

**THE IMPACT OF TRAINING OF EXTENSION OFFICERS ON
POVERTY ALLEVIATION AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS IN LEPELLE-
NKUMPI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY OF CAPRICORN DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITY IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

KGAOGELO REBECCA MONONYANE

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Development in the Faculty of Management and Law at the University of
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SUPERVISOR: PROF N.M. MOLLEL

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DECLARATION

I Kgaogelo Rebecca Mononyane declare that “The Impact of Training of Extension Officers on Poverty Alleviation Agricultural Projects in Lepelle-Nkumpi Local Municipality of Capricorn District Municipality” is my own original work and that I have not submitted it to any university for a degree, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

KGAOGELO REBECCA MONONYANE

DATE

ABSTRACT

The aim this study was to assess the impact of training of Extension Officers on poverty alleviation agricultural projects in Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. It aimed to assess if the skills that the Extension Officers acquired from the training offered to them did have a positive impact on the farmers and their projects. The objectives of the study thus, were: to identify and describe the nature and relevance of the training programs offered to the Extension Officers; to assess the impact of training and development on service delivery; and to suggest appropriate actions or interventions as may be necessary to improve the impact on service delivery. The study was qualitative in design and it sampled 10 projects. Data was gathered from Extension Officers attached to the 10 projects, farmers, key informants consisting of community leaders and headmen and Deputy Managers. The study used focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire to collect data.

The key findings from this study are: computer literacy skills training seems to be the most popular one among the Extensions Officers. Some of them have never been given the opportunity to attend agricultural-related training. The study recommends that the computer literacy should be combined with the technical agricultural subjects so that the Extension Officers could be equipped with more information which will assist them to search for information from the internet and to impart the agricultural information to the farmers so that they could improve their productivity and income. Training in marketing and financial management is imperative for farmers to enhance their productivity and to manage their finances.

The study also found out that the Extension Officers are not receiving adequate post-training supervision in the form of evaluation. The frequent project visits and supervision of the extension officers' daily duties by their superiors can improve their commitments to their work as well as increase the farmers' productivity. Farmers lament the fact that they are offered the training theoretically and none of the extension officers make an effort to demonstrate to them practically.

The work-related training which the Extension Officers have attended have improved service delivery at their work place because some of the beneficiaries since they started working in their projects, they have been getting their salary every month and their secret is that they cultivate the correct vegetables at the right time and this helps them to manage the three months waiting period easily.

The Limpopo Provincial Department of Agriculture should extend the number of the extension officers in their municipality so that they could be available when they need them. The study adds to the knowledge base on the impact of training of extension officers on poverty alleviation agricultural projects.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to:

My Parents. My beloved Mom, Mrs. Hildah Mokupi Mononyane, and my late beloved Dad, Mr. Lala Gerard Mononyane

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

SA -	South Africa
LP -	Limpopo Province
LDoA -	Limpopo Department of Agriculture
DoA -	Department of Agriculture
PDoA-	Provincial Department of Agriculture
EOs -	Extension Officers
LPDoA-	Limpopo Provincial Department of Agriculture
ANC-	African National Congress
NDA-	National Department of Agriculture
CASP -	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program
HRD -	Human Resource Development
PI -	Performance Indicator
DoH -	Department of Health
N –	Sample size
MoA-	Ministry of Agriculture
T&V-	Training and Visit system of agricultural extension
DPSA-	Department of Public Service Administration
LEDS-	Local Economic Development Strategy
GDP-	Gross Domestic Product

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Although the democratic government of South Africa (SA) made access to resources possible for poor South Africans by introducing development projects, there seems to be a number of challenges facing communities in terms of using land for productive agricultural purposes. A large number of rural households still practise subsistence farming and, as a result, the projects introduced are not generating any profits at all.

The then President of the country (Thabo Mbeki) reiterated that rural areas of South Africa represent the worst concentrations of poverty and there is no \unless the development of these areas are ensured. The President was trying to emphasize the need for a better life for all (poverty eradication) during his 1999-2008 State of the Nation Address (www.info.gov.za/speeches/son). Both the government and foreign aid agencies decided to support the then President of the country's statement by attending to the situation.

In Limpopo Province (LP), the smallholder farms are located mostly in the former homeland areas and they cover approximately 30% of the provincial land surface (National Department of Agriculture, 1995). The majority of the farmers practise dry-land farming. Most of the farms are located on infertile degraded soils, where nutrient deficiencies, predominantly nitrogen, limit the production of maize, which is the main staple food. In addition, vast parts of the province where the majority of smallholder farms are located are semi-arid. Due to limited financial resources of these smallholder farmers, very little or no fertilizers are applied to their crops, thus leading to very low production.

There are several poverty alleviation challenges facing LP, for example, to alleviate poverty and to ensure household food security. At the national level, SA is food secure (du Toit, 2011:4), but there are pockets of food insecurity at household and individual levels, mostly affecting vulnerable groups such as women, children and

the elderly. LP is still faced with the insurmountable challenge of increasing unemployment, extensive poverty and rising inequality (Reardon et al., 2005:14).

Smallholder farmers contribute significantly to agricultural production, food security, rural poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation, despite the challenges they face in the access to productive resources and service delivery. They confront new challenges on integration into high value chains, adaptation to climate change and market volatility, and other risks and vulnerability.

Due to discriminatory apartheid laws, which existed in SA before 1994, many Black smallholder farmers in LP, just like in any other province, were denied access to land for farming. The smallholder farmers had no choice but to cultivate on communal land, without a title deed. Land under communal ownership is held in trust by traditional leaders (chiefs) for the community and allocated to the community members by the chief (Mkhabela, 2002:27). The land tenure status (ownership of the land) of a farmer and the nature of her/his access to the land may influence investment of his/her farming activities or maintenance. Lack of ownership of land can cause the mind of a farmer to be clouded with some doubts and end draining up his/her farming potential. As land is a constraint in many cases, the farmers should be encouraged to generate more income from non-farm sources to augment their farm income (Chambers, 1993:14).

Lack of access to appropriate farmer support services is one of the major constraints faced by the smallholder farmers in South Africa.

There will be no progress that would be achieved regarding the improvement of household food security and poverty alleviation unless the problem of lack of access to farmer support services is taken into consideration (Machete et al., 2004:85). They further indicate that the farmers might take some efforts to address the issue, but the government intervention will always be needed for the problem to be resolved.

Roads construction serves to alleviate poverty because they open up access to markets for agricultural produce (Standish & Boting, 2004:14). In LP, most small-scale farmers have no means of transport to carry their produce to the market.

Louw et al., (2004) indicate that transportation problems result in loss of quality and late delivery, which in turn lead to lower prices, and this is regarded as the greatest problem faced by emerging farmers.

Increasing productivity is crucial for improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, who make the majority of the rural poor in LP. Low productivity is one of the primary causes of low and unstable value added along the value chains leading to a stagnant rural economy with persistence of poverty. Hence, increasing, for example, maize productivity as a staple food in the LP, is crucial for improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in the country (Msuya, 2008:291).

Theft and vandalism causes drawback to the farmers in most of the rural areas. The water pumping machines are not functioning due to the stolen electrical cables. In most cases, the boreholes and the cables are subsidized by Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDoA). The farmers are literally struggling to buy themselves the seeds to plant in their own gardens, let alone replacing the stolen cables and boreholes. The smallholder farmers are unable to hire the security in their projects due to lack of funds.

The participation of smallholder farmers in high value markets is unsatisfactory. Producing for the market calls for production resources. This means that the smallholder farmer must have access to production means such as land, water, labour force, on-farm and off-farm infrastructure, capital and good management of these resources. Poor access to the above mentioned resources by the smallholder farmer will affect the way in which they could benefit from opportunities in agricultural markets, more especially in terms of volume of products traded and the quality and quantity of those products. One might think that it may be simple to access the market, but maintaining one's position in the market is not a child's play but is rather demanding (Reardon, 2005:28).

The buyers and sellers in rural markets operate under conditions of limited and no information. Many farmers receive low prices for their cash crops by selling them at their farm gate or local market due to little marketing knowledge and selling skills as

well as little recognition of opportunities for product diversification or the links between market research and product development (Barrett, 2008:211).

Many farmers cite a lack of financial capital as a major reason for not adopting beneficial technologies. Research has also suggested that farmers with less access to credit plant fewer high yielding crop varieties. In LP, like any other province in SA, and particularly in rural areas, access to financial services, including credit and formal saving mechanisms, is limited. Even where financial services are available, they are often highly disadvantageous to smallholder farmers. For example, within a single market, interest rates often vary according to the characteristics of the borrower and the activity being financed. The farmers rely on their own funding. Some of them resort to informal means such as stokvels and rotating savings clubs to generate funds for farming activities (Letsoalo, 2000:4). Financial institutions like Land Bank should meet these clients, especially resource poor farmers' needs and thus be accountable.

Farming under smallholder system is characterized by low level of production and small farm sizes of approximately 1,5ha, with production being primarily for subsistence purposes and little marketable surplus (LDoA, 2007). One of the major constraints to crop production faced by the smallholder farmers is inadequate supply of nutrients due to declining soil fertility (Ramaru et al., 2000:1).

The goal of poverty alleviation should be optimal agricultural performance by smallholder farmers for poverty relief, food security, increased income and employment. Recognizing the contribution of these farmers in agricultural development and helping them improve their farming methods and secure small loans would impact favourably on poverty alleviation in their rural areas (Du Toit, 2004:269).

1.2 Problem Statement

Impact of training on Extension Officers in LDoA has never been carried out. The Extension Officers are being trained in various aspects of service delivery which are intended to alleviate poverty. In most cases, the training is provided by the service providers, who soon after training leave the province to their respective provinces. The agricultural poverty-alleviation projects remain stagnant and struggle to alleviate poverty to the farmers, while the LDoA is doing its best to organize the skills development programmes to their Extension Officers so that they could be able to take care of the farmers and their projects. The research intends to assess the impact of training on service delivery in poverty alleviation projects.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

Potential limitations are often numerous even in the most carefully planned research study (De Vos, 2002:121). The following factors might have limited the study:

- The withholding of vital information by project participants, for example, hiding of sensitive information such as the amount of money they are earning or used to earn at the project; and
- Sampling method: The generalization of the findings to the population from which the sample is drawn will not be possible.

1.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are important part in the research process since researchers should not seek to obtain the “truth” at the expense of the objects or subjects of study. It is important for researchers to clearly define what is or is not acceptable to help prevent conflict that could otherwise occur as a result of conflicting interests among parties involved in the study (Sidloyi, 2010:43).

The researcher first explained to the participants how the study would be carried out, its objectives, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of partaking in the study. The participants were informed beforehand about the aims and objectives and what the study was all about, and how data were going to be collected from them. They were also afforded an opportunity to ask clarifying questions on issues that they did not understand but relevant to the study.

This was done mainly to ensure that participants had enough information to enable them to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not.

Thereafter, participants were requested to sign a consent form (see Annexure I) as a sign that they understood what the study was all about and that their participation is voluntary and that they had an opportunity to withdraw at any given time.

Furthermore, a letter was also written to the local office of the DoA seeking permission to involve the Extension Officers (EOs) in the study (see Annexure E). This is done to ensure that the department was aware of the researcher's intentions to involve these officers in her study.

1.5 Definitions of Key Concepts

This sub-section conceptualises the key terminologies underlying the study. Certain concepts are used throughout this dissertation. It is, therefore, important that these terms be defined and discussed in order to ensure clarity, common understanding and the correct application thereof.

1.5.1 Poverty

Poverty means the condition where the level of consumption in a household is considered to be below the minimum standard of living. For example, where the food intake or caloric consumption is below the accepted minimum level or where the household per capita income falls below a recognized threshold (Brara, 1993).

1.5.2 Poverty alleviation projects

Poverty alleviation projects are meant to ensure facilitation of development centres and integrated empowerment programmes, which build the capacity of the poor to achieve self-reliance (Brara, 1993).

1.5.3 Agricultural Extension

Agricultural Extension can be defined as the entire set of organizations that support and facilitate people engaged in agricultural production to solve problems and to obtain information, skills and technologies to improve their livelihoods and well being (Moser, 1996).

1.5.4 Food Security

The World Food Summit of 1996 defined food security as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life.” Commonly, the concept of food security is defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences.

In many countries, health problems related to dietary excess are an ever increasing threat; In fact, malnutrition and food borne diarrhoea are becoming double burden (Ministry of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, 1997).

1.5.5 Key informant interviews

A key informant is someone who can “unlock” information for you (Kipte, 2009). The rationale for conducting in-depth discussions with key informants was that these are individuals who are grounded in the community and have particular or “expert” knowledge about the area, its people, and their livelihood activities. Key informant interview is an extended one-on-one exchange with someone who is a leader or unique in some way that is relevant to the study. The researcher had interviews with key informants such as the headmen/ community leaders in the village to get in-depth and comprehensive information for the study.

1.5.6 Focus group discussions

This is a participatory approach (method) that facilitates dialogue rather than extracts information (Onya & Flisher, 2004). It is highly iterative and conducted in groups. The idea is that if a group reaches a consensus on a particular issue after some discussions, then this consensus will be representative of views in the village.

1.5.7 Empowerment

Empowerment, defined as giving employees the means, ability and accountability to do what is required of them (Schuitema, 2004:71), is one of the necessary preconditions to holding them accountable. In the context of transforming employee behaviour, the means include resources, information, authority, standards and the manager's time to care for them and grow them.

1.5.8 Training

Training is giving an employee the ability of how a thing should be done and why it should be done (Schuitema, 2004).

1.5.9 Impact

Impact could be described as having a desirable (positive) or undesirable (negative effect) effect (Schuitema, 2004).

1.5.10 Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring system ensures that what is set to be done has been done according to the set standards, while evaluation is intended to assess whether what was intended to be achieved had been achieved (Schuitema, 2004).

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study adds to the knowledge base on the impact of training of EOs on poverty-alleviation agricultural projects. It fills the gap in knowledge of the success of training programmes on the ground, that is, whether the success of the training programme is translated into enhanced service delivery.

1.7 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to assess the impact of training of EOs using the advancements of poverty-alleviation agricultural projects in Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. The objectives of the study are briefly as follows:

- 1.7.1 To identify and describe the nature and relevance of the training programmes offered to the EOs;
- 1.7.2 To investigate the impact of training on poverty and poverty alleviation projects in terms of service delivery to farmers; and
- 1.7.3 To propose appropriate actions or interventions as may be necessary to improve the impact on service delivery.

1.8 Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

- 1.8.1 What is the nature and relevance of the training programmes offered to the EOs (content and target group)?
- 1.8.2 What impact has training and development made in terms of service delivery to farmers?
- 1.8.3 Are the skills that the EOs have acquired from the training offered to them have an impact on the farmers and their projects?

1.9 Structure of the Study

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 as seen above gives the introduction to the study. It covers the background of the study, the problem statement, and explanation of the key concepts relevant to the study, significance of the study, research objectives, research questions, and the structure of the study. Chapter 2 contains the literature review and theoretical framework that gave genesis to this study. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework adopted for the study. It describes the information sources, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis. This is followed by results and discussions in Chapter 4.

Chapter 5 the final chapter gives the summary, discussions and conclusions.

It summarizes and discusses the results of the study with reference to objectives and research questions presented in the first Chapter. This is followed by a consideration of the broader implications of the research results for policy and practice.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Most rural areas in South Africa are agrarian in nature, with most of the developmental programmes being agrarian. Due to the importance of this sector in poverty alleviation, farmers have access to Extension Officers who provide them with solutions related to agricultural problems and challenges. However, although the democratic government of South Africa made the resources to be accessible to the vulnerable South Africans by introducing development projects, there are still a number of challenges facing communities in terms of utilizing the land for productive agricultural purpose. Most of the rural households are still entrenched in abject poverty and practise subsistence farming (ANC, 1994:13) in the midst of massive poverty alleviation programmes.

2.2 International Overview

According to Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005: 81-82), an especially important and often ignored aspect is the role of agriculture in the economies of countries in Africa. In many parts of the world, it is accepted that the contribution of the agriculture sector to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is rapidly diminishing. This is because of the development of industrial, mining, service and other sectors. These other sectors may be developing slowly in the countries of the region, but much more so than in Asia or Latin America.

Lindley added that there continues to be a very strong argument in favour of increasing support for agricultural education and human resource development throughout the world. Increased population throughout the world, together with an agricultural production increasing at a lower rate, gives cause for alarm. The 1983 estimate of food self-sufficiency in Africa was 83%. That estimate is expected to fall to 56% by the end of the century. Every possible action for improving the quality of trained human resources for agricultural production, extension and research services should be explored.

There are several training challenges that have been continuing for years in the American as well as the European countries, which are more or less similar to those of the African countries.

First, some of the traditional farming management methods that are no longer appropriate are still difficult to change. Second, the training offered to farmers were sometimes not properly managed. Communication strategy, timing, venue, content and materials did not address farmers' needs and wants. Hence, there must be some effort to help extension officers in carrying out their daily activities optimally (Compton, 2002).

Training needs design for agricultural extension has been a burning issue to increase the quality of agricultural extension. The study in Pakistan (Ortmann, 2005) shows that agricultural Extension Officers (EOs) problems will be addressed by in-service training for increasing their work efficiency. It was also proven that the farmers are likely to benefit more when they receive technological package from a qualified personnel, a person who knows what to carry and convey to farmers (Mngumi, 2010). The study by Hoque and Usami (2007:53) suggests to provide training programme planners in other developing nations with valuable information in order to make more effective training program for the agricultural extension personnel.

In the Southern African, countries the training of the EOs have been offered every year but the functions of the EOs are not optimally performed. The reasons underlying this condition are: First, the training received cover practical and technical content and ignores the part of how to deliver the content itself. Secondly, some of basic knowledge and skills that EOs got from their old diploma in Agriculture were insufficient. Hence, the purpose of this study is to identify and describe the nature and relevance of the training programmes offered to the EOs.

Mngumi (2010) reveals the importance of needs assessment of extension agents in improving their performance. His findings further stress the need by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and related training institutions to conduct thorough extension training needs assessment involving all stakeholders before developing in-service training programmes for extension agents. The benefit of this situation is EOs may

be motivated to get new skills and knowledge to enhance their performance. In this situation, the American, European and Southern African countries government together with their EOs can build training materials so it will be appropriate with competent knowledge and skills that they need to master.

The study of Compton (2002) reveals that awareness about the capability of EOs and importance of extension management in conducting their job should be taken into consideration. Technical materials such as “products” processing, farming and breeding management and crop production are the main areas that get attention from the EOs. The departments should involve experts in extension management, communication and adult learning process to bring the picture on the needs of knowledge and skill in message delivery. The EOs need constant training in agribusiness, farming and breeding management as new technologies keep invented and affect farmers.

2.3 Research in Southern Africa

It is estimated that approximately 10 000 EOs are currently working for the Department of Agriculture (DoA) and they are responsible for extension services to the rural communities. The direct expenditure on extension has been estimated at R515 million per annum. Yet it is acknowledged that these extension workers of whom most were previously employed by the homeland governments were not trained well enough to comply with the requirements of rural agriculture and as a result, do not have much of an impact (National Department of Agriculture (NDA), 2005).

The improvement of a country's human resource capacity for productivity is a pre-requisite for social and economic development. In the agriculture sector, both formal and non-formal education is important for improving food security, raising the level of rural employment and reducing poverty.

Formal agricultural education is needed for the production of skilled manpower to serve the agricultural sector as producers and through extension, research, entrepreneurship and commerce. Non-formal agricultural education, provided by both public and private extension services, is needed for support to farmers, farm

families and workers and for capacity building in a wide range of rural organizations and groups (Adeola, 2005:253-254).

With regard to farmers' education and skills training in South Africa (SA), commercial farmers are relatively well educated and have acquired appropriate skills for their operations compared to small-scale farmers. The challenge for both the national and Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDoA) is to create a well-trained and motivated extension service that can assist smallholders with regard to agricultural production and farm and financial management issues. Mentoring of emerging farmers by commercial farmers could also be an effective approach to training (Ortmann, 2005:173).

According to the study by Adeola (2005:257) and Agbamu (2000:6), it has revealed that there are some of the countries in Southern African, such as Tanzania, Swaziland and Nigeria, that have discovered a professional system of extension based on frequently updated training of EOs and regular field visits which is called "Training and Visit" (T&V). Adeola and Agbamu added that T&V is a system of extension based on frequently updated training of EOs and regular field visit. It is regarded as one approach to agricultural extension that has proved to be particularly effective.

The contribution of this system to agricultural extension and agricultural development is not that it is a new extension methodology which it is not, but rather that it is an effective management system that enables the efficient implementation of extension principles. The T&V provides an organizational structure and detailed mode of operation that ensures that extension agents visit farmers regularly and transmit messages relevant to production needs, problems faced by farmers and quickly fed back to specialists and research for solution or further investigation, and extension staff receive the regular training required continually to upgrade their professional ability so that they may serve technological demands of farmers.

A basic principle of effective, professional and so of the T&V system is that farmers should be visited regularly by able and qualified EOs. They further stated that agricultural extension is not a one-shot effort. It entails a continuous, long term

process of contact with farmers to understand their production conditions and to guide research to help develop recommendations that respond to farmers technological needs. To do this, field visits should be regular and frequent (Leedy, 2001).

The best way to achieve this in developing countries is to have EOs make field visits according to a fixed schedule that is known to all farmers. To keep extension staff up to date on the latest know how and with regard to specific recommendations suited to changing farm conditions, there should be regular frequent training of extension staff of all levels. Linkage with research must be two-way and close, and based on joint extension/research field activities and workshops rather than on irregular meeting of committees (Adeola, 2005:251 and Agbamu, 2000:9).

Ajeh et al., (2008:269) alluded that in most of the SADC countries training of EOs is usually inadequate in terms of its frequency, timeliness and relevance. Training efforts are generally concentrated on pre-service training.

This, however, is often theoretical and classroom oriented, and frequently seeks to cover the whole range of crops and practices that few EOs can be expected to remember for long. He added that where the EOs are multipurpose workers, their training is further diluted by non-agricultural subjects.

The systematic refresher training should be offered or, for some through university degree studies. Even where refresher training is given, important fields like extension methods, communication methods, farm management and management skills are rarely covered and this make service delivery to be compromised in one way or another (Ajeh et al., 2008:271).

The literature study revealed that EOs operating in rural areas in SA are not well equipped to transfer agricultural information effectively to small-scale farmers (Meyer, 2000:123). He further recommended that the following should be included in the curriculum for the training of EOs:

- Compiling of information usage profiles of small-scale farmers that could be used to design transfer strategies;

- An introduction to development endeavours and development approaches and how they impact rural agricultural practices;
- Background knowledge of other support services operating in rural areas;
- Background to information as a resource for development and the information transfer process in rural communities; and
- The role of training in the planning, design and implementation of information or technology transfer strategy for small-scale farmers in rural communities.

de Villiers (2010) concurs with Meyer (2000) about the issue of training the EOs in planning the projects to assist the farmers to increase productivity. It is indicated that a heavy responsibility is placed on the shoulders of the EOs in both planning and management of agricultural projects. de Villiers added that the technical training of the agricultural EOs in soil, crops, horticulture and livestock, normally do not include adequate training in business aspects of agriculture. The Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership of the University of Limpopo designed four short learning certificates in management; ranging from basic entry level training in management, to execute management training.

These certificates can assist with skills for business planning and management to support successful agricultural poverty-alleviation projects (de Villiers, 2010).

The National Department of Agriculture (NDA) (2005) emphasized in the Norms and Standard for Extension and Advisory Services in Agriculture that a person employed as an agricultural extension or advisory services officer at all levels shall be required to have a minimum qualification of a Bachelor's degree, or its equivalent in training and experience, a strong commitment to higher education, and the willingness to assume responsibility and demonstrate competence. The department further stated that the EOs or advisors who wish to follow the specialist stream (e.g., agronomy) must have higher degrees in the technical field and are encourage to belong to organizations that will help them to further their knowledge and expertise. Those who wish to be in the extension stream must have higher degrees in extension and must register with the recognized relevant professional body.

Any person promoted or appointed to a management position must have a post graduate qualification in extension management or otherwise in accordance with the Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA) regulation.

If SA could have highly qualified extension staff like the ones mentioned above, the farmers in this country would as soon as possible graduate from being small-scale farmers to commercial farmers. It needs the joint efforts of all the respective provinces to ensure that the EOs and the other officials in the extension services are encouraged to display and build the highest standard of ethical and moral conduct in order to promote confidence and trust in agricultural extension and advisory services.

Extension and advisory service therefore need a cadre of well trained, dedicated and motivated staff skilled in scientific and technical expertise agricultural production, business (economics, marketing and financial management expertise), extension and communication techniques (NDA, 2005).

It is the farmers, not technological intervention that make production and productivity happen. The provision of effective training through development programme is, therefore, in the long-term interest of the agricultural extension and advisory service.

2.4 Research in Limpopo

Limpopo Province (LP) forms one of the nine provinces of SA, covering an area of some 122839 km², following the new demarcations. LP consists of five districts, namely, Waterberg, Vhembe, Sekhukhune, Mopani and Capricorn (Zwane, 2003:79).

The Capricorn District is situated at the core of economic development in the LP. Lepelle-Nkumpi is the second largest municipality in Capricorn District (Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality, 2007). Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality is the focus area of this study. LP has a very low urbanization level, with almost 88% of its population being located in rural areas. This is also the case for Capricorn District and significantly more so in the Lepelle- Nkumpi Municipality.

The percentage of people living in rural areas in the municipality is very high, with the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality almost being completely rural in nature (Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality, 2007). According to the study by Zwane (2003:80), the growth of the population in LP is said to be at 3.2% per annum. The unemployment rate is 45.9%. Agriculture contributes 20.3% of employment and 15% towards the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the province.

LP is a small contributor to the country's GDP. The province's contribution to the GDP in 1991 was 3.7 percent and increased to 3.8 per cent in 1996 (Statistic South Africa, 1998). The province is vulnerable to external shocks due to its high degree of dependence on primary sectors of mining and agriculture.

Agriculture contributes approximately 38 percent to the GDP of the province and provides 17 percent of the formal employment (Statistics South Africa, 1998).

The World Bank report of 1988-1990 has observed that about one in four people in Sub-Saharan Africa went to bed on an empty stomach and food emergencies were always needed to give support. To fight hunger, African countries need economic growth and food security, which implies food availability and access or capacity to purchase food. If the human population continues to grow at about 2% a year, food production should grow by at least 4% per year if the region is to meet the demand of food (Leedy, 2001).

According to the budget vote speech of the former MEC of Agriculture, the Honourable Mrs. Magadzi, for agricultural opportunities to expand, access to reasonable priced credit, irrigation schemes, communication technologies, crop production skills and market development are very important to the successful movement of Black farmers from subsistence agriculture to that of an emerging level at a commercial scale (Magadzi, 2005).

According to the study by Murphy et al., (2004) conducted in LP to identify the educational and technical needs of EOs that prevented them from delivering education to farmers in an effective and efficient manner, the following results were found:

One such huge task discovered by Murphy et al., (2004) is lack of EOs' communication and facilitation skills which is hindering service delivery. This is a stumbling block which prevents the EOs from conveying the technical information to the farmers. This shows that the staff lacked the methodology to analyse the needs of the audiences and communities in the area where they work. The study further revealed that extension service cannot be separated from communication and facilitation skills.

This is a two-way communication whereby the EO and the farmers should be able to exchange information and ideas in a clear and concise manner appropriate to the audience in order to explain, persuade, convince and influence the clients to achieve the desired outcomes.

Communication and facilitation skills are critical skills which the DoA should give urgent attention for the farmers to be able to increase crop movement and market development. For example, a sample of farmers interviewed by Murphy and his team indicated that the farmers are often requesting for technical and marketing information from industry sources, bypassing extension because of the perception that the information could not be obtained from EOs. This is a confirmation that gradually the farmers are losing interest of consulting to the EOs who are incompetent (Murphy et al., 2004).

In the very same study conducted by Murphy, the EOs indicated that they rarely receive the crop production in-service training for field-based staff which created a situation where they felt poorly equipped to work with farmers to solve technical production problems as they occurred. Usually, farmers get extension advice from the government officers, and often projects receive grants for fencing, boreholes, chicken houses, equipment, etc.

After all the efforts that the department is taking to improve the projects does it really make sense for them to ignore equipping their EOs with the crop production training which is the core of production assisting them to be able to explore and implement new ways of delivering service that contribute to the improvement of productivity of the farmers (Hedden-Dunkhorst et al., 2001:411).

The in-service training courses for the EOs should be arranged and be offered by officials from the two existing agricultural training centres in Limpopo Province which are Tompi Seleka and Madzivhandila Colleges and the University of Venda and the University of Limpopo. This will encourage the continuous contact to be maintained by the EOs who are at the centre of information flow and responsible to make information comprehensible to farmers (Leedy, 2001).

Another challenge observed in terms of extension is the lack of marketing advice Extension Officers' offer. The EOs' first role in marketing is to guide and assist farmers in the process of change from subsistence farming to commercial farming. He has a role at each stage in the development of agriculture, encouraging farmers to develop new skills needed to market and sell their produce (Hedden-Dunkhorst et al., 2001:401). If the EOs are unable to deliver the marketing information to the farmers, then it means they are contributing to cause the farmers produce to spoil due to lack of the market.

Ajayi (2001:42-43) pointed that the farmers who are educated are better able to appreciate new technologies. Their results shows that the educated farmers appreciate using the fertilizer more compared to those who are not educated. They added that the extension meetings are more widely attended by buyers than by non-buyers, because these farmers need to learn and consult more with local EOs.

Ajayi (2001:45) indicate in their study that the illiterate beneficiaries had expressed great interest in learning to read and write and almost all of them were attending the course. There are some of the farmers who are hungry to receive education in order to increase productivity in their projects. As time goes on, the farmers will overtake the EOs by acquiring more knowledge through receiving adult education and if they can reach a stage of being able to trace and find the production information on their own, they will not see the importance of depending on the EOs' advice.

All the problems taking place in LP confirms that the delivery of extension service is caused by the EOs and their immediate supervisors. The main challenge is lack of adequate skills on the part of the farmers, ward EOs and the extension managers.

According to the paper presented by Manny (2005), the Limpopo Provincial Department of Agriculture (LPDoA) is facing an extension challenge of producing an EO who is effective with the right skills, attitude and adequately motivated and equipped. According to the study by Mutimba (2005:48), training is a central part of the process to ensure that an organization acquires skills to run its affairs efficiently and effectively.

2.5 The Interventions

2.5.1 In-service training

Regular in-service training for EOs is required. Taking account of the needs of Extension Officers a training programme must be developed. As a rule of thumb, every member of the extension service should attend each year at least one special training course, and one short orientation or reorientation session. Most of the courses for the Extension Officers may be arranged and given by officials from the two agricultural training centres in Limpopo Province which are, namely, Tompi Seleka and Madzivhandila Colleges, and the University of Venda and the University of Limpopo. A very important training requirement is thorough orientation and reorientation of all staff, to the reformed professional extension system, and in particular, to the principles upon which it is based, the function of different staff, working procedures and the formulation of production recommendations. Orientation training should be offered continually, not only for the staff new to the system but also as refresher training for other staff members.

LPDoA should make it a point that there are adequate training resources and facilities so that they can cater the EOs with the training as frequent as possible in order to achieve desired levels of production (LPDoA, 2005-2010).

2.5.2 Work Program

The work programs are often ill-defined and inadequately supported. In addition, work priorities are interrupted frequently. The responsibilities of the EOs are simply too broad and vague. As a result, such can perform neither his agricultural extension duties nor his other tasks effectively, and must resort to doing only the work that is most closely monitored by his supervisors, for example, completing reports, recording statistics, and distributing agricultural inputs and providing service only to

the most influential people in his jurisdiction (and who know his supervisors). If there is no time-bound systematic programme which the Extension Officer is following, it is impossible to achieve the close regular contact between Extension Officer and farmers that is essential for successful extension. He ended up having little time or motivation to visit farmers projects (Ortmann, 2005:177).

2.5.3 Staff presentations

It has been discovered that the Asian countries are training the Extension Officers once a month on either technologies or new techniques available. What is motivating is that staff returning from training should have an obligation to share their knowledge by giving training on the different aspects covered in the training they have received. This is an encouraging method because it will encourage the extension officer to concentrate and participate knowing that he/she has to give a report through presentation at his/her workplace. This would also prune their stage fright and will be able to address the community at the rural areas let alone the farmers' gatherings.

If SA can adopt this tendency from Asia and train their officials once a month, the Extension Officers will be motivated in building up a professional extension service that is capable of assisting farmers in increasing production, raising the living standard of farmers and provide appropriate support for agricultural development (Barrett, 2008).

2.5.4 Extension officers' selection/screening before attending courses

South Africa should learn from the Nigerians who identify the qualified extension officers who will use the experience to improve their extension programmes when they return home from training. The Nigerians have discovered that sending a selection team is useful in understanding needs of their stakeholders and their extension potential for addressing those needs. Once the participants have been selected, they actively seek their inputs regarding goals for workshop and the types of activities they would like. This is helpful because it avoids the Extension Officers who come to the training for personal reasons (Voster, 2008:8-11).

2.5.5 Training programs

- Training that includes farming and breeding management as well as content delivery is critically needed to enable Extension Officers to become better and more relevant in performing their duties; and
- In developing training programmes, it is important to involve extension officers as audience and users of the materials. Training programmes should consider Extension Officers' needs, wants and aspirations (Voster, 2008:13-14).

Despite the various efforts in the empowerment of Extension Officers through training, there is hardly any impact assessment as to whether these efforts achieved what they were intended to achieve. Consequently, this study – as a pilot project, is being conducted to close this perceived gap, with the intention of replicating it in other Municipalities within Limpopo Province.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research methodology used to investigate the research problem described in the introductory chapter. The chapter is used to describe the following sections; research methods, research design, sample used, methods of data collection and data analysis used as well as the ethical considerations applied in this study.

3.2 Research Process

The research process in primary data started from questionnaire administration, data collection through data analysis. The three aspects are briefly described.

3.2.1 Administration of questionnaires

Questionnaires were hand-delivered to respondents through the use of enumerators. A request letter to complete and seal the questionnaire in the designated “return” envelope was included.

3.2.2 Collection of questionnaires

The sealed questionnaires were returned through the use of internal mail-delivery system. “Return deadlines” were prescribed as seven days after delivery. In the event of failure to return the questionnaire within the prescribed deadline, three electronic appeals were made. Lack of response was assumed to be reluctance to participate.

3.2.3 Data analysis

Various statistical softwares such as SPSS are available for data analysis.

3.3 Description of Study Area

The Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality is one of the local municipalities within the Capricorn District Municipality in LP. The municipality is located 55km south of the district and the Polokwane city. The municipality is pre-dominantly rural with a population of 227 965 and covers 3,454.78km, which is 20.4% of the district's total

land area. The municipality is divided into 25 wards, three of them being a township called Lebowakgomo, one of the Capricorn District growth point. All sittings of the Provincial Legislature takes place at Lebowakgomo Old Parliament for the former homeland. Social facilities available within the municipality include 116 primary schools, 81 secondary schools, 1 FET College, 19 primary health care clinics, 1 hospital, 4 police stations and one magisterial court (www.lepelle-nkumpi.gov.za).

3.4 Research Design

Research design is an outline of the procedure adopted in conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22). Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006: 34) see research design as “a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the implementation of suggested measures, based on the research findings to solve the research problem.” It enables the researcher to obtain answers to the research questions. It is, therefore, important that researchers choose the design that will enable them to collect information that will help them to answer the research questions. In other words, the research design indicates the general plan: how the research is set up, what happens to the subjects, and what methods of data collection are used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:22).

The researcher utilized a qualitative research design because it is useful for obtaining views and opinions of respondents. Qualitative studies are usually conducted in a natural setting where detailed information is gathered directly from the participants (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, and 2004:3).

3.5 Population

The study population for this study included farming projects beneficiaries in Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. The total number of the food security projects was 93 with a combined number of 618 beneficiaries, 24 Extension Officers and 3 Deputy Managers attached to food security working in the local office of the DoA. The population also comprised of key informants which included 3 headmen and the 2 Community Leaders working in communities where the farming projects are based.

3.6 Sampling Methods

The two types of sampling techniques that were utilized to select the respondents were purposive/judgmental sampling and the simple random sampling methods. The selection of respondents took into consideration the key elements in qualitative data gathering, namely; enculturation, current involvement and adequate time (Babbie & Mouton, 2004:288).

The three elements were important for the study, as it required respondents who have been involved in the farming projects for a considerable time and were knowledgeable about the historical background and current project activities (farmers and EOs). Purposive sampling was used in this study, with a view to finding people who fit the criteria of desirable participants who have characteristics that are relevant to the investigation (Patton, 2002:230).

Purposive sampling supplied the researcher with the participants that best helped her to gain insight into the problem and the research question (Creswell, 2003:185). In this study, the desirable participants were: 7 EOs, 54 Farmers attached to 10 food security projects, 3 Deputy Managers as well as 5 key informants that included community leaders and headmen.

In selecting the farmers to be included in the sample, the researcher first designed a framing list containing a total of 93 food security active farming projects in the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. The list was obtained from the DoA in the municipality. Ten (10) food security projects were selected (see Annexure F). The selected projects had 54 beneficiaries who were all included into the sample. After getting the selected projects automatically the researcher has got the 7 EOs attached to the 10 food security projects selected. The qualifying criteria were that the EO must be working directly with the sampled projects. There was no sampling done for the 5 key informants (community leaders, headmen), and 3 food security Deputy Managers (supervising the 7 EOs) since the population was very small.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore social problems. Flick (1998:6) notes that a qualitative method involves observing, analyzing situations, studying action

and activities as they occur. This can help the researcher to build a complex and holistic picture of the topic under investigation.

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative method to gain in-depth knowledge of the topic under investigation. This method also assisted the researcher in interpreting the participants' expressions and body postures while conducting semi-structured interviews with them.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Researchers need to collect data that will help them to answer the research questions. As noted by Miles and Huberman (1994), the use of different data collection tools tends to strengthen the study because the researcher is afforded an opportunity to collect as much data as he/she can. According to Leedy (2001), triangulation involves the use of various tools to collect data that may provide information to support or reject a specific theory or to answer the research question. In this study, the following data collection methods were used: focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews and documents.

3.8.1 Focus group interviews

The researcher used focus group interviews as a qualitative method of collecting data from the participants. Focus group interviews are used to gain an understanding of a particular issue from the perspectives of the group participants. Leedy (2001) further indicates that group members' interactions may provide data that would not have been revealed through individual interviews (see Annexure D: Focus Group Questionnaire).

According to Terre Blanche et al., (2006:304) and Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005:89), a focus group is made up of people who share similar experiences, who come together to discuss "a focused issue of concern". Terre Blanche et al., further indicate that a focus group is a friendly method because it offers a situation in which there is a willingness to listen without any judgement, which is good in emotionally charged environments. They further indicate that it encourages self-disclosure among participants.

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005: 81-82) mention the following advantages of a focus group:

- A focus group enables an in-depth discussion and involves a relatively small number of people;
- It focuses on a specific area of interest that allows participants to discuss their issues freely and in greater detail;
- Participants discuss common experiences;
- Group members' work together to explore issues that bother them;
- The facilitator introduces the topic and facilitates discussion of it – encouraging interaction and guiding the conversation; and
- Group work encourages participants to share their thoughts and feelings.

Furthermore, the researcher chose this method because of its ability to provide “a rich and detailed set of data about perceptions, feelings and impressions of people in their own words”. It was an appropriate tool in that the researcher had a glean on a lot of information about the participants. Focus groups are also suitable for dealing with sensitive issues because of the confidentiality and trust within the group. When group members realise that they have something in common, they may feel more relaxed to discuss their experiences (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005:81-82).

In this study, the researcher decided to use focus groups because the participants shared similar experiences in that they are all farmers who are benefiting from the EOs' assistance. As noted, the focus group afforded the participants a free, relaxed and non-judgemental platform to share their thoughts, emotions and feelings. Each and every project was forming a group on its own. The food security projects sampled were 10 in number consisting of 54 beneficiaries. Therefore, each project represents the focus group. This means that the researcher interviewed ten focus groups' sessions. Each focus group consisted of 4-8 beneficiaries and the session lasted for two hours. The focus group sessions were conducted in the native language in order to accommodate those farmers who could not understand the English language. A tape recorder was used and notes were taken by making use of the flip charts to collect data from the group members during focus groups.

The contact details of the group members were taken during the first interviews in order to contact them when clarification was needed.

3.8.2 Key Informants Interview

In addition, to the focus groups and questionnaires, the researcher also made use of semi-structured interviews to gather information from the key informants. The researcher prepared a set of questions prior to the actual interviews. These questions were meant to guide the researcher to avoid being side-tracked by the interviewees but the researcher also probed for more details or rephrased the questions where she felt that the participant was withholding vital information. The researcher used the same interview guide, as their areas of focus were the same.

The aim was to establish how the key informants perceived the role that the projects were playing in the lives of the beneficiaries as well as that of the community members at large. Another aim was to capture their views on the role that EOs are playing on the success or failure of these projects.

3.8.3 Questionnaire

According to Terre Blanche et al., (2006:484), a questionnaire can be defined as a group of written questions used to gather information from respondents. It is regarded as one of the commonest data gathering tools in the social sciences. The purpose of a questionnaire was to obtain facts and opinions from the participants about the investigated phenomenon (in this case, the facilitators) (Terre Blanche et al., 2006:484). Semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from primary sources which mainly comprised of deputy managers, EOs and key informants followed by review of the available secondary data source. Finally data on challenges and successes of the projects, marketing strategies and production performance were collected using the questionnaires prepared to collect the data (see Annexure H: Questionnaire for EOs; Questionnaire for Deputy Managers and Questionnaire for key informants).

3.9 Data analysis

3.9.1. Qualitative data

Data analysis is the process of bringing order and meaning to the collected data. It involves preparing data, conducting different data analyses, and interpreting the data (Creswell 2003:190). In this study, the collected data were analysed first in Sotho, the language in which interviews were conducted, and then in English. Miles and Huberman (1994:10-11) observe that data analysis consists of the following three inseparable sub-processes: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions or verification. The three inseparable sub-processes are outlined below.

3.9.2 Data reduction

During data reduction, the collected data are broken down into categories. Data reduction is part of data analysis whereby the researcher breaks down, codes, sorts, and clusters, organizes data so that final conclusions can be drawn. In this study, the data gained from structured interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim. Then the transcribed data were coded and categorized.

The following steps identified by Frankel (1997:40) were employed to facilitate the process.

- The researcher repeatedly read the participants` descriptions until they had been committed to memory;
- By this means, the researcher identified and highlighted meaningful phrases, statements or words that seemed to relate significantly to the phenomenon under investigation;
- The main ideas and themes were recorded;
- Semantic units and themes were identified;
- Different statements were organised into clusters of themes. Common or similar themes were identified and grouped together; and
- The identified main themes were discussed.

In the process, the researcher listened to the structured interviews. Themes were identified and written down. Similar topics were once again clustered together and arranged into columns, and similar themes were arranged to come up with the main themes. The data belonging to each category were assembled and analyzed.

3.9.3 Data display

According to Miles and Huberman (1994:11), “display is an organized compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action”. Displays help us to follow what is happening and if there is a need for action, it prompts us to react. In the past, data were mainly displayed as text, which was awkward. Some people are not good processors of bulk information. The use of charts, tables and graphs can help people to understand data and to come to conclusions.

3.10 Conclusion Drawing and Verification

During conclusion drawing the researcher interpreted and drew meaning from the displayed data. The researcher compared, took note of patterns and themes, used semantic units and clusters on the displayed data. The researcher then recorded final results.

In this study, a number of ethical issues were addressed:

- Informed consent was elicited from the participants;
- Maintaining strict confidentiality was preserved in the treatment of participants' personal information;
- Participants were informed of the research results; and
- Participants were informed that their privacy would be protected and about what was going to happen to their recorded information.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter, the methodology was outlined as used in the research under review. The data collection tools were discussed. The mixed method design involving qualitative research methods was discussed. A focus group was also outlined in detail, and a brief explanation was given of how data were analysed.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The current study sought to assess the impact that the training offered to the Extension Officers (EOs) working at the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality have on improving services offered to the farmers in the area. The study sampled 10 food security projects. Data were gathered from 7 EOs attached to the 10 projects selected. The qualifying criteria were that the EO must be working directly with the sampled food security projects. There was no sampling done for the 5 key informants consisting of 2 community leaders, 3 headmen and 3 food security Deputy Managers since the population was very small. The food security projects sampled were 10 in number consisting of 54 beneficiaries. Therefore, each project represents the focus group. This means that the researcher interviewed ten focus groups' sessions. Each focus group consisted of 4-8 beneficiaries and the session lasted for two hours. The study used focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire to collect data. In this study, the researcher decided to use focus group because the participants shared similar experiences in that they are all farmers who are benefiting from the assistance of EOs.

It is important that, after collecting data on the subject, the researcher presents the findings and interpretation of the research. In this chapter, the results of the study are presented and discussed. Firstly, it presents the demographic profile of the respondents and then identifies and describes the nature and relevance of the training programmes offered to EOs in line with objective 1 of the study. Objective 2 is addressed in section 4.6

4.2. Demographic profile of Extension Officers (EOs)

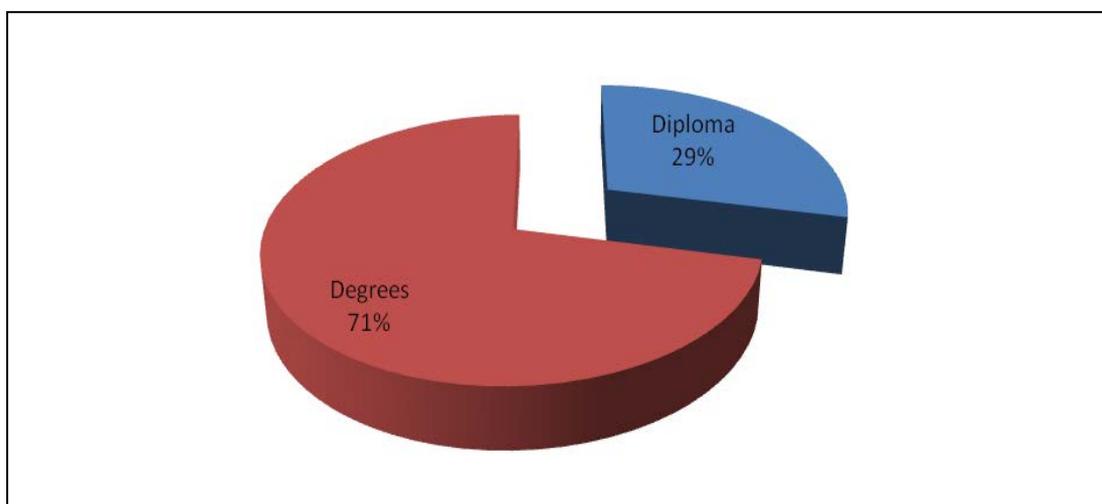
Data in Table 4.1 below reveal the demographic profile of the respondents. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the respondents were women. In terms of qualifications, also 71% of the EOs had Bachelor degrees and only 29% had diplomas. This is depicted in the form of a pie chart below (see Figure 1). Data on working experience reveal that the experience ranges from a minimum of 3 years to a maximum of 38 years. Therefore, the average number in terms of years of working experience is 18.

The 7 EOs are attached to the 10 food security sampled projects. Each and every EO is allocated a ward in their municipality. Each ward is divided into villages and the number of projects per EO depends on the projects in those wards. The maximum number of projects in each ward is six.

Table 4.1: Demographic profile of Extension Officers (n=7)

Variable	Category	Frequency
Total number of participants		100
Gender distribution	Male	29
	Female	71
Age distribution*	31–40	42
	41–50	29
	51–60	29
Marital status	Married	57
	Divorced	29
	Widowed	14
Highest education	Diploma	29
	Degree	71

Figure 1: Educational Qualification of Extension Officers

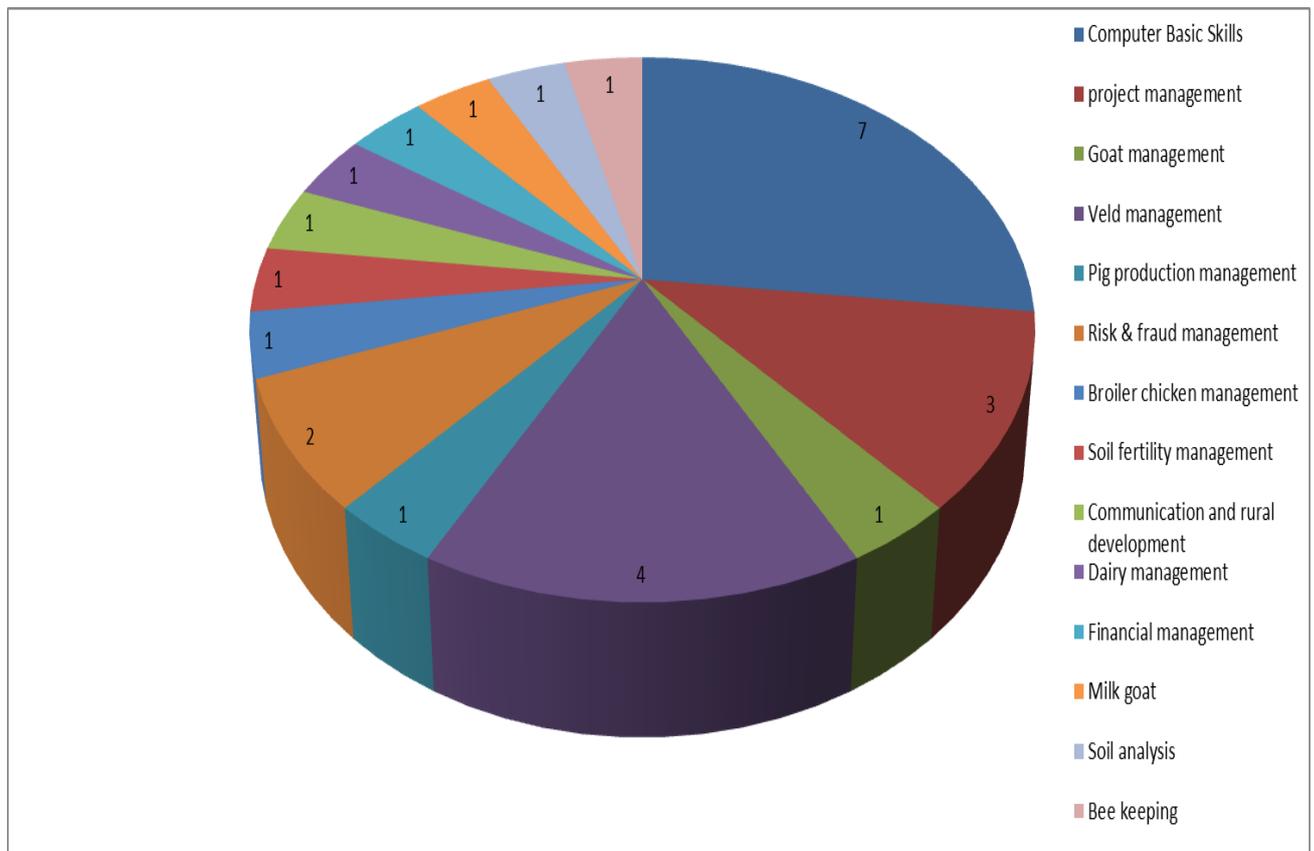


4.3 Nature and Relevance of the Training Programmes Offered to the Extension Officers

The pie chart below (Figure 2) shows the types of training that the EOs have collectively attended over the period of three years (2008-2010/11). The training mentioned in the pie chart below were captured from the EOs responses to the question which requested them to mention the training they have attended from 2008-2010/11. In Figure 2, the numbers represent the frequency of attendance of the training by the EOs. Of the 14 training courses, computer literacy skills training seems to be the most popular one (7), with some EOs attending it twice over a period of three years. The very same EOs who attended it twice over a period of three years never attended any technical training during this period, whereas they are responsible for the vegetable projects. There are also some EOs in charge of poultry projects and they were never given the opportunity to attend the training related to poultry. During this three-year period, they attended training on different subjects and the very same officials are expected to deliver the service accordingly. Some of the key findings to be revealed by the study are the inappropriate method of controlling the Performance Indicators and the skills audit by the Human Resource Development section submitted by the EOs.

Another key finding to be revealed by the study is lack of training that is crucial to the enhancement of the EOs field productivity. Key training such as Soil Fertility Management and Dairy Management have been attended only by one EO. This gives an impression that DoA is currently failing to capacitate the EOs with key knowledge and skills that are crucial to the farmers.

Figure 2: Types of training attended by Extension Officers over a three year period (2008-2010/11)



The Bee Keeping training is supposed to have been attended by the EOs who are working with the farmers farming with the bees. For example, respondent D has been taken to Bee Keeping training and none of her farmers are farming with bees. A thorough investigation needs to be done by the Human Resource Development (HRD) in charge of controlling the training because sending an official to be trained on a course which is not going to benefit the farmers is a waste of departmental resources.

The data indicate that it is only one EO out of seven who attended financial management training. It would be advisable if it was compulsory to all the EOs in order to assist the beneficiaries to run their project finances.

Figure 2 of the study shows that none of the EOs had been given the opportunity to do marketing whereas there is a serious challenge faced by the farmers to market their livestock, vegetables and poultry.

The EOs in Limpopo Province are regarded as the general extension agents and that is the reason why it is compulsory for them to include marketing aspects in their extension work. This is contrary to the option adopted in Jamaica where specialized marketing EO's whose emphasis were only to provide marketing related extension services were employed (Johnson, 1998).

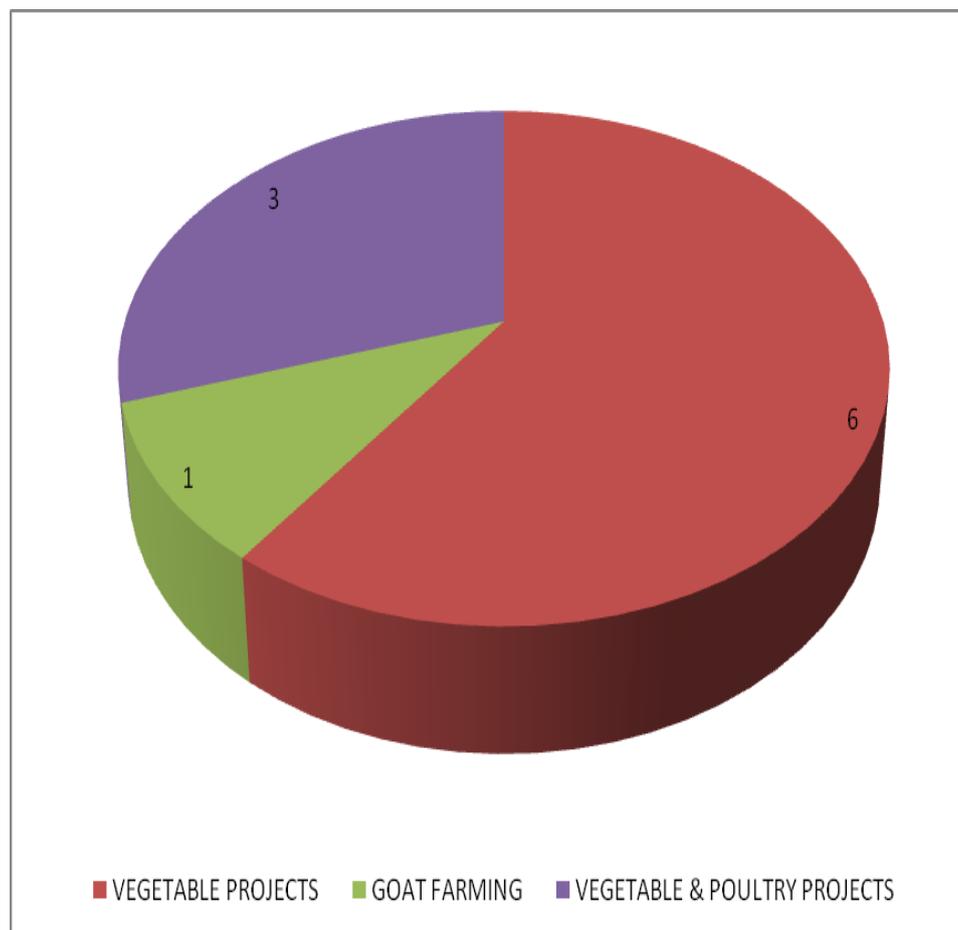
Some of the farmers do manage to produce enough but their produce ended up getting rotten due to lack of markets (see page 50). The training on marketing should have been given a priority and be attended by all the EOs for the benefit of the farmers. Jooste and Van Rooyen (1996) conclude that access to markets is the only vehicle which can make the transition of the small-scale sectors towards commercial production possible.

The risk faced by the small-scale farmers on communal land is very high. Bailey, Barrett, Little and Chabari (1999) point that the risk might be continually increasing. More specifically, increasing market price variability (Jooste & Alemu, 2004), climatic variability, as well as a lack of infrastructure to support asset and income diversification (Bailey et al., 1999), were identified as major causes of limited market participation. In addition, Jooste and Van Rooyen (1996) indicated the necessity of establishing a set of new institutions and appropriate policies to guide livestock production in the various diverse socio-economic groupings in SA. During data collection, the researcher discovered that almost all the farmers are struggling to manage their finances. It is recommended that the EOs be provided with financial management training in order to improve the farmers' condition in their respective projects.

Implications: The extension managers need to consult with the EOs at the municipal level to discuss the challenges encountered by the farmers and to confirm the types of training that will be relevant on that particular moment. The extension managers should involve the EOs by seeking their inputs regarding the goals for the training and the types of activities they would like.

The pie chart (see Figure 3) below reveals that of the 10 sampled food security projects, 6 are involved in vegetable farming; 3 are involved in both vegetable and poultry farming while 1 is involved in goat farming. The DoA through HRD should give vegetable, goat and poultry production a priority when providing training to the 7 EOs. Marketing and Financial Management should be compulsory to all of them as indicated above.

Figure 3: Types of sampled projects



4.4 Extension Officers' perspective on the training programs

4.4.1 Educational qualification

The EOs' educational qualifications show that majority of the EOs have B. Tech. The other officials have not improved their qualifications since they passed their old diploma in Agriculture (see Table 4.2 below and Table 4.1). The Limpopo Provincial Department of Agriculture (LPDoA) has introduced the Extension Recovery Plan whereby the EOs are provided with the bursaries to update their qualifications in line with the norms and standards (LDoA, 2007:8).

It has been indicated that the EOs were feeling rejected for many years and the introduction of the Extension Recovery Plan will energize and bring new hope to them.

Table 4.2: Academic qualifications of the Extension Officers

Title	Grade 12	Diploma in Agriculture	B.Tech in Agricultural Management	Hons. Agribusiness Management
Extension Officer :A			X	
Extension Officer :B			X	
Extension Officer :C				X
Extension Officer: D			X	
Extension Officer :E			X	
Extension Officer :F		x		
Extension Officer :G		x		
TOTAL	0	2	4	1

Table 4.1 (see page 32) and Table 4.2 above show that the majority of the EOs have B. Tech as their educational qualifications. There are some officials who did not bother to improve their qualifications since they passed their old diploma in Agriculture. This would in one way or another affect the competency of the EO's in as far as sharing the information with the farmers are concerned. This concurs with the findings of Oladele, et al. (2010:97) who reported that the acquisition of a higher level of education would improve the competence and skills of the EOs and this would benefit the farmers.

4.4.2 Working Experience

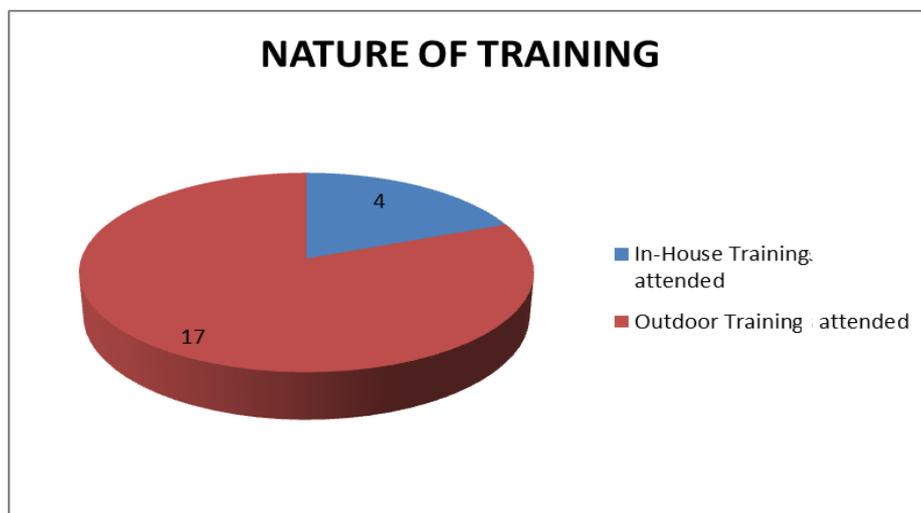
Table 4.3 on working experience reveal that the EOs' experience ranges from a minimum of 3 years to a maximum of 38 years. Therefore, the average number in terms of years of working experience is 18. Since they have a long working experience, they are expected to have attended several technical training programmes which could have empowered them to address the technical challenges which the beneficiaries are encountering on a daily basis.

Table 4.3: Working experience of the Extension Officers

Title	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26 years and above
Extension Officer :A						X
Extension Officer :B				X		
Extension Officer :C	x					
Extension Officer: D				x		
Extension Officer :E	x					
Extension Officer: F					x	
Extension Officer :G						X
TOTAL	2	0	0	2	1	2

The pie chart (Figure 4) below reveals that most of the training which the EOs attended were outdoor (17) and 4 were attended in-house. This shows that the department is trying its best to make it a point that its officials do get some exposure visits to go and learn more outside the work environment.

Figure 4: The in-house and outdoor training attended by the Extension Officers (EOs)



4.4.3 The difference in conducting the training sessions

Almost all the EOs could not differentiate by explaining in detail the presentation, content and relevance of the training sessions attended in-house and the ones attended outside the work environment. They just explained in one word, for example, good, relevant, etc.

Respondent A's response about the training she attended in-house:

Presentation in-house: The subject matter was well arranged

Content in-house: It was clear and understandable

Relevance in-house: It was relevant and job related

Presentation outside work environment: The subject matter was well arranged

(Female participant A with 26 years of experience)

Respondent C's response about the training he attended outside work environment:

Outside work environment: Presentation Goat Management- Good

Content Goat Management-Good

Relevance Goat Management- Relevant

Presentation Veld Management- Good

Content Veld Management-Good

Relevance Veld Management-Relevant

(Female participant C with 3 years of experience)

During data collection, the researcher discovered that the EOs were not happy to answer questions which needed them to explain their views in detail. Their main challenge was to express themselves in English. The researcher took it for granted that they are experienced professionals and communicating in English will make them feel comfortable. The managers responsible for supervising the EOs should make sure that the attendees offer a presentation to his/her co-workers about the training session attended. This will improve their communication skills and will also make them to be committed to their training and not going there as an outing.

4.4.4 Benefits of training

The respondent F who had only attended the computer literacy twice in three years had acquired the skills of operating a computer, retrieving and saving the information. Yes, this is benefiting both the EOs and the farmers because the EOs will be able to access more information from the internet to share with the farmers.

4.4.5. Improvement of daily duties

Respondents B and G have indicated that the training received have assisted them to be able to take soil samples and to analyze the results for the farmers.

Respondent B stated that:

She is able to take soil samples and to analyze the results.

(Female participant B with 16 years of experience)

Respondent G mentioned that:

He can analyze the soil and advice the farmers to apply the fertilizers and pesticides accordingly. (Female participant G with 38 years of experience).

The researcher was literally at the two projects attached to respondents B and G collecting the data. The farmers attached to respondents B and G indicated that there are some crops like carrots, cabbage, etc., which cannot grow on their soil and they do not know the reason. They further stated that the EOs took the soil samples for analysis long ago and they have not received the results to date.

If the respondents B and G have indicated that they can analyze the results of the soil samples what is it that is hindering them to give the farmers the response about the problems regarding their soil. They know that if the farmers are unable to cultivate some of the crops in their projects, this is seriously retarding their progress. This is an urgent matter which needed speedy attention. The farmers have explained that when they ask their EOs how far are they with the results they tell them that they are sent to the laboratory and they are also waiting for the response.

It is obvious that the EOs are not analyzing the soil on their own whereas they have attended the soil analysis training but depending on some other officials to give them the results. The farmers burning issues like the results of their soil which is affecting their production should be given urgent attention by the EOs or else the farmers will lose confidence in them. The EOs should also be encouraged to apply the skills acquired from the training for the benefit of the farmers.

Respondent C has indicated that she is demonstrating the skills received from training such as dipping and feeding of chickens to the farmers. In all the projects that the researcher visited for data collection, all the farmers indicated that the EOs are only explaining to them what to do in their projects and none of them is demonstrating to them how to implement the tasks. Some of the responses from the EOs are not really honest and this gives some suspicions if they are really sharing the skills acquired from training with the farmers.

4.4.6 Impact on personal development

Respondent E stated that:

After attending the training on Communication & Rural Development, her communication skills has improved and she is able to address the farmers and motivate them to hold meetings to discuss the project affairs.

(Female participant E with 4 years of experience)

According to respondent E, she is now confident to stand in front of people to make presentations.

All the seven respondents indicated that the training had impact on their personal development and this is contradicting with what the researcher has observed at the projects. For example, the farmers attached to respondents E and G stated the opposite of what is mentioned by their EOs. During data collection the researcher struggled to convince their farmers to cooperate. They undermine the visitors coming to their projects except their EOs because they rely on them in as far as guidance is concerned. The very same EOs indicating that their communication skills have improved should start putting their houses in order at their respective

projects and people will be convinced that the training attended have an impact on their personal development and that they have also impacted their farmers.

4.4.7 Knowledge transfer

Respondents C, D, and G stressed that they demonstrate their training attended to the farmers. For example,

Respondent C attended training on broiler chicken management, goat management and veld management mentioned that:

The training encouraged her to work hard and to demonstrate to the farmers about the skills she has acquired from the training.

(Female participant C with 3 years of experience).

Respondent D received training on milk goat, veld management and bee keeping. and he stated that:

He always imparts the information to the farmers through demonstrations.

(Male participant D with 20 years of experience).

Respondent G attended training on soil analysis, project management and computer basic skills and he alluded that:

He could impart the knowledge to the farmers by demonstrating how to record their produce and running of their project finances.

(Male participant G with 38 years of experience).

As indicated above, the farmers attached to the projects in question have explained to the researcher during data collection that they never received any demonstrations from the EOs. They just explain the teachings to them and they implement on their own.

The following are the responses from project beneficiaries F=5 members, G=6, I=5 and J=6 confirming that the EOs do not demonstrate the tasks they are supposed to perform in their projects for them:

When the EOs have visited them they only tell them what to do in as far as their vegetables, chickens and goats are concerned. They do not go with them in the projects to demonstrate to them.

(Project beneficiaries from projects F, with 11 years of experience, G=3, I=13 and J=10).

Respondent B has shown that she has taught the farmers how to operate the computer. All the farmers visited by the researcher including the ones attached to respondent B do not own any computer. It has been alluded by the respondents C, E, F and G that they have taught their farmers the skills of recording their produce and finances daily.

The farmers' recording is not done daily because they are not producing or receiving money on a daily basis. Most of the farmers' recording books are confusing and strangers/visitors cannot follow them without the beneficiaries' explanation. There are several cases whereby the farmers themselves are unable to explain their own recordings. This is a confirmation that the EOs are not demonstrating their teachings to the farmers. They are not sitting down with them to check their record books in order to assist them to rectify the mistakes done. The commitment of the EOs to the farmers' project activities should be taken seriously because it can bring drastic increases in productivity.

There is a very serious challenge in some of the projects which the researcher is researching on. Some of the beneficiaries are struggling to produce enough whereas others are doing very well. The ones struggling are affected by the water pumping machines that are stolen and the natural disasters destroying their crops. Some of the farmers producing enough, their produce are stolen by the thieves and they cannot afford hiring the security.

4.5 Summary of the perceptions of the Extension Officers on the impact of their training on poverty alleviation

The EOs indicated that the training enables them to analyse the soil for the farmers and they provide them with the relevant information on what type of the fertilizers and pesticides to apply for their productivity to increase. However, these findings are contradicted by the farmers as indicated in the text. Some of the farmers stated that the vegetables like carrots and cabbage are struggling to grow on their soil and they do not know the reason (see page 40). The EOs took the soil samples from the projects for analysis long ago and when the farmers request for some results they tell them that they are also waiting for the response from the laboratory. The EOs were supposed to apply the knowledge and skills acquired from training by analysing the soil on their own for the beneficiaries, they could have long discovered the reasons why some of the vegetables are stubborn to grow in some of the projects and the problem could have been addressed.

The EOs have stated in the text that they have benefitted from the training because when they share the information to the beneficiaries they make it a point that they demonstrate the skills they have acquired from training to the farmers. In contrast, the farmers alluded that the EOs are only explaining to them what to do in their projects and none of them had taken the efforts of demonstrating to them how to implement the tasks (see page 43). Some of the farmers also mentioned that they sometimes request for some advice from the companies where they purchase their inputs, for example, NTK, Buyers, etc. (see page 49).

The EOs alluded that the training has improved their communication skills and they could address and motivate the farmers (see page 41). One might raise a question when are they addressing and motivating the farmers whereas the farmers indicated that they do not visit their projects. During data collection, the researcher has discovered that almost all the EOs were struggling to express themselves in English (see page 41) because they were uncomfortable to answer questions which needed them to explain their views in detail. This shows that there are still some loopholes in as far as their communication skills are concerned.

The EOs who attended the computer training have stated that they can retrieve more information from the internet to share with the farmers. This is contradicting with the farmers views because they have mentioned that some of the EOs do not pay them a visit and they depend in applying the trial and error method to their projects (see page 46). If the EOs do not visit the farmers' projects then it means the computer training which they have attended and the information which they are claiming that they are retrieving from the internet does not benefit the beneficiaries

The EOs alluded that the training has enabled them to demonstrate to the farmers on how to record their production and finances accordingly. During data collection, the researcher has witnessed that the farmers are struggling in as far as recording is concerned. Their recording method is just confusing to such an extent that the farmers themselves cannot interpret it (see page 42).

4.6 Farmers' Perspective on the Impact of Training

Focus Group interviews were conducted with the 54 beneficiaries attached to 10 food security projects. Each group consisted of 4-8 project members. The interview took place at the focus groups respective projects at the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. A question was posed to the farmers whether they are receiving any regular advice from the EOs. The responses were mixed.

4.6.1 Regularity of training

According to the beneficiaries from projects A=5 members, B=4, C=5, D=5, F=5, G=6, H=5 and I=5, they indicated that:

The EOs does not give the training regularly, sometimes they take time not visiting their projects.

(Project beneficiaries from project A with 3 years of experience, B=14, C=5, D=6, F=11, G=3, H=5 and I =13).

The beneficiaries also alleged sometimes when they are in need of the EOs and phone them, they at times do not come indicating that they were busy with some of the tasks at the office.

In contrast to above views, the beneficiaries from projects E=8 members and J=6 had this to say:

Yes, the advice from the EOs is regular. They are visiting the project beneficiaries very frequently to give them advice regarding their produce. They do not miss their visits to the projects.

(Project beneficiaries E, with 7 years of experience and project beneficiaries J, with 10 years of experience).

The project beneficiaries from project C= 5 members, F=5 and G=6 also mentioned that:

If the EOs do not visit their projects they do apply the trial and error method, sometimes they do succeed but sometimes they fail.

(Project beneficiaries C, with 5 years of experience, F=11 and G=3).

Furthermore the beneficiaries from project F=5 members, G=6, I=5 and J=6 also highlighted the fact that:

When the EOs have visited them they only tell them what to do in as far as their vegetables, chickens and goats are concerned. They do not go with them in the projects to demonstrate to them.

(Project beneficiaries F, with 11 years of experience, G=3, I=13 and J=10).

The following are the responses from project beneficiaries F=5 members, G=6, I=5 and J=6 confirming that the EOs do not demonstrate the tasks they are supposed to perform in their projects for them. When they have visited them they only tell them what to do in as far as their vegetables, goats and chickens are concerned but do not go with them in the project to demonstrate to them what ought to be done.

The EOs are provided with the demonstrations at the training they do attend, therefore, they should do likewise when they visit the beneficiaries at their respective projects.

Core competencies play a major role in the successful implementation of agricultural extension programs. Woodburne and Wamukoya (1997) found that EOs were incompetent regarding the subject matter. There is a possibility that the EOs decide

to depend much on theoretical work because they are not competent in practical work and are scared that they will be humiliated by the farmers if they commit some mistakes.

The required core competencies include knowledge of animal science, an understanding of business in the context of tacit and indigenous knowledge, and the ability to identify existing and new market opportunities within the set of constraints. Competencies in agricultural extension further include knowledge of farm and information management in relation to vegetable and livestock farming. In addition, computer literacy and social, negotiation and communication skills are required.

The beneficiaries' discussions from project A=5 members, D=5, F=5 and G=6 also revealed the fact that:

When the EOs are not available and they are in need of them, they do phone, present their problems telephonically and receive the advice immediately. If the EOs do not have the response at that moment, they do come to the project at the time which suit them indicating that their work program was tight.

(Project beneficiaries A, with 3 years of experience, D=6, F=11 and G=3).

It will be better if the interaction between the EOs and the beneficiaries can be face to face so that the EOs can be able to see and understand the problems encountered by the beneficiaries in order to assist in resolving them.

They also noted that if the EOs are engaged, she would make an appointment with them to come and assist them at their project.

Appointments at designated times are not helpful either because the situation may be dire to require urgent attention. Terblanche (2005:178) stresses that the first step of participation should start between the EO and the farmer on the project. On-the-job or specific training is an important source of productivity growth. The beneficiaries' job is at the project. Therefore, the Extension Officer should make some demonstrations at the projects and also provide the beneficiaries the opportunity to practice what they have learnt to confirm that they have grasped the

subject matter for their production to improve. According to Semana (1999:111), the success of farmer participation in Uganda depended on “starting where people are and learning from their ways.... walking and working with them.” The first step to participate starts between the extension officer and the farmer in the project. If there is no partnership which depends on cooperation and mutual trust between the extension officer and the farmer, then they will struggle to participate.

4.6.2 Skills Acquired

The beneficiaries from the projects E=8 members and J=6 indicated that:

They understand the opening of the furrows so that they could plant on a straight line inside the furrows. They can measure and do the spacing between the crops when cultivating for their crops to relax and grow properly. They do the watering of the crops preferably late in the afternoon for the moisture not to evaporate easily. They water their garden before applying the spray so that the pesticides should not affect their crops. They are able to compare the prices with the outside market before pricing their own produce so that they should not price their produce higher or lower.

(Project beneficiaries E, with 7 years of experience and J=10).

This is really showing that there are some project beneficiaries who have acquired the skills from the advice provided by their EOs.

The beneficiaries from projects E=8 members, H=5 and I=5 have acquired the skill of pest controlling method. They indicated that:

They can follow the direction of mixing the dip before applying it. They are aware that the dip mixture should be mixed now; make it a point that it gets finished now because it does expire.

(Project beneficiaries E, with 7 years of experience, H=5, and I=13)

Some of the skills acquired by the beneficiaries from the EO's are indigenous in nature. For example, Project A=5 members mentioned that:

During soil preparation, when they come across the worms, they put them in one container, boil the water and kill them with hot water and throw them away so that

they should not come back to destroy their plants (Project beneficiary A, with 3 years of experience).

The beneficiaries from projects A=5 members, D=5, E=8 , F=5 , G=6 , H=5 , I=5 and J= 6 asserted that they have acquired the self-reliance skills:

With all the skills acquired, they are able to work independently without consulting with the EO.

(Project beneficiaries A with 3 years of experience, D=6, E=7, F=11, G=3, H=5, I=13 and J=10).

In contrast to the above views, the beneficiaries from project B=4 members and C=5 explained that:

There are no skills acquired from the EOs because they totally do not visit their projects. The skills they have are acquired from the nearby farmers and from the farmers' day they use to attend. They also request some advice from the companies where they purchase their inputs, for example, NTK, Buyers, etc.

(Project beneficiaries B with 14 years of experience and C=5).

If the skills that the beneficiaries have acquired are applied appropriately to their projects and help them to increase their production but at the end of the day got spoiled (see responses below from beneficiaries of project B, D, F, I and J), this is a waste of time, energy and resources.

It is obvious that only the beneficiaries from projects I=5 members and J=6 have made mention of marketing as an issue whereas the other 8 projects have not said anything. It is against this background that the researcher feels that this matter needs attention.

According to the study by Yoba (1997), it will be difficult for the farmers to graduate and become fully-fledged farmers without access to the necessary sources of information, which will empower them as independent decision makers and adopters of appropriate technologies whereas they are still participating under poor marketing information circumstances.

Inadequate information provision is the problem widespread in almost all the districts in LP, more especially in the very remote areas. For example, some areas of the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality in LP have virtually no telephone networks, neither do they have mobile phone signals and are located far from the service providers. This frustrates some of the beneficiaries who manage to produce enough.

They are struggling with the means of communication to arrange with the market. For example, the beneficiaries from projects B= 4 members, D= 5, F= 5, I= 5 and J=6 indicate that:

They sometimes do become fortunate and produce enough but their produce get rotten due to lack of the market. But there are other times where the insects and the natural disasters do destroy their crops and due to lack of money to purchase the pesticides they ended up not harvesting.

(Project beneficiaries B, with 14 years of experience, D=6, F=11, I=13 and J=10).

Another fact emanating from the study was that there is a backdrop of some of the farmers struggling to market their produce. The farmers also confirmed that there is little improvement in their lifestyles as they remain poorer than before due to lack of marketing infrastructure. In contrast to the above findings, Asuamah (1992:160) and Schwalbach, et al. (2001: 201) reported that the small-scale farmers in Limpopo Province and Nigeria keep their livestock as investment and for sale when they have an emergency for cash. This shows that they are not under pressure of the market because they sell only when there is a need.

In contrast to the above views, the beneficiaries from project C=5 members and E=8 explained that:

They do manage to produce enough and experience has taught them to look for the market for themselves and they do succeed.

(Project beneficiaries C, with 5 years of experience and E= 7).

4.7 Assessment of the Impact of Training and Development on Service Delivery

4.7.1 Impact of skills acquired to their projects

Project beneficiaries stated that they have discovered that when they have cleaned and scrapped their chicken houses in advance before accommodating them, this assist them to control the mortality rate. Their new birds are not easily affected by the diseases of the previous ones.

They do provide their chickens with the appropriate feeds at the right age and this make them to grow accordingly. When they call their clients to come and purchase their produce after harvesting it really makes them to have reliable customers to support them. Their clients come with vans to buy in bulk so that they could go and sell to their neighbouring villages. The EO too used to invite the farmers from the nearby villages to come and learn from these project beneficiaries on how to take care of the chickens. The skills that some of the beneficiaries have acquired have a good impact on their projects because in some of the seasons they could harvest more provided the thieves and the natural disaster did not interrupt with their produce.

The beneficiaries have affirmed that the skills acquired do have an impact on their respective projects but the funny part of it is that their life style is static; they still remain poorer than before due to lack of marketing infrastructure.

Apart from the key environmental constraints, such as the lack of fencing, watering and stock water, the efficient participation of small-scale farmers in marketing of their produce is inhibited by the fragmented and discrepant infrastructure available in rural areas. The roads are mainly gravel and severely eroded, and this makes access to the production areas difficult. According to Kgantsi and Mokoene (1997), lack of properly maintained roads, telephones, fencing, water and electricity makes it very costly for farmers to run their farming operations.

4.7.2 Establishment of backyard projects

The beneficiaries proclaimed that they are unable to extend their knowledge acquired at the project to their households by establishing the backyard projects because they spend much of their time at the projects even during the weekend. When they arrive home during the evening they are tired. They further stressed that the municipality is refusing them to water their gardens due to lack of water around their areas. The Department of Health is also refusing them to keep the chickens in their yards to avoid spreading the diseases in the community. Some of the households who had some chickens got discouraged and gave up.

The government has promised to join efforts to reduce poverty and hunger in the rural areas. They have promised to provide the rural communities with water to make it a point that they do maintain their backyard gardens so that they could have food at home. It is confusing because the very same government is the one which is promoting the backyard gardens for people to be food secured. When the beneficiaries were complaining about the issue of not having water and Department of Health refusing them to keep the livestock in their households, it shows that the government is somehow contradicting itself and this is really confusing and discouraging the community members. The rural communities will own the projects but if the government is ignoring the issue of providing them with water, they will remain food insecure.

The beneficiaries from projects A=5 members, C=5, D=5 and E= 8 indicated that:

Yes, they do have the backyard gardens in their households and this helps them to feed their families. They are planting the same produce they are cultivating in their project so that they could be able to apply the same skills acquired from the project. When they have harvested enough, they do sell the surplus and they are benefiting. They also extend the knowledge acquired at the project to encourage their neighbours to start the backyard gardens in their households. When their neighbours are in need of assistance in their gardens, they do consult with the project beneficiaries for advice. They do have confidence in them because they could see that they are sometimes doing well in their own backyard gardens

(Project beneficiaries A, with 3 years of experience, C=5, D=6 and E=7).

In contrast to the above view, the beneficiaries from project B=4 members, F=5, G=6, H=5, I=5 and J=6 stated that:

They are unable to extend their knowledge acquired at the projects to their households by establishing the backyard gardens because of lack of water in their respective villages and the unfavourable conditions of keeping their livestock at their households.

(Project beneficiaries B, with 14 years of experience, F=11, G=3, H=5, I=13 and J=10).

The beneficiaries from project H declared that initially their livestock were taken care of at home before receiving the site for their project. After receiving the site, they relocated to their project. Experience has taught them that the situation of keeping the animals at their households is not conducive. Due to lack of grazing or a shepherd to take care of them, they indicated that they ended up eating the crops of the neighbours who do not have fences, they eat the leftovers of food thrown away by members of the households, they eat plastics, drink laundry water mixed with soap, and the boys are ill-treating them by throwing stones at them.

Some of the neighbours are allergic to animals and this strained their relationships. These are some of the reasons that make them not to keep livestock at home because they ended up being in a poor condition.

The livestock auctioneers and speculators often raise concerns that they cannot pay competitive prices for animals that are in poor conditions or not ready for the market (Luppnow, 2003). Poor condition of livestock is also attributed to inadequate grazing and the extreme degradation of the natural resources. Lack of suppliers of important agricultural inputs for livestock farmers, such as vaccines and feed supplements, and common problems of genetic inferiority of animals further reduces the desirability of animals. The small-scale farmers do struggle to maintain their livestock to reach the standard required by the market due to the above mentioned problems.

4.7.3 Income generation

The beneficiaries from projects A=5 members, B=4, D=5, F=5, G=6, H=5, I=5 and J=6 indicated that:

Their projects are not able to generate income every month. They are affected by the waiting period of three months. Surprising enough, if they try to follow the planting calendar by planting many vegetables, so that their harvest could take place monthly, their crops grow at the same time even though they are cultivated at different times. Some beneficiaries stated that carrots and cabbage do not grow on their soil and they do not know the reasons. They are also affected by lack of water at their projects, thieves and natural disasters destroying their crops.

(Project beneficiaries A, with 3 years of experience, B=14, D=6, F=11, G=3, H=5, I=13 and J=10).

In contrast to the above view, the beneficiaries from projects C=5 members and E=8 indicated that:

Yes, the project is generating the income every month. Since the project beneficiaries started working in this project, they have been getting their salary every month and their secret is that they cultivate the correct vegetables at the right time and this helps them to manage the three months waiting period easily.

They also can manage their livestock properly and are able to sell them in bulk. They are able to harvest every month and they do have the market.

(Project beneficiaries C, with 5 years of experience and E=7).

A study conducted by Manyeli (2003) on income-generating projects in Port Elizabeth revealed that members were not generating income. Kaw (2006) reported that the major constraints faced by income-generating projects in LP were misuse of funds, lack of skills and competency of members in implementation, lack of water, poor record keeping and operating outside the framework of their business plan.

The beneficiaries from project I=5 members further proclaimed that:

Another reason contributing to their project not to generate any income every month is because of the competition from another new chicken project established in the next village. Most of the neighbouring villages that were supporting them did not mind taking a journey to come to their project but now they are supporting the new broiler project because it is closer to them and are no longer walking a long distance.

(Project beneficiaries I, with 13 years of experience).

Before the new broiler project was established, the beneficiaries of project “I” were able to generate money monthly. They are now unable to hire the transport to go around selling their produce due to lack of money. When they try to hire the transport for themselves in order to sell, the transport owners disappoint them and do not pitch up. Their vegetables would get rotten and their chickens will drain their pockets because if they are grown up, they consume a lot of feeds. Now they have stopped selling the chickens due to the challenges they are encountering. They are now depending on the vegetable garden which is not doing well due to the damaged water pump.

Lack of marketing facilities such as transport is one of the myriad of factors that imposes a serious constraint on small-scale farmers’ ability to market their chickens, livestock and vegetables. According to the studies by Bailey et al., (1999) and Sartorius von Bach (1992) transport is the most important weakness in the marketing system in Kenya and Namibia.

The supermarkets and wholesalers’ strict requirements relating to volumes, quality, food safety systems, consistency and year round supply make it difficult for the small-scale producers to supply them. There is an increasing likelihood that the small-scale producers (especially Black emerging farmers), that are now entering commercial agriculture after year of social, political and economic exclusion, can once again be excluded and marginalized as supermarket chains tend to favour established and larger producers that can comply with their requirements (Louw et al., 2008:249).

4.7.4 Taking care of the family

The beneficiaries from projects A=5 members and B=4 stated that:

They are able to take care of their families with the money they are receiving from the projects only if they have not being disturbed by the natural disasters, thieves and the insects which are destroying their crops.

The beneficiaries from projects C=5 members, D=5, E=5 and H=5 mentioned that:

Yes, they are able to take care of their families with the money received from the projects. They buy groceries, pay school fees and they purchase the building materials one by one until they start with the building project in their households.

(Project beneficiaries C, with 5 years of experience, D=6, E=7 and H=5).

The project founder indicated that she managed to take two children to university with the project money and they have completed their studies. She also stated that she has purchased furnisher like fridge, wardrobe, etc., with the salary from the project.

In contrast to the above view, project beneficiaries from project F=5 members, G=6, I=5 and J=6 indicated that:

The money they are receiving from the project is not able to take care of their families because the profit is too little. The beneficiaries acknowledged that they use the money to pay the project electricity, purchase the inputs, hire the tractor for ploughing; servicing the water pump and the little money that is left is taken to the bank for maintaining the project. They have affirmed that at the moment they do not get any salary from the project.

(Project beneficiaries F, with 11 years of experience, G=3, I=13 and J=10).

The beneficiaries who cannot afford to take care of their families with the money from the projects are sometimes borrowing the groceries from the shop owners or money from their children who are working and refund them at a later stage just for the family members to have food.

4.7.5 Land underutilization

The beneficiaries proclaimed that they are not able to use all the land allocated to them because of inadequate funds to purchase the inputs to cover the whole area and to hire a tractor to debush. Other beneficiaries stated that they lack the funds to buy a fence to secure the land they are currently not using.

It would be difficult to irrigate all the land with hosepipes because when they move it to another site, the watered area becomes dry quickly, they do not have the drippers to maintain the project. They are now using one borehole. For them to irrigate the whole area, an extra borehole is needed to supply enough water. If they use all the land, their electricity bill would go high.

Access to sufficient water for watering by smallholder farmers is a primary constraint. This posed a restriction in terms of expanding their production. Farmers are using the boreholes, river and stream water to irrigate their crops. For example, there are some projects which are partially funded with fencing material and boreholes but without electric pumping machines and irrigation systems by DoA through Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program (CASP) funds for on-farm infrastructure. Partial funding is a fruitless exercise, especially for poor smallholder farmers who do not have the financial resources to complete the on-farm infrastructure provided by the government.

The beneficiaries from project A=5 members, B=4, C=5, D=5,E=8, F=5, I=5 and J=6 indicated that:

They are unable to use the project hectors allocated to them because the electricity bill will increase for watering; extra borehole will also be needed, they will need extra inputs and manpower to cover the whole area.

(Project beneficiaries A, with 3 years of experience, B=14, C=5, D=6, E=7, F=11, I=13 and J=10).

The beneficiaries from projects G=6 members and H=5 mentioned that the sites they have occupied is not officially theirs. They have occupied the area temporarily.

(Project beneficiaries G, with 3 years of experience and H=5).

The chief and his headmen should allocate permanent sites to the project beneficiaries to encourage them to work hard and to enhance a sense of ownership in them.

4.7.6 Success of the project

It is indicated above that there are some of the projects that are sometimes doing well in some of the seasons provided the thieves, natural disasters, etc., have not interrupted with their produce. Those beneficiaries proclaimed that their secret for making their projects sometimes to be successful is hardworking; commitment to their work and unity encourages them not to lose courage.

They further indicated that they give themselves time to pay attention to their animals, tolerance of nursing them when they are sick and purchasing and feeding them with lucerne during drought period. They asserted that they have passion and dedication to their work, for example, if their crops are damaged by the hail or heat, they do not give up, but cultivate them again with the hope that one day they will grow properly and be able to harvest.

Some of the project beneficiaries stated that their secret for making their projects sometimes to be successful is that they respect the advice given to them by the EOs when they have given themselves time to visit them.

They also indicated that they respect one another and accept the instruction from the co-workers. They are faithful and not stealing from the projects.

4.7.7 Project Retardation

It is obvious that even the beneficiaries who are trying do well; they do have some problems they are encountering in as far as their projects are concerned. The project beneficiaries indicated that the retardation of the progress in their projects are caused by absenteeism of some of the project beneficiaries due to some frequent family commitments. This discourages those who are coming on a daily basis. Lack of tractor to plough on their project is a challenge because they are unable to plant some crops on that piece of land. The issue of some beneficiaries disrespecting one another is a problem because it discourages other project members. The beneficiaries stated that they are troubled by the insects which have developed resistance to the pesticides and they end up not dying.

The natural disaster is also a threat because the frost and the heat are frequently destroying their vegetables. They do not have a shade/net for protecting their crops

and animals from being attacked by the natural disasters. Lack of water in the project is a very serious problem. The project beneficiaries asserted that their crops are getting rotten; they are confused because they are unable to identify the types of diseases attacking them so that they could get the correct pesticide.

Lack of the grazing area is a drawback because some of the animals are weighed before they are bought. If they are weak and light they lose interest of buying them. They do not have a borehole but depend on the nearest river. Lack of transport for delivering their produce is a problem because they end up getting spoiled. Their produce are stolen due to lack of money for hiring security. They need a dam for watering the garden so that they could be relieved from paying the electricity bill.

4.8 Deputy Managers' perspective

The Deputy Managers with B.Tech Degree are supposed to further their studies since they are on the same qualification with the EOs. The Deputy Managers as the supervisors to the EOs are expected to be more qualified than the EOs so that they could be able to guide and motivate them to service the farmers accordingly.

The Deputy Managers' experience in supervising the EOs is good because they are quiet aware of the challenges the farmers are experiencing and they can advise and encourage the EOs on how to intervene and give assistance to the beneficiaries in order to increase productivity.

One of the Deputy Managers stated that the rationale for sending the EOs to attend work-related training is to improve service delivery at their work place. He indicated another reason that:

It is important to capacitate the EO's so that they could be able to service the farmers. So that they could be able to link the farmers with the relevant service providers for purchasing the inputs like pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals for controlling both internal and external parasites.

(Male participant C with 6 years of experience).

One of the food security Deputy Managers alluded that the work-related training is necessary because it improves service delivery at their work place. The three food

security Deputy Managers alluded to the fact that the work-related training is in the hands of the Human Resource Development (HRD) section and they are also controlled by the funds available.

The Performance Indicators (PI) and the skill audit are submitted to HRD but the training is very limited. The attendance of the training is not consistent because two years can pass without any EO attending any training. The Deputy Managers do not have a say regarding this issue.

The respondents A and B indicated that the EOs are furthering their studies and they enrol in Agricultural related courses that are based on their work-related duties. This will equip them with more knowledge to improve the farmers' projects.

LDA is giving the EOs the support they could for the EOs to be able to transfer their training to the farmers.

Respondent A emphasized that:

The EOs translate the training received to the farmers' mother tongue and to their level and by visiting their projects to teach them. Sometimes the resources that were used at the training the farmers do not have, but the DoA assisted by supplying them to the farmers for the EOs to impart the information effectively.

(Female participant A with 1 year 6 months of experience).

Respondent B stated that the farmers should be given the opportunity to participate to encourage them to own their projects. They should feel free to share their challenges with the EOs. There should be a mutual trust between the EO's and the farmers and they should know that the information from the EOs is authentic.

Respondent A alluded that when the EOs become confident and have passion of visiting the projects then it means the training was relevant. When the beneficiaries want to know more about what the EOs are imparting to them this shows the relevance of the training. When the production in some of the projects is improving, it shows that the training is relevant.

Respondent C mentioned that the department should intervene for the farmers to be able to access credit, access land and the water rights.

Respondent B emphasized the issue of working independently. He further indicated that if the beneficiaries, for example, are five in number, the land allocated to them should be divided into five equal gardens so that each and every beneficiary can work independently on his/her own garden. The beneficiaries will work hard to have better results and this will prevent the projects from collapsing because the main cause is that the lazy ones drag their feet and the hard workers get discouraged and give up.

4.9 Key Informants' Perspectives

The key informants' information is important because the researcher also wanted to get the views of the community leaders on the performance of the projects as well as their impact.

4.9.1 Findings and data interpretation

Almost all the 5 key informants knew the projects some time ago during their inception. The 5 key informants confirmed that the community members are benefiting from the project. They are no longer spending the money for transport travelling to town to purchase expensive vegetables.

They further indicated that buying the vegetables at the local project is convenient because they can even send their children to the projects because they are nearer. The vegetables prices at the project are flexible as compared to town due to the fact that the beneficiaries can also accommodate families who are not working. Participant D stressed that the project beneficiaries used to deliver meat and vegetables to their clients during normal days and even during their functions for the community members who do not have the manpower to slaughter and deliver the meat being ready to be cooked.

The informant A mentioned that:

The community is benefiting from the projects because they are flexible with their prices to accommodate the families headed by children, pensioners and sometimes they do donate to the orphans.

The informant B and C explained that:

The community members are benefiting from the project because they save money for travelling to town to purchase expensive vegetables.

The informant D stated that the community is benefiting from the projects by alluding that:

The beneficiaries also assist the community members who cannot afford to take care of their flock on their own by accepting them to their project to be taken care of by the project beneficiaries and they charge them a certain amount per month for offering the service.

The informant E explained that:

The competition in town is high and the vegetables are expensive. Most of the community members will not afford them since they are not working.

4.9.2 Support of the projects by the community members

If there is production in the projects, the community members support the projects by purchasing the vegetables to use in their households on a daily basis. They also purchase the vegetables at the projects in bulk during their parties, weddings and funerals. Key informant B mentioned that some of the community members buy the vegetables from the project in bulk so that they could sell to the nearby communities in order to get the profit to take care of their families. If the beneficiaries can happen not to produce anything due to the constraints they are encountering in their projects, the community members become frustrated.

No, the community members cannot survive without the project. Key informant C emphasized that the local community members together with the neighbouring communities are able to walk to the project without spending the money for

transport. In town, the competition is high and the prices are escalating now and then. The vulnerable families will not afford them.

Key informant D mentioned that the beneficiaries give the community members who cannot afford some produce on account and they pay at the end of the month. Key informant A alluded that the project beneficiaries are flexible with their prices. They can accommodate the families headed by children, pensioners and sometimes donate to them free of charge. Key informant B explained that the prices at the project are flexible and affordable as compared to the ones in town.

The community members are satisfied with the production of the project because the vegetables and their animals look attractive. They usually cannot afford to produce enough due to lack of water, theft, natural disasters destroying their crops, etc. Key informant E stated that the project used to satisfy the community members with its production but currently the project has collapsed due to lack of water and the market.

The informants got the information from the beneficiaries that they are visited and trained by the DoA. The informants never met these officials from DoA due to the reason that they are attached to some committees in the village as headmen and some at the municipalities as committee members. They have their own daily duties to attend to as representatives of the community.

Informant E stated that Department of Health (DoH) visits the project because they have made some contribution of funds to assist them to start a bakery at the project. DoA gives them the technical support in their garden project and DoH monitor the progress of the bakery.

All the key informants suggested that the challenges which the beneficiaries are encountering be addressed because they are retarding their progress in increasing their production. Most of the challenges indicated by the participants involve money and they are quiet aware that the beneficiaries cannot afford to resolve them on their own. The DoA is their last resort to handle their challenges.

Respondent B stated that:

The beneficiaries work with responsibility applying the skills acquired and understanding that it is their hardwork that will bring food on the table for their families.

Informant C mentioned that the farmers are able to work in the project without any advice from the EOs. They plan their project activities a day in advance and this make them to work having a goal to achieve.

Informant D stressed that the beneficiaries have discovered on their own the market for the tree called “Moringa”, which assists to heal the chronic diseases such as sugar diabetes, high blood pressure, etc., and they planted it in bulk in their project. This shows innovative mind.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Although the democratic government of South Africa (SA) made access to resources possible for poor South Africans by introducing development projects, there seems to be a number of challenges facing communities in terms of using land for a productive agricultural purpose. In Limpopo Province (LP), the smallholder farms are located mostly in the former homeland areas and they cover approximately 30% of the provincial land surface (Department of Agriculture, 1995:13).

Research about this topic has never been done around the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality. The researcher is curious to find out the reasons why are the agricultural poverty alleviation projects around the Lepelle-Nkumpi Municipality remaining stagnant and struggling to alleviate poverty to the farmers whereas the Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDoA) is doing its best to organize the skills development programmes to their Extension Officers (EOs) so that they could be able to take care of the farmers and their projects.

The general objective of the study was to assess the impact of training of EOs on poverty alleviation agricultural projects. However, the specific objectives of the study were: to identify and describe the nature and relevance of the training programs offered to the EOs; to investigate the impact of training on poverty and poverty alleviation projects in terms of service delivery to farmers, and to propose appropriate actions or interventions as may be necessary to improve the impact on service delivery.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents.

The EOs views on the impact of training are positive because they are indicating that they could impart the knowledge acquired from training to the farmers. For example, some mentioned that their communication skills have improved and they can address the farmers and motivate them to hold meetings to discuss the project

affairs, they could demonstrate how to record their produce and running of their project finances, etc. The study reveals that the EOs are happy with the few training they have already attended. The challenge remains that with all the skills acquired from training that they are claiming that they are imparting them to the farmers accordingly; the majority of the farmers are unable to take care of their families because their projects are struggling to do well.

In about 8 projects out of 10, the beneficiaries indicated that the EOs do visit them but do not come regularly (see page 45-47). With the few contacts that they made, the beneficiaries appreciate the good impact. Some of the beneficiaries especially those who have access to water pointed that in some of the seasons they could harvest more provided the thieves and the natural disasters did not interrupt with their produce. The beneficiaries from two projects, B and C (see page 49) strongly mentioned that there is no impact from the training attended by the EOs because they rarely come to visit their projects; therefore they are receiving no teachings from them.

The Deputy Managers alluded that the few training that the EOs have attended have made a difference. They are able to translate the training received to the beneficiaries' mother tongue and to their level so that they could be able to understand the subject matter effectively. This has made some improvements in some of the projects. The Deputy Managers indicated that if the PI's and the skill audit submitted annually to the HRD section by the EOs were properly managed, there would not be limited training in the department and there was going to be drastic improvement in the beneficiaries projects.

The informants reported that the training provided to the EOs have impact because some beneficiaries deliver meat and vegetables from the projects during normal days and during the weddings, funerals, etc., to the community members who do not have the manpower to slaughter and they deliver the meat being ready to be cooked. The informants further stated that some of the community members buy the vegetables from the projects in bulk and they sell to the nearby communities in order to get the profit to take care of their families. The majority of the EOs are women

with a bachelor degree as the highest qualification. The average working experience is about 18 years.

The study reveals that there are some of the EOs who were provided with the training that are relevant to their field of production whereas some were denied that opportunity. A handful of relevant training received by the EOs have managed to make little impact in their respective projects. This is substantiated by the beneficiaries' remarks that they can perform the activities in their projects without being monitored by the EOs, they can cultivate and take care of their crops until they harvest, etc. There are some key training such as soil fertility management and dairy management attended only by one EO out of seven. Amongst the very same seven EOs, there are also some who are in charge of poultry and vegetable projects and they were never given the opportunity to attend the training related to poultry and vegetable production during the three year period mentioned above. They only attended training on different subjects and the very same officials are expected to deliver the service accordingly. Some of the EOs were provided with Bee Keeping training and none of their farmers are farming with bees. DoA need to revise their method of handling the EOs training programmes for the beneficiaries to benefit from the food security projects.

5.2 Conclusions

It can be concluded that of the 14 training courses attended by EOs, computer literacy skills training seems to be the most popular one, with some EOs attending it twice over a period of three years. Some of them have never been given the opportunity to attend agricultural-related training except computer literacy. Only one EO out of seven attended financial management training and in as far as Figure 2 is concerned none had an opportunity to do marketing against a backdrop of some of the farmers struggling to market their produce and to manage their own finances.

The beneficiaries whose EOs were trying to offer them regular advice indicated that they have acquired a lot of skills and they are confident to run their projects without being monitored. The other beneficiaries never received any training from their EOs to such an extent that they requested for assistance from the neighbouring farmers

by sharing the information with them, from the EOs assisting the nearby projects and companies which they support by purchasing the inputs, e.g., NTK, Buyers, etc.

All the beneficiaries indicated that they are offered the training theoretically and none of the EOs once took the efforts of demonstrating the practical work to them.

The respondents indicated that the EOs do offer the training but not regularly. Sometimes the farmers phone the EOs when they are faced with the challenge that needs urgent attention. The EOs will give them advice telephonically to address the problem.

The skills that the beneficiaries have acquired have a good impact on some of their projects because they could harvest more. The beneficiaries have affirmed that the skills acquired do have an impact on their respective projects but, surprisingly, there is little improvement in their lifestyles as they still remain poorer than before due to lack of marketing infrastructure. Lack of marketing facilities, such as transport, is one of the myriad of factors that impose a serious constraint on small-scale farmers' ability to market their chickens, livestock and vegetables.

The nature and relevance of training offered to the EOs need to be revised urgently by the department. If the EOs are complying by indicating annually in their skill audit questionnaire their qualifications, length of experience, line function, employment category and at least five required training needed then what is it that is hindering the department to be accurate in their training programmes. If the PIs and the skill audit were really honoured, the department would not have the problem of offering the training like Bee Keeping to the EOs who are not attached to the farmers farming with Bee Keeping. Key training such as soil fertility management and dairy management would be compulsory to all the EOs. Marketing that is not offered at all to any EOs within three years would not be overlooked.

This gives an impression that DoA is currently failing to do proper allocation of the training provided by the EOs through the Performance Indicators and audit skills which they are submitting annually to HRD section and to capacitate them with key knowledge skills that are crucial to the farmers.

5.3 Recommendations

This study focused on assessing the impact that training offered to the EOs working at the Lepelle -Nkumpi Municipality have on service delivery. Based on the findings and interpretation of the study, the study makes the following recommendations:

- Computer literacy should be combined with the technical agricultural subjects so that the EOs can be equipped from both of them;
- The EOs should be in the planning of the training programs by seeking their inputs regarding the goals for training and the types of activities they would like;
- The interaction between the EOs and the farmers should be face to face so that the EOs can be able to see and understand the challenges encountered by the farmers in order to come up with the appropriate interventions;
- The department must ensure that training on Marketing and Financial Management should be given a priority and be compulsory to be attended by all the EOs so that the farmers could be trained on how to run the projects' funds and how to negotiate with the market.
- The EOs should be offered the better training in both technical agriculture and in extension methods required to disseminate production technologies information to the small-scale farmers who need the information. Their training should emphasize skills and knowledge for sustained crop production and strategies for the prevention of food losses during harvest, storage, marketing and processing.
- The EOs should be screened/selected before attending the training. Qualified participants who will use the training experience to improve their extension programs when they return home should be identified to avoid wasting the departmental resources. Sending a selection team is useful in understanding the needs of their stakeholders and their extension potential for addressing those needs.
- The demonstrations should be conducted on farmers' projects. The farmers should be involved in the planning of demonstrations and in the evaluation of the results.

Where the results of the demonstrations are clearly superior to local practices, the improved technology should be adopted by farmers so that they could see the relationship between the conditions under which the demonstration is conducted and their own situation.

- LPDoA library should be well equipped for the improvement of the EOs skills in communication.
- The project beneficiaries suggest that the LPDoA should extend the number of the EOs in their municipality so that they could be available when they need them.
- Farmers should be assisted in pooling their resources as a collective to market their produce.
- The Performance Indicators and the skill audit are the relevant instruments used by the officials to indicate their qualifications, the field of work they are in charge of and the types of training they are in need of. The department should device some means of controlling these instruments appropriately in order to be accurate with the training needed by the EOs.

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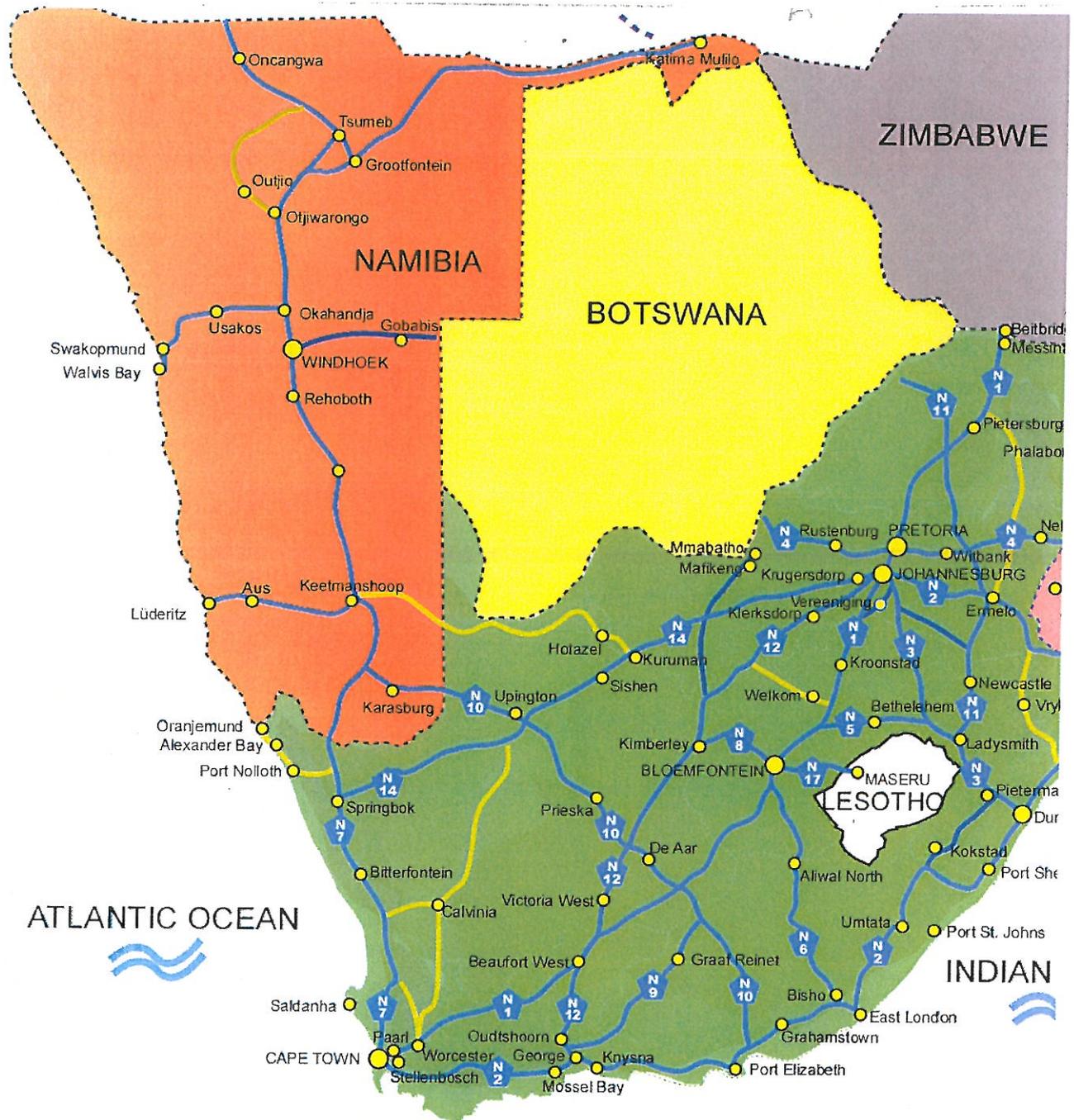
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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Map of South Africa



Annexure E: Approval from Department of Agriculture to conduct research



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
CAPRICORN DISTRICT**

RESTRICTED

Ref : S6/1/3/1
Enquiries : Maserame MM
Date : 04 December 2008

Ms Mononyane KR
C/O Senior Manager: Food Security and Rural Development
Limpopo Department of Agriculture
Private Bag X9487
POLOKWANE
0700

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO ACCESS RESEARCH INFORMATION
CAPRICORN DISTRICT: MONONYANE KR (MASTERS STUDENT)**

1. This office has received your request to collect research data towards Masters Study programme with the University of Limpopo, Edu Park.
2. The District has no objection in this regard and advises that you notify the respective cluster Senior Manager and Municipal Manager for building good working relations and cooperation.
3. Your success in this endeavour will hinge on your planned consultation with project Manager or Coordinator of specific agricultural activities to feed you with the required information.

This office wishes you the best of good-luck and prosperous 2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Maserame', written over a dotted line.

CARETAKER MANAGER: CAPRICORN DISTRICT

Annexure F Summary of the Sampled Food Security Projects

PROJECT NAME	PRIMARY ACTIVITIES	YEAR IN WHICH PROJECT WAS ESTABLISHED	POPULATION
Mahlakoane goat farming H	Goat Farming	2006	05
Tongoane Poultry Project G	Poultry and vegetable Project	2008	06
Leporogong Vegetable Project B	Vegetable Project	2009	03
Basadiba Mehlareng F	Vegetable Project	2000	05
Baithaopi Vegetable Project J	Vegetable Project	2001	07
Vukani Project I	Poultry and Vegetable	1998	05
Mologadi Vegetable Project E	Vegetable Project	2004	08
Serogole Vegetable Project D	Vegetable Project	2008	05
Popi Vegetable Project A	Vegetable Project	2008	05
BathoLenting C	Vegetable &Poultry Production	2006	05

Annexure G. Information of Extension Officers who participated in the study

Extension Officers	Academic Qualification Of EOs	Working Experience of EO in years	Training attended between 2008 – 2010			Types of training attended	
			2008	2009	2010/11	In-house	Outside work environment
Extension Officer A	B.Tech in Agricultural Management	26	Computer Basic Skills and Project Management	None	Computer Basic Skills	Computer Basic Skills	Project Management
Extension Officer B	B.Tech in Agricultural Management	16	Computer Basic Skills & Soil Fertility Management	None	Computer Basic Skills	Computer Basic Skills	Soil Fertility Management
Extension Officer C	Hons. Agribusiness Management	03	Induction, Goat Management, Risk and Fraud Management	Veld Management, Pig Production Management	Veld Management, Broiler Chicken Management	None	Induction, Goat Management, Risk and Fraud Management, Pig Veld Management, Production Management, Broiler Chicken Management
Extension Officer D	B. Tech Agricultural Management	20	Milk Goat	Veld Management	Bee Keeping	None	Milk Goat, Veld Management, Bee Keeping

Extension Officer E	B. Tech Agricultural Management	04	Dairy Management, Financial Management	Veld Management	Communication and Rural Development	None	Dairy Management, Financial Management, Veld Management, Communication and Rural Development
Extension Officer F	Diploma in Agriculture	22	Computer Literacy	Computer Microsoft Word	None	Computer Basic Skills	Computer Microsoft Word
Extension Officer G	Diploma in Agriculture	38	Soil Analysis, Project Management, Computer Literacy	None	Project Management	Computer Basic Skills	Soil Analysis, Project Management

ANNEXURE H

QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

KEY INFORMANTS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. When did you start knowingproject?
2. Are the community members benefiting from the project?
3. How do the community members support the project?
4. Do you think the community members can survive without the project?
5. Are you satisfied with the production of the project?
6. Are you aware of any relationship between the project and Department of
Agriculture?
7. Which other Departments/Institutions do you sometimes see visiting the project?
8. Do you have any suggestion(s) which you want to make for the improvement of
the project?
9. How do you think the training that the farmers received changed the way they
carry out their daily duties?
10. What impact do you think the trainings the farmers received have on their
personal development?

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Are you receiving any regular advice from the Extension Officers?
2. What types of skills did you acquire from the Extension Officers?
3. Did the skills acquired have an impact to your project?
4. Have you extended the knowledge acquired at the project to your households by establishing the backyard gardens/farming with animals at home?
5. From the training that you have received from the Extension Officers will you be able to work independently without consulting to him/her?
6. Is your project generating any income every month?
7. Are you able to take care of the family with the money you are receiving from the project?
8. Are you able to use all the project hacters allocated to you?
9. What is your secret for making your project to be successful?
10. What is it that is retarding the progress in your project?

DEPUTY MANAGERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What are your highest educational qualifications?
2. For how long have you been occupying your job position?
3. What is the rationale for sending the Extension Officers to attend work-related training?
4. How often do Extension Officers in your office attend work-related training?
5. How does your office determine that there is a need for Extension Officers to attend particular training?
6. What impact do you think the various training that Extension Officers attend have on their personal and career development?
7. How does the department ensure that the skills and knowledge that Extension Officers gain through the various trainings trickle down to the farmers on the ground?
8. What do you think need to be done to further solidify the relationship between Extension Officers and farmers so that farmers benefit from the training offered to EO?
9. What do you see as the relevance of the training that Extension Officers receive to the optimal performance of the farming projects in Lepelle-Nkumpi municipality?
10. Do you have any suggestion(s) which you want to make for the improvement of the projects?

EXTENSION OFFICERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your highest education qualification?

2. For how long have you been working as an Extension Officer?

3. Please mention the training you attended between 2008 – 2010/11.

3.1 2008:

3.2 2009:

3.3 2010:

4. How many of these training sessions were in-house?

5. How many of these training sessions were held outside your work environment?

6. Do you think there was any difference between the two types of training sessions (mentioned above) in terms of presentations, content and the relevance? Please elaborate.

7. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of the training you received?

8. How do you think the training you received changed the way you carry out your daily duties?

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9. What impact do you think the trainings you received have on your personal development?

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10. Please explain how the training programs you received enhanced your competency in imparting knowledge to the farmers.

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11. What impact do you think the training you received have on how the farmers run their projects?

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12. Is there any difference on how you did your work prior to receiving the training and now? Please elaborate on your answer.

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13. Have you noticed any difference on the performance of the projects you assisted prior to you receiving the trainings and after? Please elaborate.

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14. How do you transfer the knowledge and skills you accumulated from the training through to the projects beneficiaries?

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Annexure I: Informed Consent Form

I,..... hereI
confirm that the purpose, the procedure, the possible risks and potential benefits associated wi
participation in this research project has been explained to me by the researcher, and that I a
under no duress to participate in the study. I also confirm that the researcher has informed n
that my participation is voluntary and that I will not receive any remuneration of any kind and th
I can withdraw my participation at any time.

.....
Participants Name (Print)

.....
Participants Signature Date and Time

.....
Witness Name (Print)

.....
Witness Signature Date and Time