

Developing an agribusiness growth model for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal

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ABSTRACT

The strategies used for developing and nurturing the growth of agribusiness entities are critical for leveraging the viability and sustainability of the agribusinesses initiated by emerging farmers. It is in that context that this research explored the agribusiness development and growth framework which is suitable for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. The fundamental aim of the study was to identify the major impediments and the improvement strategies that can be adopted. To accomplish that, the study uses an interpretivist research paradigm as well as a case study blended with an exploratory research design and qualitative research method to evaluate the real-world experiences of thirty emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality to the agribusiness development and growth approaches that they use as well as their associated impediments.

Using ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software, thematic analysis of the emerging qualitative findings revealed most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to certain three main phases. Such three main phases were reiterated to include phase 1: land access and acquisition, phase 2: farming and phase three: marketing. Certainly, such three-phases' approach contrast the theoretical articulations that highlight the four critical stages for emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth to include agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and subsequently farm products' commercialisation.

However, as different emerging farmers undergo such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, empirical findings still indicated that there are challenges that still mar the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers in the Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable. Such impediments were found to arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Other constraints were narrated to emerge from poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as

instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as difficulty to understand and respond to market dynamics. In the context of such empirical findings, it is recommended that emerging farmers and government must adopt a combination of agribusiness development and growth improvement strategies that include having Land Bank to offer low interest or even interest free loans to emerging farmers. It also suggested the essence for fast-tracking land reform Programmes, establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives for emerging farmers and improvement of the efficacy of agricultural extension programmes.

But however as emerging farmers gain and improve their internal capabilities, the study also recommends that it is still critical that they adhere to the four stages for managing successful agribusiness development and growth that encompass agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, the establishment of farming structure and facilities and subsequently farm products' commercialisation. Against that backdrop, future research can consider exploring the efficacy of agricultural quality management as a determinant for effective performance of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in South Africa.

Keywords: *Agribusiness development; Amajuba District, commercialisation, diversification, emerging farmers, growth strategies, land reforms, limitations, performance*

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
Agri-SETA	Agricultural sector education and training authority
BBBEE	Broad Base Black Economic Empowerment
Covid-19	Corona virus disease 2019
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
PLAS	Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy
SLAG	Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant
SLLDP	State Land Lease and Disposal Policy

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1. CHAPTER 1 – SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Business development and growth skills and competencies are critical for leveraging emerging farmers' capabilities to develop and establish profitable and sustainable agribusinesses. Such skills and competencies edify thorough market and industry analysis to extract, develop and nurture attractive agribusiness concepts that can capture significant amount of sales, revenue and profitability (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308).

Such reasoning echoes the notion that business development and growth connote the entrepreneurial strategic process of evaluating the existing customer needs vis-à-vis unfolding industry trends to conceptualise, establish and grow more viable and sustainable business concepts to attain desired profitability goals and objectives (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14). This spawns effective performance of emerging farmers.

Emerging farmers are often individuals who are either completely new individuals with the required capital finance that are engaging in different agricultural enterprises or existing farmers that are transitioning from subsistence farming to commercial farming (Mabaya, Tihanyi, Karaan & Van Rooyen, 2019:5). Thus, prowess in business development and growth skills and competencies aid emerging farmers' capabilities to seamlessly transition from early stages of agribusiness' establishment or subsistence farming to more large scale, viable and sustainable commercial farming entities.

Business development and growth competencies edify coherent integration and interplay of natural science and agricultural skills and competencies as part of agribusiness best practices with critical business development and growth tactfulness to conceptualise, establish and grow viable and sustainable agricultural enterprises. In the South African context, these can leverage emerging farmers' viability and sustainability to catalyse employment creation, economic activities, rural development and render different land reform programmes that favour emerging black farmers more fruitful and meaningful (Zantsi, Pienaar & Greyling, 2021:724).

As all the emerging farmers transition into fully-fledged large-scale commercial farmers, it can also leverage the country's food security as well as its overall pace of socio-economic growth and development. Unfortunately, even if that is the case, empirical evidence still

indicates most South Africa's emerging farmers to face agribusiness development and growth management challenges reflected in poor agribusiness' conceptualisation, production management and financial management (Ndoro, Mudhara & Chimonyo, 2015:243; Mbatha, 2019:5; Mmbengwa, Nyhondo, Lindikaya, Ngethu & Van Schalkwyk, 2015:176).

Combined with poor supply chain management and value chain analysis as well as lack of belief and commitment to sufficiently invest in the requisite agricultural equipment and inputs, all these tend to cause the early failure of not all but some of the start-up agribusinesses initiated by some of the emerging farmers (Mazibuko, Antwi & Rubhara, 2020:261).

Such agribusiness impediments are also highlighted in most natural science and agricultural economics' studies to include poor agricultural infrastructure and marketing. But even if such impediments are highlighted by such studies (Mabaya *et al.*, 2019:5; Zantsi, Pienaar & Greyling, 2021:724), none of the studies in natural sciences, agricultural economics and even business and entrepreneurship have explored how business development and growth tactfulness can be of value in such situations.

As most studies focus on the scientific aspect of agribusiness, it undermined discerning how business development and growth tactfulness can be seamlessly integrated with the core natural science and agricultural techniques to bolster emerging farmers' capabilities to conceptualise, establish and grow viable and sustainable start-up agribusinesses.

It is in that context that this research seeks to explore the agribusiness development and growth approaches as well as the challenges that emerging farmers in Amajuba District face in conceptualising and establishing different start-up agribusinesses. Through such analysis, the study aims to contrast emerging primary findings with business theories to extract a business development and growth model that can be replicated to seamlessly integrate natural science and agricultural techniques with business astuteness to leverage emerging farmers' agribusiness' conceptualisation, establishment, growth and sustainability. In other words, as reflected below, the problems that motivate this research are further elucidated in the research background on emerging farmers in South Africa.

1.2 BACKGROUND ON EMERGING FARMERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Emerging farmers, according to Chamberlain and Anseeuw (2019:308) refer to the start-up agribusinesses that are establishing new enterprises to deal with commercial farming in a more large-scale nature. This implies emerging farmers may include even well established businesses, small-scale businesses and former subsistence farmers that are seeking to invest in different large-scale commercial farming entities.

But in the South African context, emerging farmers are narrowly construed by Agri-SETA (2019:3) to connote a group of agricultural communities that are transitioning from subsistence farming to more commercial models. Since emerging farmers largely constitute of black farmers that were previously deprived of land ownership by apartheid-era governments, Agri-SETA also posits emerging farmers to also encompass groups of people that have gained from different agricultural land reform programmes and intend to establish different agribusinesses on the land allocated to them.

Emerging farmers are further reiterated by Agri-SETA (2019:3) to include beneficiaries of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) funding that have acquired stakes in different farming businesses and are striving to attain profitability and sustainability. Certainly, not all emerging farmers benefit from state funding. But Agri-SETA's definitions are still consonant with Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's (2013) articulations that emerging farmers refer to emerging black farmers or their descendants that were previously excluded from South Africa's formal agricultural economy due race and have recently started engaging in large scale farming to sell their crops and livestock to the market with the support and assistance of the state. In contrast to such definitions, this study focuses on all emerging farmers irrespective of race and whether or not they receive state funding so as to identify the shortfalls that must be avoided and best practices that must be emulated by other poorly performing emerging farmers.

Even if that is the case, modern rise in emerging farmers that has also seen the increasing proliferation of emerging black farmers as well as other previously disadvantaged race groups like Indians and Coloureds is largely attributable to the agricultural and land reforms undertaken after the 1994 democratic dispensation (Mbatha, 2019:5). As the African National Congress' (ANC)-led reforms espoused agricultural liberalism ideologies agitating for reform of race-based land tenureship to redress past land tenureship

inequities, such agricultural liberalism ideologies were subsequently codified in the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

While basing on Universal Bill of Human Rights, the 1996 Constitution places specific responsibilities on the state to redress past apartheid imbalances in the South African society (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Such redress initiatives also inter alia include reversing race-based land ownership inequities that had over the years been systematically introduced to exclude and disadvantage some members of the society, particularly the black population (Mbatha, 2019:5).

To specifically accomplish that, Section 25 of the 1996 South African Constitution requires the State to take reasonable measures within the legislative framework to foster conditions that enable citizens to gain access to land on equitable basis. Some of such reasonable measures are articulated in Section 25(2) that requires land expropriation for public purpose or in the public interest subject to compensation agreed by the affected parties or approved by court. Even if Section 25(2) interpretation has of recent turned controversial on whether land expropriation must be with or without compensation thereby calling for its amendment through Expropriation Bill 2020 (Republic of South Africa, 2020), it still together with other Constitutional provisions operationalised in the emergence of several later pro-black farmers' land reform policies.

Since land is a pivotal factor in agribusiness, emergence of such land reform policies instigated the emergence of several emerging black farmers that seek to transition from subsistence to commercial farming (Ndoro *et al.*, 2015:243). Such land reform policies include Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) that was adopted in 1995 as part of the land redistribution programme. SLAG was based on a flat grant of R15 000 considered equal to housing grants that the government was providing to people seeking housing from the state (Ndoro *et al.*, 2015:243). Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant was primarily aimed at assisting the rural poor to secure residential tenure and land so as to improve their subsistence conditions.

Between 1995 and 1999, over 60 000 households qualified and were allocated grants for land acquisition. It was estimated that round about 650 000 hectares of land were distributed, but this figure still represented just less than 1% of the commercial farmland (Ndoro *et al.*, 2015:243). The Department of Agriculture also realised there were too many groups which had been allocated farmland and there was no coordinated and structured

post-transfer support for new farmers (Mmbengwa *et al.*, 2015:176). This affected viability of the entire land redistribution programme as well as the number of emerging farmers that were benefiting from such land reform programmes to engage in commercial farming.

In addition to SLAG, the government also from 1995, attempted to mobilise prospective black farmers into group-based farming. This was encouraged under the auspices of the cooperatives in which a number of individuals in different areas were encouraged to work together. This has been common in communal areas for communal grazing land.

Such concept soon fell out of favour because it could not deliver according to government expectations (Mmbengwa *et al.*, 2015:176). It was subsequently then abandoned. Given these land reform dynamics, the government then introduced a more holistic land reform policy through promulgation of the 1997 White Paper on South African Land Policy. Land reform in the 1997 White Paper not only operationalised Section 25 (5) of the Constitution, but also introduced the concept of willing buyer-willing seller policy. It also sought to correct past injustices by agitating for reconciliation and economic stability and growth in agricultural economic sector through poverty alleviation. To achieve this, the 1997 White Paper on South African Land Policy aims to leverage poor population's access to land for residential and productive purposes in order to improve their income and the quality of life (Mmbengwa *et al.*, 2015:176). It also intends to assist the poor, labour tenants, farm workers, women as well as emergent farmers to achieve equitable access to productive land and social justice.

Through such process, it requires government to support poor/emerging farmer in the purchase of land, but without being the buyer or owner thereof. The 1997 Land Policy White Paper requires the state to render land acquisition grants available to the qualifying individuals and to provide support and finance to the required planning processes (Mazibuko *et al.*, 2020:261).

But the 1997 White Paper's "willing buyer- willing seller" concept was reviewed by the National Land Summit held in 2005 and was found not to be effective for aiding effective land redistribution (Nel, 2019:3). It was found to be cumbersome and costly because even the sellers did not seem to be willing to dispose of their land and government experienced some budgetary constraints in purchasing land for the land-deprived universe at market rates (Nel, 2019:3). Thus, it also limited emerging farmer's accessibility to the required agricultural land to effectively engage in large scale commercial farming. Given these

shortfalls as well as concerns about the low investors' confidence levels and lessons learnt during SLAG implementation, the government introduced Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) Strategy in 2001 (Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, 2001 as cited in Mbatha, 2019:5).

The LRAD's introduction was also influenced by World Bank studies' outcomes on Brazilian and Columbia experiences of effecting land reforms programmes in their respective countries (Nel, 2019:3). Hence, its intents were to provide grants to Black South Africans so as to enable them access land, specifically for agricultural purposes. Grant size ranged from R20 000 to R100 000, depending on own contributions which disproportionately reduced or increased with the size of the grant awarded (Mazibuko *et al.*, 2020:261). In contrast to SLAG programme that targeted households, LRAD's grant was considered for individual applicants. Individuals within the same households could apply for their respective grants and once awarded, they could consider pooling their grants together and then purchase white-owned farm lands (Van Koppen, Tapela, & Mapedza, 2018:23). Under this programme, the state lands under the provincial and the national departments of Agriculture also became available for purchase by grant beneficiaries.

The LRAD was perceived by the government as a vehicle for accelerating the agricultural land redistribution initiatives and to achieve their stated 30% target by the year 2014. Contrary to such views, the small budget allocations to the Department of Land Affairs impacted negatively on the effectiveness and the mileage achievements of these initiatives. Despite such limitations, LRAD's introduction in 2001 was also closely accompanied with the introduction of Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Act in 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2003 as cited in Mbatha, 2019:5). Certainly, BEE Act aimed to facilitate the broader black economic empowerment. But it also contained some land reform elements that sought to change the current land ownership and distribution which are continuously perceived as sources of policy uncertainties and low investors' confidence in agriculture and mining sectors of the economy (Black, Conradie & Gerwel, 2014:22).

The challenge with such approach was that as LRAD faced state budgetary constraints, most of the BEE programmes benefited only a few individuals or groups (Van Koppen *et al.*, 2018:23). This was further exacerbated by BEE's tendencies to only be more

applicable in the corporate world and government structures rather than in all sectors like agriculture to benefit all including the emerging black farmers. All these hindered the majority of emerging black farmer's accessibility to land and lured the government introduce Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) in 2006 to deal with such shortfalls, as well as the general limitations of the other prior land reform policies (Department of Land Affairs, 2006 as cited in Van Koppen *et al.*, 2018:23). This is because assessment of State performance on land reforms revealed the equitable land redistribution target set at 30% for commercial land would not be achievable.

Zantsi, Pienar and Greyling (2021:724) note that in 2006, the Department of Land Affairs introduced PLAS to aid pro-active land acquisition by the state for the targeted groups. PLAS was construed to leverage land and agrarian reforms to a new trajectory that would create employment opportunities and attainment of the department's target of land distribution (Zantsi *et al.*, 2021:724). PLAS that was initiated and formalised during the National Land Summit of 2005 emphasises State-driven pro-active land acquisition as critical for accelerating land re-distribution as contrasted to previous beneficiary-driven approaches. Through such approach, Department of Land Affairs is required to identify land for acquisition that would be distributed to the identified potential beneficiaries according to certain set criteria.

Unfortunately, just like other previous post-apartheid land reform policies, Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) also did not impact much (Nel, 2019:3). This was mainly attributed to budgetary constraints and lack of transparency for identifying and allocating the acquired land to potential beneficiaries.

In another quest to accelerate land reform, government again introduced State Land Lease and Disposal Policy (SLLDP) in 2013 (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 2013). The SLLDP's motive was to lease out state-owned land to mainly female and youth beneficiaries. In such initiatives, it also prioritised landless households and black medium commercial farmers.

For landless households, the SLLDP targeted households with no or very limited access to land. While for farmers, it targeted small-scale farmers who are mainly operating as subsistence farmers and selling their produce in local markets (Bernstein, 2013:23). The SLLDP's motive was also to lease state-owned land to medium-scale commercial farmers

that are constrained by insufficient land access as well as large scale commercial farmers with potential to further grow, but are restricted by location and farm size.

Through such SLLDP's initiatives, landless households and small-scale farmers as well as labour tenants and farm workers lease state-owned land at a nominal rate of R1 per annum without a provision to purchase it (Bernstein, 2013:23). In contrast, medium and large-scale commercial farmers can lease state-owned land for 30 years with option of renewal for another 20 years upon which an option of purchase would arise after the expiry of the 20 years. In such scheme, the first 5 years will be taken as probationary period with no rental payable and thereafter the rental of 5% per annum of the projected business income (Bernstein, 2013:23). In other words, all these policies attempted to reverse the past land ownership imbalances to leverage emerging farmers' accessibility to farming land.

But the Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture's (2019) report that emerged from evaluation of the overall progress of land reform policies in South Africa still reiterated land distribution programs are too slow (Presidency, 2019). The report highlighted that the state has since 1994 been able to distribute just less than 10% of agricultural land as compared to the government target of 30%. It notes that beneficiary selection and distribution of land seem to lack transparency. The report expressed concerns that there is a perception out there that individuals with personal or political connections to government officials or politicians tend to be preferred as land reform beneficiaries ahead of those with experience and already living in these rural areas. The Advisory Panel on Land Reform and Agriculture's (2019) report further stated that government is also facing pressures in finding suitable land for human settlements in urban areas.

Certainly, there is a challenge of balancing urgency for the government to establish credible mechanisms that the public can trust while at the same time also guaranteeing land tenure security of the existing land owners and occupants. As these dynamics complicated land reform programmes with the effect that a significant segment of the South African black population feel that they have so far not benefited from different land reform programmes, it subsequently instigated call for amendment of Section 25(2) of the 1996 Constitution (Nel, 2019:3; Van Koppen *et al.*, 2018:23).

In addition to pressure from major political actors like Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), civil society and some elements within ANC, such pressure led to the development of

Expropriation Bill 2020 that seeks to amend Section 25(2) of the 1996 Constitution for land to be expropriated without compensation. Though such new developments in land reform seem to have upset investors' confidence in the future of commercial farming in South Africa, it still excited and raised hopes for most black South Africans as well as emerging black farmers. But some critics argue that even if that implies more emerging black farmers will have wider access to agricultural land; it will still not resolve the challenges hampering effective performance of different agribusinesses run by most emerging black farmers.

Attributable to that is that while some emerging black farmers are faced with land accessibility constraints, a majority of the emerging black farmers that have so far accessed land still face the challenge of developing, nurturing and growing more plausible successful agribusiness concepts. In Agri-SETA's (2019:3) study on the skillfulness of emerging farmers in South Africa, it was found that all emerging farmers across sectors like dairy farming, grains and cereals, beef farming and poultry farming are hampered by constraints of agribusiness and management skills. These skills' challenges are not only evident among agribusiness owners, but also across farm managers and other unskilled workers that cannot easily be re-skilled due to their high illiteracy levels.

Such skills' constraints affect mostly emerging farmers' capabilities to successfully initiate and nurture agribusinesses to growth and sustainability. This accentuates Mbatha's (2021:141) revelation that poor operational and production methods as well as marketing as some of the issues affecting agribusinesses initiated by emerging farmers. Such a view is supported in Mazibuko, Antwi and Rubhara's (2020:261) argument that poor agribusiness infrastructure, facilities' management, quality management and access to effective market distribution networks to characterise the operational constraints of most agribusinesses established by most of the emerging farmers. These undermine emerging farmers' capabilities to produce quality agricultural product offerings to not only outmatch other competent emerging rival farmers, but also well-established large scale commercial farmers.

Combined with the outcomes of the studies by researchers like Zantsi et al.,(2021:724) and Mabaya, Tihanyi, Karaan and Van Rooyen (2019:16), all these imply it is not just land which is a critical factor, but also business skills for emerging farmers to utilise such land and establish and grow sustainable agribusinesses. If such destabilising trends persist

even in the midst of hostile land reform policies that continue to undermine most large-scale white commercial farmers' confidence and trust in agricultural sector's future, it could subsequently affect South Africa's future food security. Thus, as the problem statement indicates, it is not only such logic that motivates this research, but also the fact that agribusiness development and management impediments that authors like Zantsi *et al.*, (2021:724) and Mabaya *et al.*, (2019:16) highlight also seem analogous to the agribusiness development and management challenges facing most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal province.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite accessing agricultural land through the government's implementation of different land reform policies, most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba district still face the challenge of conceptualising and establishing successful agricultural entities. Most of the emerging farmers struggle with developing more quality agricultural products to attract market attention and grow their agricultural enterprises to become more viable and sustainable (Mabaya *et al.*, 2019:5). Some of the emerging farmers often end up oscillating between subsistence and commercial farming at one point or another.

Even if some of the emerging farmers have sufficient financial capital, such emerging farmers are often not fully committed to invest a significant amount of their financial capital in agricultural entities whose returns they cannot easily ascertain (Botlhoko & Oladele, 2013:201; Mbatha, 2021:141). Some of the emerging farmers are skeptical whether the overall amount of capital finance committed in agribusinesses can be easily recouped with profits. This implies there is a challenge of trends' analysis and forecasting skills to discern and shape individual emerging farmer's opinions and beliefs to successfully develop and grow their agribusinesses amidst all turbulence and unpredictabilities (Mabaya *et al.*, 2019:5).

Due to insufficient capital investment, quality and quantity of agricultural inputs used are often not adequate for producing quality agricultural products that can easily secure reknown supermarkets' shelves' spaces or even attention of the targeted market segments (Mbatha, 2021:141). For emerging grain and cereal's farmers, some of them often do not fully invest in all the critical complementary inputs like irrigation systems to mitigate

negative effects of rainfall changes or inputs such as fertilizer to improve the overall soil fertility. As for dairy farmers as well as poultry farmers, some of them often fail to stringently adhere to prescribed veterinary practices as part of their agribusiness operational best practices (Mazibuko *et al.*, 2020:261). This affects the health of plants as well as animals and birds as some of them often perish or die before reaching maturity for sale. This causes losses to emerging farmers (Mazibuko *et al.*, 2020:261).

Such undesired outcomes further discourage other emerging farmers from committing sufficient capital finance in their respective agricultural enterprises. It also causes production of poor quality agricultural products. The implications are that such poor quality products often fail to score spaces in major supermarkets' shelves. This causes some of the emerging farmers' tendencies to sell their products to lowly rated wholesalers, supermarkets, retailers and hawkers that often do not enable them to fetch much in terms of revenue and profitability from their sales (Mabaya *et al.*, 2019:5). In turn, it also affects emerging farmers' capabilities to consistently accumulate enormous profits as future capital finance that can be ploughed back to spur emerging farmers' growth from just being emerging farmers to fully-fledged profitable and sustainable commercial farmers.

As these undermine successful development and growth of most of the emerging farmers' start-up agribusinesses, even the relatively well-managed and successful emerging farmers also tend to face certain agribusiness development and growth impediments (Mmbengwa *et al.*, 2015:176). This is reflected in the difficulties of some of the emerging farmers in Amajuba to infiltrate the cycle of the highly protected and white dominated monopolized but lucrative supply chain networks. This affects most emerging farmers' capabilities to connect with major supermarkets and food and beverage manufacturers that pay premium prices for farmers' agricultural inputs (Mmbengwa *et al.*, 2015:176).

It affects the profitability of some of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. But it is also notable that as some of the emerging farmers have failed to break through such highly protected and lucrative supply chain networks, others though a few have managed to break through and seamlessly integrate in such lucrative supply chain networks (Mbatha, 2019:5). This signifies relationship initiation and building with other critical business partners is critical for leveraging emerging farmers' agribusiness growth and sustainability.

Unfortunately, some of the emerging farmers often lack such complex business relationship initiation and building tactfulness (Agri-SETA, 2019:33). Instead, some of such

emerging farmers often turn to key government figures, politicians and the general public to play race cards and discrimination allegations to further polarize them from their would have been viable and profitable business partners. This limits growth of some emerging farmer's agribusinesses. Other business development and growth impediments often arise from lack of capacity of some of the emerging farmers to consistently produce and supply the more lucrative supermarkets and food and beverages' manufacturers with the requisite quantity of agricultural products (Zantsi *et al.*, 2021:724).

Even if some of the emerging farmers' agricultural products are often of superior quality, some of the premium price paying supermarkets as well as food and beverages' manufacturers with extensive networks are often skeptical to conclude inputs' supply contracts with them. This is because some of the supermarkets' supply chain managers as well as food and beverage manufacturing executives fear lack of consistency in supplies may also affect their internal operation efficiency to undermine their capabilities to consistently respond to their customer needs (Mbatha, 2021:141). To deal with capacity challenges, some of the emerging farmers have often sought for financial loans from banking institutions to boost their operational and production capacity.

But due to poor financial management, emerging farmers in Amajuba District often fail to effectively repay the loans to further exacerbate failure to effectively operate. In other instances, failure to service loans has even caused closure of some of the emerging farmers' start-up agribusinesses as banks move in to auction their agricultural equipment or even the entire agribusiness to recover the loan (Mbatha, 2021:141).

In other words, among other factors like complacency after attaining early profitability goals, all these contentiously explain why it is not just leveraged land accessibility that will render emerging farmers successful in different agribusinesses. Instead, it is also prowess in business development and management skillfulness and competencies to utilise such land to create, develop and grow sustainable agribusinesses that will impact positively on their individual wellbeing as well as the overall socio-economic development and growth of South Africa's economy (Agri-SETA, 2019:33).

Hence, the problem statement for this research can be summed as developing, nurturing, managing and growing start-up agribusinesses to sustainable profitable level that benefit not only the individual emerging farmers but also the rural economies are still challenges that most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District are grappling with.

It is in that context that this research seeks to undertake an analysis of agribusiness operation and management approaches of emerging farmers' agribusinesses along the research aim, objectives and questions outlined below so as to extract and develop a plausible business development and growth model that can be replicated by all emerging farmers in Amajuba district and South Africa at large.

1.4 AIM

The fundamental aim of this research is to critically analyse agribusiness development and growth approaches of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba vis-à-vis business growth theories to identify major impediments and extract a plausible agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba district as well as the entire South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with this fundamental research aim, the entire study will be guided by critical research questions that seek to evaluate:

- What agribusiness development approaches are used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District?
- Which agribusiness growth strategies are used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District?
- What hinders emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth approaches in Amajuba District?
- Which agri-business development and growth model can be extracted and suggested from primary findings and theories to emerging farmers in Amajuba District and South Africa at large?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Basing on the above indicated fundamental research aim and questions; this study will consistently strive to achieve these primary and secondary research objectives:

1.7 PRIMARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary research objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District so as to identify major impediments and the remedial agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested.

1.8 SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In line with the aim and primary research objectives reflected above, the secondary research objectives of this study are to:

- Evaluate business development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Analyse agri-business growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Examine impediments of agri-business development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Contrast emerging primary findings with business development and growth theories to extract a plausible agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba district and South Africa at large.

Achievement of these primary and secondary research objectives to reach logical conclusions on the challenges facing emerging farmers in Amajuba and the corresponding remedial model that can be suggested will require the use of a qualitative research methodology.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology section elucidates on the research paradigm, design and methodology that will be used in primary research.

1.9.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

During the quests to analyse and identify the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District, the study will use the interpretivist research paradigm. Research paradigm refers to the philosophical approach that guides the process of thinking and inquiry during the research process (Gill, Johnson & Clark, 2016:26). Interpretivist research paradigm is a branch of the research paradigm or philosophy that emphasises social understanding of the world from the subjective perspectives or experiences of the participants in the study.

Interpretivist research paradigm is analogous to phenomenological research paradigm that also uses meaning rather than measurement oriented methodologies like interviews, focus group discussions and observation to gain in-depth insight and understand the rich complexities of the phenomena being investigated (Gill *et al.* 2016:26).

Through such meaning oriented methodologies, interpretivist paradigm just like phenomenological paradigm is able to understand all the in-depth dimensions of the problem being investigated from the participants' perspectives and experiences about such phenomenon. Such interpretivist paradigm approach contrasts with the positivist research paradigm or ontology that also emphasises use of scientific thinking and methods to reach conclusions on the phenomenon being investigated (Wilson, 2018:15). This research will not use such positivist scientific thinking and methodologies.

Instead, the study will use interpretivist paradigm to gain in-depth insights and not summarised numerical scientific information about the real world experiences of emerging farmers in Amajuba District about the approaches as well as limitations of conceptualising, establishing and growth agribusiness start-ups to fully-fledged agricultural commercial entities. Such approach will enable the study achieve its fundamental research aim which is to critically analyse business development and growth approaches of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba vis-à-vis business growth theories so as to identify major impediments and extract a plausible business development and growth model that can be

replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba district as well as the entire South Africa. To achieve that, the application of interpretivist research paradigm will be accompanied with the use of case study and exploratory research designs.

Hence, the exploratory nature of the study.

1.9.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is not only a framework through which a research paradigm is implemented, but also a blueprint reflecting critical methodologies and techniques used in the accomplishment of the primary research (Wilson, 2018:15). Over the years, different types of research designs that have emerged from different pragmatic approaches include case study research design, causal research design, cohort research design, cross-sectional research design, descriptive research design, experimental research design, exploratory research design, historical research design and longitudinal research design (Kabir, 2016:49; Wilson, 2018:15).

But this research will use a case study and exploratory research designs. Case study research is a research approach where primary research is limited to the subjects in a specific geographical area or a particular organisation (Kabir, 2016:49). Exploratory research connotes the epistemological framework that focuses on exhuming in-depth narratives or facts on questions like why, how, what and when of the phenomenon being investigated (Wilson, 2018:15).

The use of a case a study is justifiable on the basis that the primary objective of this research is to evaluate only the effectiveness of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. Hence, limiting the study to Amajuba District justifies the application of a case study research design. As for exploratory research design, its application is justifiable on the basis that it will aid in-depth evaluation and extraction of rich critical information on the why, how and what of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District.

In the first instance, the study will be limited to a case study analysis of emerging farmers in Amajuba District and then exploratory research design will be used to gain in-depth

insights into the dynamics of agribusiness development processes by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District. A case study research design is a research approach that limits the study to a particular organisation or on only a few subjects in a particular geographical area (Kabir, 2016:49). Such approach is usually aimed at facilitating in-depth analysis of the situation in that particular organisation to enable necessary conclusions and generalisation to be drawn about the phenomenon being investigated.

Although it is noted in this study that emerging farmers across South Africa face agribusiness development and growth challenges, this study will only be limited to agribusiness development by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. This will aid thorough analysis to reach the understanding and conclusions about the dynamics of agribusiness start-up dynamics not only by emerging farmers in Amajuba, but also emerging farmers across South Africa. To effectively accomplish that, the study will also use exploratory research design. Exploratory research design connotes the research approach which is used to elicit and analyse in-depth information about a phenomenon where only limited information about it exists due to lack of prior research in that area (Kabir, 2016:33).

Through such analysis, exploratory research design aids eliciting of foundational and background information that can be used as basis for hypothesis or theoretical ideas in later studies to further analysis such phenomenon. In this research, the use of exploratory research design is motivated by the fact that since only a few studies explore the business dimensions of emerging farmers' agribusiness start-ups, exploratory research would aid exploration and eliciting of in-depth insights about the agribusiness development and growth approaches as well as the challenges that emerging farmers face.

Such information would offer enormous insights that can be used to conduct further studies on the dynamics on agribusiness development and growth not only by emerging farmers in Amajuba District, but also other emerging farmers across South Africa. To accomplish this, the application of case study and exploratory research designs will be accompanied with the use of qualitative research method.

1.9.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research method connotes a combination of empirical techniques that are used in the accomplishment of primary research. Such empirical techniques are often reflected in qualitative or quantitative research method (Gill *et al.*, 2016:26). Quantitative research method is a framework that emphasises the eliciting of summarised numerical responses from the respondents. It is aligned to the scientific and statistical approach in positivist research paradigm and often uses techniques like surveys, descriptive statistics, and factor analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009:13).

In contrast, the qualitative research method is aligned to interpretivist and phenomenology research ontology. It emphasises eliciting of in-depth non-numerical responses from the participants about their experiences and personal opinions about the phenomenon being investigated.

Qualitative research method's commonly used techniques encompass content analysis, observation, focus group discussions and interviews (Saunders *et al.*, 2009:13). As contrasted to quantitative research method, this research will use the qualitative research method and specifically interviews as the technique for accomplishing primary research. Interviews will be used to elicit detailed rich data information from the participants constituting of emerging farmers in Amajuba District about their experiences of using different agribusiness approaches as well as the associated impediments.

This will aid reaching of in-depth logical conclusions on the agribusiness challenges that they are facing as well as the agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested to respond to such challenges. To accomplish this, it is indicated below that the study will use a combination of convenience, purposive and snowballing sampling techniques to determine the sample emerging farmers that must be interviewed.

1.9.4 SAMPLING

Sampling is the process of drawing units of analysis from the target population. Target population refers to the subjects that are the focus of the study (Etikan & Kabiru, 2017:215). In this research, the target population as per Agri-SETA's (2019:23) data constitutes 1062 emerging farmers that are established in aMajuba District Municipality

and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. Geographically, this implies the target population is geographically limited to the emerging farmers in aMajuba District Municipality that constitutes of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle local municipalities. From this target population of 1062 emerging farmers, 30 (thirty) emerging farmers will be used as the sample for the study.

Data richness will be enhanced on the basis that the thirty sample population will be drawn from different emerging farmers scattered across eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle that are local municipalities in Amajuba District. The sample is also justifiable for that 30 (thirty) emerging farmers will be an adequate sample for the study on the basis that they will be drawn from different areas of Amajuba District. Ten emerging farmers will be drawn from Newcastle, 10 from Dannhauser and 10 from eMadlangeni local municipalities. The mentioned numbers targeted will exclusively be dependent on the achievement of data saturation as such.

The Dannhauser and the eMadlangeni municipalities when they are individually compared to Newcastle municipality they are geographically smaller and have fewer emerging farmers. To draw the 30 sample emerging farmers from the target population of 1062 emerging farmers, the study will use non-probability sampling as contrasted to probability sampling. Non-probability sampling refers to the sampling approach that uses criteria other than chance as the basis for determining the units that must be included in the sample population.

The commonly used non-probability sampling methods encompass convenience, purposive and snowballing sampling (Etikan & Kabiru, 2017:215). These differ from the approach in probability sampling in which the process of sampling is mainly based on randomness and chance. Non-probability sampling differs from probability by virtue of the fact that the methods that are used are also different from those of non-probability (Taherdoost, 2016:18). In probability sampling, the commonly used methods encompass simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling (Taherdoost, 2016:18). This research will use a combination of non-probability sampling that includes convenience, purposive and snowballing.

During this initiative, assessments will also be undertaken to understand the Covid-19 status of the probable participants prior to engaging any emerging farmer to participate in the study. After ascertaining, Covid-19 status as confirmed by a certificate issued by the

health authorities, convenience sampling will be used to include only the emerging farmers that are not only easily accessible, but also cost-effective to include in the study. As such approach is being used; purposive sampling will also be applied to ensure that it is only the emerging farmers that understand the business dimensions of agriculture that will be included in the study. This is because some of the emerging farmers are completely illiterate and therefore would not offer much valuable information for the study.

Snowballing will also be used. Snowballing refers to the non-probability sampling technique where an influential participant in the study is motivated to influence his colleagues or associates that also constitute part of the target population to participate in the study. Snowballing will be used to get some of the emerging farmers to influence their fellow emerging farmers who are knowledgeable about agribusiness to also participate in the study. Certainly, all these will lead to the extraction of about 30 (thirty) sample emerging farmers from the target population of 1062 emerging farmers that are established in aMajuba District Municipality and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. As it is indicated below, each of the thirty sample emerging farmers will be subjected to interviews as the principal data collection method.

1.9.5 DATA COLLECTION

The data Collection will be accomplished by using semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews will be based on the Interview Research Protocol (Bazeley, 2014:15). But during actual interviews, additional questions will be asked in the context of the new insights emerging from the participants' responses to the questions in the Interview Research Protocol (See Appendix 1). To ensure eliciting only information which is relevant to the study, the Interview Research Protocol will be structured with four sections aligned to the four critical research objectives and questions outlined in headings 5 and 6 of this research proposal.

- First section will evaluate agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Second section will analyse agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.

- Third section will examine impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Fourth section will elicit suggestions from participants on how agribusiness models in Amajuba District can be improved.

During the design of the Interview Research Protocol, initiatives will be undertaken to ensure that the statements and questions contained therein are unambiguous and simple for the participants to respond with relative ease. After the design of the Interview Research Protocol, a pilot testing will be conducted on three sample participants that among will also include an agricultural expert. The motive of the pilot testing will be to assess the suitability of the Interview Research Protocol. Fine tuning of the Interview Research Protocol will be undertaken by ensuring that errors that are identified from the pilot testing will be corrected prior to the commencement of the actual data collection.

The data collection will be accomplished using personal administration of the Interview Research Protocol. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews will be used to interview and collect data from each of the 30 selected sample emerging farmers. The obtained qualitative data will be thematically analysed.

1.9.6 DATA ANALYSIS

The ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software will be used to undertake the thematic analysis of the collected qualitative data. This will entail the use of Abductive Thematic Network Analysis in ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software. As Campbell, Quincy, Osserman and Pedersen (2014:294) note, Abductive Thematic Network Analysis is part of the ATLAS Software that uses pragmatic methodological approach with an abductive way of reasoning to study and explain linkages between emerging themes from the collected qualitative data. In this study, the use of Abductive Thematic Network Analysis will entail the application of five main steps.

- Step 1 will deal with engaging with coding functions to create codes that will guide the analysis and identification of themes.
- Step 2 will entail dealing with the "Family Manager" function to group the codes under themes.

- Step 3 will require the use of network building function to create links between codes and themes.
- Step 4 shall deal with analysis, exploration, and explanation of the cause-and-effect relationships between the themes before saving using the Edit Comment function of ATLAS 8.2.
- Step 5 will finally use the hermeneutic function to compare and contrast codes, themes, and linkages with the fundamental views in theories and literature (Campbell *et al.*, 2014:294).

Such analysis will enable identification and extraction of main themes, subthemes and associated narratives explaining the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba as well as their associated impediments. Firstly, thematic analysis will identify and extract main themes, subthemes and associated narratives on the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. This will be followed with identification and extraction of main themes, subthemes and narratives on agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Subsequently, thematic analysis will identify and extract main themes, subthemes and narratives on impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.

Further analysis will be undertaken to identify and extract main themes, subthemes and narratives on the suggestions from participants on how agribusiness models in Amajuba District can be improved. Thereafter, a thematic framework will be drawn to reflect agribusiness development approaches, growth strategies and impediments of emerging farmers in Amajuba District. By drawing the emerging thematic framework, it will aid comparison of the key discourses in such a framework with core theories and literature on agribusiness development and growth.

Such analysis will aid comparison and contrasting of the emerging primary findings with business development and growth theories to extract a plausible agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba district and South Africa at large. These will also be accompanied with the measures for enhancing data richness. As the entire research is being undertaken, measures will also

be undertaken to leverage data richness as well as credibility and trustworthiness of the entire research.

1.9.7 DATA RICHNESS

Data richness refers to the degree to which qualitative data and their presentation reflect complexities and richness of the phenomenon being researched (Chenail, 2016:248). In this study, measures for enhancing data richness will entail ensuring that during data collection, all dimensions of the challenges marring development and growth of agribusinesses established by emerging farmers in Amajuba District are explored and evaluated to reach conclusions on the details of the nature of such challenges.

Data richness principle will also be upheld during data analysis and presentation in Chapter 4 by ensuring that main themes, subthemes, sub-subthemes and their accompanying narratives are extracted to explain in details the dimensions of the challenges marring the success of emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Such initiatives will be further accompanied with the measures for enhancing credibility and trustworthiness of the entire research.

1.9.8 VALIDITY OF QUESTIONS AND DATA

The credibility and trustworthiness will entail application of the measures for leveraging the credibility, dependability and transferability of the study (Gill *et al.*, 2016:26). Credibility of the study will be enhanced by use of the theory triangulation and methodological triangulation as well as consistent analysis and triangulation of the views of the participants with the existing theories. This will be accompanied by comparing and contrasting of the views of different participants. Dependability of the study will be assessed by evaluating whether if the study is to be conducted again, the same findings will still be obtained by such similar studies.

Transferability will be examined by assessing whether the results of the study can be easily replicated to address similar challenges in other start-up agribusiness entities in other districts and provinces of South Africa. Other measures for improving credibility and

trustworthiness of the study will entail comparing and contrasting the opinions of different participants on the same concept to test and improve the overall veracity of the findings (Chenail, 2016:248).

During the presentation of findings, these will be followed by insertion of verbatim quotes from the participants to avoid distorting the opinions that the participants will aim to convey. Besides constant fact checking with relevant experts and audit trail, triangulation of the interview findings with the theories will also be undertaken to discern whether interview findings are confirmed or disputed in different theories. All these will be accompanied with measures for enhancing ethical consideration of the study.

1.9.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations will be undertaken in the first instance by obtaining ethical approval from the General Management Scientific Committee (GMSC), the North West University Business School and lastly from the Ethics Committee of the organisation being investigated in case there is any such committee (See Appendix 4: NWU Ethical Approval No: *NWU-00998-21-A4*). This will be accompanied by seeking for the letter of consent from the organisation of emerging farmers in Amajuba District that will constitute the subjects of the study.

During the actual research process, ethical considerations will be undertaken by explaining the nature of the study to the participants so that the participants can understand the nature of the study. This will be followed by soliciting the opinions of the participants on whether they aim to participate in the study. They will however be advised that participation in the study is not mandatory, though their participation is warranted for discerning how the performance and sustainability of different emerging farmers' agribusinesses can be improved.

This will be accompanied with further advice that the details of the identity of the participants will remain confidential. In other words, the principles of confidentiality, informed consent and anonymity will be upheld throughout the research process (Wilson, 2018:15). Through all these, the researcher will frequently test for Covid-19 to ensure that

he is negative so as to avoid harming the participants and the supervisor with whom he will interact with during the accomplishment of this study.

The researcher will also ensure all the 30 sample emerging farmers are Covid-19 negative to avoid harming the researcher. In other words, the researcher will liaise and build relationships with gatekeepers so as to ease the process of seeking the letter of consent from the participants. All forms of conflict of interests will also be avoided to not only improve ethical considerations, but also credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Certainly, all these will leverage the ethical consideration of the study as well as the reaching of credible and valid conclusions on the nature of challenges marring the success of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District and the appropriate remedial agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested.

Such reasoning is accentuated in the notion that use of appropriate business development and growth strategies would bolster sustainability of start-up agribusinesses initiated by emerging farmers is inherently accentuated in most theories on business development and growth.

1.10 OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE REVIEW

In line with the overall research topic, aim, objectives and questions for this study, literature and theoretical evaluations in this section offer critical insights into emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth models. Such models also reflect certain drivers of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth as well as four-stages of agribusiness development and growth model. Theories and literature analysis also examined the approaches for managing emerging farmers' agribusiness growth and finally the inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth.

1.10.1 EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MODELS

The emerging farmers' agribusiness development model highlights not only the processes that emerging farmers can use to create and establish agribusinesses, but also a combination of individual emerging farmer's beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors that

can leverage or even constrain emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth (Westen, Mangnus, Wangu & Senait, 2019:64). Agribusiness development connotes the strategic process undertaken by emerging farmers to conceptualise and establish agricultural entities that produce and offer well thought out agricultural products or services that perfectly meet the needs of their customers (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308).

Agribusiness does not only deal with the establishment of entities that produce and sell tangible products like foodstuffs from crops, red meat and milk, but also agricultural services like veterinary and agricultural advisory services as well as other forms of support services to farmers that are undertaken in pursuit of profits (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14). But in the case of emerging farmers in South Africa, agribusiness is interpreted to imply emerging farmers engaged in different agribusiness entities as well as large scale farmers. However, emerging farmers' capabilities to successfully engage in different agribusiness entities requires agribusiness development process to not only engage in agri-entrepreneurial pursuit of ideation and conceptualisation to emerge with a more attractive agricultural product or service concepts (Kelly, Vergara & Bammann, 2015:19).

Instead, such a process also requires emerging farmers to establish appropriate agricultural facilities and structures to aid successful agribusiness' practical operationalisation and commercialisation. Unfortunately, the challenge of most of the emerging farmers as it is the case in South Africa is the difficulties of balancing conceptualisation and emergence with attractive agricultural products with capital requirements for establishing the required agricultural facilities and structures (Tam & Gray, 2016:18). Agribusiness development deals with the physical establishment of an agricultural entity as well as use of a combination of strategies to initiate and create relevant structures that support agribusiness' effective performance and growth in the designated agribusiness markets (Kelly *et al.*, 2015:19).

Such initiative requires ideation and conceptualisation of critical internal agribusiness structures and operational processes and systems that must be developed and put in place in the context of the available resources to aid the agribusiness to be established achieve all its critical goals and objectives (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128). But even if the conceptualised agribusiness entity is subsequently established by the emerging farmers, the notion of agribusiness development does not only entail agribusiness'

physical establishment (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308). Instead, it also requires emerging farmers to further develop, nurture and manage such established agribusiness entities through different periods of turbulence to avoid failure (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128).

Such quests would necessitate emerging farmers to conceptualise and apply a combination of the required strategies to spur such agribusiness entities' overall growth, continuity and sustainability (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308). Just like any other business, agribusiness is a branch of entrepreneurship that specifically deals with the strategic process of setting up agricultural enterprises with the motive of taking all financial risks to exploit the prevailing agribusiness opportunities to score the intended profitability motives (Tyrychtr, Ulman & Vostrovsky, 2015:63).

Thus, as a branch of entrepreneurship, most agribusiness development and growth models suggest most of the emerging farmers' motivators and behaviours that may drive success or even failure are shaped by innovation, individual emerging farmer's beliefs and values as well as society's beliefs and values and the overall prevailing social, political and economical conditions in which emerging farmers reside (Tyrychtr *et al.*, 2015:63).

Emerging farmers' innovativeness implies all forms of emerging farmers' creative behaviours and innovativeness to develop and use superior operational methods and processes as well as to develop and offer quality agricultural products is critical for leveraging agribusiness' growth and sustainability (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14). Such reasoning echoes Schumpeterian "Innovation Theory of Entrepreneurship" that not only highlights the significance of innovation, but also distinguishes between the roles of inventors and innovators in entrepreneurial activities (Majama & Magang, 2017:74).

In the context of Schumpeterian elucidation, some inventors of organic or genetically modified agricultural products may subsequently become innovators that put their ideas into practical agribusiness entities. But Schumpeterism still suggests such inventors are often different from innovators in the entire agricultural entrepreneurial activities (Grashuis, 2018:3). In agricultural entities, inventors like agricultural scientists may discover new agricultural materials and methods while innovators that are largely emerging farmers or even large scale farmers may apply such new agricultural discoveries to create new agricultural enterprises (Blinn & Maenhout, 2019:39).

Thus, seamless collaboration between agricultural inventors that are scientists and innovators that are agribusinesses is critical for the success of the entire agricultural entrepreneurial development and growth. Unfortunately, Majama and Magang (2017:74) note that most of the emerging farmers often do not have sufficient financial and non-financial resources to engage in such high level of innovativeness.

Yet in agribusiness entities, Tam and Gray (2016:18) posit innovativeness to occupy a pivotal role for leveraging emerging farmers' capabilities to produce and introduce novel agricultural goods and services offering novel values that customers were previously not familiar with. Innovation also introduces novel agricultural operational and commercialisation methods that are not only unique, but also bolsters the overall agribusiness' competitiveness and performance its new agribusiness market and industry (Blinn & Maenhout, 2019:39).

Innovativeness aids agribusiness' consistent, purposeful and organised analysis and response to the unfolding changes with new innovative agricultural ideas reflecting novel agricultural operational methods, products and service offerings (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128). This bolsters emerging farmers' capabilities to enter into the agricultural markets that are already saturated and more competitive or agricultural markets that had previously not been explored by the past and existing agribusiness competitors (Tam & Gray, 2016:18). It is also through innovation that emerging farmers are able to discover new sources of agricultural raw-materials to gain agribusiness advantages that restructure and reshape the existing agribusiness industry.

But even if that is the case, utilisation of McClelland's "Need for Achievement Theory of Entrepreneurship" to analyse emerging farmers' behaviours and performance still implies innovativeness is not the only driver of emerging farmers' success (Westen *et al.*, 2019:64). Instead McClelland's theory suggests successful agribusiness development and growth to also arise from emerging farmer's individual human values and motives. This contrasts with views in the problem statement that indicates some of the emerging farmers in South Africa to often blame government or the less supportive existing industry structure and value chains for their failures.

Yet McClelland attributes most entrepreneurs' quests to engage in different entrepreneurial activities to the high need for achievement (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14). In the case of emerging farmers, high need for achievement drives emerging

farmers' constant quests to perform well not to purposely leverage their social recognition and prestige, but to fulfill inner feelings of personal accomplishment (Grashuis, 2018:3).

Emerging farmers' urge to satisfy inner feelings of personal accomplishment can drive some of them to take advantages of any emerging favourable commercial conditions to successfully engage in different agribusiness activities (Grashuis, 2018:3). Subsequently, this influences emerging farmers' capabilities to successfully develop and nurture their agribusinesses to the desired growth levels and achieve not only personal accomplishments, but also incidentally outcomes that stimulate their agribusiness growth and sustainability (Grashuis, 2018:3).

McClelland's theory echoes Weber's "Theory of Social Change of Entrepreneurship" that attributes emerging farmers' engagement in different agri-entrepreneurial activities to individual emerging farmer's beliefs and values as shaped by the beliefs and values cherished by the larger society in which emerging farmers reside (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128). Such a theory also supports Cochran's "Model Personality Theory of Entrepreneurship" that imply emerging farmers' successful engagement in different agricultural entrepreneurial activities is often influenced by cultural values, role expectations and social sanctions (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128).

However, in contrast, analysis of emerging farmers' behaviours in the context of Hoselitz's "Leadership Theory of Entrepreneurship" suggests it is the managerial and leadership skills that influence successful agricultural entrepreneurial activities. Just like any other business, Hoselitz's theory implies all agribusinesses require financial resources (Polakova & Kolackova, 2015:128). But it is often still the managerial and leadership tactfulness that successfully drive an agricultural enterprise from its stage of development to growth stages as well as its perpetual sustainability (Majama & Magang, 2017:74).

Even if that is true, utilisation of Kunkel's "Theory of Social Behaviour of Entrepreneurship" to evaluate emerging farmers' behaviours still posit emerging farmers' motivators to arise from social, political and economic structures in the economy in which emerging farmers reside (Westen *et al.*, 2019:64).. Social factors on how the local communities perceive agriculture, supportive political policies and economic structures displaying enormous markets and opportunities for agricultural products can drive emerging farmers' behaviours to engage in different agricultural entities (Westen *et al.*, 2019:64).

In other words, it is evident from these theories that most of the emerging farmers' motivators and behaviours that may drive success or even failure are shaped by innovation, individual emerging farmer's beliefs and values as well as society's beliefs and values and the overall prevailing social, political and economical conditions in which emerging farmers reside (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14; Blinn & Maenhout, 2019:39). But even if such theories have influenced the approaches of the contemporary agribusiness development and growth processes, most of the modern theories still highlight most emerging farmers' successful business development and growth processes to be moderated by certain five-stages' strategic process of agribusiness development and growth model. The four critical stages for emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth include agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and farm products' commercialisation (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308; Kelly *et al.*, 2015:19; Westen *et al.*, 2019:64). As the agribusiness entity is firmly established and it is operational, therefore managing its growth becomes critical for leveraging its sustainability.

1.10.2 MANAGING EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS GROWTH

Managing emerging farmers' agribusiness growth is the process whereby the emerging farmers must use a combination of strategies to manage the internal farm dynamics as well as agribusiness market dynamics arising from expansion and its growth in the designated agribusiness markets (Tam & Gray, 2016:18). Such internal farm dynamics may arise from escalating farm operational costs and complexities of managing the large number of farm personnel in now more extensive farm structures.

Agribusiness market dynamics may emerge from risks of the entry of new emerging farmers in the same agribusiness market or established large scale farmers' modifications of their strategies to counter threats from emerging farmers (Grashuis, 2018:3). Thus, effective identification and management of such internal farm dynamics as well as agribusiness market risks is critical for leveraging the sustainability and further growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Grashuis, 2018:3).

Application of the required agribusiness growth improvement strategies is critical for emerging farmers to not only maintain but even increase sales, revenue, market share and

rate of returns that the agribusiness is able to generate. In other words, emerging farmers' agribusiness growth as Griener's (1972) foundational business growth theory as cited in Okanga and Drotskie (2016a:621) imply is just like any other business likely to occur along certain five stages.

These five stages that also correspond with the five forms of crises that emerging farmers are most like to experience are emerging farmers' agribusiness growth via creativity that may give rise to agribusiness leadership crisis. This often followed by direction stage associated with emerging farmers' autonomy crisis and emerging farmers' delegation that can instigate agribusiness control crisis (Bittmann, Holzer & Loy, 2017:295). Other stages encompass emerging farmers' agribusiness coordination that can induce red-tape crisis and collaboration stage that may instigate the crisis of agribusiness employees' psychological saturation.

Even if some of the agribusiness growth crises may or may not arise during emerging farmers' agribusiness expansion and growth, it is still of importance for emerging farmers to pay attention to such forms of growth crises that can emerge to affect their sustainability and growth (Bittmann *et al.*, 2017:295). However, Griener's (1972) foundational business growth theory contradicts Adizes' (1979) business development model as cited in Tam and Gray (2016:18) that insinuate emerging farmers' agribusinesses just like any other business to be driven by management attitudes and styles adopted by emerging farmers to grow along certain ten stages.

The ten stages are emerging farmers' infancy stage where their agribusinesses launch and early agribusiness growth and adolescence stage where emerging farmers' agribusinesses experience faster growth. Such faster growth is often attained through high level of creativity in technical agricultural and agribusiness practices (Bittmann, Holzer & Loy, 2017:295). As this aids transition from just mere agribusiness start-ups to established agribusiness entities, further improvement initiatives may spur emerging farmers' agribusiness to evolve to the prime stage where the agribusiness may reach at its best and healthiest stage.

But due to competition from other emerging farmers as well as the established large-scale farmers, from prime stage, agribusiness may only evolve to the stability stage (Bittmann *et al.*, 2017:295). In spite of being a profitable stage, stability stage is where emerging farmers' agribusinesses may lose edge among its rivals. Thus, failure to be more creative

at this stage, Adizes' (1979) theory implies it is in the stability stage that most of the emerging farmers' businesses often fail to experience further growth.

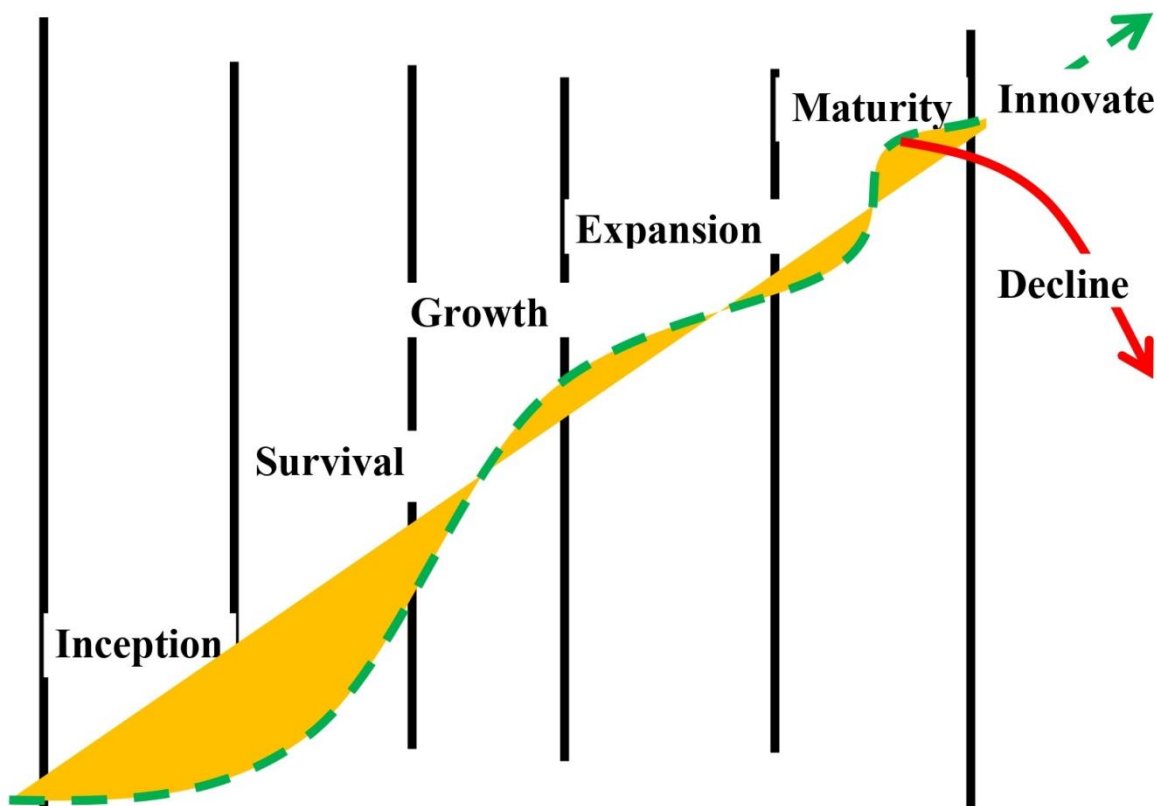
But in the event of more innovativeness in the scientific agricultural practices as well as the required agribusiness practices, emerging farmers' agribusinesses can sail from stability to aristocracy stage where such agribusinesses can consolidate the agribusiness market performance (Beber *et al.*, 2018:82). In other words, it is at such stage that emerging farmers may cease being emerging farmers to instead gain the status of established agribusinesses to effectively compete with the well-established large scale farmers while also diffusing threats from other new emerging farmers (Beber *et al.*, 2018:82). It is also at that stage that emerging farmers may cease being the sole shareholders of the agribusinesses that they started since quests for more capital for further growth could have instigated the sale of shares to new shareholders (Okanga & Drotskie, 2016b:414).

Unfortunately, the unintended consequences of such growth improvement strategies may induce the recrimination stage where due to several growth problems and threats in the external agribusiness environment, clashes and scepticisms about the designated agribusiness' future set in among the now well established agribusiness executives and shareholders (Lakner, Brenes-Munoz, & Brummer, 2017:44). Unless new innovative agribusiness growth improvement strategies are conceived and used, it is often at that stage the agribusiness initiated by emerging farmers may fall into the bureaucratic stage. Bureaucratic stage is where some emerging farmers become content with what they have achieved in life and subsequently become complacent, inward looking and more interested in disinvestment and exit than further quests for growth (Lakner *et al.*, 2017:44).

Persistence with such unsuitable agribusiness growth practices and behaviours can induce emerging farmers' agribusinesses to fall into the death stage where the agribusiness either closes, falls into bankruptcy or gets sold off to new owners (Adizes, 1979 as cited in Tam & Gray, 2016:18). In other words, Adizes' (1979) theory implies that emerging farmers' agribusinesses are just like other businesses with life-cycles which are analogous to human life-cycle that has birth, growth, maturity and death stages. Such reasoning contradicts Griener's (1972) foundational business growth theory. But not Scott and Bruce's (1987) business growth model which is more analogous to Adizes' (1979) theory and insinuate emerging farmers' agribusiness growth to unfold along five stages

reflected in Figure 1.1. The five stages are inception, survival, growth, expansion, and maturity (Petch, 2016:49).

Figure 1.1 Five Growth Stages of a Business



Source: As adapted from Petch's (2016:49) Business Growth Model.

Although, only a few emerging farmers' agribusinesses often pass the survival and growth stages, Scott, and Bruce's (1987) as cited in Ramukumba (2014:19) suggest innovativeness in the agribusiness practices and behaviours may prevent emerging farmers' agribusinesses from declining during or after the maturity stage. Innovativeness to avoid decline during or after the maturity stage may not only require emerging farmers to develop new agricultural products, but also initiate cost reductions in their agribusiness operations (Chagwiza, Muradian & Ruben, 2016:165). This may require review of the cost structure of the agricultural inputs that are used as well as investment in better and efficient agricultural technologies and machineries to further drive down costs. It also requires use of better agricultural approaches like the use of better-quality fertilizers to improve crop farming yields because the more yields attained the lower the emerging farmers can be able to sell their products and recoup not only the investment costs, but also profits (Chagwiza *et al.*, 2016:165).

For emerging farmers in animal husbandry, options could entail investment in research to improve animal veterinary medicines and feeds that cause animals to grow quickly and minimise the cost of feeding and growing them to maturity. Such a strategy can reduce agribusiness operational costs to lower the final prices charged to agricultural products' consumers (Porter, 1986 as cited in Okanga & Drotskie, 2016b:414). But emerging farmers may also explore new markets that have less fertile land and have low production of agricultural products and supply such markets with the required agricultural products.

Markets with frequent drought incidents causing shortage of foodstuffs can also be evaluated and targeted as part of the agribusiness growth improvement strategies (Hirsch, Mishra, Möhring & Finger, 2020:66). Other agribusiness growth improvement strategies may require emerging farmers' investment in farming other types of animals or crops apart from the kinds of animals or crops that they are presently investing in. This enables emerging farmers to create new agricultural products to not only enrich their existing portfolios of agricultural products, but also target and attract new agribusiness market segments (Hirsch *et al.*, 2020:66).

In the end, this bolsters the overall sales, revenue, and profits that the emerging farmer's agribusiness is able to attract from the entire market. Such initiatives may be accompanied with agribusiness diversification where emerging farmers engaged in animal husbandry also engage in certain lucrative plant or crop farming and vice-versa (Lakner *et al.*, 2017:44). Agribusiness diversification options may also require investment in the processing and manufacturing of the agricultural products produced into the finished or semi-finished processed agricultural products (Vassileva & Dimitrova, 2020:219).

Such a strategy will extend to market outreach of emerging farmers from supplying their existing markets to even supply those market segments that require finished processed agricultural products. Emerging farmers can also use the accumulated profits to invest in other industries like real estate, transportation and logistics or any other unrelated industry (Okanga & Drotskie, 2016b:414).

Due to the increasing devastating effects of climate change that cause either torrential rainfall that affects crop yields or even lack of rain that causes drought and prolonged dry season causing animal death and low crop yield, such a strategy is critical for leveraging the sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Godwin, Handsome, Ayomide, Enobong & Johnson, 2017:78). Diversification in unrelated industries will insulate

emerging farmers from poor agribusiness' performance arising from climate change or even poor performance in the agribusiness markets.

But even if some of the emerging farmers have often used a combination of these strategies to spawn the sustainability and growth of their agribusinesses, empirical evidence still implies most emerging farmers still often face an array of different agribusiness development and growth impediments (Bittmann, Holzer & Loy, 2017:295). Such impediments often reflected in lack of adequate capital finance, poor integration of emerging farmers in the value chain system, poor quality management and failure to manage extensive costs arising from increasing scale of operation. Other challenges usually emerge from climatic changes that affect agricultural productivity and yields as well as poor access to quality agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, irrigation facilities and other machineries and equipment like tractors.

Unfortunately, such constraints are also analogous to most of the inhibitors undermining the emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba district in Kwa-Zulu Natal. It is in that context that this research seeks to evaluate strategies, as well as the challenges, of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba District. Through such analysis, the study will be able to extract and develop the emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal as well as other emerging farmers in South Africa.

Such outcomes justify the significant importance of this study because of the enormous values that it will induce to emerging farmers, the society and the entire South African economy.

1.11 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this research is accentuated in the fact that it seeks to study the aspects of emerging farmers' agribusiness operation and management that has not been widely examined by most of the prior studies on emerging farmers in Amajuba and South Africa at large. Most prior studies have taken natural sciences and agricultural economics' perspectives while examining the performance of emerging farmers. As such studies may

have highlighted critical natural science and agricultural economics' techniques that are critical for leveraging effective performance of emerging farmers; they still seem to ignore the business dimension of emerging farmers' agribusinesses.

It is increasingly emerging that it is not just natural science and agricultural economics' techniques that are necessary, but also prowess of emerging farmers with relevant business management techniques to convert their agricultural enterprise ideologies into thriving and sustainable agribusiness concepts. Such a view is attributable to the fact that as natural sciences and agricultural economics' studies are undertaken with the aim of bolstering emerging farmers' natural science and agricultural economics' skillfulness, they still have often highlighted challenges that seem analogous to business development and management challenges.

This research is justifiable on the basis that it will seek to further explore and identify the major challenges of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth. This will aid thorough analysis and assessment of how emerging farmers can seamlessly integrate agricultural natural science and agricultural economics techniques with critical fundamental business techniques to successfully conceptualise, develop and grow their agribusinesses to viability and perpetual sustainability. This is because empirical evidence implies some of the emerging farmers struggle with conceptualisation of agribusiness concepts to transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming in the land obtained from different land reform programmes.

Other emerging farmers that manage to establish agriculture enterprises often still struggle to grow and attain the status of fully-fledged and sustainable large-scale agricultural commercial entities. With most of the existing large-scale white commercial farmers being discouraged with the ongoing hostile land reform policies combined with disinterest from young white population in farming, poor performance of emerging black farmers if persistent can in the long-run affect South Africa's food security.

To avoid the Zimbabwe situation which resulted in paralysis of the food security when white farmers pulled out and attempts were made to replace them with underprepared emerging black Zimbabwean farmers. Those black farmers lacked business tactfulness to conceptualise, establish and grow their agricultural entities to sustainability, and therefore this study is justifiable in that it will evaluate the business development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.

The study will also examine business growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Subsequently, the study will also evaluate impediments of business development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. All these will enable assessment of the level of emerging farmers' prowess in agribusiness development and growth techniques to discern the improvement initiatives that can be undertaken to leverage their sustainability and future growth. In order to accomplish that, the study will contrast the emerging findings on emerging farmers' agribusiness practices in Amajuba with insights from core business development and growth theories.

Even though the study will only be based in Amajuba district, such analysis will still aid in the extraction of a more plausible business development and growth model that can be replicated not only by emerging farmers in Amajuba district, but also the entire South Africa's emerging farmers. Replication of such a model will aid in the integration of relevant natural science and agricultural techniques with critical business skills to enable emerging farmers to successfully conceptualise, establish and grow viable and sustainable agricultural entities on the land obtained from different land reform programmes.

This signifies land reform programmes will not go to waste, as emerging farmers will not only be able to gain the desired level of profitability, but also financial independence. As these transform the socio-economic conditions of emerging farmers and their families, it will also stimulate increased economic activities, productivity, employment opportunities, food security and the overall pace of socio-economic growth and development of South Africa's economy. In other words, replication of the business development and growth model that this study will suggest will not only improve effective performance of emerging farmers and South Africa's economy, but also introduce a new agribusiness theory reflecting how natural science and agricultural techniques can be seamlessly integrated with fundamental business tactfulness to leverage agribusiness' effective development and performance. Subsequently, this will enrich the existing theories on agribusiness development, management and growth.

1.12 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The scope of this research will be limited to only the evaluation of the approaches and challenges of developing and managing sustainable agribusiness start-ups by emerging farmers in Amajuba District.

The challenges of developing and managing growth of agribusiness start-ups are faced by most of the emerging farmers across South Africa. In that context, this study will only be limited to the emerging farmers' agribusiness approaches in Amajuba District so as to gain insights that can be generalized to improve the development and management of growth of agribusiness start-ups by the emerging farmers in other regions of South Africa.

But even if it is true that insights extracted by this research can be replicated in other provinces and regions, it is still critical to note that the limitations of this research will still arise from the fact that some of the emerging farmers in other regions of South Africa could be facing other challenges that differ from the ones in Amajuba District. Emerging farmers across different regions of South Africa operate under varying climatic, economic, social and political conditions.

That could explain the differences in the challenges that emerging farmers could be facing in different regions of South Africa. This implies although the agribusiness development and growth model that this research will suggest can be replicated across South Africa and the world, it must still be cautiously replicated and with some modifications to ensure its applicability to the emerging farmers in other regions and around the globe.

1.13 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

The research is structured according to five chapters that encompass:

Chapter 1: Scope and Nature of the Study: This chapter will provide the general background explaining the gap that the study aims to respond to. It will also highlight the research problem statement as well as the research questions and objectives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: This chapter will provide a critical analysis of literature and theories on managing business development and growth as well as limitations of business development and growth.

Chapter 3: Empirical Investigation: This chapter will elucidate on the research design and methodology to be used in the primary research process.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions: This chapter will display the presentation of the findings as well as discussions of the findings and linking to theories and literature in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter will document the general conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Despite quests by emerging farmers to develop and nurture the growth of more sustainable agribusiness entities, it is not in the problem statement that quests to do so are often still undermined by a range of different constraints. Such impediments often reflected in lack of adequate capital finance, poor integration of emerging farmers in the value chain system, poor quality management and failure to manage extensive costs arising from increasing scale of operation. Other challenges usually emerge from climatic changes that affect agricultural productivity and yields as well as poor access to quality agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, irrigation facilities and other machineries and equipment like tractors. It is indicated that it is in that context that the explores an agribusiness development and growth framework for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality so as to identify the major impediments and the improvement strategies that can be adopted.

To accomplish that, the chapter highlights that empirical investigation is based on the interpretivist research paradigm, case study as blended with exploratory research design and qualitative research method. In conjunction with such empirical methodologies, the chapter also offers the overview literature and theoretical evaluations used in the study by providing highlights on emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth models.

Such models also reflect certain drivers of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth as well as four-stages of agribusiness development and growth model. Overview of theories and literature analysis also examined the approaches for managing emerging farmers' agribusiness growth and finally the inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth. Against that backdrop, details of the theories and literature used in the study are elucidated in the next chapter.

2. CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Business approaches which are used for managing agribusiness development and growth determine whether or not the emerging farmers will be successful in their agricultural entities. Thus, it is that context that this chapter evaluates theories and literature on developing and managing growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Such analysis is in alignment with the fundamental research aim and objective which are to explore the agribusiness development and growth framework for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality.

To accomplish that, the evaluation of theories and literature in this chapter is structured according to three main sections. First section commences by evaluating the concept of emerging farmers and global emerging farmers' statistical trends as contrasted with trends in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa. Subsequently, the chapter examines the World Bank's model for transitioning emerging farmers from subsistence to commercial farming.

Second section evaluates the fundamental concepts of agribusiness development for emerging farmers as well as the four critical steps for emerging farmers' agribusiness development. Third section evaluates theories and literature on managing growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Fourth section analyses theories and literature on the inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth and finally, the fifth section analysed trends in emerging farmers' narratives going forward. Nonetheless, in that context, details of theories and literature evaluation are as follows.

2.2 CONCEPT OF EMERGING FARMERS

The concept of what emerging farmers are or are not tends to vary from one country or region around the globe to another (Macdonald, 2019:33). In some regions like the United States, Australia and Brazil, emerging farmers are construed to refer to the new farmers that are commencing engagement in agricultural production of different agricultural outputs to participate in the agricultural output markets to sell their products and generate the

desired profits (Macdonald, 2019:33). That signifies emerging farmers are profit-motivated new farmers that produce to generate profits and grow into sustainable agricultural entities.

However, in some of the countries like India, Argentina and most of the African countries like Ethiopia and Kenya, emerging farmers are defined by their scale of operation to connote small-scale commercial farmers that hold small acres of land to engage in small-scale agricultural production which some percentage of the resulting outputs are used for household consumption and the remaining percentages are sold in the agricultural output markets to generate profits (Christian, Obi & Agbugba, 2019:94).

As for other definitions, emerging farmers are also referred to as the “peasant”, “smallholder”, “small-scale” or “family-based” farmers that are engaging in both small-scale subsistence and commercial farming on small piece of land measuring about one to ten acres of land (Gwiriri, Bennett, Mapiye, Marandure & Burbi, 2019:189). However, in the United States, Australia and Brazil, trends have proved that emerging farmers are not necessarily small-scale commercial farmers as some of the emerging farmers may commence agricultural production on medium or even large agricultural production (Ola & Menapace, 2020:101; Olorunfemi & Kayode, 2021:75; Muflikh, Smith & Aziz, 2021:103).

In spite such trends, a general consensus still exists that although emerging farmers are those small-scale commercial farmers that produce to sell and generate profits, they are still defined by their small-scale of their operations that are often based on one to ten acres of land (Christian *et al.*, 2019:94; Macdonald, 2019:33). As the term emerging farmers are used interchangeably with “peasant”, “smallholder”, “small-scale” or “family-based” farmers, most of the emerging farmers are also construed to be characterised by stronger reliance on family labour to cultivate a variety of crops or even to engage in form of mixed farming involving crop and animal production to insulate themselves against the risk of failure of one agricultural product (Ola & Menapace, 2020:101).

Even if the purpose of such small-scale agricultural production is usually to produce agricultural products for sale and household consumption, the purpose of selling the agricultural products is still construed to be to generate revenue to support and meet individual household needs rather than to generate profits for individual small-scale agribusiness growth (Muflikh *et al.*, 2021:103). Despite such a definition, the definition of what emerging farmers are or are not still seems to vary from country to country.

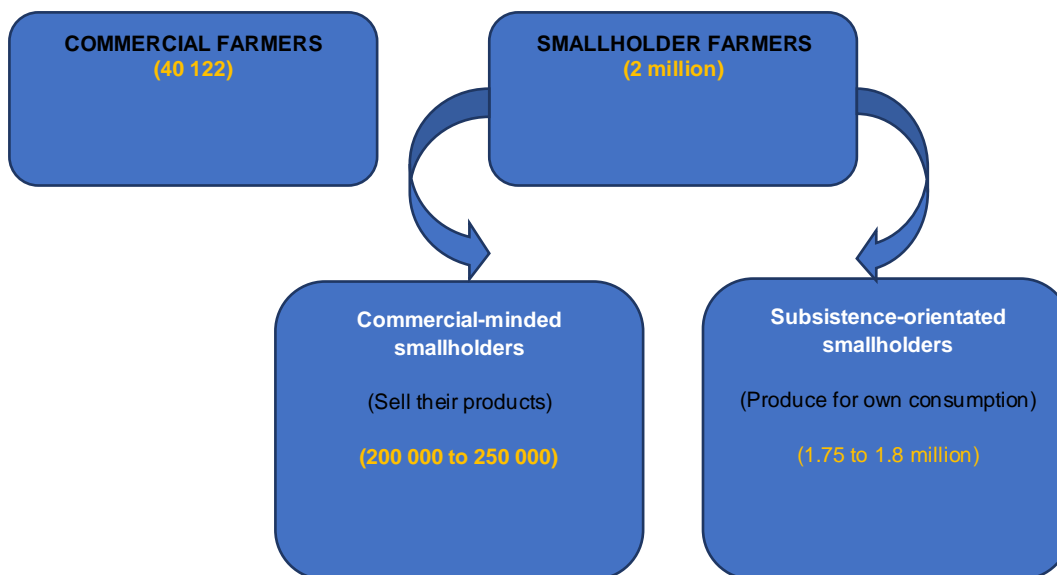
Such a view is reflected in the fact that Zantsi, Greyling and Vink (2019:505) reveal similar confusion surrounding the definition of emerging farmers to also characterise the South African definition of who emerging farmers are or are not. Zantsi *et al.*, (2019:505) cite the Department Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries-DAFF (2009) to note emerging farmers to refer to the previously underprivileged farmers that aim to transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming whether on the small, medium or even large scale commercial farming. They elaborate that emerging farmers are best defined by their limited scale of agricultural production as well as resource limitations in terms of limited land, capital and high dependence on family labour to cultivate only a few crops for subsistence and cash as contrasted against large scale commercial farmers.

Similar definition is also echoed in Agri-SETA's (2021) definition that construe emerging farmers to integrate three categories of farmers where the first category are those transitioning from subsistence to commercialised farming models. Second category includes farmers or South Africans that have gained land from different land reform programmes and aim to establish commercial agricultural production enterprises in such land. Third category is reiterated by Agri-SETA (2021) to include South Africans that have acquired different stakes in farms through Black Economic Empowerment programmes and are therefore seeking to run more successful and profitable commercial farming businesses.

Even though this implies, emerging farmers may not necessarily be small-scale commercial farmers, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (2013) as cited in Mazibuko *et al.*, (2020:261) still notes emerging farmers to connote those persons or their descendants that were previously excluded from their land on the basis of skin colour and have now commenced large scale commercial farming to sell their crops and livestock with the support and assistance of the State.

However, as indicated in Figure 2.1, Statistics South Africa (2020:19) explains that emerging farmers that also refer to smallholder farmers in South Africa can be categorised as commercially-minded smallholder farmers that produce agricultural products for pure profit generation or subsistence-oriented smallholder farmers that produce crop and animal products for own household consumption.

Figure 2.1: Statistics on Commercial Farmers and Smallholder Farmers in South Africa



Source: Adapted from Statistics South Africa (2020:19)

In such narrative, Figure 2.1 indicates that commercial farmers reflecting medium and large-scale commercial farmers constitute of 40, 122, as smallholder farmers that also include emerging farmers are estimated to be around 2 million. Of these 2 million smallholder farmers, commercially-minded emerging farmers are estimated to fall in the range of 200, 000 to 250, 000 that produce agricultural products to sell, as an estimate of 85% to 90% which is about 1.75 to 1.8 million are construed to be subsistence-oriented emerging or smallholder farmers that produce for pure household consumption (Statistics South Africa, 2020:19).

However, the focus of this research is the emerging farmers that are commercially-minded smallholder farmers that seek to engage in agricultural production with the sole motive of generating profits. This is because emerging farmers in such categories are have been found to influence improvement of food security, employment creation, export volumes as well as foreign exchange earnings for the South African government (Olorunfemi & Kayode, 2021:75; Muflikh *et al.*, 2021:103).

Hence, improvement of the support of the emerging farmers in such category using the appropriate agribusiness development and growth model is considered critical for catalysing their agribusiness sustainability as well as the overall pace of economic development and growth of the South African economy (Olorunfemi & Kayode, 2021:75; Muflikh *et al.*, 2021:103). However, such values of emerging farmers are not only evident

around in South Africa, but also in other parts of the globe and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.2.1 GLOBAL EMERGING FARMERS' TRENDS AS CONTRASTED WITH TRENDS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND SOUTH AFRICA

The global trends indicate emerging farmers to be of critical importance in improving food security and employment creation. The effect is that smallholder farmers that also include emerging farmers that produce for subsistence and commercial purposes constitute of 608 smallholder farmers that operate in different parts of the globe (Camanzi1 & Stefania, 2021:49). These 608 smallholder farmers are reiterated by Dias, Rodrigues and Ferreira (2019:125) to undertake agricultural production on the land constituting of 70 to 80% of the total global farmland to generate about 70% of the total global food production.

However, the FAO (2021:17) notes that although smallholder farmers produce about 70% of the total global food production, most smallholder farmers still cultivate on just less than 5 acres and mainly constitute of most the world's most poor segments of the population that survive on just \$2 a day. It states that this signifies, support advanced to emerging farmers and smallholder farmers is not critical for bolstering food security among the world's poor, but also important for poverty alleviation.

The FAO's (2021:17) facts echo Hirsch, Mishra, Mohring and Finger's (2020:66) revelations that as smallholder farmers produce about a third of the world's food production, five in every six farms around the globe still comprise of just less than two hectares to operate about 12% of all agricultural land that in turn produces about 35% of the total global food. In addition to that smallholder farmers' contributions to food supply also differs from country with the effect that as smallholder farmers generate about 80% of China's food, in Brazil and Nigeria, their contributions still remain as low as single digits (Hirsch *et al.*, 2020:66).

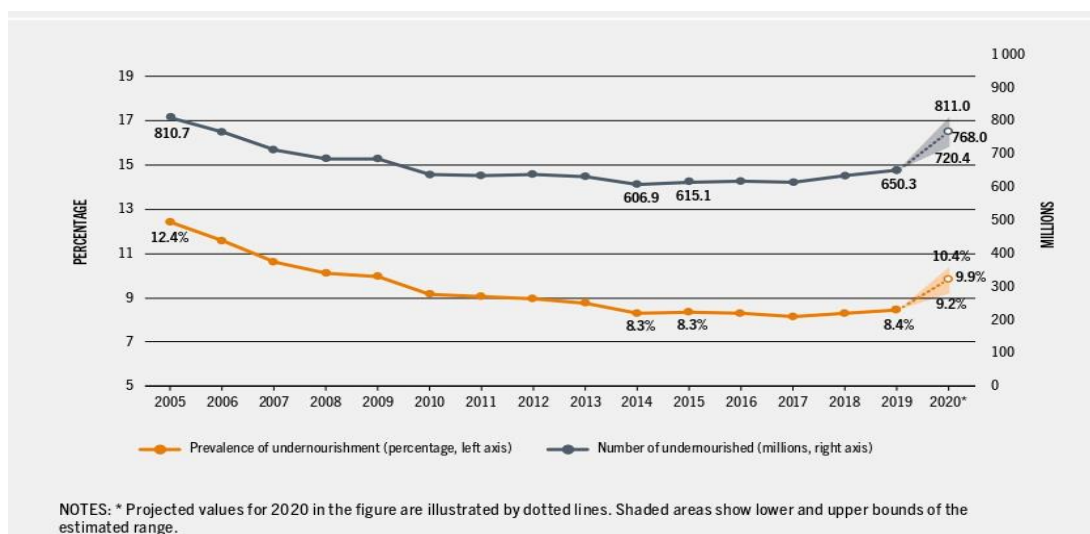
However, Camanzi1 and Stefania (2021:49) caution that although some of these farmers are referred interchangeably as smallholder farmers, emerging farmers or even family farms, in actual sense, some are not smallholder farmers as some family farms are often quite large. The implication is that if they are not using larger hectares of land, some of the

smallholder farmers in countries like Germany, Brazil and Netherlands tend to operate on small hectares, but still generate higher yields that exceed the yields of some of the large scale commercial farmers in Africa.

Inspite of smallholder farmers' contribution of about 80% of the total global food production, FAO (2021:5) as well as Yang, de Sherbinin and Liu (2020:102) still share similar views that hunger and poverty still remain quite prevalent among the global population. They reiterate that even prior to the emergence of Covid-19 pandemic, high costs of food arising from its low ratio when compared to the global population still placed nutritious food out of the reach for about 3 billion people of the total 7.753 billion population.

As elaborated in Figure 2.2 and Table 2.1, FAO (2021) notes that despite the declining undernourishment from 2005 and its tendency to remain constant in the period between 2014 and 2019, it subsequently rose from 8.4% in 2019 to 9.9% in 2020. Dias *et al.*, (2019:125) attribute this to the fact that even though smallholder farmers produce about 80% of the total global food, most of it is consumed domestically as exports are undertaken by large scale commercial farmers that do not only hike food prices, but also generate insufficient food quantities for exports to regions of the world where there are shortages.

Figure 2.2: Prevalence of Undernourished People in the World



Source: Extracted from FAO. (2021:5).

As this signifies, the support of the emerging smallholder farmers is critical for stimulate agricultural productivity to generate sufficient food that address hunger and undernourishment, FAO (2021) still explains that as the estimates range from 9.2% to 10.4, Figure 2.2 further illustrates that in the range of 720 to 811 million people around the globe were affected by hunger in 2020. Hence, given the middle of the projected range of 768 million, it implies 118 million were affected by hunger in 2020 as contrasted to 2019 in the context of 70 to 161 million estimates. In addition, FAO (2021) also reveals in Table 2.1 that 21% which is about 1 in 5 people were affected by hunger in Africa to reflect about three percentage points' increment in just one year as contrasted to any other region around the world.

Africa is followed by Latin America that has 9.1% and Asia with 9.0% that also respectively signify increments of 2.0 and 1.1 percentage points in the period of 2019 to 2020. This overall decomposition of the percentage of food security risks among the global population indicates the extent to which global agricultural production has not been responsive to the food security crisis.

Wang, Wang, Sarkar and Qian (2021:423) and FAO (2021:5) suggest that mitigation of the global food crisis will require redirection of the resources and financial support by the international financial institutions like the World Bank to developing and improving rural agricultural production in the countries in Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Latin America. Wang *et al.*, (2021:423) emphasise the need for the improvement of small-scale farmers' accessibility to critical agricultural inputs like seeds, land, fertilizers, irrigation equipment, credit and water.

As the world suffers insufficient food production, Van den Broeck, Swinnen and Maertens (2017:97) note that it is not only the emerging smallholder farmers in regions like China, Mongolia and India that face the challenge of improving agricultural productivity, but also most of the emerging smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa. But even in the midst of such constraints, Van den Broeck *et al.*, (2017:97) still highlights that of the 608 million smallholder farmers in the world, 33 million are situated in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 2.1: Prevalence of Global Undernourishment 2005 - 2020

Prevalence of undernourishment (%)								
	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
WORLD	12.4	9.2	8.3	8.3	8.1	8.3	8.4	9.9
AFRICA	21.3	18.0	16.9	17.5	17.1	17.8	18.0	21.0
Northern Africa	8.5	7.3	6.1	6.2	6.5	6.4	6.4	7.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	24.6	20.6	19.4	20.1	19.5	20.4	20.6	24.1
Eastern Africa	33.0	28.4	24.8	25.6	24.9	25.9	25.6	28.1
Middle Africa	36.8	28.9	28.7	29.6	28.4	29.4	30.3	31.8
Southern Africa	5.0	6.2	7.5	7.9	7.3	7.6	7.6	10.1
Western Africa	14.2	11.3	11.5	11.9	11.8	12.5	12.9	18.7
ASIA	13.9	9.5	8.3	8.0	7.8	7.8	7.9	9.0
Central Asia	10.6	4.4	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.4
Eastern Asia	6.8	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5
South-eastern Asia	17.3	11.6	8.3	7.8	7.4	6.9	7.0	7.3
Southern Asia	20.5	15.6	14.1	13.2	13.0	13.1	13.3	15.8
Western Asia	9.0	9.1	14.3	15.0	14.5	14.4	14.4	15.1
<i>Western Asia and Northern Africa</i>	8.8	8.2	10.5	10.9	10.7	10.6	10.7	11.3
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	9.3	6.9	5.8	6.8	6.6	6.8	7.1	9.1
Caribbean	19.2	15.9	15.2	15.4	15.3	16.1	15.8	16.1
Latin America	8.6	6.2	5.1	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.5	8.6
Central America	8.0	7.4	7.5	8.1	7.9	8.0	8.1	10.6
South America	8.8	5.7	4.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	5.8	7.8
OCEANIA	6.9	5.3	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.2	6.2
NORTHERN AMERICA AND EUROPE	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5	<2.5

NOTES: * Projected values based on the middle of the projected range. The full ranges of the projected 2020 values can be found in **Annex 2** in the report. For country compositions of each regional/subregional aggregate, see Notes on geographic regions in statistical tables inside the back cover of the full report.

Source: Extracted from FAO. (2021:6)

The 33 million smallholder farmers that operate on an average of one to five acres of land produce about 70% of the African food production. As indicated by Taha, Osaili, Saddal, Al-Nabulsi, Ayyash and Obaid (2020:49) this implies if government is to direct agricultural investments towards the improvement of the productivity of smallholder farmers, emerging smallholder farmers can contribute quite significantly towards improving food security and employment in rural parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Increment of governmental support to smallholder farmers would also lure more smallholder farmers to move away from the dual agricultural production for subsistence and commercial purposes to purely commercialised agricultural models to drive down food prices and improve accessibility to nutritious food by low incomes in Sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the globe.

Such a view echoes FAO's (2021:10) statistical narratives in Table 2.1 that indicates that of the 1.38 billion people in Africa, only a few categories reflecting mainly females and

youth still engage in smallholder farming for subsistence and commercial purposes. As Table 2.1 indicates, a comparative analysis indicated that larger percentage of the population in Sub-Saharan African countries like Mozambique, Mali, Kenya, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria tend to live in rural areas where they engage in small-scale agricultural production to generate food, income and sources of livelihood. However, the difference was that only one-third of households are engaged in agriculture in Mongolia and Plurinational State of Bolivia (FAO, 2021:10).

The variances were also reflected in the gender distribution patterns across different agricultural activities in such countries with the effect that rural male employment-to-population ratio ranged from 60% in Nigeria to 93% in Bolivia (FAO, 2021:10). In contrast, Nicaragua had the lowest rural female employment-to-population ratio of just 30% against the highest rural female employment-to-population ratios of 70% to 95% in Sub-Saharan African countries like Cameroon, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Mali and Mozambique (FAO, 2021:10). This suggests in most of these Sub-Saharan African countries, there is more involvement of women in agricultural production as compared to men to undermine the overall level of global agricultural productivity as well as earnings attained from global agriculture.

Table 2.2: Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa and Lower-Middle Income Countries around the Globe

Region	Country	Survey year	Share of rural population (%)	Share of agricultural households (%)	Rural female employment-to-population ratio (%)	Rural male employment-to-population ratio (%)
AFRICA	Cameroon	2014	60	62	73	79
	Côte d'Ivoire	2008	59	57	64	81
	Ghana	2013	49	53	80	84
	Kenya	2005	80	70	62	65
	Mali	2014	77	66	82	90
	Mozambique	2009	70	86	95	92
	Niger	2014	84	82	69	91
	Nigeria	2013	63	54	51	60
	Senegal	2011	57	53	47	72
	Uganda	2016	77	80	75	75
	United Republic of Tanzania	2015	71	61	79	85
ASIA AND PACIFIC	Cambodia	2009	81	75	61	61
	Mongolia	2014	36	31	56	65
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	2008	34	31	73	93
	Nicaragua	2014	43	65	30	88
CENTRAL ASIA	Kyrgyzstan	2013	66	63	42	67

Source: FAO. (2021:17).

However, such statistics tend to differ with the statistics in South Africa where emerging farmers' sector is largely dominated by black farmers and other previously disadvantaged

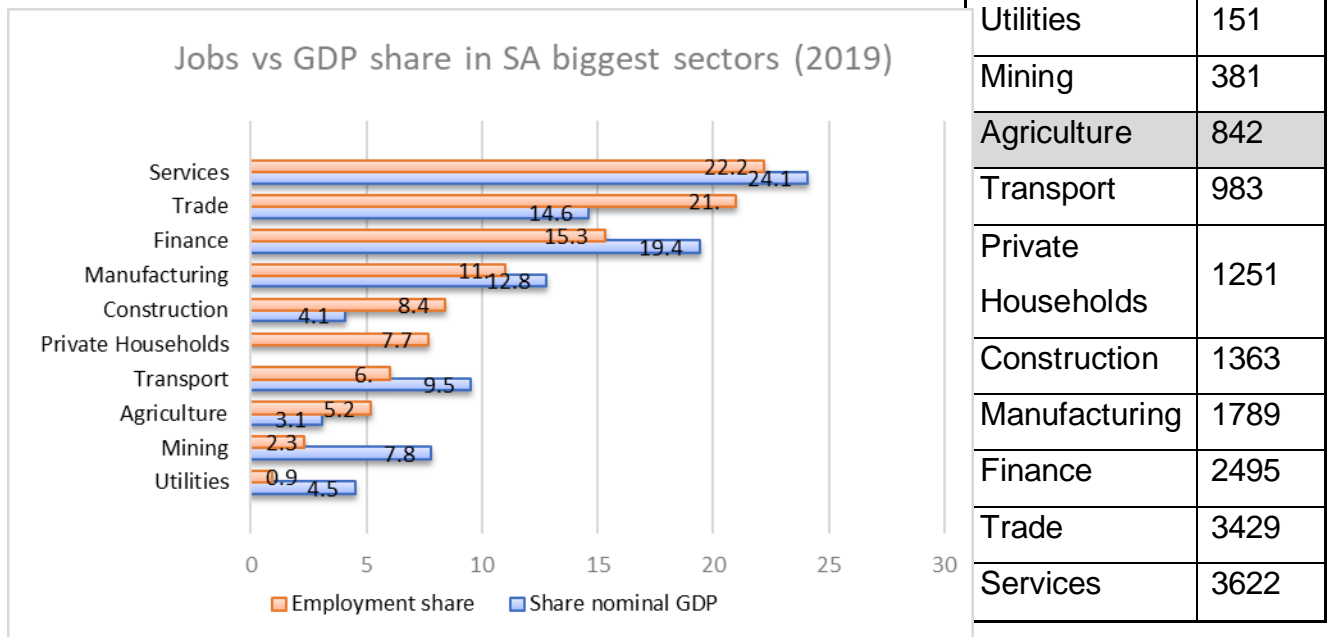
race groups, as whites dominate more efficient large scale commercial agricultural sector. Of the 33 million of smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa, Statistics South Africa (2021) indicates South Africa to hold 2 million smallholder farmers.

From the 2 million, commercially-minded emerging farmers are estimated to fall in the range of 200, 000 to 250, 000 that produce agricultural products to sell, as an estimate of 85% to 90% which is about 1.75 to 1.8 million are construed to be subsistence-oriented emerging or smallholder farmers that produce for pure household consumption (Statistics South Africa, 2020:19). Although some researchers like Mabaya, Tihanyi, Karaan and Van Rooyen (2019) question the overall contribution of emerging farmers to the South African economy, Presidency (2019:5), Mugivhisa, Olowoyo and Mzimba (2017:85) and Mbatha (2019:5) still highlight emerging farmers especially smallholder farmers to have contributed quite significantly to improved employment creation, poverty alleviation, enhanced food security, catalysing effects of agriculture's linkages with other sectors and increment of foreign exchange earnings.

Even if that is the case, Statistics South Africa (2020:19) reveals that agricultural sector did not contribute much to employment creation as compared to other sectors like trade, services, finance and manufacturing. As Figure 2.3 illustrates, the highest contributor to GDP in 2019 was the services sector, with a contribution of 24.1%, and the lowest contributor to GDP was the agricultural sector, with a contribution of 3.1%. The agricultural sector is among the three sectors that contribute less than 6% to the total employment share of the country.

Mabaya *et al.*, (2019) attribute the poor performance of the agricultural sector to poor usage of the available workforce and the failure of modernisation of agriculture as well as limited improvement of the productivity of emerging farmers' agricultural productivity. Figure 2.3 also shows that agriculture represents a low 5.2% of formal employment, which amounts to a total of 842,000 people. If agricultural seasonal and contract workers are taken into account together with the entire value chain of agriculture, agricultural and agriculture-related employment represents a total of 12% of national employment.

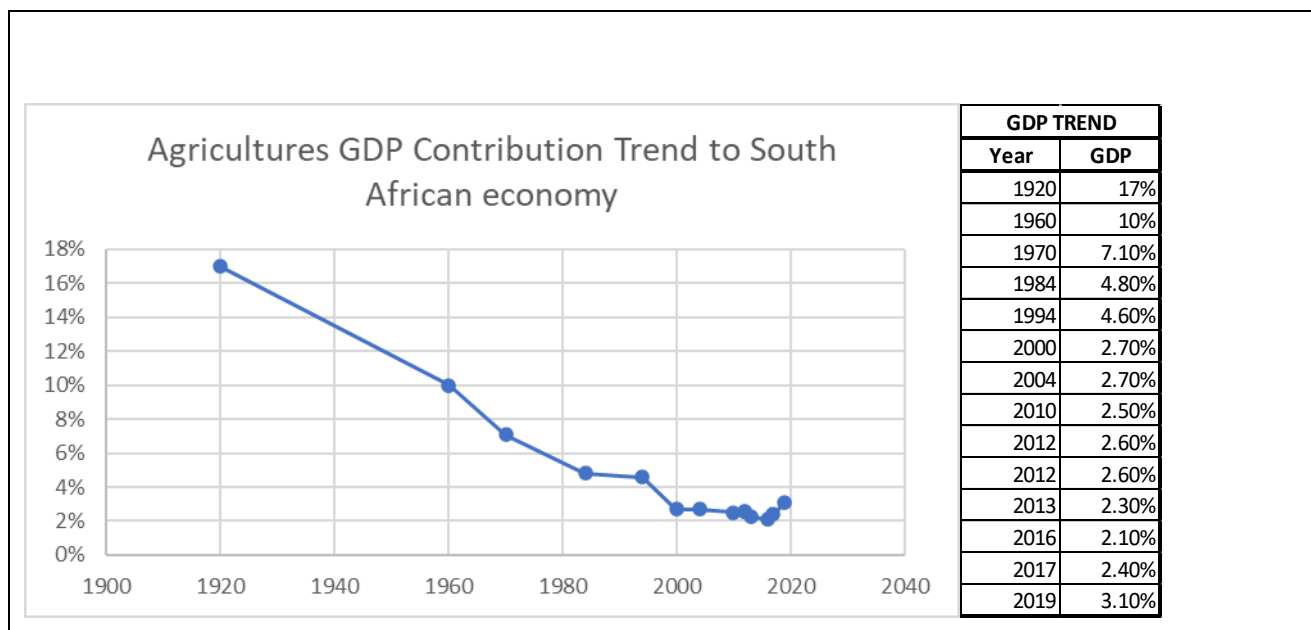
Figure 2.3 Jobs versus GDP share in South Africa's biggest sectors



Source: Statistics South Africa (2020:19)

It is not only in the employment creation that the contribution of the agriculture is just moderate, but also its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that it has been declining (Mugivhisa *et al.*, 2017:85). This is reflected in Figure 2.4 that indicates that from 1960 to 1970, the GDP contribution declined from 10% to 7.10% and, although the 1970s were a period of rapid growth in the South African economy as a whole, this growth did not result in any improvement in the agricultural GDP contribution because by 1976 the economy had moved into a recession. This led to a period of prolonged stagflation that lasted until the 1990s (Mugivhisa *et al.*, 2017:85).

Figure 2.4: GDP Contribution from Agricultural Sector 1920-2019



Sources: Statistics South Africa (2020:19)

However, the decline in the GDP contribution was minimal, far below 1%, from 1985 to the 1990s, as compared to the 3% decline of other periods (Mbatha, 2019:5). From 1994 to 2017, the decline was just above 2%, from 4.6%. This decline was due to the relatively faster growth of the non-agricultural sectors, the rising cost of inputs, weakening currencies and falling commodity prices, and land re-distribution issues that continued to be unresolved. However, growth was experienced thereafter, from 2.4% in 2017 to 3.1% in 2019.

Despite the overall decline and the relatively small share contributed by the agricultural sector to the total GDP, which stood at 3.1% in 2019, the sector still remains important to the South African economy because it has a significant link to other sectors, thus playing a role in the larger South African society and economy (Presidency, 2019:5). But even if that is the case, Ndoró *et al.*, (2015:243), Mmbengwa *et al.*, (2015:176) and Agri-SETA (2019) still link the poor contribution of the agricultural sector to the South African economy to the poor productivity of the emerging farmers' agricultural activity. They also reiterate other explaining factors to arise from devastating climate change, fluctuating prices as well as inadequate land and capital to acquire quality seeds, fertilizers, chemicals and agricultural equipment and machineries like tractors and irrigation facilities.

Just like the emerging farmers in South Africa, Beber, Theuvsen and Otter (2018:82) as well as Chen (2020:131) also note that most of the emerging farmers in Africa and other developing countries around the globe do not only face such challenges and lack of access to markets, but also experience issues of agribusiness skillfulness and tactfulness to initiate and grow successful agribusiness entities. To address such limitations, World Bank (2021:10) offers a model for enhancing transition of emerging farmers from subsistence to commercial farming.

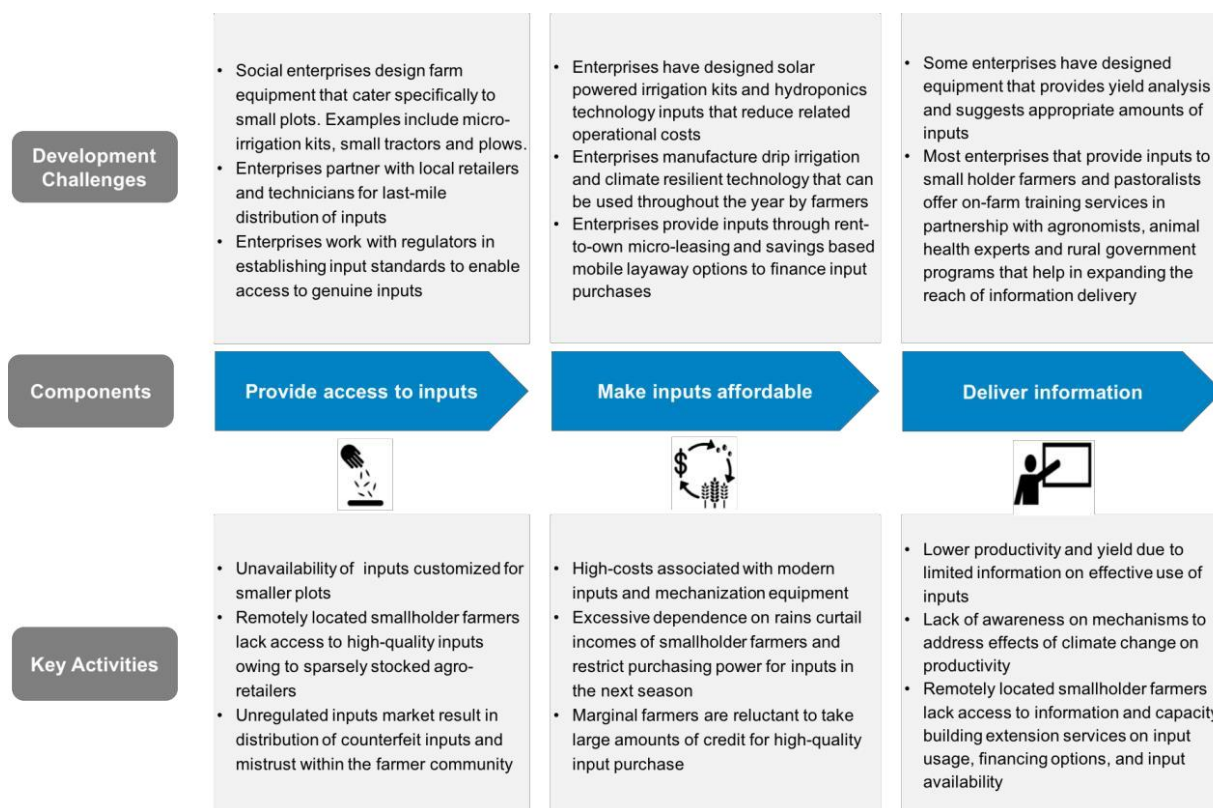
2.2.2 WORLD BANK'S MODEL FOR TRANSITIONING EMERGING FARMERS FROM SUBSISTENCE TO COMMERCIAL FARMING

The World Bank (2021:10) model argues that enhancing transition of emerging farmers from subsistence to commercial farming can be attained through the adoption of better farming better methods and mechanisation to leverage productivity, yields and the overall returns to emerging farmers. It attributes this to the fact that most of the emerging farmers often face the challenge of poor productivity, yield and crop quality control as explained by over-usage of fertilizers to generate more yields and limited mechanisation.

World Bank (2021:10) further links emerging farmers' poor performance to lack of access to quality inputs, poor knowledge and know-how of how to use some inputs and limited capital finance that affects affordability of some agricultural inputs and equipments like fertilizers. It notes these constraints to mutate with inability to invest in efficient irrigation facilities, lack of water, drug resistant pests and climate change to affect the overall agricultural production and the returns that emerging farmers are able to generate from their agribusinesses (Olorunfemi & Kayode, 2021:75). Yet, as these limit productivity and returns, they also tend to undermine the growth and transition of emerging farmers from subsistence farming to commercial farming.

To therefore avoid emerging farmers' cyclical rotation in subsistence farming in the form of some vicious cycle year-in and year out, World Bank's (2021:10) model in Figure 2.5 outlines how the development challenges facing emerging farmers can be resolved as well as the core components of the model emphasising improved access to inputs, inputs' affordability and delivering of relevant information.

Figure 2.5: World Bank’s Model for Improving Inputs’ Access, Affordability, and Information on Inputs’ Usage



Source: Adapted from World Bank (2021:10)

As noted in Figure 2.5, development challenges are constraints that limit the growth and development of emerging farmers and can be ameliorated by designing farming equipments and irrigation systems that are suitable for small plots of land and improving partnership with input retailers and distributors (Muflikh, Smith & Aziz, 2021:103). These must be accompanied with collaboration with regulators and government to improve input standards and access to genuine inputs.

The World Bank’s (2021:10) suggests that such initiatives must also be integrated with efforts that render inputs accessible and affordable with all the information on how emerging farmers can use such inputs to generate the desired productivity, yields and returns.

At the same time, World Bank’s (2021:10) model in Figure 2.5 must be complemented with the model in Figure 2.6. It is highlighted in Figure 2.6 that improvement of the productivity and yields from emerging farmers’ agricultural production may require usage of certain six

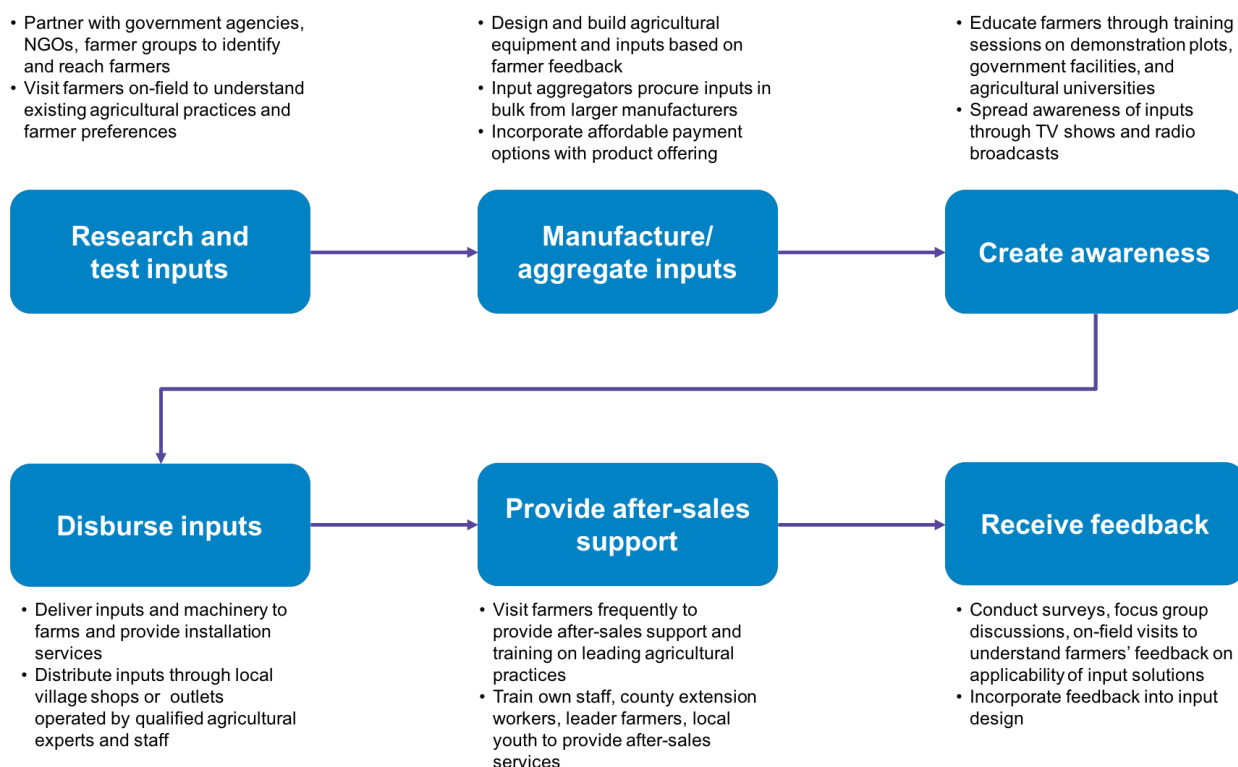
main steps that encompass research and test inputs, manufacture/aggregate inputs, awareness creation, disbursement of inputs, after sales support and feedback(Muflikh, Smith & Aziz, 2021:103).

In the process that emphasises the stronger involvement of government in the transition of emerging farmers from subsistence to commercialised farming, World Bank (2021:10) elaborates that research and test inputs require partnership of government with NGOs and farmers' groups to visit farms to identify the unfolding agricultural practices and to understand their needs. Information gained from such visits informs decisions at the manufacture/aggregate inputs stage to influence design and production of agricultural equipment and inputs based on emerging farmers' inputs (Ola & Menapace, 2020:101).

It also influences the design of appropriate package of input bulk and affordable payment options that meet the preference of smallholder farmers. As noted in Figure 2.6, this must be accompanied with awareness programmes through emerging farmers' education in government demonstration plots, facilities, agricultural research universities and other media channels to educate emerging farmers on to use certain inputs and adopt better commercial agricultural practices.

With farmers informed on how to use the agricultural inputs, World Bank (2021:11) reiterates the next step to require the disbursement of inputs and machineries to emerging farmers. This must be accompanied with the provision of installation services as well as usage of local agricultural outlets managed by qualified agriculturalists to provide emerging farmers in more remote locations with the required inputs and machineries.

Figure 2.6: World Bank’s Six Steps Framework for Improving Emerging Farmers Productivity, Yields and Results



Source: Adapted from World Bank (2021:11)

Subsequently, the suppliers and providers of relevant agricultural inputs and machineries must also provide after-sales services either directly to the emerging farmers or through usage of trained personnel(Ola & Menapace, 2020:101). This improves the extent to which emerging farmers can be modeled and nurtured to adopt good agricultural practices that aid efficient and effective usage of the available agricultural inputs and machineries. Finally, World Bank (2021:11) notes that there must be a stage where feedback from emerging farmers is received through workshops, surveys, farmers’ focus group discussions and frequent field visits to assess the emerging farmers’ improving capabilities to apply the available agricultural inputs and equipment to generate the desired productivity, yields and returns. Information gained from such programmes must be used to improve the design of the agricultural inputs and equipment that meet the needs and preferences of the emerging farmers.

In other words, the World Bank’s (2021:11) model construes that emerging farmers’ transition from subsistence to commercialised farming can be best facilitated by improving

access, affordability and information on how to use the best quality agricultural inputs and equipments. However, Gengenbach, Schurman, Bassett, Munro and Moseley (2018:208) argue that even if that is so, effective performance of emerging farmers as commercial farmers still requires more than just improvement of inputs' access, affordability and information on inputs' usage.

Instead, they concur with other researchers like Kungu, Dione, Roesel, Ejobi, Ocaido and Grace (2017:1368) as well as Lakner, Brenes-Munoz and Brummer (2017:44) that effective transition of emerging farmers from subsistence to commercial farming requires seamless combination of the pure on-farm agricultural production skills with certain agribusiness development and growth practices to access and create the desired values for emerging farmers in the agricultural output markets. World Bank's (2021:11) model aids improvement of productivity and yields at the farm level and agribusiness management skills aids the selling and generation of the required revenues from the agricultural output markets.

It is in that context the concept of agribusiness development for emerging farmers is evaluated in the next section.

2.3 CONCEPT OF AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FOR EMERGING FARMERS

Conventionally, agribusiness development is defined by Chengappa (2018:3) as the strategic process through which emerging farmers create the entity comprising of structures that source supplies from the agricultural producers and convert them through the process of crop or livestock production to create values that are distributed to the market. It is not only a process of engaging in the primary activities of crop or live stock production, but also the associated secondary activities of sourcing inputs, processing and converting them into agricultural products that must be efficiently distributed and marketed to the target consumers (Westermann, Forch, Thornton, Korner, Cramer & Campbell, 2018:283). Unfortunately, failure of most of the emerging farmers is often instigated by the narrow conceptualisation of agribusiness as just the process of engaging in primary activities of livestock or crop production (Singh & Chudasama, 2020:227).

Such approach undermines capabilities of the emerging farmers to understand the holistic nexus of structures and their associated activities that must be carefully managed to ensure the established agricultural entity creates the desired values. As cited in Adamowicz and Miecyslaw (2020:135), such reasoning echoes Davis and Goldberg's (1957:2) foundational concept of what agribusiness is or is not. Motivated by the quests for agricultural production to be approached as business to generate profits and reduce farmers' dependence on the United States' funding, Davis and Goldberg developed the concept of agribusiness and coined it as: "the sum total of all operations involved in the manufacture, distribution of farm supplies, production operations on the farm and storage, processing and distribution of farm commodities and items made from them."

Even if such a definition influenced the development of the notion of agribusiness across the globe, it still did not elucidate clearly on the importance to create a strong linkage between agricultural production at the farm and the final consumers in the market. It is such limitations that Bramley, Ouzman and Gobbett (2019:362) addressed by redefining the notion of agribusiness as " a dynamic and systematic endeavour that serves consumers globally and locally through innovation and management of multiple value chains that deliver valued goods and services derived from sustainable orchestration of food, fiber and natural resources." Such redefinition repositions agribusiness as an innovative and market centric entity that creates the desired agricultural products to respond to consumer needs and generate the desired values for farmers (Bramley *et al.*, 2019:362). It signifies emerging farmers must be more innovative to coherently manage the dynamic process of agribusiness management to achieve the intended outcomes.

However, even if that is the case, agribusiness still differs according to different but also inter-related arenas like input, production, processing, marketing or support arenas (Chengappa, 2018:3). The input arena constitutes of the enterprises that are not directly involved in any form of crop or livestock production, but are instead engaged in the manufacturing and production of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, animal feeds, animal medicines, irrigation equipment and other forms of agricultural equipment and machineries.

It also integrates specialist labour organisations that are engaged in the sourcing, training and providing farmers with labour (Liu, Fan, Li & Dai, 2017:170). This is because agriculture is becoming increasingly mechanised and scientific in areas like how to use

different cultivation, weeding, pest control, irrigation and harvesting equipment and machineries. Precision of farmers' science knowledge is therefore critical for leveraging agribusiness' effective performance. Intense training of the prospective farm labour is important in leveraging the overall efficiency and productivity of the agricultural entity (Ho, Nguyen, Adhikari, Miles & Bonney, 2019:5). Due to the scientific nature of agriculture, prior training of farm workers is also important for informing them on how to monitor plant or animal health as well as how to read and identify other forms of risks that can undermine the performance of the agricultural entity.

Though input platform links with the production arena by offering the required agricultural inputs, it still differs from the production arena (Chen, 2020:131). Production arena constitutes of the agricultural enterprises that are engaged in the direct primary agricultural activities of sourcing and combining different inputs to create the required crop or livestock products for the market. Such primary activities often unfold in among others arable farms, vegetable farms, fruit farms as well as dairy, pig, aquatic and poultry farms created by the emerging farmers (Aboah, Wilson, Bicknell & Rich, 2021:683). However, as farmers engage in such primary agricultural activities, the production arena may or may not also integrate with the activities in the processing arena. Processing arena comprises of the primary and secondary activities in which emerging farmers or specialist enterprises engage in the process of transforming of raw agricultural products into the finished goods that are ready for consumption (Liu *et al.*, 2017:170). In that process, some of the primary activities that are inherently ingrained with the activities in the production arena include emerging farmers' engagement in drying, threshing and winnowing of crop products or grading, packing and packaging of animal or crop products. In certain cases, such activities are also accomplished by specialist enterprises that also engage in the accomplishment of different value adding activities like inter alia grain milling, shelling nuts, butchering and processing meat, canning fish, meat and other crop products, extracting and filtering crop or animal oil, freezing and smoking fish or meat, pasteurizing milk and candling eggs (Islam, 2021:13).

In addition to that, specialist enterprises that are not engaged in direct farming activities often get involved in the specialist secondary activities of converting agricultural outputs as inputs in the manufacturing process into the finished products for final consumers' consumption. Such secondary activities often inter alia include fermenting fish, grinding, cooking and tinning beef, use of sorghum or cassava to make beer, use of wheat to make

bread, converting meat or pork into sausages and making wine from grapes (Chen, 2020:131). In other words, in the situation where emerging farmers do not engage in the accomplishment of some of the activities in the processing arena, some of the enterprises in the processing arenas often become corporate customers of the emerging farmers that mainly operate in the production arena.

Nonetheless, all the enterprises in the input, production and processing arenas need to link with the enterprises in the marketing arena that constitutes of entities that are engaged in the securing and moving different agricultural products from the points of manufacture to the points of sale (Kalita, 2017:6). In the input arena, such enterprises link with the producers of all agricultural inputs to facilitate the securing and movement of such inputs from points of production to the farmers. As they accomplish that, other enterprises in the same marketing arena engage in the movement of finished agricultural products from the farmers in the production arena or the operators in the processing arena to the final points of sale (Ho *et al.*, 2019:5). In the event where emerging farmers are not engaged directly in the marketing or even selling of their agricultural products to the final consumers, the marketing domain constitutes of intermediaries that purchase, store, transport and distribute the agricultural products from the emerging farmers to the wholesalers, retailers or even directly to the final consumers (Kalita, 2017:6).

Though such activities also link with the players in support arena, support arena still differs from other agricultural arenas as it refers to the field that constitutes of organisations that offer different support services to mainly the operators or farmers in the primary agricultural production arena (Jat, Chakraborty, Ladha, Rana, Gathala, McDonald & Gerard, 2020:336). It includes government organisations or agencies that offer different agricultural extension and training services to emerging farmers as well as the required financial and regulatory support to emerging farmers.

Agricultural support domain also integrates all operators like agricultural cooperatives, non-governmental organisations and other profit-making and non-profit making organisations that support emerging farmers by offering free inputs, equipments and capital finance or low interest rate loans offered by agricultural development banks (Zhou, Guo, Liu, 2019:339). Agricultural support domain also offers emerging farmers with benefit from the professional operators like researchers that are involved in different studies and provisions of opinions on organic and genetic modified farming or even the techniques for

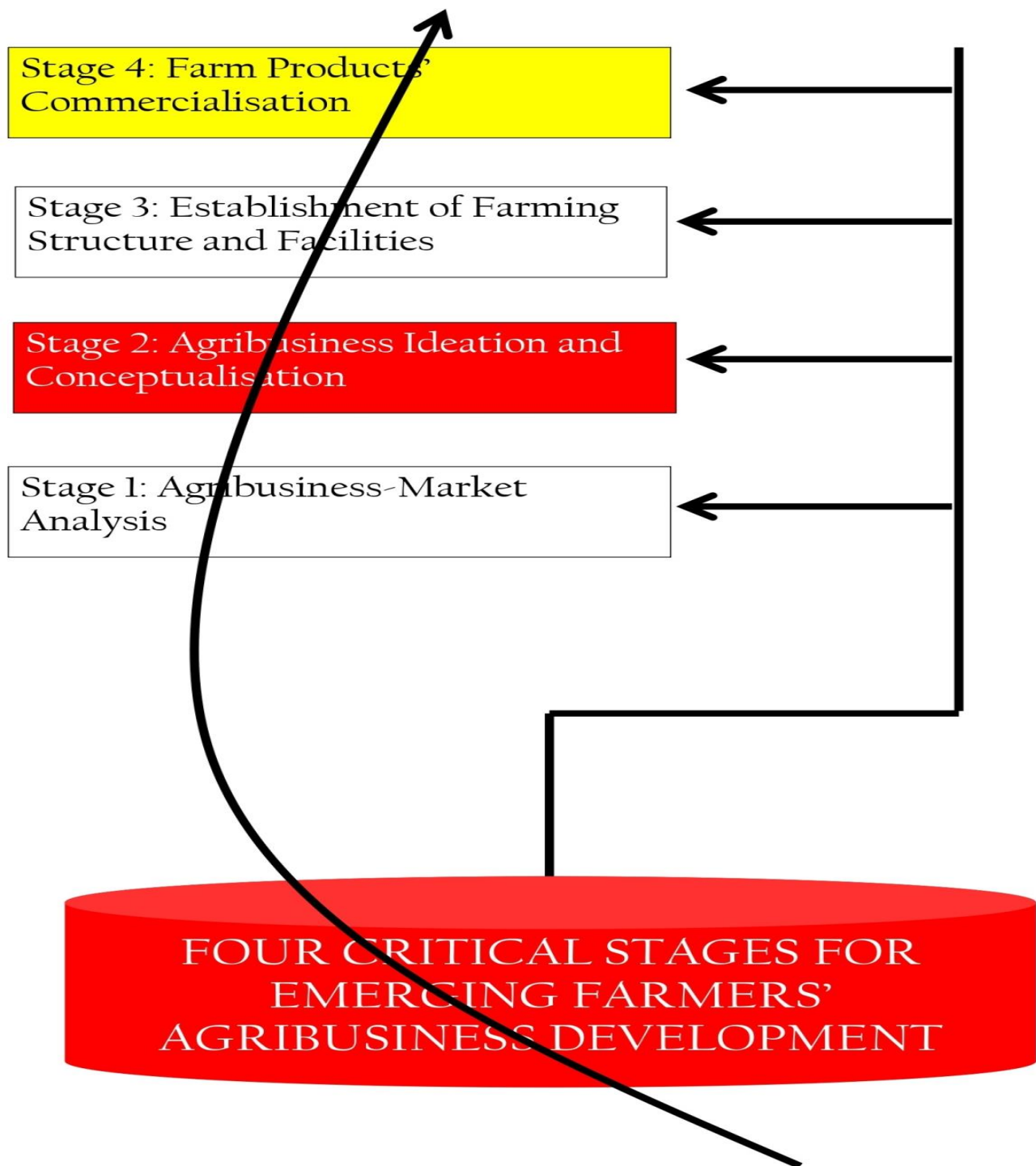
improving agribusiness management and performance. Through such activities, professional players in the support arena also provide actors in the input arena with insights on new agricultural inputs that must be developed and provided to the emerging farmers (Jat *et al.*, 2020:336).

Thus, with certitude, all these imply the existence of the input, production, processing, marketing and support arenas signifies though it is in the production arena that most of the emerging farmers in South Africa operate, it is also still critical for all emerging farmers to seamlessly integrate with the operators in the input, processing, marketing and support arenas in order to efficiently operate and create the desired values. But to achieve that, theories and literature on agribusiness development still suggest emerging farmers will still have to develop and establish more vibrant agribusiness entities in the agricultural production arena (Morton, 2020:105; Chengappa, 2018:3; Vroegindewey & Hodbod, 2018:916).

2.3.1 CRITICAL STAGES FOR EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Theories imply pragmatic approaches used over the years by successful agribusinesses suggest the four critical stages for emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth include agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and farm products' commercialisation (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308; Kelly *et al.*, 2015:19; Westen *et al.*, 2019:64). Such four critical stages are illustrated in Figure 2.7:

Figure 2.7: Four Critical Stages for Emerging Farmers' Agribusiness Development



Source: Adapted from Chamberlain and Anseeuw (2019:308).

2.3.1.1 Agribusiness-Market Analysis

The agribusiness market analysis is a strategic process through which emerging farmers evaluate the suitability as well as threats in the existing agribusiness markets so as to discern the most suitable agribusiness entities that must be established (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308). Most successful emerging farmers often undertake market analysis in the initial stages of the process for developing their start-up agribusiness entities.

Unfortunately, due to lack of know-how and shortage of capital finance, a majority of most emerging farmers also often do not do agribusiness market analysis prior to the establishment of their agribusiness entities (Kirsty, 2016:5). In most of the cases, this leads to the establishment of wrong agribusiness concepts that often fail immediately after start-up (DiMatteo & Schoneveld, 2016:11). Agri-products' market trends' analysis aids emerging farmers' capabilities to isolate agribusiness opportunities that the agribusiness to be established must be directed at maximising to achieve the desired strategic agribusiness goals and objectives (Hoof & Thiell, 2014:239).

Agri-products' market trends' analysis also spawns emerging farmers' identification of agribusiness threats like the existence of well-established agribusiness entities offering substitute agri-products that must be diffused or even converted into agribusiness opportunities to leverage emerging farmers overall effective performance in the designated agribusiness industry (Okanga & Groenewald, 2017a:62). To achieve that, agribusiness market analysis requires emerging farmers to use business environmental scanning entailing the application of agribusiness PESTEL (Political, Economical, Social, Technological, Ecological and Legal) evaluation. The environmental scanning using PESTEL analysis aids though diagnosis of the agribusiness environment to identify political and government policies that either threaten or offer enormous opportunities for different agribusinesses (DiMatteo & Schoneveld, 2016:11). It enhances analysis of the changes in economic trends like increment population causing a rise in the demand for food to create more markets for agricultural products. Social trends causing emergence of consumer preferences for agricultural products like organic agri-products as contrasted to genetically-modified agricultural products is often evaluated to discern how the agribusiness to be established is affected or not affected (Wiggins, Henley & Keats, 2015:9).

Subsequently, agribusiness PESTEL analysis requires emerging farmers to evaluate emergence agricultural technologies as well ecological and legal concerns that may create advantages or threats for the agribusiness to be established (Dias, Rodrigues & Ferreira, 2019:125). Such analysis can improve emerging farmers' capabilities to modify their agribusiness concepts to emerge with innovative agribusiness entities that are more responsive to the needs of agricultural products and services market (Wiggins *et al.*, 2015:9). However, for emerging farmers to isolate all agricultural risks as well as opportunities in the agribusiness industry, trends unfolding in the national, regional and international agricultural products and services' markets may offer insights on actions that can or cannot be undertaken (Majama & Magang, 2017:74). National agricultural markets' analysis may require emerging farmers to analyse and identify consumer segments, competitors and legislations that either create agribusiness opportunities or even constrain agribusiness' effective performance (Kirsty, 2016:5).

Market analysis refers to the process of evaluating the prevailing needs and demands of the consumers (Gao, Zuzul, Jones & Khanna, 2017:2147). Consumers' needs and demands as well as tastes and preferences influence the type of products that they desire (Adewale, 2016:55). Regional and international agricultural products and services' markets require emerging farmers to evaluate emergence of incidents like climate change causing drought in other parts of Africa and the world that may instigate high demand for agricultural products and services (DiMatteo & Schoneveld, 2016:11). In other words, such analysis leverages emerging farmers' capabilities to conceptualise and establish agribusiness entities that are more responsive to the changes in agribusiness market trends (Motswene, 2017:19). Some of the emerging farmers may lack skills, capabilities and mentors to undertake effective environmental scanning and market analysis. However, Vassileva and Dimitrova (2020:219) still posit that while using Porter's (1986) five forces of competitors' analysis, emerging farmers must also evaluate the number of new agribusiness entrants in the sector that they deal in. Emerging farmers must also analyse growing bargain power of agricultural inputs' suppliers so as to discern how such changes would affect their agribusiness operational costs and profitability (Grashuis, 2018:3). Other area for emerging farmers to analyse is the growing buyers' bargaining power in agricultural products and services markets reflecting wholesalers and retailers that dictate prices for agricultural products in their value chain networks (Grashuis, 2018:3).

Emerging farmers must also assess risks of the emergence of various agricultural products' substitutes or the likely increase in the degree of agribusiness industry volatilities. As such analysis enables emerging farmers to be aware of the threats and opportunities they are exposed to, Vassileva and Dimitrova (2020:219) emphasise that such analysis must be accompanied with agribusiness' capabilities' analysis. Certainly most of the emerging farmers face the challenge of poor record keeping and lack of access to relevant information. However, Motswene (2017:19) still reiterates that emerging farmers' capabilities' analysis entails analysis of the existence or lack of agricultural skills, equipment, machineries, experience, financial resources and partners that offer unique agricultural inputs and markets. Such emerging farmers' capabilities' analysis aids discerning the degree to which emerging farmers are able to counter the identified agribusiness threats while also reaping the unfolding agribusiness opportunities. Although agri-market analysis is a continuous process, its completion at this stage induces enormous agribusiness information that accurately informs emerging farmers on the kind of agribusiness entity in which to venture (Mupfasoni, Kessler, Lans & Ngenzebuke, 2019:85).

2.3.1.2 Agribusiness Ideation and Conceptualisation

With a lot of information gained from agri-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation is a stage when emerging farmers meditate, imagine, think and rethink to refine their agribusiness concepts in the context of the unfolding agribusiness market and industry trends (Nelson & Phillips, 2018:9). Depending on the type of agribusiness as well as agricultural products to be invested in, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation stage requires emerging farmers to evaluate the ideas of the agricultural products that they want to provide (Wiggins *et al.*, 2015:9). Such agricultural products must be evaluated and conceptualised against what the agricultural products' consumers want vis-à-vis what the agribusiness competitors are offering (Brinckmann, Dew, Read, Mayer-Haug & Grichnik, 2019:173). This enables emerging farmers to position their agribusiness entities in the way that not only responds to the needs of the market, but also creates points-of-difference that set them apart from other emerging farmers as well as well-established large scale farmers (Pindado, Sanchez, Verstegen & Lans, 2018:101).

Gaps can arise from the fact that most of the well-established large scale farmers often produce large amounts of agricultural products and are therefore unable to supply fresh agricultural products. Hence, despite difficulties to get access, emerging farmers can still utilise such gaps to conceptualise and position themselves as the producers and suppliers of fresh agricultural products (George, Walker & Monster, 2019:810). This will enable emerging farmers to respond to growing demand for fresh agricultural products from the modern health conscious consumers and counter competition from well-established large scale farmers (Kirsty, 2016:5). In otherwords, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation aid evaluation of the agricultural products that emerging farmers must produce vis-à-vis the needs, gaps and level of competition in the agribusiness market and industry (Rae, 2017:486) (Rosenstock, Lubberink, Gondwe, Manyise & Dentoni, 2020:76) .

Apart from the general agribusiness models as well as what can be learnt from other emerging farmers, large scale commercial farmers or farmers' focus group, there is no defined template that emerging farmers can use (George *et al.*, 2019:810). Some of the emerging farmers that can, often link up with large scale commercial farmers to discern the kind of agribusiness that they can initiate. However, in most cases, the idea of agribusiness to get engaged in will depend on the type of agribusiness that a particular emerging farmer is seeking to get involved in. Successful entry in such agribusiness market will depend on the capabilities of each emerging farmer to emerge with agricultural products of superior quality that offer what agricultural products' customers are searching for (Okanga & Groenewald, 2017a:62). Such agricultural products must also be able to fill the gaps in the agribusiness market and counter competition from other emerging farmers and well-established farmers (Adewale, 2016:55).

But even if the competition is high, ideation and conceptualisation of the best agribusiness concept to establish may also be influenced by the vastness of the agri-market to be served. If the agri-market is too vast and large, high number of agribusiness operators in that agri-market may still not erode its profitability (Salvini, Dentoni, Ligtenberg, Herold, Bregt, 2018:533). This is because vastness of the market means high demand. If the motive of a particular emerging farmer is sales maximization and not profit-maximisation, then conceptualisation and establishment of an agribusiness entity in such agribusiness markets is a viable idea (Tyrychtr *et al.*, 2015:63). Nevertheless, with agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation leading to refinement and reaching the conclusion on the final agricultural enterprise to be development, the next stage requires emerging farmers to put

such agribusiness ideas and concepts into practice by establishing the required farming structure and facilities (Sumane *et al.*, 2018:232).

2.3.1.3 Establishment of Farming Structure and Facilities

Any linking of emerging farmers to large scale commercial farmers' associations can enable the majority of emerging farmers to accomplish most of these activities more efficiently and effectively. This is because the establishment of farming structures and facilities is the stage where emerging farmers translate their agribusiness ideas into practices by investing in and establishing the required farming structures and facilities (DiMatteo & Schoneveld, 2016:11). It requires emerging farmers to develop the agribusiness plan, get the agribusiness entity registered with government authorities and establish the requisite management structure. The registration of agribusiness start-ups is important because it renders it possible for emerging farmers to enter into all forms of business contracts that are critical for efficient and effective operation of the established agribusiness entity (van Hille, de Bakker, Groenewegen & Ferguson, 2019:88). It also enables emerging farmers use their registered agribusinesses to access loans from financial institutions.

But depending on the attractiveness of the agribusiness project proposal and the available collaterals (Okpala, 2020:4). In the event that emerging farmers do not have land for the establishment of the agricultural entity, it is at this stage that land is also purchased (Beber, Theuvsen & Otter, 2018:82). It is also at the establishment of farming structures and facilities that emerging farmers mobilise the required financial resources by seeking for loans from financial institutions or even government grants. These apply in situations where the agribusiness entity is not able to raise sufficient financial capital from previous savings by individual emerging farmers or from the floating of its share capital (De Lima, Medeiros, Dardin & Stangarlin-Fiori, 2019: e12637).

Nonetheless, with land and capital finance obtained, emerging farmers can then establish the necessary structures and facilities. That will certainly depend on the kind of agribusiness entity that the emerging farmer is involved in (Funke, Fischer & Holt, 2018:16). For those venturing into beef or dairy production, the establishment of fenced paddocks for grazing beef or dairy cattle would be a prerequisite. In case, the emerging

farmer is venturing in poultry or pig farming, the establishment of relevant housing infrastructure for the chicken or pigs is required (Wambui, Karuri, Lamuka & Matofari, 2017:34).

These must be accompanied with the establishment of the storage infrastructure and facilities for handling the feeds as well as the veterinary medicine for the cattle, pigs or chicken depending on the kinds of animals or birds that the emerging farmer is venturing into (Upadhayaya & Ghimire, 2018:110). For financially capable emerging farmers, part of the agricultural infrastructure and facilities may also include agricultural research laboratories to invent better agricultural products, farming methods, pest control and innovative mechanisms for mitigating the devastating impacts of climate change. In other words, all the emerging farmers venturing into animal husbandry must have also the structures and facilities for efficient and effective running of the business of animal husbandry (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14).

As for emerging farmers venturing into crop farming, investment, and establishment in all the structure and facilities for efficient and effective operation of the business of crop farming are critical prerequisites. For crop farming, some of the requisite equipment are ploughing, sowing, weeding, and harvesting machineries and the required facilities are storage and transportation facilities (Antonioli & Santeramo, 2017:14). Yet, as the agribusiness entity gets established and begins operation, refinement of the management structure is still important for avoiding the overload of the emerging farm owner with a lot of management activities (Caetano, Sebastian & Ioannis, 2021:19). Thus, there must be a general farm manager, farm inputs' procurement manager, field managers, accounts and finance manager, farming infrastructure and equipment manager, supervisors in all the required areas and unskilled and semi-skilled farm personnel that are in charge of accomplishing all the scheduled day-to-day farm activities (Okpala, Nwobi & Korzeniowska, 2021a:1165).

Agribusiness however requires a lot of patience from emerging farmers as it takes time or even years for the established agribusiness entity to start generating revenues. But with time, as the emerging farmer gets established and starts producing agricultural products for the market, the need for the employment of a permanent marketing and logistics manager may also arise. Thus, it is also at that point that the emerging farmers will have to

introduce and commercialise the produced agricultural products into the market (Okanga & Groenewald, 2017b:156).

2.3.1.4 Farm Products' Commercialisation

Some of the emerging farmers often fail to reach this stage while others reach this stage but still do not execute all the required tasks more effectively. However, there are also still good commercialisation practices that can be learnt from the emerging farmers that have built capabilities to execute all the activities required for the commercialisation of their agricultural products (Sinkel, Khouryieh, Daday, Stone & Shen, 2018:111). Farm products' commercialisation is the stage at which different agricultural products produced by emerging farmers are introduced and marketed in the agricultural products' markets (Olson, Slater, Hult & Olson, 2018:62).

Farm products' commercialisation is the stage at which emerging farmers begin to produce and sell their products into the market. This is often the most difficult stage because of lack of customers' awareness about the emerging farmers' products (Olson *et al.*, 2018:62). It is also often difficult to break through the established value chain networks established between wholesalers, retailers and large-scale commercial farmers. Other challenge is that if the agricultural products are easily perishable, emerging farmers may experience loss as they take time to get the markets (Sinkel *et al.*, 2018:111). But if the produced agricultural products are of good quality, through intense marketing, advertisements and promotions, some of the emerging farmers often manage to get their products to diffuse through the agribusiness markets as fast as possible (Funke *et al.* 2018:16). Depending on the nature of the product, commercialisation process may entail the distribution of the emerging farmers' agricultural products throughout the distribution channels. It may also require advertisement and promotion of the agricultural product's availability with wholesalers and retailers (Kirsty, 2016:5). Other commercialisation strategies may require emerging farmers to use exhibitions to alert the entire agribusiness market about the existence and availability of such agricultural products (Jena & Chavan, 2017:20).

Improvement of the capacity of the emerging farmers to accomplish all the required activities in the commercialisation stage may require training and development of emerging farmers on the critical skills for agribusiness commercialisation, marketing and

salesforce management (Martins, De Campos Leite, Martins, Da Silva & De Carvalho Balian, 2019:e151385). Nonetheless, besides use of agribusiness salesforce that can move around commercial and residential areas marketing the produced agricultural products, commercialisation may also require emerging farmers to farm products' retail outlets where the produced farm products are directly sold to the final consumers. However, as emerging farmers use such approach, it is also critical that the pricing of their newly produced agricultural products are lower than those of the established agribusiness competitors (Minten, Randrianarison & Swinnen, 2019:1728). This will lure more customers to enable emerging farmers break through the established pricing barriers in the agribusiness markets.

Depending on the type of agricultural products produced by the emerging farmers, it is often during the commercialisation stage that the agricultural product may emerge as a disruptive innovation, a moderate market performer or just a poor market performer (Kungu, Dione, Roesel, Ejobi, Ocaido & Grace, 2017:1368). If the produced agricultural product emerges as a disruptive innovation, then that particular emerging farmer gains from the advantages of having to immediately recoup the cost of research and development as well as other costs establishing the agricultural entity (Hoof & Thiehl, 2014:239). But even if the product performs well or even poorly, further continuous improvement is critical for improving the commercialisation of emerging farmers' agricultural products. In other instances, emerging farmers with the requisite capital finance may also opt to add value and process the agricultural products into finished or semi-finished agricultural products. This not only prolongs shelf-life to emerging farmers' agricultural products, but also improves the commercialisation of their agricultural products across different channels (Martins *et al.*, 2019:e151385).

As the produced agricultural product gains traction and diffuses faster across the market, maintenance of the appropriate agricultural productivity capacity is critical for leveraging emerging farmers' sustainability and growth. In other words, it is during the commercialisation stage that emerging farmers often transition wholly from subsistence to commercial farming (Manyisea & Domenico, 2021:102). However, that still depends on whether emerging farmer performs well in the market because those that often fail to perform well often still fall back to dualistic form of subsistence and commercial farming.

As the agribusiness entities of emerging farmers struggle with how to expand to the other provincial or regional agribusiness markets, challenges may arise from superior market performance of some agricultural products that in turn capacity related challenges (Soon, Chandia & Regenstein, 2017:39). Most emerging farmers have the tendency to maintain very lean agricultural structures and operational systems in the initial stages of agribusiness entity. That implies as the demand of the new agricultural product escalates, some of the emerging farmers may not be able to easily respond by having the desired quantity of such agricultural products produced as fast as possible. Although new manpower can easily be recruited, quite often lack of well-established agricultural production and marketing procedures as well as operational approaches may also tend to hamper some of emerging farmers' operational efficiency and the quality of customer services (Okanga & Groenewald, 2017b:156).

Emerging farmers can resolve the agricultural capacity constraints by re-investing the gained profits on the purchase of new animals for the case of animal husbandry business or invest in the expansion of crop farming to produce more for the now delighted market. Emerging farmers can also invest in the development of additional agricultural structures, operational facilities and equipment as well as on improvement of the distribution infrastructures and networks (Okpala, 2019:6). Despite the impressive market performance of the agricultural product, extensive marketing and promotion is still important for branding emerging farmers' products as well as their entire agribusiness entities. In contrast if the agricultural product emerges only as a moderate or poor market performer, then that particular emerging farmer must review the product to improve its quality or even invest in the production of other agricultural products that seem more marketable (Manyisea & Domenico, 2021:102).

At this stage of commercialisation, emerging farmers must avoid doing the same thing over and over with change in results as reflected in their improved level of profitability. Other improvement strategies may require improvement of the farming methods being used as well as the introduction of other measures like irrigation, pest control and good storage (David, David & David, 2017:22). This will improve the marketability of the agricultural products that previously failed due to poor farming methods causing poor quality.

As all these catalyse agricultural productivity, increment of returns on investment as well as further expansion and growth, there are also other accompanying strategies that must be utilised for managing growth as well as the sustainability of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Elena, Yannou-Le Bris, Yannou & Petit, 2017: 461; Maestre, Poole & Henson, 2017:31; Abebe, Bahn, Chalak & Yehya, 2020:1082).

Even if it is during the commercialisation stage that emerging farmers are catapult from subsistence farming to commercial farming, there are still a combination of strategies that often influence effective managing of growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses.

2.4 MANAGING GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY OF EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESSES

Theories and literature such as Zavale, Matchaya, Vilissa, Nhemachena, Nhlengethwa and Wilson (2020:4691) and Muflikh, Smith and Aziz (2021:103) suggest that some of the strategies for managing the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses include agribusiness' integration in the value chain system. Other strategies encompass agricultural quality management and usage of agricultural cooperatives as a growth leveraging strategy (Mihalache, Dumitraşcu, Nicolau & Borda, 2021:107; Taha, Osaili, Saddal, Al-Nabulsi, Ayyash & Obaid, 2020:106).

2.4.1 AGRIBUSINESS' INTEGRATION IN THE VALUE CHAIN SYSTEM

The integration of agribusiness in the value chain is one of the strategies for catalysing and managing growth of the agribusiness entities initiated by emerging farmers (Bizikova, Nkonya, Minah, Hanisch, Turaga, Speranza, Karthikeyan, Tang, Ghezzi-Kopel & Kelly, 2020: 620). Whether the agribusiness is experiencing growth or performing poorly, seamless integration of such agricultural entity into the value chain is critical for bolstering its overall market performance. In the event of attractive market performance, the management of good relationships in the value chain networks as well as the initiation and management of new relationships are critical for spurring further good market

performance. In the situation where emerging farmer's agribusiness is performing poorly, integration of such agribusiness entity into the value chain is still a critical remedy for turning around its performance (Liverpool-Tasie, Wineman, Young, Tambo, Vargas, Reardon, Adjognon, Porciello, Gathoni & Bizikova, 2020: 799). This is because in both scenarios, integration in the value chain not only exposes the emerging farmers' agribusiness entities to lucrative new customers, but also improves the management of the existing relationships. This leverages the overall competitiveness and effective market performance of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses integrated in the value chain system as contrasted to the ones that have not done so (Olorunfemi & Kayode, 2021: 75).

Overall importance of integration in value chain for emerging farmers is reflected in Van den Broeck, Swinnen and Maertens' (2017:97) description of the agricultural value chain as an inter-linked processes reflecting a set of coherent activities that create and deliver to customers not only products of superior quality, but also products that are competitively priced at costs relatively affordable for all the market segments. It is not only integration in the value chain, but also its analysis that leverages capabilities of emerging farmers' agribusinesses to identify and eliminate certain activities and areas that undermine quality and cost competitiveness of the agribusiness entity.

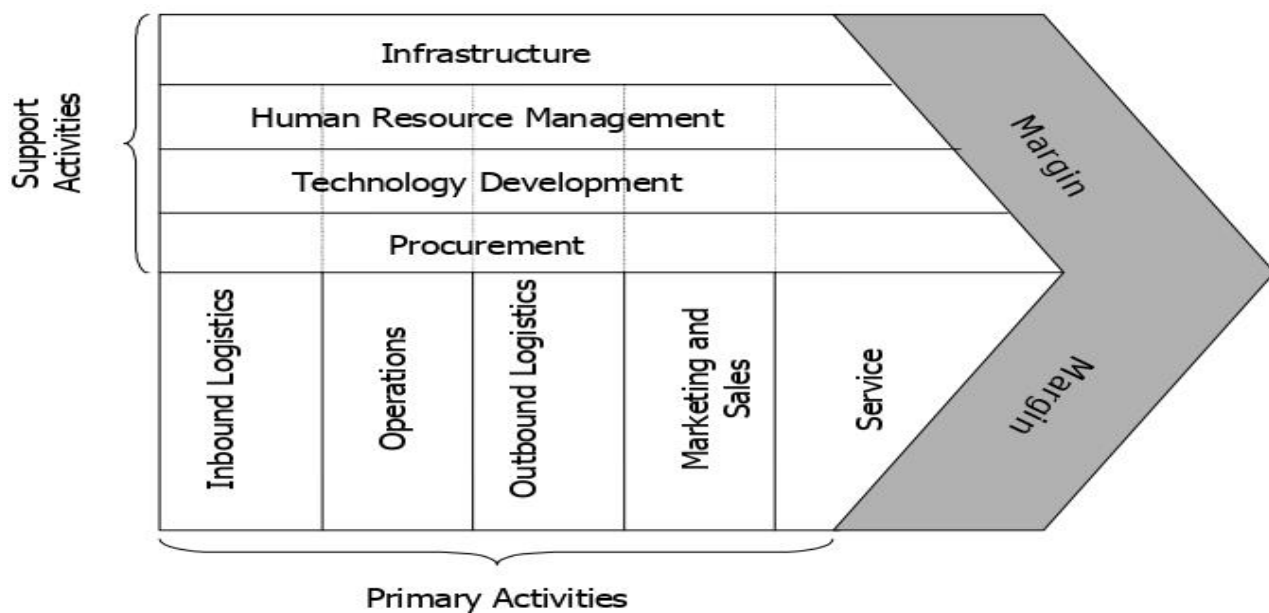
In such processes, Porter's (1985:42) value chain system as cited in Gengenbach, Schurman, Bassett, Munro and Moseley (2018:208) has been replicated in agricultural enterprises to illustrate the kinds of activities and their associated actors that operate in the agricultural value chain. Such agricultural value chain reflects not only the partners that emerging farmers must or must not integrate with, but also demonstrate the kinds of activities and areas to analyse and avoid or even integrate with to create the desired values for customers and the agribusiness. To therefore indicate the kinds of activities and partners that emerging farmers must integrate with, Gengenbach *et al.*, (2018:208) describe agricultural value chain to arise from the points where agricultural inputs are sourced and delivered to the farms and from the farms where agricultural crop or livestock products are produced and delivered through different distribution channels to the final consumers. Thus, efficient management of all the activities along such value chain leverages the creation of differential values that can catalyse emerging farmers' agribusinesses' overall effective market competitiveness and performance (Gengenbach *et al.*, 2018:208). For a typical emerging farmer that adheres to all the good agribusiness

practices, this can certainly change their performance to in turn also change the narratives that are often associated with most of the emerging farmers' poor performance.

However, for emerging farmers' agribusinesses to integrate with such value chain system, Van den Broeck, Swinnen and Maertens (2017:97) as well as Gengenbach *et al.*, (2018:208) mimic Porter's (1985:42) value chain system that agricultural entities' value chain constitutes of two sets of inter-related primary and support activities. As indicated in Figure 2.8, primary activities comprise of five sets of activities that are critical for creating differential values that spawn agribusiness' overall competitiveness. Such primary activities include inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales as well as service (Kotu, Abass, Hoeschle-Zeledon, Mbwambo & Bekunda, 2019:98). Figure 2.8 further indicates that inbound logistics integrate the process through which emerging farmers source inputs like seeds, animal feeds, seed animals, fertilizers, irrigation equipment, equipment, machineries and among others farm workers' protective wear from different suppliers or manufacturers of agricultural inputs and store them for usage in their agricultural production activities. Operation is the actual agricultural production in which such inputs are seamlessly combined with other inputs like labour, land, capital finance and good entrepreneurial skills and capabilities to create the desired crop or livestock products (Kumar & Kalita, 2017:6).

Outbound logistics connote the activities of distributing and moving the finished agricultural products from the farm or the farm warehouses to the final consumers. In such a process, emerging farmers may directly distribute their products to the market or use intermediaries to distribute the product across the market.

Figure 2.8: Agribusiness Value Chain System



Source: Adapted from Porter (1986) as cited in Kumar and Kalita (2017:6)

Marketing and sales deal with the usage of a set of strategies like advertisement, promotion, door-to-door marketing and appropriate pricing like market penetration to create visibility and promote the product to the designated market segments (Liu, Guo, Zhou, 2018: 241). Even after the emerging farmers have distributed the agricultural products to the market and customers have already bought them, service is a critical component of primary activities that must remain active to address customer needs about rejects, complaints and even compliments about the product.

Usage of service component of primary activities to deal with all kinds of questions that customers may have about the product often bolsters improved customer relationship management, retention and loyalty (Zhang, Xu, Sun & Elahi, 2021:462). In the long run, all these often translate into the sources of value creation to spur increment in sales, revenue, profitability and the overall financial bottom-line of the emerging farmers. But even if it is a set of these primary activities that create values for the emerging farmers' agribusiness entities, their capabilities and efficiency to do so still depend on the availability of relevant support activities that emerging farmers have at their disposal (Balie, del Prete, Magrini, Montalbano & Nenci, 2019: 773). Such support activities coherently integrate four sets of activities of procurement, technological development, human resource management and infrastructure. Procurement concerns the analysis of

the process through which emerging farmers source different agricultural inputs or raw materials that they use in their different agricultural production activities. It evaluates quality considerations and specifications as well as cost variables that are integrated in the emerging farmers' decision to procure or not to procure from a particular supplier or manufacturer of agricultural inputs (Montalbano, Pietrelli & Salvatici, 2018: 81).

Technological advancement refers not only to the sophisticated agricultural machineries or equipment, but also the complex scientific and agricultural know-how, skills, knowledge and research that the agribusiness entity engages in to develop and use new agricultural production techniques. Such techniques may entail the development and use of new and better quality seeds, animals to generate other animals, new animal feeds, more efficient production processes and better ways of dealing with soil management and fertility issues (Fan & Sun, 2018: 860). It also evaluates the extent to which emerging farmers have automated certain agricultural production processes like the automation of the milking process, poultry feeding, weeding, harvesting and processing of crops or animal products for the market.

As emerging farmers engage in such support activities, the existence of more effective human resource management systems is the other support activities that must be put in place (Liu, Liu & Zhou, 2017:66). For very small size emerging farmers, human resource management may not be a challenge due to the manageable small number of farm workers. However, for relatively larger emerging farmers, human resource management soothes and smoothen the efficacy of farm workers to accomplish all the activities that are required for generating the desired quantity and quality of agricultural output.

Human resource management deals with not only how farm workers manage the actual farming activities, but also how they adhere with relevant quality and cost management prescriptions during the sourcing of the required inputs from suppliers as well as in the course of combining such inputs to generate the desired agricultural output (Mugivhisa, Olowoyo & Mzimba, 2017: 85). It also integrates with the efficiency of the activities of moving the agricultural products from the farm to the market for final sale to the consumers. Human resource management is related to all the other activities as well as to infrastructure which is the last support activity that integrates both soft and hard infrastructure. Soft infrastructure refers to the management system constituting of planning, accounting, finance, marketing, logistics, quality control and agricultural

production teams that the emerging farmers have put in place (Pereira, Marques & Fuinhas, 2019:791).

Hard infrastructure connotes the farm buildings like administrative building, animal or crop production buildings, fences and storage building and facilities that the emerging farmers have put in place. Existence of such a value chain often leverages effective performance of an agricultural enterprise (Pereira, Marques & Fuinhas, 2019:791). Unfortunately, studies on emerging farmers' agricultural production and operations imply most of the emerging farmers' attentions are often directed to bolstering only the efficiency of the support activities (Alexander *et al.*, 2020:17; Zavale, Matchaya, Vilissa, Nhemachena, Nhlengethwa & Wilson, 2020:4691).

Such support activities like procurement, technological development, human resource management and infrastructure are although internal still link with primary activities such as inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales as well as service. These primary activities modulate with external and internal systems to create conditions that either leverage or even constrain emerging farmers' agribusiness entities (Yang, de Sherbinin & Liu, 2020:102).

Diagnosis of how primary and support activities interface with each other is critical for bolstering the efficiency of emerging farmers' agribusinesses. But that would require emerging farmers to create a nexus between the suppliers of different agricultural inputs with their internal procurement systems as well as the integration of their marketing and distribution systems with the players in the outbound logistic environment (Ola & Menapace, 2020:101). In that context, Muflikh, Smith and Aziz (2021:103) suggest that emerging farmers must create both backward and forward linkages with the players in their external environment. Backward linkages signify emerging farmers must link and integrate with the suppliers of their agricultural inputs and forward linkages imply emerging farmers must link and integrate with any customer or organisation that buys or facilitates the exposition of their agricultural products to the final consumers.

Backward linkages would require the creation and maintaining of good working relationships with suppliers of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, equipment, machineries and agricultural capital finance through loans from financial institutions (Von Loeper, Drimie & Blignaut, 2018:161). It also requires networking and managing working relationships with agricultural cooperatives, government agencies,

agricultural extension officials, agricultural researchers and scientists and non-governmental organisations that are engaged in the provision of different farmers' support programmes.

Forward linkages would require emerging farmers to network and develop working relationships with actors like distributors, transporters, processors and manufacturers of agricultural products, procurement officials of supermarkets, wholesalers and retailers as well as marketers, promoters and even direct dealings with final consumers in the market (von Loeper, Drimie & Blignaut, 2018:161).

The existence of such synergistic and integral relationships within the value chain system would not only expose emerging farmers to an array of different customers, but also improve information sharing and capabilities of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses to perform well, grow and become more sustainable. But even if that is the case, theories on agribusiness management still insinuate such initiatives must also be integrated with good quality management practices in the emerging farmers' agribusiness entities (Smith & Frankenberger, 2020:105; Barzola-Iza & Dentoni, 2020:2020).

2.4.2 AGRICULTURAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The quality management in agribusiness is one of the critical growth drivers that emerging farmers can utilise to capture and retain more customers to bolster the increment in sales, market share, revenue, profitability and the overall financial bottom-line (Mizanbekova, Umbetaliev, Aitzhanova & Bogomolov, 2017:42). It leverages access to the market by eliminating quality issues that often affect the attractiveness of their agricultural products. Agricultural quality management in agribusiness is the process of putting in place and ensuring the agricultural production system produces products that meet the prescribed quality specifications and standards (Wulandari, 2021:012).

In the increasingly more competitive agribusiness landscape in which the emerging farmers operate, high level of quality management is critical for improving the connection of customers with the agribusiness offering agricultural products of superior quality. It is such connectivity with customers that create differential values to spawn the overall competitiveness of emerging farmers' agribusinesses as compared to those with poor

quality management practices (Wulandari, 2021:012). If consistent, quality management therefore tends to catalyse further growth and sustainability of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Good quality management not only creates quality outputs that spur growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in the domestic markets, but also in the international markets through exports (Mizanbekova *et al.*, 2017:42). Capabilities to achieve such outcomes require emerging farmers to adhere to certain prescribed ways of handling agricultural inputs, farming methods, harvesting, storage, preservation and handling during transportation or movement from the farms to the markets.

However, Okpala and Korzeniowska (2021:903) note that implementation of quality management practices in most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses have often been a challenge because some of the emerging farmers do not understand the importance of good quality management in agriculture. Others understand its importance but do not still understand how to enhance quality management in agricultural production to achieve the desired outcomes. There are also situations where some emerging farmers resist quality management change and transformation due to the hefty costs required for adoption of certain agricultural quality management systems (Okpala & Korzeniowska, 2021:903). Even if the emerging farmers themselves do not resist, it is in certain cases their farm workers that may tend to resist and sabotage the quality management process due to the required high volume and complexity of work without much additional pay (Wilcock & Boys 2017:10). As these induce the creation of agricultural products that do not meet quality specifications, other challenges of emerging farmers' embracement of quality management practices often arise from lack of resources, complexities of the required quality measurement techniques, poor data management and poor agricultural production process control (Mambanda, Maibvisira & Murangwa, 2017:26).

Such complexities tend to induce poor quality poor agricultural products that plague the overall competitiveness, growth and sustainability of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses in the domestic and international markets. This is because agriculture deals with human nutrition and health which is a stringently regulated area in terms of quality assurance, sanitary and safety requirements (Karmawati, Ardana, Siswanto & Soetopo, 2020:10). These are accompanied with stringent quality and safety regulations on micro-organism contamination, aflatoxins and pesticide residues that all emerging farmers' agribusinesses must comply with. To therefore address quality management issues among emerging farmers, Wilcock and Boys (2017:10) propose the integration of total quality management

in agricultural production. Even though emerging farmers may be constrained by resources, time and know-how, in agricultural production, total quality management is a holistic process through the quality of agricultural output is managed right from the points of sourcing and storage of inputs, storage, conversion of such inputs in agricultural outputs as well as storage and transportation of such outputs to the final consumers.

Just like in any other business, agricultural total quality management is a multidimensional construct which is measured by six elements that include top management commitment, customer focus, supplier quality management, human resource management, continuous improvement and process management (Casolani, Liberatore & Psomas, 2018:125).

Management structure in most of the emerging farms may just have the owner of the farm and a few managers. But still for such emerging farmers as well as medium scale emerging farmers with more complex management structures, top management commitment requires the senior management structure at the emerging farmers' agribusinesses to ensure that quality management is integrated at all levels and stages of agricultural production processes. It is also the top management as well as the emerging farmers as shareholders that take initiatives of ensuring the agribusiness entity is allocated sufficient funds for the implementation of agricultural quality management system at all levels (Okpala & Korzeniowska, 2020:578). In such decisions, emerging farmers will have to recognise that although agricultural quality management is costly, it turns to not only pay back but also significantly reduce quality issues that often devalue agribusiness' effective performance.

Besides top management commitment, customer focus as yet another element of TQM emphasises the need for understanding the demands of the consumers to tailor agricultural production to respond to such needs (Costa-Font & Revoredo-Giha, 2020:6). Such needs may entail consumers' concerns about the safety and health implications of the consumption of certain agricultural products. This would require the agricultural production processes are undertaken by emerging farmers as well as their farm workers in the way that do not compromise health and safety of the consumers (Kotsanopoulos & Arvanitoyannis, 2017:760).

Such safety and quality management processes must not only be integrated in the actual farming processes, but also in the processing, storage and transportation of the harvested products to the final consumers. At the sametime agricultural total management principles

must also be integrated in the supply chain using supplier quality management as the other critical TQM element(Okpala & Ezeonu, 2019:697).

Such initiatives will require emerging farmers to ensure it is only reputable suppliers with higher considerations for quality are engaged to supply the required agricultural inputs like fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, irrigation equipments and machineries. This could eliminate the usage of certain dangerous pesticides that cause health and safety risks to farm workers as well as customers. It also prevents emerging farmers from using seeds that produce poor quality crop or animal products (Okpala, Sardo, Vitale, Bono, & Arukwe, 2018:1986). Such initiatives must also be accompanied with the integration of TQM principles in human resource management. Emerging farmers can accomplish that by training and developing all the farm workers including all the managers about the importance of agricultural quality management as the critical techniques and principles to apply to enhance total agricultural quality management throughout the entire agribusiness entity (Mihalache, Dumitraşcu, Nicolau & Borda, 2021:107).

Even if such initiative would leverage quality management, emerging farmers must still also adopt the concept of continuous improvement. Continuous improvement would require emerging farmers to initiate and entrench the culture that whether the outcomes are good or bad, further improvements must be continuously adopted to induce as the best outcomes as possible (Mihalache, Dumitraşcu, Nicolau & Borda, 2021:107). Subsequently, emerging farmers must also pay attention to process management as the other critical element of TQM by integrating quality management in all the critical processes of sourcing inputs, storage of inputs, handling inputs and usage of inputs in the required farming process as well as the process of extracting the agricultural products from the farm and transporting them to the market (Bahn & Abebe, 2017:28). In otherwords, all these agricultural total quality management elements would ameliorate all the quality management issues that plague and deleverage emerging farmers' agribusiness' performance to induce the outcomes that spur the growth and sustainability of the agribusiness entities that use such quality management process.

However, Wulandari (2021:012) also suggests that for emerging farmers to entrench agricultural total quality management in their agricultural operations, such quests must involve the investment in the requisite technologies, training on the usage of relevant agricultural quality management methods and tools as well as consistent measurement

and improvement of agricultural quality management at all the levels and stages of agricultural production. Wulandari also emphasises the importance for collection and usage of valid and reliable data in agricultural quality measurement, consistent analysis, identification and response to consumers' health and safety concerns, knowledge sharing and creating incentives for rewarding good quality management practices among farm workers.

In addition, Okpala, Nwobi and Korzeniowska (2021b:41) further propose the essence for emerging farmers to adopt the philosophy of zero-defect or defect free agricultural production and development and use of appropriate feedback mechanisms to get inputs from farm workers as well as consumers for continuous improvement to be undertaken. Certainly, these imply integration of critical agricultural quality management principles would ameliorate most of the quality management dynamics that often plague emerging farmers' agribusiness to deleverage their growth and sustainability (Marklinder, Ahlgren, Blucherc, Borjesson, Hellkvist, Moazzami, Schelin, Zetterstrom, Eskhult & Danielsson-Tham, 2020:107). But even if that is so, theories and literature further imply usage of agricultural cooperatives is the other strategy that can bolster the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Hohler & Kuhl, 2018:697).

2.4.4 AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES AS A GROWTH LEVERAGING STRATEGY

The agricultural cooperatives that often offer secured markets for emerging farmers' agricultural products connote the socio-economic organisations established, managed and control by farmers to create the desired socio-economic values for the farmers, surrounding communities and the country at large (Wolz, Mollers & Micu, 2020:57). Agricultural cooperative constitutes part of the critical strategies for leveraging the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers. It builds both the internal and external capabilities of emerging farmers' agribusiness.

Internally, agricultural cooperatives bolster the pooling and sharing of resources among emerging farmers. It also aids the sharing of information and knowledge as well as farming equipment and machineries (Hoken & Su, 2018:831). This spawns the capabilities of the emerging farmers that do not have access to relevant resources and machineries to gain and improve the productivity of their agricultural entities. Through increment of agricultural

productivity, emerging farmers can be able to generate the desired output levels to attract increment in sales, revenue and profitability (Luo, Guo & Jia, 2017:19).

It is not only through such a process that agricultural cooperatives bolster growth and sustainability of the emerging farmers, but also through the notion that agricultural cooperatives also spawn improvement of emerging farmers' external capabilities. Externally, agricultural cooperatives improves the bargaining power of emerging farmers to bargain better deals and prices with the suppliers of agricultural inputs (Luo *et al.*, 2017:19). This reduces the overall input and operational costs to bolster capabilities of emerging farmers to offer agricultural products to the final consumers at prices that are relatively competitive.

As agricultural cooperatives bolster the bargaining power of emerging farmers with suppliers of agricultural inputs, it also tends to increase the bargaining power of emerging farmers when negotiating deals with large scale purchasers of agricultural products like agro-processors and manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and exporters (Ngamjan & Buranasiri, 2020: 2343). This is because agricultural cooperative improves the collective power of emerging farmers to negotiate and reach decision at an entity. It contrasts and creates enormous advantages as compared to the situations where each emerging farmers individually negotiate deals with the suppliers of agricultural inputs as well as purchasers of agricultural outputs. For suppliers of agricultural inputs, they would be more enticed to offer enormous discounts to emerging farmers that are purchasing at once and in large quantities under a particular agricultural cooperative (Ngamjan & Buranasiri, 2020: 2343).

As in the case of the purchases of agricultural outputs, agricultural cooperatives spawn emerging farmers' negotiating power because once all the emerging farmers dealing in a particular agricultural cooperative have come together, it implies the prices that they are proposing is the price that is most likely to be offered by all the other farmers. Thus, agricultural cooperatives improve the collective capabilities of emerging farmers to successfully compete against the large scale commercial farmers (Huang & Liang, 2018:48). This is because agricultural cooperatives facilitate the seamless integration of emerging farmers into the industry and market value chains. It also improves the capabilities of emerging farmers to collective influence government policies and decisions in their favour. Agricultural cooperatives may take any of the certain four forms of

agricultural cooperatives depending on what the emerging farmers desire to achieve (Huang & Liang, 2018:48). Such four forms of agricultural cooperatives encompass marketing cooperatives, farm supply cooperatives, service cooperatives and New Generation Cooperatives.

Marketing cooperatives that are also known as producer cooperatives engage in the, processing, manufacturing and marketing and promoting farmers' agricultural products for better prices (Wolz *et al.*, 2020: 57). They tend to secure more lucrative markets for farmers' agricultural products. In contrast, farm supply cooperatives focus on inputs by purchasing, manufacturing, processing and distributing in large quantities the farm supplies and inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, feed, chemicals, petroleum products, farm equipment, hardware, and building supplies.

Service cooperatives tend to focus on the provision of services like transporting, storage, ginning, grinding, drying, artificial insemination, irrigation, credit, utilities, and insurance to farmers that are members of that service cooperative (Wang & Luo, 2019:767). New Generation Cooperatives aim at adding value and selling processed agricultural products as contrasted to selling unprocessed agricultural products from farmers who are members of that particular cooperative. Certainly, agricultural cooperatives reduce the exploitation of emerging farmers by suppliers of agricultural inputs that charge highly and by the purchasers of agricultural products that charge very low prices for emerging farmers' produce (Hohler & Kuhl, 2018:697).

Agricultural cooperatives also tend to insulate emerging farmers in situations of economic crisis. This is because they tend to sign long term contracts with the purchasers of different agricultural products to the extent that in the event of economic crisis; emerging farmers still often have secured markets for their agricultural products. But even if that implies agricultural cooperatives catalyse the performance of emerging farmers' agribusinesses to bolster their growth and sustainability in the midst of all economic circumstances, empirical evidence still suggests agricultural cooperatives are often plagued with governance and lack of accountability issues (Ngamjan & Buranasiri, 2020: 2343; Huang & Liang, 2018:48; Luo *et al.*, 2017:19). In certain cases, agricultural cooperatives have been with corruption allegations and embezzlement of members' funds. Some of the agricultural cooperatives have also often faced the challenge of becoming completely financially independent as they tend to perennially depend on governments for funding (Wang & Luo, 2019:767).

The implication is that this tends to induce free-rider problems where emerging farmers take membership of agricultural cooperatives if the government is anticipated to disburse funds and disappear once the funds are exhausted. However, though such incidents devalue the capabilities of agricultural cooperatives to create values for emerging farmers, studies still confirm agricultural cooperatives to extensively spawn the growth and long term sustainability of most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Wolz *et al.*, 2020: 57; Hohler & Kuhl, 2018:697; Hoken & Su, 2018:831). In other words, it is evident that theories and literature imply some of the strategies for managing the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses include agribusiness' integration in the value chain system (Smith & Frankenberger, 2020:105; Barzola-Iza & Dentoni, 2020:2020) (Manyisea & Domenico, 2021:102). Other strategies encompass agricultural quality management and usage of agricultural cooperatives as a growth leveraging strategy (Wallace, Sperber, Mortimore, 2018:494; Ryan, 2017:342; Trafiałek & Kolanowski, 2017:710–728).

However, even if such strategies influence the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusiness, theories and literature still signifies quests of most of the emerging farmers to develop and nurture the growth of more sustainable agribusinesses are often still hampered by a combination of certain challenges(Williams, Crespo & Abu, 2019:124; Yaseen, Somogyi & Bryceson, 2018:124; Hansson & Kokko, 2018:141; Holt & Littlewood, 2017:253).

It is that context that the next section examines challenges experienced by emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth.

2.5 CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

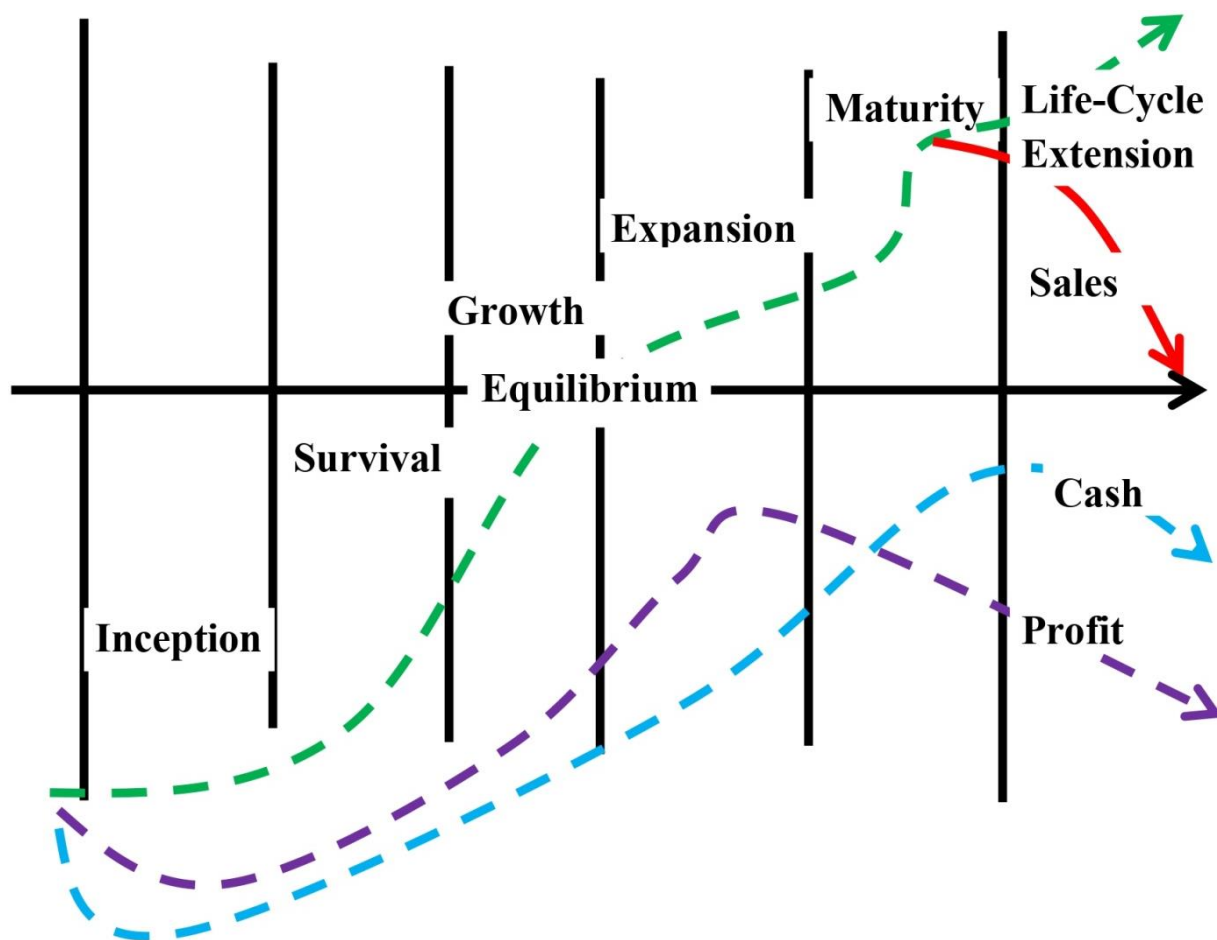
Most of the emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth processes are often constrained by limited capital finance at the disposal of most of the emerging farmers (Bellemare & Novak, 2017:99). At the early stages of agribusiness development, this often undermines practical implementation of most of the emerging farmers' agribusiness plans and proposals. It also limits emerging farmers' investment of the required amount of financial resources in the required agricultural research and innovation so as to develop

and refine more attractive agricultural products and business model (Crick & Crick, 2018:34).

The implication is that most of the emerging farmers often emerge with poorly conceptualised agribusiness ideas that often either never take-off or fail immediately after the establishment. Even if some of the emerging farmers' agribusiness often pass the development stage, during the growth stages, hefty expenses arising from extensive expansion of the agricultural entity often still strain the limited capital finance that emerging farmers have at their disposal (Gebru, Leung, Rammelt, Zoomers & van Westen, 2019:743).

As such financial constraints are further exacerbated by the fact that in the initial stages, it is often difficult for emerging farmers to gain trust of the commercial banks to be granted the required financial credits. Financial constraints arising from lack of required collateral security or poor financial cashflows often limited emerging farmers' capabilities to invest in the required agricultural innovation and creativity (Miralles, Dentoni & Pascucci, 2017:833). This affects emerging farmers' capabilities to avoid failure and sustainability grow. As Figure 2.9 illustrates, emerging farmers' businesses that manage to reach the equilibrium, growth and maturity stages still often decline if emerging farmers fail to undertake innovative initiatives to extend their life-cycles (CFI Education, 2021).

Figure 2.9: Business Life Cycle Model



Source: As adapted from CFI Education's (2021). Business Life Cycle Model.

Financial constraints also undermines emerging farmers' quests to expand and establish footprints through the required structures like the distribution structures in new geographical locations (Hirsch *et al.*, 2020:66). This is because if emerging farmers are unable to break through the established value chains of large wholesalers, retailers and large scale farmers, then the establishment of their own agricultural products' retail outlets in different locations is often the best way to go (Wang, Wang, Sarkar & Qian, 2021:462). Unfortunately, with only limited financial resources, emerging farmers' pursuance of such a strategy is often not possible.

As such constraints limit emerging farmers' agribusiness growth, hefty unmanageable expansion costs also often arise from the fact that as the agribusiness expands; it not only requires new distribution structures and other operational infrastructure, but also hefty costs of meeting the higher costs of employee remuneration (Lakner *et al.*, 2017:44).

Besides that, some of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses tend to be established in more highly regulated industries and markets that emphasise strong regulatory controls for pesticide usage and management of agricultural wastes (FAO, 2021:99).

In addition to pesticide usage control to protect the health of the surround communities, regulatory complexities may also arise from the prescribed government spatial plans and land use management systems.

Some of the spatial plan and land use management mechanisms may not allow establishment of agribusiness entities in certain geographical locations (Chagwiza, Muradian & Ruben, 2016:165). Alternatively, land use regulations may require emerging farmers to comply with several conditions as terms for establishing agribusiness entities in such locations (Federica¹, Drogue & Pasquale, 2021:9). These exacerbate costs of emerging farmers' regulatory compliance to either delay the establishment of their agribusinesses or even erode the limited resources reserved for growth (Vassileva & Dimitrova, 2020:219). As compared to the established large scale farmers, this disadvantages most of the emerging farmers.

The emerging farmers' quests to put in place the necessary agribusiness operational structures and infrastructure to comply with certain required regulations tends to be quite costly (Beber, Carpio, Almadani & Theuvsen, 2019:19). Such high agribusiness operational costs tend to affect some of the emerging farmers that often prefer to start small and keep on investing more resources in the establishment of more effective agribusiness structures and infrastructure as the established agribusiness expands (Gathala *et al.*, 2021:138).

Emerging farmers' extensive expansion and growth of the agribusiness also require the employment of enormous number of agribusiness managers and farm workers. Increment in the number of agribusiness managers and farm workers often implies certain employee related issues may also arise (Rather, Tehseen, Itoo & Parrey, 2019:196). Such issues may include farm workers' dissatisfaction, low-moral and de-motivation as well as the need for the development and nurturing of a more suitable agribusiness organisational structures that aids the agribusiness entity achieve its growth improvement goals and objectives.

The emerging farmers' failure to respond to such employees' related issues may instigate undesired incidents like farm workers' riots and strikes that undermine agribusiness' reputation and its brand image (Vassileva & Dimitrova, 2020:219). Such farm workers' complexities are often further exacerbated by some of the emerging farmers' failure to successfully replicate their agribusiness successes in new locations and markets as they expand.

This is attributable to the fact that conditions and agri-market dynamics in which the emerging farmers started from may not be the same as the conditions and dynamics in the new agri-markets that they aim to expand to (Bittmann, Holzer & Loy, 2017:295). This constrains seamless growth and expansion of most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. This implies for emerging farmers to thrive, they must learn to absorb and adapt to the new agribusiness conditions and dynamics as their agribusinesses grow. Unfortunately, some of the emerging farmers or even their managers often do not possess such sophisticated agribusiness skills to thereby explain why some fail as others grow (Benjamin, Ola & Buchenrieder, 2018:6).

Emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth inhibitors may arise from poor agri-products' inventory management as well as poor agribusiness supply management (Hoof & Thiell, 2014:239). As emerging farmers' agribusiness entities expand to serve a wider diverse agricultural products' market, poor agribusiness inventory management tends to set in to undermine effective response to customer needs as well as agribusiness growth. Emerging farmers' extensive expansion requires agribusinesses to adopt better inventory management practices (Rather *et al.* 2019:196).

Such agribusiness inventory management practices may require adoption of appropriate agricultural goods' production scheduling to balance supply and demand, frequent trends' analysis and agricultural stock replenishment as well as good accounting and financial management practices (Drotskie & Okanga, 2016:190). Even though other good agribusiness practices include good agri-products' storage and store management practices, empirical facts still imply poor inventory management is a challenge that often characterise most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Attributable to insufficient capital finance, emerging farmers' inadequate and poor storage facilities often cause wastes of the stored agricultural stock (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308).

Subsequently, this culminates into enormous loss that emerging farmers experience through the total funds eroded through poor agribusiness inventory management.

As these also affect emerging farmers' agricultural products' quality, the other challenge often arises from poor scheduling that affects balancing of supply of the agricultural stock in the inventory system with demand (Piacenza, Antonioli, Kaabia, Arfini & Gil, 2019:374). This further exacerbates agribusiness supply chain management constraints that often arise from the difficulties of most of the emerging farmers to effectively manage their agribusiness supply chain system. Faster emerging farmers' agribusiness' expansion often turns difficult and costly for most of them to invest in the development of an effective internal supply chain system (Drotskie & Okanga, 2016a:190).

Even in the instances where such agribusiness supply chain management activities are outsourced, poor management of the more extensive networks of partners in the agribusiness supply chain system still often affects emerging farmers' agribusinesses' effective performance. Such agribusiness supply chain management deficiencies affect the capabilities of some of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses to respond to their customers' needs and build reputation and brand image as a more efficient and responsive agribusiness entities (Drotskie & Okanga, 2016a:190).

Besides that, as cited in Cholez, Magrini and Galliano (2020:135), analysis of Drucker's (1994) "Theory of the Business" in the context of emerging farmers implies most failures of emerging farmers' agribusinesses arise from complacency and lack of analysis and response to changes once the agribusiness gains enormous success in its growth stage (Cholez, Magrini & Galliano, 2020:135). As agribusinesses become successful and begin to create a lot revenue, most of the emerging farmers often tend to relax, become complacent and less innovative to continuously improve the performance of their agribusiness entities.

This affects successful emerging farmers' capabilities to constantly read the emerging changes and modify the assumptions and realities against which the agribusiness was initially founded and established to match the emerging new assumptions, beliefs and realities in the larger agribusiness environment (Camanzi1 & Stefania, 2021:49). Yet, as the emerging farmers' agribusinesses fail to modify their founding assumptions, beliefs and realities, the emerging new realities tend to undermine their effective performance and

subsequently cause agribusiness' failure and closure (Dentoni, Pinkse & Lubberink, 2020:1216) .

In other words, these theories and literature signify one or a combination of these factors which often hamper emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth either in the early or the later stages of their expansion and growth (Beber, Carpio, Almadani & Theuvsen, 2019:19). It is that context that the discussion in the next section examines trends in emerging farmers' narratives going forward.

2.6 TRENDS IN EMERGING FARMERS' NARRATIVES GOING FORWARD

Trends on emerging farmers' narratives indicate that governments are increasingly adopting the measures for improving the performance and growth of the agribusiness entities initiated by the emerging farmers (Ntuchu, Mareme & Kwabena, 2021:99). Such measures among others include the improvement of the efficiency of agricultural extension programmes to effectively respond to the needs and demands of the emerging farmers.

The trends from African countries like Ethiopia indicate that the government is improving the capacity of agricultural extension programmes by equipping them with qualified agricultural experts to train and develop emerging farmers on the best agricultural production practices (Afful & Ayisi, 2016:41). In addition, agricultural extension programmes are also being used to train emerging farmers on how to measure and use the right quantities of fertilizers and chemicals so as to avoid the damage that may arise from the over-dose of fertilizers and chemicals on plants.

The agricultural extension programmes are also being used to train farmers on how to accomplish agriculture in the midst of climate changes that can either cause extended dry seasons or excessive rainfalls (Botai, Botai & Zwane, 2020:32). To also improve the overall quality of the agricultural products produced by the emerging farmers, agricultural extension programmes are also being used to train and develop emerging farmers on how to detect and control pests and diseases that can affect plants or animals to undermine the quality of the produced crops and animal products (Mosase & Ahiablame, 2018:364).

As such strategies are being used, governments are also increasingly discerning how emerging farmers in more remote locations can easily be availed with quality and cheaper agricultural inputs like fertilizers, chemicals, seeds and other required equipments (Mwadzingeni, Mugandani & Mafongoya, 2020:418). In addition, some governments are also increasingly assessing how emerging farmers can be availed with the required capital finance to enable meet the costs of agricultural equipment and machineries as well as labour costs and the overall operational costs of managing agricultural production until emerging farmers begin to generate revenues to become financially sustainable and independent (Ntuchu *et al.*, 2021:99).

As for the South African government, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development also indicated more commitment to speed up the process for the implementation of different land reform programmes (Ntuchu *et al.*, 2021:99). They construe that speeding land reform programmes will address the challenge of land that most of the emerging farmers in regard of the adequacy of the land for expansion to engage in medium or even large-scale commercial agriculture.

Such initiatives are also increasingly being accompanied with the adoption of the measures that link emerging farmers to the agricultural input and output markets (Ubisi, Mafongoya, Kolanisi & Jiri, 2017:27). Most governments in countries like Mozambique, Angola and Kenya are accomplishing this by investing in the improvement of infrastructure in the rural areas where most of the emerging farmers operate. This is being accomplished by improving the conditions of roads, telecommunication infrastructure through partnership with telecom companies and the improvement of electricity connections to rural households (Mwadzingeni, Mugandani & Mafongoya, 2020:418). This would improve the connection of rural areas with urban centres to bolster the flow of inputs from the market to the farms and the flow of agricultural outputs from the farms to the markets in the urban centres.

At the same time, extension of electricity connection to rural areas can help solve the challenge of energy among emerging farmers that require sufficient energy for irrigation and minor agro-processing activities. Energy is also critical for emerging farmers that are engaged in the production of perishable agricultural products to keep their fridges running and avoid deterioration of their agricultural products (Mwadzingeni *et al.*, 2020:418). In addition to that, other countries like India and China are increasingly investing and

encouraging emerging farmers to form agricultural cooperatives as the strategy for pooling and sharing of resources among the emerging farmers that have and those that do not have (Botai *et al.*, 2020:32).

In other words, there is a wider consensus that usage of a combination of these strategies can enable emerging farmers overcome a number of challenges to transition from subsistence farming or dualism of subsistence and commercial farming to complete commercialised agricultural production (Mosase & Ahiablame, 2018:364; Mwadzingeni *et al.*, 2020:418; Ubisi *et al.*, 2017:27). Unfortunately, such strategies still do not integrate with the critical skills for developing and growing successful and sustainable agribusiness entities initiated by the emerging farmers.

But even if that is the case, it is also unfortunate that factors marring emerging farmers agribusiness development and growth are also analogous to most of the inhibitors undermining the emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba district in Kwa-Zulu Natal. It is in that context that this research seeks to evaluate strategies, as well as the challenges, of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba District. Through such analysis, the study will be able to extract and develop the emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal, as well as other, emerging farmers in other parts of South Africa.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Agribusiness development is not only a process of engaging in the primary activities of crop or live stock production, but also the associated secondary activities of sourcing inputs, processing and converting them into agricultural products that must be efficiently distributed and marketed to the target consumers (Westermann, Forch, Thornton, Korner, Cramer & Campbell, 2018:283). As cited in Adamowicz and Miecyslaw (2020:135), such reasoning echoes Davis and Goldberg's (1957:2) foundational concept of what agribusiness is or is not. Motivated by the quests for agricultural production to be approached as business to generate profits and reduce farmers' dependence on the United States' funding, Davis and Goldberg developed the concept of agribusiness and coined it as: 'the sum total of all operations involved in the manufacture, distribution of farm supplies,

production operations on the farm and storage, processing and distribution of farm commodities and items made from them.” Such redefinition repositions agribusiness as an innovative and market centric entity that creates the desired agricultural products to respond to consumer needs and generate the desired values for farmers (Bramley *et al.*, 2019:362).

It signifies emerging farmers must be more innovative to coherently manage the dynamic process of agribusiness management to achieve the intended outcomes. However, even if that is the case, theories still imply pragmatic approaches used over the years by successful agribusinesses suggest the four critical stages for emerging farmers’ agribusiness development and growth include agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and farm products’ commercialisation (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308; Kelly *et al.*, 2015:19; Westen *et al.*, 2019:64).

At the stage of commercialisation, emerging farmers must avoid doing the same thing over and over with change in results as reflected in their improved level of profitability. Other improvement strategies may require improvement of the farming methods being used as well as the introduction of other measures like irrigation, pest control and good storage (David, David & David, 2017:22). This will improve the marketability of the agricultural products that previously failed due to poor farming methods causing poor quality.

As all these catalyse agricultural productivity, increment of returns on investment as well as further expansion and growth, there are also other accompanying strategies that must be utilised for managing growth as well as the sustainability of the emerging farmers agribusinesses (Elena, Yannou-Le Bris, Yannou & Petit, 2017: 461; Maestre, Poole & Henson, 2017:31; Abebe, Bahn, Chalak & Yehya, 2020:1082). Such strategies include agribusiness’ integration in the value chain system (Zavale, Matchaya, Vilissa, Nhemachena, Nhlengethwa & Wilson, 2020:4691; Muflikh, Smith and Aziz, 2021:103). Other strategies encompass agricultural quality management and usage of agricultural cooperatives as a growth leveraging strategy (Mihalache, Dumitraşcu, Nicolau & Borda, 2021:107; Taha, Osaili, Saddal, Al-Nabulsi, Ayyash & Obaid, 2020:106).

However, even if such strategies influence the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers’ agribusiness, theories and literature still signifies quests of most of the emerging farmers to develop and nurture the growth of more sustainable agribusinesses are often

still hampered by a combination of certain challenges(Williams, Crespo & Abu, 2019:124; Yaseen, Somogyi & Bryceson, 2018:124; Hansson & Kokko, 2018:141; Holt & Littlewood, 2017:253).

Most of the emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth processes are often constrained by limited capital finance at the disposal of most of the emerging farmers (Bellemare & Novak, 2017:99). Besides that, some of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses tend to be established in more highly regulated industries and markets that emphasise strong regulatory controls for pesticide usage and management of agricultural wastes (FAO, 2021:99). In addition to pesticide usage control to protect the health of the surround communities, regulatory complexities may also arise from the prescribed government spatial plans and land use management systems.

Emerging farmers' extensive expansion and growth of the agribusiness also require the employment of enormous number of agribusiness managers and farm workers. Increment in the number of agribusiness managers and farm workers often implies certain employee related issues may also arise (Rather, Tehseen, Itoo & Parrey, 2019:196). Such issues may include farm workers' dissatisfaction, low-moral and de-motivation as well as the need for the development and nurturing of a more suitable agribusiness organisational structures that aids the agribusiness entity achieve its growth improvement goals and objectives. But even if that is the case, it is also unfortunate that such factors are also analogous to most of the inhibitors undermining the emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba district in KwaZulu-Natal.

It is in that context that this research seeks to evaluate strategies, as well as the challenges, of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba District. Through such analysis, the study will be able to extract and develop the emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba District in KwaZulu-Natal as well as other emerging farmers in South Africa. In that context, discussions in the next chapter offer the description of the methodology that was used in empirical investigation.

CHAPTER 3 - EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Description of the methodologies for empirical investigations in this chapter implies the study was based on the interpretivist research paradigm as well as case study as blended with exploratory research design. Due to such research paradigm and design, it is noted that the study used the qualitative research method. The effect is that the sample of 30 emerging farmers from aMajuba District Municipality was drawn using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. As indicated in the Appendix 1 of this Dissertation, each of the thirty sample emerging farmers was subjected to semi-structured interviews that were partially based on the Interview Research Protocol as designed in alignment with the research objectives and questions. Qualitative data collected from each of the thirty emerging farmers were thematically analysed using ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software. Such analysis was accompanied with the use of measures for enhancing the overall credibility and trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations of the study. In otherwords, details of the methodologies used in empirical investigation are as follows.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The empirical investigation in this study is based on the interpretivist research paradigm. In general, a research paradigm is the philosophical, ontological and epistemological logic or way of thinking that directs the entire process of primary investigation in a study (Bach, Stefaner & Boy, 2018:125). Thus, in the empirical investigation, a study can base its thinking either on the interpretivist or positivist research paradigm. However, empirical investigation in this study is based on the interpretivist research paradigm. Interpretivist research paradigm refers to the research ontology that encourages empirical investigation and the meanings of the emerging findings to not only be analysed and interpreted from the perspective of the world, but also from the investigator's perception of what the realities in the world are and as to what such realities ought to or not be (Fullagar, 2017:247).

Interpretivist research paradigm uses social construction and re-constructionist approaches in which the investigation process is subjected to evaluation and social

construction and re-construction to discern meanings in statements and words that offer in-depth insights about the phenomenon being investigated. In contrast, positivist research paradigm connotes the research ontology or philosophy in which the process of investigation is conducted independently of the researcher's input or any form of social construction and re-construction of the meanings of statements and words that offer coherent explanation about the subject of investigation (Bach *et al.*, 2018:125). It emphasises the essence for the application natural science or scientific methodologies in the investigation and research logical conclusion about the stated hypothesis about the phenomenon being investigated.

However, positivism is found not suitable for usage in this research. This is because of the nature of the research topic, aim, objectives and questions that require eliciting of in-depth rich information about emerging farmers' experiences. Hence, instead, empirical investigation in this study required in-depth exploring and analysis of emerging farmers' perceptions and real world insights by the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. On that basis, it is construed that as contrasted to positivism, interpretivist research paradigm would aid effective response to such designated research topic, aim, objectives and questions.

As dictated by the research topic, aim, objectives and questions, the empirical investigation in this study is concerned with seeking answers to the questions of who, why, how, what, where and what of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. It also seeks to explore the impact and limitations of such approaches on leveraging the performance of emerging farmers. In the context of the research topic and aim, that signifies this empirical investigation would be involved in some form of social construction and re-construction to discern meanings in the statements and worlds used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality about the agribusiness development and growth approaches that they use as well as the deleveraging factors that often plague their effective market performance.

Such approach and way of thinking as well as selection of the interpretivist research paradigm in this study are consonant with the fundamental prescription in research design and methodology theories that decision on the research paradigm to use or not use is often dictated by the nature of the research topic and study (Braidotti, 2019a:49). Thus, given the nature of this study, it is deciphered that usage of the interpretivist research

paradigm aided the study to elicit in-depth realworld narratives from emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality to explore and discern the kind of agribusiness development and growth framework that can be extracted and suggested not only to the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality, but also other emerging farmers in South Africa and other parts of the developing countries around the world. This is because as the study used the interpretivist research paradigm, it also aided the integration of inductive research paradigm that emphasises the process of empirical investigation to commerce by isolating the problem and then setting objectives prior to collecting and analysing secondary and primary data to discern the kinds of solutions to be extracted to respond to such isolated problem.

Such approach differs from the deductive research paradigm which is aligned with positivism and emphasises hypothesis formulation and subsequently collection and analysis of secondary and primary data to test the validity or invalidity of such hypothesis (Fox & Alldred, 2018:191).

As the interpretivist research paradigm was aligned with inductive research paradigm, it was also at par with subjectivist ontology. In general, ontology is analogous to a philosophy or way of thinking that guide empirical investigations on the identified realities and assumptions that are of concern of the study. Ontology can be subjective or objective (Housley, Dicks & Henwood, 2017:607). Objective ontology is positivistic in nature and encourages the process and outcomes of empirical investigation to unfold according to natural science principles without any interference or social construction by the investigator. Subjective ontology on the otherhand uses a nexus of the analysis of the phenomenon being investigated vis-à-vis what the investigator perceives the situation to be or ought to be in the context of his opinions as shaped by theories and experience about the phenomenon being investigated (Kennedy, 2018:31).

Since this research would engage in some form of triangulation, it was found that as the study uses social construction in the interpretivism, it would also echo the application of subjective ontological principles. Triangulation as per O'Connor and Gibson's (2019:49) definition is the epistemological process of applying a combination of methods and techniques to investigate and reach coherent conclusion about a particular phenomenon of inquiry. Through triangulation of the emerging findings with established theoretical articulations on managing agribusiness development and growth, it was discernible that as

the study uses social construction in the interpretivism, it would also bolster the application of subjective ontological principles. However, for the study to accurately respond to its overriding aim of exploring an agribusiness development and growth framework for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality; usage of interpretivist research paradigm was accompanied with the application of case study and exploratory research designs.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

As the research paradigm was positivistic, empirical investigation was based on the case study as integrated with exploratory research design. Research design connotes the epistemological framework reflecting a combination of methodologies and techniques used in the accomplishment of primary research. A research design can be causal, cohort, cross-sectional, experimental, historical, longitudinal, descriptive, case study and exploratory (Kabir, 2016b:49). However, empirical investigation in this study was based on case study and exploratory research design. Causal research design is the epistemological framework that uses methodologies that are aimed at evaluating how the change in the independent variables causes change in the dependent variables (Braun & Clarke, 2016:77).

Cohort research design is a blueprint reflecting asset of methodologies and techniques used for research a set of population with certain shared characteristics and drawn from a specific population group (O'Connor & Gibson, 2019:49). Cross-sectional research design is the approach to research that aims to evaluate the differences in the characteristics of certain designated population groups (Braun & Clarke, 2016:78). Experimental research design reflects the framework and methodologies through which the investigator controls variables being examined from any external influence so as to test and validate or invalidate the hypothesis associated with the phenomenon being investigated (Chenail, 2016:248).

Historical research design connotes the empirical framework that focuses on collecting and analysing past data in order to reach logical conclusions about the phenomenon being investigated. Longitudinal research design offers a framework through which empirical investigation is conducted during two or three consecutive intervals so as to study and

reach conclusions on the changes in the designated variables for the study. Descriptive research design is the empirical framework that aims to document detailed narratives that offer answers to the questions like how, why, when, what and where of the phenomenon being investigated (Chenail, 2016:248).

However, even if this study is also concerned with the analysis of the questions like how, why, when, what and where of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality, the application of descriptive research design as contrasted to exploratory research design was still found unsuitable for the study. Instead, the study uses case study as blended with exploratory research design.

A case study research connotes the research approach through which the study is limited to a certain designated population or subjects in a particular geographical area for the purposes of thorough analysis and logical conclusions and thereafter generalisation to be reached about the phenomenon being investigated (Leavy, 2017:339). As contrasted to research designs like cross-sectional research design as well as descriptive and longitudinal research designs that focus on the larger population, a case study tends to limit the study to just certain designated population and geographical area to aid thorough diagnosis and understanding of all the facets of the dimensions being examined (Markham, 2020:227).

In that context, since this research is limited to only the evaluation of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality, usage of a case study in this study was therefore found to be more aligned to the research topic, aim, questions and objectives of this. Such approach is in alignment with O'Connor and Gibson's (2019:49) reasoning that just like the research paradigm, selection of the research design is often dictated by the research topic, aim, questions and objectives as well as the adopted research paradigm.

As the study used the case study research design, it was also integrated with the exploratory research design to aid in-depth analysis and unearthing of all the facets of the phenomenon being investigated. Such a view accentuates Taherdoost's (2016:18) definition that exploratory research design connotes the empirical framework that seeks to undertake in-depth analysis and follow up all the leads that offer in-depth answers and

narratives on the questions like how, why, when, what and where of the phenomenon being investigated.

Hence, as compared to descriptive research design that just describes the nature of the phenomenon being investigated, exploratory research design was preferred. This is because it was considered critical for aiding thorough in-depth diagnosis and exploration of all the facets of facts explaining the impact of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. Such rich data was also critical for discerning the constraints of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. However, to further elicit all the critical in-depth information that respond to the research objectives and questions, usage of case study as blended with exploratory research design was accompanied with the use of the qualitative research method.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The quests to reach logical conclusions about all the dimensions of the impacts as well as the challenges of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality entailed the application of the qualitative research method. In general, a research method refers to a plan reflecting specific techniques and strategies that are used in the empirical investigations (Pelias, 2019:449). However, a research method can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative research method is the plan reflecting a set of specific scientific and statistical techniques and strategies that are used in the empirical investigation. It often focuses on eliciting summarised numerical responses from the respondents as the statistical basis and strategy for reaching logical conclusions about the concept being investigated (Schadler, 2019:215).

In the accomplishment of that processes, quantitative research method tends to use research techniques or strategies like survey, cross-sectional surveys, Delphi techniques, descriptive statistics, multivariate analysis, co-relational analysis, confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis (Vannini & Vannini, 2019:229). However, as contrasted to qualitative research method, it is the usage of such scientific and statistical techniques that render the application of quantitative research method less suitable for this research. This is because usage of such quantitative techniques often leads to eliciting of only

summarised numerical information about the phenomenon being investigated. Thus, such summarised numerical information was found less effective for aiding this research respond to its objectives and questions that aim to elicit and understand emerging farmers' perceptions about the impact and constraints that they experience during the development and nurturing the growth of different agribusinesses in Amajuba District Municipality.

The view that qualitative research method has the capabilities to induce such outcomes is further accentuated in O'Connor and Gibson's (2019:49) description of qualitative research method as the empirical framework of investigation that focuses on eliciting realworld in-depth experiences and narratives of the participants about the phenomenon being investigated. In the accomplishment of that, qualitative research method often requires the application of techniques like interviews, focus group discussions, observation and qualitative content analysis.

While using interviews as the main qualitative research technique, this study was also to elicit in-depth narratives of the emerging farmers to respond to research objective and questions that aimed to analyse why, who, when, which, what and where of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. It was also able to extracted detailed insights on the agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District as well as the hindrances of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth approaches in Amajuba District.

Usage of interviews as the main qualitative research technique also enhanced thorough analysis of the emerging narratives to discern the agribusiness development and growth model that can be extracted and suggested from primary findings and theories to emerging farmers in Amajuba District and South Africa at large. Yet, as this influenced effective response to the research objectives and questions for this study, the sample population used in the study was drawn from the emerging farmers in Amajuba District using purposive sampling.

3.5 SAMPLING

Sampling connotes the process of extracting the subjects to be designated for analysis from the target population. Target population refers to the subjects that are the focus of the

study (Etikan & Kabiru, 2017:215). In this research, as cited in the sampling section 1.9.4 in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the target population as per Agri-SETA's (2019:23) data constitutes 1062 emerging farmers that are established in aMajuba District Municipality and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. Geographically, this implies the target population is geographically limited to the emerging farmers in aMajuba District Municipality that constitutes of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle local municipalities.

From this target population of 1062 emerging farmers, 30 (thirty) emerging farmers will be used as the sample for the study. This enabled the attainment of data saturation which the point that Etikan and Kabiru (2017:215) note to refer to the level where no new information can be obtained despite further investigation. Such designated sample population not only influenced achievement of data saturation, but also data richness. Data richness connotes the degree to which the study is able to elicit all relevant information and from all angles of the phenomenon being investigated (Vannini & Vannini, 2019:229).

Data richness was enhanced on the basis that the thirty sample population was drawn from different emerging farmers scattered across eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle that are local municipalities in Amajuba District. This improved data richness by eliciting information reflecting the experiences of different emerging farmers about venturing into commercial farming. The sample is also justifiable on the basis that the 30 (thirty) emerging farmers were considered an adequate sample for the study on the basis that they were drawn from different areas of Amajuba District. Ten emerging farmers were drawn from Newcastle, 10 from Dannhauser and 10 from eMadlangeni local municipalities.

The mentioned numbers targeted were exclusively dependent on the achievement of data saturation as such. If Dannhauser and the eMadlangeni municipalities are individually compared to Newcastle municipality, they are geographically smaller and have fewer emerging farmers. To draw the 30 sample emerging farmers from the target population of 1062 emerging farmers, the study used non-probability sampling as contrasted to probability sampling. Non-probability sampling refers to the sampling approach that uses criteria other than chance as the basis for determining the units that must be included in the sample population (Watson, 2020: 66). The commonly used non-probability sampling methods encompass convenience, purposive and snowballing sampling (Etikan & Kabiru, 2017:215).

A convenience sampling is an approach where the sample is drawn from the target population depending on how easy and cost effective it is to draw and include such units or subjects in the sample population. Purposive sampling which is also known as judgmental sampling refers to the sampling technique that uses certain set criteria to evaluate the subjects or units that must or must not be included in the sample population (Thackray, 2018:229).

Snowballing is the sampling approach where a few subjects are lured to participate in the study and thereafter used to convince colleagues and friends that constitute the target population of the study to also participate as part of the sample population for the study. However, such non-probability sampling techniques differ from the approach in probability sampling in which the process of sampling is mainly based on randomness and chance (Wilson, 2016:44).

Non-probability sampling is distinct from probability by virtue of the fact that the methods that are used are also different from those of non-probability (Taherdoost, 2016:18). In probability sampling, the commonly used methods encompass simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling (Taherdoost, 2016:18). Simple random sampling is the technique in which using certain statistical framework, the respondents are randomly drawn and included in the sample population with the impact that almost every subject in the target population has equal chance of being included in the sample population (Eakin, 2016:107).

Systematic sampling is the sampling approach where the respondents are drawn according to certain pre-specified statistical interval until the designated number of sample population is attained. Cluster sampling requires the target population to be divided according to different groups for simple or systematic sampling to be thereafter used to draw the groups that must be used as the sample population (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe & Neville, 2019:545). In contrast, stratified sampling requires the target population to be categorised according to certain homogenous groups so that the units of analysis can be proportionally drawn from each homogenous group to constitute the overall sample population for the study.

Besides such insight on what probability sampling is and is not; this research uses a combination of non-probability sampling that includes convenience, purposive and snowballing. During this initiative, assessments were undertaken to understand the Covid-

19 status of the probable participants prior to engaging any emerging farmer to participate in the study. After ascertaining, Covid-19 status as confirmed by a certificate issued by health authorities, convenience sampling was used to include only the emerging farmers that are not only easily accessible, but also cost-effective to include in the study.

As such approach was being used; purposive sampling was applied to ensure that it is only the emerging farmers that understand the business dimensions of agriculture that were included in the study. This is because some of the emerging farmers are illiterate and therefore would not offer much valuable information for the study. It is also the low illiteracy levels of the emerging farmers that explain why the study opted for a qualitative research approach. This is because emerging farmers would be offered avenues to explain their experiences as contrasted to quantitative method that relies on closed statements measured using numbers or figures with certain statistical values. As purposive sampling was being used, snowballing was also used. Snowballing refers to the non-probability sampling technique where an influential participant in the study is motivated to influence his colleagues or associates that also constitute part of the target population to participate in the study.

Snowballing was used to get some of the emerging farmers to influence their fellow emerging farmers who are knowledgeable about agribusiness to also participate in the study. Certainly, all these led to the extraction of about 30 (thirty) sample emerging farmers from the target population of 1062 emerging farmers that are established in aMajuba District Municipality and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. As it is indicated below, each of the thirty sample emerging farmers was subjected to interviews as the principal data collection method.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

The collection of the required qualitative data from the thirty sample emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality was accomplished by using semi-structured interviews. In general, such a view is based on the fact that interviews connote the one-on-one data collection process in which the investigator asks questions and the participant is permitted to offer detailed responses to such questions (Hunter & Brewer, 2016:185). Interview is just one of the qualitative data collection methods like focus group discussions and

observations. However, this research opts for usage of interviews on the basis that as compared to focus group discussions in which data gathering tends to be more complex, in interviews, data gathering process is more streamlined and easy to accomplish.

As observation was avoided, focus group discussions that bring the participants together to discuss a particular topic was also found unsuitable as it would affect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants to freely speak out their minds during the interviews (Archibald, Radil, Zhang & Hanson, 2018:5). But even if it is such weaknesses that induced the usage of interviews, the study still opted for semi-structured interviews. Such a decision is attributable to the fact that interviews can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Structured interviews refer to the qualitative one-on-one data collection process which is based on the pre-designed Interview Protocol and the interview process and questions are not permitted to deviate from such pre-designed questions (Bach *et al.*, 2018:125).

In contrast, semi-structured interviews are often partially based on the pre-designed Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol) to permit further additional and even new questions to be asked depending on the new facts emerging from the participant's responses to the asked pre-design questions. Unstructured interviews are not based on any pre-designed Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol) and tend to use open questions at the beginning and then use the facts from the participant's narratives to ask additional questions (Archibald *et al.*, 2018:5). However, as compared to structured and unstructured interviews, this research used semi-structured interviews because as much as the dimension of the study is dictated by the research objectives and questions that also influenced the questions in the Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol), further additional questions were still considered critical for eliciting new facts that explain the impact and constraints of the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality as well as the remedial improvement strategies that can be adopted.

In effect, semi-structured interviews were based on the Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol) (Bazeley, 2014:15). But during actual interviews, additional questions were still asked in the context of the new insights emerging from the participants' responses to the questions in the Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1). To ensure eliciting only information which is relevant to the study, the Interview Protocol was

structured with four sections aligned to the four critical research objectives and questions outlined in headings 5 and 6 of this dissertation.

- First section will evaluate agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Second section will analyse agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Third section will examine impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District.
- Fourth section will elicit suggestions from participants on how agribusiness models in Amajuba District can be improved.

During the design of the Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol), initiatives were undertaken to ensure that the statements and questions contained therein are unambiguous and simple for the participants to respond with relative ease. After the design of the Interview Research Protocol, a pilot testing was conducted on three sample participants that among also included an agricultural expert. The motive of the pilot testing was to assess the suitability of the Interview Research Protocol. Fine tuning of the Interview Protocol (See Appendix 1: Interview Protocol) was undertaken by ensuring that errors that are identified from the pilot testing were corrected prior to the commencement of the actual data collection. Data collection was accomplished using personal administration of the Interview Protocol. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to interview and collect data from each of the 30 selected sample emerging farmers.

3.6.1 INTERVIEWS

Prior to the commencement of the actual face-to-face interviews, letters requesting the participants who are the selected emerging farmers were written to each of the thirty emerging participants. The letter of permission (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent) that was written to each of the thirty emerging farmers that was selected using a combination of purposive, convenience and snowballing sampling aMajuba District Municipality highlighted the purpose of the study. In the letter, the participants were informed that due to the complexities that emerging farmers in aMajuba and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle face in initiating, developing

and nurturing the growth of more sustainable agribusiness entities, the study aimed to explore the approaches that emerging farmers (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent).

Through such analysis, the participants were informed that the study would be able to identify the major impediments as well as the remedial improvement strategies that would inform emerging farmers' decisions on the improvement strategies to adopt. Participants were also notified through the same letter of permission that the outcomes of the study would also influence government policies on how the performance of emerging farmers can be improved to leverage emerging farmers' contributions to socio-economic development and growth (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent). However, it was also pointed out to the participants that even if the study will induce such outcomes, it still purely an academic programme of which the government may or may not borrow its outcomes to discern how the performance of emerging farmers could be improved. Thus, the participants were still advised to participate because their participation is not only important for influencing government policies, but also for learning new insights on how they could improve the performance of their agribusiness entities (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent).

For those that opted to participate, they were informed that participation in the study is not mandatory as they could discontinue participation at anytime if they elected to do so (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent). Regarding those that choose to willfully participate in the study, they were informed that their identities and as well as the information provided would not be linked to any participant. Thus, after each of the thirty emerging farmers had accepted to participate (See Appendix 3: Consent to Participate) in the study, appointments for one-on-one and face-to-face interviews were made with each of them to prepare for the interviews as well as the date, time and place that the interviews would be held.

When such appointments were confirmed with each of the thirty participants, each of the ten emerging farmers in Newcastle was interviewed until all the ten emerging farmers in that district were interviewed. This was followed by the interview of each of the 10 emerging farmers from Dannhauser and 10 from eMadlangeni local municipalities until all the thirty emerging farmers in aMajuba District Municipality and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle were all interviewed. Since, the interviews were semi-structured, during each of the interviews, each question in the

Interview Protocol were read to each of the thirty emerging farmers and each of them was allowed to respond.

But during their responses, there were still injections with new questions that sought to probe and re-probe new facts that were emerging from each of the face-to-face interviews. Similar processes were followed during each of the thirty sequential interviews that was held with each of the thirty emerging farmers in aMajuba District Municipality and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. After all the thirty sets of the qualitative data were obtained, they were subjected to thematic analysis using ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software was used to undertake the thematic analysis of the collected qualitative data. It entailed the use of Abductive Thematic Network Analysis in ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software. As Campbell, Quincy, Osserman and Pedersen (2014:294) note, Abductive Thematic Network Analysis is part of the ATLAS Software that uses pragmatic methodological approach with an abductive way of reasoning to study and explain linkages between emerging themes from the collected qualitative data. In this study, use of Abductive Thematic Network Analysis entailed the application of five main steps:

- Step 1 was dedicated to engaging with coding functions to create codes that guided the analysis and identification of themes.
- Step 2 entailed dealing with the “Family Manager” function to group the codes under themes.
- Step 3 required the use of network building function to create links between codes and themes.
- Step 4 dealt with analysis, exploration, and explanation of the cause-and-effect relationships between the themes before saving using the Edit Comment function of ATLAS 8.2 of 9.
- Step 5 finally used the hermeneutic function to compare and contrast codes, themes, and linkages with the fundamental views in theories and literature (Campbell *et al.*, 2014:294).

Such analysis enabled the identification and extraction of main themes, subthemes and associated narratives explaining the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba as well as their associated impediments. Firstly, the thematic analysis identified and extracted the main themes, the subthemes and associated narratives on the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Such analysis was followed with the identification and extraction of main themes, subthemes and narratives on agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Subsequently, the thematic analysis identified and extracted the main themes, the subthemes and the narratives on impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Further analysis was undertaken to identify and extract the main themes, the subthemes and the narratives on the suggestions from participants on how agribusiness models in Amajuba District can be improved.

Thereafter, a thematic framework was drawn to reflect agribusiness development approaches, growth strategies and impediments of emerging farmers in Amajuba District. By drawing the emerging thematic framework, they study was able to compare the emerging key discourses in such a framework with core theories and literature on agribusiness development and growth. Such analysis aided comparison and contrasting of the emerging primary findings with business development and growth theories to extract a plausible agribusiness development and growth model that can be replicated by emerging farmers in Amajuba district and South Africa at large. Such process of thematic analysis was also accompanied with the measures for enhancing data richness. In otherwords, as the entire research was being undertaken, measures were also undertaken to leverage data richness as well as credibility and trustworthiness of the entire research.

3.8 CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Drawing from the fact that this empirical investigation is based on the interpretivist research paradigm that also dictated the use of qualitative research method,, credibility and trustworthiness that also refer to validity and reliability in a qualitative research are enhanced by upholding credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability (Braidotti, 2019a:49). Credibility is the extent to which the outcomes of the study are

believable and authentic for usage in relevant decision-making process. In this study, credibility was upheld by ensuring that decisions on the impacts as well as the constraints affecting emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality were based on credible agribusiness development and growth management theories and literature that have been tested and proved valid over time.

At the same time, the study also ensured that the sample of the emerging farmers that were used were representative of the total number of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality and its local municipalities of Newcastle, Dannhauser and eMadlangeni. Such a view is reflected in the fact that instead of using a smaller sample of just twenty participants, the study used a larger sample of thirty emerging farmers. Yet, as each of the emerging farmers in the thirty sample population was being drawn, purposive sampling was also used to ensure that only the emerging farmers that understood the dynamics that emerging farmers undergo as well as the critical issues that concern this research were included.

The credibility of the study was also enhanced by use of theory triangulation and methodological triangulation as well as consistent analysis and triangulation of the views of the participants with the existing theories. All these were accompanied with comparing and contrasting of the views of different participants with each other to improve the overall credibility of the outcomes of the study. As that improved credibility, it also bolstered the dependability of the study. Dependability connotes the degree to which the outcomes of the study can be relied on to make relevant decisions (Housley *et al.*, 2017:607).

Dependability in this research was improved by the fact that as the findings were being evaluated, they were compared and contrasted with core theories and literature on agribusiness development growth models. This aided discerning the extent to which the emerging findings were disputed or supported in theories and literature to bolster the overall credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability of the study. Such initiatives were further accompanied by comparing and contrasting of the views of different participants during the analysis of findings. This enhanced assessment of the veracity and truthfulness as well as elimination of biasness in the responses of some of the interviewed participants. In turn, leverage of veracity and truthfulness of the study as well as minimisation of biasness bolstered the overall credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability of the study.

Besides that, dependability of the study was also assessed by evaluating whether if the study is to be conducted again, the same findings would still be obtained by such similar studies. Dependability is concerned with the degree to which relevant stakeholders as well as the general public can rely on the research findings to reach the necessary decisions (Vigour, 2015). Such analysis was accomplished by comparing and contrasting the findings of this research with the information in theories to assess whether the emerging findings confirm what is already in theories. Thus, by assessing whether similar findings would still be obtained by other later studies, dependability of the study was improved for relevant stakeholders and general public to rely on its findings to make relevant decisions.

As such initiatives leveraged dependability; it also catalysed credibility, conformability and transferability of the study. Confirmability refers to the extent which the findings are confirmed by other studies (Ragin, 2014). To ensure confirmability, the research findings were triangulated with the findings of the other previous studies on agribusiness development and growth models to assess the extent to which they support or dispute the primary research findings in this study. Transferability was also assessed by evaluating the degree to which the findings and solutions extracted from this study can easily be used or replicated to solve similar emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth challenges in other parts of South Africa or developing countries.

Other measures for enhancing credibility, dependability and transferability entailed fact-checking with the supervisor, agricultural experts and other academic experts and audit trail. Yet, during the analysis, interpretation and presentation of interview findings, verbatim quotes from the interview findings were also inserted in the presentation and discussions of the findings to ensure that the information that the participants aimed to convey was not distorted. Certainly, all these enhanced credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability of the study to in turn bolster the overall validity and reliability of the study. However, as such initiatives were being undertaken, measures were also used to enhance the ethical considerations of the study.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ethical considerations were in the first instance undertaken by obtaining ethical approval from the General Management Scientific Committee and then North West

University Business School and from the Ethics Committee of the organisation being investigated in case there is any such committee (See Appendix 5: NWU Ethical Approval No: NWU-00998-21-A4). This was accompanied by seeking for the letter of consent (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent) from the organisation of emerging farmers in Amajuba District that constituted the subjects of the study. In the letter, the participants were informed that due to the complexities that emerging farmers in aMajuba and its constituent local municipalities of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle face in initiating, developing and nurturing the growth of more sustainable agribusiness entities, the study aimed to explore the approaches that emerging farmers (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent).

Through such analysis, the participants were informed that the study would be able to identify the major impediments as well as the remedial improvement strategies that would inform emerging farmers' decisions on the improvement strategies to adopt. Participants were also notified through the same letter of permission that the outcomes of the study would also influence government policies on how the performance of emerging farmers can be improved to leverage emerging farmers' contributions to socio-economic development and growth (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent).

However, it was also pointed out to the participants that even if the study will induce such outcomes, it still purely an academic programme of which the government may or may not borrow its outcomes to discern how the performance of emerging farmers could be improved (See Appendix 2: Letter of Consent). Thus, the participants were still advised to participate because their participation is not only important for influencing government policies, but also for learning new insights on how they could improve the performance of their agribusiness entities. For those that opted to participate, they were informed that participation in the study is not mandatory as they could discontinue participation at anytime if they elected to do so (See Appendix 3: Consent to Participate).

Regarding those that choose to willfully participate in the study, they were informed that their identities and as well as the information provided would not be linked to any participant. Thus, after each of the thirty emerging farmers had accepted to participate in the study (See Appendix 3: Consent to Participate), appointments for one-on-one and face-to-face interviews were made with each of them to prepare for the interviews as well as the date, time and place that the interviews would be held. In other words, the principles

of confidentiality, informed consent and anonymity were upheld throughout the research process (Wilson, 2018:15). These were also accompanied with the upholding of the principle of avoidance of harm on the basis that through the entire research process, the researcher also frequently tested for Covid-19 to ensure that he is negative so as to avoid harming the participants and the supervisor with whom he interacted with during the accomplishment of this study.

The researcher ensured all the 30 sample emerging farmers are Covid-19 negative to avoid harming the researcher. The researcher liaised and built relationships with gatekeepers so as to ease the process of seeking the letter of consent from the participants. As the study was being conducted, the participants were not subjected to any form of harm or any other incidents that would cause either physical or psychological harm to them (Hunter & Brewer, 2016:185). Their views were respected and they were allowed to speak freely except in situations where probe and re-probe questions would be required to be asked to elicit more information about certain new facts that were emerging from the participants.

At the same time, all forms of conflict of interests were avoided to not only improve ethical considerations, but also credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Certainly, all these leveraged the ethical consideration of the study as well as the reaching of credible and valid conclusions on the nature of challenges marring the success of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District and the appropriate remedial agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested. Such reasoning is accentuated in the notion that use of appropriate business development and growth strategies would bolster sustainability of start-up agribusinesses initiated by emerging farmers is inherently accentuated in most theories on business development and growth.

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The description of the methodologies for empirical investigations in this chapter implies that the study was based on the interpretivist research paradigm as well as case study, as blended with exploratory research design. Due to such research paradigm and design, it is noted that the study used the qualitative research method. The effect is that a sample of 30 emerging farmers from aMajuba District Municipality was subjected to semi-structured

interviews partially based on the Interview Research Protocol aligned with the research objectives and questions. The qualitative data collected from each of the thirty emerging farmers was thematically analysed using ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software in conjunction with the use of measures for enhancing the overall credibility and trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations of the study. Thus, in that context, details of empirical findings are as elucidated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4 - EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON EMERGING FARMERS' AGRIBUSINESS APPROACHES IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the context of the fundamental research aim of this study which is to explore the agribusiness development and growth framework for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality, this chapter provides the analysis and presentation of empirical findings of the study. Analysis and presentation of the empirical findings is structured not only according to the four main sections in the Interview Research Protocol, but also aligned with the four research questions and objectives that are outlined in Chapter 1 of this Dissertation. Thus, first section of the chapter provides the analysis and presentation of themes and their associated narratives on the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. Second section analyses themes and narratives on the agribusiness growth strategies used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. Third section examines themes and narratives on the impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. Fourth section provides analysis and presentation of themes and narratives that were elicited from emerging farmers' suggestions on how agribusiness models in Amajuba District can be improved. The decisions on these findings were reached through the key aspects of the research methodology as elucidated below.

4.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As indicated in the Research Methodology Chapter 3 of this Dissertation, the findings on the sections above and below were obtained through the empirical investigation that entailed usage of interpretivist research paradigm as well as case study as blended with exploratory research design. While using qualitative research method as based on such research paradigm and design, the interviews examined agribusiness development approaches, growth strategies, impediments and the emerging farmers' suggestions on how to improve their agribusiness development and growth approaches. The emerging farmers that participated in such interviews constituted a sample of thirty emerging farmers that were purposively drawn from different emerging farmers scattered across

eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle that are local municipalities in Amajuba District. Each of the thirty emerging farmers was subjected to semi-structured interviews that were partially based on the Interview Research Protocol aligned with the research objectives and questions. The qualitative data collected from each of the thirty emerging farmers was thematically analysed by using ATLAS 8.2 of 9 Software. As the study was being accomplished, accompanying measures were also integrated to enhance the overall credibility and trustworthiness as well as ethical considerations of the study. Against that backdrop, the details of the analysis and presentation of the findings are as follows.

4.3 AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES USED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

The thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives of the processes that they use for establishing their farming businesses indicated that most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to three main phases. The three main phases include:

- Phase 1: land access and acquisition,
- Phase 2: farming, and
- Phase 3: access to market places.

The details of such phases as well as their associated themes and subthemes are evaluated as follows.

4.3.1 PHASE 1: LAND ACCESS AND ACQUISITION

It emerged from the narratives of the emerging farmers that the initial stage of the development of their agribusiness enterprises often entails searching for land for the establishment of such farming entities. Emerging farmers reiterated that irrespective of the kind of agribusiness that one aims to venture in, the process of establishing such farming entities often require land. In such explanations, participants stated that no matter how attractive the farming business idea is, it cannot still take-off without the existence of

sufficient land for farming. Other emerging farmers noted that the implication is that the prospective emerging farmers with more attractive agribusiness ideas often fail to acquire the requisite farming land. Emerging farmers also reiterated that they often fail to acquire adequate land for expansion. Such a view is corroborated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 1, 2021) who is involved in the growing of spinach and Irish potatoes and stated that:

“You cannot talk of agribusiness ideas before thinking about land. It is land which is the first thing for any farmer who aims to engage in any serious commercial farming activities. For me case, I was already growing spinach and Irish potatoes on a small scale where some were used by family as other remaining balance was sold. But when farming became very profitable from the small scale farming that I was involved in, I tried to look for more land. I had the agribusiness idea already and I wanted to expand so that I could be able to get more revenues. The process of getting more land was not easy. Most of the pieces of land farming are in millions of rands that we cannot afford. So I had to acquire small piece of land here and there that instead complicates the process of farming and controlling activities because I have to move from one farm to another. So I think you understand what I mean. Land is the first thing that the emerging farmer must search for and not the agribusiness or farming ideas, whatever you call it. If you have land the good farming ideas will come.”

Such narrative also echoes the emerging farmers who revealed that they first thing that they often do is to search for land. Through probe and reprobe questions, they reiterated that they often search for land by asking neighbours and relatives that have land for hiring or sale as well as browsing through the local advertisements for private land for lease or sale. Others stated that they also tend to keep track of the announcement of the government land redistribution programmes to assess whether they can benefit. Participants attributed such approach to the fact that with land in place, the agribusiness idea can emerge to the extent that even if the practical implementation of such agribusiness idea fails, other agribusiness ideas can always emerge. In such quests, emerging farmers stated that they often have some funds to engage in the search of farming land for purchase.

Emerging farmers further explained that they tend to prioritise land purchase above any other agricultural factors of production because land creates the foundation for the

establishment of the required farming structures. As emerging farmers engage in such practice and thinking, others stated that since they often fail to get suitable land for sale, they often tend resort to hiring land from the people who have large pieces of land but are not intending to engage in commercial farming.

Even if this enables emerging farmers to solve the issue of land as the first step for the establishment of agricultural entities, findings still reiterated that challenges often arise from the fact that when such leases expire, some of the landlords usually refuse to renew. Reasons for such refusal were attributed to the fact that some of the landlords may subsequently opt to do farming business themselves or just because they feel the payments from the emerging farmers are not enough. Interviews also revealed that some of the land leases also tend to come with certain conditions that may not permit some forms of farming or agricultural activities. As they revealed, such conditions limit creativity by the emerging farmers to engage in a combination of different agricultural activities to bolster the productivity of agricultural production in their farms. Such a finding is accentuated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 2, 2021) who is involved in medium scale sheep farming in Dannhauser and stated that:

“My view is that people usually have some ideas of the type of farming that they aim to engage in. But the first thing is usually the question as to whether you have sufficient land to do that. Some of my fellow emerging farmers usually hire land as others that have money purchase their own. Purchasing is better, but hiring land through a lease is usually a problem because as you with us black people, some of our people from whom land is leased often get jealous if the farming business becomes well and refuse to renew the lease. As they refuse to renew, land owners usually take over and begin to implement the kinds of agricultural activities that you were doing on that land. This not only causes high level of competition among emerging farmers, but also leaves the emerging farmers that were leasing such pieces of land in dilemma. In the long run, it tends to affect the continuity and sustainability of their businesses. So my advise is that as emerging farmers hire land or additional land for farming, they must also develop the strategy of acquiring or buying their own pieces of land in the later stages of their farming businesses. It is unreliable to hire land from the surround communities because today the landlord is hiring and tomorrow he/she is refusing to hire out due to the reasons best known to him or her.”

As emerging farmers resort to purchasing or leasing land, they reiterated that those from the most rural parts of eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle often use traditional land inherited from their forefathers as the first step for the establishment of their farming businesses. In such a way, emerging farmers elaborated that they often commence on a small-scale like subsistence farmers and move onto the medium scale farming by negotiating with the family members to allow them to use the customary land for farming business.

To some of the emerging farmers, such a strategy has often been effective because some of the family relatives often migrate to big cities like Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town in search of employment opportunities as contrasted to engaging in farming business. As they noted, this creates opportunities for emerging farmers that reside deep in the rural areas to engage in some form of medium scale commercial farming. However, for other emerging farmers, they revealed that such a strategy has often been effective because of family conflicts and lack of cooperation that often affect the utilisation of large chunks of customary or family owned land for commercial agriculture. As they stated, the implication is that the emerging farmers as well as the prospective emerging farmers that cannot purchase, hire or even use family land often resort to lobbying government to provide them with land for farming.

Thus, through different land reform programmes, participants revealed that emerging farmers have been able to access land for agriculture as others are still yet waiting. Besides the complexities and dynamics of land access and acquisition, it was still evident across the narratives of different emerging farmers that it is land that preoccupies the first step undertaken by most of the emerging farmers in the establishment of their farming businesses. Yet, as the emerging farmers acquire or access the required land, social construction of most of the emerging farmers' narratives using thematic analysis revealed that the next step in the approach for the establishment of the farming business is the practical implementation of their agribusiness ideas.

4.3.2 PHASE 2: FARMING

The emerging farmers explained that with land in place, whether it is family land or land which is purchased or leased from landlords, the next step is usually the engagement in

actual farming. In such approach, the participants revealed that emerging farmers tend to engage in the buying of livestock like cattle, sheep and goats from large scale commercial farmers so as to keep, rear and grow them for sale. As on the otherhand, some of the emerging farmers engage in the buying of crop seeds from different sources to get them planted and grown for sale after tilling the land. Such a view is summed in the narrative of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 3, 2021) in eMadlangeni who noted that:

“Of course, if you have land already, what next? And what would you be waiting for? you start the farming.”

Similar narrative was also shared by most of the emerging farmers that it is land that defines the beginning of farming and once it is got, there is nothing that can stop the farmer from engaging in farming business. In such explanations, some of the emerging farmers stated that once they got land, they started engaging in different forms of farming businesses where they cultivate crops and farm other animals like goats, cows, sheep or even engage in small and medium scale commercial poultry businesses.

However, during the probe and re-probe interviews in which different emerging farmers were asked as to where they get the ideas on the kinds of farming businesses to engage in, some of them stated that they are influenced by family members or neighbours that are doing similar farming businesses. Other emerging farmers revealed that the farming business ideas that they are engaged in are often influenced by the success of other emerging farmers due to the shortage of food that the communities face.

They reiterated that some of the emerging farmers are successful because they have ready markets which are analogous to ready buyers of their products from around the rural communities. They attributed that to the fact that most of the rural community members prefer to buy from the emerging farmers because they tend to sell cheaply as compared to the agricultural products like tomatoes, cabbages, Irish potatoes, apples, onions, beans and beef that are sold in the supermarkets. At the sametime, findings revealed that most of the rural communities often find supermarkets far and requiring additional costs in terms of transport to go to the supermarkets even before purchasing a single item.

Thus, as a result of that, emerging farmers explained that emerging farmers among the rural communities in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle often have enormous ready markets from the surrounding rural community members. Such a finding is

corroborated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 4, 2021) who is engaged in the farming of onions, beans, tomatoes and cabbages in eMadlangeni and stated that:

“At first, members from the communities that had gardens were cultivating and growing their own vegetables and others that even had land were buying from supermarkets. But the supermarkets and tuck shops were far. So my friend who is also involved in commercial farming started growing and selling vegetables like cabbages, tomatoes and onions. He was also doing some bit of goat farming. When the communities realised that he was growing and selling such products, they started going to buy such products from his farm. This is because you know when you go to Shoprite, Pick ‘n Pay or Boxer Store in Newcastle, the same products like cabbages and onions that you pass in the farms are being sold quite expensively that some of the unemployed community members that depend on handouts are often unable to afford. So my friend started farming such products on small-scale in 2010 and by 2015, he had expanded to larger land. When I saw his success and growth of his farming business, I was also lured to get involved in some farming. This is because the family had some large piece of land in the rural areas and because I was unemployed, I started farming by planting, growing and selling tomatoes, cabbages and beans in 2016. I also added some sheep and chicken farming and after about three years in 2019, I did not regret why I joined farming because the customers from the communities were there. Today, am thinking of even expanding further and with time grow to become the large-scale commercial farmer. So basically, that is so far my success stories at the moment.”

As emerging farmers are influenced by the success stories of friends and colleagues that got involved in commercial farming, they reiterated that they are motivated by the fact that it is commercial farming that is presently less saturated and with a lot of opportunities. They elaborated that commercial farming is still dominated by just a few categories of people.

As this creates enormous opportunities, such emerging farmers explained that the emerging farmers that have some adequate financial capital are increasingly buying land and investing in the livestock farming like cattle, goat, sheep, poultry and fish farming. However, in responses to the question that explored what kinds of farm infrastructure that they usually put place prior to the commencement of their farming businesses, some of the

emerging farmers that are mainly involved in crop farming stated that once land is available, they usually directly get involved in the tilting of land for the cultivation of crops, plants or fruits that are of their interests. Meanwhile, for other emerging farmers that are engaged in livestock farming like sheep, goats and cattle, they stated that they usually establish simple cost effective structures at the beginning to shield the animals away from thieves at night.

In contrast, others revealed that, since goats, cattle and sheep are kept in the kraal or fenced places, there is usually no need for the establishment of super farm infrastructure unless after expansion. However, in their narratives, they stated that emerging farmers that have capital finance often tend to imitate the large scale commercial farmers by establishing super farm infrastructure with all the modern farming facilities. They attributed such thinking and approach to the fact that some of the emerging farmers have learnt from large scale commercial farmers that investing enormously in the farm infrastructure improves the quality of agricultural products. It also creates trust and confidence in the customers that visit the farms where such emerging farmers operate from. Nevertheless, as crops and livestock mature and become ready for sale, most of the emerging farmers' responses to the question that examined the kind of agribusiness development approaches that emerging farmers use indicated that most of the emerging farmers tend to engage in intense marketing of their products. Even though this results into the increased sales and revenues of their products, findings still revealed there are also those that fail to access adequate market for their products.

4.3.3 PHASE 3: ACCESS TO MARKET PLACES

The emerging farmers reiterated that if the agricultural products become ready for harvesting and sale, they often engage in different initiatives to market and sell their products to consumers. In such narratives, emerging farmers explained that they tend to capitalize on marketing their agricultural products like fruits and vegetables directly to the consumers in the surrounding communities. But even if the surrounding communities offer enormous markets, they still noted such markets not to often be adequate for exhausting all the agricultural products produced by different emerging farmers. To counter such challenges, they explained that emerging farmers that target low income households tend

to extend the geographical outreach of their marketing programmes. However, they also noted that such approach depends on the quantities and surpluses produced.

In such approach, they stated that emerging farmers that engage in direct marketing to the consumers often purchase bakkies or trucks that they use to transport the agricultural products like oranges, apples, cabbages, tomatoes, onions, spinach and eggs from poultry around the communities in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. Emerging farmers using such direct marketing approach were found to go as far as promoting their products in Pietermaritzburg and Germiston. Such a view is echoed in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 5, 2021) who is engaged in poultry farming and selling of eggs in Newcastle and stated that:

“I started this poultry business in 2013 and when eggs started coming in large numbers in 2015, the surrounding communities and shops that were my main customers could not take all the eggs. So I bought the truck and bakkies that me and my workers were using to transport and supply eggs in other areas in eMadlangeni and Dannhauser. We would go on one-on-one marketing that is something like door-to-door marketing selling eggs to the residential areas and also supplying shops in the areas. At the moment, we supply eggs and chicken to other retailers in as far places as Pietermaritzburg and Germiston in Gauteng.”

As emerging farmers engage in such commercialisation approach, other emerging farmers were found to use and rely on middlemen. In such approach, emerging farmers elaborated that there are two kinds of middlemen that come to the farms.

- They revealed the first category to constitute of hawkers or small-scale retailers that come directly to the farm to purchase agricultural products at farm prices and then go to sell directly to the consumers.
- Second category of middlemen were noted by the interviewed emerging farmers to constitute of the middlemen that come to the farms and buy agricultural products for supply to the large-scale retailers, supermarkets and manufacturers or processors of agricultural products.

Even though such middlemen often buy in large quantities, the emerging farmers revealed that they often still demand for lower prices because they tend to charge their percentage on top of the prices that they charge to the retailers, supermarkets and processes or

manufacturers of agricultural products. However, even if that is the case, those emerging farmers that produce large quantities of agricultural products still stated that they are satisfied with the services of middlemen because they buy at once which is better than selling the products one-by-one to the final consumers.

As for other emerging farmers, they stated that since some of them deal in perishable products like oranges and tomatoes that are produced in large quantities, middlemen that purchase in large quantities reduce the costs of wastage. This is because as compared to the large retailers that have the cold storage facilities and capacity to store perishable products like milk, beef and vegetables, some of the emerging farmers do not have such storage facilities and capacity. Such a view is corroborated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 6, 2021) who is engaged in dairy and beef farming in Dannhauser and stated that:

“At the beginning when the cows started producing milk and also getting ready for slaughtering for beef, I use to engage my team to move around eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle selling milk. But that was not enough because the surrounding communities would not purchase all the milk and the sametime I did not have sufficient milk coolers. So most of the milk would go to waste not until I manage to get some middlemen that buy milk from farmers and supply to the companies that produce yoghurt and also process packaged milk that have longer shelve lives. So that approach helped me, though the middlemen also often buy only limited quantities and therefore the more the middlemen that you have the better. For beef, am producing cows for beef and also goat for meat but it is not easy to sell in to the communities. If you slaughter a cow, it can be difficult to sell all of the meat in a short time. So most of the emerging farmers avoid slaughtering cows for direct sale of meat to the communities. Instead using their connections in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle, they capitalize on searching functions and ceremonies like weddings, traditional marriages, traditional cleansing ceremonies and all other forms of ceremonies where they sell the cows for beef in large quantities for the consumption by guests in such ceremonies. Such traditional functions and ceremonies are usually not many, but still they help us sell the meat to the surrounding communities because it is usually not easy to sell beef in large quantities to other areas due to competition and our difficulties of understanding how to get to the butcheries in towns and other cities.”

As the emerging farmers use such approach; others revealed that they have often opted to establish their butcheries and braaing points in Newcastle and Ladysmith because they are more developed commercial centres when compared to eMadlangeni and Dannhauser. In such approach, such emerging farmers elaborated that they get the cows from their farms, slaughter and sell them as meat or beef in their butcheries to the final consumers.

Such butcheries are also integrated with braai points where customers buy and braai as others take them home for family consumption. Combined with sale to other areas like traditional functions, emerging farmers expressed contentment that such approach has often generated daily revenue to keep them running the farming businesses. Similarly, narratives from the emerging farmers that are engaged in the growing and selling especially vegetables and fruits indicated emerging farmers to engage in the practice where they open retail outlets where their vegetables and fruits are sold directly to the final consumers. Using such approach, they explained that some of the emerging farmers have opened fruit and vegetable stores in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle as others have gone as far as Escourt, Welkom and Germiston. Such a view is accentuated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 7, 2021) who is engaged in vegetable and fruit farming in eMadlangeni and revealed that:

“For me, I find that it is easy to grow vegetables and fruits, but the problem is selling them. Consumers around here cannot buy all that we produce. So at the beginning, I was facing a lot of challenges selling all the vegetables and fruits because of lack of market. So most of the vegetables and fruits would get wasted. So I had to sit down and think and I came with the plan of establishing my own retail shops in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. The bank lent me some small money for doing that because I place my farm as the security. I also went as far as Escourt, Germiston and Welkom and at least I minimised my losses because I was able to sell certain good quantities on the daily basis and also get the money to run the farm. Otherwise I would have been out of business by now.”

In other words, it is evident that thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives of the processes that they use for establishing their farming businesses indicated most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to certain three main phases. Such three main phases were reiterated to include phase 1: land access and acquisition, phase 2: farming and

phase three: marketing. Yet, as different emerging farmers undergo through such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, interview findings revealed that they also tend apply a combination of strategies to not only remain sustainable, but also to grow, expand and transition from small-scale to medium-scale and subsequently to large scale commercial farmers.

4.4 AGRIBUSINESS GROWTH STRATEGIES USED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

The thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives indicated some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products as well as market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable. The details of the themes and subthemes on such narratives are analysed and presented as follows.

4.4.1 DIVERSIFICATION

Even though the emerging farmers did not explicitly use the word “diversification”, it was still evident from their narratives that they tend to engage in diversification as part of the agribusiness growth improvement strategies. In such narratives, emerging farmers elaborated that they tend to produce more than one form of agricultural products. They attributed that to the fact that production of more than one form of agricultural products increases the overall revenue that can be used for further expansion and sustainability. They stated that it is difficult to rely on just one agricultural product to generate the necessary income if their businesses are to remain sustainable.

By using the diversification approach, they explained that most of the emerging farmers are increasingly adopting the strategy where they keep some livestock in conjunction to growing and harvesting more than one forms of crops. They explained that farmers usually decide the mix by evaluating a combination of crops that are easier to combine on even small piece of land like beans and maize or maize and peas. Alternatively, they explained

that even a combination of crops and livestock like maize and beans combined with goat and sheep farming can be undertaken because sheep and goats can be fed with the maize and beans in the event of surpluses and thereby avoid wastage. Emerging farmers reiterated the implication of such approach to be reflected in the fact that if the income of a particular agricultural product crop falls, incomes from other agricultural products can usually insulate the farmer by offering alternative sources of income. At the same time, they revealed that for beef and dairy farming, it takes a long period of time before the farming can begin getting revenues.

So in that regard, emerging farmers usually engage in other forms of completely different businesses to support the running of beef farm. As for other emerging farmers, they stated that they tend to add crop production like the growing and harvesting of beans, peas and vegetables to support them and run the beef and dairy farms as they wait for cows to mature and begin producing beef and milk. Through such approach, emerging farmers revealed that the farming business tends to be sustainable and grow. Such narrative is succinctly supported in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 8, 2021) who is operating crop and livestock production in Newcastle and argued that:

“You see after starting the farming business, it is not easy to grow and become sustainable without a side business or even in some of the cases employment. For things like tomatoes, beans, peas, apples and oranges, you must give yourself five months to even to two or three years before you can start even earning anything from your farm. For animals like cows, goats, sheep and pigs, you must give yourself something like five to six years before you can start earning good income from the farming business. Meanwhile, during that periods that you wait, the land must be cultivated, the plants must be weeded and the farm workers must be paid weekly or monthly. At the sametime, you must also provide animal feeds as well as pesticides for animals and plants. All these require expenses that must be met by the farmer before he or she can start earning anything. So basically, what am saying is that apart from starting the farm and beginning operation, you need other extra sources of income which is coming from activities other than farming. Through that, you can be able to get the farming business to grow and become more sustainable with time.”

Meanwhile, emerging farmers further revealed that their growth and expansion initiatives have often entailed purchasing more land to establish other farms that integrate with the

existing farms to produce other forms of agricultural products. In such initiatives, they explained that some of the emerging farmers may experience the challenge of lack of finance and land for expansion, but for the emerging farmers that have accumulated sufficient revenues, growth of the farming business has often entailed purchase of additional land for expansion.

Most of the narratives of the emerging farmers indicated that such approach enables them to generate additional revenues from other agricultural products for further expansion. Participants reiterated that unless the agricultural product that the emerging farmer is dealing in is of high demand and has a large market, growth through the production of a single agricultural product is often not the option. They attributed this to the fact that there are often unpredictabilities in terms of climatic changes and the emergence of new plant and animal diseases as well as poultry diseases that can destroy the entire farm products over a short space of time. Thus, in the event that the emerging farmer is producing more than one agricultural product, it therefore tends to bolster the sustainability and resilience of that farmer. Such a finding is accentuated in the narratives of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 9, 2021) that engage in sheep farming as well as the farming of Irish potatoes in eMadlangeni and insinuated that:

“Farming is just like any other business that is unpredictable. From my experience, I have found that it is difficult to grow and remain sustainable if you have only a single agricultural product that you are focusing on. In 2013, I was focusing only on farming Irish potatoes, but in 2015, a disease invaded my farm and the disease could be eradicated using the available pesticides. So by the time, the traders of pesticides got the exact pesticide for such a disease, I had already lost a lot and completely earned nothing from my potato plantation. So from that time I learnt the hard lesson to also introduce other forms of farming by adding sheep farming. I selected sheep farming because many farmers do not focus on sheep farming. Sheep are also easy to keep because if you have a simple fence, they usually do not breakthrough such fences to roam around in the villages. I also cultivate some vegetables like tomatoes and thus through the cultivation of different agricultural products, I have been able to balance the incomes from the sale of different agricultural products. You know seasons for all plants vary so that if one of the plants is still in the garden, the others that are being harvested can generate income to support the farm. As for the sheep farm, I use them in case of eventualities and I need money to do something in the farm. In that circumstance, I sell the sheep and get the money to do that

thing instead of borrowing from the bank. Basically, that is how you keep the farming business growing until it becomes sustainable for you to reap the earnings without depending on any other source of income.”

As some of the emerging farmers adopt diversification to expand and grow their farming businesses, but others revealed that they have started to invest in market expansions, as a growth improvement strategy.

4.4.2 MARKET EXPANSION

Constant market expansion emerged from the narratives of most of the participants as one of the growth strategies commonly used by the emerging farmers. They explained that most of the emerging farmers understand that increasing the customer base is critical for increasing revenue generation that can be re-invested to expand and grow the farming business. For that reason, participants stated that for emerging farmers that produce relatively larger quantities of agricultural products, they are often hunting for customers. They stated that some of the emerging farmers usually accomplish that by looking for middlemen that supply large retailers as well as the manufacturers or processors of agricultural products.

Emerging farmers attributed that to the fact that most of the emerging farmers realise that most of large retailers and manufacturers or processors of agricultural products that usually buy in large quantities tend to operate and source agricultural products from farmers through the middlemen. They explained that as other emerging farmers get to deal with middlemen, others often fail and search for alternative markets for their products. Such a view is supported in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 10, 2021) who is involved in orange farming in Newcastle and stated that:

“From my understanding of the farming business, I think it is the market that determines the growth of the farming business. If you have a good market and you serve it well through the provision of quality products, you win. You can do anything to grow further because you will have the sources of incomes to do so. For my farming business, I started slowly, I started by supplying street vendors and hawkers in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle and other parts of the Free State with oranges. With time, I also started

supply the hawkers in Johannesburg and Durban. So when I exhausted that, I look for factories that manufacture fruit juice and I got some contracts to supply them with oranges. From that experience, I discovered that it is easy to get the supply contracts with small-scale manufacturers of fruit juice as compared to the large-scale manufacturers of fruit juice. So I redirected my attention to searching only for such small scale manufacturers of fruit juice in Pietermaritzburg and in Germiston. I increased the number of the factories that I was supplying from just five in 2012 to about 13 in 2019 and for now, I just have the thirteen that am dealing with in conjunction to supply the hawkers and other retailers. Even if some of the hawkers get stable employment and stop selling on the streets, I still often have the thirteen factories as well as other small retailers that I supply them with oranges. That has kept me going and even expanding slowly by slowly because I just had four acres of land in 2012, but now I have 9 acres of fruits. I think if all goes as it is going at the moment, I will expand further to about 14 acres by 2025.”

Meanwhile, emerging farmers revealed that they have resorted to discounting so as to sell below the other farmers in order to attract more customers. Through such approach, they elaborated that emerging farmers often discount on the prices being charged quite significantly in order to attract more customers and expand their market based. They stated that since such approach aids the selling of the agricultural products that would stay and get rotten, it seems better than earning completely nothing.

Emerging farmers also revealed that the emerging farmers that produce on a medium-scale basis often produce larger quantities of agricultural products to the extent that if they lower prices, they still tend not to be affected in terms of the income generation from sales. Such a finding is corroborated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 11, 2021) who is engaged in the farming of vegetables in Dannhauser and stated that:

“You know, there are many farmers that are producing vegetables like onions, tomatoes and cabbages. So if you charge the same prices as them, you can get nothing or not that large number of customers and the vegetables will just get rotten. So for me, I discount and sell lower than other producers and that has enabled me to build relationships and networks with customers that mainly market vendors and small scale retailers. This is because my discounts enable me to benefit them as they also support me. The other thing is that I produce a lot of tomatoes and cabbages to the extent that if I sell at the discount, I still don’t experience much decline in revenue. Instead, I gain more because the more the

customers take, the more I also minimise the loss. So through that, I have been able to sustain and grow my business since 2009.”

However, emerging farmers stated that due to the difficulties to convince customers to buy their agricultural products use instant cash; they usually penetrate the market by supplying their agricultural products on credit. They explained that they offer credits as a strategy of getting new customers especially the small-scale retailers that resell agricultural products to accept their products. Thus, with time, emerging farmers stated that they continue to do the same for as long as the retailers continue to pay for the credit as scheduled.

As for other emerging farmers, they revealed that in the event that retailers offered credits do not pay consistently as scheduled, they tend to discontinue the credits and focus only on those that pay. They attributed such approach to the fact that it is better to sell and get some earnings as contrasted to selling and getting nothing in return completely. But even though, it has been difficult to collect the money from the retail creditors, emerging farmers still reiterated that such a strategy has been important for getting and retaining new retailers as also searching for new retailers that can be brought on board. They stated that this is because once credit is advanced and it is paid, the relationship with the small-scale retailers is initiated and built over time.

However, besides that emerging farmers revealed that they have also been engaging in partial contract farming to supplement their incomes. They elaborated that they use partial contract farming in situations where especially manufacturers or processors of agricultural products require farmers to produce particular crops for usage as inputs in their manufacturing processes. Through contract farming, they reiterated that they often able to gain stable source of incomes because the manufacturers in such contract farming models buy all the produced agricultural products. However, emerging farmers expressed concerns that although contract farming offers stable incomes, such revenues are usually still lower as compared to the prices that other buyers of agricultural products are offering.

Though the advantage is that emerging farmers produce while knowing where they will sell the agricultural products, some of the emerging farmers still highlighted that in most of the cases, contract farming agreements are discontinued due to consistent delivery of poor quality products or even failure to deliver the required quantity. Despite such limitations, emerging farmers stated that the emerging farmers that have been able to use contract farming well, have often benefited and found values in contract farming.

As they noted, the implication is that emerging farmers have been able to use contract farming to establish a footprint in farming business before avoiding contract farming and going on their own to grow further. As on the other hand, other emerging farmers have been able to use contract farming to expand their clientele base to rake in more revenues and grow to become sustainable.

In other words, from these narratives, it is evident that some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products as well as market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable. However, as much as some of the emerging farmers have been able to successfully use such strategies, empirical findings still also indicated that there are a combination of challenges that still mar the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable.

4.5 IMPEDIMENTS OF AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH APPROACHES USED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

The major impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District were found from the emerging farmers' interview narratives to arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Other limitations were associated with poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as to understand and respond to market dynamics. The details of such the themes and subthemes on such impediments are evaluated as follows.

4.5.1 POOR QUALITY SEEDS, FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES

Emerging farmers' narration of the kinds of complexities which tend to undermine their effective performance pointed to the input-based challenges to be the major impediments. The participants explained that they have managed to overcome the challenges of lacking the required inputs. However, they noted that those emerging farmers that are transitioning

from subsistence farming to small-scale and medium scale commercial farming often face fierce challenges of acquiring or accessing all the required agricultural inputs on sustainable basis such as fertilizers, chemicals, quality seeds and tractors.

Despite having relatively sufficient land, these farmers highlighted that most of the emerging farmers that are based in rural areas do lack adequate financial resources to purchase and use quality seeds, fertilizers and other required agricultural equipments. As they noted, the implication is that emerging farmers tend to use the traditional methods of preserving seeds from the crops of the previous seasons to be used as the seeds in the future planting seasons. Such approach limits the maximum yields that some of the emerging farmers are able to get from the particular planting season. They explained that this is attributable to the fact that experience of emerging farmers have confirmed that agricultural seeds processed and sold by the producers of plant seeds are often of better quality and tend to produce more yields.

The narratives of the emerging farmers also indicated that some of the emerging farmers face the challenge of meeting the cost of quality seeds due to the fact that their transition from subsistence farming into commercial farming implies that they would be cultivating more land that require more expenditures on quality seeds. Unfortunately, as they noted that emerging farmers are often unable to afford that due to the hefty costs of plant seeds. Such a finding is reflected in the views of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 12, 2021) who is also involved in the cultivation of potatoes and beans in eMadlangeni and stated that:

“Some of the farmers especially those in the rural areas have enough land for atleast medium scale commercial farming. But the problem is that they lack even the simplest thing like quality seeds due to money related problems. So what they do is that they resort to processing of seeds from the previous seasons and using them for other later planting seasons. Of course traditionally that is what we have been doing, but when it comes to commercial farming where you are producing for sale and not for home consumption, customers want better quality. So according to the kinds of seeds that some of the emerging farmers are using, they are not able to get better quality crops as compared to the other emerging farmers that are using better quality seeds. Another problem is that such seeds as compared to the ones offered by the suppliers of agricultural seeds do not usually produce better yields. So you find that a farmer has cultivated beans on about

three or four acres, but the yield is so small and like the beans were cultivated in half an acre. So basically that is the problem.”

Due to lack of technical knowledge and experience, interviews revealed that as emerging farmers face such challenges, other limitations tend to arise from the fact that it is not easy to preserve some of the seeds of certain plants. Through that, they reiterated that it is easy to preserve the seeds for crops and plants like beans, peas and tomatoes using the traditional method. But it is not possible to do the same for the seeds of Irish potatoes that the emerging farmers must buy during each planting season. They attributed that to the fact that most of the emerging farmers do not have the capabilities to preserve such seeds.

As the emerging farmers highlighted, the effect is that some of the emerging farmers are often unable to diversify by producing a variety of different crops because they cannot afford or even have access to the seeds for certain plants. During questioning of the kinds of complexities that emerging farmers experience, most of the participants revealed that challenges of seeds affect capabilities of the emerging farmers to produce a variety of crops to improve their agricultural outputs as well as the overall earnings from the market. As the interviewed participants further noted, it is not only challenge of quality seeds which is an impediment, but also limitations arising from the capabilities to afford and use fertilizers. Emerging farmers elaborated that most of the emerging farmers tend to lack funds for purchase of fertilizers yet they do cultivation on land which is not very fertile. They explained that land may be fertile in the beginning stages of farming, but when it is cultivated from season to season, it tends to get exhausted and become infertile.

Thus, emerging farmers that are usually unable to afford artificial and organic fertilizers often end up cultivating without using fertilizers. As they noted, this combined with poor quality seeds often cause poor yields from the cultivated fields as well as the returns that emerging farmers are able to get from the invested capital. Such a view is further elucidated in the reasoning of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 13, 2021) in Newcastle who stated that:

“Some of the farmers can afford quality seeds but not fertilizers because the costs of having and using both of them would be too high. Others cannot afford both quality seeds and fertilizers, and therefore tend to just cultivate the land in its natural state as it is. Of course some land in this Kwa-Zulu is fertile. But if it is used consistently for a long period

of time, it tends to turn infertile to mean that you must use fertilizers if you are to get the desired yields. But that is usually a problem for most my fellow farmers because after cultivating and harvesting, the revenues from the sale of crops or plants are often used for meeting different needs. So by the time the next planting season arrives, money would not be available for the purchase of quality seeds and fertilizers. This affects the yield as well as the quality of the crops and plants that some of fellow farmers get. For instance, I will give you the examples of tomatoes or avocados, for those farmers that do not use good seeds and fertilizers, the tomatoes and avocados produced are usually smaller and not very attractive as compared to those of the competitors using quality seeds and good fertilizers. So what some of my colleagues is that they strive by all means to borrow and use money from stokvels or from any other source to purchase quality seeds and fertilizers so that they can get good yields and returns from the market. Once they have earned such revenues, they tend to reinvest it by buying and keeping better seeds as well as sufficient quantities of fertilizers for the next planting season. So through that, you can be able to overcome the challenge of lack of quality seeds and fertilizers.”

Besides that, emerging farmers also noted that challenges often also arise from managing and growing plants to levels of sustainability. They explained that chemicals required for weed spraying and control tend to be costly and not easily available in towns like eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. Instead, such complex chemicals are often only found in large cities like Pietermaritzburg or even Durban. This tends to be costly for emerging farmers to travel long distances and pay hefty transport costs to also purchase highly expensive chemicals.

As the emerging farmers noted, such difficulties often lure emerging farmers to resort to using manual labour to do the weeding. Yet, as emerging farmers transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming, the size of the land also often increases to imply that usage of manual labour becomes less effective method for weed control. Thus, some of the emerging farmers reveal poor weed control combined with failure to afford pesticides for pest controls often affect the yields that emerging farmers get from the fields as well as the returns from the market. Participants reiterated such dynamics to limit the growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses with the effect that some of the emerging farmers have remained small-scale or just medium scale commercial farmers for a long time without transitioning into large scale commercial farmers. Yet, as the participants reiterated, challenges of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides often still mutate with the poor

farming methods and equipments to undermine the overall effective performance of most of the emerging farmers.

4.5.2 POOR FARMING METHODS AND EQUIPMENT

The poor farming methods and the lack of access to equipment emerged from the responses of most of the emerging farmers as some one of the impediments for successful development and growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Participants elaborated that most of the subsistence farmers have transitioned to small and medium scale commercial farming. But the challenge still arises from the fact that even those that operate in medium scale farms still tend to use mix of traditional and modern mechanised agricultural production methods. Most of the emerging farmers highlighted such situations to be reflected in the fact that some of the emerging farmers tend to use tractors that they hire or purchase for tilting of land.

However, when it comes to weeding and harvesting, most of them still tend to use manual labour. As most of the participants stated, use of a mix of traditional and modern farming methods causes the decline of the productivity of emerging farmers' farms. They attributed that to the fact that manual weeding does adequately protect crops or plants from destruction by weeds.

Emerging farmers noted that there is also a challenge with manual harvesting because it causes a lot of damage to crops that in turn undermine quality. As they noted, such constraints are not only evident among the emerging farmers that are involved in crop production, but also for those that are engaged in livestock production. They explained that some of the emerging farmers that are engaged in poultry farming tend to use basic techniques like the usage of ordinary maize flour without any or much vitamins that are critical for improving the quality of poultry products.

For the emerging farmers engaged in dairy farming, some of the interviewed participants revealed that they also tend to use manual labour-intensive process of milking cows that in turn tends to be costly and time consuming. When the milk is produced, some of those farmers who are involved in milk production lamented that they do not have coolers to store their milk. They stated that the implication is that the produced milk must be sold

immediately after production. However, failure to sell all the milk implies the remaining milk may just get wasted. Such a finding is further detailed in the narratives of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 14, 2021) , who is engaged in dairy farming as well as the farming of crops (maize and other grains) in Newcastle and revealed that:

“There is generally a problem with the farming methods we use. Some of us have moved to complete mechanised farming as others are still using a combination of traditional and mechanised farming. For instance, we got dairy farmers that do not only use manual milking of cows, but also once the milk is produced, it is boiled using fire as the method for preserving it before sale. So instead of investing in the establishment of coolers, they tend to boil. This affects the quality of milk because some of the factories that process milk into different milk products often do not require boiled milk. So the dairy farmers engaging in such practices have usually only focused on serving the surrounding communities with milk for direct household consumption. Then, there are emerging farmers that never spray their crops or plants as well as animals to control pests and diseases. So the animals, plants or poultry birds tend to survive on the mercy of God with only minimal medications and pest control initiatives undertaken by some of the farmers. They usually get markets among the ordinary communities because they sell such products cheaply, but still they cannot get extra market base among the affluent communities that are used to high quality products produced by the large scale commercial farmers.”

Emerging farmers attributed such poor farming methods and equipment to lack of adequate financial resources that force most of the emerging farmers to be creative in how they accomplish their farming businesses. But still, they reiterated that even the emerging farmers that have relatively some good amount of capital finance are often still reluctant to fully invest and commit enormous financial resources in agriculture. This is because emerging farmers have not found much profitability and returns in farming businesses.

Thus, emerging farmers tend to balance farming with other non-agricultural businesses like taxi operation business, construction and tendering from government as well as even having employment as the main source of incomes in other organisations. So in that case, since agricultural production is not the main source of income, the interviewed participants stated that emerging farmers tend to redirect the financial resources to other businesses rather than farming.

As some of the interviewed participants revealed, the implication is that most of the farms tend to lack all the essential equipment. Due to poor commitment, they also tend not to follow instructions of the agricultural extension officers as well as veterinary officers to ensure pest and disease control initiatives are undertaken as scheduled by frequently spraying plants and animals or giving chicken in the poultry farm the necessary medicine for proactive disease control. Such a finding is succinctly elucidated in the narratives of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 15, 2021) who is engaged in poultry farming in eMadlangeni and highlighted that:

“From my understanding of this thing of farming, I have come to discover that not everyone who comes into farming is committed. Some of the new farmers usually have other businesses that they consider as the main source of income. Others who get involved in commercial farming are employed in government or even the corporate world and therefore tend to engage in some small or medium scale commercial farming as one of the strategies of assisting their family members in the rural areas. So in that case, they may have capital finance, but never commit the required capital finance in farming. Even if they purchase some farming equipment, a lot other equipment may still often be missing. But of course, the good thing is that they usually have the financial capabilities to hire such equipments from either large scale commercial farmers or other sources. Despite that, there is usually complete lack of total commitment in the farming business. This is because farming is a complex business in which you do not earn immediately, but after five months to even five or six years later. So most of the new farmers with viable alternative sources of incomes are often unprepared to wait for such a long period to achieve that. So in the short run, that causes poor investment of the required capital finance in farming business by some of the farmers and they also tend to realise the benefits of farming in the long run when the cows, goats or sheep start to generate some incomes. And it is only at that point that they tend to increase their commitment as well as the amount of financial resources invested in farming. But again that will still depend on whether a particular farmer with viable alternative source of incomes is able to patiently wait for such a long period of time to gain from his or her farming business. This is because all the time, new small and medium scale commercial farmers are usually coming on board and within a two or three years, just only a few are remaining in the agricultural production. So in most of the cases, it is only those with capital finance that have seen good business opportunities in farming that stay as well as those in the rural areas that have no option but to do farming business as the source of income and employment that stay in this farming business.”

However, emerging farmers revealed that even if challenges that affect emerging farmers' agribusinesses are not arising from poor farming methods and equipments, limitations can still arise from lack of land for expansion. They elaborated that the emerging farmers that have been able to access the market and require more land for expansion to produce more as required by the consumers have often been able to get land. For the emerging farmers that are doing relatively very well, they stated that land constraints have undermined their seamless transition from medium scale commercial farmers to fully-fledged large scale commercial farmers. As the emerging farmers face such challenges, others also experience certain market dynamics and complexities that constrain their growth and sustainability.

4.5.3 MARKET DYNAMICS AND COMPLEXITIES

The study revealed a range of market dynamics and complexities which tend to undermine the growth and sustainability of most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Participants reiterated this to arise from the fact that most of the emerging farmers reside deep in the rural areas where extensive land for farming is available. Unfortunately, they also stated that it is such remoteness of the rural areas in which emerging farmers operate that also creates the gap and distance between the emerging farmers and the markets for their agricultural products. They explained that problems arise from the fact that eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle are located far from major cities like Pietermaritzburg, Durban and Johannesburg where there is high demand for food among their large population.

Thus, for the emerging farmers that are operating in deep rural areas of these municipalities, there is a problem of the distance between them and the major markets for their products. They attributed this to the fact that such distances are further compounded by the poor state of the roads linking eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle with their associated rural areas. Due to such poor state of some roads, only a few public transport operate upto the deep end of the rural areas where most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses are situated. At the same time, they stated that only a few middlemen also tend to reach the rural areas where some of the emerging farmers operate. Participants revealed that the effect is that the emerging farmers that have not invested in the purchase of bakkies or trucks to transport their agricultural products to the markets in different urban centres often have to hire their vehicles that can do so.

Even though emerging farmers are able to do that, they still stated that scarcity of transport in the rural areas tend to increase the overall transport costs. As they noted, this affects the competitiveness of the prices that emerging farmers are able to charge when their agricultural products finally reach the urban centres. They also indicated that such high transport costs tend to erode the profit margins as well as the percentages that they are able to retain and re-invest in the farming business. This slows the pace of development and growth of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District. Such a view is elaborated in the opinions of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 16, 2021), who is operating a crop farm for maize, beans, peas and soybeans in Dannhauser and stated that:

“As you understand, farms operate in rural areas. That is where land for agriculture is. But the problem is that you get cut-off from the main market. In most of the cases, the roads are not very good except for those that are situated along major roads. However, for those that are deep in the remote rural areas, a challenge of good roads and poor linkage using public transport often arises. This renders reaching the market quite difficult. Since most of the farmers do not have their own bakkies or trucks, we tend to hire bakkies or trucks to transport our products to the market. To get a better a price for transport, that means you must use only one transporter because if you change transporters, some of them do not understand the conditions in the rural areas and therefore tend to charge higher transport costs. We usually have transporters that have specialised in the transportation of the farmers' products from rural areas to the surrounding towns and cities. But that can only be cheaper if the smallholder farmers combined their products and engage the transporter to transport them at once. But farmers that are unable to do that usually face a lot of high transport costs that make them get almost nothing after selling their agricultural products. So generally, transport linking the rural farmers with the major towns and cities where most of the consumers of agricultural products reside is still a challenge.”

As emerging farmers face such transportation challenges, other emerging farmers also noted that most of the emerging farmers do not have sufficient market information. They explained that the distance between the rural areas where emerging farmers operate and the markets render them less informed about what is unfolding in the market. Thus, they revealed emerging farmers to usually rely on the information gained by fellow emerging farmers of which some of such information is also often inaccurate.

The emerging farmers highlighted such lack of market information to affect the planning where agricultural production and supply is matched with demand. Such complexities were further highlighted by emerging farmers to be exacerbated by the fact that most of the consumers are used to the processed or value added agricultural products provided by most of the large scale commercial farmers. They stated such situations to affect the performance of most of the emerging farmers that largely deal in unprocessed raw agricultural products. Due to lack of adequate capital as well as know, some of the emerging farmers stated that dealing in unprocessed agricultural products places emerging farmers at disadvantaged position as compared to the large scale farmers. Such a view is reflected in the narratives of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 17, 2021), that farm beans and peas as well as dairy cows in Dannhauser and revealed that:

“Most of the consumers like processed agricultural products. Except for vegetables like spinach as well as fruits, beef and fish, most of the consumers prefer processed maize, beans, peas, soybeans and other products. This places us in a bad position because most of our products are unprocessed. Some of the farmers do not have adequate capital finance to invest in the processing of their products. Some even do not have the machines for doing good packaging. So in most of the cases, the products are just put in plastic bags as compared to the attractive packaging that you see in Shoprite, Pick ‘n Pay or whatever. So there is a problem in that area. Some of the farmers have the financial resources to invest in such machineries, but still somehow there is also a problem of knowledge of how to do it as well as the additional costs required for employing the personnel for the processing plant. So basically, most of the farmers tend to prefer to sell unprocessed products direct to the consumers or to the other processors of agricultural products in order to minimise the overall operational costs.”

However, besides that, interviews also revealed that there is a problem of emerging farmers getting good contracts to supply the required agricultural products to the large buyers like processors or manufacturers of agricultural products, wholesalers and large retailers that purchase in bulk. The research study has revealed that most of the emerging farmers in rural areas do not understand how the overall system of getting access to such lucrative contracts works. They stated that some of the emerging farmers that are doing well have been able to find out how such contracts work, but still a challenge still often arises from having to comply with the requirements for accessing such contracts.

In their narratives, they elaborated that most of the lucrative processors or manufacturers of agricultural products as well as wholesalers and retailers often place stringent requirements for one to be contracted to supply the required agricultural products. Unfortunately, they noted that it is often still difficult for emerging farmers to qualify. Participants attributed that to the fact that emerging farmers do not produce the large quantities required by most of the manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

Emerging Farmers explained that manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers often also place stringent quality requirements that are difficult for emerging farmers to comply with. They linked the failure of most emerging farmers to comply with the requisite quality standards because of poor skillfulness of farm workers, lack of fertilizer usage, poor pest control and inability to control climate change effects that either cause excess rain or lack of rain to destroy crops. Thus, they noted that it is a combination of these factors of which some are within the control of emerging farmers as others are out of control of the emerging farmers that induce quality issues that affect sale of their products to their customers. To counter such limitations, interviews revealed that emerging farmers are increasingly trying to find way of working outside the contracts provided by large scale manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers by focusing on poor consumers. Such a view is accentuated in the views of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 18, 2021) in Newcastle that farms oranges and apples and stated that:

“It is not easy to access the supply contracts for large manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers. They require a lot mostly in terms of consistency of quantity and quality. You know, most of the manufacturers produce their products for sale in South Africa and also for export to overseas. So if the quality is not good, they fear they will loose their affluent customers that rely on them in South Africa. They also fear that they can loose the contracts in the overseas countries. So that makes them to set the quality standards which are too high for us. To comply, you need to have good machineries, equipment and the farm workers that know what they are doing. That is not possible always because we do not have the money to employ the best. Also take note of the fact that like for us in the apple and oranges business, you can do all which is required, but all of a sudden storm, too much rain or too much sunshine may just come from nowhere to affect all the quality considerations and efforts that you had put in place. I think you can see what we face. All these affect the kinds of profits that we get from our farming business.”

Due to such challenges, emerging farmers revealed that they are often unable to generate the required returns that can be re-invested in their farming business to catalyse the pace of their overall growth and sustainability. Yet, as emerging farmers are faced with such challenges, they also stated that they have collateral that can be placed to the banks as security to get loans and mitigate the risks of lack of finance still often face declining profitability due to the high interest rates that banks charge.

In other words, from these narratives, it is evident that the impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District often arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as to understand and respond to market dynamics. Thus, in the context of such constraints as well as in response to the question that explored emerging farmers' opinions on what can be done to overcome such constraints, different emerging farmers offered different solutions.

4.6 SUGGESTIONS OF EMERGING FARMERS ON HOW AGRIBUSINESS MODELS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT CAN BE IMPROVED

The emerging farmers suggested that the government must speed up the land reform programmes to ensure that the question of land issues among the emerging farmers is addressed. They elaborated that instead of giving out land even those that do not aim to utilise it, the government should prioritise those that are already engaged in small and medium scale commercial farming. Through such approach, emerging farmers expressed concerns that land reform programmes will be retailored to directly address the land question and inadequacy of land among the emerging farmers. At the same time, other emerging farmers revealed that it is also critical for the government to offer funding or low interest loans to the emerging farmers to mitigate the challenges of lack of adequate capital finance. Increasing the availability of capital finance was reiterated to enable them be able to afford to purchase and use better seeds and agricultural machineries and equipment. Such a view is accentuated in the narrative of one of the emerging farmers (Interviewee 19, 2021) who stated that:

“Government must prioritise land reform for people who are already engaged in some form of commercial farming. The problem with land reform programmes is that they are giving out land to even people that do not aim to use the land in the near future. That causes wastage of land and therefore farmers like us who are already engaged in farming to make the land productive must be accorded priorities in the land reform programmes. My view is also that the government must assess the way of providing us with the initial operating capital for atleast to help those who are involved in commercial farming to start well with quality seeds, fertilizers and other relatively cheaper agricultural equipments like bakkies for transporting produce from the farms to the market.”

As emerging farmers proposed such a solution, others suggested that the government must improve the efficacy of the agricultural extension programmes in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle. They attributed this to the fact that the agricultural extension programmes in eMadlangeni, Dannhauser and Newcastle are less effective and occupied by very few agricultural extension officers that do not reach all the farmers in all the rural areas. Through the improvement of the capabilities of the agricultural extension programmes, emerging farmers stated that emerging farmers can get to understand how to farm certain crops as well as certain animals and poultry products. They attributed this to the fact that agricultural extension services have not reached all the farmers to thereby undermine the capabilities of the emerging farmers to learn and apply new modern farming skills.

As they noted, the implication is that emerging farmers are stuck in the middle of a mix of traditional and some aspects of modern farming methods. Participants highlighted such approach to affect the overall productivity of the land in which emerging farmers do their farming business. Thus, they revealed that the improvement of the efficacy of agricultural extension services will not only improve the modern agricultural skillfulness of emerging farmers, but also enable emerging farmers to access critical agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and simple modern farming equipments. In other words, emerging farmers feel that the government must be improve the capabilities of the agricultural extension services to also provide atleast quality seeds to the emerging farmers that cannot afford to purchase them.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

It is evident that thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives of the processes that they use for establishing their farming businesses indicated most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to certain three main phases. Such three main phases were reiterated to include phase 1: land access and acquisition, phase 2: farming and phase three: marketing. As different emerging farmers undergo through such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, interview findings revealed that they also tend apply a combination of strategies to not only remain sustainable, but also to grow, expand and transition from small-scale to medium-scale and subsequently to large scale commercial farmers. Such a view is accentuated in the outcomes of thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives that indicated some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products.

Such growth strategies were also reiterated to include market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable. However, as much as some of the emerging farmers have been able to successfully use such strategies, empirical findings still also indicated that there are a combination of challenges that still mar the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable. Major impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District were found from the emerging farmers' interview narratives to arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Other constraints were narrated to emerge from poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as to understand and respond to market dynamics.

Thus, in the context of such constraints as well as in response to the question that explored emerging farmers' opinions on what can be done to overcome such constraints, most of the emerging farmers suggested that the government must speed up the land reform programmes to ensure that the question of land issues among the emerging farmers is addressed. They elaborated that instead of giving out land even those that do not aim to utilise it, the government should prioritise those that are already engaged in small and medium scale commercial farming. Hence, in the context of such suggestions as

well as the overall empirical findings, the discussions in the next chapter offer the general conclusions of the study as well as recommendations on the measures for improving the performance of emerging farmers in Amajuba District and South Africa at large.

5. CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTIONS

In alignment with the fundamental research questions and objectives that examined the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District as well as their associated limitations, this chapter offers the general conclusions and recommendations of the study. The general conclusions reflect the key primary research findings and key literature review findings. Key primary research findings are summarised according to key findings on the agribusiness development approaches as well as agribusiness growth strategies and impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District. Key literature review findings are summarised according to the key findings on agribusiness development process for emerging farmers, strategies for managing growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses and inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth. In the context of such key secondary and empirical research findings, the chapter documents recommendations that offer a combination of strategies that can be used to improve the performance of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District and South Africa at large.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

Basing on the overriding research questions and objectives that examined the agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District as well as their associated inhibitors, the general conclusions below reflect the key primary research findings and key literature review findings.

5.2.1 KEY PRIMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS

The key empirical research findings are summarised according to key findings on the agribusiness development approaches as well as agribusiness growth strategies and

impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District.

5.2.1.1 Agribusiness Development Approaches used by Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District

The empirical findings indicated most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to three main phases that include:

- Phase 1: land access and acquisition
- Phase 2: farming
- Phase three: marketing.

It emerged from the narratives of emerging farmers that the initial stage of the development of their agribusiness enterprises often entails searching for land for the establishment of such farming entities. Emerging farmers reiterated that irrespective of the kind of agribusiness that one aims to venture in, the process of establishing such farming entities often require land. In such explanations, participants stated that no matter how attractive the farming business idea is, it cannot still take-off without the existence of sufficient land for farming.

Emerging farmers noted that the implication is that some of the prospective emerging farmers with more attractive agribusiness ideas often fail to acquire the requisite farming land. As on the otherhand, emerging farmers often fail to acquire adequate land for expansion. Besides the complexities and dynamics of land access and acquisition, it was still evident across the narratives of different emerging farmers that it is land that preoccupies the first step undertaken by the emerging farmers in the establishment of their farming businesses. As the emerging farmers acquire or access the required land, social construction of the emerging farmers' narratives using thematic analysis revealed that the next step in the approach for the establishment of the farming business is the practical implementation of their agribusiness ideas.

Emerging farmers explained that with land in place, whether it is family land or land which is purchase or leased from landlords, the next step is usually the engagement in actual farming. In such approach, the participants revealed that emerging farmers engage in the buying of livestock like cattle, sheep and goats from large scale commercial farmers so as to keep, rare and grow them for sale. As on the otherhand, emerging farmers engage in the buying of crop seeds from different sources to get them planted and grown for sale after tilting the land. As crops and livestock mature and become ready for sale, emerging farmers' responses indicated that they tend to engage in intense marketing of their products.

Emerging farmers reiterated that if the agricultural products become ready for harvesting and sale, emerging farmers often engage in different initiatives to market and sell their products to consumers. As different emerging farmers undergo through such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, interview findings revealed that they also tend apply a combination of strategies to not only remain sustainable, but also to grow, expand and transition from small-scale to medium-scale and subsequently to large scale commercial farmers.

5.2.1.2 Agribusiness Growth Strategies used by Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District

The empirical findings indicated some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products. Although they have only limited scale, other growth improvement strategies were found to encompass market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable. Even though emerging farmers did not directly use the word "diversification", it was still evident from their narratives that they tend to engage in diversification as part of the agribusiness growth improvement strategies. In such narratives, emerging farmers elaborated that they tend to produce more than one form of agricultural products. They attributed that to the fact that production of more than one form of agricultural products increases the overall revenue that can be used for further expansion and sustainability.

Emerging farmers stated that it is difficult to rely on just one agricultural product to generate the necessary revenue to remain sustainable. Using diversification approach, they explained that emerging farmers are increasingly adopting the strategy where they keep some livestock in conjunction to growing and harvesting more than one form of crops. Emerging farmers reiterated the implication of such approach to be reflected in the fact that if the income of a particular agricultural product crop falls, incomes from other agricultural products can usually insulate the farmer by offering alternative sources of income.

As emerging farmers adopt diversification to expand and grow their farming businesses, other emerging farmers revealed that some other emerging farmers have often invested in market expansion as a growth improvement strategy. They explained that emerging farmers understand that increasing the customer base is critical for increasing revenue generation that can be re-invested to expand and grow the farming business. For that reason, participants stated that for emerging farmers that produce relatively larger quantities of agricultural products, they are often hunting for customers. They stated that emerging farmers usually accomplish that by looking for middlemen that supply large retailers as well as the manufacturers or processors of agricultural products.

Emerging farmers attributed that to the fact that most of the emerging farmers realise that most of large retailers and manufacturers or processors of agricultural products that usually buy in large quantities tend to operate and source agricultural products from farmers through the middlemen. They explained that as other emerging farmers get to deal with intermediaries, others often fail and search for alternative markets for their products. Meanwhile, emerging farmers revealed that they have resorted to discounting so as to sell below the other farmers in order to attract more customers. Through such approach, they elaborated that emerging farmers often discount on the prices being charged quite significantly in order to attract more customers and expand their market based. They stated that since such approach aids the selling of the agricultural products that would stay and get rotten, it seems better than earning completely nothing.

Emerging farmers revealed that some of them that produce on a medium-scale basis often produce larger quantities of agricultural products to the extent that if they lower prices, they still tend not to be affected in terms of the income generation from sales. However, emerging farmers stated that due to the difficulties to convince customers to buy their

agricultural products, they usually penetrate the market by supplying their agricultural products on credit. They explained that they offer credits as a strategy of getting new customers especially the small-scale retailers that resell agricultural products to accept their products. Thus, with time, emerging farmers stated that they continue to do the same for as long as the retailers continue to pay for the credit as scheduled. As on the otherhand, other emerging farmers have been able to use contract farming to expand their clientele base to rake in more revenues and grow to become sustainable. As much as emerging farmers have been able to successfully use such strategies, empirical findings still also indicated that there are a combination of challenges that still mar the capabilities of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable.

5.2.1.3 Impediments of Agribusiness Development and Growth Approaches used by Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District

The empirical findings signify the major impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District arise from:

- Poor quality seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides
- Poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs
- Incapabilities to understand and respond to market dynamics.

Participants explained that emerging farmers have managed to pass the challenges of lack of the required inputs. However, they noted that emerging farmers that are transitioning from subsistence farming to small-scale and medium scale commercial farming often face the challenges of acquiring and using all the necessary agricultural inputs.

Despite having relatively sufficient land, emerging farmers highlighted that most of the emerging farmers that are based in rural areas lack adequate financial resources to purchase and use quality seeds, fertilizers and other required agricultural equipments. Narratives from the emerging farmers also indicated that emerging farmers face the challenge of meeting the cost of quality seeds due to the fact that their transition from subsistence farming into commercial farming implies that they would be cultivating more

land that require more expenditures on quality seeds. Unfortunately, as they noted emerging farmers are often unable to afford that due to the hefty costs of plant seeds.

As the participants reiterated, challenges of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides often still mutate with the poor farming methods and equipments to undermine the overall effective performance of the emerging farmers. Participants elaborated that most of the subsistence farmers have transitioned to small and medium scale commercial farming. But the challenge still arises from the fact that even those that operate in medium scale farms still tend to use mix of traditional and modern mechanised agricultural production methods.

Emerging farmers highlighted such situations to be reflected in the fact that some of the emerging farmers tend to use tractors that they hire or purchase for tilling of land. When it comes to weeding and harvesting, most of them still tend to use manual labour. As the participants stated use of a mix of traditional and modern farming methods causes the decline of the productivity of emerging farmers' farms. As emerging farmers face such challenges, others also experience certain market dynamics and complexities that constrain their growth and sustainability. Emerging farmers revealed a range of market dynamics and complexities to undermine the growth and sustainability of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses.

The participants reiterated this to arise from the fact that most of the emerging farmers reside deep in the rural areas where extensive land for farming is available. Unfortunately, they also stated that it is such remoteness of the rural areas in which emerging farmers operate that also creates the gap and distance between the emerging farmers and the markets for their agricultural products. Emerging farmers also noted that they do not have sufficient market information. They explained that the distance between the rural areas where emerging farmers operate and the markets render them less informed about what is unfolding in the market. Thus, they revealed emerging farmers to usually rely on the information gained by fellow emerging farmers of which some of such information is also often inaccurate. Emerging farmers highlighted such lack of market information to affect the planning where agricultural production and supply is matched with demand. Such complexities were further highlighted by most of the emerging farmers to be exacerbated by the fact that most of the consumers are used to the processed or value added agricultural products provided by most of the large scale commercial farmers. They stated

such situations to affect the performance of the emerging farmers that largely deal in unprocessed raw agricultural products.

Due to lack of adequate capital as well as know, emerging farmers stated that dealing in unprocessed agricultural products places emerging farmers at disadvantaged position as compared to the large scale farmers. However, besides that, other emerging farmers also noted that there is a problem of emerging farmers getting good contracts to supply the required agricultural products to the large buyers like processors or manufacturers of agricultural products, wholesalers and large retailers that purchase in bulk. In their narratives, they elaborated that most of the lucrative processors or manufacturers of agricultural products as well as wholesalers and retailers often place stringent requirements for one to be contracted to supply the required agricultural products. Unfortunately, they noted that it is often still difficult for emerging farmers to qualify. Due to such challenges, participants revealed that they are often unable to generate the required returns that can be re-invested in their farming business to catalyse the pace of their overall growth and sustainability.

As emerging farmers are faced with such challenges, they also stated that emerging farmers that have collateral that can be placed to the banks as security to get loans and mitigate the risks of lack of finance still often face declining profitability due to the high interest rates that banks charge.

5.2.2 KEY LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

The key literature review findings are summarised according to the key findings on agribusiness development process for emerging farmers, strategies for managing growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses and inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth.

5.2.2.1 Agribusiness Development Process for Emerging Farmers

Even though micro-farmers do not have the capacity to operate as more efficient agribusiness entities, literature review signifies agribusiness development is the dynamic

and systematic process of creating an agricultural enterprise that serves consumers globally and locally through innovation and management of multiple value chains that deliver valued goods and services derived from sustainable orchestration of food, grains and natural resources (Bramley *et al.*, 2019:362). Such a definition positions agribusiness as an innovative and market centric entity that creates the desired agricultural products to respond to consumer needs and generate the desired values for farmers (Bramley *et al.*, 2019:362). It signifies emerging farmers must be more innovative to coherently manage the dynamic process of agribusiness management to achieve the intended outcomes. However, even if that is the case, agribusiness still differs according to different but also inter-related arenas like input, production, processing, marketing and support arenas (Chengappa, 2018:3).

- Input arena constitutes of the enterprises that are not directly involved in any form of crop or livestock production but are instead engaged in the manufacturing and production of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, animal feeds, animal medicines, irrigation equipment and other forms of agricultural equipment and machineries.
- Production arena constitutes of the agricultural enterprises that are engaged in the direct primary agricultural activities of sourcing and combining different inputs to create the required crop or livestock products for the market.
- Processing arena comprises of the primary and secondary activities in which emerging farmers or specialist enterprises engage in the process of transforming of raw agricultural products into the finished goods that are ready for consumption (Liu *et al.*, 2017:170).
- Marketing arena that constitutes of entities that are engaged in the securing and moving different agricultural products from the points of manufacture to the points of sale (Kalita, 2017:6).
- Support arena refers to the field that constitutes of organisations that offer different support services to mainly the operators or farmers in the primary agricultural production arena.

However, to develop and establish more vibrant agribusiness entities in the agricultural production arena, theories articulated by Elena *et al.*, (2017: 461) and Maestre *et al.*, (2017:31) imply pragmatic approaches used over the years by successful agribusinesses

suggest certain four critical stages for emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth.

Such four stages include agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and farm products' commercialisation. As all these four stages catalyse agricultural productivity, increment of returns on investment as well as further expansion and growth, there are also other accompanying strategies that must be utilised for managing growth as well as the sustainability of the emerging farmers agribusinesses (Abebe *et al.*, 2020:1082).

Such strategies are summarised below.

5.2.2.2 Managing Growth and Sustainability of Emerging Farmers' Agribusinesses

The outcomes of the secondary research suggest that some of the strategies for managing the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses include agribusiness' integration in the value chain system (Zavale *et al.*, 2020:4691; Muflikh *et al.*, 2021:103). Other strategies encompass agricultural quality management and usage of agricultural cooperatives as a growth leveraging strategy (Mihalache *et al.*, 2021:107; Taha *et al.*, 2020:106). Whether the agribusiness is experiencing growth or performing poorly, seamless integration of such agricultural entity into the value chain is critical for bolstering its overall market performance. However, for emerging farmers' agribusinesses to integrate with such value chain system, agricultural entities' value chain must constitute of two sets of inter-related primary and support activities.

- Primary activities comprise of five sets of activities that are critical for creating differential values that spawn agribusiness' overall competitiveness. Such primary activities include inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing, and sales as well as service (Kotu *et al.*, 2019:98).
- Support activities coherently integrate four sets of activities of procurement, technological development, human resource management and infrastructure. These suggest emerging farmers must create both backward and forward linkages with the players in their external environment.

Backward linkages signify emerging farmers must link and integrate with the suppliers of their agricultural inputs and forward linkages imply emerging farmers must link and integrate with any customer or organisation that buys or facilitates the exposition of their agricultural products to the final consumers. Existence of such synergistic and integral relationships within the value chain system would not only expose emerging farmers to an array of different customers, but also improve information sharing and capabilities of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses to perform well, grow and become more sustainable. But even if that is the case, theories on agribusiness management still insinuate such initiatives must also be integrated with good quality management practices in the emerging farmers' agribusiness entities (Smith & Frankenberger, 2020:105).

Good quality management not only creates quality outputs that spur growth of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in the domestic markets, but also in the international markets through exports (Mizanbekova *et al.*, 2017:42). Capabilities to achieve such outcomes require emerging farmers to adhere to certain prescribed ways of handling agricultural inputs, farming methods, harvesting, storage, preservation and handling during transportation or movement from the farms to the markets. However, usage of such good agricultural quality management approach must be integrated with the establishment of agricultural cooperatives as the other strategy that can bolster the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses (Hohler & Kuhl, 2018:697).

Agricultural cooperative constitutes part of the critical strategies for leveraging the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers. It builds both the internal and external capabilities of emerging farmers' agribusiness. Internally, agricultural cooperatives bolster the pooling and sharing of resources among emerging farmers. It also aids the sharing of information and knowledge as well as farming equipment and machineries (Hoken & Su, 2018:831). This spawns the capabilities of the emerging farmers that do not have access to relevant resources and machineries to gain and improve the productivity of their agricultural entities. Through increment of agricultural productivity, emerging farmers can be able to generate the desired output levels to attract increment in sales, revenue and profitability (Luo, Guo & Jia, 2017:19).

It is not only through such a process that agricultural cooperatives bolster growth and sustainability of the emerging farmers, but also through the notion that agricultural cooperatives also spawn improvement of emerging farmers' external capabilities.

Externally, agricultural cooperatives improves the bargaining power of emerging farmers to bargain better deals and prices with the suppliers of agricultural inputs (Luo *et al.*, 2017:19). This reduces the overall input and operational costs to bolster capabilities of emerging farmers to offer agricultural products to the final consumers at prices that are relatively competitive.

As agricultural cooperatives bolster the bargaining power of emerging farmers with suppliers of agricultural inputs, it also tends to increase the bargaining power of emerging farmers when negotiating deals with large scale purchasers of agricultural products like agro-processors and manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and exporters (Ngamjan & Buranasiri, 2020: 2343). However, even if such strategies influence the growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusiness, theories and literature still signify quests of most of the emerging farmers to develop and nurture the growth of more sustainable agribusinesses are often still hampered by a combination of certain challenges(Williams *et al.*, 2019:124; Yaseen *et al.*, 2018:124).

Such challenges or inhibitors are summarised in the next subheading.

5.2.2.3 Inhibitors of Emerging Farmers' Agribusiness Development and Growth

Apart from lack of adequate capital finance, secondary findings signify inhibitors of most of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth often arise from the fact that most of the emerging farmers often emerge with poorly conceptualised agribusiness ideas that often either never take-off or fail immediately after the establishment. Even if some of the emerging farmers' agribusiness often pass the development stage, during the growth stages, hefty expenses arising from extensive expansion of the agricultural entity often still strain the limited capital finance that emerging farmers have at their disposal (Gebru *et al.*, 2019:743).

As such financial constraints are further exacerbated by the fact that in the initial stages, it is often difficult for emerging farmers to gain trust of the commercial banks to be granted the required financial credits. Financial constraints arising from lack of required collateral security or poor financial cashflows often limited emerging farmers' capabilities to invest in the required agricultural innovation and creativity (Miralles *et al.*, 2017:833). This affects

emerging farmers' capabilities to avoid failure and sustainability grow. Financial constraints also undermines emerging farmers' quests to expand and establish footprints through the required structures like the distribution structures in new geographical locations (Hirsch *et al.*, 2020:66). This is because if emerging farmers are unable to break through the established value chains of large wholesalers, retailers and large scale farmers, then the establishment of their own agricultural products' retail outlets in different locations is often the best way to go (Wang, Wang, Sarkar & Qian, 2021:462).

Unfortunately, with only limited financial resources, emerging farmers' pursuance of such a strategy is often not possible. As such constraints limit emerging farmers' agribusiness growth, hefty unmanageable expansion costs also often arise from the fact that as the agribusiness expands; it not only requires new distribution structures and other operational infrastructure, but also hefty costs of meeting the higher costs of employee remuneration (Lakner *et al.*, 2017:44). Emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth inhibitors may also arise from poor agri-products' inventory management as well as poor agribusiness supply management (Hoof & Thiell, 2014:239).

As emerging farmers' agribusiness entities expand to serve a wider diverse agricultural products' market, poor agribusiness inventory management tends to set in to undermine effective response to customer needs as well as agribusiness growth. Emerging farmers' extensive expansion requires agribusinesses to adopt better inventory management practices (Rather *et al.* 2019:196). Such agribusiness inventory management practices may require adoption of appropriate agricultural goods' production scheduling to balance supply and demand, frequent trends' analysis and agricultural stock replenishment as well as good accounting and financial management practices (Drotskie & Okanga, 2016:190).

Even though other good agribusiness practices include good agri-products' storage and store management practices, empirical facts still imply due to their small size, smallholder farmers often do not have funds to adopt good agribusiness practices. This mutates with poor inventory management as part of the challenges that often characterise most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses. Attributable to insufficient capital finance, emerging farmers' inadequate and poor storage facilities often cause wastes of the stored agricultural stock (Chamberlain & Anseeuw, 2019:308). Subsequently, this culminates into enormous loss that emerging farmers experience through the total funds eroded through poor agribusiness inventory management.

Combined with climate changes that undermine productivity of agricultural production, these theories and literature signify one or a combination of these factors which often hamper emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth either in the early or the later stages of their expansion and growth (Beber, Carpio, Almadani & Theuvsen, 2019:19). Concerningly, empirical investigations indicated that such factors are also analogous to most of the inhibitors undermining the emerging farmers' successful agribusiness development and growth in Amajuba district in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

5.3 EVALUATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Generally, this study has managed to respond to its critical problem statement, research aim, objectives and questions that highlighted not only that emerging farmers face enormous challenges, but also sought to explore the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers, strategies for managing growth and sustainability of emerging farmers' agribusinesses and inhibitors of emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth. From the entire findings of the study, it can be deciphered that the study that has responded to all such critical research objectives and questions. This is because it was evident from interviews that the approaches that they use for establishing their farming businesses often unfold according to certain three main phases that include phase 1: land access and acquisition, phase 2: farming and phase three: marketing.

As different emerging farmers undergo through such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, interview findings revealed that they also tend apply a combination of strategies to not only remain sustainable, but also to grow, expand and transition from small-scale to medium-scale and subsequently to large scale commercial farmers. Such a view is accentuated in the outcomes of thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives that indicated some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products. Such growth strategies were also reiterated to include market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable.

As much as some of the emerging farmers have been able to successfully use such strategies, empirical findings still also indicated that there are a combination of challenges

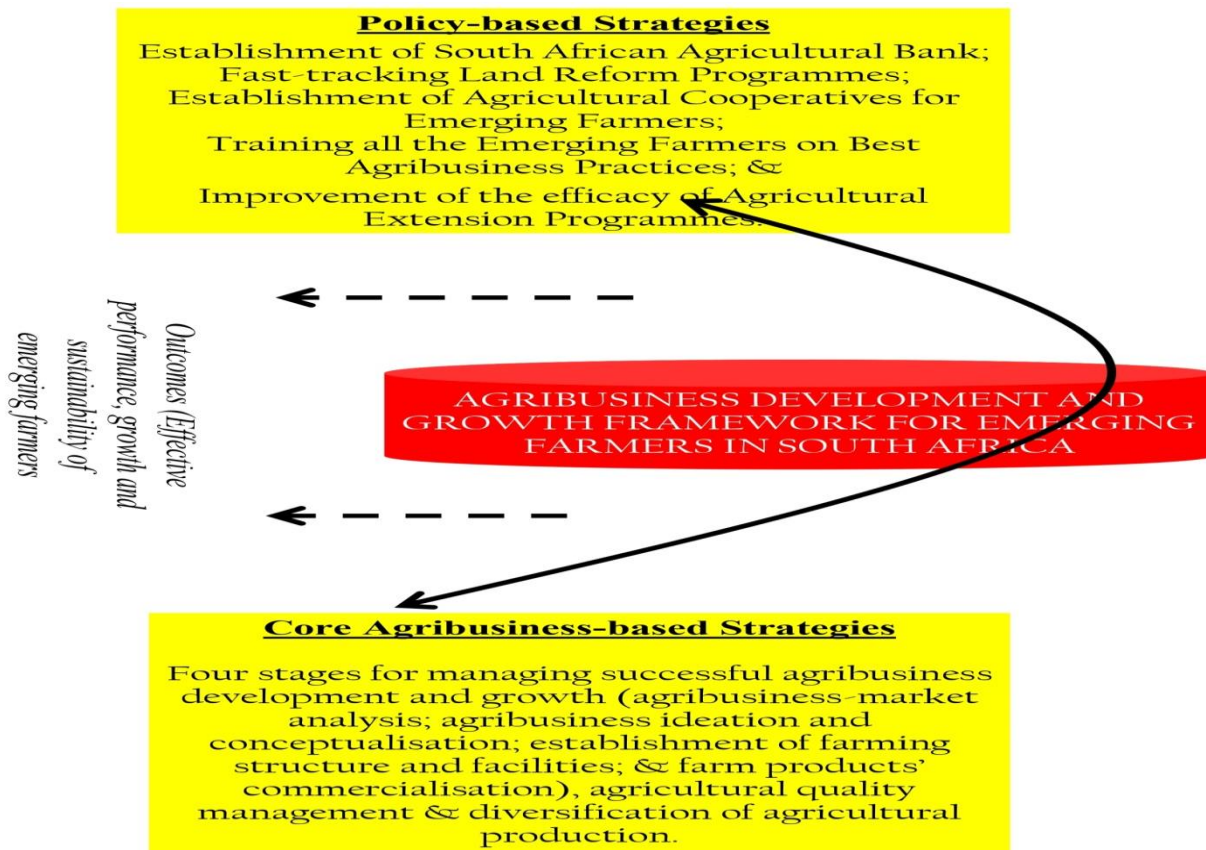
that still mar the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable. Major impediments of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District were found from the emerging farmers' interview narratives to arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Other constraints were narrated to emerge from poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as to understand and respond to market dynamics.

As much as these imply the study has responded to its research objectives and questions, the overall findings still suggest the adoption of the recommendations below is still critical for alleviating the agribusiness development and growth challenges that emerging face. In the context of the identified constraints as well as in response to the question that explored emerging farmers' opinions on what can be done to overcome such constraints, the recommendations below offer a combination of strategies that can be used to improve the performance of emerging farmers' agribusinesses in Amajuba District and South Africa at large.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the empirical findings that indicate the efficacy of agribusiness development and growth by most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality is still hindered by a combination of different factors, it is suggested in Figure 5.1 that the emerging farmers, as well as the South African government, must consider adopting a combination of certain policy-based and core agribusiness-based strategies.

Figure 5.1: Agribusiness Development and Growth Framework for Emerging Farmers in South Africa



Source: As extracted by the researcher from the triangulation of findings with theories

5.4.1 Land Bank must extend Low Interest and Interest Free Agricultural Loans

Land Bank should consider extending low interest or even interest free agricultural loans for the emerging farmers. This is attributable to the fact that though Land Bank has achieved significant strides and has often been recapitalized by the government to support several emerging farmers, offering financial support to all the emerging farmers is still a challenge. As the government injects more funds into the Land Bank to support more emerging farmers, the number of start-up emerging farmers has also been significantly increasing. Yet, those that have been given loans also struggle or even completely fail to repay the loans due to high interest to affect the overall capitalization of Land Bank to continue offering financial support to the new emerging farmers.

Hence, the provision of low interest or event interest free agricultural loans is one of the strategies that the government should consider adopting to address the challenges that most of emerging farmers face in developing and growing their agribusinesses to sustainability. Provision of low interest or interest free agricultural loans will reduce the financial burdens that emerging farmers experience when repaying high interest agricultural loans.

With low interest or completely interest free agricultural loans, most of the emerging farmers will be able to repay the borrowed loans to bolster the liquidity of Land Bank to continue supporting more and more farmers. This is because empirical findings revealed the major impediments of most emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth to often arise from the challenge of insufficient capital finance. Insufficient capital finance affects the capabilities of the emerging farmers to acquire land for the establishment of new agricultural enterprises or even additional land for expansion.

Insufficient capital finance also undermines capabilities of the emerging farmers to purchase and use quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides as well as good agricultural equipment and machineries. Thus, the provision of low interest and interest free loans will improve the emerging farmers' loan repayment rate to bolster Land Bank's liquidity to finance more emerging farmers to enormously address such capital related challenges. However, for that to be achieved, emerging farmers should be supported for a bout ten years of which thereafter, they should be required to go on their own. Such approach will reduce financial wastage on the emerging farmers that cannot pick up and thrive in their different agribusinesses. In addition, measures for ensuring that emerging farmers repay the borrowed loans may also entail blacklisting of those that fail to repay within the stipulated time as well as removal from list of the emerging farmers that are to further benefit from the Land Bank in future. Yet, as the Land Bank is offering such services, the government must also consider fast-tracking land reform programmes.

5.4.2 FAST-TRACK LAND REFORM PROGRAMMES

Fast-tracking the land reform programmes is critical for enhancing the successful agribusiness development and growth by the emerging farmers. This is attributable to the fact that most of the emerging farmers face the challenge of accessing adequate land for

the establishment of new agricultural enterprises. This is particularly applicable to those emerging farmers who are transitioning from subsistence to commercial farming. The empirical findings revealed that access to adequate land tend to remain a major constraint to the effect that some of the emerging farmers are constrained to remain in subsistence farming, which is often disguised as small-scale commercial farming.

On the otherhand, emerging farmers that are relatively successful were found to face the challenge of the land for expansion. The implication is that some of the emerging farmers tend to remain in medium-scale operation for a long time without further growth to fully-fledged large scale commercial farmers. Thus, fast-tracking of land reform programmes by the government would address such limitations to bolster the capabilities of emerging farmers to get land to establish their agricultural entities as well as to get land for expansion in the future. However, achievement of such outcomes will require fast-tracking of land reform programmes to target rural households that are engaged in some form of commercial farming.

As the participants suggested during the empirical investigation, land reform programmes must be prioritised to first benefit the emerging farmers as contrasted to giving every land even those that are not involved in any form of commercial farming. In otherwords, since land is one of the critical factors of agricultural production, land availability through the fast-tracking of land reform programmes will aid ameliorate the current inadequate land challenges that hamper the successful development and growth of agribusinesses initiated by the emerging farmers. However, such initiatives must still be accompanied with the establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives for Emerging Farmers.

5.4.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES FOR EMERGING FARMERS

It is recommended that the establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives for Emerging Farmers will strengthen the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers to initiate and grow viable and sustainable agricultural entities. This is because establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives for Emerging Farmers will enable existing and prospective emerging farmers some access to a pool of resources, which will in turn reduce the challenges of resource constraints. The agricultural cooperatives can enable emerging

farmers to come together so as to share scarce and expensive agricultural machineries and equipment like tractors and combine harvesters to improve the overall productivity of their agricultural land as well as the quality of their agricultural products.

The agricultural cooperatives will also improve the backward and forward linkages of the emerging farmers with all the critical players in the value chain. In terms of backward linkages, agricultural cooperatives will improve the networking and linkages of emerging farmers with the critical suppliers of agricultural inputs like quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides for crops and animals. This is because agricultural cooperatives will improve the bargaining power of the emerging farmers to collectively negotiate for better deals with the suppliers of agricultural inputs. This will erode the challenge of lack of adequate agricultural inputs that some of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality face.

Regarding forward linkages, agricultural cooperatives will facilitate the linkage and access of the emerging farmers to some of the critical value chains in the country. This is because through agricultural cooperatives, emerging farmers can collectively approach major manufacturers of agricultural products as well as wholesalers and large scale retailers for the contracts to supply them with the required agricultural products. This implies agricultural cooperatives can enable emerging farmers overcome the current challenge of lack of market. Since emerging farmers in the agricultural cooperatives can also share transport costs, it also signifies through agricultural cooperatives emerging farmers in rural areas can be able to easily transport their agricultural produce to the markets in the urban centres. In addition to that, agricultural cooperatives will also enable emerging farmers to collectively negotiate for financial support from government as well as from the other financial institutions. In otherwords, agricultural cooperatives will solve a lot of challenges such as lack of resources, machineries, equipments, capital finance, transport and market that hinder the successful agribusiness development and growth by most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality. But even as agricultural cooperatives for emerging farmers are being established, the government must also consider using Agri-SETA to train all the emerging farmers.

5.4.4 TRAINING ALL THE EMERGING FARMERS ON BEST AGRIBUSINESS PRACTICES

The government must investigate the feasibility of using the Agri-SETA to train and develop all the emerging farmers on the best agribusiness practices. Such training programmes must not only include the core farming skills, but also the agribusiness management skills like market analysis, financial management and marketing. Such initiatives must be accompanied with the improvement of the efficacy of agricultural extension programmes to further train and offer the necessary agricultural services to emerging farmers.

5.4.5 IMPROVE EFFICACY OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PROGRAMMES

Improving the efficacy of agricultural extension programmes is critical for leveraging the capabilities of emerging farmers to initiate, develop and grow sustainable agribusinesses. This is attributable to the fact that empirical findings revealed that most of agricultural extension programmes in Amajuba District Municipality are not that offering the kinds of agricultural extension services that they ought to be offering. Thus, improvement of the efficacy agricultural extension programmes will enable all the emerging farmers to subjected to training to improve their agricultural skillfulness. This will enable emerging farmers to understand and gain skills on how to do farming in the midst of certain climatic changes. It also enables emerging farmers to understand how to proactively read and respond to incidents that can affect animal and plant health.

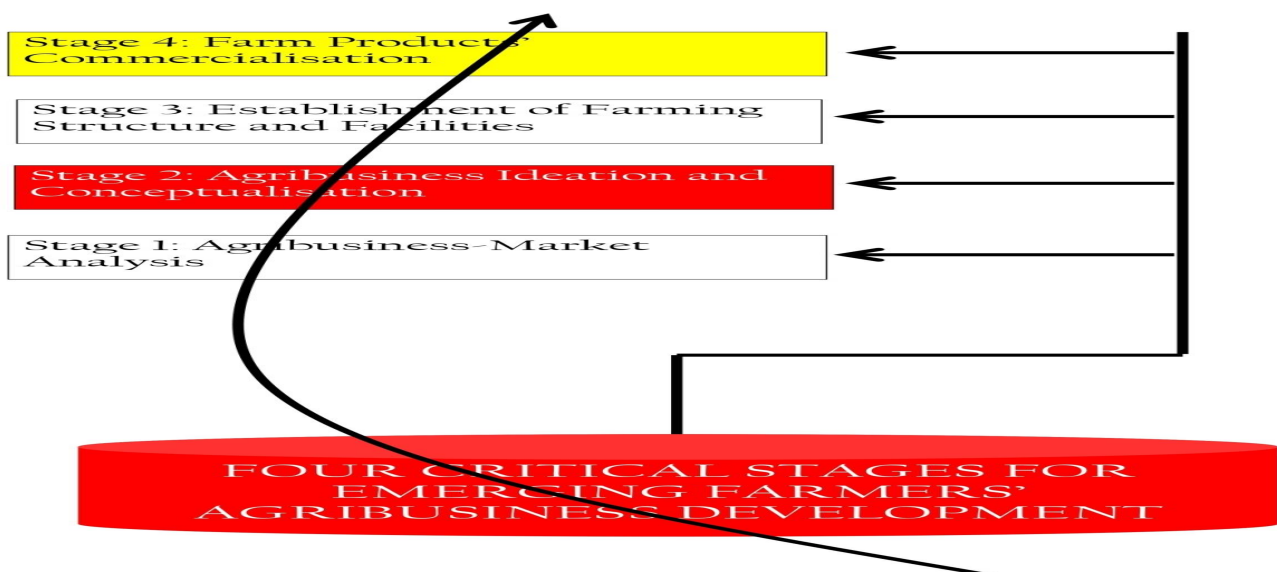
Agricultural extension programmes will also enable emerging farmers to reduce costs because the agricultural extension officers can always visit emerging farmers advise them on how to approach certain farming activities. This will lower the overall costs of farming because emerging farmers will not need to consult agriculturalists or veterinary practitioners that often charge a lot of fees for consultation. Agricultural extension programmes can also enable emerging farmers access inputs like quality seeds, pesticides, irrigation facilities and equipment as well as medicine for animals. In otherwords, agricultural extension programmes will improve the internal capabilities of the emerging farmers to efficiently accomplish farming activities to achieve the desired revenues that would also in turn influence the growth and sustainability of their agricultural

enterprises. But as emerging farmers gain and improve their internal capabilities, it is still critical that they adhere to the four stages for managing successful agribusiness development and growth.

5.4.6 USAGE OF FOUR STAGES FOR AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

As Figure 5.2 indicates, the usage of the four stages for agribusiness development and growth will enable emerging farmers to chronologically manage the systematic activities that are critical for them to develop and establish viable and sustainable agricultural enterprises.

Figure 5.2: Four Critical Stages for Emerging Farmers' Agribusiness Development in South Africa



Source: Adapted from Chamberlain and Anseeuw (2019:308).

To accomplish that, such for stages of agribusiness development and growth include:

- **Agribusiness-market analysis:** This stage will require emerging farmers to analyse and understand the customer needs in the market that they intend to join. They must also evaluate and understand the prevailing competitors like fellow emerging farmers and large-scale commercial farmers that are operating in that market. Analysis of competitors

must not be aimed at identifying gaps that emerging farmers can fill, but also the best agricultural practices that emerging farmers can learn and replicate in order to perform more effectively. Emerging farmers must also analyse the value chain in the markets that they intend to join as well as the dynamics of such value chains so as to devise strategies of working around such value chain to perform effectively.

- **Agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation:** After understating the market, this stage will require emerging farmers to think, conceptualise and develop the agribusiness plan for the kind of agricultural enterprise that they aim to put in place. Such agribusiness plan must outline the product to be farmed as well as the required capital finance, facilities and infrastructure and the management structure of the farm.
- **Establishment of farming structure and facilities:** This stage will require emerging farmers to establish the structure and facilities required for them to engage in successful farming. For emerging farmers engaged in crop product, this may require the establishment of farm administrative block, storage facilities for both agricultural inputs and outputs. For emerging farmers engaged in animal farming, it will require the establishment of the fencing system, poultry houses, farm administration block, storage facilities and all the other facilities and structures that are necessary for the efficient operation of the kind of animal farm that the emerging farmer is establishing.
- **Farm products' commercialisation:** This stage will require emerging farmers to devise the strategies of moving the finished products from the farm to the market. They can use market penetration pricing or even enormous discounts to entice street hawkers, retailers, and processors of agricultural products to purchase and get used to buying from them as compared to purchasing from large-scale commercial farmers.

However, emerging farmers must still ensure that such initiatives are accompanied with good agricultural quality management practices.

5.4.7 AGRICULTURAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Despite the lack of resources among the emerging farmers, agricultural quality management is critical for emerging farmers to attract more customers and perform well in the market to become more sustainable. To achieve that, emerging farmers are however required to adopt good agricultural management practices by ensuring that good quality inputs like seeds, fertilisers, irrigation facilities and pesticides are used during crop

production. For animal farming, emerging farmers must ensure that animal or poultry health is prioritised in order to produce good quality poultry and animal products. Subsequently, as emerging farmers become more successful, diversification is the strategy to grow further and become sustainable.

5.4.8 DIVERSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION TO INDUCE ECONOMIES OF SCALE

To generate more revenues from agricultural production and become sustainable, the emerging farmers must embrace diversification to induce economies of scale. Diversification can be undertaken from the beginning of agribusiness to avoid failure of agribusinesses that often arise from the sole focus on just one product that fail. For crop production, emerging farmers can diversify by producing a combination of different kinds of crops or plants. This implies if one crop fails, the agribusiness can still rely on other crops to avoid failure. The same also applies for emerging farmers engaging in animal farming where they would be required to diversify by farming different kinds of animals.

In other words, from the empirical findings of this study, it is evident that the use of a combination of these strategies would leverage the growth and sustainability of most of the emerging farmers' agribusinesses.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitation of the study was the limited research that had been conducted on emerging farmers' agribusiness development and growth model. However, through the usage of grey literature as well as other studies that have been conducted on emerging farmers in other countries, the study was able to overcome such limitations. The study was also able to overcome such limitations by using and interpreting the emerging farmers' narratives to discern what the problems are as well as to develop the agribusiness development and growth framework in Figure 5.1.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

Generally, the study reveals most of the agribusiness development approaches used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District to chronologically unfold according to certain three main phases. Such three main phases were reiterated to include phase 1: land access and acquisition, phase 2: farming and phase three: marketing. Yet, as different emerging farmers undergo through such different phases of establishing their farming businesses, they were also found to apply a combination of strategies to not only remain sustainable, but also to grow, expand and transition from small-scale to medium-scale and subsequently to large scale commercial farmers.

Such a view is accentuated in the outcomes of thematic analysis of the emerging farmers' narratives that indicated some of the agribusiness growth strategies that are used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to encompass diversification to simultaneously grow and sell different agricultural products. Such growth strategies were also reiterated to include market expansion entailing the use of discounts, credits and contract farming to rake in more revenues to grow and remain sustainable.

However, as much as some of the emerging farmers have been able to successfully use such strategies, empirical findings still also indicated that there are a combination of challenges that still mar the capabilities of most of the emerging farmers in Amajuba District to grow and become sustainable. Such impediments were found to arise from poor quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. Other constraints were narrated to emerge from poor farming methods and equipment as well as market dynamics and complexities as instigated by failure to meet quality needs as well as to understand and respond to market dynamics.

Thus, in the context of such constraints as well as in response to the question that explored emerging farmers' opinions on what can be done to overcome such constraints, most of the emerging farmers suggested that the government must speed up the land reform programmes to ensure that the question of land issues among the emerging farmers is addressed. They elaborated that instead of giving out land even those that do not aim to utilise it, the government should prioritise those that are already engaged in small and medium scale commercial farming.

Hence, in the context of such suggestions as well as the overall empirical findings, it is recommended that emerging farmers and government must adopt a combination of agribusiness development and growth improvement strategies that include establishment of South African Agricultural Bank to offer low interest or even interest free loans to emerging farmers. It also suggested the essence for fast-tracking land reform Programmes, establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives for emerging farmers and improvement of the efficacy of agricultural extension programmes.

But as emerging farmers gain and improve their internal capabilities, the study also recommends that it is still critical that emerging farmers adhere to the four stages for managing successful agribusiness development and growth. Such four stages encompass agribusiness-market analysis, agribusiness ideation and conceptualisation, establishment of farming structure and facilities and subsequently farm products' commercialisation. In addition, the study also emphasised the need for improving agricultural quality management among emerging farmers as well as diversification of agricultural production to induce economies of scale. Thus, in the context of these findings, future research can consider exploring efficacy of agricultural quality management as a determinant for effective performance of emerging farmers' agribusiness entities in South Africa.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Interview Research Protocol

INTERVIEW RESEARCH PROTOCOL

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Which type of farming business are you involved in?

When did you start your farming business?

What motivated you to get engaged in farming business?

SECTION B: AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES ARE USED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

List and describe in detail the steps that you used in setting up your farming business

List and describe in detail the reasons why you selected that type of farming business

Have you ever developed any agricultural product of your own that you later transformed into an agricultural business? **YES/NO**

If **Yes**, explain the steps that you used in that process?

If **No**, explain in detail why you have never used such a process?

List and explain in detail how you managed to raise the capital finance for the establishment of your agricultural business

Did you partner with any other farmer or organisation? **YES/NO**

If Yes, explain in detail how such partnership was formed and why?

If No, explain in detail why you did not engage in such partnerships?

Are you satisfied with the type of agricultural business in which you are engaged?

If Yes, explain in detail why you are satisfied?

If No, explain in detail why you are not satisfied?

SECTION C: AGRIBUSINESS GROWTH STRATEGIES WHICH ARE USED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

Q1. Tick and describe in detail how you are currently using the following methods to expand and grow your agricultural business

Improvement of the quality of farm products

Lowering the price of my farm products

Advertisement in newspapers

Door to door marketing

Sale promotions using discounts

--

Setting up my own retail outlet for farm products

Selling farm products to other districts in KZN

Selling farm products to other provinces in South Africa

Signing supply contracts with wholesalers

Signing supply contracts with retailers

Engaging in farming of crops/plants and animals at the same time

Selling more shares

Using loans from banks

Re-using the earned profits to further grow my business

If you are not using any of the above methods, list and describe the other methods that you are currently using to expand and grow your farming business

SECTION D: LIMITATIONS OF EMERGING FARMERS' AGRI-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH APPROACHES IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT

Tick and explain in detail if you are experiencing some of the following challenges in your farming business

Lack of customers

High farming costs

Lack of funds

Lack of farming equipment

Competition from large scale commercial farmers

Lack of farm workers

Lack of agricultural experts in my area

Lack of land

Name and describe in detail other problems that you are facing in your farming business

List and explain in detail how you have managed to solve the farming problems that your are facing

SECTION E: SUGGESTIONS ON THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH APPROACHES THAT CAN BE ADOPTED BY EMERGING FARMERS IN AMAJUBA DISTRICT AND SOUTH AFRICA AT LARGE

Name and list some of the methods you would recommend for improving the development of farming businesses by new farmers in your municipality

Name and list some of the methods you would recommend for improving the expansion and growth of farming businesses by new farmers in your municipality

End of Interviews and Thank You for the Interview

APPENDIX 2: Letter of request to participate in the study

Mr. Ewart Hadebe

Student: MBA

North West University Business School

Cell: 071 278 2386/

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

Date: 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Dear Participant(s)

REQUEST TO EMERGING FARMERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I am Ewart Hadebe, a student of the Master of Business Administration-MBA at North West University Business School.

I am conducting a research towards the completion of the above indicated postgraduate degree under the study titled: **“Agribusiness Development and Growth Model for Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal.”**

This interview will take about 60 minutes to complete and all relevant COVID-protocols will be adhered to.

Due to the several challenges that emerging farmers in Amajuba District face, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District so as to identify major impediments and the remedial agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested.

The study is very important for assessing how the performance of emerging farmers can be improved to not only create more employment opportunities, but also improve the overall socio-economic living conditions and standards of the population in Amajuba District.

Hence, I humbly request for your participation in the interviews that will be held with time and venue yet to be communicated.

Although with time, we shall meet for face-to-face interviews, the study is mainly concerned with the evaluation of the following questions.

- What agri-business development approaches are used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District?
- Which agri-business growth strategies are used by emerging farmers in Amajuba District?
- What hinders emerging farmers' agri-business development and growth approaches in Amajuba District?
- Which agri-business development and growth model can be suggested to the emerging farmers in Amajuba District and South Africa at large?

The study is purely academic. But still your participation is of significant importance for assessing how your performance as well as needs as the emerging farmers and other emerging farmers can be met or improved.

Your participation in the interviews is also quite important because your views will inform government policies on the measures that can be adopted to support and improve the performance of emerging farmers not only in Amajuba District, but also across South Africa.

However, your participation is not mandatory as you can refuse to participate or even opt out before the completion of the study.

Also if you choose to participate in the study, your identity will remain anonymous and confidential.

So I hereby with a lot of pleasure invite you to participate in the study through face-to-face interviews that will be conducted with you at the venue of your choice and time to be communicated in the near future.

To confirm your participation, kindly sign the attached Informed Consent Form and return to me (Ewart Hadebe) on e-mail: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

In case of any further queries about this research, please do not hesitate to contact me, the Principal Researcher, Ewart Hadebe on:

Tel: **071 278 2386** or **071 613 4352**,

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance

Regards

Ewart Hadebe

Principal Researcher and a Student of the Masters of Business Administration-MBA at North West University Business School.

Cell: **071 278 2386** or **071 613 4352**, and

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

APPENDIX 3: Consent to participate

Mr. Ewart Hadebe

Student: MBA

North West University Business School

Cell: **071 278 2386/ 071 613 4352**

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

22 SEPTEMBER 2021

Dear participant

Thank you in advance for taking time to participate in this study. I am Mr. Ewart Hadebe, a student of MBA at North West University Business School and conducting a research towards the completion of my MBA degree under the study titled: **“Agribusiness Development and Growth Model for Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal.”**

Following, your decision to participate in the study, please I request you to pay attention to the following and sign as requested:

1. Your participation in this study is voluntary. We will only include you in the study if you give us written consent to do so.
2. You can discontinue participation in the study at any point without adverse consequences
3. No personal questions or identifying particulars will be asked
4. The interviews and the collected qualitative data will be dealt with confidentially.
5. The original collected qualitative data from interviews with you will be stored in a secure location at the campus of North West University Business School for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed.
6. Electronic qualitative datasets will be completely anonymised and stored for an indefinite period on a password protected computer.

7. Only the researchers involved in this project will have access to the raw data.
8. The dataset may possibly be utilised in future research and the same confidentiality will be applied in that instance.
9. Where applicable: The interview will be recorded using a tape recorder or written. NO personal identifying information will be in the interview data. The original interview data will be stored in a secure location for five years, after which it will be destroyed.

If you have any concerns or questions related to the study in general, please contact the Principal Researcher, Mr. Ewart Hadebe on:

Cell: **071 278 2386 / 071 613 4352**

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

Kind regards

Mr. Ewart Hadebe

(Principal Researcher)

Cell: **071 278 2386/ 071 613 4352**

Email: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

13.2.2 Participant's Consent

I have been asked to participate in the above study. I have been informed about my involvement in the research, and what is required of me. I understand that:

- My participation in the research study is voluntary;
- My answers will not be used if I do not provide written, informed consent;
- I may withdraw from the research at any time with no negative consequences for myself;
- Where applicable: The interview will be recorded using a tape recorder or written. NO personal identifying information will be in the interview data. The original interview data will be stored in a secure location for five years, after which it will be destroyed.
- My answers will be kept confidential, and the anonymised data will be safely stored on password protected computers;
- The data and results may be used for journal publications and/or conference presentations;
- The raw qualitative data from the interview will be stored in a secure location on the North West University Business School campus for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed;
- The data may also be used in related studies in future and anonymity and confidentiality will still apply.
- Other researchers may have access to the data, but my name will not appear on any of the data base that is sent to other researchers;
- I will not receive any reports on individual results, but I can request feedback on the overall findings of the study;
- I can contact the researchers, whose details have been provided above, if I have any uncertainties or concerns that relate to the study;
- I have received the contact details of the researchers on the Letter of Consent;
- All my questions about the research have been answered and I agree that my responses from the interviews can be used for the research;
- I have read the abovementioned information and agree to participate as per the above conditions. I understand everything and consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

13.3.3 Purpose of Study

I am Mr. Ewart Hadebe, a student of the Masters of Business Administration-MBA at North West University Business School.

I am conducting a research towards the completion of the above indicated postgraduate degree under the study titled: **“Agribusiness Development and Growth Model for Emerging Farmers in Amajuba District in Kwa-Zulu Natal.”**

Due to the several challenges that emerging farmers in Amajuba District face, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of agribusiness development and growth approaches used by the emerging farmers in Amajuba District so as to identify major impediments and the remedial agribusiness development and growth model that can be suggested.

The study is very important for assessing how the performance of emerging farmers can be improved to not only create more employment opportunities, but also improve the overall socio-economic living conditions and standards of the population in Amajuba District.

Hence, I humbly request for your participation in the interviews that will be held at a time and a venue yet to be communicated.

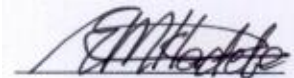
To confirm your participation, kindly sign the attached Informed Consent Form and return to me (Mr. Ewart Hadebe) on e-mail: ewarthadebe1@gmail.com

13.3.4 Consent to Participate in Study

Please tick each box

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without any adverse consequences or penalty. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | I understand that this project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, EMS-REC (Ethics Committee). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | I understand who will have access to the data provided, how the data will be stored, and what will happen to the data at the end of the project. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | I understand how this research will be reported and published. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | I understand how to raise a concern or make a complaint. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | I consent to being audio recorded. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | I give permission to be quoted directly in research outputs but only completely anonymously. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | I agree to take part in the study. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	dd / mm / yyyy	
Name of participant	Date	Signature

Ewart Hadebe	22/08/2021	
--------------	------------	--

	dd / mm / yyyy	
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature



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Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

22 November 2021

Prof R Lotriet
Per e-mail
Dear Prof Lotriet,

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 29102021 – Round Robin
Student: Hadebe, E (25757377)(NWU-00998-21-A4)
Study leader: Prof R Lotriet - MBA

Your ethics application on, *Agribusiness development and growth model for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality in Kwa-Zulu Natal*, which served via Round Robin, refers.


Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number NWU-00998-21-A4 is given for one year of ethics clearance.

Please note that the ethics approval of this application is subject to the Covid-19 protocols.

Kind regards,

Mark
Rathbone



digitally signed by Mark Rathbone
DN: cn=Mark Rathbone, o=North-West University, ou=Business Management, email=mark.rathbone@nwu.ac.za, c=ZA
2021.11.22 16:10:11 +0200

Prof Mark Rathbone
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

APPENDIX.6: Language Editing Report

Bradley Editors & Publishers
Delheim Village
Auckland Park
Johannesburg-South Africa

Date: 13 JANUARY 2022

Certificate of Editing

This is to confirm that the dissertation titled:

“Exploring an agribusiness development and growth framework for emerging farmers in Amajuba District Municipality”

authored by **Ewart Mboni Hadebe,**

has been subjected to English Language editing and it is now good for publication or for any other academic usage.

Dr Alex Bradley



Editor

Bradley Editors & Publishers, Delheim Village, Auckland Park, Johannesburg-South Africa

APPENDIX. 7: Turn-It-In Report

Turnitin Originality Report

Processed on: 14-Mar-2022 18:29 SAST
 ID: 1784135194
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< 1% match (Internet from 12-Oct-2021)