

**DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION FOR BETTER
FARMING METHODS: STUDY OF COMMUNICATION ACTIONS
AMONG FARMERS IN TSWAING LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

by

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Declaration

I, Tsholofelo Ofentse Moreosele, student number: 16288521 declare that this dissertation hereby submitted for the degree Master of Arts in Communication at the North-West University (Mafikeng Campus), Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, is my own original work and this has not been previously submitted, either as a whole or in part, for a qualification at this or any other university.

Date: 20th January, 2017

Signature:

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my family and friends, who have helped me both morally and materially to complete this important task. A special thanks to my child Kgathiso Moreosele and my colleagues for their patience and encouragement. My mother Dintshang Moreosele, who passed on in 2009, may her soul rest in peace; her memories always make me find peace. My brother Katlego Moreosele and my sister Mmadiboke Madoda deserve a lot of thanks for their support.

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To all persons who contributed to this study in one form or another at some stage.

Much appreciated

ABSTRACT

There are various factors that can ensure agricultural projects sustenance in a community but this study focused on the role communication, planning and implementation plays in sustaining these development projects and ensuring productivity in terms of better farming methods. Based on the development communication theory, the study sought to determine the role of communication, channels used by development agents and partners within the Tswaing local municipalities (TLM) to involve farming communities in their own development and the changes the projects.

The development communication corresponds with not so ideal paternalistic approach that is top-down and one-directional. The failures of this dominant approach became evident, a number of alternative approaches were proposed, culminating in the new paradigm, which supported equal status between benefactor and beneficiary, two-way communication, dialogue, and community participation, and emphasising the value of beneficiaries and their culture and traditions.

Development support communication (DSC) theory therefore supports development in communities but the approach may be applied effectively in small scale development efforts, such as individual farming projects and agricultural community projects, provided the benefactors are willing to learn from the community, and do not "negotiate" development from a position of status or power, in order to identify the community's real needs.

This study examined the communication practices and influence on agricultural projects as provided by the development agents and partners in the TLM targeted at farmers to identify how they describe their communication approach, what communication approach their organisations employ and how the organisation communication approach is perceived by their beneficiaries. Research was conducted by means of a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews, which were contrasted with focus group discussion and participant observations at the field site.

Using various purposively selected participants in the TLM, a cross-sectional research design was adopted for the study. Variables relevant to the study were identified and explained through a thorough literature review after which the methodology to solicit the necessary data and information to address the research questions was determined. Both systematic and purposive sampling techniques were used for the study. Data obtained from the field were analysed.

The study revealed that though development partners particularly advisors, technicians and extension officers communicated to communities on some of the projects and individual farming projects, the components of development support communication was not wholly employed. The projects that employed communication among other things have been sustained whilst the ones with little or no communication are in deplorable state. The study also revealed that interpersonal communication was the most common means of communication used by development agents and partners, to contact communities and convey information and support and this helped in improving better farming methods and social change to the lives of the people in the TLM.

There is a need for an integrative model of development support communication that could be applied to ensure a participatory rather than a top-down nature of diffusion of information from the approach as well as its focus on farming projects. These characteristics are then combined with the DSC aspects which are aimed at assisting beneficiaries to empower themselves by acquiring information, to formulate their problems, to suggest solutions and to take their own decisions by focusing on their own needs and interests for better farming methods. This includes aspects such as information sharing on an equal level, beneficiary participation, and communication planning and support as well as implementation in the TLM.

The study established that both project implementers and communities face challenges in sustaining development projects. However, project implementers did not adopt the three components of development support communication such as, advocacy, social mobilisation and behaviour change to assist farmers in the TLM. It is therefore recommended that development agents, partners and farmers should develop communication strategies for their projects whilst focusing on sustenance of the projects to ensure better farming methods.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Without communication, there would be no development. Communication is extremely pivotal to human development. Poor communication or a lack of it, has a negative impact on development. In stressing the critical role of communication in the twenty-first century, Makunyane (2007), outlines some of its functions as offering opportunity for informed choices, increasing information access to people and encouraging dialogue among leaders and followers. The point of departure in this research is that information and communication are resources for development.

Sustainable development is a major challenge in which communication practices are central issues. In sustainable development, appropriate communication channels, techniques to increase people's participation and the flow of information from one group of people to another are issues that can impact on the sustainability of development projects (Agunga, 1998: 37).

Consequently, it is common practice that communication is seen as an integral part of development projects in communities. It is against this backdrop that Agunga (1998), and Melkote (1991), opined that without communication, development is not possible. It is only through communication that the important dialogue between the benefactors and beneficiaries is established.

The context of this study is based on the concept of Development Support Communication hereafter referred to as DSC, is not a new area of inquiry, but this study examines a new and as yet inadequately defined approach within the South African context. This approach holds the view that planned and organised communication is one of the key factors for the accomplishment of the goals of specific development-seeking institutions and projects within agriculture in the North West province of South Africa.

Unfortunately, in many cases, it has been noted in much of development literature that the communication approach that has been used in many development projects has led to the failure of these projects. The one-way communication approach as followed in the modernistic development paradigm has failed dismally (Melkote, 1991; Servaes, 1995; Malan, 1998; and Agunga 1998). Agunga (1998:228) indicates that one of the main problems in community development projects is the disregard for communication concerns. These scholars urge that it is high time that community developers realise that the only way in which the sustainability of development projects can be improved, is facilitated by using participatory communication.

Development communication literature indicates clearly that communication should not be taken for granted in any development projects (Melkote, 1991; Servaes, 1995; Malan, 1998; Agunga, 1998). Communication should be part and parcel of the initial planning of all development projects; in actual fact, proper planning regarding communication should be done during each phase of a development project because effective communication prepares people to participate in their own social change (Agunga, 1998:225).

Scholars such as Malan (1998:55) and Melkote (1991) also emphasise that communication should be appreciated as a cultural phenomenon. Because it involves people, the specific cultural traits of the community or the group should be fully considered when a development project is planned and executed. This applies to the agricultural sector as it plays a vital role in South African society. This study contends that there is a need to advance farming methods within the Tswaing local municipality hereafter referred to as TLM, in the North West Province of South Africa.

Agriculture is the foundation of many-a-developing economy. As one of these economies, South Africa needs to ensure a healthy agricultural industry that contributes to the country's gross domestic product (GDP), food security, social welfare, job creation and ecotourism, while adding value to raw materials. This research also contends that the health of the agricultural sector depends on the sustainability of farming methods. Farming practices must therefore not only protect the long-term productivity of the land, but must also ensure profitable yields and the well-being of farmers and farm workers.

The role of farming previously dedicated mainly to food production changed with an increasing recognition of the multi-functionality of agriculture and rural areas. It is expected of farmers and rural actors to adapt themselves to these new conditions, which are innovative and redefine their engagements and work. In many regions, farmers can increase their income sources as rural entrepreneurs, developing new services and exploring new markets. Often, however, there is a gap between the need for change and farmers' willingness to adjust, and the insufficient capacities of innovation agencies and advisory services to effectively support changes.

Msibi (2010), Schoen (1996: 249) and Servaes (1999: 14) all argue that "development is regarded as an ethical-political process of social change, and any such change or intervention implicitly or explicitly has far-reaching consequences on the lives of the people involved in the process. The authors' say, development communication is not merely concerned with providing information on development activities. Further creating opportunities for the people to know about the technical nature of new ideas and how they work and with what effect, development communication plays an important role in creating an atmosphere for understanding how these new ideas fit into the practical and real social situation in which the people operate" (Shahzad and Bokhari, 2014).

It is in this context that this study investigates the communication practices amongst farmers and change agents within the TLM, in the North-West Province of South Africa, to determine the extent of community participation in development projects. It further examines whether or not a specific agricultural development programme targeted at such farmers in South Africa exists.

This research uses a case study approach to determine the communication flow, channels and other communication tools used as part of the communication process in the farming community's development projects in the TLM. It has been established that the economy of this area is highly dependent on agriculture. The general weather-induced decline in the agricultural sector has posed a serious challenge to the economy in South Africa which has not improved over the years (Department of Rural, Environment and Agricultural Development strategic plan 2015-2020, and Tswaing IDP plan 2015/16), (www.nwpg.gov.za/Agriculture).

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Various agricultural projects in the Tswaing area exist namely: Mamamolela Farming, Gannalaagte Konopo, Doorlinglaagte farming, Deelpan geluk, Sebowana Agricultural Services and Corsica farming. These projects, together with other individual farming projects, are used for the purpose of analysis in this study to examine how communication practices have influenced the farming methods. The implications of the communication strategies, processes and styles identified in each of the development projects are investigated in order to gain insight into the communication practices of successful farmers' development projects in the Tswaing community. The investigation looks at the flow of communication and establishes those who influence it. This study interrogates communication as a development tool, the media used or other information communication technologies in a bid to establish the influence that these communication practices have on various projects in Tswaing.

The term DSC was originally coined by Childers (1976) while working for the United Nations Development Programme in Bangkok. In essence, DSC implies the design and implementation of mass and interpersonal strategies of communication aimed at helping or supporting development projects achieve the national objectives of the Third World more effectively and reliably. The term is deployed in this study to specifically examine how it conceptually facilitates communication strategies in agricultural projects within the Tswaing community.

In determining the strength of DSC, many rural farmers do not realise the importance of development communication and the necessity of building lasting and mutually beneficial relationships "with different stakeholders" (Naude, 2001:265; Dyer *et al.* 2002:15).

The strength of the DSC is also determined by Childers (1976) in Ayirebasia (2008:11), who explicated the concept of DSC as follows:

"DSC is a discipline in development planning and implementation in which more adequate account is taken of human behavioural factors in the design of development projects and their objectives. Then, on the basis of a behavioural analysis and the development of a feasible design, the requirements for technical human communication are built into that project as part of its plan of operation and budget".

Bryant Kears (1976), as cited in Gleason (2008) a communication and agricultural development specialist, reviewed the relationship between applied communication research and the models for agricultural development programmes in the developing world. The evolution of these agricultural change models clearly showed a shift away from an emphasis on diffusion of technological innovations and attempts to persuade "resistive" farmers to adopt them to a call for communication research and exploring ways of addressing the problems of farmers from their own perspective. These new models were not fully developed in Kears's paper, but they stressed integration of services and identification of farmer needs.

In light of the above, this study therefore explores the current use of communication. A case study is deployed to determine the communication flow and other communication tools used in the communication processes of community development projects in the Tswaing area.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The social scientific study of human communication began during the late 1930s in the United States of America (USA). This study was centred almost exclusively on the impact of mass media on public information and attitudes. It was at that time related to development efforts such as development information to and for American farmers.

But the early experience of communication efforts in Africa, specifically the South African context, to boost social and economic development created an interest in finding out how best to use communication and technology in the promotion of agriculture. There was at that time, a preoccupation with effects such as an increase in sales and change of attitudes to mention just a few. Mass media was seen as an important agent of change. There is also a need for rigorously adopting and broadly using communication, engaging stakeholders, building consensus towards change, and raising the profile of the communication for development. What is also critical is that changes in today's world require bold thinking about how communication contributes to development. Communication therefore needs to be approached as a

horizontal, cross-cutting sector woven into, or mainstreamed into development programmes.

The agricultural industry in South Africa is divided into two sectors: the commercial sector and the predominately subsistence-oriented sector in traditionally rural areas. A strategic vision for the rural economy of South Africa to 2030 was outlined in the National Development Plan (NPC, 2011). This mission envisions a multiplicity of interventions that increase the capabilities of rural communities, but the specifics of the plan itself give strong attention to agricultural activities. Indeed, it is stated: “(a) as the primary economic activity in rural areas... (b) agriculture has the potential to create close to 1 million new jobs by 2030...” (NPC, 2011: 197).

Firstly, the consumption of food to sustain life in the next 36 years till 2050 is expected to exceed the consumption of food over the past 500 years. This is mainly due to an expected population increase of over 2 billion in mainly Africa and Asia, while the demand for food in Europe is expected to decline. Secondly, the expected demand for food has been exceeding that of population growth due to a blurring of the boundaries between energy used to sustain life, renewable energy as well as other uses of food, like the production of biodegradable plastics.

This creates a further growth in demand that needs to be met by increased agricultural production. To meet this growth in demand, agricultural produce needs to more than double before 2050. The question that arises is how this production is to be actualised and whether agricultural production could realistically rise to meet this challenge. In order to meet the expected growth in food production that is needed to feed the world, growth in production through intensification and the use of new technologies is unfortunately not enough. However, it would go a long way in meeting the growth needed in the medium term.

South Africa is a major producer of vegetables such as potatoes, tomatoes, onions, cabbage and carrots. Supply and demand influence pricing as the bulk of the vegetables are sold in the fresh produce market. Weather, especially rainfall patterns, plays an important part in the quality and lifespan of most of these products as they are perishable and mostly sold as fresh produce. Frozen products have a limited influence on the markets for fresh agricultural products. The advantage of vegetables

is that they have a shorter growing period and can therefore be planted more than once a year. The high labour, packaging and transport costs are some of the immediate disadvantages.

Current global challenges such as climate change, food insecurity and crises that particularly affect rural smallholder families in developing countries call for knowledge-intensive, location-specific and community-driven strategies (FAO, 2010). This is applicable to the South African context, and in this study specifically the Tswaing area.

The process of change and development in South Africa has been characterised by a number of challenges. There has been concerted effort on the part of government to transform key institutions of South African society, at the same time also attempting to speed up service delivery on the ground. The challenges that government has been faced with have mainly been due to historical factors, given the apartheid history of the country. It must be added that notwithstanding the historical injustices, development challenges in the agricultural sector in Tswaing area have been on the increase.

Participatory communication makes it possible to involve community people in the planning and execution of their own development. The one-way communication approach as followed in the modernistic development paradigm has failed dismally, specifically in developing economies (Melkote, 1991; Servaes, 1995; Malan, 1998; and Agunga, 1998). Agunga (1998:228) indicates that one of the main problems in community development projects is the disregard for communication protocols and concerns. He urges that that community developers ought to realise that the only way in which the sustainability of development projects could be improved is by using participatory communication.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The agricultural sector particularly in South Africa faces severe challenges that threaten the sector. With climate change and rising food prices amongst others, there is a dire need for effective interventions and efficient flow of information in the

agricultural sector. The North West province in South Africa is commonly referred to as the food basket of the country. Maize and sunflowers are the most highly produced in this province and it is also the major producer of maize in the country. Over the years, farming has declined massively, in the face of the endless challenges posed by the climate. Further, lack of communication to and amongst farmers in the North West poses a greater challenge and threat in farming beyond the climate change risk. Apparently, there is a low level of interpersonal and intersectoral communication that hinder the sharing of experiences and their coping strategies in the agriculture sector.

In reality, some individuals may have applied scientific knowledge and technology to enhance agricultural production. In the light of the above, it should be prudent for development agents, groups and individual researchers to recognise and adopt these communication practices and at least blend them with sustainable development communication strategies directed at the community.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In order to address the above problem statement, this study investigates and examines the way in which communication practices influence development projects. The investigation looks at the flow of communication and identifies who influences it in the North West Province of South Africa. The study conceptualises communication as a development tool where the media is used, together with other information communication technologies. These media and technologies influence communication practices and this study seeks to examine the impact that they have on various projects in Tswaing.

The first objective is to epistemologically conduct a focused literature review in secondary sources of data, to discover the theoretical underpinnings and routes of communication development problems, and ontologically exploring the role of DSC in advancing farming in the TLM area. For this reason, three specific primary objectives emerge from the problem statement:

The following serve as objectives of this qualitative study and these seek to:

- examine the role of communication in development within the context of TLM.
- identify communication barriers in the farming sector in TLM.
- explore Development Communication as a panacea to poor communication amongst farmers in the TLM.
- investigate how farmers in the TLM communicate.
- explicate farmers' approaches to communication for social change and its distinguishing communicative practices.

Ultimately, the study makes appropriate recommendations based on the findings of this study for the improvement of DSC communication in enhancing farming and development. This is done after a thorough examination of the communication strategies in vogue, the channels of communication and measuring their effectiveness in enhancing development in the area demarcated for this.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the need for an interpretive framework to understand how DSC could be used to assist farmers in their farming methods to increase their productivity, the following research questions seek evidence about the role of DSC in South Africa within a development communication context:

- What are the communication methods used by farmers in the TLM to communicate to each other and to what extent have they been successful?
- How could DSC help farmers to meet their long-term success and improve their farming practices?
- What are the development communication approaches that could be used in the farming sector?
- Which strategies could be applied in order to realise mainstream Development Communication in farming?

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aims to evaluate DSC elements as strategies for better farming methods in the Tswaing Local Municipality. The research documents DSC approaches to communication for social change, particularly how rural farmers integrate issues of concern and participation within their various initiatives. In addition, the study explores how DSC could promote a people-centred local approach which stands in sharp contrast to the top-down, external and expert driven model of development or social change within the South African context with specific reference to Tswaing local municipality. This study illustrates how alternative visions of development and communication for social change could be enacted and embodied.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of this study is two-fold. Conceptually it highlights the various approaches and debates on the importance and relevance of communication in general and particularly as a development support tool.

The world is characterised by inevitable changes to the climate, augmented by social, political and economic factors. Access to information, sharing of knowledge and coping strategies through advanced communication methods constitute the only way farmers could survive in the agricultural sector. This sector has to be socially engaged to ensure success.

Development Communication is the most suitable protocol for farmers to learn, teach and adopt in their efforts to improve their farming methods. This study lays the foundation for farmers to communicate better and adopt ways that could help them to cope with the challenges they face in their agri-businesses.

Empirically this study seeks to understand the key elements that could facilitate sustainable and meaningful change, how development issues such as progressive ways and farming practices could be communicated more effectively to communities,

especially farmers, and more importantly how communities could both envision and re-envision successful and productive futures.

1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

- **Communication**

According to Moody (1991), the word "communication" comes from the Latin "communis" meaning that which is "common". The aim of communication is to "make common", to share. Communication is effectively achieved when the sender and the receiver have common and shared meanings, that is, when the meaning that the sender wants to share is identical ('isomorphic' with) to the meaning that the audience receives. Rogers (1995) defined communication as the process by which two or more people share knowledge so as to arrive at a common understanding of a practice, experience or concept.

Communication is also defined by Nair and White (1994:155) as a "two-way process of convergence, rather than a one-way, linear set in which one individual seeks to transfer a message to another." Communication is often used as within the first type of the two types of definitions of communication identified by O'Sullivan *et al.*, (1994:50): "The first sees communication as a process by which **A** sends a message to **B**, upon whom it has an effect. The second sees communication as a negotiation and exchange of meaning in which messages, people-in-cultures and 'reality' interact so as to enable meaning to be produced or understanding to occur". The pilot project was based on the latter.

- **Development communication**

DC is described by Malan (1998:51) as all forms of communication that are used for the improvement (such as social upliftment by means of capacity building through training) of an individual, community, or a country's material, cultural, spiritual, social and other conditions. Culturally, the areas of development and communication overlap to the extent that both involve processes of making sense, giving meaning, reaching goals, improving and finding solutions, creatively changing the environment, and creating visions based on values and beliefs of a context-specific community.

- **Development support communication (DSC)**

DSC is a strategy for reaching specific groups of people with new ideas, information, and technologies to get rural communities participating in development programmes. According to Jayaweera and Amunugama (1989:60) DSC differs from development communication in the following respects: DSC applies to micro or local entities, it is goal-orientated and concerned with effects; it is time bound and message orientated; it uses a whole range of culture-based media; it is invariably interactive and participatory and it has gained enormous credibility both locally and globally.

DSC is specifically designed to support a particular development programme. It can therefore work effectively within its limited sphere, even in the absence of DC throughout the society. Within DSC the negotiation and exchange of meaning of culturally determined interactions is of primary importance (Jayaweera, 1987: xviii).

- **Participatory development communication (PDC)**

Participatory development communication is regarded as a planned activity, based on two elements on the participatory processes, media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates dialogue among different stakeholders and publics, around a common development problem, with the objective of developing and implementing a set of activities that ultimately contribute to its solution, or its realisation, implementation and actualisation.

As Chaka (2003a) points out, that the idea of 'participatory development communication' draws attention to the emphasis on two-way communication processes and a withdrawal from one-way communication approaches that involve disseminating messages, transmitting information, or persuading people to change their behaviours. This participatory development communication privileges horizontal approaches that involve encouraging dialogue concentrated on problem analysis and a search for solutions, as well as bottom-up approaches in contrast to top-bottom ones that aim to raise the awareness of decision-makers.

1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The delimitation of a study addresses how the study was narrowed in scope, that is, how it is bounded. It is important to identify the major focus of a study and ensure that it is comprehensively dealt with. This is critical, especially when the field of enquiry is characterised by limited precedent research. The domains investigated in this particular one, therefore delimit the study. Approaches from domains other than DSC, development communication and participatory development communication were not included. This study was also limited geographically as it focused in the North West province, TLM in particular within the South African context.

1.10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Theoretical and methodological predilections are in many ways interconnected, and both research questions and methodological choices emerge from theoretical inclinations. Furthermore, preferences toward a participatory and communicators' stance as a scholar and researcher influence how the research is conducted. A holistic understanding of the multiple and complex processes that play out in such social change efforts is therefore quite critical (Morgan, 1998; Papa, Auwal, and Singhal, 1995). The questions posed serve by taking on an interpretive approach and drawing upon multiple tools of inquiry within the qualitative methodology.

In chapter three, a detailed discussion is provided of how the research arrives at crucial answers to the research questions posed at the onset of this study. The basic epistemological and ontological assumptions that guided the study then describe the research setting. The study uses methodological triangulation to strengthen the analysis of data.

1.10.1 Research design

A qualitative approach is used. In qualitative research the researcher can be subjectively involved with the phenomenon being investigated. It allows the researcher to interact with the informants in a natural and unobtrusive manner, which helps to understand the people from their own frames of reference (Mouton, 1993:162). This interpretive study draws upon both development and participatory research paradigms as evinced in the TLM, North West Province, South Africa.

1.10.2 Data collection methods

De Voss (2004: 10) claims that case studies are often seen as prime examples of qualitative research which adopts an interpretive approach to data, studies 'things and phenomena' within their context and considers the subjective meanings that people bring to their situation.

The following data collection methods are used in this research study:

- **Semi-structured/semi-standardised open-ended interviews.**

Semi-structured/semi-standardised open-ended interviews were used. This type of interview allows participants to speak freely in the language of their choice (Mouton, 1998:212). It further allows the participants to be interviewed on more than one occasion to help clarify issues that were not successfully explained in initial interactions (Struwig and Stead, 2013:99).

- **Focus group discussions with small-scale farmers**

According to Chaka (2011), focus group discussions involve a small number of respondents (usually six to ten) under the guidance of a facilitator. The subject of

investigation is explored extensively and these group sessions were originally used by commercial sector firms and have now become a method of conducting qualitative research studies. As a research method focus group discussions use group interview procedures for evaluation. It has also been a popular method used to solicit people's attitudes, perceptions and opinions about communication practices.

- **Participant observation**

According to Struwig and Stead (2013:101), the participant observation method is used to supplement information gathered during interviews. Participants are therefore observed in their natural setting. This usually assists the researcher to give life to what is being researched (Swanepoel, 1997:104). Participant observation has the added advantage of using various instruments for collecting information. The researcher may use notes, cameras, tape recorders, videos or the visual observation could be conducted without any technological assistance. In this study, digital recorders and field notes were taken and kept for analysis purposes where codes and themes emerged from the data collected.

1.10.3 Population of the study

The respondents were rural farmers in the North West province of South Africa, TLM. The North West Province was chosen because of its background and experience in rural farming as well as in non-commercial farming. There are the local chiefs, project managers of various project, all small-scale farmers as well as individuals ranging from project workers to community members.

This study used a semi-structured face-to-face open-ended interview schedule. The research was therefore based on empirical evidence gathered through the interviews and focus group discussions. Face-to-face interviews were effectively used to obtain in-depth feedback. The research employed a wide range of methods to get specific and relevant research data.

1.10.4 Sampling technique

The sample of this study was chosen on the subject of purposive (convenience) sampling which is a non-probability sample consisting of respondents or subjects who are available (Wimmer and Dominick 1994: 472). According to Johnson and Chistensen (2012:231), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which the researcher solicits research specific information from persons with specific characteristics to participate in a research study.

In this method, the researcher specifies the characteristics of a population of interest and locates individuals who have those characteristics. It is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, understand and gain insight into a particular subject and therefore is required to select a sample from which the most can be learned (Agang, 2009; Merriam, 2009:77). For the purposes of this study the sample was selected on the basis that non-probability samples are suitable for small scale studies that do not intend to generalise the findings beyond the sample because they are not representative. However, the advantage of this method is that it is not complicated and it is inexpensive as long as the researcher is aware of its limitations, especially those linked to generalisability of the findings (Agang, 2009).

1.10.5 Sample size

The sample size of this study was dictated by the objectives of the research. However, considerations were given to time constraints and the resources needed to carry out both the interviews and focus group discussions. Chaka (2003) posits that phenomenologists normally select "five to 10 people in their studies because they depend on in-depth interviews." Agang (2009) also opined that any sample that has less than 20 to 30 people in it is too small, but they also point out that a sample should

be "as large as the researcher can obtain with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy" in order to find the answers they are looking for.

As interviews generate a lot of data, this study targeted one hundred (N=100) respondents. This was made up of forty (N=40) semi-structured interviews with small scale famers, ten (N=10) officials from Tswaing including project leaders and managers from the different development projects in the area. Five (N=5) focus group discussions of various projects or community members including the chiefs/headman were conducted.

1.10.6 Data Analyses

Three analytical methods were used for the analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations. Some responses are quantitatively measurable whilst others were subjected to subjective interpretations. This combination is as a result of the fact that this study heavily relied on qualitative analysis of variables in line with the procedure suggested by Merriam, specifically the part to do with narrative description of the findings (Merriam, 1988).

An inductive analysis and creative synthesis provides a framework for analysis in this study. According to Patton (2002:41), the researcher becomes immersed in the details and specifics of the data, to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships. The process begins with the researcher exploring and then confirming themes, guided by analytical principles rather than empirical rules, ending up with a creative synthesis of the data (Patton, 2002:42). All data analysis commences with categorisation by means of a thematic content analysis.

1.11 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Validity has to do with the truth value of observations; in other words, whether the research instrument is accurately reporting the nature of the object (Davmon and

Holloway, 2002:89). Reliability has to do with the consistency of observations and whether the results could be reproduced consistently, every time it is applied (Davmon and Holloway 2002:80; Lindlof and Taylor, 2002:238).

For the above reasons, Davmon and Holloway (2002:92-95) suggest alternative ways that qualitative inquiries justify their validity and reliability. According to these authors, validity can be demonstrated by showing relevance or authenticity and trustworthiness of the data. Therefore, research should be meaningful and useful to the reader (relevance), and the authenticity of such research is acknowledged when the strategies used are appropriate for the true reporting of participants' ideas.

A study is fair when it helps readers to understand the world of the respondents and identify how they can improve it (Davmon and Holloway, 2002:94). Additionally, Davmon and Holloway (2002:89-90) consider qualitative studies to be reliable, when an audit trail or decision trail is presented that documents the decisions and steps that the researcher took during the project.

This allows future researchers to follow the same process, replicate the study as the original researcher, and helps readers to understand the pertinent decisions made. The validity and reliability of this study is provided throughout this section. Babbie and Mouton (2002) reveal an additional means of justifying qualitative research.

These authors explain that qualitative studies need to focus on being objective through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Babbie and Mouton, 2002:276). The sample selected is well within the confines of the targeted audiences for small scale farmers in a developmental context. Therefore, this should not influence the reliability of the results when making it applicable to similar small-scale rural farmers in other geographical areas.

Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and participant observation as the three methods of data collection were used. According to Shackleton (2007), qualitative research seeks to produce and demonstrate credible data. As gleaned from the various authors' explanations above, all the elements have been integrated into

this study to assist the researcher in evaluating the trustworthiness and credibility of this study's interpretations.

1.12 Defining the time dimension of the study

Babbie and Mouton (2002:93) explain that exploratory research typically follows a cross sectional approach, where information is gathered on one occasion and not over an extended period. This study can therefore be termed 'cross-sectional', because does not follow the longitudinal approach. The data of this study was gathered within a 4 months period from September to December, 2016.

1.13 Ethical considerations

According to Leedy and Ormond (2005), ethical issues in research fall into four categories. These categories form the foundation of the ethical principles that were applied and followed in this study. The four categories and their application are as follows:

1. Protection from harm: the risk involved in participating in a study should not exceed the normal day-to-day risks (Leedy and Ormond, 2005).
2. The participants were not put in harm's way throughout the data collection phase of the study.
3. Informed consent: the nature of the study conducted was revealed to the research participant (Leedy and Ormond, 2005). The background and intent of the study was explained to the participants in the informed consent form to ensure that they were aware of the purpose and objective of this study.
4. Right to privacy: Strict confidentiality was adhered to in order to keep the nature and quality of participants' performance private (Leedy and Ormond, 2005). Where reports were part of the secondary data during the data collection phase, they were disclosed without written consent from the respondents taking part. The privacy of the participants was fully protected.
5. Honesty: Research results were reported in a complete and honest fashion (Leedy and Ormond, 2005).



1.14 INFORMED CONSENT

Waldrop (2004:238) as cited in Padget (2008:65) strongly emphasises that research involves face-to face interactions or engagement. Therefore, informed consent was an ongoing and negotiated process. The researcher informed research participants about the intention of the study. The identity of the researcher such as the full names, telephone numbers, and physical address were not disclosed. The researcher also explained research procedures such as the duration of the interviews.

To ensure these principles were adhered to, research participants were requested to sign a consent form. The researcher also requested permission from traditional tribal authority to conduct the study.

1.15 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Research participants undertook to engage in this voluntarily without coercion. This gave the research participants an opportunity to withdraw from the study when they felt uncomfortable. This notion is supported by Engel and Schutt (2009: 62) who assert that participation in any research project should be voluntary and researchers should inform participants of their rights as well.

1.16 CONFIDENTIALITY

Real names and identifying particulars of participants were not used to ensure confidentiality. The researcher also assured research participants of anonymity in writing and verbally.

1.17 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the unlawful act of using the ideas and the writings of other people without acknowledgement as if they are yours (Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard 2014:96). The researcher avoided plagiarism by acknowledging all the sources through citations and referencing.

1.18 RESEARCH FRAUD

Neuman (2011:144) states that fraud in research occurs when researchers fake data that were not collected or falsify them. The researcher kept field notes, tape records and transcripts safely which was only available to the study leader or supervisor.

1.19 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

As a means of providing an overview of the entire study, the following summary is: the study is divided into six chapters. **Chapter one** constitutes an introduction to the study. The background and context, research problem statement, objectives of the study, conceptualisation, a brief overview of the research methodology employed in the study and the delimitation of the study are presented in the same chapter.

Chapters two and **three** present the theoretical anchors of the study. **Chapter two** focuses the theoretical approaches to development communication where communication is seen as a major contributor in providing communities with information to better their life and in tandem to improve their socio-economic well-being. **Chapter three** provides literature on development support communication (DSC) to bridge the gap between communicators and end-users or beneficiaries within the South African context, specifically TLM in North-West Province.

Furthermore, participatory development communication is discussed as an interactive social process. Participatory communication in a development situation normally gives local people, especially the TLM farming community, the opportunity to participate in determining and articulating their needs, potential and aspirations to advance their farming.

The research methodology is outlined in **Chapter four**. The qualitative research methods and design and strategy are explained, a typology of data, a consideration of

the legitimacy of the data, the population, units of analysis and sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques used in this study are discussed in detail. The analyses and the results obtained from the reliability and the validity analysis are also discussed.

Chapter five presents the data analyses and interpretation of the findings of the study.

Chapter six draws inferences from the findings of the research study and concludes with recommendations derived specifically from the objectives set for the study. This chapter also sets out the strategies that could be applied to farming as mentioned in Chapter one as a part of the empirically based recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The historical roots of the concept of development communication must be taken into account when strategies and programmes are planned. Historically, development communication evolved from the modernisation paradigm, to participative communication, to sustainable development through participative communication. This chapter is devoted to the theoretical perspectives of Development Communication (DC) within a South African context.

This chapter reviews the literature on communication for social change (sometimes also referred to as “development communication” or “communication for development,”) beginning with an overview of the field and situating this in the broader discipline of development theory-praxis. Development communication means different things to different people. This owes to the fact that the concept is viewed from different ideological dispositions and orientations. The researcher also charts the evolution of communication for development praxis from the dominant paradigm to the current people-centered model upon which this study is premised.

This chapter indicates how pivotal communication is used as a tool for development. Historically, many development projects did not prosper, the lack of proper communication procedures were considered a reason for failure. Communication is regarded as a mediation tool which brings different social groups together, as well as information for development as a continuously growing resource. Currently, communication is considered as a requisite for many development projects (Agunga, 1998:8).

Because communication has been viewed as a scientific field, the foundation of this study is interdisciplinary. The other fields applicable to this study are development and development communication. From such interdisciplinary approach, this study explores the communicative practices of farmers in Tswaing.

According to van Rooyen (2004), Southern Africa's population is predominantly rural and marked by high levels under-development. According to the 2003 Official SADC Trade, Industry and Investment Review, approximately 80% of the people within the SADC region rely on agriculture for subsistence, employment or income. Currently, an estimated 1, 5% growth in the agricultural sector in the southern Africa-region does not support the product demand brought about by growth in population. As this study looks at the South African situation, the researcher is convinced that this is applicable to the local context of Tswaing in the North West province.

Bothoko and Oladele (2013) posit that agriculture is an important sector in the economic development and poverty alleviation drive of many countries such that its development requires technologies, organisational and institutional innovations. Farmers' participation is an important factor for sustainable agriculture in rural areas such as North West province.

Agriculture contributes immensely to the South African economy in the provision of food for the increasing population; supply of adequate raw materials to a growing industrial sector; a major source of employment; generation of foreign exchange earnings; and provision of a market for the products of the industrial sector. Based on the above, this research argues that the agrarian sector has a strong rural base; hence, concern for agriculture and rural development become synonymous, with common roots and that the bedrock of agriculture and agricultural development in South Africa is rural development, without which all efforts at agricultural development are doomed to futility.

Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, where the Tswaing Local municipality falls, is a predominantly rural region where agriculture and mining form the economic backbone of the district. Education and skills levels are generally low. It is therefore not surprising that a big proportion of those who are economically active work in relatively poorly paid elementary occupations, especially in the rural areas.

The current challenges and opportunities for the rural poor warrants renewed consideration of interventions to achieve sustainable development (From Action to Impact: The African Region's Rural Strategy, 2002: 1). As such, numerous promising development initiatives are under way. Most notable are programmes and projects run by the local farmers in the Tswaing area.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AS A FRAMEWORK FOR BETTER FARMING METHODS

Agriculture plays a crucial role in sustainable development and in the eradication of hunger and poverty. It is therefore a developmental issue, and consequently the theories and principles of development communication have become key to improving and maintaining better farming methods.

A development communication pioneer Nora Quebral officially coined the term "development communication" at the University of the Philippines in Los Banos in 2006. The author's early definition of development communication was that it is human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potential (Quebral, 2006).

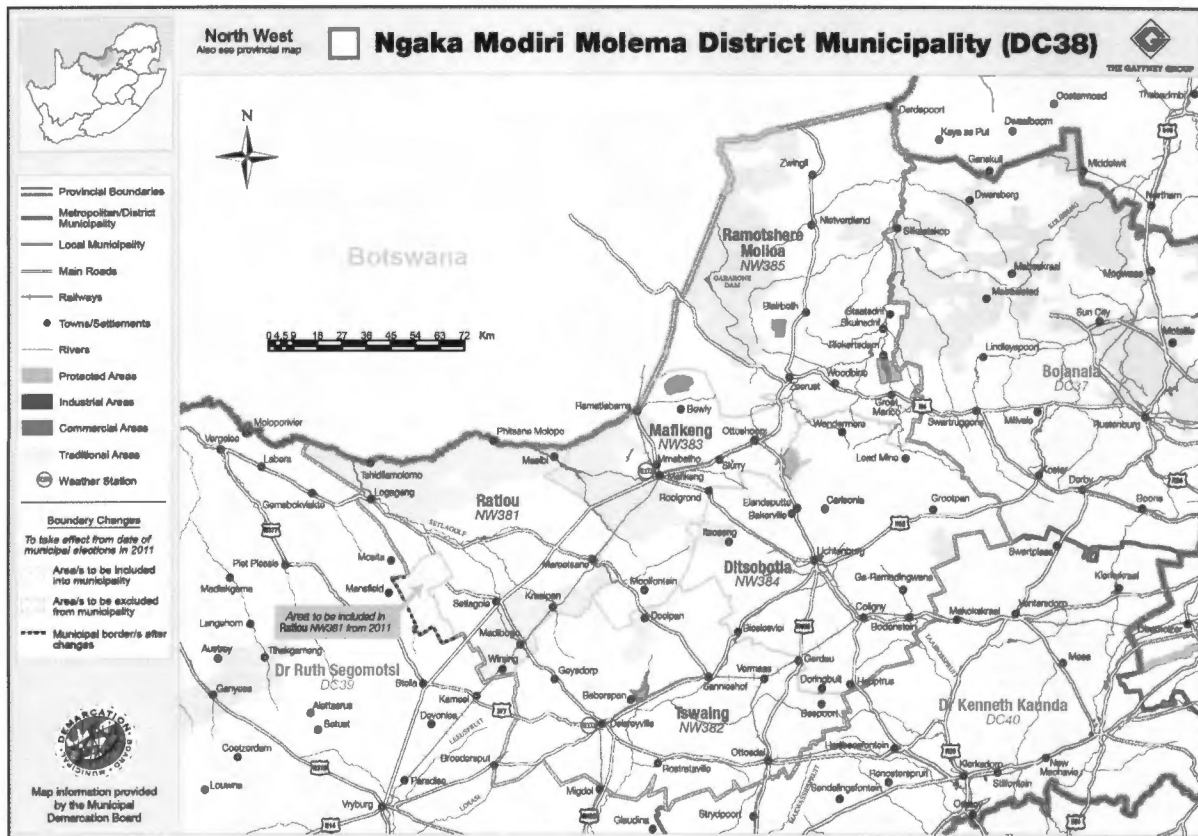
As Richardson (2003), puts it, development communication is shifting away from "one-way, top-down" communication techniques towards a participatory communication approach. This salient distinction is quite pertinent to this study. According to Yoon (2003), the top-down or modernist approach targeted the economic growth of countries towards the example of developed countries, whereas the participatory

approach to development communication as a norm, amongst other aspects, requires community participation at all levels of implementation.

According to the South African government, development communication is an approach which provides communities with information that they can use in bettering their lives or to improving their socio-economic well-being, which aims at making public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable (Government Communication Handbook: 2010: 55). Such information must not only be applied as part of community development but it must also address information needs which communities themselves identify. The outcome of this approach makes a difference in the quality of life of communities, many of which live below the poverty datum line.

As Andreasen and Kotler (2003:330) claim, this form of communication requires a major change in perceptions and values, including a new way of doing things which is a far more complex process than buying a product, as no tangible reward to sustain the change in behaviour is apparent. Within this there is a shift in development communication from disseminative modernist programmes to programmes that focus on inclusive participatory approaches, programmes that fall within the new participatory paradigm that are likely to be more successful in the agricultural sector in ensuring that there is an improvement in production. This assumption is based on empirical studies that have proven that programmes that are more participatory have greater success.

Figure 1. Map of Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality.



Source: Demarcation board (2015)

The following discussion looks at the issue of participatory communication as a prerequisite for development.

2.2.1 WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

In reviewing the literature, four concepts were extracted based on their placement at the foundation of the field's theory and methods that could be applied to this study:

- Human-level development: refers to that which equips the individual with appropriate resources to improve aspects of one's well-being (Freire, 1970; Serveas, 1999; Li, 2008).

- Community-level development: refers to that which enables individuals to build networks at the group level for addressing a range of concrete and abstract goals (Uphoff, 1986; Paull, 2002; Li, 2008, Catalani, 2009).
- Horizontal-communication: refers to that which empowers individuals to participate in peer-to-peer dialogue (Vargas, 1998; Catalani, 2009; Heinonon, 2011).
- Advocacy: refers to that which takes an active role in promoting interests on behalf of an individual or group (Ogan, 1982; Lee, 2008; Catalani, 2009, Jones, 2012).

Most pundits would agree that regardless of the particular economic or political system used to produce tangible development, the goals of development include improved material conditions for everyone; greater equity in access to the world's natural resources and wealth; improved realisation of human rights, freedom and security; improved choices, self-determination and the establishment of power to influence one's own life and conditions; and sustainability.

Achievement of these goals entails changes at every level: within households and communities, in societies and states. They are not goals that can ever be achieved absolutely and for all time: they involve continuing processes of dialogue, competition, negotiation, exchange, adaptation and decision-making in which all sectors of society, including poor and marginalised people, need to participate (Panos, 2007).

These processes are largely processes of communication. Much development planning today is focused on reducing poverty, especially in a country like South Africa. There is debate about the relative importance of low incomes, other elements contributing to the quality of life, and inequality in defining poverty. But most analysts agree that for any improvement in the lives of the poor to be lasting and sustainable, it must include strengthening the powers of poor people to participate in the processes of development.

Based on the above, it means strengthening their capacity to communicate. Poor people, and people who are marginalised and powerless within their own communities, are by definition excluded from many things, including the diverse forms and platforms of communication. It is critical to note that one side of communication is receiving information. Constraints on poor people's capacity to receive information could include non-literacy or illiteracy, distance from sources of information, not speaking the majority or official languages, and lack of electricity that limits the availability of radios and televisions.

The other side of communication is the ability to give information, to make one's voice heard and to participate in discussions and debates. Poor people's capacities to make their voices heard are also limited. This may be the case in the TLM which is the research study setting for this current study: they lack access to powerful people; until the very recent spread of mobile phones, most poor people had no telephones within reach. Using computers and the Internet is expensive and needs skills. And within communities, social customs and power structures often keep some groups, especially women, silent. Strengthening poor people's power to share information and engage in dialogue could lead to major changes in the lives of individuals in the community of Tswaing.

2.2.2 Communication

For the purpose of this study, the researcher has argued that communication is the exchange of information and dialogue. It is an essential part of all fundamental processes of development. However, digital and electronic, print and interpersonal communication are all part of the 'communication ecology' of communities, societies, government and are included in the concept of communication in this paper. The researcher includes all types of communication: from planned communication campaigns to unplanned flows of communication (namely; personal interactions and informal gatherings. Processes of gathering and ordering knowledge and information are part of communication, as well as the processes of sending and sharing information (Panos 2007). The following segment defines communication for development.

2.2.3 What is communication for development?

Communication is a requisite for development. At first, communication was seen as a simple matter of a sender giving a message to a receiver. Partly influenced by the experience of the advertising industry, the idea grew that the message and the medium had to be carefully matched to the receiver's ideas and social context. Nonetheless, recognising the importance of communication in bringing about development change is not new. There is a great variety of theoretical and practical approaches in development communications and social change (CSC). Broadly speaking, development communication/communications and social change is about understanding the role played by information, communication, and the media in directed and non-directed social change. It also includes a variety of practical applications based on the mainstreaming of communication as "process" and the leveraging of media technologies in social change. According to Panos (2007), over the past 50 years many analyses of how communication works in development have seen the targets of communication principally as receivers of information and ideas.

The aim has been to transmit information and to persuade people to change their behaviour in respect of a specific area of their lives, for example in issues of health, family planning, or agricultural practices. Information campaigns began to be more carefully designed, with representatives of the target audience often helping to identify what needed to be said and how. For many individuals, this is what development communication is: planned communication campaigns, often using a variety of media, to achieve specific changes. More importantly, within this approach, the idea is now well established that people's behaviour is more likely to change if they are not just passive recipients of messages but are more actively involved in the process: hence the modern adage discussion is better than listening.

Nyasani (1997), asserts that communication system that fosters Africa's development, be it cultural and spiritual, religious, economic, or political must be a reflective one. That reflective communication is wrapped in philosophical presuppositions of the African personhood, made whole in the community in which the African lives (Nyasani 1997: 51-57). The assumptions are that there are unique processes of thought that are African; and that Africans organise and categorise their world from a strictly indigenous socio-cultural milieu.

2.2.4 The importance of communication

According to Nwosu (1990), communication is central to the development of any society. The author has observed that development experiences in other parts of the world have continued to point to the fact that communication is central to rural and national development and that its catalytic effect to the development of the other sectors of a nation's economy should not be neglected or underplayed. This underscores the strategic place communication plays in rural development, especially in a country like South Africa. This is true considering the fact that majority of South African population reside in the rural areas where access to basic amenities is grossly restricted. Hence majority of people are living in abject poverty and deprivation, and as a result they are completely cut off from government interventions programmes.

This study explores how communication could facilitate development support communication to improve poor people's lives using agriculture in Tswaing, in the North West province of South Africa as a case study. For more than three and a half decades, communication has been an important aspect for enhancing people's lives and well-being in Tswaing. Within the developing nations it is a part of a holistic development approach that helps poor families improve their lives through promotion and diffusion of new information, and through different communication practices that ultimately empowers this community's agricultural practice.



Many challenges between major institutional actors are caused by a lack of coordinated planning, poor communication between partners, and absence of follow through with actual resource planning or implementation. In addition, there is typically little or no involvement at all of representative farmers or their organisations. A lack of appropriate communication structures, methodologies and tools results in poor identification of farmers' needs and priorities, inappropriate research programmes, poor or irrelevant information and technologies and finally, low farmers' take-up of technology innovations.

These are by no means new challenges even though they need to be addressed in this study in the light of new developments in media and communication technologies and new support strategies to rural areas such as TLM. In order to overcome these challenges in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner, this study looks at the agricultural Development Support Communication model for the relevant information aimed at communicating innovation in agricultural practices, to various groups of farmers in the TLM for their adoption and practice.

Rural communication is an interactive process in which information, knowledge and skills, relevant for development are exchanged between farmers, advisory services, information providers and research either personally or through media such as radio, print and more recently the new Information or Communication Technologies (ICTs). In this process, all actors may be innovators, intermediaries and receivers of information and knowledge. The aim is to put rural people in a position that allows them to have the necessary information for informed decision-making and the relevant skills to improve their livelihoods.

Communication in this context is therefore a non-linear process with the content or information. In communication for development approaches, rural people are at the centre of any given development initiative and view planners, development workers, local authorities, farmers and rural people as "communication equals", equally committed to mutual understanding and concerted action. Communication for development is used for: people's participation and community mobilisation, decision-making and action, confidence building, for raising awareness, sharing knowledge and

changing attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles; for improving learning and training and rapidly spreading information; to assist with programme planning and formulation; to foster the support of decision-makers. As Chitnis (2005) points out, communication is thus used at two levels: to provide new information and to engage people in a dialogue that leads to positive community action.

2.2.5 Communication as a symbolic mediation tool

Communication is seen as a mediation tool which brings different individuals and social groups together to discuss their interests and needs to reach consensus for action. Communication technology and media are therefore useful tools in this process that should, nonetheless, not be considered as an end in themselves. Sustainable people-orientated development can only be realised if information and knowledge are shared and beneficiaries are involved and motivated. This indicates that "the essence of involving rural people like the TLM in their own development lies in the sharing of knowledge. Sharing is not a one-way transfer of information; it implies rather an exchange between communications equals.

In Roger's view cited in Shahzad, Bokhari (2014): "Development communication refers to the uses to which communication is put in order to further development. Such applications are intended to either further development in a general way, such as by increasing the level of the mass media exposure among nation's citizens, in order to create a favourable climate for development, or to support a specific development programme or project this type of development communication is often termed as Development Support Communication."

On the one hand, technical specialists learn about peoples' needs and their techniques or production; on the other, the people learn of the techniques and proposals of the specialists" (Balit, 1996:5). Balit has also said that DSC efforts begin by listening to people and taking into account their perceptions, needs, knowledge, experiences, cultures and traditions (1996:6).

This study also seeks to demonstrate how development, in an area troubled with poverty, is accomplished based on the principles of participation, communication and empowerment (Melkote and Steeves, 2001). Firstly, White, (1999), Melkote and Steeves, (2001) believe that participation of local communities is the cornerstone of holistic development. Secondly, communication aimed at empowering the most marginalised and overcoming cultural and social barriers could help achieve participation. It is critical to note that communication strategies are central to such community-based and people-centred development endeavours because good communication allows people to gain new knowledge, challenge existing structures, and above all, gain control over their lives and overcome the odds. Likewise, the role of communication for development is not merely the transmission of information and ideas about development, but the means through which people gain control over their lives (Melkote and Steeves, 2001).

Thirdly, empowerment, this is a process through which people gain control over their lives and make decisions to improve their existing state (Papa, Singhal, Ghanekar and Papa, 2000; Rogers and Singhal, 2003; White, 2003). Empowerment is usually understood within the context of power, as it refers to the ability to have control over decisions that affect people's lives.

People's right to be involved and be heard is at the center of participatory development and this is achieved through empowerment (Melkote and Steeves, 2001). Many scholars have proposed that empowerment essentially has two dimensions: the personal level, whereby people gain self-confidence and improve their self-esteem to take on new tasks and become active participants in the project activities; and the group level, in which communities become empowered and people have access to information and a chance to participate as decision makers (Melkote and Steeves, 2001).

There are, however, challenges facing the world today notwithstanding the South African context, particularly Tswana community in the North West province that include managing the environment in a sustainable manner, managing the rate of population growth and urbanisation, ensuring food security, meeting health, education

and literacy needs and eliminating poverty (Malan, 1996). In order to meet these challenges requires shared information, knowledge and a participatory process towards social change. In this case communication is an essential element in this process. Establishing dialogue with people could empower them to take decisions for their own development. Communication is essential in order to increase participation, provide information for change and innovation and help in the sharing of knowledge and skills (Balit, 1996). As old as the concept of communication might be, dating back to the inception of mankind, there are as many theories today relating to it. The concept of development communication and its historical context is now be explored in greater depth.

2.3 DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION (DC)

As Chaka (2011) points out, for many, development communication began when Schramm (1964) examined the relationship between modernisation and communication. Chaka (2011) continues to re-state that Schramm (1964:145) outlined “how communication campaigns could help modernise some parts of society “through a combination of mass media channels and face-to-face communication.” At the centre of modern political life lies the idea of participation and democracy, but in order for these to be achieved meaningful communication between a polity and its governing structures should transpire. This should also apply in the South African context.

It is against this backdrop that this study illustrates how alternative visions of development and communication for social change could be enacted and embodied.

Various scholars have indicated that development communication designates the process of transmitting and communicating new knowledges related to a developing country. On the one hand, Quebral (2006) and Currin (2002) in Chaka (2011) explain that development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater equality and the larger fulfilment of human potential.

On the other hand, according to the GCIS (2001:1), development communication focuses primarily on the “poor and disadvantaged, whose profile reflects not only limited access to information, but also feature as the main target of government socio-economic programmes.” This concept of development communication therefore includes participatory action for learning and sharing of powers, in terms of social, economic, political and cultural contexts. This is an attempt at informing, creating awareness, educating and enlightening the people so that they could improve their lives.

This chapter presents a theoretical perspective of development communication and the following sections are outlined: the development communication context for the South African perspective, and important elements of the various approaches to development communication, namely, the dominant paradigm, dependency paradigm and participatory approach of development communication in the context of this study.

Historically, development communication scholars claim that this field originated in the 1960s and 1970s. The same field and scholars affiliated to its discursive strategies examined the relationship between modernisation theory and mass communication. Research shows that the attitudes toward the developing world were changing and so was communication in such areas which became more participatory and bottom-up.

According to Thussu (2006) dependency theory emerged later, which proposed that the true underlying principle of development communication was to facilitate the narrowing and ultimate closure of the gap between developing and developed countries. Thussu (2006) claims that the underlying goal of the free flow of information was in fact neo-colonialism where the rich were getting richer while the poor were kept poor.

Kumar (2011:2) posit that, DC is the “art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potentiall”. Quebral, (1975) in Kumar (2011), further define DC as operating through engaging the poor more fully in decision-making processes that affect their lives, giving them a voice “to influence policy, or persuading

them to adopt new practices that enhance their livelihood, increase their security, advance their education and improve their health” (Rogers, 2006:180).

2.4 OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION THEORY

According to Roman (2009), development communication scholars have always been inspired by a strong rolled-up-sleeves sentiment; a willingness (and often a professional responsibility) to do something, a drive for action beyond mere academic reflection. This tendency to actively engage in or depend on project implementation frequently leads to problem-solving and applied research options, often in the form of project evaluation. This inclination to roll up sleeves and get to work partly explains the way theory is conceived and used by DC scholars and their prospects for theory building.

This means that development communication is historically dependent on at least two areas of scholarly research and practice; namely, development and communication. Analysing the roots of this intellectual foray is the first step to clarifying the place theory occupies in development communication.

First, there is the influence of development. Wilkins and Mody, (2001) assert that conceptual revisions of development have framed the way development communication scholars approach their work and think about what they do. Since the invention of development in the early 1950s (Rist, 1999), development scholars have periodically provided new and revised ideas to guide the economic and social development of the most disadvantaged nations (Peet and Hartwick, 1999).

These ideas and ideologies are loosely packaged and labelled, mostly by economists and sociologists, as development theories, models, or paradigms. In this instance, as in the context of this study, “development theory is understood as the ordinary antonym and complement of practice, a grand theory, or a paradigm defined in its simplest way as a basic set of beliefs that guides action” (Guba, 1990: 17).

Since its inception, DC has been a dynamic discipline, evolving and adapting to new development paradigms. In the past, development approaches were top-down and based on economic development and the transfer of technology and information. Today, participatory and people-centred development approaches are used. A variety of communication models and approaches have been developed in the last 25 years. It is with this framework in place that as the researcher review different development communication approaches.

The mission was two-fold: as social, political and economic competencies reached maturity in the liberal West, they would be demonstrated and disseminated through superior Western communication technologies. Both ideas and their means of dissemination would be exported to the third world in the struggle against Communism. This model of development and of communication stresses a linear transmission approach: a mature concept or practice exists and communication technologies act to send information from an expert to a less knowledgeable recipient located and resident in the third world.

Rogers argues that the consensus among researchers in favour of this paradigm (dominant through much of the 1950s and 1960s) began to erode as Third World practitioners joined development communication conferences, as positivist empirical methods began to be complemented with feminist cultural inquiries, and as new technologies like inexpensive radio transmitters and paper printing became popular. Instead of seeing development communication as mainly a one-way, mass-media centred process from government to people, stressing capital intensive technological innovations that often led to industrialisation and urbanisation. Contemporary development communication approaches are more likely to emphasise equality, the 'little media, ' and people-participation.

These shifts, Rogers argues, helped to relocate development communication research communities from a homogeneous enterprise largely concerned with media-effects models to a more fractured pursuit concerned with questions like “who owns and controls communications systems; who gains and loses when communication technologies are introduced; what is the role of public regulation if media systems are viewed as public goods?” (McAnany, 2011).

The end of the Cold War brought another addition to the development communication research agenda: a focus on creating economic, social and political institutions that ex-Soviet countries needed to construct market-based economies and representative democracies. Building these institutions required once again educational and social change programmes in the service of the creation of new individuals, consumers, customers and citizens. Rather than attitude change among the common person, the focus shifted to the managers and decision-makers that would run businesses, courts, regulatory agencies and governments.

2.5 THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT

2.5.1 MODERNISATION THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

A complete review of development communication theories is beyond the scope of this study. However, the following discussion is designed to highlight a trail of traditions through which development communication theories have moved.

Firstly, the progression of development communication theory in the context of this study is explored with modernisation as a starting point. Secondly, in contrast to modernisation, the participatory approach to development communication and similar theories in communication, such as Habermas' communicative actions are explored and presented. The modernisation theory was regarded as the Western capitalistic dream for development in the Third world.

Development theorists during the 1950s and the 1960s were convinced that the neo-classical paradigm for development could eradicate underdevelopment in traditional societies. Quantifiable indicators such as economic growth, measured by a country's gross national product, was deemed an imperative goal of development that would ultimately lead to the establishment of a democratic civil society. According to Rogers (1989:121, in Chaka 2011), the "dominant paradigm to development therefore consists of four main rudiments, namely, economic growth, investment in capital-intensive technology, centralised planning, and identifying internal causes as the chief sources of mal-development in the developing world."

2.5.2 From modernisation to dependency

The early approaches to development communication are often referred to as the dominant paradigm or modernisation and included the theory of Diffusion of Innovations. Lerner (1958) completed the conceptualisation of modernisation by identifying mass communication systems as the great multiplier in development and named it as the change agent that necessitated and facilitated intended social change processes. For this reason, communication was regarded as a functionality of a larger, complex system which fulfilled varied public responsibilities for instance, spreading Western notions of development and progress to the Third world. Communication in the dominant paradigm was thus applied in a one-way, persuasive, and authoritarian fashion.

As Bosch (2009) puts it, within the framework of modernisation, development was defined in economic terms as a form of evolution. This implied that development was conceived as uni-directional and cumulative, predetermined and irreversible, progressive and imminent with reference to the nation state: "To be a modern society, the attitudes of 'backward' people - their traditionalism, bad tastes, superstitions, fatalism, which are obstacles and barriers in the traditional societies have to be removed" (Servaes 1995:12).

Early communication models, following the modernisation paradigm, considered the process of communication as messages sent from a privileged sender to an inept receiver. This implied that the sender was more important in the communication process than the receiver. This was based on what is probably the most basic communication model, which incidentally originated in engineering studies to illustrate the transfer of messages between machines (Waisbord, 2003:3). In true modernist fashion, this mechanistic model would be used to shape development communication.

Hence Melkote (1991:57) explains that "modernisation followed the top down model of communication, since communicative initiatives were planned at the macro, centralised level of government", thus negating communication inputs and feedback at the micro or grassroots level of society. It thus exemplified the transmission or "linear

model of communication by oversimplifying communication efforts for development as influential, direct efforts and influences” (McQuail and Windahl, 1981:13).

Within this worldview, communication was perceived as a one way, top-down flow of information. Beneficiaries of development projects were seen as passive recipients of information, and the media as a powerful vehicle of social change (Rogers, 1976). A pro-innovation and pro-persuasion bias existed in most of the outreach work. Agricultural development efforts, a key area of communication for development, focused on persuading people in developing countries to adopt technological innovations without questioning their design, form, adaptability or utility within their specific concepts (Rogers, 2003). Four broad communication approaches were thus used to foster social change:

- (1) The communication effects approach,
- (2) Mass media and modernisation approach,
- (3) The diffusion of innovation approach and
- (4) The social marketing approach to innovations (Melkote and Steeves, 2001; Morris, 2003).

By the early 1970s, the next phase of development, known as the dependency paradigm, emerged and consequently influenced development communication theory praxis. Scholars resisted the “perpetuation of historical inequities” demanding more “human, egalitarian, and responsive communication theories and practices” (Huesca, 2002:501). Proponents of the dependency paradigm saw developed countries as making developing countries overly reliant on aid and therefore prospering at the cost of poorer countries. The dependency school first began in Latin America (Rist, 1997). Members of this school, known as the *dependistas*, believed that the developing countries remained poor due to their dependent economic position with respect to Europe and North America and saw the west as complicit and accountable for their continued exploitation and underdevelopment (Melkote and Steeves, 2001). Power imbalances and the historicity of the process of development were thus brought to centre stage.

Various communication scholars such as Ashcroft, Melkote, and Moody (1991), began to critically question the practice of development communication. For the first-time “bottlenecks,” or external constraints to adoption, such as the financial inability to adopt an innovation or inadequate knowledge about the innovation, were recognised as serious impediments in the process of social change (Melkote and Steeves, 2001). Latin American scholars further deconstructed the dominant paradigm, pointing out that development communication theory and praxis had thus far been modelled upon western models that were out of sync with the context of developing countries (Huesca, 2002). For instance, the focus of persuasion oriented efforts was on individuals and not on communities or social systems, reflecting a western belief system. This led to a significant shift in how communication for social change was perceived and practiced. Thus, development thinking and consequently development communication progressed to the alternative paradigm which embraced a basic human needs perspective.

2.5.3 Alternative paradigm

As a continuation of what the *dependistas* began, the alternative paradigm too had its roots in Latin America, gaining popularity in the 1980s and 1990s (Huesca, 2002). The history of the movement becomes an important variable in understanding the context within which this study is situated. Within the alternative paradigm, participation was recognised as a prerequisite for development programmes. Rogers (1976) defined development as a widely participatory process of social and economic development (including equality and freedom) through gaining control over one’s environment. This approach espoused a pluralistic perspective where “multiple local and individual realities are recognised, accepted, enhanced and celebrated” (Chambers, 1997: 188). The paradigm recognised people as human beings and not as objects to be developed, calling for a people-centred bottom-up approach as opposed to the earlier top-down approach. The alternative framework also moved away from blue-prints to development work and encouraged a localised and context-specific approach (Chambers, 1997). The call for “endogenous” development, which stemmed from societal values and a community’s perception of their needs, rang loud and clear (Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada, 1998). The focus of development shifted from

economic advancement to social change, stressing the urgency of bettering peoples' quality of life (Rist, 1997).

Consequently, development and communication practitioners began to see a strong link between communication and participation (Fraser and Restrapo-Estrada, 1998; White, Nair, and Ascroft, 1994). As Singhal (2001:12) states "there can be no participation without communication. The notion of 'participation,' as a desirable part and parcel of communicative approaches to development, goes back three decades." In fact, communication and participation are conceptually the same thing. The root of the Latin word for communication is *communio* which implies participation and sharing (Dagron, 2001). While there is no singular model for participatory communication, the central tenet is to involve people in the communication process in order to achieve social change (Dagron, 2001; Fraser and Restrapo-Estrada, 1998; Singhal, 2001; White, 2003).

2.5.4 Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Diffusion of Innovations theory describes the social process of communication of a new idea among members of a community over time. Rogers and Singhal (1996) elucidate that the focus of the theory is not only on awareness and knowledge but also on attitude change and the decision-making process that lead to the practice or adoption of an innovation. The objective of this theory is to explain the dynamics of social construction and gradual assimilation of an innovation. It includes conceptual generalisations about

- (1) how and through what media an innovation is communicated,
- (2) the attributes of innovations,
- (3) the decision process that leads to adoption (or non-adoption), and
- (4) the characteristics of adopters.

Furthermore, there is an increasing theoretical concern about the consequences or effects of innovation adoption (Rogers, 1995). Since communication is the heart of diffusion of innovations theory, “the essence of the diffusion process is the information exchange through which one individual communicates a new idea to one or several others” (Rogers, 1995:18).

In general, mass media are considered the best channels to create awareness about innovations, whereas interpersonal channels are crucial for persuasion and adoption of final decision. Diffusion theory emphasises interpersonal communication more than any other area of communication research (Rogers and Singhal, 1996). In this sense, diffusion of innovations is closely linked to the study of social networks (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981; Coleman, Katz, and Menzel, 1966). Diffusion theory states that “individuals who are isolates or on the periphery of local social networks are less likely to hear about an innovation, will hear about it much later, and will not have as much opportunity for social comparison” (Kincaid, 2000:218).

In summary, in order to improve, the application of the diffusion of innovation in agriculture can lead to advances in farming and production and disease prevention at a community level. As clearly stated previously, diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the community members of a particular social system like the TLM. This process includes both the planned and spontaneous spread of new ideas (Rogers, 1995). Therefore, communication of messages concerning new ideas involves the active creation and sharing of information among people to reach mutual understanding (Haider and Kreps 2004). The authors acknowledge that, diffusion of innovation is a special type of communication, in which the messages are about a new ideas. In addition, diffusion is a type of social change defined as the process by which change occurs in the structure and function of a social system (Rogers, 1995). Social change (including decisions that affect issues of concern) and within the context of this study, farming and agriculture can occur as a result of certain consequences due to the invention, diffusion, and adoption or rejection of new ideas or innovations). Diffusion of innovation thus involves four main interacting factors:

1. an innovation,
2. communication channels,
3. social systems, and
4. time.

This theory has contributed to a greater understanding of behavioural change in various settings, including the variation in rates of adoption of innovations, and it has held a broad scope of practical applications in the field of farming and agriculture.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Development communication is not merely concerned with providing information on development activities. Besides creating opportunities for the people to know about the technical nature of new ideas and how they work and with what effect, development communication plays the more important role of creating an atmosphere for understanding how these new ideas fit into the real social and contextual situation in which the people operate. Its ultimate goal is to catalyse local development activities, local development planning and implementation, and local communication to smoothen the path to development. Youth and women participation should be made possible through such integration of theory with praxis.

Communication here should not stop with conventional mass media. If development communication must succeed, then it must include strong components of social organisation and interpersonal as well as traditional modes and media. In addition, those in charge of planning development communication must be those who understand the social structure (those who have entered into the socio-cultural contexts of the people) and appreciate how change could take place in it, not merely how development messages are disseminated.

The theories in these fields have developed over a long period, with various perspectives providing possible approaches and solutions to the problems of development in agriculture. The prescriptive definition of the notion of development assumed greater popularity and influence over the functional one. Development

became understood as modernisation or westernisation of which the process was uni-directional and projected as universally applicable. This understanding, existing with increasing popularity in the 1950s and 1960s, inspired the exogenous practice of development, termed in this thesis as externally-driven development.

Since the 1950s to date, it is this understanding of development as modernisation which has fashioned the design and execution of development programmes and projects in Africa. Perhaps the continued existence of this model in Africa owes much to its exclusionary disposition, which makes the development processes to be controlled by only few but influential experts and benefactors.

As Louise Bourgault (1995) observed, the elitist disposition of the modernisation paradigm secured the model great support among the elite class it created in Africa. These elite and the few proponents have not wanted sincerely to relinquish the modernisation paradigm because they share from its spoils. The next chapter discusses the development support communication in detail and also outlines and contextualises participatory development communication perspectives for this study.

CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to the theoretical perspectives of the Development Support Communication (DSC) within a South African context. An overview of the development support communication paradigm and a shift from Development Communication (DC) to Development Support Communication (DSC) is explained. For the development sphere, the concept of DSC has been established.

3.2 THE EMERGENCE OF DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION

As Shahzad and Bokhari (2014) has suggested the concept of development communication (DC) arose within the framework of the contribution that communication and the media made to development in the Third World. Development communication comprises organised efforts to use communication processes and media that bring social and economic improvements in developing societies. There are three main ideas which define the philosophy of development communication and that make it different from general communication. Firstly, DC is purposive, it is value-laden and it is pragmatic. In the development context, a tacit positive value is attached to what one communicates about, which shall motivate people towards social change.

The concept of development communication and its historical context is explored in greater depth. This discussion commences with the concept of DC and proceeds to the DSC.

3.3 CONTEXTUALISATION AND OVERVIEW OF DSC

The notion of Development Support Communication emerged in the 1980s, following the realisation by some development scholars-practitioners that the problems of the post-colonial Third world were different from those of war ravaged Europe of the late 1940s. They contend that Pro-Innovation Development Communication has not worked in the development processes of Third World countries as successfully as it did in Europe's redevelopment (Melkote, 1991).

The scholars attribute such failure to what they have termed a communication gap between the Development Communicator and the intended end-users at the grassroots. They argue that Development Communication had created a lacuna between the communicator and the end-users, mitigating against the full comprehension and use of the information and messages by the end-users and inhibiting the intended results in development.

These arguments led to another communication approach known as Development Support Communication in the 1980s (Jayaweera, 1987b; Ashcroft and Masilela, 1989). The objective of this approach is to bridge the *communication gap* between development experts and the end-users of information, the development beneficiaries (Melkote, 1991). Development Support Communication is intended and expected to remedy the communication flaws and the consequent development failures associated with and attributed to the communication pattern of the Development Communication approach.

DSC theory represents one of the few notable efforts aimed at reorienting the role and process of communication in development. Underlying it is the need to increase participation of beneficiaries in the development process. Proponents envisaged a shift from the "concept of development communication to development support communication focused on co-equal, little media-centred government-with-people communication (Ashcroft and Masilela, 1989: 3; Melkote, 1991: 262).

The proponents of the Development Support Communication approach claim that the approach has noted and catered for the communication gap between developers and beneficiaries. They claim that the approach has discussed and addressed the "operational impasse caused by the absence of a common language of communication between the administrators and technical experts on the one hand and the receivers on the other" (Melkote, 1991: 262). Thus, Development Support Communication ensures that communicators in development "translate technical language and ideas into messages understandable to the beneficiaries thereby creating a climate of mutual understanding" (Melkote, 1991: 263).

The Development Support Communication approach relies on the use of media but not necessarily the big mass media. It relies more on the small media which include the use of "video, film strips, traditional media, group and interpersonal communication" (Melkote, 1991: 263). This approach is outlined in Table below.

Table 1. Difference between Development communication and Development support communication constructs.

Development and Development communication (Top-down approach)	Development and Development support communication (Grassroots bottom-up and participatory approach)
<p>Source: Universally based</p> <p>Structure: Top-down, authoritarian</p> <p>Paradigm: Dominant paradigm of externally directed social change.</p> <p>Level: International, National media: Television, radio and newspapers.</p> <p>Effects: To create a climate of acceptance by beneficiaries for exogenous ideas and innovations.</p>	<p>Development agency based</p> <p>Horizontal knowledge sharing between benefactors and beneficiaries</p> <p>Participatory paradigm of endogenous directed quest to maintain control over basic needs</p> <p>Grassroots, local, Group and Interpersonal communication, traditional media, video and film.</p> <p>Create a climate of mutual understanding between beneficiaris and benefactors.</p>

Source: Ascroft and Masilela (1989:16-17) cited in Melkote (1991: 263)

According to Burger (1997), the field of development planning is informed by two main approaches regarding the role of communication in development efforts, namely the dominant paradigm and a number of alternative models, often referred to as the new paradigm. The dominant paradigm is the older approach and coincides with the theories of development communication (DC). Since the 1970s the dominant school of thinking has fallen into disrepute, mainly because it failed to bring about the desired

change. This resulted in it being gradually replaced by the new paradigm, which corresponds with development support communication (DSC), emphasising dialogue and participation.

During the 1980s the development support communication (DSC) approach to development programmes largely replaced the DC paradigm. The DSC approach is two-way facet, focusing on participation, dialogue and the exchange of information between facilitators and beneficiaries of development efforts. This approach coincides with communication in the small group context and employs the so-called "small media" as channels of communication. The DSC approach suggests therefore that development planners should transmit information via the channels of small group communication and ought to give attendants of small group discussions the opportunity to take part in exchanging ideas and voicing their opinions.

DSC, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO, 1987); White *et al.*, (1994) and Agunga, (1997) represents a new discipline and profession whose primary goal is facilitating development. Bordenave (1996:11) argues that "participation is impossible without communication." He further notes that: "What has been so obvious is that not just any kind of communication makes genuine participation possible." DSC has come to represent the type of communication necessary for enabling people to become active participants in their own development.

3.3.1 What is DSC?



The practice of Development Support Communication, DSC, is a multi-sectorial process of information sharing about development agendas and planned actions. It links planners, beneficiaries and implementers of development action, including the donor community. It obligates planners and implementers to provide clear, explicit and intelligible data and information about their goals and roles in development, and explicitly provides opportunities for beneficiaries to participate in shaping development outcomes. It ensures that the donor community is kept constantly aware of the achievements and constraints of development efforts in the field. DSC makes use of all available structures and means of information sharing. Therefore, it is not limited to

mass media alone. It also uses both formal group and non-formal channels of communication, such as women's and youth associations, as well as places where people gather such as markets, churches, festivals, and meetings.

Its contribution is in using these in a systematic, continuous, coordinated and planned manner to perform linkage and enabling functions. It requires analysis of the communication environment, of the available and needed communication competencies and resources and clearly indicates expected results from specific resource inputs so as to maintain accountability.

In short, DSC is a legitimate function of development planning and implementation. DSC therefore needs to be appreciated as a valuable technology for using the social communication process to foster and strengthen sustainable development at local and national levels. It should be taken more seriously in programmes of social change and should be reflected explicitly in development policy and strategy. One way of doing so is through the enunciation of a national information and communication policy, which can be explicitly integrated into national development thinking and practice. But within the context of this study which is in the TLM a regional or municipality information and communication policy on agricultural development rather than on a broader or national level would be desirable.

3.4 INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

According to Agboola (1980), the concept of integrated rural development has always been suffering from overexposure and under implementation since its inception. All the many discussion papers and journal articles addressed to the subject, all the conferences, seminars and workshops held over the years seem to have yielded few carefully planned, systematically integrated programmes which could be pointed to as successful examples to emulate. Yet most experts agree that the integrated approach is crucial to accelerating rural development.

The South African government compiled a comprehensive integrated rural development programme. This is championed by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. Its mandate is to intensify the land reform programme and to ensure that more land is made available to the rural poor, while providing them with technical skills and financial resources to productively use the land to create sustainable livelihoods and decent work in rural areas.

It is against this background that integrated rural development is a concept for planning and thus a strategy for multi-sectorial and multi-faceted interventions designed to ensure sustained improvements in the lives of rural dwellers and rural economies. Rural development programmes are more effective and result in sustainable impact if implemented in combination with community-based traditional knowledges. Public participation is therefore essential for successful and acceptable rural development.

Rural development in general is regarded as the actions and initiatives taken to improve the standard of living of communities in non-urban areas. These areas are usually characterised by a low ratio of inhabitants in wide open spaces where agricultural activities are prominent, while economic activities relate mainly to the production of food and raw materials. Rural development actions are therefore mainly aimed at enabling rural people to take control of their destiny, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources. This could be achieved through coordinated and integrated broad-based agrarian transformation as well as strategic investment in the relevant economic and social infrastructure to the benefit of all rural communities and not only those involved in agriculture. The success of rural development would then culminate in sustainable and vibrant rural communities.

3.5 THE WORLD OF DEVELOPMENT ACCORDING TO THE DSC

Historically, Sonderling (1997:35) indicates that, according to Ashcroft and Masilela (1994:275), "the failure of attempts of development to improve the living conditions of the poorest people in the Third World prompted Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank (and a former United States Secretary of Defence), to announce a

new direction or perspective for development initiatives in 1973". The new perspective, targeting rural areas, was to include the participation of the poor people in the decision-making process and implementation of development programmes. This is applicable to the the TLM context.

Though, even two decades later, people's participation had not happened owing to an elaborate conspiracy between the academy and the initiators of international development. As Ashcroft and Masilela (1994:275), points out, theories of development proved unsuccessful and ineffective. So, in response to the crisis, the development industry itself provided the appropriate alternative concept of DSC. This is seen as a communication approach that has evolved as a more participatory to development. An emphasis on this approach is focused on co-equal, not so media centred and government with people communication.

It is purported that the phrase DSC was first coined by a professional information officer Erksine Childers, in the United Nations Development Programme in Thailand around the 1960s. The "idea was taken up by multilateral development agencies and training programmes for professional DSC practitioners at the University of Iowa and other institutions around the world" (Ashcroft and Masilela 1994:278). Today, DSC, has emerged as the role of development support tha is characterised by cultural identity, empowerment and participatory communication that mediates between the extension, technical agents/advisors and their beneficiaries which makes it applicable and pragmatic to TLM.

According to Burger (1997), DSC coincides with a participatory approach where developers and beneficiaries are involved in dialogue and a two-way process of communication, creating an environment of mutual understanding and appreciation between benefactors and beneficiaries in a given context. This implies empowering communities to take advantage of their newly gained status and power, for the best development possibilities of the community at large, such as self-development and self-empowerment. The mass media may serve as a source of information, but internalising new information is more likely to take place when face-to-face communication is involved.

For this reason, many Third World countries are turning to a symbiosis of mass media and the so-called small media, including community media and communication in the small group. The advantage of this method does not offend traditional communities' values and customs, and it provides information in a familiar setting and via familiar media.

In short, DSC is also seen as a practical discipline based on applied research as opposed to the academic-based theoretical research in development communication. It therefore offers a practical hands-on tool to the bureaucracy of the development industry in resolving what it believes are the real problems of development. Thus, Jayaweera (1989:76-77) in Sonderling (1997:36) believes that "the application of communication strategies specifically designed for concrete development programmes generally in micro-situation, takes the form of campaigns and is generally terminated when the development project in question is completed". That is the reason, DSC is a local component and not an alternative substitute for national development strategy or for a whole society (Jayaweera 1989:90-91).

The approach therefore privileges the understanding that, the whole world of development is dialogical, where "communication is simply involves creating and sharing of information to achieve mutual understanding" (Ashcroft and Agunga 1994: 306, 311).

In March 2015 Leon Walcott wrote in a letter to the editor of *Stabroek* news and aptly stated that DSC should be revived. Walcott (2015), opined that, DSC refers to the use of communication to facilitate social and economic development. It also involves stakeholders and policy-makers, establishes conducive surroundings, assesses risks and opportunities and promotes information exchanges that offers positive solution to problems and some changes for sustainable development. This involves information dissemination, behavioural change, social mobilisation, media advocacy and communication for social change and community participation.

He continues to state that according to the (UNICEF), DSC also encompasses understanding people, their belief system and values, the social and cultural norms that shape their lives. It also embraces engaging communities and listening to them as they identify problems, propose solutions and act upon them (<http://www.stabroeknews.com/>). In his letter, he suggests that experts on DSC and all journalists and writers on DSC could be called so that they can reinvigorate hinterland development. This study is sought to align with the statement by Walcott.

The 1980s have seen a paradigm shift, described as a movement, from the concept of DC with its emphasis on top-down, big-media-centred government-to-people communication to DSC, focusing on co-equal, little-media centred, government-with-people communication. Moreover, the situation is complicated by the theoretical upheaval following the 'paradigm shift.' In his survey of international research, Halloran (1987: 146) describes critical scholars' "dissatisfaction and concern at the lack of progress, confusion, etc., in development communication paradigm: "This might well be due to the fact that communication took place according to the top-down DC paradigm, if it is taken into consideration that the DSC paradigm was initiated in later years only."

Now researchers in DSC can draw upon the lessons learned to use communication technologies, methodologies and techniques in the most effective manner to promote sustainable development efforts and to adapt to changing societal needs. "Village communities need to be empowered so that they can be in a position to put forth their ideas as 'equal' actors in the process of development planning, design and execution" (Malan, 1996: 18).

3.6 CONCEPTUALISING PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

The philosophy of participatory communication for social change can be drawn to the work of Paulo Freire from the 1960s to 1970s. A Brazilian educator who regarded communication as dialogue and participation for the purpose of making cultural identity, trust, commitment, ownership and empowerment specifically for the poor and developing communities. Huesca, (2002:499) explains that the dominant paradigm of modernisation underwent criticism in the 1970s from around the world by scholars who in turn, "stimulated a range of research projects that resulted in a robust literature exploring participatory communication approaches to development."

3.6.1 Participatory communication theory

This study uses participatory communication theory as the theoretical basis for its analysis of the contribution of DSC to advance farming methods in the TLM in an effort to eradicate poverty South Africa. The participatory communication model puts emphasis on the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and of democratisation and participation at all levels being, international, national, local and individual. It leads to a strategy, though not inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional receivers or beneficiaries. This examines the relevant aspects of participatory communication theory, including key definitions and processes.

Participatory communication indicates the theory and practices of communication used to include people and community members in the decision-making processes of development communication (Huesca, 2002; Servaes, 2008). This is regarded as a current primary normative theory in development communication. This theory aims at involving communities in their own development in an active manner. "Dialogue is at the heart of participatory communication, as it provides people from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to share ideas, inform others, persuade some - and first and foremost - listen" (Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte, 2006: xiv).

Within participatory communication, the process is integral to the communication in the two-way character that facilitates people and communities to come together in dialogue, listen and respond. Thus, the entire communication process is of value instead of the mere content of the messages. Owing to the nature of this communication approach, participatory communication's messaging feeds from indigenous knowledge and traditions, in other words, from within the reality of the community itself. A focus on the process of communication advances the sharing of meanings and the significance of relationship-building within communication (Servaes, 1996b:33). The strength of this approach is summarised by Melkote (1991:270) as helping to strengthen a community's cultural identity, facilitate self-expression of members of that community and serve as a means by which to diagnose and address the community's problems.

Participatory communication has been viewed as a process of creating and sharing knowledge, understanding and meanings among stakeholders, and where the project beneficiaries (targeted for change) are actively engaged in the design and implementation of project activities at various levels to achieve the desired goals (Piotrow, Kincaid, Rimon, and Rinehart., 1997; White 1994). This emphasis calls for a two-way interactive process in which all participants both encode and decode information. Dialogue is among the key tenets of the participatory approach and a revolutionary concept that de-emphasises the transfer of information and expertise and concerns itself with existing knowledge at the grassroots.

3.6.2 Participatory communication as a dialogical process

Rahim (1994) characterises development systems as heterogeneous, or consisting of people and resources that are linked to each other by material and symbolic transactions. For Rahim, these transactions are not mental abstractions but are communication behaviours in the development process. The transactions produce meanings and values of development, and communication plays a major part in this process.

3.7 HABERMASIAN COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

In development communication theory, Jacobson (2003a:89) uses Habermas' theory of communicative action to address the definitional problems regarding participatory communication as discussed above. A last theoretical premise of participatory communication can be found in the theory of communicative action of Jurgen Habermas (1989).

The theory further states that all social action assumes a basic set of norms. According to Byrne (2004:27), these norms create the environment in which all participants (or actors in Habermasian terms) communicate fully and openly. This implies that all actors accept the outcome of open and rational argumentation. Communication breakdowns occur when these norms are not respected.

Within Habermas' theory of communicative action, action towards reaching understanding is the ideal form of interaction in which "all participants harmonise their individual plans of action with one another and thus pursue their illocutionary aims without reservation" (Habermas, 1984: 294). Plainly put, Habermas theorises that there is a point at which those in a participatory situation may freely communicate their ideas.

As Jacobson and Storey, (2004) acknowledges, this theory emphasises bringing the issues into the public sphere, as a key informant and influencer of the participatory approach. These authors maintain that a valuable contribution of the participatory paradigm is the emphasis on planning and stakeholder participation. According to Agunga (1997); Ashcroft and Masilela (1994); Berkowitz and Muturi (1999); and UNDP (1993), this involves creating public participation in identification and addressing their most felt or pressing societal needs through community based strategies that are culturally appropriate.

More importantly, a culture-centred approach involves all stakeholders where cultural participants actively engage in ascertaining issues that are critical to the community (Dutta, 2011). This is to say, the TLM farming community may always be included in the planning of their development as well as to be progressive participant in the quest of making development successful. Projects that have a predetermined agenda and seek to use participatory platforms to diffuse this agenda in the community are fundamentally top-down projects in which participation is used as another communication tool for achieving predetermined change. Dutta (2011:11) note that “what is missing in most instances is the process is people's voices” to avoid a top-down approach but instead a bottom-up. They also note that practitioners, agents and advisors adopting the participatory framework should examine the ways in which the cultural context and the voices of cultural participants are reflected in such projects.

3.7.1 Elements of participatory communication approaches

There are four different ways of participatory communication which emanated as a reaction against modernisation theory, which can be observed in development projects (Tufte and Mefalopoulos, 2009). These are:

- 1) Participatory communication in implementation, whereby people are actively encouraged and mobilized to take part in the actualization of projects.
- 2) Participatory communication in evaluation, whereby people are invited upon completion of a project to critique the success or failure of it.
- 3) Participatory communication in benefit, whereby people take part in discussing the fruits of a project.
- 4) Participatory communication in decision-making, whereby people initiate, discuss, conceptualise and plan political, cultural, social and economic activities they will all do as individuals, community or nation.

The first two of these important elements contribute towards securing sustained development of their community. The other three approaches of participatory communication in implementation, evaluation and benefit have been criticised by Uphoff (1985) for being false participation, arguing that participatory communication in

decision-making is fundamental and indispensable in achieving development goals, while other approaches are used by the powerful elite to manipulate other people.

Participatory communication can be applied in two ways, either by dialogue based face-to-face interaction, mainly used at the community level or by participatory mass media based on technology uses (Servaes, 1999; Singhal, 2001). This research interprets the communicative actions of farmers in TLM. The next section discusses the concept of multiplicity in participatory communication practice within the South African context.

3.7.2 South African participatory communication discourses and practice

There are two major discourses of participatory communication which are widely accepted. The practice of participatory communication stresses on collaboration between the people and the experts, a co-equal knowledge-sharing between the people and experts, and local context cultural proximity in order to bring true empowerment to the people (Melkote, 2002).

Without an adequate two-way flow of information and dialogue between periphery and centre, the exchange of knowledge, market information, and political dialogue, development is unlikely to take place. Participatory communication links individuals and communities, governments and citizens, to share in decision-making. Participatory communication could be achieved through two major approaches. The first approach is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1970) which stresses interpersonal and group communication in a small-scale or community based participatory communication. Speech, traditional and folk media, and group activities are considered the most appropriate instruments for supporting the approach. This early thinking ignores the mass media by not suggesting any roles for them. "Freire also gives little attention to language or form of communication, devoting most of his discussion to the intentions of communication" (Servaes, 1996a: 18).

According to Tufte (2005), Freire's theory of dialogical communication is based on face-to-face communication and small group dialogue rather than mass media forms that indulge radio, print and television. One observes that Freire's ideas are unpopular among the elite in the developing world because this genius advocated for the rising of people's consciousness which would lead to change of power structures of society, but there is nonetheless the acceptance of Freire's notion of dialogic communication as a normative theory in participatory communication (Servaes 1996a; Servaes and Malikhao, 2005; Tufte, 2005). The second discourse about participatory communication is the UNESCO language about self-management, access and participation articulated in the UNESCO meeting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1977 (Servaes, 1996a).

Participatory communication is based on the uses of mass media technology (Servaes, 1999; Singhal, 2001). This notion implies the right of the audience to participate in the planning, production, dissemination and evaluation of the media content. Although not everyone wants to be involved in its practical implementation, but the most important aspect of this notion is that participation is made possible in the decision-making regarding the subjects treated in the messages and regarding the selection procedures and evaluation. More often, audience participation takes the form of letters, emails, phone-ins, outside broadcasting units, roving reporters, and nowadays: Skype, Tweeter, Facebook, and mobile phone text messages.

It can be observed that the feed-forward and/or feedback comes through either people interacting face-to-face with journalists or the people sharing their views on media using new communication technologies of mobile phones and Internet. Feed-forward is when people tell the journalists what is important for media coverage and suggest the best angle and way of covering these issues, while feedback is when people react to stories or programmes conceived independently by the journalists (Melkote, 2002). Feedforward and feedback are considered more important since they give the poor and the marginalised people a platform to raise their voices and share their popular knowledge (Melkote, 1991).

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided the overview of the development support communication and participatory development communication. DSC is not merely concerned with providing information on development activities. Besides creating opportunity for the people to know about the technical nature of new ideas and on how they work and with what effect, DSC plays the more important role of creating an atmosphere for understanding how these new ideas fit into the real social situation in which the farmers operate. Its ultimate goal is to catalyse local development activities, local development planning and implementation and local communication to smoothen the path to development. The next chapter discusses the choice of research methodology and design employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research approach and methodology that was followed in this study. Chapter 1 contained a general overview of the qualitative methods that were employed in this study, while this chapter provides a more detailed description of the research process. Qualitative research is contrasted with quantitative research in order to illustrate the way the former approach echoes the shift in philosophy found in communication theory (described in Chapter 2). Qualitative research is then described with a focus on the methods selected for this study: qualitative content analysis, semi-structured interview questions and focus group discussions.

The research methodology was designed to address the research objectives presented in Chapter 1. The research design included a literature review, which was given in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, in which the literature was reviewed on the development support communication philosophy as the systematic utilisation of appropriate communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and where necessary train farming communities, mainly at the grassroots level, the contextualisation and principles of participatory communication that are applicable to the advancement of better farming methods in TLM. These principles were identified and condensed into specific theoretical perspectives.

The theoretical perspectives were then grouped into constructs that were used for the qualitative semi-structured interviews schedule, participant observation and focus group discussions. The research approach and methodology are discussed in this chapter. The chapter closes with a discussion of the limitations of the methodology, including problems faced in conducting the research.

According to Sengupta (2007), theoretical and methodological predilections are interconnected, and both research questions and methodological choices emerge from theoretical inclinations. This chapter presents the philosophical underpinnings of this study and sets out the general rationale of using a qualitative approach and case study research design. The choice of using face-to-face and in-depth interviews and focus groups as data collection methods and employing thematic analysis as data analysis technique are discussed in detail later.

4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH INQUIRY

This study pursues a qualitative inquiry, due to the depth of information required for exploration purposes. The research accomplishes this by conducting in-depth personal interviews, where the actual meaning of the information is obtained (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:18). The study embraces also an interpretive worldview, as opposed to a realist worldview, as it explores the way respondents make sense of their social worlds, as well as the way in which they express these understandings (Davmon & Holloway, 2002:5). The interpretive worldview accomplishes by identifying development support communication for famers. This study also demonstrates communicative actions of farmers in the TLM.

4.2.1 Philosophical underpinnings and research assumptions

The philosophical underpinnings for this research study stemmed from interpretive phenomenology (constructivism). The interpretive approach holds that the meaning of social reality in social life is socially constructed through social interactions. As Gunter (2000) asserts, people subjectively understand their lived experience of the social reality around them. This subjective possession of reality is vital in explaining human social life. Thus, reality in the social world is subjective and people construct their own reality from the way they perceive the world around them.

4.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Welman & Kruger (2002:2) state that “research is the process in which scientific methods are used to expand knowledge in a particular field of study.” This study draws upon a participatory paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). A paradigm is viewed as a framework or a worldview that endorses certain conceptions of the nature of reality. At a basic level, paradigms provide an overall framework for how we view reality and knowledge.

As Guba & Lincoln (1998) point out, paradigms guide researcher’s methodological choices as well as ontological and epistemological proclivities. This study is guided by several epistemological assumptions shared interpretive, social constructivist and participatory paradigms.

Epistemologically, this present research recognises and privileges TLM farming community in the North West province of South Africa as possessing “knowledge,” thus legitimising the lived experiences of traditional communities (Harding, 1987). Further the study enabled the participants to be active in the production and meaning making of knowledge that concerns their lives (Chambers, 1997).

The epistemological premise in interpretive phenomenology is that knowledge arises not out of our discovery but from interactions between knower and known, while the interpretive ontological assumption is that social reality in the social world is built on the shared subjective meanings and coordinated actions of rational actors, not by external structures, causes and hidden mechanisms (Gunter, 2000). Thus, the researcher employed interpretivist epistemology (Verstehen, 2009) to understand the subjective meanings and grasp the interpretation of the research participants on the contribution of DSC in empowering them to fight and eradicate poverty in their lives. This study is guided by the interpretive ontological assumption that social reality is subjective.

Thus, the perceptions of the research participants on the role of DSC in poverty eradication in TLM differed from one another since each participant had their own interpretation of the social reality of the contribution of DSC as tool for poverty eradication within the South African context. These differences of interpretations and meanings from the participants produced multiple perspectives in understanding the role DSC plays in eradicating poverty.

Methodologically, this is an interpretive study that draws upon several ethnographic tools of inquiry such as interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation of participants within the TLM. In an interpretive study, emphasis is placed on the socio-cultural context in which human behaviour occurs while recognising individuals as active agents in the co-construction of their social realities. Furthermore, human interaction within the context of social change is best understood as complex, multi-faceted, and requiring reflexivity on the part of the researcher (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1995). This becomes critical especially when the study is rich in description rather than prediction of human actions or behaviours.

This research used theoretical constructs guiding participatory communication such as critical thinking and problematisation as a means for empowerment (Freire, 1970, 1973), the role of the communicator as a facilitator in orchestrating social change (White, 1999) and the role of para-professional aides and change agents in fostering the diffusion of new information and ideas for social change (Rogers, 2003). Two-months of fieldwork, conducted in six villages in the Jamkhed region, used multiple ethnographic methods.

4.4 DEFINING THE TIME DIMENSION OF THE STUDY

Babbie and Mouton (2002:93) explain that exploratory research typically follows a cross sectional approach, where information is gathered on one occasion and not over an extended period. Typically, longitudinal studies attempt to make comparisons from the information collected over a lengthy period. This study is 'cross-sectional' because it did not follow the longitudinal approach. Data was collected from September 2016 to December 2016.

4.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

Case study research design has been chosen in this study. This design reveals an in-depth understanding of the research problem (Burns, 2000). According to Singhal and Rogers (1999:194), a case study is a “type of research in which individuals, groups, or systems are interviewed or observed, or various types of archival records are examined to search for underlying patterns and insights into a phenomenon.”

As Hussey & Hussey, (1997); Zikmund, (1991) expound, this study used a case study research design as a detailed plan specifying the methods and procedures employed in collecting and analysing data in order to answer the research questions. The study design enabled the researcher to come out with new interpretations, new perspectives, new meanings and fresh insights on the role of the DSC as a tool to advance farming methods for development in the TLM as perceived by the research participants.

4.5.1 Population and the study area

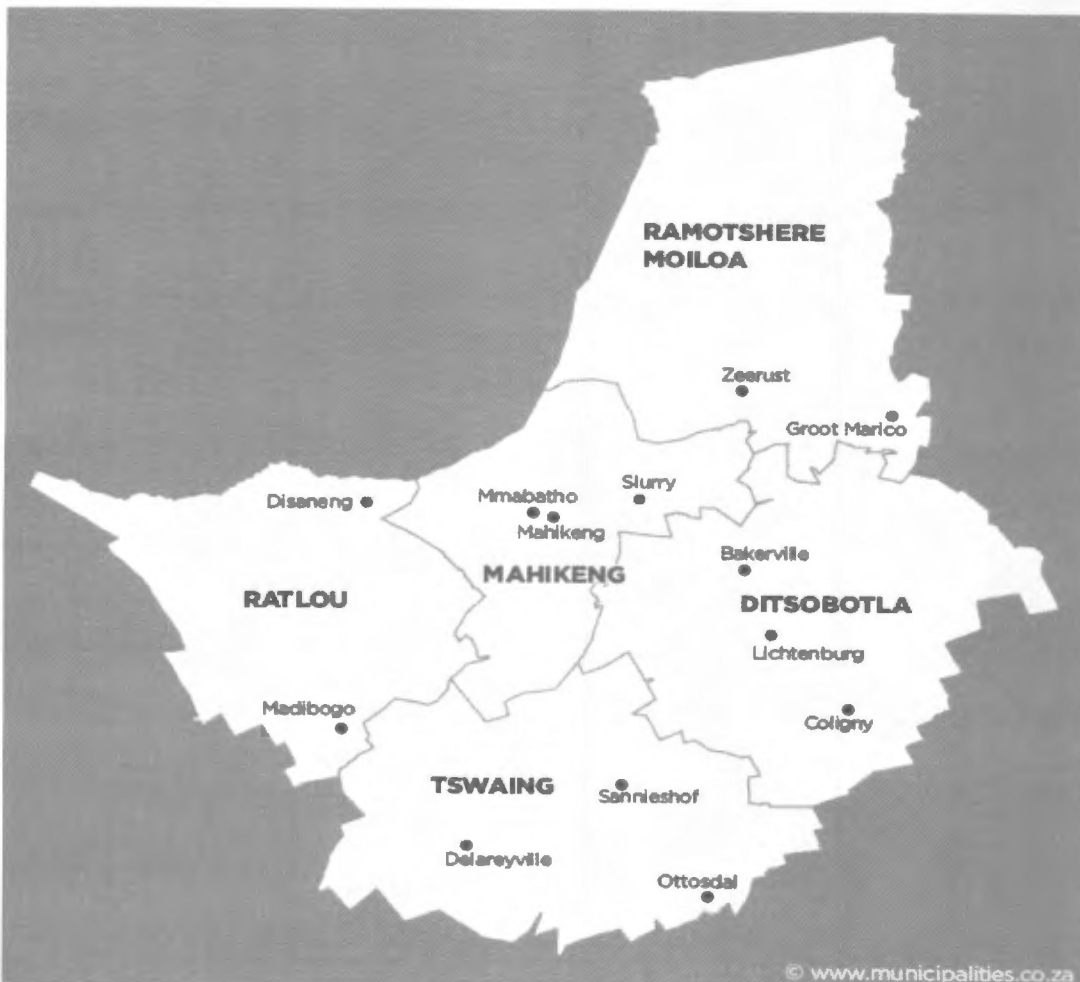
The respondents were rural farmers in the North West province of South Africa. The North West Province has been chosen because of its background and experience in rural farming as well as in non-commercial farming. According to Statistics South Africa, the province lies in the north of country RSA next to the Botswana border, outlying the Kalahari Desert in the west. It is also close to the Gauteng province to the east and the Free State to the south. The North West province is said to cover an area of 104 882km² and has an approximate population of about 3 509 953. The capital city is Mahikeng (previously known as Mafikeng). There are two major cities in the province Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp and other main towns are Brits, Rustenburg, and Lichtenburg. Most economic activities are concentrated in the southern region between Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp, as well as Rustenburg and the eastern region.

North West is known for cattle farming, although the areas around Rustenburg and Brits are fertile, mixed-crop farming land. Crops such as maize and sunflowers are the most common and the province is also the major producer of white maize in the country. It is divided into four district municipalities, which are further subdivided into 18 local municipalities. As the the study setting is the TLM which is is one of the five local municipalities in this district situated in the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality in the province (www.localgovernment.co.za/locals/view/206/Tswaing-Local-Municipality).

There are the local chiefs, project managers of various project, all small-scale farmers as well as individuals ranging from project workers to community members. Details of the participants selection process is presented below. According to Census 2011 Tswaing Municipality has a total population of 124 218 people, of which 92% are black African, 5, 6% are white people, with other population groups making up the remaining 2, 4%.

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Figure 2: Location map of the central district municipality in the North West



<http://www.localgovernment.co.za/sources>

4.5.2 Sampling

The sample of this study was chosen on the subject of purposive sampling which is a non-probability sample consisting of respondents or subjects who are available (Wimmer and Dominick 1994: 472). According to Johnson and Chistensen (2012:231), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which the researcher solicits persons with specific characteristics to participate in a research study.

In this method, the researcher specifies the characteristics of a population of interest and locates individuals who have those characteristics. It is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, understand and gain insight on a particular subject and therefore selects a sample from which most can be learned (Agang, 2009 and Merriam, 2009:77). For the purpose of this study the sample was selected on the basis that non-probability samples are suitable for small scale studies that do not intend to generalise the findings beyond the sample, because they are not representative. However, the advantage of this method is that it is not complicated and it is inexpensive as long as the researcher is aware of its limitation (Agang, 2009).

4.5.3 Sample size

The sample size of this study was dictated by the objectives of the research. However, consideration was given to time constraints and the resources needed to carry out both the interviews and focus group discussions. Chaka (2003), posits that phenomenologists normally select "five to 10 people in their studies because they depend on in-depth interviews". Agang (2009) also opined that any sample that has less than 20 to 30 people in it is too small, but they also point out that a sample should be "as large as the researcher can obtain with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy" in order to find the answers they are looking for.

As interviews generate a lot of data, this study targeted (N=100) respondents. This was made up of (N=40) semi-structured interviews with small scale famers, (N=10) officials from Tswaing including project leaders/managers from the different development projects in the area. (N=5) focus group discussions of various projects or community members including the chiefs/headman.

4.5.4 Sampling procedure and sample size

Purposive sampling procedures were used to select a total of (N=100) participants as a break down indicated for the purpose of this research. Wimmer and Dominick (2006) argue that previous studies have indicated that a small number of purposively selected participants can generate data of sufficient quality to explore an area of interest.

4.5.5 Data Collection Techniques

This study employed various data collection techniques such as unstructured interview, participant observation and focus group discussions as data collection methods. The reason for using the methods was that no single method is perfect or sufficient to give all the data independently (Kothari, 1993) for this study.

The data collection method used in this study was are a “commonly employed methods of data collection for qualitative research”, (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:249; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:4). According to Cooper and Schindler (2003:325) it is a “two-way conversation, initiated by an interviewer, to obtain information from participants. These methods encourage participants to share as much information as possible in an unconstrained environment, and resembles a form of conversation that systematically explores topics of interest” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:4). The researcher provides “guidelines by using a set of questions, to promote discussion and elaboration by the participant” (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:362).

The questions asked may be structured (consisting of predetermined choices, called close-ended questions) or unstructured (where responses are not limited to choices, called open-ended questions) (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:178). This study used open-ended questions to achieve detailed information and to encourage participants through probing.

Data collected in this study were recorded by tape recorder for accuracy purposes. This was done to enable the interviewer to be in a position to participate appropriately during the entire interview processes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). However, as various authors acknowledge, there are a few disadvantages to using the tape recorder. These are “mainly attributed to the uncomfortable and compromised behaviour, which the respondent might adopt when informed of the recording” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:187). These disadvantages were overcome in this study by creating rapport with the respondents (Patton, 2001).

4.5.6 Interviewing

Interviewing as a research method covers a wide variety of interactions in the research setting. This includes informal conversations or unstructured interviews, in which there is a minimum control over responses; semi-structured interview questions, in which there is a general script with the possibility of open-ended discussion; and highly structured, quantitative interviews, in which the interview is succinct and within a pre-determined set of questions (Du Plooy, 2002:176). The aim of interviews was to gain insight into a matter that could not be ascertained from written texts and to understand a situation from the perspective of those involved.

4.5.7 Semi-structured/semi-standardised open-ended interviews

“Semi-structured/semi-standardised open-ended interviews rely on an interview guide instead of an interview schedule, such as would be used in structured interviews. An interview schedule is an explicit set of instructions for the oral administering of questionnaires, while an interview guide facilitates certain topics of discussion without the full control that the structured interview requires” (Du Plooy, 2002:177). “Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher an element of control and focus in an interview situation that is likened to a structured conversation” (Mason, 1996:35), while it allows the interviewer and respondent to follow new or unanticipated leads. “The ability to probe or allow elaboration on a topic or theme in the interview process is the strength of the semi-structured interview” (Bernard, 2006:232). The written interview guides used in semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewer to replicate the interviews.

4.5.8 Participant observation

As Struwig and Stead (2001:101) put it, “participant observation method is used to supplement information gathered during interviews. Participants were therefore observed in their natural setting. This assisted the researcher to give life to what was the focus of the research” (Swanepoel, 1997:104). This method has an added advantage of using various instruments for collecting information. The researcher used

notes, cameras, tape recorders, videos and observation without any technological assistance. In this study, digital recorders and field notes were taken and kept for analysis purposes.

4.5.9 Focus Group discussions

Gunter, (2000); Wimmer and Dominick, (2006), define focus group or group interview as a research strategy aiming at understanding the audience attitudes towards a phenomenon or question under study whereby a group of six to twelve people are interviewed simultaneously by a moderator or researcher in a relatively unstructured discussion about the focal topic.

As the name indicates, focus group discussions provide a focused discussion. This qualitative method provided an enhanced understanding of an issue as it revealed a wide range of opinions, some of which the researcher did not expect (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Focus groups are a means of interviewing people in a group for the purpose of gaining insight into the way in which the group interacts (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:182). A trained moderator facilitated these group discussions according to an interview guide similar to that used in semi-structured interviews (Greenbaum, 1998:2-3). The focus group was of a manageable size in order to encourage participation.

4.5.10 Advantages of focus group discussions

The use of focus groups has a number of advantages: first, focus groups in this research were socially oriented since discussions with participants took place in natural settings and more relaxed environment. Second, focus groups increased the sample size by enabling more people to be interviewed together (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Likewise, focus groups provided quick results and allowed exploring unanticipated issues as they arose in the discussions. Furthermore, focus groups made it possible for the researcher to gather a large amount of information from participants in a relatively short period of time.

Moreover, focus groups generate important insights into issues that may not be well understood to the researcher, like the relationship between participatory communication, extreme poverty, corruption, education, good governance and leadership (See Chapter 5). The technique enabled the researcher to explore related but unanticipated issues as they arose in the course of the group discussions. In addition, focus groups placed participants on a more even footing with each other and the investigators. Finally, the focus groups enabled the researcher to gather information from people with different demographic characteristics in terms of gender, age, level of education marital status and type of agricultural activity (See figures 3-6). Hence, the results of the discussions were highly valuable.

On the other hand, focus groups had some disadvantages. First, during discussions time was lost when irrelevant issues were discussed. Reminding the participants to keep the discussion on the topic under study solved this. Second, some dominant personalities tended to overpower and steer the groups' responses. To resolve this problem, the researcher ensured that every participant in the discussions was given equal chance to give out their views. The researcher encouraged the participants to speak out by asking them the same question in different ways.

4.5.11 Data Analysis

Three analytical methods were used for the analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation. Some responses were measurable whilst others were interpreted. This study relied heavily on qualitative analysis of variables in line with the procedure by Merriam; specifically, the part to do with narrative description of the findings (Merriam, 1988).

An *inductive* analysis and creative synthesis provided a framework for analysis in this study. According to Patton (2002:41), the researcher becomes immersed in the details and specifics of the data, to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships. The process begins with the researcher, exploring and then confirming themes, being guided by analytical principles rather than rules, ending up with a creative synthesis (Patton, 2002:42). All data analysis initiates with the

categorisation by means of a thematic content analysis, however, in order to engage in a critical analysis an extensive data reduction processes were done if necessary. The following discussion looks at the data analysis and coding.

4.5.12 Data Analysis and Coding

Data was selected to generate key themes. Then thematic analysis was employed in this study to identify themes which were in the raw data. Thematic analysis is regarded as a process for encoding qualitative information, which requires an explicit code or a list of themes, indicators and qualifications that are causally related (Boyatzis, 1998).

The author continues to define a theme as a pattern found in the information, which describes and organises the possible observations or interprets aspects of the phenomenon. Thematic analysis in this study involved four steps adopted by Boyatzis (1998):

1. identifying or sensing themes for analysis;
2. using the themes reliably and consistently (to see and to see as);
3. developing codes and classifying the patterns with similar themes and give them labels, definitions or descriptions; and
4. Interpreting the patterns and themes in the context of development support communication theory in relation to advancing better farming methods. This was done in order to come out with information contributing to the development of knowledge within the TLM. Themes and codes for analysis were constructed inductively from the raw data collected.

4.5.13 Thematic content analysis

There were two reasons for using thematic analysis in this study: Firstly, it enabled the researcher to access a wide variety of phenomenological information from research participants (Boyatzis, 1998). Thus, the researcher was able to analyse the data from an interpretive phenomenological point of view by interpreting the meaning of data from the lived experience of the participants. Secondly, thematic analysis made it

easier for the researcher to present the findings and discussions of what is known about the phenomenon.

4.5.14 Data coding

Coding in this research was about relating data to the researcher's ideas about these data (Coffey and Atkison, 1996). In this respect, the researcher's projection was the main obstacle in using thematic analysis coding. Miles and Huberman regard coding as analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 56).

Boyatzis (1998) described projection as attributing to another person something that is your own characteristic, emotion, value, attitude, or perception. The researcher took four measures to prevent projection in this research: first, the researcher developed an explicit code with a list of themes generated inductively from the data. Second, this was done by establishing consistency and reliability in making judgment and recognising codable themes and encode them consistently. Third, the researcher ensured that the development of the themes and codes was based on the raw data collected.

A process of categorisation was performed by means of a thematic content analysis, where a unit of data of any length, otherwise known as a 'chunk', is identified as belonging to, representing, or being an example of some general phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:272). In this study, the three main themes were derived from the literature review represented in Chapter 2, and 3. Additional themes or categories were induced from the data collected (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:215). During this phase, themes and sub-themes were identified by re-reading the third person data, as numerous as required. In this study's case, this re-reading process occurred several times, before the data was in a format that could be categorised. These themes were then reviewed and verified, by the supervisor of this study, to confirm credibility and dependability. The data was conceptualised during this stage, by consolidating the relevant sections of the interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation into one document, below the relevant theme. Data that did not provide relevance to any theme was excluded. Additionally, data was not considered mutually

exclusive, and could have been represented in two or more themes, depending on its relevance (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:272).

4.5.15 The data analysis process of the study

An inductive analysis and creative synthesis provided the framework for analysis in this study. According to Patton (2002:41), the researcher becomes immersed in the details and specifics of the data, to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships. The process begins with the researcher, exploring and then confirming themes, being guided by analytical principles rather than rules, ending up with a creative synthesis (Patton, 2002: 42).

4.5.16. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher lacked control over the respondents' environment at the time of the study. This study can only be generalised to the population of farmers and agents in the study area of TLM; these research findings do not apply in other geographical regions because of the possibility of distinct characteristics of farmers and change agents and their projects and organisations. Also, this study best describes the period when data collection was completed and does not extend beyond that frame. When the situation changed at different times, such as due to the provision of training or improvement of the extension facilities, then such change could also change the respondents' behaviours.

4.5.17. CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided the overview of the research methodology followed in this study. It has outlined how the research design and the different methods of data collection applied in this study. The process and different techniques of a qualitative research approach, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, participant observation was planned and implemented.

The next chapter provides detailed analysis to address the research objectives and to ascertain whether development support communication could ensure better farming methods within the TLM.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSES, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis of data, its interpretation followed by a discussion of the research findings. The findings relate to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 of the study. Data were analysed and evaluated by DSC elements as strategies for better farming methods in the TLM. The research documented DSC approaches to communication for social change, particularly how rural farmers integrate issues of concern and participation within their various initiatives.

Given the need for an interpretive framework to understand how DSC could be used to assist farmers in their farming methods to increase productivity, the following research questions posed in Chapter 1 generated evidence for the role of DSC in South Africa within a development communication context:

The objectives of the study were set to:

- examine the role of communication in development within the context of TLM.
- identify communication barriers in the farming sector.
- explore Development Communication as a panacea to poor communication amongst farmers in the TLM.
- investigate how farmers in the TLM communicate
- explicate farmer's approaches to communication for social change and its distinguishing communicative practices in the TLM.
- make appropriate recommendations based on the findings of this study for the improvement of DSC communication in enhancing farming and development.
- examine the communication strategies, channels/tools and their effectiveness in the TLM.

Data were obtained from semi-structure interviews, focus group discussions and participant observation. Interviews were conducted with farmers, and agricultural advisors employed by the government. Focus groups discussions were done with farmers in the following areas Khunwana, Atamelang, Manamolela, Delareyville, Gannalaagte and Vrischgewaagd. The participants included among others: selected advisors, agents, partners, experts in the department of agriculture and other farmer support services. These were also done with project officers, development planners, and training managers, independent experts who work with rural communities in the North West Province as well as farmers and selected community members.

The main findings of the study are presented in the following components: the first part presents the description of the demographic characteristics and agricultural activity type of the sampled respondents. The second part looks at the role of development support communication in the farming practices. The third part gives an overview of the findings and provides recommendations.

5.2 Demographic information

Gender, age and marital status of respondents

A total of one hundred (100) respondents took part in the study. A total of forty (40) semi-structured interviews with small scale farmers, ten (10) semi-structured interviews with agricultural agents, (advisors, extension officers and technicians) and five (5) focus group discussions with community members such as opinion leaders, chiefs/headmen were conducted.

Out of the total respondents there were more males at 63% and 37% females.

Figure 3; Gender of respondents

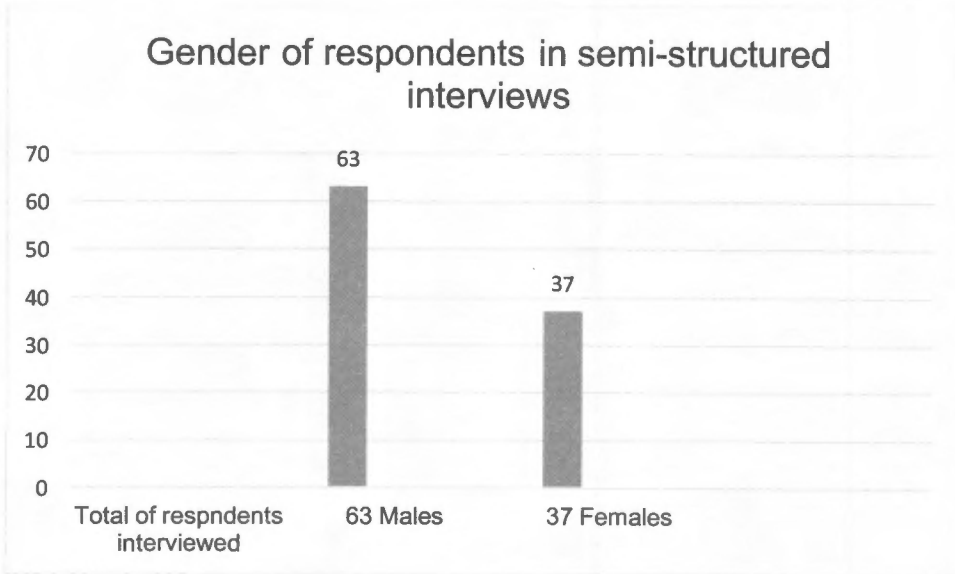
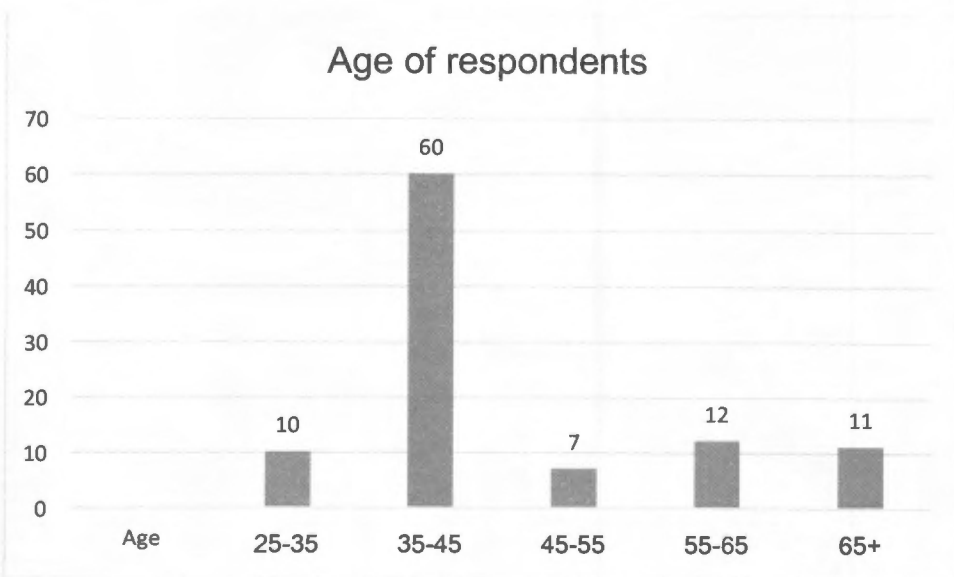


Figure 4: Age of respondents



Sixty percent of respondents were between 35-45 years old, the age group that is considered to be adult and can make viable decisions about projects implemented in their communities. These are people who could be engaged to take responsibility of their own projects. A small percentage of 12 percent are within the 55-65 range while only 11 percent are older than 65 years. This shows the span of experience of the farmers that were respondents in this study.

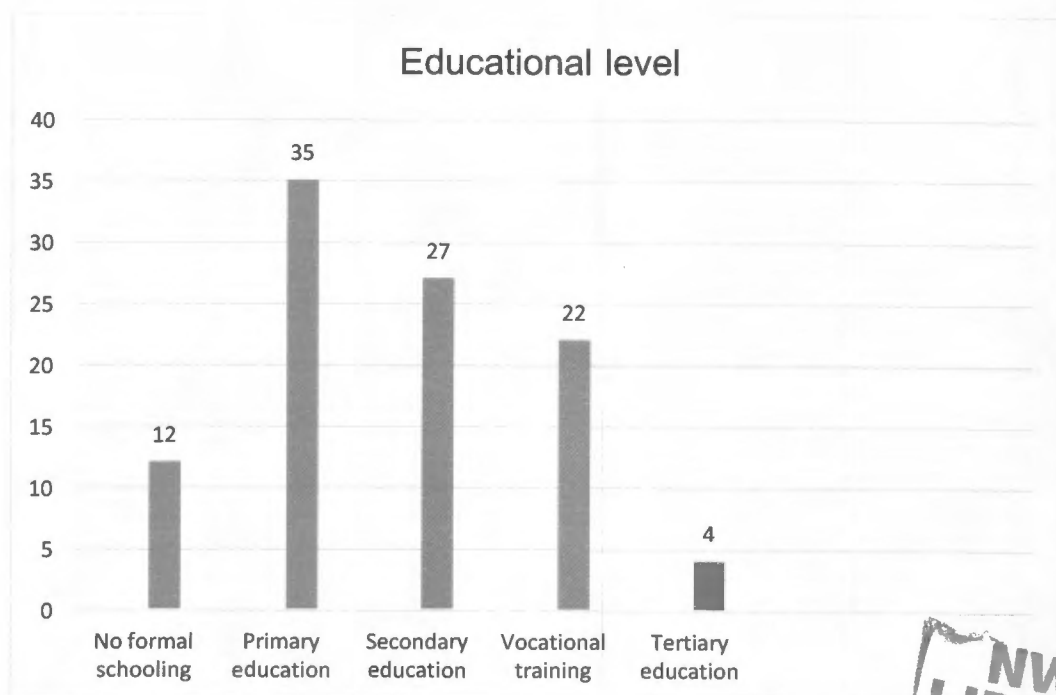
The data further shows that there is a promising future for farmers in the TLM as more respondents are still below 50 years. This could also highly significantly ensure that there are improved farming methods in the TLM. According to focus group discussions with participant farmers, since land has not been redistributed, most of the youthful farmers have no land of their own. They remain hopeful to continue farming on communal land and some rented land. Older farmers are eager to get more land so that they can possess some productive land and pass on their agricultural knowledge to their children.

Figure 5: Marital status



The figure above reveals very interesting details especially on the issue of marriage and living together. The respondents indicated that they regard themselves as married even though they are not formally married according to home affairs.

Figure 6: Educational qualifications



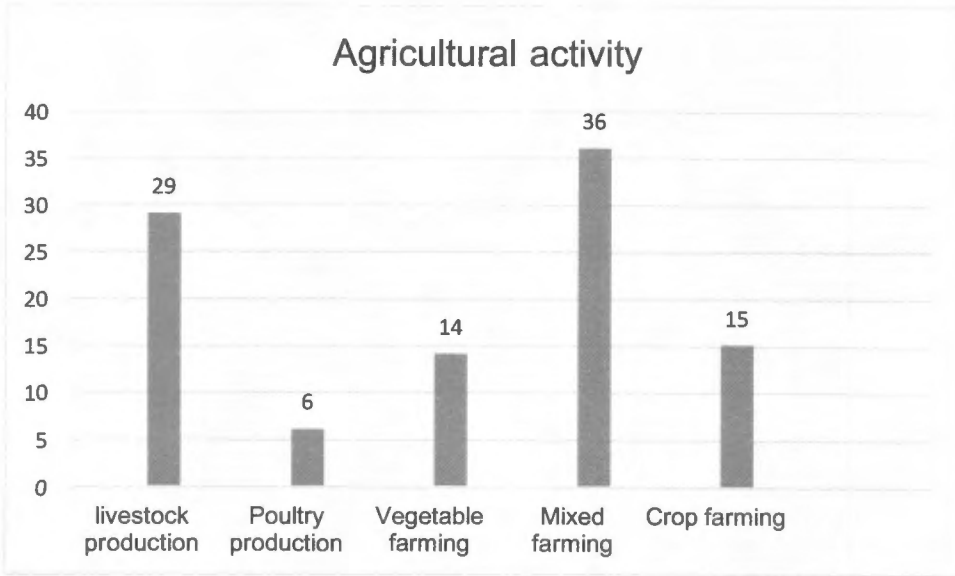
According to the data gathered the majority of the respondents have a primary education and it was established that most of these respondents took up farming at a very young age thus they could not continue with schooling. 27% have a secondary education and 22% have been to a technical college or TVET where most of them indicated that they were told by their parents at an early age that they must go and “do something with their hands” thus they ended going to study plants and animals in institutions in the North West province with the intention of farming further to appease their parents. Only 4 percent have been to a university.

The data shows that some farmers have better educational background and are more likely to use information and communication and advice on improved farming methods

provided to them. Many studies revealed that there is strong and significant relation between household head level of education and use of improved communication varieties in particular and farm technologies in general (Dessaiegn, 2008). In addition, Dessaiegn (2008) indicated that literate people in the household mean better access to information and resources and better social networking that ultimately leads to better adoption of improved technologies at household level.

In view of this it is pivotal to ensure that the development support communication aimed at the best suits the respondents' educational level to adapt technologies and dissemination of information to livestock and crop producers to improve production efficiency. It is also critical to point out that choosing communication channels that best suit the farmers within TLM is a mammoth task that ought to take into consideration the educational level of all participants. Literacy levels influence one's ability to comprehend communication messages and strategies targeted at them. It is also important to note that as most of the projects in the area have not succeeded, illiteracy might have been a major drawback in the sustainability of the projects.

Figure 7: Agricultural activity type



Most of the respondents practice mixed farming at 36 percent, 29 percent are doing livestock production and 15% are on crop farmers. Only 5 percent do poultry production.

In the context of this study a development project is defined as an intervention that addresses a particular problem for the community as in the TLM. Development support communication's role and influence on sustaining these projects is what the study set out to identify and profile. The projects that have been implemented in the selected communities of the TLM were investigated and it was realised that most projects were not successful and no formal communication approaches were implemented in the past few years to ensure that there are effective support systems.

The survey indicated that government and other partners and NGOs as well as development partners were involved in the initiation, implementation and evaluation of these projects. It was also realised that government was the sole provider of support and other commodities such as seeds, cattle such as the Nguni breed, diesel and machinery to needy farmers in the area.

This section therefore looks at the role of communication in development within the TLM. It examined how communication was used to involve the farming communities in the TLM to participate in projects that are meant to bring development into their area and communities alike.

The main aim of this study was to explore the DSC elements as strategies for improved farming methods in the TLM. This documented a DSC approach to communication for social change, particularly how rural farmers integrate issues of concern and participation within their various initiatives. In addition, the study sought to explore how DSC could promote a people-centred local approach which stands in sharp contrast to the top-down, external, and expert driven model of development or social change within the South African context with specific reference to TLM.

This study therefore illustrated how alternative visions of development and communication for social change are enacted and embodied, how communication plays a role in sustaining development projects. This took into consideration the channels used as well as the stages in which the communities were involved from the inception to the end of the projects.

5.3 The role of communication in development.

The study explored the role of communication before, during and after the implementation of agriculture projects identified in the study. As indicated in the literature chapters, participatory communication approaches bring together different people, stakeholders and groups into dialogue with each other, and enable them to have a successful or influential voice in the decision and activities concerning their well-being.

From the information gathered through interviews with respondents and focus group discussion, majority agreed that there was communication whilst a few respondents said there was absence of communication between implementers and communities before and during the implementation of the projects under study.

A few of the respondents said there was absence of communication from mostly government and other partners during the initiation of development, project in the area. Some indicated that they get hearsay most of the time instead of getting first-hand information. A discussion on this submission ensured that the implementers would meet with the community leaders to inform them about the projects and sometimes such projects never materialise.

During the interview with community leaders it was established that they did not have any information pertaining to the allegations. Most participants indicated that they were hardly informed about the projects especially about the Nguni cattle, seeds, diseases and boreholes. This shows that most of the information is top-down communication approach and most of the times community members are merely told of government intentions. They are therefore not part of the initiation or planning.

Interviews with opinion leaders also revealed that implementers, especially those from the government, sent delegations to inform communities about the intention to develop such communities and this was done mostly through political rallies and campaigns. This implies that the implementers did not adopt any communication strategy to reach out to the majority of the community members, hence their lack of knowledge about the projects. Sometimes, communities get information late that could have been provided earlier to them such as information about livestock diseases and vaccinations.

During the interviews and focus group discussions information gathered was that some of the projects, especially boreholes, were initiated by the community leaders and farming communities themselves. This came about after most animals died because of drought and low water sources in 2015/16. This form of initiative where communities initiate the drilling boreholes for communal use, planting food for animals and also for drinking was urgent. They also then appealed to government and development partners through their leaders to come to their aid to support them with the needed resources.

- **Farmers' knowledge levels**

This study found out that the farmers' knowledge needs in the TLM still have to be improved. Most information currently comes from fellow farmers in the area, who, as the interviews and focus group discussions uncovered, are not themselves properly informed. It was established that in some cases information they receive is not relevant to them. The fact is that they acknowledged that they do get some information that most of the farmers, even the prominent ones, require to improve their farming through trial and error. Respondents indicated that they are not informed on the quantities of fertilizers to be used per acre of what they have planted.

Some respondents mentioned that they had been concentrating on traditional farming methods like working of land till it is exhausted and is not productive any longer. However, as established in the interviews, farming requires some training and continuous workshopping on those who venture into it. The following verbatim statement from one of the respondents is a telling indictment on the flawed communication processes with regards dissemination of information:

“As farmers we want to be trained on the type of fertilizers to use for our plants. We sometimes hear that there are types like organic fertilizers in the market and we don't know as we are used to manure and using compost for our vegetables. Some big farmers use fertilizers because they have money so for us it is expensive and we don't know if the fertilizer will be good for our vegetables.”

- **Communication barriers in the farming sector**

In the discussions with focus group participants, the study found out that some stakeholders were major culprits in the breakdown of information. Agricultural extension officers, advisors and technicians are the main sources of agricultural information but the Department of Agriculture does not have enough agricultural officers to adequately facilitate advice on advancing better farming methods in the TLM.

5.4 Access to Agricultural information

Access to information by the farmers interviewed revealed two main issues: was the source of the information and secondly the channels through which this information reached the farmers. In terms of information sources, fellow farmers were identified as major sources of disseminating relevant messages on farming trends and practices. Those farmers whose crop had fared well were asked by other farmers about the fertilizers and the seeds they had used and then their methodology was copied and replicated in subsequent seasons. This source emerged as easily accessible since the fellow farmers lived with and interacted with them on a regular basis.

In the TLM where the majority of the farmers are small scale farmers many of the farmers pride themselves for acquiring agricultural material such as prominent publications in the farming industry such as *Farmers Weekly Magazine*. They even share these print materials amongst themselves for news and new information published.

This revealed that literate farmers also rely on print media for farming their information needs. This local publication is close to farming readers' hearts in that it is not comparable to other information supplied by other stakeholders in the Agricultural industry.

Some few prominent farmers in the discussions were mentioned by some of the participants as the source of their agricultural information as they are seen as successful in their farming approach and experience. This is captured in the following vignette:

I give credit to farmer's day that takes place in Delarey as the source of information; we get pamphlets, flyers and sometimes manuals on how to apply chemicals to manage weeds and diseases that affect our animals.

Few farmers also mentioned that they used trial and error methods and with time, they had built a knowledge base that they applied in all their subsequent planting seasons. The channels that were used by the farmers to access information included observational learning, where farmers observed what other farmers did and tried to replicate it in their farms.

The findings have been organised thematically into various key points according to what came out of the interviews and focus group discussions namely; knowledge levels of farmers, access to information and challenges thereof, appropriate communication channels as well as the role of participatory communication in poverty reduction. More questions are elaborated below.

- **How farmers in the TLM communicate**

The theme under how farmers communicate related to interpersonal communication.

- **Interpersonal Communication**

Communication is a powerful tool and can be used to effectively communicate scientific knowledge and information to the farming communities particularly small scale/rural in the TLM.

During the focus group discussions with the farmers as well as the semi-structured interviews, interpersonal communication was one method that was commonly used in communicating agricultural information to the farmers in the TLM.

As identified in the literature, this is a finding that confirms one of the elements of the diffusion of innovations theory, which suggests the use of interpersonal communication as an effective channel mode. This mode involves the use of face-to-face communication between two or more individuals. As Rogers (1993) puts it, interpersonal communication is one of the most effective methods of communication because it helps in persuading individuals to adopt a new idea.

The respondents alluded to the fact that they mainly get agriculture messages targeted at them as farmers from the agricultural extension workers, advisors, during demonstrations, village meetings and during field and workshop and training days. It is critical to note that new knowledge generated from research amongst stakeholders needs to be communicated to farmers in the most appropriate form for them to learn, acquire new skills and adopt new innovations that ultimately improve their methods of farming.

During the analysis, the following themes emerged:

- Dialogue/discussion
- Dissemination/
- Talking about good practice
- Communicating more effectively
- Open communication
- Engaging actively with stakeholders
- Participation and shared responsibility

The researcher therefore concludes that based on this pattern that dialogue involves aspects of argumentation and that it would be acceptable in a dialogic situation to influence another party to accept the agent's point of view. This aspect was discussed in Chapter 2 in the explanation of Freireian dialogue, and Habermasian communicative action. In terms of communicative actions of farmers, the idea of open communication involves an active exchange of ideas and on condition that these ideas are discussed in a manner in which participants are permitted differing opinions and the discussion is formed around those opinions, the dialogue is in fact participatory.

In this case, it is clear that communication amongst the farmers and agricultural agents/advisors enables farmers to get information that they can use in their farming practices. This suggests that talking is plainly a way in which information may be disseminated. The use of the phrase "communicating to" or "talking to" instead of 'communicating *with*', indicates dissemination.

Communication is the sharing of ideas and information and this forms a large part of the agricultural extension agent's job. By passing on ideas, advice and information, such agents hope to influence the decisions of farmers. They also encourage farmers to communicate with one another; sharing of farming strategies, problems and ideas is an important stage in DSC in terms of planning and farming activities in TLM villages. The agent must also be able to communicate with superior officers and researchers or other stakeholders about the situation faced by farmers in the area. The following segment gives an analysis of the different communication modes on better agriculture methods as used in the TLM.

- **Communication through the extension worker**

As outlined above on the barriers of communication in the farming sector, agricultural extension officers, advisors and technicians are the main sources of agricultural information. Following an interview with five extension officers they confirmed that they deliver information to farmers as well as offering them support.

They explained that after developing a work plan they sensitise their frontline staff, agriculture extension development coordinators and agriculture extension development officers who then sensitise the lead farmers. Farmers are subsequently sensitised during meetings where different modes of communication materials such as posters, leaflets and brochures are used.

Following another interview with one respondent from agricultural support division, he explained that his overall responsibility is to coordinate agriculture activities with the extension officers by taking agriculture activities from the head office to the TLM through the help of support officers. He also indicated that he worked closely with some of the non-governmental organisations such as AGRISA, Land Bank, GRAIN SA and Agricultural Research Commission, ARC.

In the interviews conducted with agricultural advisors, these respondents displayed a passion for finding ways of communicating agricultural information and advice for better farming methods. The overall tone of the interviews was suffused with optimism,

as farmers in the TLM were hopeful that their engagements saw a leap in agricultural productivity in the future.

Agricultural productivity can arguably be improved by relevant, reliable and useful information and knowledge. Hence, the creation of agricultural information (by extension services, research, education programmes and others) is now often managed by agricultural organisations that create information systems to disseminate such information to farmers so that farmers make better decisions in order to take advantage of market opportunities and manage continuous changes in their production systems.

- **Farmers' approaches to communication for social change and its distinguishing communicative practices**

The analysis and interpretation on this was focused on what farmer advisors say about how they see their communication approach and practices towards farmers. This information was gained from them and their plans that reflect on the approach, communications with stakeholders and head office staff members' description of the organisation's communication approach and practices.

- **Recommendations for the improvement of DSC in enhancing farming and development**

In order to improve the DSC and to enhance farming with the TLM, officials, agents, advisors and technicians initiate communications at intervals for the purpose of achieving agricultural and rural development objectives. However, they need to take cognisance of the following points:

- Such officials need to be certain that their actions support TLM communication processes
- Officials need to convey information that is of help and value to the receivers
- Officials need to be mindful of the basic content of the messages.

- Agents ought to work together in order to remove inter-group hostility from the process in case of many farmers at once.
- There is an apparently urgent need to develop effective communication skills as well as listening skills.
- There is a practical need to ensure that messages are timed properly.
- There is also a need to regulate information flow and use the informal communication channels where necessary.
- Should agricultural projects succeed this could be achieved through the use of clear and concise words during communication.
- Encouraging feedback is one way that ensures communication is a reciprocal process.
- Selecting proper channels to convey messages, that is, using the channel that is most appropriate for the situation could only assure the success of the projects in TLM.
- Though costly at times, it is recommended to use face-to-face communication whenever it is feasible.
- Though in communication the use of repetition is monotonous, its selective deployment ensures remembering some of the messages and information, especially if information is new and complicated.
- Those that initiate development projects ought to follow up through important verbal discussion and actual site visit.

- **Examine the communication strategies, channels/tools and their effectiveness.**

Based on the results of this study, it is clear that there are various communication strategies although they are not all equally effective. The following reasons are highlighted to stress the ineffectiveness of some of the communication strategies.

Most projects in TLM have failed to succeed because of defective communication strategies and phlegmatic planning in the project even though other reasons such as lack of funding, negligence and non-participation of all project members are cited as the causes.

The purposeful application of communication strategies in agriculture should ensure that agricultural support services are tailor-made to suit interventions and the specific needs of individual farmers within the TLM. In such settings, extensionists therefore need communication strategies and activities that are suffused with the potential to raise farmers' production and income.

It is for this reason that as this study sets out, DSC, within the context of TLM is precisely the systematic utilisation of appropriate communication channels and techniques to increase people's participation in development and to inform, motivate, and train rural populations, mainly at the grassroots level.

There is therefore a need and general preference for participatory communication is necessary to ensure that the farmers take part in the whole process of the initial planning, implementation and monitoring in order to ensure that the aim of advancing their agricultural method is achieved.

In both the focus group discussions and the semi-structured interviews, the respondents agreed that participatory communication is important for them. During the discussion some felt that a top-down communication approach was not the best for them and indicated that instead of having face-to-face discussion with stakeholders such as advisors, agricultural extensions, researchers and other experts, there should be an approach that could allow them to be part of the processes and also tell them

the kind of information they need, the kind of assistance they really need in order to advance their farming methods.

One extension officer said:

“in light of the technological innovations across the world, we as balemisi (extension officers in Setswana) have to advise our farmers and ensure that all innovations are adopted and reach the farmers”.

One technician said:

“we are now coming up with other things like farmers’ days, clinics just like any other forum targeted at human beings. Farmers are able to come with their infected animals for vaccination.

So if there was participatory communication, where the stakeholders come and you join hands in direct communication with the farmers, it would assist us a great deal as we will be able to vaccinate, cure the animals or give any farmer answers to their issues immediately.”

So it is on this basis that the advisors engaged with the farmers in TLM, showing clearly that participatory communication works well if it is used within practical contexts. In this instance, the entire process of farming and growing crops emerged as a part of it right from land preparation through harvesting. Evidence in these excerpts demonstrates that the advisors and the farmers were participating in a discussion where the real practical aspect of learning and teaching is absent.

5.5 Summary of results

The respondents confirmed that participatory communication is important for them. During the discussion some felt that a top-down communication approach was not the best for them and indicated that instead of having face-to-face discussion with stakeholders such as advisors, agricultural extensions, researchers and other experts, there should be an approach that could allow them to be part of the processes and

also tell them the kind of information they need or the kind of assistance they really need in order to advance their farming methods.

The study found that smooth information and communication flow from the various sources of agricultural information to the farmers in the TLM was lacking. This was attributed to the failure by the different stakeholders and the farmers to engage in participatory communication in the TLM area.

When asked what kind of suggestions they have, the farmers failed to give further suggestions on what other means of participatory communication they would like to see used to help them in their farming.

5.6 Reliability and Validity

The qualitative content analysis involved the following procedures:

- Data was recorded on a digital voice recorder, and taking notes served as further backup and provided the context for the interviews and focus groups.
- Verbatim transcription of the responses from the interviews were done immediately to ensure that the researcher became acquainted with the data for the purposes of analysis and interpretation, the original interview of the completed verbatim transcription was listened to again. Transcription notation symbols, comments and the taking of field notes as suggested by Henning *et al.*, (2004:76-77) were used to capture non-transcribable text to gain as much of the complete picture as possible.
- The entire transcribed text and field notes were thoroughly read at first to obtain an overall and comprehensive impression of the content and context before the abstraction process of coding began where units of meaning were identified or labelled.
- Codes are names or labels assigned to specific units or segments of related meaning identified within the field notes and transcripts (Henning *et al.*,

2004:104; Neuman, 2011:510). The transcribed text was arranged in meaningful themes and categories and further sub themes and sub categories were included to identify meaning connections, relationships and trends in the analysis.

- Open coding process was done by naming of segments of meaning from the field notes and transcripts in relation to the research objectives. The focus was on wording, phrasing, context, consistency, frequency, extensiveness and specificity of comments. Subsequently, the segments of meaning from the field notes and transcripts were clearly highlighted and labelled in a descriptive manner.
- Finally, selective coding as the third and final coding procedure involved selective scanning of all codes that were identified for comparison, contrast and linkage to the research question as well as for a central theme or “key linkage” that occurred. The codes were eventually evaluated for relevance to the research objectives.

The process of qualitative analysis outlined above served as a framework to ensure that the initial data (semi-structured interviews) were systematised by thematic organisation to form part of the data that were connected to and combined with the quantitative data already presented.

5.7 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Interviewing as data-gathering method was included to obtain additional data, clarify vague statements, permit further exploration of research topics, expand on the qualitative findings and yield a more in-depth account of the DSC and the role of communication in improving farming methods in the TLM.

The recording of the interview data took place by means of note-taking and audio recording. Verbatim transcripts of the interviews were compiled for analysis and interpretation.



5.8 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ANALYSIS

Five separate focus group discussions were done. According to Bryman (2008: 473) “a focus group discussion is an interview with several (usually six to ten) people on a specific topic or issue.” All the focus group discussions conducted totaled 50 people (6-10 people in each group) comprising small scale farmers in TLM, female and male farmers of ages ranging from 25-65+ so as to get a broader picture of the successes and challenges that exist in the communication and implementation of the projects.

Initially the researcher had planned to conduct a focus group discussion with up to 10 people but this proved impossible because more people had turned up and they had travelled from long distances so it was practically hard to bar them from participating.

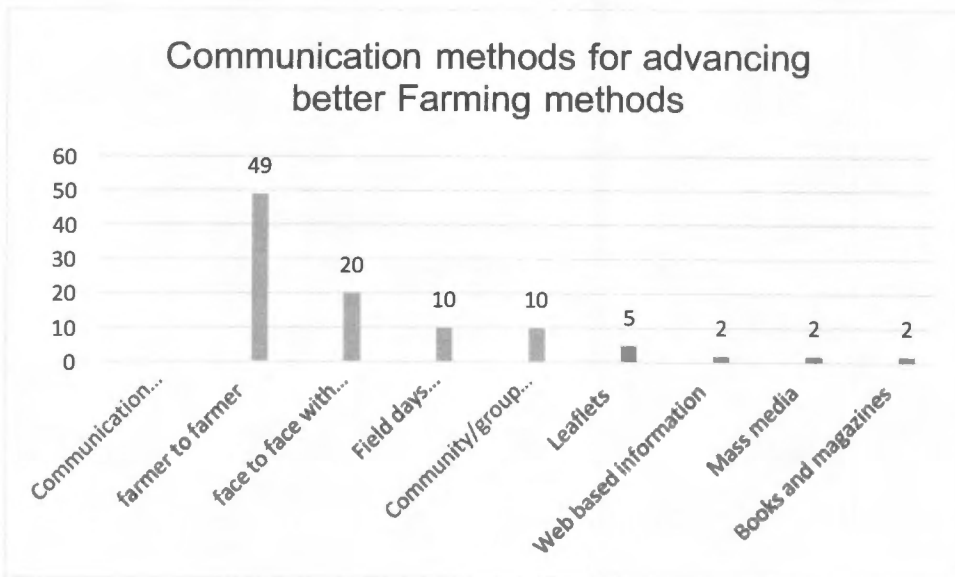
However, even though this was the case, it was not difficult to control the discussion. The researcher was interested in the way individuals discuss certain issues as members of a group, rather than simply as individuals and also how people respond to each other's views and build up on the views of others. The focus group sessions were recorded and later transcribed because it would be impossible for the researcher to write everything down. Some of the limitations of a focus group discussion were that the researcher had less control over proceedings, too much data which took a lot of time to analyse was collected, the respondents were also in most instances off track with their discussions but the main reason was that the subject of agriculture in the TLM is a sensitive one as most farmers feel very frustrated with government.

The objective of the focus group discussion was to better understand farming practices while also learning about farmers' needs for resources and ideas for future improvements and productivity within TLM. Certain themes emerged during the discussions and are presented in a summary below.

Q1. What type of communication channels are familiar with as a farmer under the Agriculture Development and Support programmes?

Farmers are familiar with interpersonal communication (communication with the extension workers, communication during demonstration blocks, communication through village meetings, field days; leaflets, posters and magazines).

Figure: 8



Respondents were asked to mention and rate the communication methods used for advancing farming methods. They mentioned eight communication methods. Based on their effectiveness, respondents were asked to rate it on a scale of very effective, slightly, somewhat and not effective. The above figure summarises the results, ordering communication methods from those that received the highest effectiveness to the lowest. This reveals that 49 percent of the respondents felt that those methods that emphasises farmer to farmer contact and extension agents to farmer at 20 percent are considered the most effective.

On farming knowledge and skills, respondents believe that they have hands-on practical skills, and the extension agents believe that they provide technical skills to the farmers. They believe that they are familiar with the breadth of competencies required to provide much needed information to farmers in the TLM.

Practical farm production skills encompass physical day-to-day farm work and include equipment and facilities operation, maintenance and repair, animal husbandry, planting and harvesting a crop, and pest and soil management. Many new farmers without farm backgrounds prioritise acquisition of these skills. Effective programming must enable each new farmer to efficiently acquire whatever technical skills are necessary for successful farm management of their farm operation. Focus group participants distinguished among skills, knowledge, and information needs, and the programming required to serve those needs. An example is knowing how to grow corn (a skill), how corn grows (knowledge), and when and where to buy a particular variety of corn seed at the best price (information).

Theme 1: Need for farmer support

The need for support from extension agents and other stakeholder's became an issue of concern, almost all respondents raised and vocalised this as part of the method that could assist in the adoption and advancing of better farming practices mentioned across all of the discussions. They believe that extension activities had low impact on improving farm production yield or output and profitability.

Farmers would like to see changes in agriculture and various support from stakeholders including government (department of agriculture in the North West province) by offering more resources and technical assistance geared specifically to farmers especially in small and non-conventional farms.

- Farmers expressed a need for technical assistance on building and maintaining agricultural production.
- Farmers would like to see workshops on methods and protocol for conducting their own soil tests and interpreting and applying the data they collect.
- Farmers expressed a need for technical assistance on which cover crops to plant and when to plant them.

Few respondents indicated that, "for us to enjoy better production, sustainable farming etc. we dependent upon support, I think support for all I have mentioned has to do with

your land,...I mean I think you need to have the support of the community around you, I think that's really important to sustain yourself". You got to have a network that supports you...I mean there's a lot of people out there that really go out and work their butt off, farm really hard and grow some really good crops like mielies, vegetables and have beautiful livestock, but what kind of community does it have supporting them?....They need more than that, they need loved ones, or wives, or husbands, or you"

Theme 2: Message effectiveness

As meetings, visits and demonstrations were reported to be the most effective ways of getting information. The results of the study reveal that applications of some of the extension methods are perceived to be effective by farmers however, regular farm visit may assist in the dissemination of messages and should be encouraged. However, these visits, meetings and demonstrations should be meaningful and have a purpose in order to have a positive impact. It is therefore critical to ensure that communication methods effective in order to deliver effective extension messages.

Theme 3: Governmental support

In the discussion with extension agents and advisors, they all agree that support from government aimed at farmers is more than critical.

"Government has helped in the past and continue to assist us as farmers' especially during the recent drought". As agents, technicians and advisors we have assisted our farmers with so many interventions, like drilling of boreholes for water much needed for livestock, drought relief for all small-scale farmers highly affected by challenges of drought. We also give them advise on other things like assisting with market of their herd to reduce many livestock suffering and maintain animal

production. But for those who we regard as commercial we even assist with facilitating credit, and nutrition”.

Q2. Do you think the agriculture development support programme is effective to you as a farmer?

One respondent said “The programmes do help especially with providing advise, giving us fodder, diesel, seed and other things we need as farmers in Tswaing”.

Another respondent said “I started receiving support for some time from the programme but now I am on my own. I am happy that I can do anything on my own now. Actually, I am now regarded as a commercial farmer. I have about 200 cows and basically do mixed farming. I even have a descent income. I smile all the way to the bank and thanks to what I got when I started farming.”

It is important to note that the support programme was initiated to kick-start a shift away from white dominance in agriculture, and attempted to assess the needs of black agriculture, existing and new black farmers, and identify development priorities and strategies to improve their access to agriculture.

Q3. Do you think there is expertise on agricultural communication and you are comfortable with extension’s services in general?

Farmers are generally satisfied though they point out some challenges. Some of the main lessons that emerged from the study and the discussions were:

- a) That farmer support services had to be comprehensive, i.e. they had to be available and accessible for all farmers across the country;
- b) That the provision of farmer support services had to be coordinated, and different government agencies and the private and non-profit sectors had to work together in order to provide farmer support services successfully; and
- c) That the sequencing of the provision of farmer support services had to be focussed on the needs of particular areas and groups of farmers.

Interviews with extension agents, technicians and advisors.

The influence of DSC on farming.

Interview 1 and 2: September 2016

One respondent said “as practitioners one of the critical elements/variables for extension agents, technicians and advisors is to help farmers to help themselves and to facilitate optimal and sustainable resource utilisation, and to solve problems of poverty in Tswaing”.

This emphasis demonstrate that DSC can have an influence on production in the TLM. For each respondent that identified their work as being informed by a particular field of theory, the following summary reflect this relationship.

Most of the projects and individual farmers fit within the modernisation or DSC paradigm, where the extension and technical advice are seen as a way to convey correct information to farmers who needs to be informed and encouraged to change behavior and ensure good productivity in their farming.

Though, various projects are characterised by non-sustainability as they do not have a long life span within the target community. They are characterised by short-term interventions, lasting few month or years. This evidence of short-term interventions indicates that many projects are on-off interventions and that most projects are not handed to the community to run on a sustained basis. There may be a number of reasons for this amongst the projects of the practitioners. An examination of the cases of the cases based on the respondents reflects that it is a lack of either skills or resources that prevents this. While the lack of resources may be real, the lack of skills may simply be perceived as limited.

The projects rationale, goals and strategies

Interview 3: October 2016

“The goals for this project were set by the department, development agents and project funders. It is an opportunity for farmers to create a relationship with the community”.

While this may not be associated with traditional development goals it does not give community to create the sense of self-empowerment. This therefore lacks community or individual farmer participation in the projects. While the funders determined the goals of the projects, the planning, implementing and monitoring of such are critical to achieve better results. It would be nice to have the beneficiaries be part of the initial planning and also be trained for the implementing getting some input from experts to assist them in their project.

5.9 Summary of the project findings

The above results emanating from the interviews with the extension presented the significant findings from the study into the projects in the study. However, it is clear that the projects have different results and a different impact for the participants and for the beneficiary communities. Some projects involves participation at a greater level than others.

While others reflect benefits for the participants, the potential for extending these benefits and for bringing about empowerment on a broader scale within the community is limited. DSC and another development as regarded in literature and interpreted as (participation) in this study place greater emphasis on a two-way communication process and take into account cultural multiplicity (Servaes, 1995; 1999). These theories allow for “multidimensionality, horizontality, deprofessionalisation and diachronic communication exchange” (Servaes, 1999:84). The paradigm of DSC involves development planners and implementers creating partnerships with local communities in order to bring about development. While there is an emphasis on actively involving the beneficiary community in their own development; the donor

partner supports this process through funding and expertise. This notion of empowerment and social change through DSC and DC was explored in more detail in the literature chapter.

5.10 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION ANALYSIS

As part of the analyses, the participant observation technique was integral as most respondents showed frustration and shared mostly opinion and ideas on what and how they could be assisted and supported in order to advance their farming skills. This helped the researcher to learn the perspectives held by this study sample. As qualitative researchers, we presume that there are multiple perspectives within any given community and this was a reality in the TLM. This study shed light in knowing what those diverse perspectives are and in understanding the interplay among.

So, through observation alone or by both observing and participating, to varying degrees, in the study community's daily activities there were critical nuances added to this study.

On communicative actions, most farmers have high trust in other farmers, particularly commercial ones that are seen to have made it in agriculture and have realised very high production levels in their farming. Some projects called cooperatives were mentioned and it was indicated that these projects are doing well. Small-scale farmers noted that agricultural research centres and other stakeholders were integral in their timely service provision and sharing of experiences, provision of input and information to bolster what the TLM farming community is doing.

In contrast, they do not have trust and good attitude towards advisors and technicians in the area due to their perceived inefficiency, inability to hear about farmers' demands, and the limited development interventions which decisively affect their potential productivity.

Accordingly, the result of focus group discussion and key informant interview with various actors revealed that farmers display good habits and practice regarding knowledge and information sharing with other farmers in their surroundings. The communicative actions therefore also confirm that farmers were mentioned as main

source of input particularly of improved seed varieties through farmer to farmer information exchange.

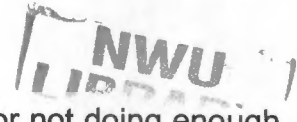
It is therefore critical to ensure a participatory approach that incorporates all stakeholders in the development and demonstration of innovation, DSC and generally improved technologies for farmers' research and extension groups.

5.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings and offered interpretation of these findings in depth. This study explored the role of DSC and the role of communication for improved farming methods in the TLM. This was against the backdrop that most development projects in the area were not successful or sustainable and most individual farmers' projects were also not advancing according to initial ideals. This means that most projects, especially group projects, do not achieve their intended objectives.

The study revealed that though project implementers, agents and all related stakeholders do their work to establish contact with the community before implementing the projects, the components of development communication, social mobilisation, advocacy and behaviour change communication were not employed to their full extent to reach the entire community.

The study also found that most extension officers are criticised for not doing enough within the TLM farming community, for offering irrelevant technical advice, and for not monitoring the implementation of the advice given. Farmers in TLM were quite vocal in complaining about the poor services received from extension officers.



However, based on the analyses and researcher's observation, it should be emphasised that farmers had the best well-trained and knowledgeable extension officers within TLM. However, the element of participatory communication lacked in making a well-managed extension service using a participatory approach. In a nutshell, extension programmes are supposed to be designed with the purpose of fully benefitting farmers, hence it is pivotal for them to be involved in communication strategies and planning to advance farming methods in the area. The next chapter deals with the recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter discussed the analysis and interpretation of the development support communication for better farming methods, a communicative action amongst farmers and agents in the TLM.

The aim of this chapter is to present the final conclusions drawn from the results of the analysis of the data derived from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and some participant observation in the study and then make recommendations for this and further research.

Development communication could perform a fundamental role by promoting communication and information exchange between farmers concerning their actions, problems and needs for better farming methods. If development communication is to become part of the new focus of development, it would require some innovative thinking, more field testing of new ideas and theories, and more qualitative and quantitative evaluation of results. It is a challenge which researchers and practitioners cannot ignore.

As agricultural issues in the country become a prominent target in the media, the need for effective communication in agriculture continues to grow. Since a large number of the people lacks a full understanding of farming, it is important for agricultural communicators, agents or extension officers and technicians to provide timely, accurate information on current issues, trends that privilege new and progressive farming methods to the farming community.

This study proved the importance of communication for development and it is critical that communication strategy and planning is designed for all projects before planning, implementation and evaluation to ensure success for farming projects.

Any project's sustainability depends on many caveats but this study focused on how DSC could play a role in supporting development projects. Findings from the study suggest that communication plays a very significant role in so far as the advancement of development for better farming methods is concerned. Communication in this respect helps involve community members to be agents of their own development. Finally, the theory of development communication that suggests "there is no development without communication" has been proven in the case study of TLM.

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ADDENDUM A

Dear respondent,

My name is Tsholofelo Moreosele a Masters student in Communication studies at North-West University, Mafikeng campus. I am conducting a study of development support communication for better farming methods: an interpretive study of communicative actions amongst farmers in the Tswaing local municipality.

I would like you to assist me to carry out this study. Please feel free to take part and answer questions. Do not hesitate to ask me any question, if you do not understand. The information you provide will be used for this research only and confidentiality is guaranteed.

Thank you

ADDENDUM B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Section A

Demographic

Please tick the appropriate box.

Name									
Gender			Male			Female			
Age	25-35		35-45		45-55		55-65		65-75 or above

Marital status

Married	
Never married	
Widow/widower	
Separated	

Educational qualification

No formal schooling	
Primary education	
Secondary education	
Vocational training	
Tertiary education	

NWU
LIBRARY

Agricultural type

Livestock	
Poultry	
Vegetable	
Mixed	
Crop	

Section B

Media sources	
Television	
Radio	
Newspapers	
People/Organizational sources	
My neighbours	
Farm input distributors	
Extension agents	
Local government officials	
Fellow farmers	
Farmers training centers/institutes	

1. As a farmer, where do you get or receive information about farming from?

2. What are the sources of information?

3. Does government, municipality or development planners provide information and communication materials for farming?

4. What are the communication methods used by farmers in the TLM to communicate and to what extent have they been successful?

5. Do you think the communication methods are effective?

Media sources	
Television	
Radio	
Newspapers	
People/Organizational sources	
My neighbours	
Farm input distributors	
Extension agents	
Local government officials	
Fellow farmers	
Farmers training centers/institutes	

6. Have you ever accessed any source of agricultural information?

- a. Yes -----
- b. No -----

7. If yes to the previous question, which of the following has been your source of information on agriculture? Circle as many as may apply.

Focus groups discussions

Planning and implementation and theories

1. How can DSC help farmers to meet their long-term success, and improve their farming practices?
2. What are the different communication strategies that agents use to assist farmers to improve their farming practices?
3. Are there any communication material you get from agents aimed at you as a farmer?
4. What are the channels of communication are targeted at you as a farmer?
5. How often do you receive information about farming?
6. What are the Development communication approaches that can be used in the farming sector?

7. Do you participate in the communication planning of farming implementation?
8. Which strategies can be applied in order to realise mainstream Development Communication in farming?
9. Do you design mass and interpersonal strategies of communication aimed at helping or supporting projects in agriculture in TLM?
10. Do you know which communication strategies are used to support your projects?

If yes, how are they implemented?

11. What was the initial plan for communicating agricultural activities? How are they being communicated to now?
12. How are activities of the agriculture development programmes support project communicated to farmers?
13. How do you ensure that the different types of communication modes are being effective? Is there a feedback system? how many times does feedback happen?
14. What are some of the challenges with communicating activities or the structure of communication?
How can it be improved?
15. How do you keep yourself informed about latest agricultural information?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No