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Abstract

World Hunger (2013) declared that to solve the food crisis in the global south, the solution lay in incorporating indigenous knowledge in mainstream development programmes. On the other hand, the Brussels conference of (2005) resolved that the indigenous knowledge systems are on the verge of extinction due to marginalisation from mainstream development programs. The capitalist State was identified as the major force undermining indigenous knowledge. However, there is no consensus to the meaning of indigenous knowledge. This thesis sought an in depth understanding of indigenous knowledge and its role in agricultural production in the Svosve community. Furthermore, it sought to find out how the farmers in the Svosve community react to the development initiatives by the State. Semi-structured interview schedules were used to allow farmers, government administrators and extension workers to narrate their experiences with farming. The research was able to pick on the features of indigenous knowledge which are beliefs practices and skills. The key findings of this research are that the farmers in the Svosve community have long relied on indigenous beliefs and practices to farm. This knowledge extends to other land-based means of livelihood that support the Svosve community. However, the State's economic policy which promotes market farming, ahead of the community's indigenous initiatives tends to undermine the use of indigenous knowledge. Therefore, in the Svosve community, there is a tension between the indigenous beliefs and practices and the Western beliefs and practices.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank the following people: My supervisor, Dr Paul Stewart, Senior tutor in Sociology in the Department of Sociology, at the University of the Witwatersrand, without whose advice, encouragement and foresight this thesis would certainly never have been completed; Professor Michelle Williams, Senior lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Witwatersrand for her thoughtful suggestions and my immediate family, Juliet, Herbert, Tafadzwa, Tinashe, Tendai, Cleopas and Michael. Thank you for your patience, understanding and support during the writing of this research report.