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Exploring the perceived factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni- South Africa

A report on a research study presented to

The Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

In partial fulfilment of the requirements

For the degree Master of Arts (Social work) in the field of Social Development by course work and research report

By

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March

2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own original and unaided work. I have correctly referenced all the sources utilised. This research report has not been submitted previously for any degree or examination.

Name: Nyeleti Shibambo

Date: 15 March 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the God O Lord almighty for making, it possible to complete my research report despite the challenges I personally faced. Dr Nkosiyazi, my supervisor has also been very supportive and patient with me throughout the research process. I also want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my late mother, Mrs Hlamalani Vivian Shibambo who encouraged me to apply for the degree and complete it. I will dedicate my graduation to her, although she won't be able to witness the success. A special thanks to Ekurhuleni municipality social worker, Mr Percy Molala, for granting me permission to conduct my study in his area of service including all the research participants from various primary agriculture cooperatives who agreed to form part of the research study.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
CIPC	Companies Intellectual Property Commission
CWP	Community Work Programme
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EWP	Expanded Work Programme
GCRO	Gauteng City Region Observatory
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICA	International Cooperatives Alliance
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NSS	National Service Scheme
PAC	Primary Agricultural Cooperatives
RDP	Reconstructive Distributive Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STATS SA	Statistics South Africa
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

Cooperatives promote sustainable development and advance economic and social progress both in rural and urban communities. These entities especially primary agricultural cooperatives have the potential to minimise unemployment, eradicate poverty and end hunger. However, in South Africa, more than 20 years after democracy cooperatives seem not to be yielding results they are intended to. These self-help groups are legally registered however, even though this is the case, majority of them are unsustainable and therefore do not last long. It is therefore against this backdrop that the aim of this research report was to explore the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township, Ekurhuleni municipality. The study was qualitative in nature, and it employed a case study as a research design. Purposive sampling was used to select 15 participants who were members of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township. A semi-structured interview schedule was used as a research instrument, with in-depth face-face interviews used as a method of data collection. Data collected during the interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, while participants' demographic information was analysed using descriptive statistics.

The main findings revealed that some of the factors that led to unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township were lack of access to land, lack of suitable agricultural equipment, lack of cooperation within and between cooperatives, lack of reliable markets, poor managerial skills, misuse of financial resources and corruption. Recommendations relates to future collaborations and research.

Keywords: Cooperatives; primary agricultural cooperatives; perception, unsustainability, Katlehong-Ekurhuleni- South Africa.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

A people centred path for International Cooperatives Alliance (ICA) is a strategic plan that is intended to promote the world cooperatives movement. (ICA,2020). Cooperatives according to Wright (2014) are self-help groups that work together to meet their socio-economic needs. The author furthermore highlights that as instruments, cooperatives have a potential to address poverty, hunger, and unemployment, thus advancing some United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Wanyama, 2016). South Africa is one country amongst many that has been advocating for the initiation and management of cooperatives. The cooperatives Act 38 of 2005 is one of the legislative frameworks in South Africa that has mandated the private and government entities to support the development and growth of cooperatives. Van der Walt (2005) study shows that several cooperatives are registered, yet they are underperforming due to lack of financial support, equipment, and proper agricultural skills. As result, communities are continually trapped in poverty. Even though cooperatives are regarded as vehicles for social development of late, their sustainability has been problematic. The following research study investigated the unsustainability nature of primary agriculture cooperatives in Ekurhuleni municipality Katlehong area- South Africa.

1.2. Statement of the problem and rationale for the study

Dalby, Horton, Mahon and Thomaz (2019) highlight that Africa is a continent that is still faced with inequality, unemployment, and poverty more especially in peripheral areas such as rural areas and informal settlements. DTI (2012) outlines that the South African government and agencies have invested millions if not billions to assist in the development and monitoring of cooperatives, yet the intended outcome of cooperatives is still non-satisfactory (DTI,2012). Year after year, many cooperatives are registered at the Companies Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) registrar. However, even if this is the case, there has also been less focus on examining the factors that lead to the unsustainability of cooperatives in literature and empirical studies. The importance of this study was to specifically find out why and how primary agriculture cooperatives (PAC) in Katlehong fail to sustain themselves. It is anticipated that the findings of the study will close the gap that exists within the literature and contribute to the knowledge of the topic (Kao, 2010).

Even though there are several studies that have been done, exploring different types of cooperatives in South Africa and beyond, there seem to be a gap on studies that focus on the unsustainable nature of primary agricultural cooperatives, and yet these seem to be a poverty alleviation strategy for the poor (DTI, 2012; Mazibuko, 2010; Okem, 2016 & Tchami, 2007). Thus, this study was of importance as it aimed at closing this gap in literature by adding knowledge regarding the factors that contribute to the unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong. This study is of great importance as well, as it may stimulate debates around the issues of unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives, thereby leading to more studies that can lead to the strengthening of programmatic interventions aimed at improving sustainability of these entities.

1.3 Research question(s)

What are the perceived factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni – South Africa?

1.4. Aim and objectives.

1.4.1Aims

The aim of the research study is to explore factors that contribute to unsustainability of primary agriculture cooperatives in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni Municipality.

1.4.2 Objectives

- To explore the reasons of having primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong.
- To understand the befits derived from participating in primary agricultural cooperative.
- To identify the perceived factors that contribute to primary agriculture cooperatives unsustainability.
- To ascertain the views of members on how they think primary agricultural cooperatives can be better sustained in Ekurhuleni's Katlehong township.

1.5 Definition of concepts

1.5.1 Cooperatives

Various authors define the term "cooperative" differently. According to DTI (2010), a co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet common socio-economic needs through a joint democratic controlled enterprise. Cooperatives can also be

defined as people centred businesses that have been tried and tested internationally to contribute to people taking charge of their economic livelihood (Eid & Martínez-Carrasco ,2014). Cooperatives are categorized under three categories namely primary, secondary, and tertiary (Tchami,2007). There are also different types of cooperatives such as housing cooperatives, worker cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, burial society cooperatives, financial services cooperatives, agriculture cooperatives (RSA,2005). It is recognised that there are different definitions of cooperatives from various authors. However, for the purpose of this study, the DTI (2010) definition will be used to define the term cooperatives.

1.5.2 Primary Agricultural cooperative

Primary agriculture cooperative is a voluntary institution in the science of agriculture that is established with a common goal of socio-economic development of a community (Tchami,2007). A primary agriculture cooperative according to RSA (2005) is an organisation that consists of at least five or more individuals with a purpose of providing agricultural services and employment opportunities to its members and to facilitate community development. Agriculture is one vital sector that the world depends on for food security, thus survival (Mahmoud, 2021).

1.5.3 Perception

Perception can be viewed in different ways from various contexts. Rogers (2017) define perception as an individual experience of hearing, seeing, smelling, and touching objects in the surrounding environment. Perception can also be defined as an "active process that allows individuals to extract information from the pattern of energy that impinge their sense organs" (Rogers, 2017, p.1). According to Kenyan and Sen (2015), perception is a process of collecting data from censoring organs and interpreting it in the brain.

1.5.4 Unsustainability

Bluhdorn and Welsh (2013) define unsustainable as discontinuity. Unsustainability is a state of inability to continue from the current rate meaning if something is unsustainable, it cannot be prolonged or continued with. (Bluhdorn & Welsh, 2013). According to Giovannoni and Fabietti (2014), unsustainability has been referred to as the incapability of a corporation to last in time, both in terms of profitability, productivity, and financial performance. This includes inability to manage environmental, social, ecological assets (Giovannoni & Fabietti, 2014).

1.6 PICTORIAL VIEW OF SOME EXAMPLES OF SOME PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN KATLEHONG TOWNSHIP, EKURHULENI MUNICIPALITY

Crop and animal farming











1.7 The Scope of the study

The geographical location for the study was limited to primary agriculture cooperatives in katlehong area, Ekurhuleni municipality. The primary agriculture cooperatives were diverse in terms of age, gender, and work experience. Many cooperatives' members had previous experience in different business ventures before, and some were involved in subsistence farming. To address poverty and unemployment, the Katlehong community members formed agriculture cooperatives as a solution to address these social development issues. Furthermore, it can also be highlighted that Katlehong appeared as a setting that had legally registered agriculture cooperatives that encountered development and sustainability challenges.

1.8 Overview of the research design and methodology

The study was qualitative in nature, and it employed a case study as a research design. The criteria for research participants were South African individuals who are part of primary agriculture cooperatives that have been operating 2 years and more. All participants were not below the age of 18 years and above the age of 80 years. Purposive sampling was used to recruit fifteen (15) primary agriculture members who are not in the management teams. Positions held by the participants were generally positions such as field worker, secretary, spokesperson, treasurer to name a few. The data collection method that was administered to the participants was the face- to face in-depth semi- structured interviews, while the tool was a semi-structured interview guide. that was first pretested to ensure that the instrument was adequate to acquire the information required. Furthermore, it can also be stated that the participant's responses were analysed using the thematic analysis.

1.9 Limitations of the study

- The limitation of the study was that findings were not generalizable to wider contexts, but only to specific contexts. However, the aim of qualitative research was not to generalise but to provide an in-depth analysis of the context under the study.
- The researcher encountered a challenge to interview 15 participants at the anticipated time. Many cooperatives' representatives were demotivated by the fact that government promised them development in their entities with no results. The researcher in this instance was flexible and patient when arranging all the fifteen (15) interview sessions.
- The researcher 's aim was to get participation from various cooperatives. However, due to time, resources available and the cooperatives members availability restricted the researcher to interview only 15 participants.

- Due to Covid 19, participants were afraid of contracting the virus from the researcher and vice versa. To mitigate the situation, the researcher observed Covid 19 protocols which included sanitizing of hands, wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.

1.10 Organisation of the report

The research report comprises of five chapters which are briefly described below.

1.10.1 Chapter 1

The first chapter of the report provided an overview and orientation of the study. It highlighted the problem statement; significance of the study and the research aims and objectives. Part of the chapter also consisted of the definitions of concepts, examples of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong, overview of the research methodology and the research study limitations.

1.10.2 Chapter 2 .

The second chapter outlined the literature review of the research study by introducing cooperatives and their origins. This chapter proceeded to show the challenges that cooperatives encounter from country to country as well as the significance of cooperatives in relation to poverty and unemployment. The last section of chapter 2 examined the Asset based community development (ABCD) approach which is theoretical framework underpinning the study.

1.10.3 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 is a section that highlighted the research study methodology. Initially, the chapter discussed the research approach and design underpinning the study. The chapter continued to outline and expand on the research study population, sample, sampling strategy, data collection methods, data analysis and ethical considerations.

1.10.4 Chapter 4

Chapter 4 of this research report presented and discussed the raw data and analysed findings, followed by the interpretation of these results.

1.10.5 Chapter 5

The last section of the chapter described the main findings, conclusions and recommendations that might contribute to policy change and add to the academic body of knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the overview of cooperatives by defining what cooperatives are from different perspectives. Cooperatives were identified and discussed based on their categories and types. The literature review outlines the origins of cooperatives followed by the challenges/factors that influence cooperatives in different contexts. This chapter further highlights the significance of cooperatives in relation to poverty and unemployment. Finally, a discussion of the theoretical framework underpinning the study is provided.

2.2.1 Co-operatives: An overview

The co-operatives movement is a vehicle that grows the economy and ensures that development reaches individuals at the grassroot level (ICA,2020). Co-operatives have a "long successful tradition around the world and have proven to be amazingly flexible in meeting a wide variety of social and economic needs" (DTI, 2012, p. 18). According to Goodwin (2018), the term cooperation emanates from a Latin word that loosely translates to "working together". It is an evident common trait in various parts of the world where people engage in self-help groups and activities to improve their needs. Wright (2014) simply refers to co-operatives as social enterprises that are operated based on business principles. Co-operatives are autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet common socio-economic needs through a joint democratic controlled enterprise (DTI,2012). In other words, cooperatives can be recognized as people centred businesses that enable people to pool their assets, talents, and energies together to meet a common goal. ICA (2020) highlight that within the cooperative's organisations, members all have an equal right to suggest the direction of the cooperatives in terms how it generates and uses its profit. By working together, the cooperative members accomplish objectives that could not be achieved by one individual alone (Tchami,2007). According to Pollet (2009) cooperatives operate in different levels and categories.

Co-operatives operate from different levels and can be categorised into three categories (Tchami, 2007). The first cooperative category is called primary cooperatives. A primary cooperative according to DTI (2012), is an organisation that consists of at least five or more individuals with a purpose of providing services and employment opportunities or services to its members to facilitate community development. Primary cooperatives are legally registered

and operate on a basis of a constitution that is decided by its members who clearly understand their roles (Tchami,2007). The second cooperatives category is namely secondary cooperatives which can be defined as entities that are formed when two or more operational primary co-operatives affiliate on a basis of meeting one goal (Okem, 2016). Under secondary cooperatives, each primary cooperative forward 3 representatives to form an assembly that is also referred to as a management committee. In addition, Mazibuko (2010) highlights that secondary cooperative are committees formed to ensure that primary cooperatives are monitored, controlled and they account for their actions in the process of operation. Tchami (2007) refers to the third category as tertiary cooperatives which are basically operational secondary co-operatives that come together to promote the interest of its secondary member cooperatives at a larger scale. The promotion of these cooperatives can be done at the government bodies, private sectors, and other stakeholders scales. Marketing cooperatives are examples of tertiary cooperatives category that promotes secondary cooperatives at local and international stages for market competition and development. Pollet (2009) furthermore explains that there are different types of cooperatives which are namely worker co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, housing cooperatives, credit, and savings cooperatives and agriculture cooperatives. From the above-mentioned literature, it can be concluded that cooperatives come in different types and forms. However, this research will only be looking at primary agriculture cooperatives.

2.2.2 The Origins of Cooperatives

The first highly successful cooperative was the amicable society that emerged in the year 1705 if not earlier (Lyimo,2012). Most of the cooperatives at that time were consumer-controlled organisations that failed to attract attention for growth. A prominent industrialist by the name of Robert Owen advocated for the establishment of other types of cooperatives to alleviate poverty amongst the industrial workers in England (Zeuli and Cropp 2004). Some of the cooperatives that emerged in the 19th century were industrial production cooperatives, education, housing, and commercial distribution cooperatives (Wright,2014). The first modern cooperative was founded in Rochdale England in 1844. Cooperatives today still trace the roots of the Rochdale principles, and they are also adopted by the international Cooperatives Alliance as a cooperative's identity all over the world (Birchall, 2011).

Cooperatives in the African continent have always been viewed as a model to improve socio-economic issues (Okem, 2016). According to Okem (2016), cooperatives movement can be

traced back from centuries ago, where the native provident societies were established in Africa by the west colonies such as Germany, France ect to increase the agricultural production in equatorial Africa (Bhuimali,2003). Cooperatives at that time were established at a village level, where peasants (smallholder farmers) who failed to join these societies were persuaded, with their membership made compulsory (Bhuimali,2003). Cooperatives benefits remained with the politicians instead of the general population (Okem, 2016). A typical example of the scenario is the Ghana cooperatives in the 1920s that experienced high mortality rates due to government dominance.

The aftermath of decolonisation formed a second era of the cooperative's movement in Africa. The newly independent nations saw cooperation as a model that can achieve an array of national objectives (Okem,2016). In the 1960s era, many cooperatives became free from the government dictatorship and operated autonomously like traditional business enterprises (Pollet, 2009). The international community such as international labour organisations (ILO), international cooperatives alliance and other agencies engaged to promote cooperative's development. Furthermore, Develtere, Pollet and Wanyama (2008, p.1) highlights that in the shift or era, "there was a comprehensive development cooperative strategy that was developed to encourage formulation and maintenance of cooperatives". Today, cooperatives are highly acknowledged and form part of the political agenda in many African countries including South Africa to achieve development (Okem, 2016).

In the 19th century, the cooperative sector was mainly established as an economic vehicle in South Africa. According to Barratt (1989) the first cooperatives movement was initiated predominantly for white agriculture cooperatives aiming to build the white farmers community. These co-operatives eventually developed into powerful business ventures that controlled the agriculture sector in terms of production, marketing, and processing in South Africa. Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies as people depend on the sector for their livelihoods. The sector in South Africa still comprises of huge commercial farming predominately operated by white farmers while the subsistence-based farming is usually owned by many black people in the rural areas (Matsane & Oyelake,2014). According to Mazibuko (2010), South Africa in the year 1994 had approximately 1400 cooperatives which many of them belonged to the white community. These agricultural cooperatives were estimated to produce a turnover of more than R20 billion Rands per annum and made a major contribution to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country (Mazibuko, 2010).

The statistics available from the National Registrar of Cooperatives shows that there has been a rapid increase in the number of formal cooperatives registered since 2006 with many cooperatives established in rural parts of South Africa such as Kwazulu-Natal amongst many. While cooperatives were racially exclusive, Mazibuko (2010) argues that they nevertheless illustrated the crucial role they play in mobilizing economies of scale and promoting market access. The Department of agriculture in conjunction with other stakeholders are playing crucial roles in building a genuine co-operatives movement that will accommodate and support black and/small scale farmers. Barrat (1989) argues that South Africa as a country is faced with a scenario of many African people not having land with communal land as the only resource available. The government is however currently working towards a strategy to join people together and gain land as beneficiaries of the land reform policies and farm collectively (Mazibuko, 2010) Furthermore, Zeuli and Radel (2005) highlights that lack of land is not only a problem that negatively contribute to the establishment of South African agricultural cooperatives. There are also several challenges that are stumbling blocks in developing sustainable agriculture cooperatives Internationally, nationally, and locally (Zeuli & Radel, 2005).

2.2.3 Values and principles guiding the operation of co-operatives.

The cooperatives movement was built on the Rochdale principles, making cooperatives appear different from regular business entities (Zeuli & Cropp,2004). As compared to the capitalist business enterprises that are usually motivated by greed, competition and selfishness, Wright (2014) argues that cooperatives are rooted in values of democratic ownership, self-help, equality, equity, and solidarity. According to Zeuli and Cropp (2004), the success of a cooperative's movement is dependent on adhering to the Rochdale seven core principles namely voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, concern for community, education, and training and cooperation amongst cooperatives.

The voluntary membership principle explains that individuals must form part of a cooperative voluntarily with democratic membership control within the entity (Wright,2014). Power according to this principle is not only possessed by the management team. Instead, all cooperatives' members have an equal decision-making power amongst themselves to control and lead the cooperative. Zeuli and Radel (2005) highlights that concern for community is another principle that governs cooperatives. The overall main aim of cooperatives according to concern for community principle is to contribute to sustainable development of the society. A

typical example of this principle can be a scenario where a primary agricultural cooperative creates employment opportunities for community members as well as donate basic needs such as food to local needy non-profit organisations of the community. Wright (2014) states that business entities however are profit-driven, and their overall aim is to attain high profit margins. Wright (2014) furthermore explains that education and training is a principle that binds cooperatives to provide education and training through empowerment of its members to effectively contribute to the success of a cooperative. Cooperation amongst cooperatives is one principle that promotes cooperatives to collaborate and work together. Cooperative's solidarity according to Okem (2016) empowers member cooperatives to build a collective stronger co-operative economy for economic participation and distribution of wealth.

2.2.4 Challenges confronting primary agricultural cooperatives

The literature review investigates issues raised by various authors and researchers on the challenges and status quo of cooperatives involved in agricultural production. According to DTI (2012) cooperatives possess a successful tradition around the world and have proven to be a relevant tool in contributing to development. However, cooperatives still encounter major challenges that vary from country to country (Koopman, 2006).

Generally, DTI (2010) highlights that primary agriculture cooperative are faced with a challenge of inadequate and insufficient resources/ infrastructure to operate. Ferguson and Kepe (2011) reiterates that high production costs of primary agriculture cooperatives are due to inadequate farms inputs, infrastructure, and financial capitals. Many primary agricultural cooperatives have proper cooperative ideas on paper, yet they lack resources to support the cooperatives vision (DTI, 2010). As a result, cooperatives become unsustainable. Koopman (2006) highlights that an additional challenge that was identified in Ethiopia is poor leadership and organisational skills. Many cooperatives management team members lack adequate management capabilities to operate their organisations which contributes to cooperatives mortality possibilities (Koopman,2006). The low performance of many primary agriculture cooperatives is due to chairperson's lack of education and management experiences (Ferguson & Keep,2011). A lack of management capabilities results into mismanagement of funds as well as mistreating the cooperatives members.

Machete (2004) furthermore argues that the stagnation of many co-operatives is due to lack of market knowledge. Many primary agricultural cooperatives do not have information and proper platforms to sell their products. According to Sultana, Ahmed and Shiratake (2014), scale

farmers and cooperatives lose their produce after harvesting due to many marketing challenges such as failure to explore their full market potentials. Cooperatives find it difficult to negotiate with potential buyers as Ortmann and King (2007) call It “lack of negotiation power”. Due to lack of education and proper training, Matsane and Oyelake (2014, p. 123) argues that many cooperative experience high transaction costs including “costs associated with searching for trade partners, new information, the distance to formal markets and contract enforcements which are detrimental to the efficient operation of markets inputs and products”. The cooperatives rather resort into informal arrangements where they produce for informal channels such as local shops, neighbour households and pension markets. According to Van de Walt (2005) a solution to this challenge is for the government initiatives to involve well trained extension officers both from the national to provincial to potential cooperatives on how to promote knowledge about how to deal with trading partners.

In India for example, the National Service Scheme (NSS) farmer surveys shows that agriculture cooperatives face challenges such as inadequate and poor human resources base. These organisations have a smaller access in services regarding product marketing and international platforms to sell their products (Machete,2004). The Bangladesh government according to DTI (2012) has adopted a cooperatives model led by the state integral part of rural development and poverty alleviation. Primary agricultural cooperatives encounter challenges such as lack of education amongst the cooperative’s members and poor managerial capabilities. The management team members are authoritative and have the highest power in controlling the cooperatives (Ortmann & King, 2007).

In Africa on the other hand, Okem (2016) state that co-operatives in Kenya play a major role in organising the production, processing and marketing of crop and livestock commodities However, many agriculture cooperatives are still negatively affected by debt burden and unpaid development loans (Okem, 2016). According to DTI (2012), emerging co-operatives still find it difficult to attract adequate capital. Poor financial skills and conflict amongst management and general members directly affects the lifespan of the cooperatives (Zeuli & Radel,2005).

Additionally, it can be stated that another reason why many primary agriculture cooperatives become unsuccessful in South Africa is due to limited trust and social cohesion. Lack of social cohesion according to Tortia, Valentinov and Iliopoulos (2013) means internal conflicts of interests and poor sense of ownership among members. Some primary agricultural members remain in such entities to only benefit external support.

Wright (2014) argues that the nature of cooperatives consists of democracy, collective interest, and trust between members. The absence of a shared vision from the management to member's result in cooperatives members losing trust and social ties (Machete,2004). When the board or management oversteps their mandate and not inform the general members about the decisions made, trust gets eroded which is a sign that many cooperatives still lack adequate governance skills. In addition, Machete (2004) highlights that a challenge that contribute to cooperatives more especially primary agriculture cooperatives to be unsustainable is high dependency on opportunities provided by the government. Agriculture cooperatives relies on the government for funding, information, education, and training on how to apply cooperatives principles and values into practice (RSA,2005). Irregular interventions from the government result in cooperatives mortality chance to be high (RSA,2005). According to Matsane and Oyelake (2014), a sharp division between small scale and commercial farming explains why there is still an unequal distribution of agricultural inputs such as farm assets, support services, markets, and land by the government. In peripheral areas such as the rural areas and semi-rural areas for instance, land allocation is usually the responsibility of the local tribal authority, and no individual will claim land formal ownership without their approval (Matsane & Oyelake,2014). In the process, De Janvry and Sadoutlet (2001) argues that the local tribal leadership incorporate corruption by distributing land while taking "cuts" from land applicants without following a proper well-defined, transparent processes. As a result, land applicants utilize land with no title deeds and later have trouble in accessing finances from financial institutions to expand their entities (Bank,2017). Small subsistence farmers and cooperatives with no access to land usually operate by accessing credit through informal lenders who normally charge them higher prices to rent a piece of land (De Janvry & Sadoutlet, 2001). Many cooperatives end up losing on making good profit that is meant to contribute to the sustainability of the entity (Sebopetji & Belete ,2009). A furthermore primary agricultural cooperatives challenge highlighted by choi (2006) is the issue of cooperatives member's age. In Korea, almost half of cooperatives operators are over the age of 60. As a result, primary agriculture cooperatives lose their labour through regular sick members and unexpected sudden deaths. Studies have been conducted on cooperatives and unsustainability in different part of the world including South Africa. From the above literature, this paper has outlined different findings regarding this research topic. Literature highlights that factors that contribute to cooperatives unsustainability are namely, insufficient resources (Land and infrastructure), Poor leadership skills and lack of trust from cooperatives members, Inability to penetrate commercial markets, lack of relevant technology and over reliance on the government interventions for cooperatives operations and

sustainability. Looking at the above authors findings, one can argue that the literature might not represent all the challenges that primary agriculture cooperatives encounter in townships hence this research study.

2.2.5 How agriculture cooperatives contribute to poverty and unemployment in South Africa

Primary agriculture cooperatives are entities that constitute of minimum five individual members. Primary agriculture cooperative is mostly formed at local level and aimed at providing employment and other services to its own members and community at large (Tchami,2007). In other words, these types of cooperatives produce, process, market products and supply services to its farming members to operate jointly and gain profit. Primary agriculture cooperatives are usually formed by poorest households in the effort of increasing income and food security to reduce absolute poverty (Birchall, 2003). According to Kao (2010) absolute poverty is a state of poverty where a household lives below the poverty line. In this case, an example of absolute poverty is a household income that makes it impossible to meet basic needs. The World bank defines poverty as hunger, lack of shelter, fear of the future and lack of representation and freedom (Mubangisi, 2008). More than a quarter of the population in developing countries still live-in poverty surviving with an income that is less than US$1 a day. (World bank report).

In South Africa, poverty is widespread mostly in rural areas, which are former homelands that suffered discrimination during the apartheid era (Sharaunga & Mudhara, 2020). The South African government has introduced policies and programmes with the aim of eradicating poverty. Post 1994, one of the immediate policies that was introduced was called the reconstruction distributive programme (RDP) which had a distributive intent of achieving social and economic justice of the people that were previously disadvantaged by the apartheid legacies (Gumede, 2015). Social assistance programmes in a form of cash transfers and others were offered to the vulnerable groups of the community to minimize poverty in households (Lund,2008). As a result, this programme was argued to create a dependency syndrome, where citizens were perceived as “passive” and not active recipients of their development. The government therefore introduced additional programmes such as cooperative entities that were intended to create jobs and allowed citizens to work for themselves.

RSA (1994) shows that there is approximately 17 million people in South Africa that are unable to afford a minimum lifestyle. The Gauteng City Region observatory (GCRO) sixth quality of

life survey furthermore indicates that since Covid 19, the poverty levels in Gauteng have shot up. The survey shows that 36% of households over a third are still living in poverty which makes it difficult for people to afford basic needs (Stoltz, 2021). The latest quarterly labour survey released by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) shows that there is approximately 6.7 million people who do not have jobs (Maeko, 2020). A high population of people are still unemployed, and the government is unable to create sufficient jobs for its own citizens, skilled or unskilled. Despite programmes such as community work programme (CWP) and Expanded work programme (EWP), that were implemented to create jobs, unemployment still appears as one of the social development issues that South Africa is still battling to combat (RSA, 2013) hence cooperatives were perceived as a solution.

Wanyama, Delvetere and Pollet (2008) state that as an economic alternative, cooperatives are viable and strong tools that promote self-help and mutualism. These entities give vulnerable groups an opportunity to work together and create decent work for all to ensure inclusive economy participation. According to RSA (1994), cooperatives are also means to create gender equality which is essentially empowering women to be become independent. Sharaunga and Mudhara (2020, p.128) argues that women must participate in cooperatives to reduce poverty within their households because they "invest a higher proportion of their earnings in their families than men". Cooperatives are a means of empowering women to participate in decisions that affects their lives. In that way, women become independent from male figures and minimize chances of them being stuck in abusive intimate relationships (WHO,2013).

The South African government through the Cooperatives Act 13 of 2005 has committed to provide support for the growth of cooperatives especially for vulnerable groups such as women, youth and people living with disabilities. The Act also seek to ensure that co-operatives are registered as entities separate from their members and they preserve a distinct legal status. Like any other business, cooperatives are expected to be well-managed, efficient and be effective financially (DTI,2012). Currently, it can be highlighted that the government takes responsibility in promoting the formation and management of cooperatives. However, the South African government also acknowledges that there is a need to support the agricultural sector in rural communities including an additional investment in the expansion of physical, technological infrastructure and services. Furthermore, the government also encourages cooperatives members to be responsible recipients of government resources as Thaba (2015) shows that some cooperatives receive government grants and tend to misuse it instead of achieving the cooperatives primary functions.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.3.1 The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

The ABCD approach is an acronym for Asset Based Community Development and it was the theoretical framework that guided the research study. Green and Haines (2015, p. 14) define an asset as a "special resource that an individual, organisation or entire community can use to reduce or prevent poverty and injustice". Ledwith (2011) perceives ABCD as a community development approach that is participatory in mobilizing community assets to improve the community member's quality of life. In other words, ABCD can also be referred to as a perspective that is used to build on existing assets to achieve a community development goal (Ledwith, 2011).

The primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong were perceived as entities that had potential to improve if they identified and accessed existing assets in their locality. Assets in this case are land, Infustructure and other agriculture inputs that can contribute into the cooperative's success. Furthermore, it can be highlighted that assets, institutions and associations also appeared as critical stakeholders that have a potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the primary cooperatives (Green & Haines,2015). These include local authorities, online agriculture forums for networking, government departments, local market retailers and street vendors as the cooperatives market.

The ABCD furthermore outlined those human resources such as the cooperatives members indigenous agriculture skills form part of the cooperatives assets because when community members are empowered, they can perform optimally. Ledwith (2011) emphasizes that there is a link between the ABCD approach and primary agriculture cooperatives in a sense that both approaches promote self-help, mutual benefit and developement. Generally, cooperatives are assumed to strive if they are owned by local residents of the community (Lyimo,2012).

2.4 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the overview of cooperatives by providing cooperatives definitions from various authors and the principles, values and principles that govern and guide cooperatives as entities. This chapter presented the origin of cooperatives and continued to outline the challenges that cooperatives encountered from country to country. The significance of cooperatives considering how they address poverty and unemployment was also highlighted. The last part of the chapter discussed the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) theory which is the theoretical approach underpinning the research study. This section,

furthermore, showed how cooperatives had a potential to improve if they identified and mobilized existing assets in their locality. The next chapter will be discussing the research methodology underpinning the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overview of the research processes and techniques by first outlining the research approach and design of the study. Furthermore, the research study highlights the sampling procedures and data collection method that was utilized to collect data in the study area. The chapter further discusses how data was analysed followed by the ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Research Approach and design

A research approach is a plan and procedure that span the decision from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2013). This research study used a qualitative approach to explore and deeply understand the lived experiences of participants in their natural environment, thus looking at the sustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong (Crewell,2013)**.**

Case study is the research design that was utilized. According to Creswell Cousin (2005) a case study is a method of analysing systems with a comprehensive view. There are different types of case studies. However, this research study used a single case study to comprehensively explore and understand factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agriculture cooperatives in Katlehong.

3.2.2 Population, sample and sampling procedures

Ritchie and Lewis (2013) highlight that a population is referred as an entire group or phenomenon that the researcher is interested in researching about. Singh (2006) emphasizes that a population is a parent group in which a sample is drawn from. In research, a population can be described as the entire mass of characteristics of a specific group that the researcher is interested in researching about. The targeted population of this research study was all qualifying primary agriculture cooperatives under Ekurhuleni Municipality.

A sample is a section of a wider population. Richie and Lewis (2013) define a sample rather as a subset of characteristics extracted from the population as a representative. According to Richie and Lewis (2013) determining a sample size is an important step when planning to conduct a study. Based on a study that was conducted, the sample of the research study was fifteen (15) members representing primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong in Ekurhuleni municipality.

A sampling strategy is an art of selecting a sample out of a whole population (Singh, 2006). Purposive sampling strategy is part of a non-probability sampling that deliberately produces a sample assuming that it represents a population. In this research study, the researcher used this technique to select fifteen (15) research participants to take part in the study. The purposive sampling helped the researcher to select the participants based on the characteristics that are of interest to the investigator (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Any fifteen (15) members of primary agriculture cooperatives based in Katlehong Ekurhuleni municipality were purposively selected to form part of the research sample. The selection criteria were the following

- Participants were either male or female.
- There were African individuals below the age of 18 years/ above the age of 80 years.
- Qualifying primary agriculture cooperatives had 2 years working experience and more.

Moreover, the researcher was granted permission to conduct the study by Ekurhuleni municipality and received a database of cooperatives. The population of the study was all qualifying primary agriculture cooperatives under Ekurhuleni municipality. The researcher was able to purposefully recruit fifteen (15) members from the database.

3.2.3 Research tool

The semi-structured guide was used as a research instrument. According to Barbour (2014) An interview schedule is a data collection tool commonly used by social researchers to collect raw data from the participants. Traditionally, interview schedules are usually in a form of printed list of questions that are highly structured to collect data from research participants about a research topic. According to Alshenqeeti (2014), utilizing interview schedules enable the researcher to check the accuracy of responses through observing how participants answer their questions.

3.2.4 Pre-testing of the research tool

Barbour (2014) states that pre-testing interview schedules involves conducting an interview session with a participant that possesses the same characteristics as the targeted research sample. Pre-tests in qualitative research are conducted to check whether the interview questions are accurate to extract information that it intends to receive from participants (Mikuska,2017). To pre-test the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study with one qualifying member representing a primary agriculture cooperative. The cooperative member who formed part of the pilot study did not form part of the selected sample. The pilot study was conducted to check if the questions were going to be clearly understood by the participants and whether the questions would yield the results that the researcher was anticipating. During the pre-testing process, the researcher realised that section 2, first and second questions elicited similar information from the research participants. As a result, question 2 had to be omitted in the interview schedule to avoid repeating the questions (Bryman,2004).

3.5. Method of data collection

In-depth one-on-one interviews were used as a method of data collection. An interview according to Alshenqeeti (2014), is not merely a method of data collection. Interviews are a natural way of interacting, and it offers researchers an opportunity to uncover information that is not probably accessible using observations and questionnaires. During interviews, mutual understanding can be ensured because the researcher gets an opportunity to simplify questions that are not understood by participants (Rahman,2020). As a result, accurate data is elicited from the interview. According to Gray, Wong-Wylie Rempel and Cook (2020), interviews have a disadvantage of participants not willing to reveal their views and perceptions at times about certain events. In-depth interviews according to Raham (2020) are time consuming. To mitigate that, the researcher was guided by the interview structure that was set for a specific period to avoid longer discussions.

3.6 Data analysis

Wong (2008) defines the term data analysis as a process of systematically searching and arranging interview scripts, observation notes or other materials that the researcher accumulates to get a better understanding of the phenomenon. This process includes comparing the outcomes of various statements from different respondents and identifying if the responses are answering the research questions (Wong,2008). To analyse the qualitative data, thematic analysis was used while descriptive statistics was used analyse the participants demographic

information. According to Timmermans and Tavory (2022), data analysis is a method of identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns. In other words, thematic analysis is a process of searching repeated patterns of meaning across a data set. Following the data analysis stages by Braun and Clarke (2006) the researcher first familiarized herself with data, looking at the depth and breadth of the content. This means that the researcher actively listened to the audio recordings while transcribing information into verbatim text as heard from the recorder (Wong,2008).

The second stage of thematic analysis included generating codes, where the researcher assessed the raw material data (verbatim) into meaningful groups called codes. In completing the generation of codes, the third stage of the data analysis was searching for themes. In this stage, the researcher studied the codes and sorted them into potential themes. After identifying themes, phase four of thematic analysis according to Bourn and Clarke (2013) is reviewing of the themes, which is finding out whether the candidate themes appear to form a coherent pattern. Defining and naming of themes was phase five of thematic data analysis. In this phase, the researcher identified the essence of what each team was about as well as themes overall and organized them into a coherent information (Bourn & Clarke,2013). Each theme had a meaning, the researcher took into consideration how each theme fitted in answering the research questions (Timmermans & Tavory,2022).

Creswell (2013) indicates that the last phase of thematic analysis is producing the report which is a phase where the researcher drafts a report about the worked-out themes. The research study followed the sequence of the thematic analysis and provided a concise, logical, and coherent story of what the data outlined within and across the themes. The write up provided sufficient evidence of the themes within the data. Furthermore, it can also be stated that data in each theme was analysed with reference to the literature review and research question of the study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003)

3.6.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to a degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods used to ensure quality of the study (Creswell,2013). According to Korstjensa and Moser (2017) trustworthiness poses a simple question of intending to find out if the study can be considered worthy by readers. The best-known criteria of trustworthiness are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. According to Given (2008), credibility is aimed at establishing if the research findings represent information drawn from participant's

original data. To check credibility, the researcher conducted triangulation, which included gathering feedback from a professional researcher to validate research findings in reference to the participant's original data.

Transferability is a second criterion of trustworthiness which is aimed at investigating the aspect of applicability (Korstjensa & Moser ,2017). To ensure transferability, the researcher provided a comprehensive descriptive data of the research study such as the context of where the research study was carried out, setting, demographics, socio-economic, sample size, inclusion, and exclusion criteria. Given (2008) highlight the third criterion of trustworthiness as confirmability which is the neutrality or a degree in which findings are consistent. Attempting confirmability, the researcher held a debriefing session where she presented analysed data and received feedback from a supervisor. This prevented biases from only the researcher 's perspective. Dependability is the final criterion of trustworthiness, and it refers to the stability of the data over time and conditions (Korstjensa & Moser,2017). The researcher in this case constantly re-checked and reviewed the process notes about the aspects and decision of the research study.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

3.7.1 Ethical clearance

The researcher obtained an ethical clearance from University of the Witwatersrand Ethics committee. The Ethical clearance permitted the researcher to proceed with collecting primary data from the selected research participants.

3.7.2 *Informed consent*

The researcher provided participant information sheet (Appendix A) and consent forms (Appendix B) which were signed by each participant as a way of understanding what the research study is aimed to achieve. Consent sheets/forms and participation sheet clearly outlined the purpose of the study, procedures, possible risks and benefits of the research study (Klenke,2008). Before the interview sessions were conducted, the researcher ensured that all participants clearly understood the interview by first clarifying all the presented questions in a language they understood. As the researcher is fluent in both indigenous languages including English, there was no need to use the services of an interpreter.

3.7.3 Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study.

According to Gregory (2003), Voluntary participation refers to research participants undertaking in the research study voluntarily. Participants during this research study were not coerced, manipulated, or bribed to participate. Instead, participants were informed about their right to withdraw from a study without suffering negative consequences.

3.7.4 Avoidance of harm /non- maleficence

The research study did not pose sensitive questions that resulted into direct and indirect harm to the participants putting them at risk (Gregory,2003). The researcher informed the participants that any sensitive issue that emerged during the interviews would be referred to the cooperative's management and area social workers to formally address the presenting problem at hand. During data collection process, the participants were comfortable with all the interview questions hence there was no referral to the area social workers offices.

3.7.5 Anonymity

Anonymity is a form of confidentiality (Klenke, 2008). It involves keeping the participant's identity secretive. To ensure that anonymity is maintained, the research identified each participant with numbers. For example, participant '1', participant '2' and 3. In this way, the formation revealed during the interview was identified with the research participant 's character and not their identity.

3.7.6 ***Confidentiality***

According to Klenke (2008), confidentiality refers to the researcher 's agreement of keeping the research information safe and not exposing it to unauthorized authorities. The researcher ensured that all the participants' responses were kept safe and confidential. Participants were informed that information would be shared for research purposes. (Wiles et. al,2008).

3.8. Chapter summary

This chapter presented the qualitative approach and research design pertaining the study. This was followed by the explanation of the population and sampling procedures, data collection tools, data analysis and ethical considerations of the study. The next chapter outlined the presentation of data and discussions of the research study findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The following chapter focuses on the presentation and discussion of data collected. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse demographic information, while data collected was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study were discussed in relation to the objectives of the study. The themes were illustrated with verbatim responses given by the participants.

4.2 Demographic information

Table 4.3.1 Demographic profile of participants (N=15)

Demographic Factor	**Sub-category**	**No.**
Gender	Males	9
	Females	6
Total number of years operating	0-5 years	10
	5 years -10 years	5
	11-15 years	0
Language	Isizulu	10
	Nothern Sotho	5
Level of education	Did not complete primary level of education	0
	Completed primary level of education	11
	Matriculated	3
	Tertiary education	1

Table 4.2.1 represents the demographic profile of the participants. A total of 15 participants formed part of the study, and they were members of primary agriculture cooperatives based in Katlehong township in Ekurhuleni. All the cooperatives operated for more than two years and comprised of African participants, with whom six were female and nine were males. English, IsiZulu and Northern Sesotho were the languages spoken during the data collection process. As the researcher is fluent in both indigenous languages including English, there was no need

to use the services of an interpreter. Of the 15 participants, only 11 participants completed their primary level of education, three participants managed to acquire matric certificates while 1 participant had a tertiary qualification. In terms of ages, all participants were majors and adults over the age of 18 years. The youngest participant was 33 years, and the oldest research participant was 66 years old.

4.3.1 Tables showing the objectives and themes that emanated from the study.

Study objectives	Themes	Quotations supporting the themes
Reasons for having primary agricultural cooperatives	**To eradicate poverty and end hunger**	*"A cooperative is when people meet with the same vision to do something for the community which is to eradicate hunger and create jobs for community members. The main reason we started our cooperatives was to eradicate poverty in our community".* *"We are still standing even today. Some of the cooperatives members have built homes and some are still taking care of their families with the cooperatives stipends they receive".*
	Promotes social cohesion	*"A cooperative as a business creates a platform whereby people come together and operate with an idea of making profit and help community members"* *"It means working together as individuals to do something with your life and not just sitting down and waiting for the government to provide basic needs for you as a society"*
	Gained skills about running	*"Many of our cooperatives' members originate from villages and we naturally have skills that we share.*

Benefits derived from participating in primary agricultural cooperatives.	**primary agricultural cooperatives**	*The skills were taught to us when we were staying in farms with our families during the apartheid era"* *"Many cooperatives' members know about piggery because I taught them from experience. Many years back, it appeared as a harsh treatment to me when I was taught but today it is working for my own good".*
	Enhanced my knowledge about different activities that fall under primary agricultural cooperatives	*"We have been trained to plough and do chicken farming. The training was inclusive because we covered many things about agriculture that we did not know in the first place"* *"Greenhouses can also be a solution because with green houses, the plants are protected from natural disasters such as extreme sun rays and heavy hailstorms. Green houses produce good plants" as compared to the conventional way of farming.*
Perception regarding the factors contributing to unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives.	**Lack of designated land for different projects.**	*"Land. We have been operating in a school for a long time. At times, funders would like to fund us, but we lack a lease agreement letter which means no funding. I know land is not easily accessible but if the government can help us to try access it".* *"Land is also a problem. I really wish one day I can build a big structure for my livestock because I do not have enough space to erect infrastructure"* *"The whole year I have realised that the government officials have a problem. They mention that the government does not have land yet in other meetings*

		they say the land is available. They say they need R500 from us to apply for land and we end up not getting land"
	Misuse of financial resources earmarked for projects.	*"I must confirm that we received funding and conflict started within the cooperative. People wanted to have a share of that money. Our treasurer ended up having so much pressure because they ganged up on her saying they want their money"* *"There is someone who was given R250 000 as a cooperative. One of the management people built a four roomed house. They even used the rest of the money. The cooperative does not even have a garden. That is why they misused the money. At times, it is not necessary for the government to give us money. What really matters us for them to give us land, Infustructure, tools and water".* *"We once ploughed spinach and did very well. It is later when we found that the profit was eaten by the management team. I think we made around R3000. Ever since there has not been a concrete answer".*
	Lack of suitable agricultural Equipment.	*"The government must help us with Jojo tanks, equipment and tools. It is better to have tools to work with on the ground"* *"We need fencing and wooden fence to at least get security for our gardens. Our land can be divided as one side for livestock and the other side for ploughing"* *"We asked for a tractor from the municipality to plough. All they do is to tell us stories saying the tractor is not working. If not, then they tell you that they need a qualified driver for the tractor. It cannot*

		be driven by anyone else except for the qualified driver. That is their everyday story. I blame social workers".
	Lack of cooperation within and between cooperatives	*"The first challenge is cooperating with one another within the cooperatives themselves. Some staff members make excuses when it comes to going to the field and work. They have excuses such as I am sick, I am going to collect SASSA grant".* *"Anger. When people have jealousy among each other. Absenteeism of cooperatives members is also a huge problem. We cannot be six in the cooperative and only 3 people come and do cooperatives daily duties".*
	Poor managerial skills from chairpersons.	*"Chairpersons at times feel intimidated by us more especially if we are more knowledgeable than them. We need to share responsibilities as an entity"*
	Corruption within the funding system.	*"The municipality always advertise grants, but they award their funds to their relatives. I don't like them because they are very corrupt".* *"They got R30 million, and they never came back to us. That is what kills many cooperatives. We have corrupt officials' wo act like saints"* *"These officials are giving funding to cooperatives that do not even have land or something to show. But we who have been operating and have something to show, no funding has ever been granted to us"*
	Lack of reliable markets for our	*"What I am saying is that we must have a market. A place where we can be asked to work with orders,*

	products and goods.	*supply in certain seasons collectively in Ekurhuleni municipality"* *"We need a market. The question is where do we sell our produce after harvesting".* *"Our municipality can make relationships with mortuaries and other entities on our behalf. Cooperatives can supply mortuaries"*
Views on how primary agricultural cooperatives can become sustainable.	**Regular monitoring and evaluation of cooperatives activities**	"We *need reliable and competent social workers who will constantly monitor us, identify our needs and address them. We need quarterly monitoring and evaluation. I believe cooperatives have potential to combat hunger in South Africa".*
	Members must be assisted with funding and farming equipment	*"The government must help us with Jojo tanks, equipment and tools. It is better to have tools to work with on the ground".*
	Making arable land available to cooperatives.	*"I think land is very important. We might get funding but if we do not have land, where will we use our funding on"*
	Recruitment of a younger generation	*"We need to motivate more the youth to engage in agriculture, showing them the opportunities that exist more especially those that are unemployed".*

	Training of members to upskill them.	"*I think a solution could be for the government to gather cooperatives and give us basic information about what a cooperative is and sustainability issues. The problem is we do not know about this issues"*
	Creation of markets where cooperatives can sell their produce.	*"Nothing except for funding and market. The experience we have with retailers is that they tell us that our produce is not first grade, forgetting that for one to produce first grade, we need to have proper fertilizers, certain PH soil tests that requires a lot of money. Retailers end up grading our vegetables second grade and we get less profit". Forestry is mainly operated by white people. Portuguese and Italians are leading in vegetable farming. Why can't we be linked with those ethnic groups and get market from them so that we can develop"*
	Reducing Corruption	*"If the government can send officials from the highest level. They must make sure that the resources are trickled down to us as field workers. We are now tired of going up and down looking for assistance. We need help".*

4. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.4 Reasons and benefits of participating in primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong

4.4.1 Eradicate poverty and end hunger.

Findings from the data collected indicated that the need to eradicate hunger was one of the reasons why primary agricultural cooperatives members joined these groups. This theme was mentioned by most participants, and it was starkly captured when they said the following:

"A cooperative is when people meet with the same vision to do something for the community which is to eradicate hunger and create jobs for community members. The main reason we started our cooperatives was to eradicate poverty in our community".

And

"We are still standing even today. Some of the cooperatives members have built homes and some are still taking care of their families with the cooperatives stipends they receive".

The above response from participants emphasises the need to eradicate hunger and poverty as one of the reasons why members of primary agricultural cooperatives joined or formed these groups. These findings concur with literature where Wright (2014) states that cooperatives are instruments that have a potential to eradicate poverty and hunger. As entities, they advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SGGs). It is important to note that even though Wright 's research or study was done in 2014, hunger and poverty still appear as the social ills that cripple Africa and beyond. Thus, the reason why primary agricultural cooperatives in South Africa exist.

4.4.2 Promotes social cohesion

Social cohesion is one of the findings that was highlighted during data collection. Participants outlined that the reason why they participated in primary agricultural cooperatives is because these entities promoted social cohesion within the groups and the community at large. One primary agricultural member outlined the following:

"A cooperative as a business creates a platform whereby people come together to operate with an idea of making profit and help community members".

And

"It means working together as individuals to do something with our lives and not just sitting down and waiting for the government to provide basic needs to you as a society"

The above participants responses show how primary agricultural cooperatives promote social cohesion, thus mutual solidarity to achieve cooperatives goals. According to Goodwin (2018), the term cooperative emanates from cooperation which is a Latin word that loosely translates to "working together". In order words, cooperatives enable people to pool their assets, talents, and energies together to meet a common goal. Wright (2014) highlighted that by working together, the cooperative members can accomplish objectives that are usually challenging to be achieved by one individual alone. Regardless of the context where the primary cooperatives research studies are conducted, a common trait is that cooperatives possess the promotion of mutual solidarity expressed among individuals and communities at large. Inequalities, exclusions, disparities based on ethnicity, gender, class, disability, and age are eliminated in these self-help groups hence diversity is still evident in many primary agricultural cooperatives. Therefore, these findings concur with what is already available in the literature.

4.5 **Benefits derived from participating in primary agricultural cooperatives**

4.5.1 To share skills about primary agricultural cooperatives

Participants from the research study indicated that one of the benefits that they gained from primary agricultural cooperatives is an opportunity to share skills during the process of operating the entities. The primary agricultural cooperative's members are enabled to extract knowledge and skills from each other for self-development. This theme was clearly supported by the following quotations:

"Many of our cooperatives' members originate from villages and we naturally have skills that we share. The skills were taught to us when we were staying in farms with our families during the apartheid era"

And

"Many cooperatives' members know about piggery because I taught them from experience. Many years back, it appeared as a harsh treatment to me when I was taught but today it is working for my own good".

Responses from the participant representatives indicate that primary agricultural cooperatives are platforms where cooperatives members share skills and knowledge with each other during

their operation. The knowledge is informed by their previous experiences many years back. Cooperative's members are not passive recipients who always benefits skills from the entity. Instead, they also stand in a good position to contribute their indigenous knowledge and skills to develop primary agricultural cooperatives. Green and Haines (2015) indicates that the ABCD is a community development approach that is participatory in mobilizing community assets to improve the community members quality of life. An asset in this instance also refers to human resources such as agricultural knowledge that can be identified from community members to improve the primary agricultural cooperatives. During the data collection process, it has been indicated that many primary cooperatives members fall under the elderly category which is an advantage to the entities because the older generation is able to share their agricultural skills and knowledge with the younger generation to improve their primary agricultural cooperatives.

4.5.2 To Expand knowledge about primary agricultural cooperatives.

The research participants mentioned that another benefit of participating in primary agricultural cooperatives is the expansion of knowledge about the entities. Many cooperatives' members are already informed about agriculture and yet their knowledge could be irrelevant when it comes to the current age. The theme was expanded below:

"We have been trained to plough and do chicken farming" The training was inclusive because we covered many things about agriculture that we did not know in the first place".

And

"Greenhouses can also be a solution because with green houses, the plants are protected from natural disasters such as extreme sun rays and heavy hailstorms. Green houses produce good plants" as compared to the conventional way of farming"

The above responses from the participants support the fact that cooperative members benefit from skills development sessions while operating in their entities. Government and private sector institutions afford cooperatives members an opportunity to gain new knowledge that is applicable to the new era. Midgley (2014) states that the sustainable development goal number 9 outlines the importance of countries fostering inclusivity and sustainable innovation. The world is becoming interconnected with technology; hence technology is also introduced in the agricultural space to improve agriculture productivity. This finding concur with literature as

Wright (2016) further explains that education and training is a principle that binds cooperatives to provide education and training to cooperatives members. The cooperatives members are empowered to effectively contribute to the success of their primary agricultural cooperatives.

4.6 Cooperatives perception on factors contributing to agricultural cooperatives unsustainability.

4.6.1 Lack of designated land for different projects

The findings revealed that one of the factors that make primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong to become unsustainable is the lack of land. The following responses show how lack of access to land cripples the sustainable development of primary agricultural cooperatives:

"Land. We have been operating in a school for a long time. At times, funders would like to fund us but we lack a lease agreement letter which means no funding. I know land is not easily accessible but if the government can help us to try access it".

And

"The whole year I have realised that the government officials have a problem. They mention that the government does not have land yet in other meetings they say the land is available. They say they need R500 from us to apply for land and we end up not getting land"

And

"Land is also a problem. I really wish one day I can build a big structure for my livestock because I do not have enough space to erect infrastructure"

Land is one asset that all farmers need to conduct agriculture. Without land or settlement, it is impossible to do either vegetable or animal farming. Matsane and Oyelake (2014) states that in many areas, it is challenging to access land because land is usually awarded to people who do not deserve it. Bank (2017) furthermore highlights that working on a piece of land where a farmer does not have a title deed hinders progress. The farmer in future face hurdles when it comes to accessing funding and other sponsorship.

4.6.2 Misuse of financial resources earmarked for projects

Responses from agricultural cooperatives indicated that misuse of funding and resources by the cooperatives members results into cooperatives not becoming sustainable. The research

participants outlined that it is usually the cooperatives management members that misuse either the organisation funds or resources. This theme was captured when the participants said the following:

"There is someone who was given R250 000 as a cooperative. One of the management people built a four roomed house. They even used the rest of the money. The cooperative does not even have a garden. That is why they misused the money. At times, it is not necessary for the government to give us money. What really matters us for them to give us land, Infustructure, tools and water"

And

"I must confirm that we received funding and conflict started within the cooperative. People wanted to have a share of that money. Our treasurer ended up having so much pressure because they ganged up on her saying they want their money"

According to DTI (2012), emerging co-operatives still find it difficult to attract adequate capital. Poor financial skills and conflict amongst management and general members directly affects the lifespan of the cooperatives (Zeuli & Radel,2005). According to Koopman (2006), A lack of management capabilities results into mismanagement of funds. Therefore, the current findings concur with literature as it was also found that misuse of funds still result in cooperatives being unsustainable.

4.6.3 Lack of suitable agricultural equipment

It was found that without basic equipment and resources such as water and agriculture tools, the cooperatives members failed to operate adequately. This theme was clearly expanded from below responses:

"The government must help us with Jojo tanks, equipment and tools. It is better to have tools to work with on the ground"

And

"We need fencing to at least get security for our gardens. Our land can be divided as one side for livestock and the other side for ploughing"

And

"We asked for a tractor from the municipality to plough. All they do is to tell us stories saying the tractor is not working. If not, then they tell you that they need a qualified driver for the tractor. It cannot be driven by anyone else except for the qualified driver. That is their everyday story. I blame social workers".

The responses above from cooperative members shows that lack of adequate agricultural equipment for primary agricultural cooperatives result in them being unsustainable. These findings relate to literature where DTI (2010) states that generally cooperatives are faced with a challenge of inadequate and insufficient resources /infrastructure to operate. The author reiterates this further by stating that many cooperatives have proper cooperative ideas on paper, yet they lack resources to implement the cooperatives vision and sustain their cooperatives (DTI, 2010).

4.6.4 Lack of cooperation within and between cooperatives

From the data responses granted by the research participants, it was stated that non-cooperation within and amongst agriculture cooperatives is one negative factor influencing the cooperatives from not being sustainable. Some individual responses are outlined below to support this theme.

"Anger. When people have jealousy among each other. Absenteeism of cooperatives members is also a huge problem. We cannot be six in the cooperative and only 3 people come and do cooperatives daily duties".

And

"The first challenge is cooperating with one another within the cooperatives themselves. Some staff members make excuses when it comes to going to the field and work. They have excuses such as I am sick, I am going to collect SASSA grant".

These findings concur with literature as Wright (2014) highlights that non-cooperation is one that contributes in cooperatives mortality. Literature shows that in South Africa, many cooperatives become unsuccessful due to limited trust and social cohesion. The absence of a shared vision from the management and cooperatives members results into loss of trust and social ties (Machete,2004). Case studies of cooperatives states that jealousy towards each becomes a problem. Furthermore, absenteeism and lethargy are also behaviours that discourages the whole cooperatives team from optimally performing and sustaining the cooperative.

4.6.5 Poor managerial skills from chairpersons

Poor management is one of the findings that emerged from the study. Three participants indicated that poor management is one of the factors that hinders agriculture cooperatives from becoming sustainable. This theme was clearly captured in the following responses:

"We once ploughed spinach and did very well. It is later when we found that the profit is being used by the management team".

And

"There is someone who was given R250 000 as a cooperative. One of the management members built a 4 roomed house. They even used the rest of the money. The cooperative does not even have a garden".

And

"Chairpersons at times feel intimidated by us more especially if we are more knowledgeable than them. We need to share responsibilities as an entity".

The above responses reiterate that poor management is one of the contributing factors making primary agricultural cooperatives unsustainable. This finding relates to literature where Koopman (2006) highlights poor management in a cooperative as a cause of high mortality possibilities. Many cooperatives management team members lack adequate management capabilities. The management team mismanages funds and mistreat cooperatives members which results into cooperative underperforming. Zeuli and Radel (2005) proceeds to explain that poor financial skills and conflict amongst management and general members directly affects the lifespan of the cooperatives. In other words, the cooperatives management team must have the best interest of the organisation at heart to accomplish its objectives thus contributing to the organisation sustainability.

4.6.6 Corruption within the funding system

Findings indicated that corruption is one factor that cripples the existence of agricultural cooperatives. According to the responses from the participants, corruption was perceived as a disease such as cancer that slowly hinders the growth of primary agricultural cooperatives. The South African government has resources, yet the resources are not adequately filtered down to the citizens. The below quotations outline the research participant's views on corruption:

"The municipality always advertises grants, but they award the funds to their relatives. I don't like them because they are very corrupt".

And

"They got R30 million, and they never came back to us. That is what kills many cooperatives. We have corrupt officials' who act like saints"

And

"These officials are giving funding to cooperatives that do not even have land or something to show. But we who have been operating and have something to show, no funding has ever been granted to us"

Agricultural cooperatives rely on the government for funding, information, education, and training (RSA,2005). Lack of interventions from the government influence cooperatives entities to have a probability of high mortality rates. Finances are usually channelled to cooperatives who do not qualify to have funding and develop their entities. The ignorance of the reality of nepotism, corruption, and financial mismanagement is heightened by illegal appointments in organisations (Ketcham, 2020).

4.6.7 Lack of reliable markets for our products and goods

Findings showed that the notion of no access to markets was also another factor leading to the unsustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives. This theme was starkly captured when participants said the following:

"What I am saying is that we must have a market. A place where we can be asked to work with orders, supply in certain seasons collectively in Ekurhuleni municipality"

And

"We need a market. The question is where do we sell our produce after harvesting".

And

"Our municipality can make relationships with mortuaries and other entities on our behalf. Cooperatives can supply mortuaries"

Machete (2004) states that the stagnation of many co-operatives is due to lack of market knowledge. Many primary cooperatives do not have information and proper platforms to sell their products. According to Sultana, Ahmed and Shiratake (2014), agricultural small-scale

farmers and cooperatives lose their produce due to many marketing challenges. They encounter difficulties when it comes to exploring the full market potentials. The cooperatives rather resort into informal arrangements which includes producing for informal channels such as local shops, neighbouring households, and pension markets. Even though this was highlighted by few participants, it raised an important issue that also concurs with what literature states when it comes to lack of access to markets by primary agricultural cooperatives.

4.7 Views of members on how primary agricultural cooperatives can better be sustained in Ekurhuleni's Katlehong township

4.7.1 Regular monitoring and evaluation of cooperatives activities.

Findings revealed that monitoring and evaluation was a need if cooperatives are to be sustainable. It was revealed that there is a need for the government or local municipality officials such as social workers to conduct at least quarterly monitoring and evaluation sessions where they will be able to identify the agriculture cooperatives needs and progress. It was indicated that monitoring and evaluation sessions may help to identify the primary cooperatives operational mistakes and give solutions on how to move forward. It was showed that several primary agriculture cooperatives in Katlehong township were legally registered for many years and yet they did not get the opportunity to access the social worker's supervision sessions. To support this theme, participants said the following:

"We *need reliable and competent social workers who will constantly monitor us, identify our needs and address them. We need quarterly monitoring and evaluation. I believe cooperatives have potential to combat hunger in South Africa".*

One participant emphasizes this recommendation by stating that:

"We request social workers to get out of their offices and take us through the cooperatives processes".

The research participants quotations suggested that self-help groups must receive monitoring and evaluation. The above findings relate to literature where Gudda (2011) emphasized on a need for professionals to regularly monitor and evaluate programmes or projects. According to Kusek and Rist (2004) monitoring and evaluation is an appraisal that is conducted to analyse the programme progress and its impact. Therefore. It is recommended that social workers conduct regular visits to primary agricultural cooperatives as form of guidance and support.

4.7.2 Members to be assisted with funding and farming equipment

Findings revealed that the primary agricultural cooperatives that have been operating for more than five (5) years in Katlehong township outlined that a lack of infrastructure and equipment hindered them from sustainability. This includes structures, water supplies, seeds and fencing. The theme was captured when participants said the following:

"The government must help us with Jojo tanks, equipment and tools. It is better to have tools to work with on the ground".

And

"We need garden tools because we bring our own garden tools from home and take them when we knock off from work".

The above responses reiterate that lack of funding and farming equipment's contributes in primary agricultural cooperatives to become unsustainable. This finding relates to literature where Lendwith (2014) stated that primary agricultural cooperative has a potential to improve if they can be assisted to identify and mobilize existing assets in their locality. Utilizing the ABCD approach, Green & Haines (2015) define assets as land, Infustructure and other agriculture inputs that can contribute into the cooperative's success. It is, therefore, a recommendation that the government provides infrastructure and equipment to the local cooperatives. In a way, the cooperatives field workers will be motivated and propelled to work productively at a faster pace.

4.7.3 Making arable land available to cooperatives

Findings highlighted that the government must allocate land that will solely belong to cooperatives. Cooperatives operating as primary agriculture cooperatives do not have their own land. Cooperatives either rent from a government location such as schools, churches, and police stations for a certain period. In some cases, cooperatives illegally occupied the land, and that became problematic at times when the landowners evicted them without a notice. Participants said the following to support this theme:

"I think land is very important. We might get funding but if we do not have land, where will we use our funding on"

And

"I think what could help us is the government to give us land. If we can get land, we will create jobs".

Studies show that land remains a crucial asset that plays a role in addressing the past inequalities in caused by apartheid. Ketcham (2020) states that land reform processes are currently hijacked by the elites who have political and economic power. Citizens with power acquire land through personal connections ahead of the farmers. It is recommended that the primary agricultural cooperatives be the prioritized group when it comes to land allocation in South Africa.

4.7.4 Recruitment of a younger generation

Responses revealed that most primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township comprised of the elderly members. It was therefore recommended that youth must find interest in joining these cooperatives. It was also found that if the youth joined these cooperatives, it might enhance cooperatives sustainability in that youth is innovative, tech-savvy and can suggest better strategies on how cooperatives can expand. To support this recommendation, one participant said the following:

"We need to motivate more youth to engage in agriculture, showing them the opportunities that exist more especially those that are unemployed".

Studies show that the reason why the youth is encouraged to join agriculture cooperatives is because many older people are not physically fit to operate in the fields for a longer period.

4.7.5 Training of members to upskill themselves

Findings indicated that it is important for primary agricultural cooperatives to receive training in their entities. The participants highlighted those various organisations offer them training sessions to improve their entities. However, the training sessions consist of the same agriculture content, and the sessions are conducted after a long period of time.

"*I think a solution could be for the government to gather cooperatives and give us basic information about what a cooperative is and sustainability issues. The problem is we do not know about these issues"*

According to Zeuli and Copp (2004), The Rochdale seven core principles are guidelines that any type of cooperatives must adhere when operating. One of the principles is education and training, where cooperatives are expected to provide skills and knowledge to the cooperative's

members. Wright (2014) states that cooperatives members who are empowered effectively contribute to the success of the cooperatives. Therefore, training to enhance their knowledge in a day to day running of primary agriculture cooperatives space is very vital. It is also recommended that the training sessions must happen regularly and inform cooperatives members about basic information on how to sustain their primary agricultural cooperatives.

4.7.6 Creation of markets where cooperatives can sell their produce

Findings indicated that lack of access to markets was one recommendation that was constantly highlighted by the participants. Currently, almost all agriculture cooperatives based in Katlehong refer their target market as community members. It was however suggested that the local municipality encourage local cooperatives to open a local agriculture store, where cooperatives can pool their resources collectively and sell to local small businesses. There was a need to link cooperatives with commercial markets to boost their revenue. To support this theme, participants said the following:

> *"Nothing except for funding and market. The experience with retailers, they tell us that our produce is not first grade when we go and knock doors forgetting that for one to produce first grade, we need to have proper fertilizers, certain PH soil tests that requires a lot of money. Retailers end up grading our vegetables second grade and we get less profit". Forestry is mainly operated by white people. Portuguese and Italians are leading in vegetable farming. Why can't we be linked with those ethnic groups and get market from them so that we can develop"*

The above response emphasizes on the need for local primary agricultural cooperatives to access commercial markets to become sustainable. Various role players such as the private sectors, agriculture forums and businesses are critical stakeholders that primary agricultural cooperatives must be linked with to access commercial markets (Green & Haines, 2015). It is recommended that the government creates networking platforms where primary agricultural cooperatives can actively engage with prospective commercial market entities. Both national to provincial officers must also be able to inform primary agricultural cooperatives with knowledge about how to deal with trading partners.

4.7.7 Reducing corruption

Participants also indicated the need to deal decisively with corruption. Several cooperatives in Katlehong indicated that the government must put in place a way to ensure that resources are

trickled down to the rightful citizens. Cooperatives need to receive funding to achieve their operational gaols. This theme was captured when participants said the following:

"*We need standard funding, and our cooperatives will become sustainable"*

And

"If the government can send officials from the highest level. They must make sure that the resources are trickled down to us as field workers. We are now tired of going up and down looking for assistance. We need help"

The above responses shows that corruption hinders primary agricultural cooperatives from accessing funding from funding institutions. According to Janvry and Sadoutlet (2001), generally leadership incorporate corruption by taking "cuts" from funding applications without following proper, well-defined processes. It is therefore a recommendation that the government allocates funds to primary agricultural cooperatives based on their own operational merits.

4.8 Chapter summary

This chapter presented and discussed the main findings from the study. The chapter furthermore discussed the views of cooperatives members on how primary agricultural cooperatives can better been sustained in Katlehong township, Ekurhuleni. The following chapter which is chapter 5 will therefore discuss the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the research study

CHAPTER FIVE

MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored the factors that contribute to the unsustainability nature of the primary agricultural cooperatives based in Katlehong township, Ekurhuleni municipality.

5.1 Reasons and benefits for having primary agricultural cooperatives.

The findings revealed that primary agricultural cooperatives members joined these entities to eradicate poverty and end hunger in their households. Few cooperative members indicated that these self-help groups create a platform where members can work together in a team and share indigenous knowledge about agriculture. In addition, primary agricultural cooperatives were viewed as organisations that granted community members an opportunity to access jobs that enabled them to meet their family members' daily basic needs.

5.2. To Expand knowledge about primary agricultural cooperatives

The participant findings reveal that majority of the primary agricultural cooperatives are elderly persons. Many cooperatives' members have knowledge about agriculture however, their knowledge is usually limited to traditional farming. Primary agricultural cooperatives as a result create a platform where cooperatives members enhance their knowledge by gaining agriculture information that is relevant to the current age to improve their agriculture productivity. In addition, it can also be highlighted that primary agricultural cooperative empower its members with various new skills needed to sustain their organisation such as business development, bookkeeping and leadership. Skills development sessions are usually facilitated by government, private and non-profit organisations.

5.3 Perceptions regarding factors contributing to primary agricultural cooperatives unsustainability

Different factors were expressed with regards to how they negatively influenced primary agricultural cooperatives from becoming sustainable in Katlehong township. During the engagements with the research participants, they highlighted that lack of suitable agriculture equipment made several cooperatives to become stagnant. It was found that majority, if not all, primary agricultural cooperatives did not own land which created an uncertainty and when it came to making future expansion plans.

One other factor discussed with the research participants was that of non-cooperation. Participants perceived that the issues of non-cooperation between members and between

cooperatives, resulted in difficulties to sustain them, as some of these led to high member turnover. Moreover, the research study showed that lack of government support in a form of funding crippled many primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong township. It was stated that funding was usually awarded to citizens who did not have interest in growing these self-help groups. It was indicated that in some cases the funding got misused because of poor managerial skills. Lack of access to closer commercial markets was also one of the factors that contributed to the lack of sustainability of primary agricultural cooperatives.

5.4 Members views on how primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong can become sustainable.

Participants highlighted the importance of regular monitoring and evaluation as well as training sessions as part of their views on how these cooperatives can be sustainable. Social workers as professionals must offer primary agricultural cooperatives with operational guidance on how to improve their cooperatives as well as continuous training sessions. At the current moment, the cooperatives members were not receiving regular training to upskill them.

Participants indicated that the government must also support primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong with resources such as land, structures, and agricultural equipment. Many cooperatives' members lack basic needs to sustain themselves, thus it makes it challenging for them to sustain themselves and contribute their personal resources to operational costs of their organisations.

The research participants furthermore highlighted the importance of recruiting the younger generation into joining local agricultural cooperatives, as they were said to be tech savvy, energetic and physically fit to operate in the fields as compared to the older generation. It was highlighted that the younger generation could be in a better position to engage with social workers and other professionals on how to expand the cooperatives' commercial markets through technology and social media platforms.

5.5 Conclusion

It is clear that cooperatives are self-help groups that are formed voluntarily to meet the socio-economic needs of the community. Primary agricultural cooperatives, to be specific, have the potential to eradicate poverty, end hunger and create employment in peripheral areas. These entities can promote sustainable development by ensuring that community members afford basic needs, access employment as well as care for the environment. However, some

drawbacks, which led to the unsustainability of these entities, were also identified and these included the lack of access to land, suitable agricultural resources, cooperation within and between cooperatives, poor managerial skills, corruption in the government system and lack of access to commercial markets. Despite the efforts by development role players, the South African government should strive to achieve the sustainability of local primary agricultural cooperatives through giving them support in their operations.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

5.6.1 Recommendations related to increasing the sustainability of primary agriculture cooperatives

The local primary agricultural cooperatives must form relationships with research intensive universities. The students from such institutions can conduct research and set out recommendations and strategies that can be of beneficial thereby improving the sustainability cooperatives.

- The department of agriculture, land reform and rural development must monitor land allocation processes and allocate primary agriculture cooperatives enough land that can sustain them and increase sustainability.

5.6.2 Recommendations for future research

- As the research was conducted in Katlehong township only, future research can be carried out in different townships and villages of the country to explore the issues further from other contexts

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Exploring the perceived factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agriculture cooperatives in Katlehong, Ekurhuleni- South Africa.

Good day

My name is Nyeleti Shibambo, and I am a postgraduate student registered for the degree MA in Social development at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting a research study aimed at exploring the perceived factors contributing to the unsustainability nature of primary agricultural cooperatives in Katlehong. It is hoped that the information gathered will assist in resolving challenges that primary agriculture cooperatives face to improve their effectiveness. The outcome of this study will inform both knowledge base in the academia, government, and non-profit organization settings.

As a member of a primary agricultural cooperative, you are ideally positioned to contribute to my research. I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. If you accept my invitation, your participation will be entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. There are no consequences or personal benefits of participating in this study. If you agree to take part, I will arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. However, it cannot be held in a densely populated area. The interview will last approximately one hour. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering. If you decide to participate, I will ask your permission to tape-record the interview. No one other than the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. A copy of your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.

Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used for academic purposes (including books, journals, and conference proceedings) and a summary of findings will be made available to study participants on request.

Please contact me on 072 983 1213 or email at 487408@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Nkosiyazi Dube on 011 717 8686 or Nkosiyazi.Dube@wits.ac.za if you have any questions regarding my study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability. If you have any concerns and complaints about the study, please contact ***Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) Contact Details:*** hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours Sincerely,

Nyeleti Shibambo.

APPENDIX B

Consent form





APPENDIX D

Informed Consent for Participation in the Interviews

I hereby give my written, informed consent to voluntary participation in this study.

- I am aware that I may stop the interview at any point and that I may withdraw my participation at any stage with no negative consequences.
- I understand that only the researcher will have access to the interview transcripts and that a pseudonym will be used to ensure confidentiality of my identity.
- I understand that I may access the results of this study following final write up of the research paper(s).

I consent to voluntary participate in this study:

Participant Name and Surname: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

I consent to audio-recording of the interviews:

Participant Name and Surname: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Interviewer:

Interviewer Name and Surname: _____

Interviewer Signature: _____

Date_____

APPENDIX C

A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Identifying information

Age:

Race:

Level of education:

Place of origin:

1. Cooperatives

Which primary agriculture cooperative are you representing?

What position are you in?

How long have you been serving?

Do you understand the term cooperative and what it entails?

What type of agricultural activity do you specialize in at your cooperative?

Perceived factors contributing to lack of sustainability in primary agricultural cooperatives.

- What factors do you think prevents primary agriculture cooperatives from being sustainable?

Challenges primary agriculture cooperatives face during their operation.

- What challenges do you encounter at your cooperative?
- When last did you raise a grievance at the cooperative? Has it been resolved so far?
- How is the current management style of the cooperative's management team/ cooperatives members? Strengths and weaknesses?
- Are the cooperatives members or management team skilled enough to contribute towards the operation of the cooperative?
- What is the government/ local municipality contribution towards your cooperatives?
- How often is your cooperative monitored and evaluated?
- What do you know about Information technology tools in agriculture? Are you interested in learning about this field?

2. **Strategies which can be established to address challenges primary agriculture cooperatives encounter during operation.**

- What do you think can be done to address the challenges primary agriculture cooperatives face?
- Recommendations perhaps? At least (3) three recommendations?
- Do you have any questions?

Thank you.

APPENDIX D

Letter of permission

EKURHULENI

METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY
EKURHULENI
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Enquiries: Percy Molala
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Tel. No: 011 999 0615
Email: Malesela.molala@ekurhuleni.gov.za
Our Ref.: 2021/08-02

For Attention: Ethics committee
Organization: University of the Witwatersrand
Date: 16 Aug 2021

Name of Student: Nyeleti Wendy Shibambo
Student number: 487408

Contact no.: 072 983 1213

PERMISSION LETTER

This communique serves to grant permission to the above-mentioned student to conduct her research study in katlehong. The City of Ekurhuleni is the local municipality where Katlehong is situated. She had informed us that the research will be focusing on the “unsustainability nature of primary agriculture co-operatives in Katlehong”.

Yours faithfully



Malesela Percy Molala

Social Worker Signature