EVALUATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION TO THE SUCCESS OF RURAL AGRICULTURE PROJECTS

By

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Declaration

I, **Ndlovu Wiseman** hereby declare that this thesis for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development (PHDRDV)** submitted to the Institute for Rural Development at the University of Venda has not been submitted previously for any degree at this or any other university. It is original in design and execution, and all reference material contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature ………… **Date ……...14/11/2020**……

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Abstract

Despite numerous attempts to improve the participation of the Traditional Leadership Institution (TLI) in rural development, it is still not clear what its sector-specific roles and contributions are in agriculture (TLIC). Furthermore, how these contributions impact the Success of agricultural projects (APSF) and the barriers to their effective participation (FHTLIC) remain unknown. Therefore, the study evaluated the moderating effect of FHTLIC on the relationship between TLIC and APSF. A structural equation model was used for evaluation through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences IBM Amos version 26. Specifically, the direct and indirect effects of the TLIC in creating conditions necessary for rural agricultural projects to prosper were modelled and analysed. Initially an explorative study was conducted using focus groups and interviews (N =103) to construct measures in the model and then, a self-administered survey questionnaire (N = 211) was utilized to collect quantitative data for model testing and evaluation. Communal farmers, traditional leaders, and key informants in Vhembe and Mopani districts in Limpopo province, South Africa provided data for the study. The study revealed that four of the five validated factors of TLIC significantly and positively impact the conditions of success for rural agricultural projects using multiple regression analysis. The role of TLI in promoting social capital by aiding networking, partnerships, and collaborations for farmers with development actors such as government, non-governmental organizations as well as other local players explained the most variance. Furthermore, it emerged that FHTLIC is a significant moderator in the relationship. Thus, with a combination of higher levels of TLIC or TLI participation and low effect of barriers to participation, conditions of success for rural farmers are significantly improved. Moreover, the higher-level effect of FHTLIC affected the effect that TLI has on APSF, even with increased participation. The political and relational barriers were the most problematic barriers mainly caused by role ambiguity. To improve TLI participation, efforts to minimize the effect of four identified barriers while enhancing the capacity of the TLI to promote rural development is recommended. Given the results, regular multi-stakeholder collaboration training is also recommended that might enable stakeholders to partner, share responsibilities, and knowledge in support of rural agricultural projects, including those in agriculture. Further refinement of the current model, by investigating the moderating effect for each of the four facets of FHTLIC is recommended. This is critical to further adapt the model, give practitioners, TLI, and policy makers options or tools to promote local economic development and add to the body of knowledge.

Keywords: Agriculture support, Community institutions, Local economic development, Traditional Leadership Institution, Structural equation model.

This work is dedicated to my late father (Joseph Magimba Ndlovu), my special mother (Sheila Ncube), my supportive uncle (Robson Mbalisi Ndlovu), my family, and my community in general. To my granny, Elizabeth Ncube, Ngiyakuthanda.

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Thesis Outputs

Conferences

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Publications

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Abbreviations

APSF	Agricultural project success factors
APSFQ	Agricultural project success factors questionnaire
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
DAAU	Deloitte Africa Agribusiness Unit
DRDARLP	Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform of Limpopo Province
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCU	Farmers' Cooperative Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHTLIC	Barriers to the effective participation of the traditional leadership institution
GDP	Gross domestic product
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LED	Local Economic L Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAF	Principal axis factoring
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PTO	Permission to Occupy
RED	Rural Economic Development
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SALGA	South Africa local governance agency

SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SEM	Structural equation modelling
SLAG	Settlement Land Acquisition Grant programme
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TBA	Tribal Authority
TLGFA	Traditional leadership governance and framework act
TLI	Traditional Leadership Institutions
TLIC	Traditional leadership contributions
TLIEQ	Traditional leadership institutional effectiveness questionnaire
TQM	Total Quality Management
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background of the Study

Increasing levels of poverty and hunger in the developing world particularly in rural areas calls for a relook into the existing rural and regional development approaches. Globally, it is evident that agriculture is used as a key strategy for rural economic development transformation which significantly reduces hunger and poverty levels (Norton, 2016; Kerkvliet, 2018). However, sustained low agricultural output currently experienced by rural farmers in developing countries is a major threat to current and future food security and nutrition (Gukurume, 2014; Lipper *et al*., 2014). Furthermore, a decrease in agricultural output slows down rural economic growth.

Factors such as, climate change, limited support, and farming capital shortages contributes to this phenomenon (Kuwornu, Demi, & Amegashie, 2013; Campbell *et al.,* 2014). Mengistu (2011) and Gukurume (2013) observed d that the prevalent lack of business management and leadership skills limits farmers' abilities to swiftly adapt to changing dynamics in agriculture environment). Over and above, Snapp & Pound (2017) and Sisto *et al*. (2018) show that support, cooperation and collaboration with local stakeholders (individuals, governments, non-government organisation, and private sector) fast tracks farmers' abilities to adapt to the rapidly changing farming environment. Thus, building an effective local network of support to rural farmers is a must if the rural agriculture sector is to be successfully transformed.

Limited local stakeholder support and cooperation with farmers limits the opportunities that promote success of rural farmers (Sisto *et al.,* 2018). It is established that strong legal frameworks, adept civil services, quality service delivery, vibrant and actively engaged civil societies, and support from local community institutions such as traditional leadership institutions (TLI) yields positive outcomes for rural agriculture development (Pretty, 2003; Uphoff & Buck, 2006; Sisto *et al*., 2018). In the absence of these conditions, farmers fail to mobilise key resources required to increase production and run their ventures successfully. Effective local organisations and institutions like TLI cushion, absorb, and provide a moderating effect to the challenges faced by local economic development activities like agriculture (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2016). This is why, Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 places importance on building strong, supportive, responsive, inclusive, and accountable institutions at the grassroots level to achieve sustainable development and societies.

Viable rural agriculture guarantees local supply of raw materials, creates jobs, and generates income for farmers. Moreover, it creates opportunities for the development of other industries through agro-processing supply chain from production to agriculture products markets (Nchuchuwe & Adejuwon, 2012; Olaoye, 2014). Reportedly, rural smallholder agricultural practices contribute about 70% of the world's food and nutrition supplies (Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO], 2014). Experiences from developed and upper-middle-income countries, reflect that agriculture is central to sustained rural development (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2012). For instance, in BRICS countries, China and Chile's rural agricultural sector grew significantly in the last decades due to the active participation and support of key stakeholders in the local communities (Wolfenson, 2013). Similarly, in Bangladesh institutional support played a critical role in helping farmers adapt to climate change challenges (Islam & Nursey-Bray, 2017). Increased agricultural production resulted in the shift of people and resources from agriculture to manufacturing and services (Altieri *et al.,* 2012; Food, 2016). This shift inspired a massive increase in per capita income and a dramatic reduction in levels of poverty and hunger (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2012). Therefore, an all-inclusive supportive and efficient network of local players, must be built to support famers to sustain food and nutrition security as well as promote rural economic growth.

Evaluating and decrypting specific roles in promoting agricultural development is the first step towards defining what and how the TLI promotes development agricultural projects. Moreover, it promotes succesful intergaration of TLI in support, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of rural agriculture development programs and activities. An effective TLI helps to build trust in governance, contribute to formulating responsive agricultural policies, and ensures efficient utilisation of community resources by farmers. Likewise, inclusion of TLI in rural development ensures a stable, and predictable farming environment. A stable and predictable environment, enables farmers and agricultural projects to engage in long-term planning and simultaneously reduces the costs of doing business and decision making (Lall *et al*., 2016; Centeno *et al.,* 2017; Hansen *et al*., 2019). In this way, sustained agricultural production is achieved.

The South African government acknowledges that an all-inclusive stakeholder approach to development and agricultural revitalisation is imperative (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), 2017). As such, TLI since 1994, has been placed as a strategic partner in augmenting the fight against rural poverty and achieving rural economic regeneration (White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance, 2003; Mawere & Mayekiso, 2014). To date, TLI remains resilient and part of the modern cooperative governance in rural landscape in

South Africa and Africa (Mason & Simmons, 2014; Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017). The cooperative system, allows key local stakeholders to be incorporated into a variety of decision-making and implementation practices at various levels of society. The aim is to promote participative democratic management, collegiality, collaboration, and, most importantly, localized decision making or local-based management.

A limiting factor to effective participation of TLI has its roots in the tempered roles and functions during the colonial period. The legislative framework of that time, reduced the roles of TLI to that of mere administration. The Black Administration Act of 1927 as well as the Bantu Government Act of 1956 are some of the pieces of legislation that limited the role of TLI in rural development (Duot, 2013; Buthelezi & Skosana, 2018). Post-apartheid, South Africa became a developmental state and committed to reinstating and defining the roles of TLI in rural development (Buthelezi & Skosana, 2018). However, the promogulated legislative framework presents broad guidelines and various spheres of rural development where TLI can contribute to. Despite this, it remains unclear how the listed roles and broad categories are to be performed (Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017; Koenane, 2018). That is why, it is imperative to specify and further show how the legislated TLI roles could effectively promote agriculture development. Role specification is a stepping stone to institutional effectiveness and accountability.

A study by Logan (2013), shows that in 19 African countries, including South Africa, TLI play a symbolic role as a representative of identity, unity, continuity, and stability of a community. In addition, Wolf (2015) found that most citizens of Liechtenstein consider TLI legitimate and instrumental in effective governance and development. Similarly, Biitir *et al.,* (2017) and Finnegan (2017) further emphasises their importance in rural development. The TLI's intimate relationship with the rural communities in key areas such as land administration, identity, leadership, community relations, and constituency representation are the main assets to build on. Potentially, an effective TLI provides an extra layer of protection to challenges facing farmers. Despite this evidence, currently the roles of TLI in rural development remain administrative and seem ceremonial especially in the areas of economic development. Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate the current and potential contributions of TLI in promoting the development and success of agricultural projects.

Limpopo province is predominantly rural and listed as the poorest province in South Africa. About 90% of the population in the province live in either informal rural settlements or villages and largely depend on agriculture (De Cock *et al*., 2013). The TLI are a major component of the provinces rural political landscape and development (Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders Act, Act 5 of

2005). Its sole function is to advise the provincial government and the legislature on developmental matters and initiatives that affect their tribal communities. In the province, there are different forms of agriculture farming such as subsistence, to small-scale commercial farming that are owned and managed by individuals and or groups in the form of cooperatives. In this study, they are referred to as agricultural projects. Individuals and groups in tribal communities initiate and start agricultural projects to feed their families as well as generate income to meet household needs. However, most of these projects exhibit unsatisfactory performance and little/or no signs of significant improvement. It is for this reason why there are growing calls for measured involvement and inclusion of key local stakeholders to support the development of rural agricultural projects towards zeroing poverty and eliminating hunger in rural households. It is for this reason, that the current study investigated and evaluated the contributions of the TLI towards the success of agricultural projects to ensure sustained rural economic growth. Moreover, the study proposes a model for estimating TL institutional effectiveness in fostering the success of rural agricultural projects.

1.2 The Statement of the Research Problem

Traditional leadership institutions (TLI) are recognised in South Africa by the constitution and other pieces of legislation which clearly spell out their importance in rural development (Consitution of the Republic of South Africa, Chapter 11 1994; Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000; TLGFA 41 2003). At the national level, TLI is expcted to promote rural economic growth includiing agriculture (Chapter 5 of TLGFA 41 2003; Ntsebeza 2004; Claassens, 2008). However, these roles are not specific (Behr *et al.*, 2015). As stipuated in the Act, the legislated roles are enlisted as potential areas of contribution and do not spell out how they should be performed (Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017; Koenane, 2018). At local level, the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 (2000) provides for consultation of TLI at all times on matters affecting their communities. To the contrary, they are excluded in the subsequent decision making proccesses as they cannot vote on the disccusedmatters that affect their sphere of influence (Stafford-Smith *et al*., 2017). Seemingly, the nature and quality of their involvement is ceremonial and for compliance purposes.

The arguments above explain why to date, there is still no standardised criterion used to estimate the effectiveness of TLIC to rural development like promoting agriculture. Thus, there is no tool to distinguish between an effective and ineffective TLI. Although, it is acknowldged that TLI play a critical role in promiting rural development, the available evidence is scattered, undocumented and not thoroughly researched. There is little and limited evidence in this regard. Correspondingly, there is no scientific and contextual developed model that recommends systematic integration of

TLI in the development of rural agriculture. That is why this study proposes a systematic and contextualized approach to standardize TLI inclusion in rural development that effectively promotes rural farming and agriculture sector. In the end, a model of TLI insitutional effectiveness in the context of agriculture projects is proposed

1.3 Justification/Rationale of the Study

Traditional Leadership Institution remains part of the modern political and development landscape in rural South Africa. Their role remains critical at least for the foreseeable future. Unlike elected officials, the TLI has permanent outlook in rural communities. Also, the TLI has a direct and indirect relationship with factors of production such as land, as well as the social and cultural identity of their communities. Hence there is a need to develop a specific criterion on how it should effectively contribute to key rural economic sectors like agriculture. This contributes to ensuring effectiveness of the TLI in promoting rural development and agriculture in their tribal communities.

The growing poverty gap between urban and rural areas requires that key economic activities such as agriculture be supported to achieve fast-track rural economic growth (Uphoff, 1992; Young, 2013). Incorporating key local stakeholders in the community such as TLI in promoting rural agriculture development might improve the chances of success for rural agricultural projects (Stafford-Smith, 2017). The findings of this study provide useful information for policymakers on how best TLI could be fully incorporated and integrated in promoting agriculture development for sustained rural economic regeneration and poverty alleviation.

The findings of this study also provide an understanding of the level at which the TLIs are included in the development hierarchy within their communities. This is instrumental for policymakers, development agents, and researchers alike to formulate specific policies that effectively integrate TLI in rural development and success of agricultural projects. Additionally, evaluating the current and potential TLI roles is vital for developing a comprehensive and practical model for effective contribution to the success of agricultural projects. The results of this study demonstrate the importance of the bottom-up approach, local and direct participation, as well as empowerment of local indigenous institutions in developing their communities.

Increased production among agricultural projects ensures food and nutrition security and generates income for the families concerned (Kanyane & Ilorah, 2015). Nevertheless, many rural agricultural projects fail due to lack of business skills and knowledge, limited resources to maintain and expand farming operations, and lack or limited local community and stakeholders support. This limits the ability of agricultural projects to unlock their full potential (Kasabov, 2016). This

evaluation and the proposed model will therefore be a springboard for enhancing and strengthening the successes of rural agriculture. Ascertaining its roles in agriculture contributes to the transformation process definitively defining the TLI's place and roles in the new system of governance. This is part of the commitment by the South African government to transform the state following the demise of colonisation and apartheid.

1.4 Aim and Objectives

1.4.1 Main research objective

The study evaluated the important Traditional Leadership Institution's contributions to the success of rural agriculture projects in Limpopo province, South Africa.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

1. To examine threats to the success of rural agriculture projects;
2. To assess critical success factors for rural agriculture projects;
3. To characterise the important traditional leadership institutional contributions to the success rural agriculture projects;
4. To identify barriers to the traditional leadership institution's participation in promoting success of rural agriculture projects;
5. To evaluate the direct and indirect effects of the traditional leadership institution contributions to the success of rural agriculture projects; and
1. To propose a theoretical model for effective participation of traditional leadership institution in practices and decision making that promote the success of rural agriculture projects.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are challenges faced by rural agricultural projects?
2. Which are the critical success factors for rural agriculture projects?
3. What are the roles of the traditional leadership institution in rural agrarian reforms that promote the success of agriculture projects?
4. What are the factors that make it difficult for the traditional leadership institution to participate in practices and community decision making platforms that promote the success of rural agriculture projects?

5. What are the direct and indirect estimated effects of the TLI contributions in creating a conducive environment to the success of rural agriculture projects through barriers to participation?

1.6 Study Hypotheses

1. **H_a**: Traditional leadership institutional contributions positively influence the conditions necessary for the success of rural agriculture projects.
2. **H_a**: Barriers to TLI participation moderates how the traditional leadership institution participates in practices and decision making processes that promote rural agriculture projects.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Effectiveness: UNESCO (2020) defines effectiveness as the measure of the quality of achievement of a specific goal or degree to which an institution can be expected to achieve a specific requirement. Wojtczak (2002) defines effectiveness as a measure of the extent to which a specific intervention, procedure, regimen, or service when deployed in the field in routine circumstances, does what it is intended to do for a specific population. In this study, effectiveness is therefore operationalised as the measure or an estimate of how specific TLI interventions or services contribute towards the improvement of the dimensions of problems or challenges confronting agricultural projects.

Institutions: refer to establishments or organisations that monitor and govern predefined recurring patterns of behaviours (Voigt, 2013). North (1990) adds that institutions provide the rules of the game. Walo (2016) identified three different types of institutions that operate at the local level which are governmental, indigenous, as well as farmers' unions. They contribute to the success of community activities by nurturing conducive political, social, and economic conditions. In this study, institutions are operationalised as the community-based organizations which operate at a local level of government decision-making processes and practices in the rural areas.

Success Factors: Success factors in this study refer to the attributes or conditions key for rural agricultural projects to accomplish a designed outcome. Specifically, success factors refer to the pre-requisite conditions whose presence guarantees success for rural agricultural projects. Chittithaworn *et al*., (2011: 181) define success as "achievement of goals and objectives in whatever sector of human life". Foley & Green (1989) argue that there is no universally agreed definition of success. Although there is no outwardly accepted definition of success, individuals

have a similar understanding of what a successful enterprise should be like (Chittithaworn *et al.,* 2011). Therefore, in this case, success factors are a combination of multiple ingredients in the internal and external environment required to accomplish one or more desirable outcomes for rural farmers.

Institutional Effectiveness: For this study, this term refers to how well an organisation is achieving its roles or objectives. In other words, an institution is effective when it can clearly understand its mandate and can perform to the satisfaction of the district or population it serves (Scott & Davis, 2007). Cameron & Quinn (2006) state that institutions are created in different ways and there are various expectations of multiple districts. Thus, each district perceives institutional effectiveness differently. Hence, it requires that each district establishes a criterion in its context to measure its institutional effectiveness. Cameron *et al*. (2014), further states that community members or stakeholders support the adaptability of their institutions and expect them to be flexible, stable, and effective. Cohen & Bradford (2005) adds that a performant and effective organization is the one which has a high degree of collaboration and commitment with stakeholders through workgroups and management for community development.

*Traditional leadership Institution (TLI**):*** is defined as "the customary institutions or structures, or customary systems or procedures of governance, recognised, utilised or practiced by traditional communities (Traditional leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003). Traditional Leadership Institution includes all the systems, procedures, practices and guidelines put in place by the community governance structure to manage, enforce and support political, social, and economic development initiatives of the society. According to the TLGFA Act 41 of (2003), TLI is comprised of kingship or queenship, principal traditional leadership, senior traditional leadership, headman ship, and the traditional leadership councils. The TLI systems are designed to direct and monitor the affairs of the rural communities. These are also officially referred to as the tribal authorities (TBA) and the official definition is used for this study.

Traditional leadership (TL): refers to a governance system which by ancestry and inheritance, governs an area (Dlungwana, 2012). Also, traditional leadership is appointed following the customs and traditions of each society. Traditional leadership represents the authority in rural areas that has legitimacy over the people or resources within their jurisdiction. For this study, traditional leadership would be defined as the local institution mandated to oversee and preside over the people and resources in each designated tribal area. In this definition, the traditional leadership is expected to promote social, economic, and political development in their communities.

Traditional leaders: traditional leaders encompass individuals or people who occupy communal political leadership positions that are based on the cultural norms and values and they enjoy the legitimacy of their societies to direct their affairs (Mawere & Mwanaka, 2015).

Agricultural project: Agricultural projects are all activities performed in a farm pre-requisite for the success of rural farmers. Mackay & Sette, (2019) defined agricultural projects to include activities such as “planning, target group inclusion, research, management, soil enhancement, agronomic practices, field operations, storage, processing, and distribution. Thus, projects as referred to in this study involves a combination of a coordinated set of planned continuous farming activities by farmers. Project activities are actions or set of conditions required to run a successful farming enterprise or venture.

Communal farmers: communal farmers are individuals, groups, cooperatives, and smallholder farmers in rural communal lands and has the potential to develop into commercial agricultural businesses or are already running a business (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Republic of South Africa, 2009). Moreover, rural farmers either lease or pay a fee to the tribal office (TLI) and obtain permission or right to occupy land (King, 2011).

Local Economic Development (LED): Blakely (1994: xv) posit LED refers to “the process in which local governments or community-based organizations engage to stimulate or maintain business activity and/or employment.” Abrahams (2003:188) defined LED as the process of “creating wealth through the organized mobilization of human, physical, capital and natural resources in a locality”. In this study, LED refers to the process by which community members or individuals through collaboration with various stakeholders create community wealth and improve rural livelihoods through mobilisation of local resources.

1.8 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework.

The model for this study is adapted from the theoretical framework by Welsh & Metcalf (2003) on factors affecting institutional effectiveness activities. The framework focuses on the institutional management strategies why they emerge and fail as well as how they could be used productively. There are two main focuses of institutional effectiveness framework that have relevance to different constituencies served by TLI including agricultural projects in its administration, governance, and stature. Firstly, it is argued that management strategies for improving institutional operations and performance are typically rooted in a broader context. Thus, the adoption of strategies for TLI institutional effectiveness management occur because of external pressures from community and constituencies that it serves. External pressures resultantly

improve institutional effectiveness and accountability. Secondly, it is believed that institutions fail due to their inability to attract allegiance or support from a large pool of the community constituencies such as farmers in the case of this study. It is argued that institutional effectiveness fail due to inability to create engagement platforms with its constituency for improving institutional operations and performance. There are four factors that are used to understand and estimate the perceived institutional effectiveness of different stakeholders in this framework. These are; internal vs external motivation; depth of the implementation; definition of quality; and level of involvement. In the study, they are used to assess, evaluate, and estimate TLI institutional effectiveness in support of rural agricultural projects and farmers' activities key to their success.

The study explored the nature of TLI administrative, governance, and structural support for the development and implementation of institutional effectiveness activities in the context of the rural agricultural project. Institutional effectiveness activities are TLI contributions that promote the success of agricultural projects. Specifically, the study aims to develop and respond to institutional accountability and visibility in local development. This is done through developing a criteria for an effective TLI in support of the agricultural project's success. Two important questions on administrative, governance, and structural support for the implementation and development of TLI institutional effectiveness activities in the context of rural farmers are asked. These are; To what extent do TLIs (traditional leaders and TL council) respond to external pressures from the farming community that seeks to improve its institutional effectiveness activities that promote the success of agricultural projects? Which factors affects TLI institutional effectiveness activities and how could they be mitigated? Literature demonstrates that perceptions about institutional effectiveness are overwhelmingly subjective and circumstantial hence they must be contextualised per institution. Key factors for institutional effectiveness are operationalised below as they are used in this study.

1.8.1 Internal versus External Motivation

Existing and emphasized TLI's autonomy from external control and oversight appears to affect the degree to which the community under these institutions, view the importance of institutional effectiveness initiatives to their success (Benjamin, 1994; Welsh & Metcalf, 2003). A TLI that successfully implements its institutional effectiveness activities incentivises sustainable growth and development. While TLI institutional effectiveness activities are not mechanical responses to external pressures, to the contrary, the impetus for TLI institutional effectiveness activities emanates from external constituencies like the state organs, and state legislature. A community or constituency like agricultural projects' that perceives TLI institutional effectiveness activities to

be undertaken primarily to satisfy the standards of other groups in the community other than themselves, they assign low levels of importance to it (Seymour, 1993; Wessels & Schmitt, 2008). On the other hand, internal motivators for institutional effectiveness elevate institutional commitment to outcomes valuation and other data-based approaches for improving institutional effectiveness (Seymour, 1993). Internal motivators as identified include projections of limited growth in resources available to TLI; increased competition for agricultural projects in different TBAs; a more citizens-oriented and knowledgeable pool of community constituencies including agricultural projects; constituency perceptions of dissatisfaction with TLI institutional effectiveness activities; changing governance or service delivery methods and increased interest in TLI institutional effectiveness strategies such as total and continuous quality management and improvement towards poverty reduction and zeroing hunger. All these dynamics influence how TLI supports its constituencies.

1.8.2 Depth of Implementation

The depth of implementation refers to the extent to which the institution meets its obligations or implement institutional effectiveness activities as expected by the different community constituencies or groups. This influences how each sector of the community perceives the institutional effectiveness and its importance. For instance, farmers who regard the TLI ‘s role in community development is only limited to other sectors of the community like cultural activities, may hold lower levels of TLI importance towards the agricultural sector. Birnbaum, (2000) indicates that such perceptions are affected by the extent of integration of institutional activities into the overall fabric of its function. Needless to say, farmers are more likely to utilise institutional effectiveness activities if perceived to be beneficial to their success and the institution is capable of implementing such activities. However, the direction of causality remains an open question, mainly because of the perceived importance of institutional effectiveness activities to farmers affect the extent to which they are implemented. For this cause, a clear criterion and effective model for the TLI in promoting the success of agricultural projects are developed in the study from the perceptions of farmers and TLI. Specifically, the study attempted to estimate how the perceived TLICs could affect or predict the chances of success of agricultural projects among the rural farmers if implemented.

1.8.3 Definition of Quality

In the past decade, the South African government through the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA); The National House of Traditional Leadership Act 22 of 2009; other local government legislation, and resources allocation for the operations of the TLI, required a

quality-driven and outcome-based contribution of the TLI (Kaplan *et al*., 2012). Welsh & Metcalf (2003) argue that institutional effectiveness refers to initiatives that are oriented towards the measurement and realization of an institution's progress in fulfilling its mission. Hence, this study established areas in which the TLI could effectively contribute to the success of rural farmers. To estimate success; farmers, NGOs, LED municipal officers, and representatives from the department agriculture identified key success factors in the context of rural agricultural projects. If rural farmers believe that the role of TLI in agricultural projects relates only to land provision, for example, they will place less importance on other potential contributions to which might positively impact on their farming enterprise outcomes (Frielander & MacDougall, 1990; Sims & Sims, 1995). Outcomes-based institutional effectiveness contribution to agricultural projects success require a shared understanding and extensive stakeholder support and involvement. It is not enough to financially and legislatively support the roles of the TLI in rural development; and pursue merely documenting that necessary conditions for quality TLI contributions are present. It is a must that TLI demonstrate the impact of its activities on rural development, on key sectors such as agriculture and general support to development initiatives. Outcomes of these assessments could be used to strengthen the effectiveness of the TLI contributions to the success of agricultural projects and rural development in general. Interactions between the TLI with agricultural projects that have a mutual understanding and support for the outcomes-based conception are more likely to effectively support rural farmers.

1.8.4 Level of Involvement

The involvement of various constituencies and stakeholders in innovative processes or support systems is deemed crucial to their receptivity to change and innovation (Richardson, 1988; Burgher, 1998). The level of involvement is considered a predictor of the degree to which institutional effectiveness programs are successfully implemented. Thus, the involvement of the TLI in the implementation practices of community development including promoting agricultural projects success could facilitate and stimulate sustained agriculture growth in rural areas. Institutions that are more and intensely involved in institutional effectiveness activities are more likely to understand their role and express support to their stakeholders including rural farmers. Thus, if the TLI who regard their potential institutional contribution activities as being of little importance may contribute below par or do so partially, for the reason of little involvement in the process. Hence, this study seeks to develop a list of categories or criteria to which the TLI could meaningfully contribute towards the success of rural agricultural projects. It is assumed that the active TLI involvement could contribute towards the success of agricultural projects. As such,

there is a necessity to build a criterion for potential TLI effective contributions in support of successful agriculture in rural areas.

1.9 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis comprises of eight chapters. Chapter one contains the background, objectives, and questions that underpin the study. In chapter two, literature is reviewed and it encompasses international, regional, and local perspectives. The third chapter, explains the methodological approaches which include the study design and how the data was collected and analysed. The chapter also provides an explanation of the ethical considerations applied in this study. Chapters four, five, six, and seven are written in a paper format, that is abstract, introduction, materials and methods, presentation of results, discussion, conclusion, recommendations, and references for each specific objective. Chapter four presents information on determining the threats and success factors for rural farmers. Chapter five focuses on developing a measure for an effective TLI towards the success of agricultural projects. Chapter six presents barriers to effective contribution of the TLI to the success of agricultural projects. Chapter seven illustrates and discusses model development. It also shows relationships of direct and indirect effects of TLI contributions to the success of agricultural projects. The thesis ends with chapter 8. The chapter summarises the key findings and associated synthesis of the entire study. Thus, the chapter expounds on the accomplishment of the study objectives. Specifically, contributions of the study findings to the body of knowledge, scholarship, policy, and theory are discussed. Conclusions and recommendations to various groups of readers are also given in this chapter. A list of references and appendices is also included.. In the following chapter, a review of literature is presented.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and reviews literature based on the study objectives. Firstly, the chapter provides a brief overview of why the study was conducted and its origins. The first section sketches the rationale, why, and where the study was initiated. Secondly, the overview and role of agriculture in the socio-economic status of rural communities and development, in general, is thoroughly discussed. Furthermore, threats to and factors required for the rural agricultural projects to succeed are also robustly reviewed. Thirdly, the contributions of local institutions to development and arguments for the potential TLIC to the success of agricultural projects are systematically reviewed and discussed in the chapter. This is accomplished by assessing the potential and inherent attributes of TLI for effective contribution in agriculture. A focus is paid to the background on the evolution of TLI and its roles currently. The goal is to arrive at an understanding of how the TLI is and could potentially contribute to the success of agricultural projects. This is critical in identifying the current short and long term assets of the TLI that could be harnessed to promote agriculture and rural development. Global, African, and South African perspectives are given in all cases. Lastly, this chapter highlights and discusses theories of evaluation that informed this study. Atlas. Ti networks diagrams, tables, graphs, and texts in this chapter are used to analyse and present the information.

2.2 Origins and Rationale for the Study

Greater Giyani municipality in Mopani district of Limpopo province, South Africa is where the study was initiated. The researcher was involved in a community entrepreneurial promotion with a community agricultural project under the University of Venda, Entrepreneurial Action Us (ENACTUS) a student organisation. Headquartered in New York, United States of America, ENACTUS, is one of the largest worldwide student movement transforming communities through entrepreneurship action. The project in had about 18 members. During the engagements, the researcher observed an intimate and demonstrative relationship between the project and the TLI. Moreover, while working on the project to resolve or find solutions to its challenges (particularly on ensuring its viability), the TLI emerged as a key and pertinent partner in the project. The TLI was involved in sourcing funds; endorsements and approvals through signatures; land allocation; giving assurance to funders; and playing an oversight role in the administration of the awarded funding to the project. In addition to this, a traditional leadership council member with knowledge

in project management, was assigned to offer consultative aid and guidance to the running of the project where the members deemed necessary. Further inquisition revealed that both the project members and supervisors viewed the institution as one of the important players in augmenting or aiding its activities. This raised questions such as, what are the roles of the TLI in society and how should or do they promote developmental activities in their areas? What are the legislative provisions and literature evidence on the appropriate relationship that should between TLI and rural farmers? What are specific practices or roles of TLIs that contribute in creating necessary conditions for farmers to succeed in tribal lands? A preliminary observational evidence suggested that there is a direct and indirect relationship between TLI and agricultural projects. However, a gap between those TLIs considered effective and ineffective was blurry. This prompted the need to understand how best could TLI positively impact the development of rural farmers. This necessitated a need for insights into what TLICs reliably and validly predict the success of agricultural projects to distinguish between an effective and ineffective TLI. Moreover, the barriers to TLI participation or effectiveness were also established. It for this reason that the study was set to develop a model for TLI institutional effectiveness in support of rural agricultural projects. This literature review therefore unpacks the roles of the TLI and community institutions in different sectors of rural development. Also, challenges and conditions for agricultural project success, as well as barriers to effective participation of the TLI in agriculture are reviewed in this chapter.

2.3 Overview: The Role of Agriculture

Agriculture is an important sector for most rural areas in developing communities and the world over. It is the source of food and nutrition security (Ahmad & Heng, 2012; Deloitte Africa Agribusiness Unit (DAAU), n.d.; United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2015). It also serves as a market for industrial products through buying machinery, fertilizers, and pesticides, a source of foreign exchange earnings and it has the potential to raise incomes of the farmers and villagers towards poverty reduction efforts (Jones & Ejeta, 2016). Also, increased agriculture production or growth in rural areas could create more opportunities for the youth and members of the community. Its success can reverse and slow down the influx of rural population to urban areas in search of better opportunities. Likewise, Nyanga *et al*. (2011) suggest that family or rural farming has the potential to decisively generate resilience in space and more sustainable ways of life that allow people to cope with environmental changes and food insecurity. Despite its importance, the rural agricultural sector is on the decline in most rural communities in the sub-Saharan Africa. Rural farmers' vulnerabilities and exposure to systemic risks is the main reason for the decline or poor performance of rural agricultural projects.

The importance of agriculture in the developing world differs from that of the advanced and transitional countries. In sub-Sahara, agriculture contributes over 29% of GDP higher than transitional economies like South Asian; Middle Eastern, and North African countries' averages (FAO, 2010). Moreover, agriculture employs about 68% in the sub-Sahara and 48% for transitional economies. Most agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa is done by rural and or small farmers. Over 90 % of the rural households, practice subsistence agriculture in small communal farms in the continent (Hilson & Garforth, 2012; FAO, 2014). Globally, about 500 million out of 570 million farms in the world are rural smallholder or family-owned farms (Lowder *et al*., 2014). Despite the importance of their contribution to food security and job creation, rural farmers are confronted by several challenges. The reported decline in agricultural production and food security in rural areas attests to this fact (McCarthy *et al*., 2011; Arnold *et al*., 2011; Abass *et al.,* 2014). Thus, improving agricultural production remains a critical issue.

Yearly, individuals, NGOs, the private sector, and governments implement various agriculture development projects and programmes to capacitate, support, and increase agricultural output and attain food security. Although, advances could be noted, most rural farmers show unsatisfactory performance with little/or no signs of significant improvement. Frequin *et al*. (2012) as well as Aliber & Hall (2012) posit that majority of these programs, have aggravated the farmers' situation, as opposed to lessening their challenges. The problem with these programmes is that they do not rightfully integrate local partners, hence farmers have limited support once the programmes are completed (Chikazunga & Paradza, 2012). Moloi (2010) and Ayinke (2011) adds that the umbrella and one size fit all approach adopted by most development partners such as government and NGOs is the major weaknesses in most programmes. It is the absence of contextual grounding and relevance that limits their ability to successfully and adequately address farmers' challenges by region. This is why despite multiple support programmes; most rural farmers remain vulnerable as seen by their inability to increase production and reach their full potential. It is important that when developing intervention programs, a bottom-up approach is followed by firstly identifying contextual challenges facing farmers in each region. Secondly, identifying necessary conditions for rural farmer's success is key, as well as how these could be supported or enhanced by different stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes for farmers. In this way, a comprehensive, targeted, appropriate, and localized approaches to the success of rural farmers is developed. This section reviews literature in the light of establishing differing trends and similarities of farmer's challenges and their key success factors. To demonstrate these variations, global, regional and South African literature evidence is reviewed.

2.3.1 Global overview of challenges to the success of rural farmers

Rural farmers are faced with vast challenges unique to their circumstances that limits their short-term and long-term growth potential. This situation is set to continue if the status quo remains unchanged. The global review of literature on farmer challenges in this study focuses on Asia and Latin America. These regions were chosen because of the shared farmer circumstances with those in the sub-Sahara

In Asia and the Pacific Island Countries (PICs), a larger proportion of farmers are in rural smallholder practice. Rural farming and smallholding is marked as key to rural development. However, their vulnerability poses a greater risk not only to farmers and the community but also to global food and nutrition security (Campbell, 2015). About 87% of the world ‘s 500 million smallholder farmers are in Asia and the Pacific region (IFPRI, 2007). In India, about 85% of all farms are small farms and half a billion households live in these small farms (Swaminathan & Baksi 2017). China and India alone account for the largest number of rural farmers with over 193 million and 93 million, respectively. Countries like Indonesia (17 million), Bangladesh (17 million), and Viet Nam (10 million) also have large numbers of small rural farms. Smallholdings play an important role in agricultural development and poverty reduction in Asia. For example, in India small farm holders cultivate an estimated 44% of the total farming area and produce around 60% of the total food grain. More so, over 50% of the country’s fruits and vegetable production (Agricultural census, 2014).

In Latin America and the Caribbean, rural farmers account for about 81% of agricultural activities (Leporati *et al*., 2014). On average, at the country level, it contributes between 27% and 67% of the total food production nationally. Inland share, rural or family farming comprises between 12% and 67% of agricultural land. Moreover, it creates between 57% and 77% of agricultural jobs regionally (IDB-FAO 2007; FAO, 2012). Despite the importance of rural farming, the sector faces numerous challenges in the region (Figure 2.1). Common farmers’ challenges in this region include climate change, limited access to credit and other financial resources, and poor roads infrastructure. Moreover, market inaccessibility and institutional fragmentation is a major concern to rural farmers.

Another unique challenge to farmers in this region (Asian and The Pacific) is that of declining farm size over time. For instance, China’s land farm size decreased by 0.16 hectares between 1980 to 1999 (Fan & ChanKang, 2003); and Pakistan saw a decline from 5.3 ha in 1971 to 3.1 hectares in 2000. Similarly, India's farmland size declined from 2.2 ha, in 1950 to 1.8 ha in 1980. Furthermore, it decreased from 1.4 ha between 1995-96 to 1.33 ha in 2000-01 (Nagayets, 2005;

Government of India, 2008). Although some Latin American countries like Ecuador, Chile, and Panama are also reporting a decline in the land size for farming, it is increasing in countries such as Brazil. These revelations show similarities that exist at a global level and as well as differences within the same continent/region. In many Latin American and Asian countries, challenges of land access are perpetuated by the social mechanisms (World Bank, 2007). Resultantly, many households in indigenous or tribal ethnic minorities are left without access to land or with small plots that cannot meet farmer needs.

Climate variabilities and change is another threat to the success of rural farmers. Reportedly, Asian and Central American rural farmers expect a decrease of about 20 to 40 % of wheat and maize yields due to rising temperatures (Long *et al.,* 2007). Unlike in high lands, farmers in low-lying areas are adversely affected by flooding and salinization due to sea-level rise and saltwater intrusion in groundwater aquifers in the region. Countries like Nepal, and some parts of China and India are forecasted to experience water scarcity due to decreasing snow cover over time. In addition, rural farmers in the semi-arid region of south India are prone to crop shocks compared to those in the tropical regions (Gaiha & Imai, 2004). Thus, based on region or location the extent of the impact of climate change varies and significantly differ.

In many Asian countries, rural farmers have poor water and land management practices. It for this reason why most farmers in the region experience land degradation causing salinization and waterlogging. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) reported that about 40% of irrigated land in dry areas of Asia are affected by salinization. Also, due to over-dependence on groundwater in Mexico there has been a decline in water in the coastal aquifer. This resulted in, large agribusiness companies relocating to other regions leaving rural farmers with no market for their produce (Howe, 2002).

2.3.2 Challenges to the success of rural farmers in sub-Saharan Africa

Most rural farmers in sub-Saharan countries are involved in cash crop production with a focus mainly on basic stable food for their regions. The commonly planted or cultivated crops among the rural farmers in the sub-Sahara include maize, soybean, sorghum, potatoes, vegetables, groundnuts, beans, millet, rice, cassava, and sweet potato. Like South Africa, smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe, Ghana, and Nigeria are actively involved in producing cash crops such as potatoes, maize, and vegetables.

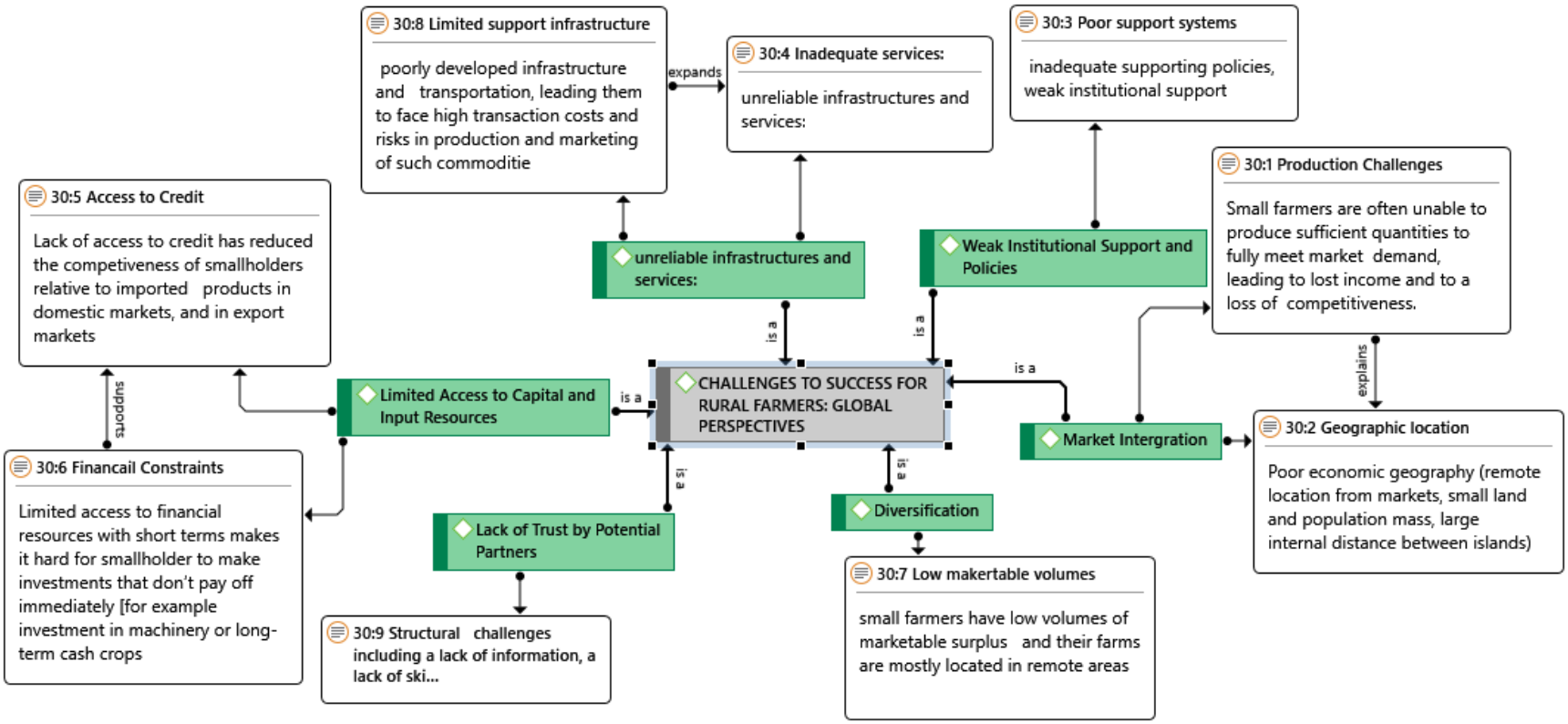

***Figure 2.1**: Global perspectives on the threats to the success of rural farmers*

Smallholder farms occupy 1 000 times more people than mechanised or commercial agriculture in Africa (UNCTAD, 2013). Moreover, Scoones (2009) reports that 70% of sub-Saharan Africa's food supply comes from rural small farmers. Agriculture remains an important sector in the continent. For instance, there are more than 3 million rural farmers involved in smallholder farming in Mozambique (Anderson & Learch, 2016). In Kenya agriculture contributes about 24% of GDP annually (UNEP, 2015) and over 80% of its population earns from agriculture and related activities. About 70% of the rural people derive their livelihood from the sector and related activities. In Nigeria, more than 80% of farming is practiced by smallholder farmers. Small-scale farmers are the biggest producers of the food consumed in Nigeria contributing about 98%. Similarly, agriculture is a key sector in the Zimbabwean economy. It is estimated to contribute between 16% and 19% of the country's GDP. It is a main source of livelihoods to about three-quarters of the county's population (Government of Zimbabwe, 1995; Mangoyana & Meda, 2001). This includes most of the 70% of the rural population. Reportedly, in Uganda, agriculture contributes 23 % of the GDP with over 80 % dependent on it (Masaba, *et al.,* 2014). The contribution of the sector is threatened by the declining rural agriculture output in sub-Saharan Africa. This highlights numerous challenges faced by small rural farms and why agriculture fails to successfully transform rural economies.

Common challenges facing sub-Saharan African rural farmers include insecure rights to land and natural resources, inadequate access to quality inputs and financial services, and limited support from research and extension services (Obidike, 2011; Larson *et al.*, 2012). Also, farmers are confronted by higher transaction costs caused by poor rural infrastructure including roads. Little or no input of farmers into rural agricultural policy decisions limits the opportunities of success to agricultural projects (Mengistu, 2011; Gukurume, 2013). In addition, the rapidly changing nature of domestic and international markets for agricultural produce, makes it difficult for rural farm producers to participate. These challenges vary at regional and country-level due to individual government support systems, topography, cultural differences, community and local level support, and as well as aridity of an area.

The support given to farmers presents challenges to implementation due to lack of contextual relevance. For example, the current international and local level of support to farmers tends to follow a conventional approach to boosting agricultural productivity and putting emphasis on commercialisation of agriculture (Ololade & Olagunju, 2013). In this approach farmers are encouraged to use modern inputs and attempt to integrate farmers into agricultural value chains including producing for export markets. In contrast, only a small group of wealthier and better-

connected farmers are likely to benefit from opportunities created in this fashion (FAO, 2013). This shows that that most rural farmers are marginalised, hence require different forms of support to reach their potential and effectively participate in agriculture product markets. The section below presents on the critical success factors for rural farmers.

2.4 Critical Success Factors for Rural Farmers

Variations of challenges facing rural farmers at global and regional levels (Figure 2.1), highlight the importance of contextualized interventions. The inevitability of such variations is attributable to biological factors; location; the level of specialization; the intensity of production; farm size; and production practices in each region (Kalaugher *et al.,* 2013; Brummel & Nelson 2014). Moreover, it also suggests that farmers in each region or environment require a different set of conditions to succeed. Thus, the extent and uniqueness in regional challenges which include the level of support, climate change effects, market dynamics, credit access, and financial support and infrastructure development require that each region develops its own approaches towards improving the success of rural farmers. Before identifying success factors for rural farmers, it is crucial to define success in general and in the context of this study.

The term success is defined differently in various contexts and it is subjective. To one farmer, success means producing more, while to another, it means increasing profit. Evidently, a product farmer might still fail due to the inability to penetrate the market. On the other hand, another farmer securing a permanent customer base is critical. Depending on the major challenge to individual farmers or projects, success means a different combination of factors from good farm management, to successfully marketing their produce. Thus, success in the context of farmers depending on individual farmer needs at a given period is subjective and varied (Larwood, 1986; Peluchette, 1993). According to Peluchette (1993), success refers to individuals' or groups' feelings about their accomplishment. Botsiou *et al.* (2014) concludes that it is not easy to define success and give only one definition.

Conditions peculiar to farmers in each region also influence the manner in which success is defined. At farm level, these differences might vary from one farm to the next and from an individual within a farm. However, farmers in the same farm or region or area are likely to share similar understanding and sentiments on what success means in their context (Chittithaworn *et al*., 2011). Delving into defining the subjectivity of what success is to rural farmers, might prove wasteful. As such, instead of dwelling on defining success, a different approach is used to understand success in the current study. Success is therefore understood to as the conditions

pre-requisite for the prosperity of rural agricultural projects. Success factors are defined as the combination of factors whose presence guarantees success or prosperity to rural farmers. This part of the review there outlines and shows the key critical success factors for agricultural projects from a global to regional perspectives. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 shows the Atlas Ti generated network diagrams of shared critical success factors for farmers in the global and sub-Saharan context, respectively. At global level, reviewed literature shows that support at various levels such as family and community; ability to manage farm activities, supportive policies, and skilled labour or workers are important conditions for rural framers success. In the sub-Sahara, partnerships and collaborations, market and funding access, availability of skilled labour, and as well as secure land tenure system emerged as the most important conditions for success to farmers.

2.5 Agriculture in South Africa

Rural farming forms a significant part of the agriculture and is widely practiced in South Africa (Masango, 2015). It is regarded as the engine for economic growth and livelihood improvement for rural communities (Desmond & Salin, 2012). There are over 3 million households engaged in subsistence agriculture in South Africa (Altman *et al.*, 2010; Biénabe *et al.,* 2011). Like the rest of sub-Saharan African and Asian countries, agriculture remains the main economic activity for most rural populations. However, in recent years, rural agriculture has been on a downward spiral.

Smallholder farmers in South Africa, like the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, face several barriers that inhibit their chances of success (Sinyolo, 2014). This is why although South Africa is national food secure with a sophisticated agricultural food system, about 26% of rural households are food insecure. The majority are the rural poor (Baiphethi & Jacobs, 2009; Labadarios *et al*., 2011; SANHANES-1, 2013).

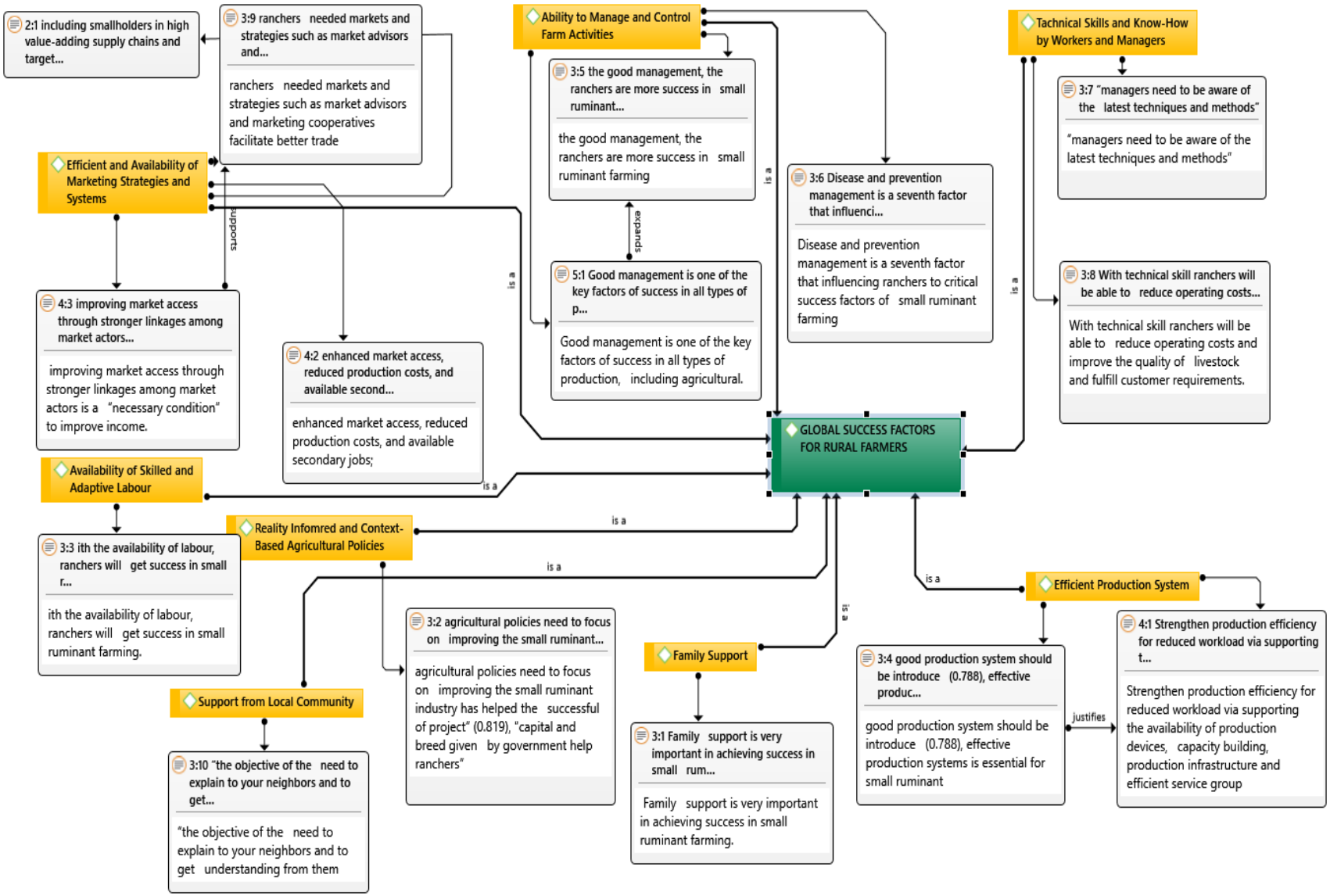

***Figure 2.2**: Factors critical for the success for rural farmers*

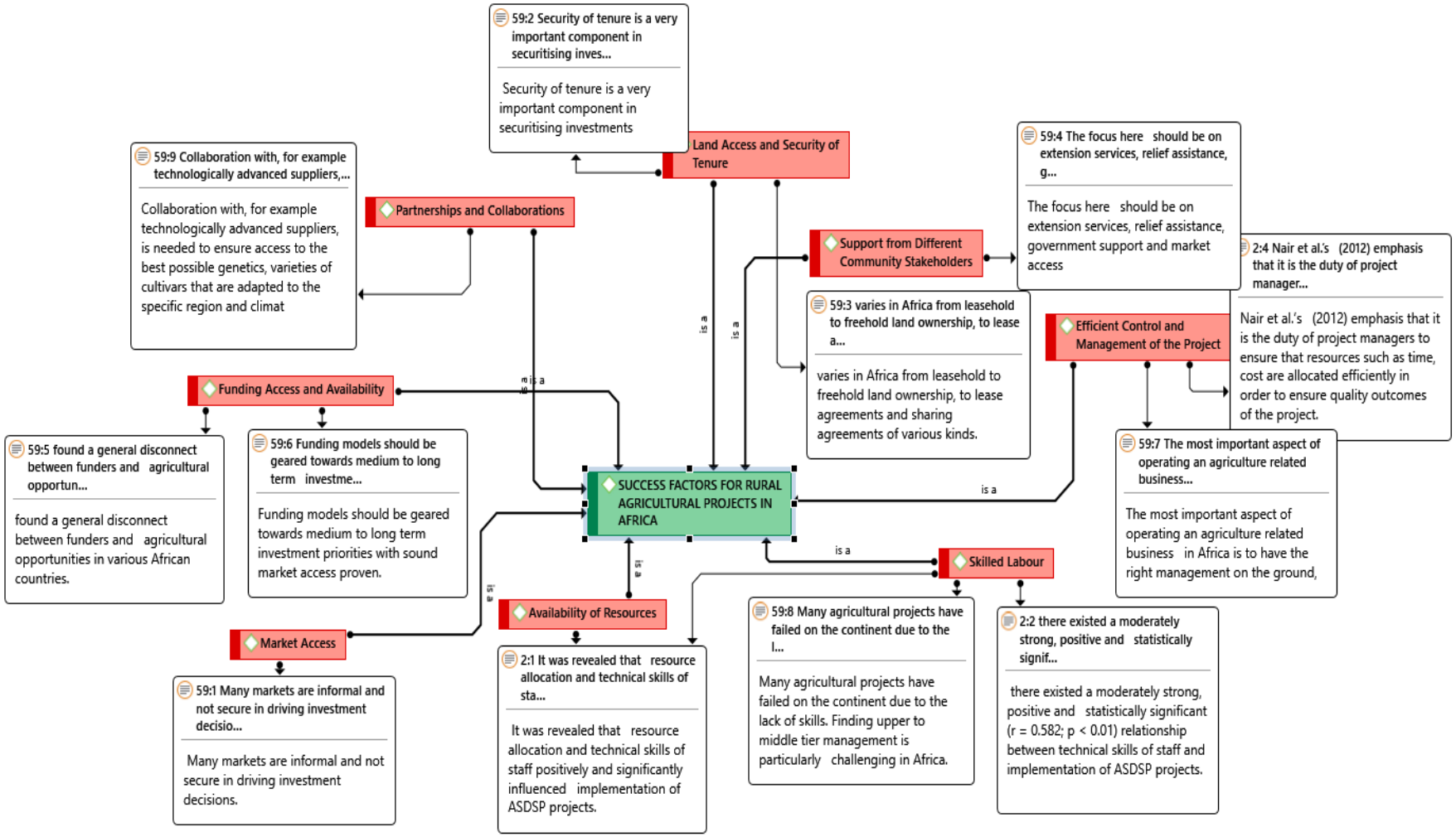

***Figure 2.3**: Factors determining success to sub-Saharan Africa*

Yearly, the South African government rolls out numerous agricultural development projects and programmes to capacitate and support rural farmers. Some of the programmes include Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, 1994); Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (2003); and One Household One Hectare (2015) (Tshuma, 2012; Netshipale et al., 2017). The aim of these programmes is to reduce the farmer vulnerabilities, address rural poverty, achieve effective land use and create job opportunities. There are notable successes recorded, however the government acknowledges that a host of these programmes did not yield desired results. This is part of the reasons why; land underutilisation is observed among rural smallholder farmers and communities. A similar situation is observed under the beneficiaries of the land reform and redistribution where land largely remains underutilised (Lahiff *et al.,* 2012; Tshuma, 2012). This points out that majority of the intervention measures adopted in these programmes reflect a misdiagnosis of farmers' problem or use of one-size-fit all approach. The next section unpacks challenges that affect the productivity of farmers in South Africa.

2.5.1 Challenges Threatening Success of Rural Farming in South Africa

Increasingly smallholder farmers' productivity is under threat due to several challenges that require urgent attention. Little attention is given to these farmers and majority of the support programmes in the sector, primarily focus on small scale and fully-fledged commercial farmers (Hall & Kepe, 2017). This further exposes grassroots farmers in rural communities leaving them vulnerable to external and internal shocks (Altman *et al.,* 2010). A thorough literature review on challenges commonly experienced by rural farmers or agricultural projects in South Africa was conducted using Atlas Ti software. Themes describing farmer challenges are summarised as, limited access to credit and capital, limited access to inputs, inadequate support by key stakeholders, unaffordable insurance, no supporting infrastructure, exclusion from the value chain and agro-processing, limited access to information, and lack of know-how (Deloitte Africa Agribusiness Unit (DAAU), 2011; Aliber & Hall, 2012; Mpandeli & Maponya, 2014; Hall & Kepe, 2017). These are diagrammatically illustrated in Figure 2.4.

Most rural farmers report challeneges associated with market dynamics as a threat to their success (Aliber & Hall, 2012). O'Laughlin *et al.* (2013) explains that unavailability and inaccessibility of markets for rural farmers is a major concern to the sustainability of their operation. Inability to access capital and credit is another major setback to the growth and development of rural farmers (Tekana & Oladele, 2011). A report by Deloitte Africa Agribusiness Unit (DAAU) (2011) found that there is a disconnection between funders and farmers. Also, between farmers and agricultural opportunities in various African countries including South Africa.

The land tenure system, and lack of trust between the funders and farmers are some of the contributing factors. For example, most rural farmers in South Africa occupy land under the Permission to Occupy (PTO) or lease agreement (Hebinck, 2014). This tenure system does not allow communal farmers to own land, but rather it earns them the right to usage once approved by the chief and relevant authorities (Hall & Kepe, 2017). As such, financial institutions require collateral in the form of title deeds which is not provided under the PTO system.

These challenges have negatively affected rural agricultural productivity. Friedrich *et al*. (2017) noted that in Limpopo where this study was conducted, growing poverty is a direct result of declining rural agricultural productivity and performance. Hence, it is critical that the challenges facing rural agriculture projects are known to devise appropriate and adapt existing intervention measures. Equally, what it would take for farmers to succeed in their locality must be established. Interventions developed based challenges or success factors assessment alone does not afford farmers to shape and model solutions based on their own realities. Thus, both challenges and success factors are established as done in this study to appropriately diagnose farmers' situation in totality. The next section shows the literature review of the known success factors for rural farmers in South Africa

2.5.2 Factors Determining Success to rural farmers in South Africa

Reviewed literature revealed that access to market, technology, resources, support from government and local stakeholders are conditions that determine success to rural farmers. Thematic analysis using Atlas Ti network diagram depicts the resultant factors (Figure 2.5). The evolution of TLI and its role in rural development is discussed next.

2.6 Overview and Origins: Roles and Functions of the Traditional Leadership Institution

This section gives an outline on the evolution of TLI roles and functions. Historical and current TLI roles are discussed considering their capabilities and to define the scope at which they operate. This serves as a foundation for establishing potential contributions to agriculture. Also, legislative framework, on TLI roles and position in society is reviewed and gaps identified.

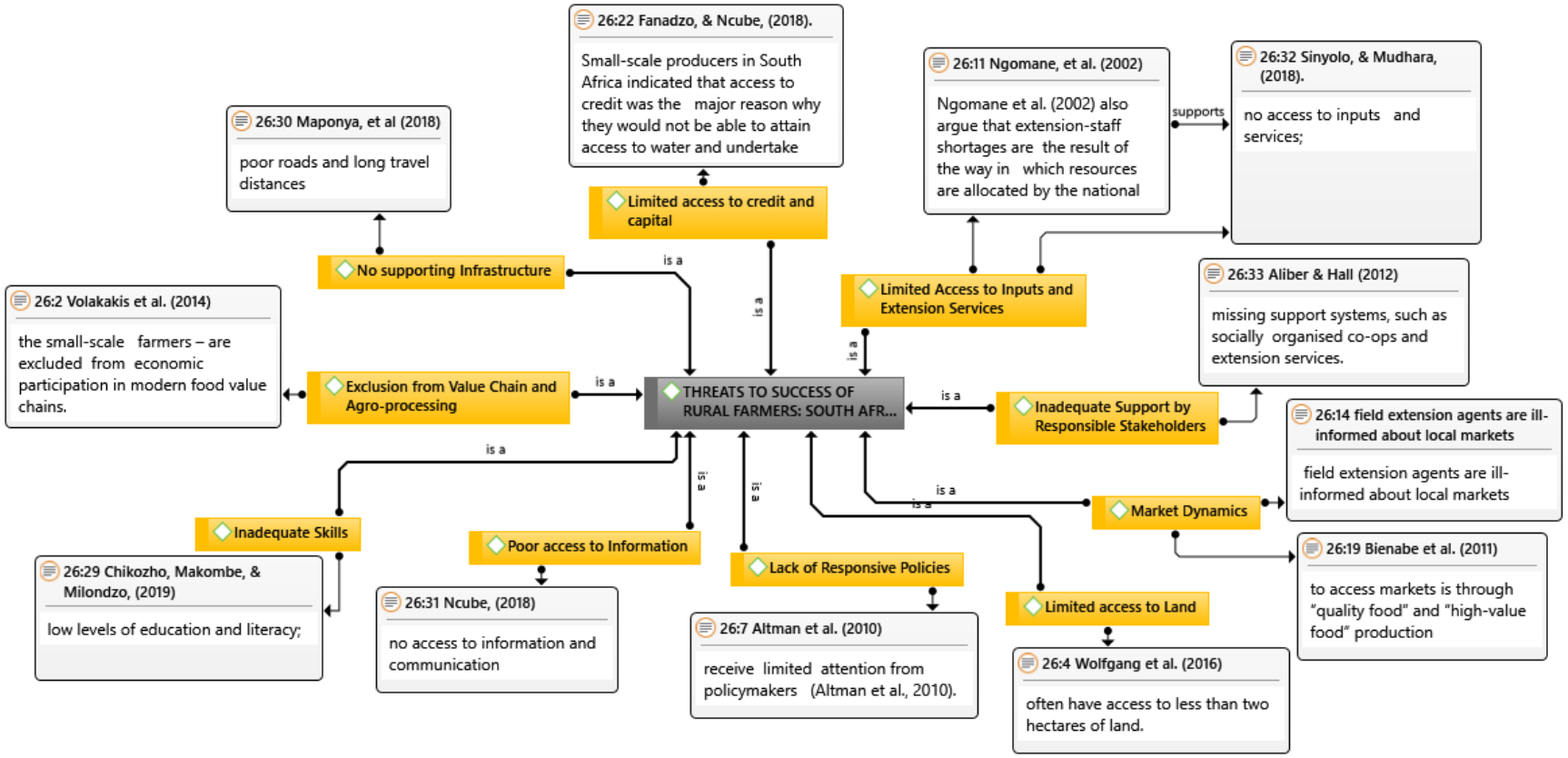

***Figure 2.4**: Threats to the success of rural farmers in South Africa*

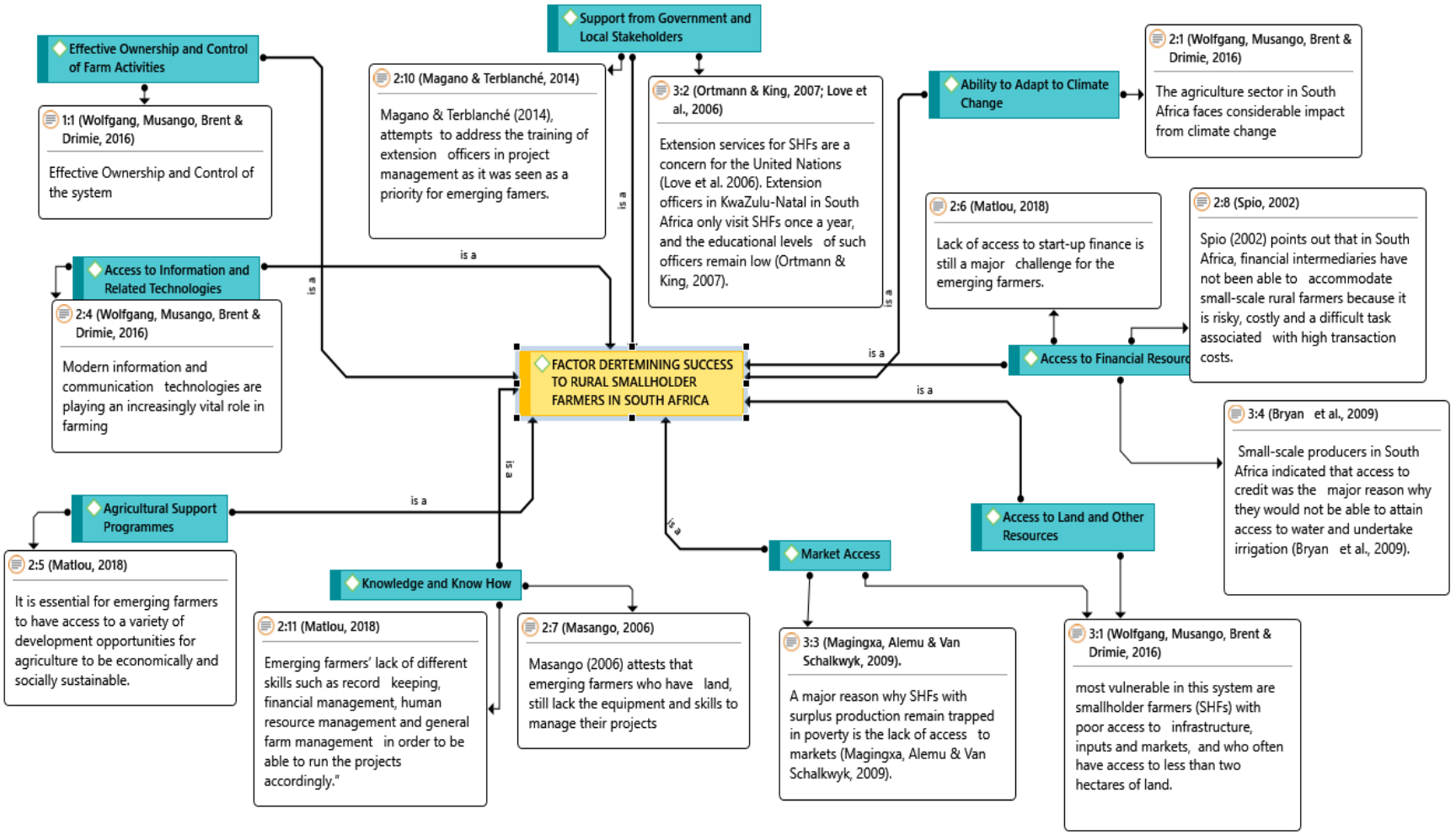

Figure 2.5: *Factors Determining Success for rural farmers in South Africa*

The TLI is as old as the history of human kind. Arguable, the human transition from nomadic cave dwelling to modern civilisation resulted in the formation of TLI. Historically, humans dwelt in caves and were nomadic. They were guided by the “survival of the fittest” principle (d’Engelbronner-Kolff *et al.,* 1998:118). As time passed by, they saw the need for protection and resolved to come together in small groups (Freud, 2015). This protected them against animals and other groups and consequently the standard of living improved. As a result, the few gifted and eloquent individuals with the ability to solve community problems eventually found themselves as leaders in their small groups (Freud, 2015).

The descendants of this elite took after their fathers and clan as leaders. Thus, their legitimacy is entirely inherited power and authority (Fortes & Evan-Pritchard, 2015). Accordingly, leadership lineage automatically fell to sons and grandsons whose ancestry, had proven themselves in leadership. This gave birth to kings, headmen, chiefs, and what today is commonly known as the TLI (Peires, 2014). Their brevity and ability to solve community problems earned the TL a strongly held belief that they are God sent (Oomen, 2005). This is part of the reasons why community members shunned away from questioning and holding the institution and its leaders accountable. Such beliefs still exist in some part of the world mainly in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (Green, 2014). For instance, chiefs are the highest priests and in others, they are worshiped as God. Luvale tribe in Angola is one such good example (Orgel, 2014). Ntsebeza (2001) states that “the Chief is not merely the most important and most powerful member of the tribe, but rather the tribe itself and the embodiment of all the attitudes, emotions and values that ensure its solidarity”. In some societies, the belief has been lost to modern democratic movement across the world. The chief is the symbol of tribal unity, and the unity within the institution. The TLI is also a custodian of the social, economic, and political direction of most rural communities (Goodfellow & Lindermann, 2013). They are assigned with the responsibility to administer and allocate community resources in the society such as livestock and land (Ubink, 2016).

The TLI is therefore the authority based on the belief in "sacred traditions that have existed since time immemorial" and the legitimacy of those who are called to govern by their traditions (Oomen, 2005: 28-29). Traditional Leadership Institution rule and govern their societies on the foundations of traditional norms and values (Ntsebeza, 2003). Its leadership is rooted in culture and tradition (Oomen 2005: 28). Thus, they derive their authority from the earned allegiance of subjects and not from coercive power. Literature review on the TLI roles suggests that these roles can be categorized into legal services, social, political, economic, and land administration as illustrated Figure 2.6. To date, countries like the United Kingdom, France, and Germany have high regard

to TLI as a monarch and they play a pivotal role in governance to date (Leyland, 2016). Their role is to act as overseers of elected leaders and are a source of unity for the community through shared identities.

Prior to colonialization, the TLI presided over disputes, formulated community policies, and ensured the food and nutrition security of its citizens (Molomo, 2014; Poteete, 2015). However, these roles were partly tempered with during the colonial period. In some cases, in Africa, the TLI was disbanded. At the end of colonialism and apartheid, the TLI was reinstated in most parts of Africa. This includes South Africa. The TLI in South Africa like most sub-Saharan and Southern African countries, share common traits. Their history is largely similar. The following section presents the South African case of the TLI from the colonial period to the present day. Also, legal framework for the TLI is outlined.

2.7 Traditional Leadership Institution in South Africa

South Africa like other African states, community governance was dominated by kings and chiefs (Bulter, 2017). Traditional leaders (chiefs and kings) had political and economic functions. They directly controlled and influenced resources such as land, minerals, and agriculture in general (Ntsebeza, 2001). Agriculture in various kingdoms was the main economic activity. It involved livestock and crop production to ensure food and nutrition security for the community. The institution oversaw environmental and developmental matters. It also had a tribute system which was a tax collection mechanism (Bulter, 2017). It acted as the judicial administration for the community disputes (Ntsebeza, 2003). In all, the TLI in South Africa exercised custodianship over the social, political, and economic spheres of their community. This was before the colonial period. After the arrival of settlers, like the rest of the post-colonial states, the TLI in South Africa was greatly compromised.

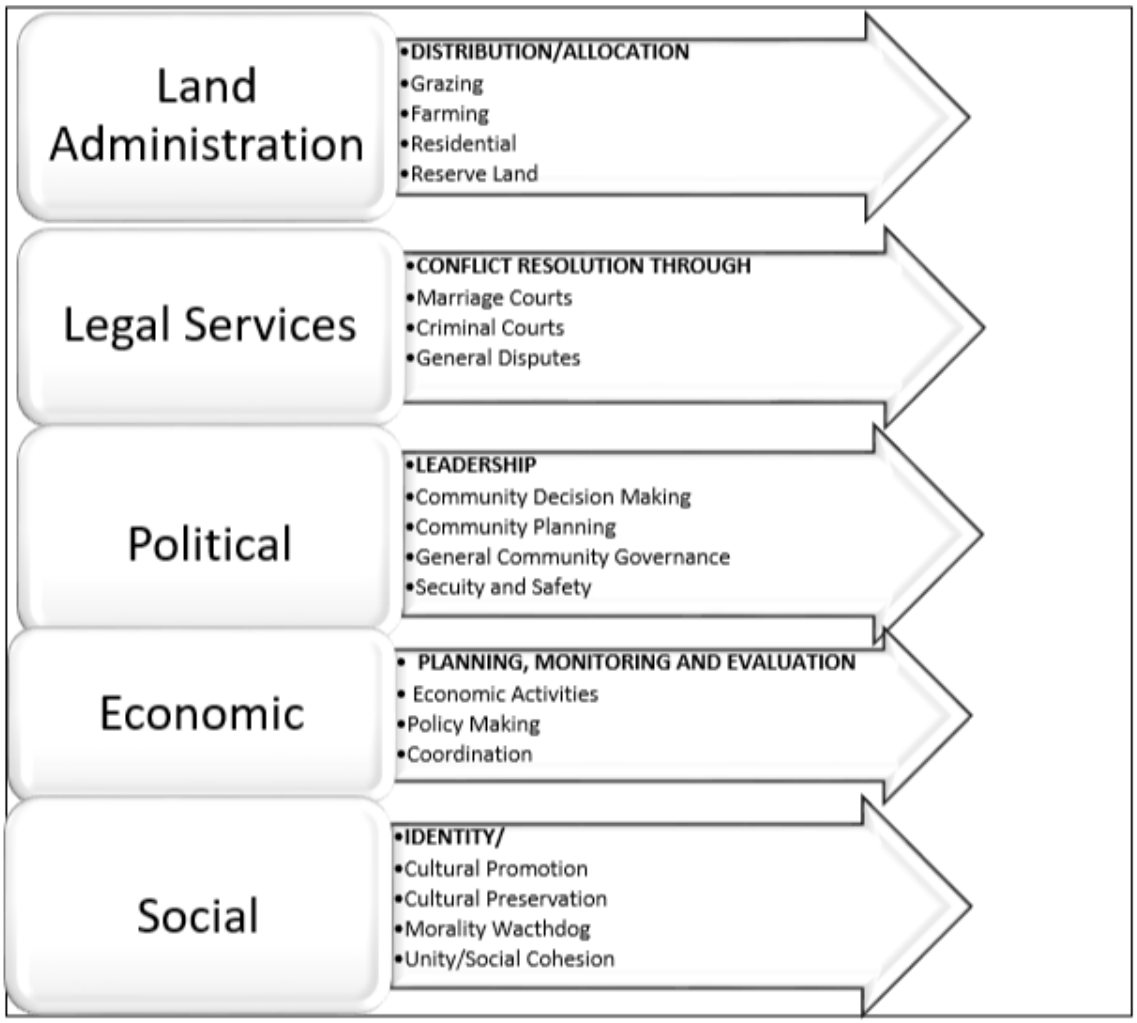

***Figure 2.6**: Roles and functions of the Traditional Leadership Institution in rural development sub-Saharan Africa*

In this period, new regulations and policies were introduced leading to a complete restructuring of the traditional communities and their organisational or leadership system. Consequently, the institution became an administrative tool for the apartheid government (Sithole & Mbele, 2008). This is part of the reasons why present opponents of the TLI, cast that the traditional leadership is a manipulated institution which was used to legitimize the colonial rule and separate development. Scholars such as Koelble (2005) argue that TLI cannot be sustained by a country espousing liberal democracy. Despite the contestations, the TLI is constitutionally recognised and remains a custodian of social, economic and political functioning of rural communities. The constitution of 1994 established a new path for the incorporation of TLI into rural development. Scholars such as Sithole & Mbele (2008) view the TLI as effective, unique, and aligned to grassroots circumstances. Slow rural development could also be attributed to rural development programmes which side-line the role of the TLI in a modern democracy.

The South African government acknowledges that TLI is an important strategic partner in rural development, therefore, must be consulted and included always in matters that affect their communities (Khunou, 2009; Sithole & Mbele, 2015). Traditional Leadership Institution has arguably brought about stability and ensured a socially cohesive environment. A key attribute for successful and sustainable community development. The differences between African and European traditional leadership system lies in how they are organised and incorporated into the democratic system. In most sub-Saharan African states, the TLIs are designated to serve in rural areas with each institution representing a distinct tribe. Hence, they are called “tribal authorities” (TBA) in South Africa (Gluckman, 2013). This is noted throughout Africa. For instance, in Zimbabwe, Shona, Ndebele, and Tonga tribes have their own unique and distinct TLIs. Zulu, Pedi, Tsonga, and Venda are among the many other recognised tribal groups in South Africa. The next section discusses the TLI roles in the democratic South Africa as expounded in the legislative framework.

2.7.1 Legislated Roles of Traditional Leadership Institution in South Africa

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1994, made it mandatory to involve the TLI in rural governance and development of their communities (DTA, 2012). Consequently, the TLGFA, Act 41 (2003) was promulgated. The Act lays out guidelines and provides for the roles and duties of the TLI. The White paper on the Traditional Leadership Governance and Framework Act (TLFGA) of 2006 was introduced to state the roles of the TLI. However, the White paper did not clarify the roles, instead provided the list of broad categories to which local, national, or provincial governments may assign roles and duties to the TLI. Enlisted categories are, promoting

development in arts and culture; administration, health, welfare, the administration of justice, safety and security, the registration of births, deaths and customary marriages, economic development, environment, tourism, disaster management, the management of natural resources, the dissemination of information relating to government policies and programmes, and education as well as agriculture.

The Act further stipulates that “the national government and all provincial governments must promote partnerships between district municipalities and kingship or queenship councils and principal traditional councils through legislative or other measures”. There are several pieces of legislative measures that exist today to fully incorporate and democratise the TLI. The aim is to promote and ensure a participatory approach to rural development. Some of the key legislative frameworks and their purpose are illustrated in Table 2.1.

According to Madzivhandila & Maloka (2014), participatory development is expected to foster active participation of local players for effective service delivery, particularly in the previously disadvantaged communities. Local institutions such as the TLI play a critical role in grassroots development. Puttnam (200) alludes that local institutions differentiate between successful economies and communities. Local institutions are involved in community decision making at various levels. The next section deals with locating and bringing to the fore the level at which the TLI is involved or has influence in community decision making matrix. This is done to understand and pull out the realistic contributions from the TLI.

Table 2.1: Legislative Framework for Traditional leadership in South Africa

	Legislation	Purpose
1	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa	• Provides for the official recognition of the TLI • Makes provisions for the incorporation of the traditional leadership into community development
2	Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003).	• Recognizes traditional communities • Establishes and recognizes traditional councils • Provides a statutory framework within which traditional leadership should operate
3	White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003	• List the potential areas of contribution by the TLI • State the implied roles of the TLI
4	National House of Traditional Leaders Act, 1997 (Act 10 of 1997)	• Created a platform for the recognition of the TLI at the national level • Provides an opportunity for Traditional leaders to contribute to the development of working mechanisms for the institution.
5	Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998); Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)	• Promotes the incorporation of the TLI in local governance planning • The IDP makes provision for the involvement of the TLI in local community development decision making processes • However, the TLI does not have voting rights
6	Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005	• Provides the recognition of the traditional leadership communities • States areas in which the TLI could be assigned roles.

2.8 The Position of the Traditional Leadership Institution in community development

The TLI is a participatory institution using the guidelines by Uphoff (2004). Prior to describing the characteristics of various institutions in community decision making and locating TLI, the term institutions must be defined and contextualised. Institutions general refer to the rules of the game (North, 1990). Institutions shepherd, direct, and influence the behaviours of individuals and community activities (Schultz, 1968; Runge, 1981; Eggertsson, 1997). Powelson (1972) defines institutions as a set of relationships between individuals, that are designed to resolve conflicts. Institutions could also be understood as the working rules where conflicting social demands are reconciled (Bromley, 1974). Nabli & Nugent 1989) states that institutions channel behaviour of people concerning each other, their belongings, possessions, and property and this is achieved by setting the "rules of the game". These definitions show that, institutions in communities influence social, economic and political behaviour.

Uphoff (2004) highlights that their activities or non-activity enable and maintain certain practices, whilst at the same time they can also exclude certain actors or constrain these same practices. Defining institutions and understanding their level of involvement in community decision making is important in this study for evaluating how the TLI shape or influence the outcomes of rural agriculture (Basurto & Coleman, 2010; Deneke *et al*., 2011). In this manner, it can be understood how the TLI structures power, rights, entitlements, community goals, and support systems at multiple levels to influence the adaptive capacity of rural agriculture. The following paragraph distils and locates the TLI's level of decision making in community development.

Institutions occur at different levels and take various forms in the community (Figure 2.7). Each institution makes decisions at the level in which it operates. There are ten levels in community decision making and activity planning (Upnoff, 2004; Room, 2011). These include individual, household, community, and international level. At each level, there are players referred to as institutions (Upnoff, 2006; Copus & Erlingsson, 2013). The inherent characteristics, roles, and nature of the TLI were used to categorise the level it influences community decisions (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2013). This was done to demonstrate and analyse how the TLI fits into the pool of local community institutions. The TLI falls in the group, community and locality levels of community decision making process as highlighted in yellow in Figure 2.8.

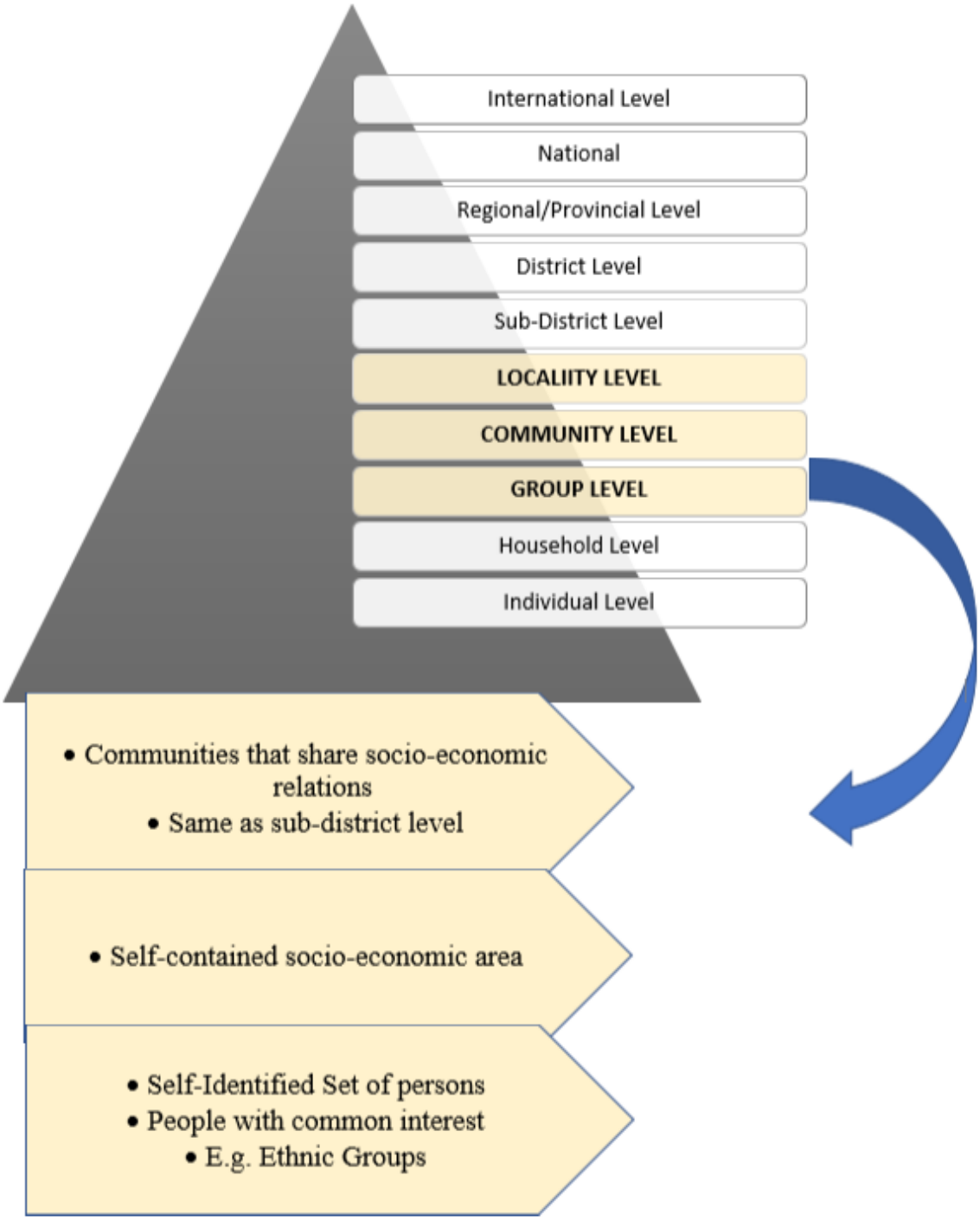

***Figure 2.7**: Ten Levels of Decision Making and Activity Planning. Adapted from Uphoff (1986: 11)*

At different levels, local institutions are characterised by kinship, direct, frequent, and intense interactions with the community, village, or town (Upnoff, 2004; Broto, 2013; Smucker *et al*., 2015). Similarly, TLI has a high level of interaction with the community. Thus, it stands to create vast opportunities for collective action and mutual assistance in resource mobilisation and harnessing local resources to improve conditions of success for rural farmers (Room, 2011; Bhuyan, 2012). An effective TLI is therefore expected to achieve self-directed and self-sustaining farmers in utilising community resources.

Institutions at local level are further classified into public, participatory, and private institutions (Table 2.2). The TLI rightfully fits the description of participatory institutions. Participatory institutions represent ethnic groups, voluntary organisations, NGOs and other community institutions (Upnoff, 2004). The TLI is defined as "the customary institutions or structures, or customary systems or procedures of governance, recognised, utilised or practiced by traditional communities" (TLGFA Act 41 of 2003). The TLI is tasked with monitoring, governing and promoting grassroots development. Like participatory institutions, the TLI is a source of unity and it represents its community on shared identities, purpose and goals (Uphoff, 2004). Moreover, TLI is a self-governing body that represents different tribes bound by a common identity and shared interests. To the contrary, private institutions are profit-oriented and driven by an economic need as opposed to public good.

2.8.1 Participatory institutions

Participatory institutions are the most variable in performance. They benefit from local knowledge. Empowered participatory institutions respond quickly to local changes and conflict. Moreover, such institutions create climates of opinion to influence behaviour in their communities (Cortright *et al.,* 2017). Similar characteristics are also observed in the description of the TLI. For example, Logan (2013) states that TLI includes all systems, procedures, and guidelines put in place by the traditional community leadership to manage, enforce and support political, social, and economic community development activities.

Table 2.2: Types and characteristics of local institutions

Category	**Types of organisations**	**Characteristics**
Public institutions	Local administration, local government	• Political and bureaucratic • Serves local citizens at a constituency level
Participatory institutions	Community institutions, tribal authorities, Voluntary organisations, cooperatives,	• Shared common interests • Self-identified group • Community/group interests
Private institutions	Service organisations, private businesses	• Profit driven • Private interest

It is also worth noting that, the TLI in South Africa and most parts of the world, are also regarded as a public institution. One feature that qualifies the TLI in this category is operating at the constituency level serving local citizens. Nonetheless, the TLI is more inclined to the participatory institutions. The shared common interests, identity and intimate relationship between TLI and the community including rural farmers provides the basis for collective action; building consensus; coordination, and management of group activities. Copus and Erlingsson (2013) and Walo (2016) show that local partnership at this level creates a unique platform to collect, analyse, and evaluate information about group challenges and interests. Also, common viable solutions are sought in this way. Local participatory institutions like the TLI offer strong bonds that act as a source of motivation energised by a degree of interpersonal solidarity. This shows that the TLI directly and indirectly influence opportunities and atmosphere in rural agriculture.

2.9 Arguments for Traditional Leadership Institution Contributions to rural farmers

Figure 2.8 further illustrates a review of literature on roles played by local institutions like the TLI in promoting the success of agriculture development in their regions. Literature reveals the importance of local institutions in collective action and helping farmers build assets necessary to withstand external shocks (Meinzen-Dick *et al*., 2002; Meinzen-Dick *et al.,* 2013; *Pike et al.,* 2015). The TLI contributions could contribute to levelling the ground for farmers to access financial and human resources, and securing agricultural inputs. Moreover, it could contribute in creating linkages, promoting access to technologies as well as mobilising local markets and communities to support rural agriculture. It could also act as a forum of information exchange, motivation, and awareness-raising activities (Ewell, 2011; Berman *et al*., 2012). Similarly, Nalere *et al. (*2015) in Bangladesh and Islam & Nursey-Bray (2017) in Uganda confirmed that rural institutions contribute to agriculture by promoting access to land and mobilizing resources. Absence, of supportive local institutions leaves farmers vulnerable to external risks and shocks. Muchara & Mbatha (2016) reported that there are weak local agricultural support institutions in South Africa. That is why farmers in KwaZulu-Natal have resorted to self-regulated institutions to ensure timely access to farming services. These institutions help farmers address immediate problems unique to their geographical location such as, improving market access, information flow, and resources availability. This confirms the potential importance of local institutions such as TLI in promoting the agricultural projects. If the TLI has the potential to contribute, why is it regarded as a weaker development partner by many? This calls into question the effectiveness of its activities. The next section deals with factors hindering and affecting TLI institutional ineffectiveness.

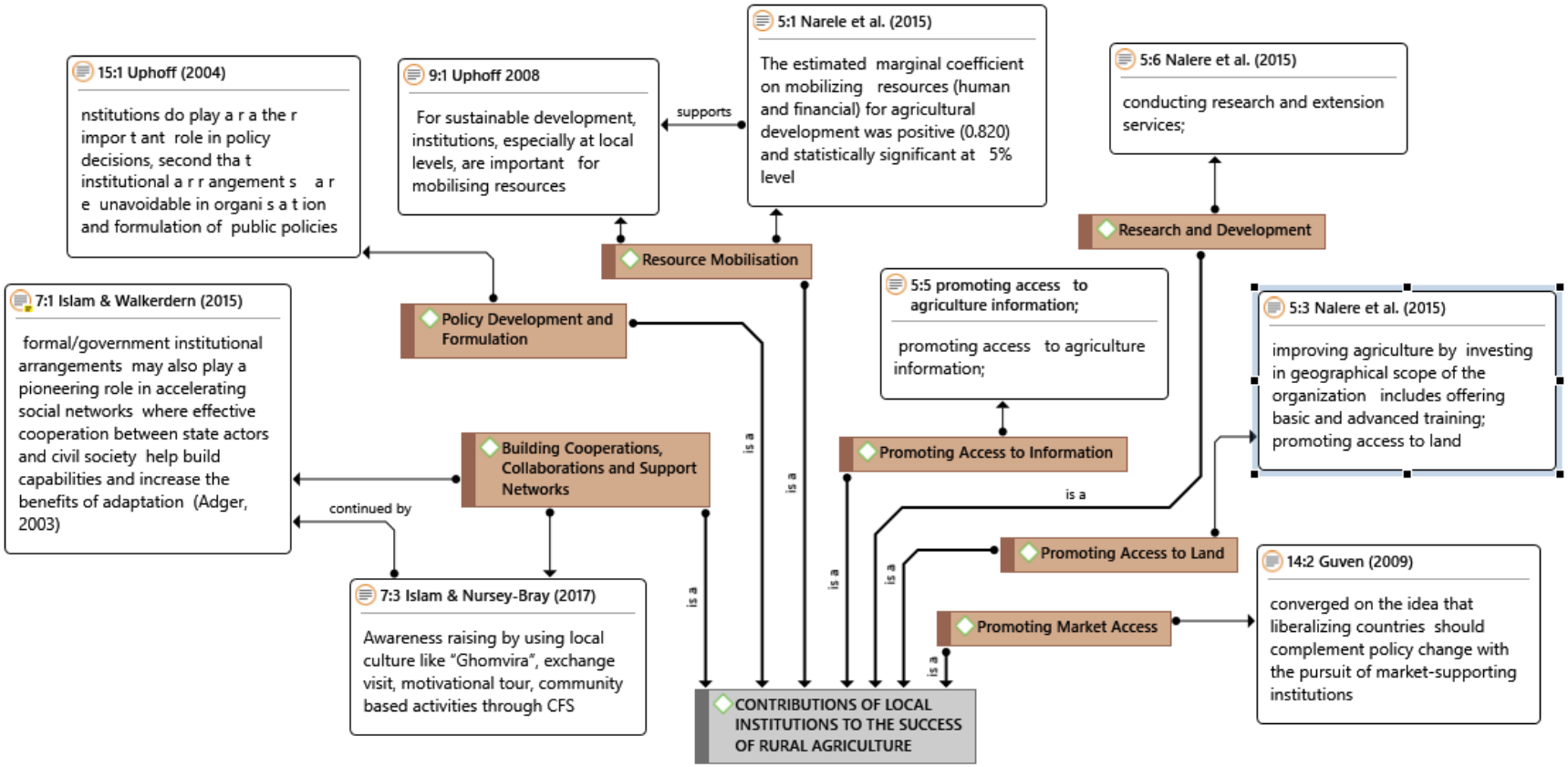

***Figure 2.8**: Potential traditional leadership institution contributions to the success of rural agricultural projects*

2.10 Traditional Leadership Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional effectiveness is increasingly receiving attention in recent years. It is mirrored on the premise and calls for greater accountability and responsiveness of local public institutions and government (Cortright *et al.,* 2017). Institutional effectiveness is aligned with practicing concepts such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) (Madu, 2012; Zabadi, 2013). At a community level, the primary measure for institutional effectiveness focuses on the cause-effect relationship between the institution and community development outcomes (Dugan & Hernon, 2002). In this view, institutional effectiveness is about the quality of services it provides. Similarly, in the current study, the effectiveness of the TLI relates to the quality of services or contributions towards the success of agriculture.

Institutional effectiveness is defined as the ability and a process by which institutional activities are analysed concerning its mandated roles, purposes, and objectives against the desired outcomes. The effectiveness of the TLI in this case is measured by the extent to which it satisfies a target group (Baiura & Sytenko, 2015). Jenkins (2007) posits that an effective institution meets the needs of stakeholders; meets its goals and takes complete accountability in demonstrating the institution's quality and responsibility. It is therefore, expected that an effective TLI is one that is responsive and proactive in addressing the needs of rural farmers. In contrast, a typical ineffective TLI is less transparent, less responsive, and uninvolved (McCann, 2011). In an era of unparalleled change in both the techniques and objectives of rural economic development, the role of TLI has never been so vital (Kalu, 2011; Ewell, 2011). Recognition and empowerment of TLI and local institutions' in community development, gives a thrust to its myriad of activities in search of ways that improve chances of success to rural agricultural activities. This study seeks to model an ideal effective TLI that can contribute in creating positive outcomes for agricultural projects. This attempt embrace the diversity of TLI effectiveness, and provides the ground for assessing and reviewing the TLI programs and activities in community development.

A quality TLI offers services or contributions that farmers consider important based on their mission or set of objectives. Institutional effectiveness is important in determining and keeping track of the activities of the institution concerning its mandate. It involves systematic, explicit, and documented processes for assessing performance. Thus, a TLI could not be considered effective if there is no clarity on its roles in promoting agriculture and how these must be performed. Hence, contextual criteria or a list of potential and specific TLI contributions that may positively influence required to ensure the success of agricultural projects are developed in this study.

Currently there are no defined or specific roles on how TLI should contribute to agriculture as legislated. This is part of the reasons why it is difficult to hold the TLI to account and evaluate its institutional activities in the sector. There is lack of rigorous research or studies on TLI effectiveness in promoting agriculture. Hence, this study. Current studies focus more on the characteristics of the TLI activities associated with positive community development outcomes (Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014; Tshitangoni & Francis, 2014). However, little has been done on the actual specific set of TLI practices necessary to successfully promote agricultural projects. This poses a challenge on how to compare TLI's participation in different community settings. The study contributes towards this cause by defining TLI roles and developing a TLI institutional model in promoting agriculture development. It is equally, paramount to distil factors that influence or affect institutional effectiveness. This is discussed below.

2.10.1 Factors hindering institutional effectiveness

In developing an evaluative model for effectiveness, isolating, and pulling out factors that impede the effective TLI contribution in support of rural farmers is principal. This section identifies possible factors from the literature that affect the effective participation of the TLI in community decision making activities and practices that promote rural development including agriculture. A TLI perceived to be ineffective by farmers loses credibility and importance in their context (Cortright *et al*., 2017). Continued ineffectiveness generates farmer's apathy, which delegitimises the roles and importance of the TLI in agriculture. This affects the way rural farmers relate or interact with it, consequently the effectiveness of the TLI is further undermined.

With the aid of Atlas Ti network legislative framework, empirical studies, books, and government documents on the role of TLI in rural development were assessed. This enabled the identification and isolation factors hindering TLI institutional effectiveness. Four FHTLIC were identified (Figure, 2.9). These are structural incompatibilities; role ambiguity; as well as poor relations between the community, elected and traditional leaders. Literature further shows that the lack of trust in the activities are driven by presumed TLI incapacity (Jackson & Heather, 2003; Mhlanga, 2012; Chigwata, 2016; Ndlovu, Mwale, & Zuwarimwe, 2020).

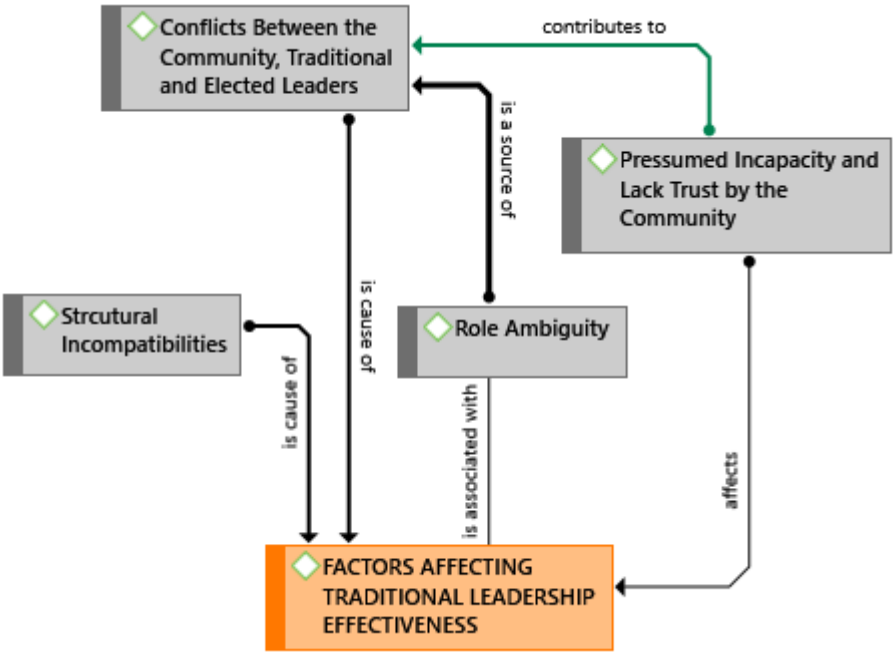

***Figure 2.9**: Factors affecting the effective contribution of traditional leadership*

Municipal Structures Act, 1998 and TLFGA Act, 2003 provides for the incorporation of TLI to foster efficient and responsive local development at grassroots. The Municipal Structures Act, of 1998 tries to localise the participation of the TLI, however their participation is only limited to discussions. For instance, both elected and traditional leaders are bound by the Code of Conduct for Councillors during discussions. Traditional leaders participate in the discussions, but have no voting rights in subsequent decisions or resolutions. TLI participation in community decision making matrix for effective community development is therefore limited. This contradicts the provisions for inclusive development as expounded in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Voting rights are key to developing context-based approaches and forms the foundations of participatory and inclusive development (Ndlovu *et al,* 2020).

Since its fusion into the democratic local government system, the role, and place of the TLI in local municipalities and communities is met with tension, confusion, and contradictory practices (Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017; Koenane, 2018). SALGA (2012) reported that one of the major concerns to the TLI was the clarity of the roles. As a result, both the traditional leaders and TL councils, frequently enquire about their exact roles in the municipality and local development where community decisions are taken. Such inquiries point to the confusion created by role ambiguity and lack of clarity duties and responsibilities of the TLI. Mhlanga (2012) and Koenane (2018) oberved that due to non-specific roles, some traditional leaders either do not participate or present themselves for compliance purposes.

In addition, the TLI council members are legal public office bearers who do not have conditions of service. This adds to the confusion as to what are the roles of the TLI in the development of their communities. This is part of the reasons why, the TLI is yet to be fully integrated into different sectors of rural development such as agriculture.

2.11 Modelling

2.11.1 Study Modelling

The study therefore evaluates and proposes TLI institutional effectiveness model in the context of rural farmers. To achieve this, three key scenarios are created based on the objectives of the study. Firstly, key success factors or attributes that guarantee success to agricultural projects are identified. The agricultural project's success factors are abbreviated as APSF for the purposes of this study. Secondly, possible and viable TLI contributions (TLIC) that positively influence the APSF were assessed and assorted. These represented triangulated views (farmers, TLI representatives, and key informants) and evidence from literature on the realistic, ideal, and

potential support systems or mechanisms that are and could be offered by TLI to realise success stories among the rural farmers. In other words, a criterion for TLI effective participation in promoting rural agricultural projects was developed. The last scenario, was to identify barriers (FHTLIC) perceived to hinder the participation of TLI in decision-making processes that promote APSF. This factor was treated as a moderating variable in the model. In all the cases, both empirical and literature data was utilised to develop a robust and plausible model cases. Only valid and reliable factors were used as tools of measurement in the three models.

To build the TLI institutional effectiveness model, direct effect of TLIC to APSF was tested. The aim was to estimate and ascertain the perceived effect of TLIC on APSF. The hypothesis that TLIC positively influence APSF. Indirect effect of TLIC to APSF through FHTLIC was also assessed. The indirect effect analysis estimated the moderating effect of FHTLIC in relationship between TLIC and APSF. This model was tested through the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) method. Structural equation model equations are common decision making tools used in evaluative studies and practices to build and understand predictive, prescriptive, and causal models. The details of its applicability in the present study are presented fully in Chapter 3.

2.11.2 Approaches to Evaluation Modelling

A combination of Theory Driven Evaluation and Success Case approach was used through the application of Systems theory. This provided the basis for systematic and scientific evaluation and estimation of a typical case scenario of an effective TLI in promoting agricultural project success. There are several approaches used to evaluate studies in literature. These includes empowerment, organizational, participatory, utilisation-focused, responsive, and behavioural objectives approaches (Patton, 1997; Gregory, 2000; Fetterman, 2001). Other approaches focus on the evaluation of methodical issues of the work, programme, or effect of an intervention. An evaluation of the effect of a training programme is an ideal example (Kirkpatrick, 1994). In this study, the Theory Driven and Success Case approaches were used in the evaluation to firstly define the theory or development measurement models on TLIC, FHTLIC, and APSF. "Rationale or theory is the basis of an evaluation to understand the program's development and impact" (Smith, 1994:83)

Theory driven evaluation approach was used suitably by developing a plausible model on the relationship between TLIC, FHTLIC and APSF. The success case method approach was used to evaluate a typical case or condition that defines agricultural projects success. This approach is suitable for defining practical successful outcomes and success cases as expounded by Brinkerhoff (2003). Adoption of this approach allowed a combination of processes from the

Theory-driven evaluation to be used to determine linkages, in the form of a logic model, an impact model, or a results map for the observed variables (APSF, FHTLIC, & TLIC). Detailed stories were gathered to the built model from the direct recipients to determine what was happening, what was being achieved, and what could be done. Bickman (1987) explains that theory or emerging relationships include resources, activities, processes, and outcomes, and underlying assumptions. This is how the underlying assumptions on the development and implementation of perceived relationships (APSF, FHTLIC, & TLIC) were identified. The Systems theory was adopted to explain this complex relationship between the observed variables (Preskill & Russ-Eft, 2005). The application of the Systems theory in this study is discussed below.

2.11.1 Application of the System theory

System theory is hinged on the fact that activities or the universe is not merely a summation of its components or parts. Using this theory, it is argued that successful outcomes for rural farmers are not explained simply by their activities or desired outcomes, but the relationship between their activities and immediate environment (context) is important (Bertalanffy, 1968; Bertalanffy, 1972). Investigating single parts and processes customarily does not provide a complete explanation of the observed phenomena. Such an investigation gives no information on how all the activities, systems, procedures, and their environments are coordinated to achieve the desired outcomes. Thus, only understanding challenges and success factors of agricultural projects is not enough, it requires an understanding of how other stakeholders in their environment contribute to or influence their success or failure. A system in this study defines a relationship between the conditions and activities required for the agricultural projects to succeed and how they relate to the activities or inactivity of TLI. This relationship is not inert but flexible and dynamic (Bertalanffy, 1972). The relationship between agricultural projects and TLI therefore represent a social system comprised of parts, with interactions and interrelations among the parts. Thus, the TLI activities or inactivity exist within and interact with, the conditions necessary for the success of agricultural projects. To understand this intricate relationship between TLIC and agricultural projects it requires an evaluation approach in a system consistent with Systems theory.

In the systems approach, a linear way of thinking is applied in which it is assumed that once the factors contributing to an outcome are known, success or failure in achieving the desired outcomes can be explained. Therefore, it is required to explain the success of agricultural projects not by parts like access to markets, land, and other resources but through the relationships between and among those parts and their environment. The system is either open or closed. Consistent with the theory and assumptions of this study, the relationship between the TLI and

rural agricultural projects is an open system. This suggests that there is an exchange or interaction that occurs among activities of agricultural projects and that of the TLI as a key stakeholder in rural development. Unlike a closed system, open systems are described as living systems. Moreover, in an open system interrelationship between activities of the rural farmers and the practices as well as community development decisions by TLI at steady-state are in balance or active. Thus, they could influence each other in the opposite or opposing directions, but active nonetheless (Bertalanffy, 1968).

An equilibrium system in this context means that the interrelationships between the TLIC, FHTLIC, and APSF are static and non-directional indicating y a system that is dying. In conclusion, an open system is consistent with what occurs in the relationships between the TLI and agricultural projects. Thus, it is an open system either at a steady or dynamic state but active nonetheless. As such, the systems approach was considered appropriate for explaining the causal relationships between agricultural projects and TLI.

2.12 Chapter Conclusion

Reviewed literature indicates that agriculture has the potential to successfully transform rural communities leading to local industries such as agro-processing and ultimately the service industry. The chapter revealed that rural farmers' threats to success included market inaccessibility; poor farm management; climate change vulnerabilities and lack of support at the grassroots level directly limiting the resilient capacities of farmers. Thus, to succeed farmers required supportive local systems, market integration, and good management of farm activities. Additionally, , literature shows that with active and adaptive local institutions such as TLI, the success of agricultural projects through the provision of conditions that favour innovation, reciprocal learning, and increase productivity is enhanced. Furthermore, institutions bring about a sustained resistance to change and regulate partnerships and how farmers, community members relate to other stakeholders. TLI could also contribute to the success of agricultural projects through support, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of development programmes. Given the evidence from literature, it is concluded that the TLI has the potential to augment and support the success of agricultural projects in various ways including resource mobilisation. The next chapter presents the methods that were used in the study to address the research objectives and/or questions.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the path, direction and course followed in conducting this study to adequately answer the research questions (Yin, 2013). Specifically, the elements of the research methodology presented are the study area description, design, population, sampling, data collection, and analysis. Ethical procedure followed is also explained.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in the Greater Giyani municipality (Mopani district), Collins Chabane, Makhado, and Thulamela municipality (Vhembe biosphere reserve), in Limpopo province, South Africa (Figure 3.1). The province is bordered by Botswana to the west and northwest; Zimbabwe to the north and northeast respectively, and Mozambique to the east. Giyani is 470 km northeast of Johannesburg and 104 km from Tzaneen. Also, it is 105 km from the Phalaborwa Gate to the Kruger National Park and 35 km from Malamulele town. Its coordinates are 23.3072° S, 30.7063° E. Collins Chabane Municipality is in Malamulele town. The local Municipality is situated between Giyani on the east, starting at Letaba river, and Thohoyandou on the north-west. Its coordinates are 22°58′16″S 30°40′25″E. Thulamela on the other hand is in Thohoyandou town and its coordinates are 22°57′S 30°29′E. It is about 75 km away from Makhado town and 28 km to Collins Chabane on the east side.

Limpopo has the highest headcount of people living in poverty and it is estimated that over 50% of the population live in poverty (Stats SA, 2019). The province is predominantly rural (De Cock *et al*., 2013), and has about 10% of South Africa's arable land producing a wide range of agricultural produce. grain sorghum (43%), dry beans (22%), soybeans (4%), wheat (7%), and sunflower (10%) are the main crops produced (Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (DAFF), 2019). Cotton, groundnuts, and maize are also produced.

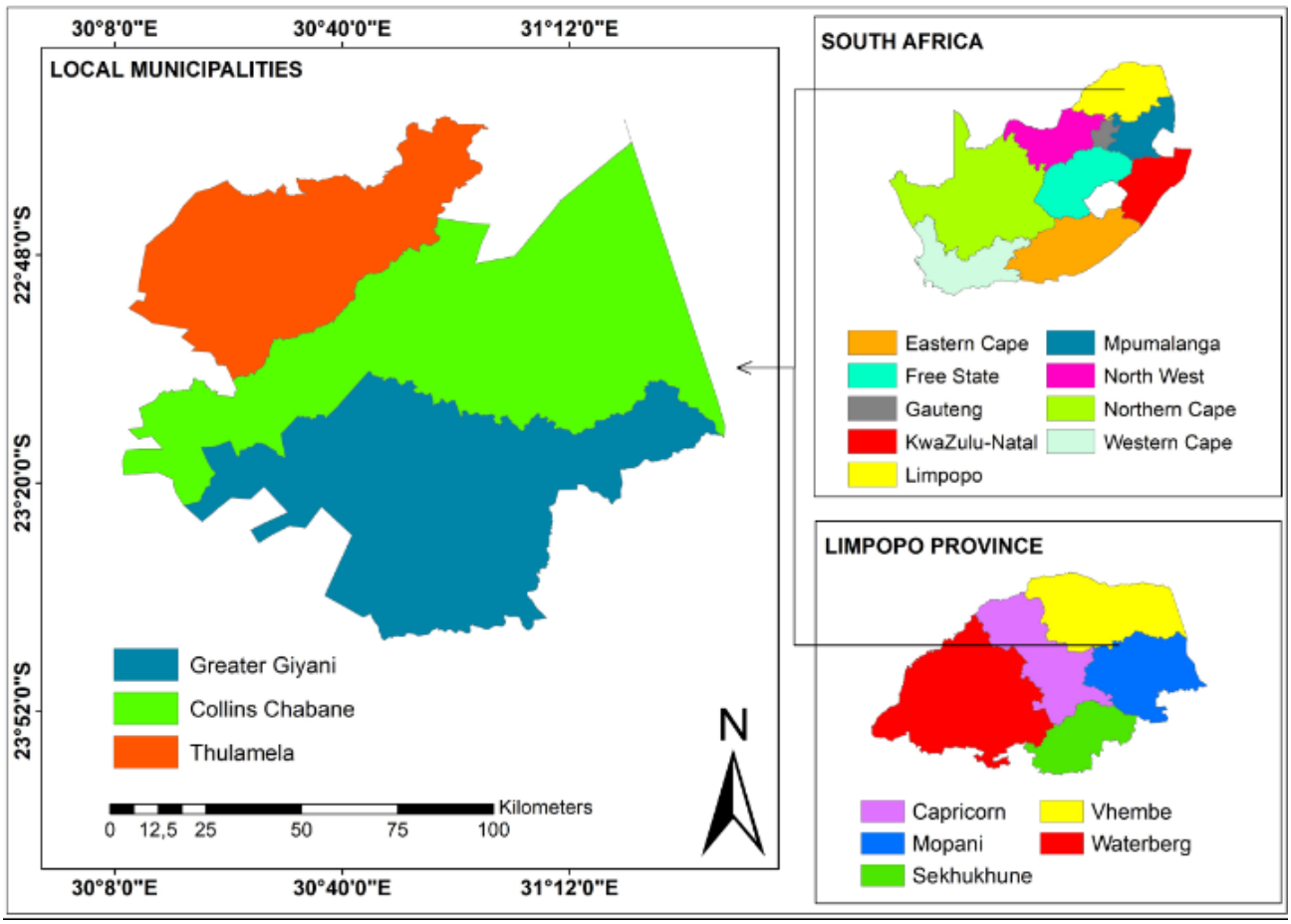

Figure 3.1: *Map of the study area* *Source: University of Venda, GIS Resource Centre*

Agriculture is an important sector in the province. Currently, the establishment of Agri-parks, farming co-operatives, agro-processing industry, and support for youth in farming and rural farmers are key provincial government initiatives. Smallholder or communal farmers play a significant role in the agricultural sector in the province. The province is committed to growing the agricultural sector as it is an important part of rural development. Annually, more than 1 000 rural farmers receive training to improve their skills for improved agricultural production (DAFF, 2019). These are some of the initiatives geared to support rural farmers.

3.3 Research Design

An exploratory sequential mixed method approach was used in this study. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative data was collected first and quantitative last (Figure 3.2). The exploratory sequential design was used because less is known about the effects of TLIC on the success of agricultural projects. Therefore, an exploration was conducted first to understand the theory about causal relationships (effects of TLIC on the success of agricultural projects). This approach was also recommended by Eccles *et al.,* (2003) for evaluative studies to build context-based theoretical and qualitative modelling work.

In the second stage, a quantitative approach that followed a correctional survey design was developed based on the first phase theory. The intention was to quantitatively test and validate the resultant theory to facilitate TLI institutional effectiveness model building for the study. Precisely, quantitative data tested the theoretical established causal direct and indirect effects or relationships of TLIC on APSF. Combining both methods, enhanced the robustness of the analysis and the results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). It is for these reasons, that this design was considered appropriate in the evaluation. The specific design for each phase of data collection is detailed below.

3.3.1 Phase One: Qualitative approach

In this phase, an explorative case study design was utilised to explore and build a theory/model on TLIC, FHTLIC, and APSF. Causal relationships between the latent variables were also established. This was achieved by exploring the views, opinions, and lived experiences of participants. In this way, contextual lived realities were built into theory on the relationship between TLIC, FHTLIC, and APSF (Creswell, 2014). Moreover, relevant literature on how community institutions impact community development projects was reviewed to enhance and strengthen model (APSF, FHTLIC, and TLIC).

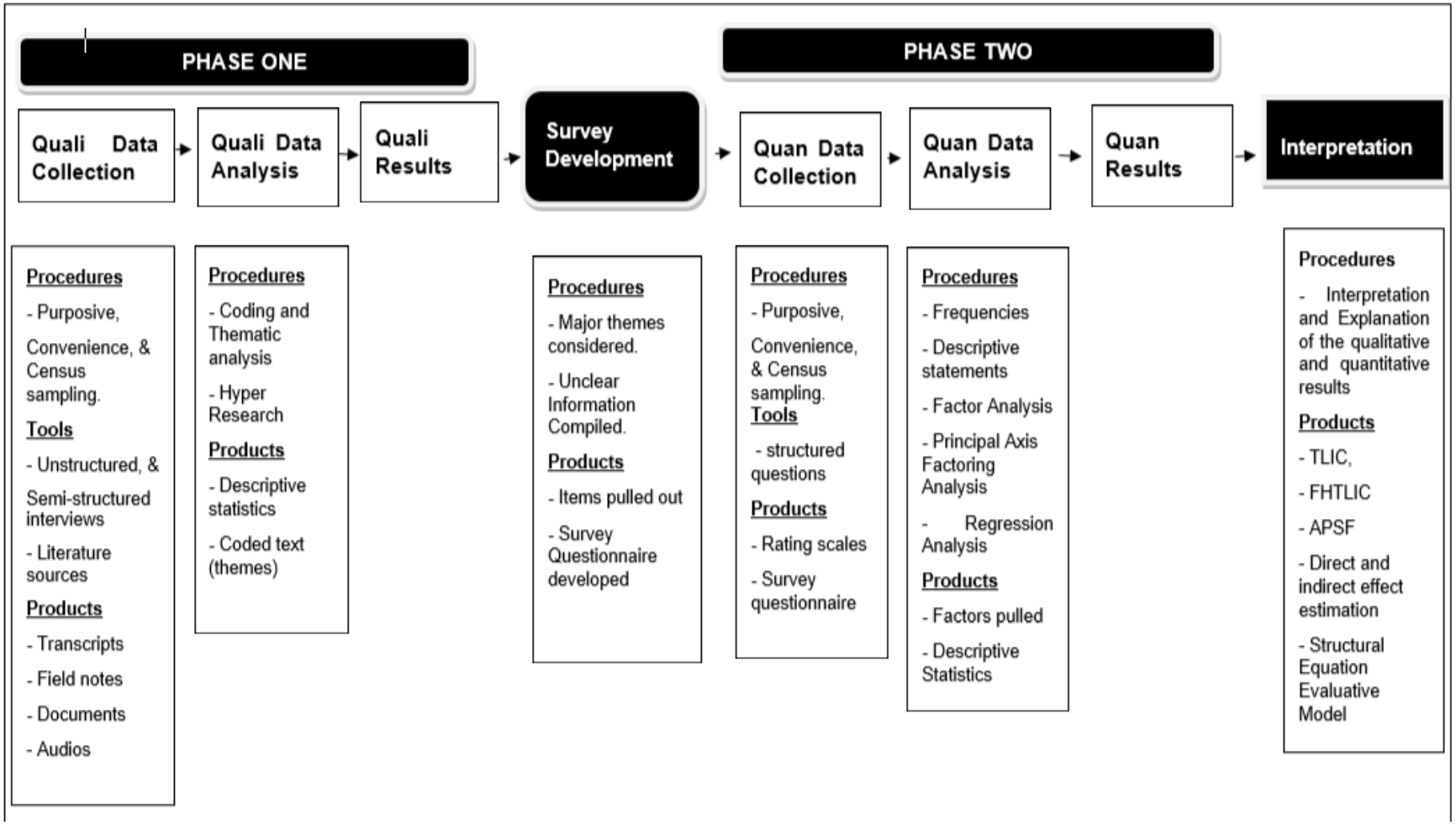

Figure 3.2: *Flow chart of the research methodology utilised in this study* Source: Author

3.3.2 Phase two: Quantitative approach

A cross-sectional survey design was used in this phase. The aim for collecting quantitative data was to test and validate the developed theory in model structure. Thus, the effect estimates of observed variables (TLIC; FHTLIC & APSF) were established in the model. Causality, generalizability, and magnitude of the potential direct and indirect effect of TLIC to APSF through FHTLIC were estimated to build the study model (Fetters et al., 2013). The population studied and sample size selection techniques are alluded to below.

3.4 Community entry

Ethical clearance certificate (SARDF/18/IRD/06/2111) was first sought from the University of Venda Higher Degrees Committee. Thereafter, letters seeking permission to conduct the study were submitted to TBAs and municipalities with the jurisdiction in the study area (Appendix 2). After the permission was sought, community entry meetings were held with all the representatives of the TBAs and LED officers on behalf of the municipalities. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the project and obtain information regarding agricultural projects in the area. Consequently, the TBAs and LED officers supported the study. Subsequently, individual agricultural projects were approached to introduce the study, a rapport was built, s well as seek consent to undertake the study.

3.5 Population and Sampling Procedures

Two hundred and eleven (211) participants from sixteen (16) agricultural projects and Five (5) TBAs (TLI) partook in this study. Also, key informants from Municipal LED department; Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform of Limpopo Province (DRDARLP) and NGOs in a working relationship with agricultural projects in the participating TBAs formed part of the study (Figure 3.3). Inclusion of multiple respondents, completed the triangulation and ensured validity and reliability of the study findings. In short, the study population included all the members of the groups described above (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In each phase and target groups, different sampling techniques were applied.

***Figure 3.3**: The distribution of the study population in each category per phase*

Tribal Authorities refer to customary institutions, structures, or systems or procedures of governance, recognised, utilised, or practiced by traditional communities (TLGFA 41 of 2003). They are traditional and ethnic organised institutions led by a systematically and historically established succession plan. They are also called TLI as referred to in this study. It encompasses all systems, procedures, and ways followed by TLI to manage, enforce, and support political, social, as well as economic development initiatives of the society. Its departments comprise of kingship or queenship, principal traditional leadership, senior traditional leadership, headman ship, and the traditional leadership councils. Each TBA has jurisdiction over a wide scope of areas spanning across different villages. The boundary for one TBA marks the beginning of another and agricultural projects are spread across villages in each TBA.

Agricultural projects are individuals, groups, cooperatives, and smallholder farmers operating in communal land under the jurisdiction of the participating TBAs. Only those that have been in operation at least for 5 years were selected. A detailed definition of agriculture projects is given in chapter 1, section 1.7. Agricultural projects refer to a combination of a well-coordinated set of carefully planned continuous farming activities by farmers. The total number of agricultural projects and other categories in this study was limited by their willingness to participate, the number of projects in the area, time, and budgetary constraints. Procedures and techniques used to select participants for each phase are detailed below.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

Phase One

A total of one hundred and three (103) participants from TBAs (27); agricultural projects (69); LED municipal and local government officials (four) and NGOs (three) were sampled in the first phase (Figure 3.3). Participants were selected following a multi-stage sampling technique. Specifically, a combination of purposive, convenient, random, and census/total population sampling methods enabled the sampling of an adequate, representative, diverse, and rich group of participants of this study. The stages or processes followed are sequentially explained below.

Firstly, five TBAs were purposively and conveniently sampled. Tribal authorities that had an interest in the study, and had a prior and existing intimate relationship with farmers in their relationship were also conveniently and purposively selected. Precisely, only TBAs that were easy to reach, readily available, willing to participate, and met the respondents' profiles of the study were selected. Seven TBAs were approached however, only five successfully participated. Purposive sampling helped identify the TBAs that matched the criteria of the study. Convenience sampling, permitted narrowing down the number of TBAs that are

widespread over the three participating municipalities by only picking those that were within reach and available for the study (Sedgwick, 2013). Moreover, purposive sampling was further used to pick the members of the TBA that were readily available and had knowledge in the operations of the institution concerning agriculture.

Sixty-nine (69) farmworkers, employees, and managers participated from eleven (11) agricultural projects in selected TBAs. In each TBA, a combination of typical case and random sampling techniques were applied. Typical case sampling is a purposive sampling procedure that allowed a selection of agricultural projects within the identified TBAs (Etikan *et al.,* 2016). and that have been active for at least five years. Agricultural projects were sampled randomly and conveniently within the participating TBAs. Those that were easy to reach without following any order were targeted. Absence of clearly defined or systematic organisation of agricultural projects groupings within the TBAs deemed this approach appropriate. Randomness eliminated biasness by giving each agricultural project within the boundaries of the selected TBAs an equal opportunity to form part of the study.

Only consenting agricultural projects were selected. In this phase, the total number of 11 agricultural projects with 69 members was largely determined by data saturation (Creswell, 2014). Interviews were stopped once each additional participant was no longer shading more insights about the relationship between TLIC, FHTLIC and APSF. Lastly, seven key informants participated in the study.

Phase two

Additional agricultural projects and members of other population groups were surveyed and incorporated for the quantitative data collection. Combined with the first phase participants, a total of 211 participated. Specifically, there were 32 participants from five TBAs (167 from 16 agricultural projects; seven LED municipal and local government officials; seven and NGOs (five) were sampled following a multi-stage sampling technique described above (Figure 3.3). More respondents were considered in the second phase to adequately and significantly estimate and evaluate the proposed theoretical model.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection is the process that followed to gather information for the present study (Creswell, 2014). A combination of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), survey questionnaires, and expert interviews was utilised to collect data. Combining data collection tools was performed to enable cross-validation and triangulation of data. Combining data collection techniques increases reliability and eliminates biases inherent in each data collection method.

This permits generalisability of the results. Procedures and tools followed in collecting data in each of the two phases are explained below.

3.6.1 Phase One: Qualitative approach

Qualitative data was collected from 21 FGDs and 26 interviews.

*Face to face Interview*s

Semi-structured questions in an interview guide were administered to key informants to collect data. Key informants provided expert opinion and technical knowledge to lay out the understanding of current and potential TLIs contributions, the barriers to its participation and how all these affect the success of agricultural projects. Also, key informants shared their views on, challenges faced by agricultural projects. Expert opinion or interviews prompted detailed narratives and perceptions as well as sharing of personal, professional, and intimate encounters in an open, direct, and verbal manner about the studied problem (Muskat *et al.,* 2012). *Focus Group Discussions*

Focus group discussions were conducted using an interview guide containing semi-structured questions to solicit data from the respondents. These were specifically used to collect data from the agricultural project members or farm workers and part of the TLI members. A total of twenty-one (21) FDGs were utilised for this study. Eighteen (18) groups came from agricultural projects while three came from TL council members. Focus groups are described as small but diverse groups. On average, each group had at least four people and were constituted randomly. Thus, the population demographic composition in the FDGs in this study was mixed.

Mixed groups were considered suitable since the topic cut across is not affected by life stages and styles of farmers such as gender and age group. It was also assumed that farmers' opinions or views regardless of age or gender about the observed relationship are normally distributed. In addition, mixed groups eliminate biased discussions and ensured results validity and reliability. Also, observation of the population in different projects indicated that there is no sufficient number of farmers spread across different ages. For instance, some projects were run by the youth or adults or both. In non-commercial studies, smaller group sizes are recommended when in-depth insights are required for such studies. Although groups of five to eight people are common, group sizes of between four and six are increasingly becoming popular (Onwuegbuzie *et al.,* 2009).

In cases where individuals have more knowledge about the subject, lesser group sizes are recommended. In this case, four members per group were considered appropriate as farmers, had intense and lengthy experience in rural agricultural projects. Hence, the underlying assumptions in the FDGs of homogeneity and sufficient variation were satisfied paving the

way for robust discussions. Thus, the groups were constituted based on being a member of the project as opposed to age and gender specificity. In this arrangement, farmers could share intimate details based on lived experiences on the ideal relationship between rural farmers and the TLI.

The purpose of FDGs in this study was not to infer, generalise and make statements about the population. It was to understand, determine the range and provide insights about how the farmers understand the relationship between farmers and the TLIs. Hence, smaller groups ensured thoroughness during discussions, considered points that were agreed upon by the group after a series of discussions. Furthermore, FGDs were considered advantageous since participants spoke in their native languages, hence they had the advantage to choose and discover a common language for the discussion. This enabled the respondents to use their native language to accurately capture their opinions and understand the situation better. Lastly, focus groups were considered suitable due to their ability to produce data and insights that is less likely to emerge without the interaction found in focus groups. In FGDs participants can construct the realities of this phenomenon in the best possible way, with fewer limitations. The field notes, transcripts, documents, interview audios, and related information were sought and later analysed (See section 3.6) in preparation for the second data collection phase explained below

3.6.2 Phase Two: Quantitative approach

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data in the second phase. Data collected in the first phase was cleaned and analysed, categorised into factors that define FHTLIC, TLIC, and APSF. Based on these categories, a survey questionnaire with structured questions was developed to confirm, collect, and quantitatively, develop, test, and validate the study model. The paradigm of pragmatism hinged on the post-positivist approach which was considered appropriate for this study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Post-positivism posits that there are external realities that exist and cannot be known or understood in totality, however, they could be measured as latent variables. Post-positivism draws from social constructionism by believing that reality exists and can be known only imperfectly and probabilistically to explain and understand it. In line with post-positivism, it is believed that the relationship between farmers and TLI is based not on a priori assessments, but rather upon human conjectures. Since human knowledge is conjectural, the assertion of the modelled relationship can be justified by a set of warrants or underlying rationale, which can be modified or withdrawn in the light of further investigation. Hence, phase one was used as a theory-building phase based on empirical and literature sources.

In evaluative studies that focus on causal relationships, questions, or items based on a theoretical and empirical understanding of the subject or variables survey questionnaires are commonly used. These employ a Likert type of scale to measure perceptions and make inferences. Consequently, a theory-based 64-items TLI effectiveness questionnaire (TLIEQ) was developed. The questionnaire had four sections which are, Section A: demographic information; Section B: APSF; Section C: TLIC; and Section D: FHTLIC (Appendix 3). Sections of the developed survey questionnaire were independent of each other to eliminate possible polarization and bias, thereby enhancing the reliability of the results. Questionnaires used a Likert scale with a range of 1–5. Although the questionnaire was self-administered, four research assistants administered questionnaires to the respondents with special needs such as language barriers and problems related to vision.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data was analysed in two separate sets (qualitative and quantitative) as described in each section below. Data analysis is a process of discovering meanings and patterns from raw information collected from respondents. De Vos *et al*. (2011) assert that analysis takes place simultaneously with data collection, however, rigorous analysis is done after the data has been collected.

3.7.1 Phase One

Data collected using FGDs, and face to face interviews was analysed thematically to answer objectives 1, 2, and 3. Data from FDGs and individual interviews was captured into Microsoft excel after it was cleaned. Excel enabled data formatting before the importation into the qualitative data analysis tool, Atlas Ti version 8.2 software. The software is described as a powerful desktop tool that gives the user a wide scope for analysing texts, audios, and picture information scientifically. Data was captured into categorises of sections A; B; C; and D as described in focus groups/Interview; the name of TBA; municipality; project name; the total number of group members; challenges to the success of agricultural projects; APSFs; TLIC; and FHTLICs. Thereafter, data was arranged and categorized then imported into the software. In the analysis of large pieces of information such as texts, audios, and photographic material, Atlas Ti is recommended (Smit, 2002). Furthermore, the software allows visualisation of networks showing relationships between concepts and variables.

In this study, data was categorized into themes using open and In-Vivo coding. In-Vivo coding is instant coding of text that could be used as a major theme to explain related statements while open coding is the grouping of discreet variables that broadly explain a phenomenon. This process was repeated several times until emerging factors and their descriptive statements or items on TLIC; APSF and FHTLIC were developed. To achieve this, related or

family of codes were grouped. The resultant theory built from empirical data was further strengthened by a thorough review of the literature using similar techniques as described in this section.

3.7.2 Phase two

In this phase, data was analysed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm and validate factors and Cronbach Alpha's coefficient to test their reliability. Mean scores were calculated and observed to rank the emerging factors on the level of importance for each category to respond to objectives 2, 3, and 4 (Chapter 1). Moreover, multiple regression analyses were used to gauge which of the identified TLI contributions has the most effect in creating conditions perceived to positively influence the APSF. IBM-SPSS Amos version 26 as well as IBM -SPSS version 26 was utilised to perform this exercise.
The purpose of the CFA was to test if the emerging factors in the first phase and specified latent variables backed by theory and thematic content analysis were reflected and supported by the second sample data. Confirmatory factor analysis is a statistical procedure that is a special form of factor analysis and most commonly used in social research (Kline, 2010). It is used to test whether latent variables or measures of a construct are consistent with a researcher's understanding of the nature of that factor.

Preedy, & Watson (2009) alludes that, the main objective of CFA is to test whether the collected data fit hypothesized factors in a measurement model that is based on theory and/or previous analytic research. Unlike, in Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), items or statements conceptualised to describe a construct are specified by indicating which variables load on which factors and which factors are correlated (Kline, 2010). In this light, the CFA was considered appropriate for this study. Factors in the survey questionnaire were based on empirical evidence and supported by a thorough literature review in the present study. As opposed to EFA where there is no prior theory on the factor loadings and the number of constructs, CFA confirms and validates the existing and known factors. Hence, in this study identified latent variables or statements for each factor were loaded as theorised in the first phase to verify if they adequately predicted the construct that they are presumed to measure.

Sample size recommendations and appropriateness was verified first to confirm the suitability of CFA. There are varying sample size recommendations for CFA. In this study, N =211 was considered appropriate. For example, Kline (2011) recommends between 200 to 400 while Boomsma (1985), recommended a minimum sample size of 100 or 200. Wolf *et al.* (2013) proposed a sample size as small as 30. Depending on the factor loadings and number of items per construct, sample size requirements for CFA vary. For instance, models with one-factor and four-indicators with loadings of .50, .65, and .80 require sample sizes of 190, 90, and 60,

respectively (Wolf *et al.,* 2013). These findings concur with those by MacCallum *et al*. (1999). All these variations demonstrate that there is no acceptable or appropriate rule of thumb in choosing the sample size for CFA. Recommended rules of thumps are heavily criticized for not being model specific and their potential to grossly over or under state sample size requirements. Hence, the current sample size was regarded as suitable for the study. Also, the nature and distribution of agricultural projects over a large geographical area, and the fact that the total number of respondents in these projects is predetermined was considered in sampling.

Skewness and kurtosis were used to determine the normality of data. Firstly, when using CFA data must satisfy the normality tests as also assumed in the study that the information collected is normally distributed. There are various methods available to test the normality of continuous data. The most popular methods are the Shapiro–Wilk test, Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, skewness, and kurtosis. Methods like the eyeball, Shapiro-Wilk test, and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are sensitive to sample size (Kim, 2013). Moreover, these methods tend to show incompatible results for the same data. For example, Royston (1995) states that the Shapiro-Wilk test works well only if every value in the sample is unique and it fails where there are several identical values. Also, D'Agostino (1986) categorically states that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is only of a historical curiosity and it should never be used. Hence, Hae-Young (2013) recommends that using skewness and kurtosis of the distribution is appropriate as it is relatively produces correct results in both small and large samples. Hence, skewness and kurtosis were used.

There are many different rules of thump recommended for both skewness and kurtosis values. For instance, 3 and 10 (Kline, 2011); and -2 to +2 (George & Mallery, 2010) for skewness and kurtosis, respectively. Hence, it was very difficult to select which cut off is suitable for this study. Therefore, based on the analysis in this study the set threshold by Hair *et al*. (2010) and Bryne (2010) of skewness range of between -2 to +2 and -7 to +7 for kurtosis was used.

To test and verify construct validity, factor loadings were observed. Also, comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) goodness fit indices were used. There are several fit indices such as normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Chi-square that are used to assess for factor structure validity. However, some of the indices have considerable weaknesses and the investigator needs to choose the appropriate method for the data. For instance, NFI and Chi-square are sample sensitive and tend to indicate poor fit with different sample sizes although the data might be fit (Bentler, 1990; Kline, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). CFI is an improved version of NFI which is flexible and considers different sample sizes. The RMSEA measure is regarded as “one of the most informative fit

indices" (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000: 85). Its sensitivity to the number of estimated parameters in the model gives it the advantage in comparison to other model fit indices. Hence, CFI and RMSEA were utilised in this study over other tests such as NFI and Chi-square (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000).

The cut off point for the RMSEA index varies and has changed over the years. It is considered fit on the range of 0.05 to 0.10 (MacCallum *et al.,* 1996); at 0.06 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) and astringent upper limit of 0.07 (Steiger, 2007). Hooper *et al*. (2008) recommend a cut-off point at 0.08. In consideration of these variations, the threshold for RMSEA was set at 0.08 to indicate a good fit in this study as recommended by Hu & Bentler (1999) and Hooper *et al*. (2008). The CFI ranges from zero to one, with values close to or greater than 0.90 indicating a good fit and factor structural validity in a measurement model (Hooper *et al.,* 2008). Thus, a threshold of CFI ≥ 0.90 was considered a good fit for this study. Only suitable factor structures that loaded adequately and improved model fitness were extracted. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed through AMOS (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Using hypothesized factors, the population covariance matrix was compared with the observed covariance matrices.

There is no fixed rule of thumb for minimal factor loadings. Stevens (1992) recommends 0.4; Field (2005) proposed 0.6 while Tabachnick & Fidell (2007) propose cut-offs that are from 0.32 as poor, 0.45 (fair), 0.55 (good), 0.63 (very good) or 0.71 (excellent). Regardless of these prescribed baselines indices, it is argued that there is no correct approach. It is recommended that model fit indices are observed first and lower factor loadings deleted one after the other starting with lower factor loading to improve factor structure validity in the model. Based on these revelations, variables or items with lower factor loadings or predictive power for each construct were deleted systematically one by one starting with the lowest to improve model fitness using CFI and RMSEA.

Factor-structure reliability and mean score ranking

Factors in each measurement model for estimating TLIC; APSF and FHTLIC were also tested for internal consistency and reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Scale if item-deleted option in SPSS was utilised to assess the effect of each item in a construct on factor structure reliability. Items that significantly improved the reliability of the measure if deleted were eliminated after observation. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a widely used and valid method to assess construct reliability (DeVellis, 2003; Saunders *et al*., 2012), hence it was considered in this study. Adequate reliability was considered at $\alpha > 0.5$ (Pallnat, 2007). Mean scores were utilised to rank which of the factors per category (FHTLIC; APSF & TLIC) are most important. Garrett's (1969) ranking technique was followed. For each factor, the scores of each item are added, and thereafter, the total value of scores and mean values are calculated. The factors

having the highest mean value is the most important factor (Garrett's & Woodworth, 1969; Ndlovu *et al*., 2016).

Multiple regression

Multiple regression analysis tested the hypothesized conceptual model on the direct effect of TLIC on APSF. Standardized variables (Z-scores) were used to facilitate the plotting of significant moderator effects (given the convenient representative values) and interpreting them. Using standardized variables also reduced problems associated with multicollinearity (Frazier *et al.,* 2004). Special emphasis was placed on examining confounders (Pearl, 1998). Simple slopes were tested for low (−1 standard deviation below the mean), and high (+1 standard deviation above the mean) self-FHTLIC, to determine the association between TLIC and APSF.

3.8 Structural Equation Modelling

The study focused on building and evaluating a model on the TLI institutional effectiveness towards the success of agricultural projects through SEM. This section outlines steps followed in building the SEM to estimate the direct effect of TLIC on APSF and an indirect effect through FHTLIC (Figure, 3.4). The use of CFA and SEM was considered suitable. Fan *et al.,* 2016) state that CFA and SEM are used in prescriptive or evaluative models to identify or find values or predictive power of the exogenous (decision) variables that maximize or minimise the endogenous (objective function) variables. The modelling was guided by three distinct factors which are, the objective function (APSF), decision variables (TLIC), and constraints (FHTLIC) (Figure 3.4). The objective function refers to the factors which are to be maximised or minimised as a dependent variable. In this model, APSFs were maximised. Decision variable (TLIC) refers to factors whose values or effect are under ones our control and influence the performance of the system or outcomes of the model. The model is built on the assumption that the impact of TLIC on APSF is affected by the moderating effect of FHTLIC. In an ideal world situation, considerable or significant impact of TLIC to APSF could only be achieved in the absence of FHTLIC. FHTLIC are factors that constrain the effect of TLIC on APSF. In this study, the effects or impact of the TLIC to APSF were tested directly and the effect of FHTLIC was verified with an indirect effect as a moderating variable. The key assumptions of this model are specified in Figure 3.4.

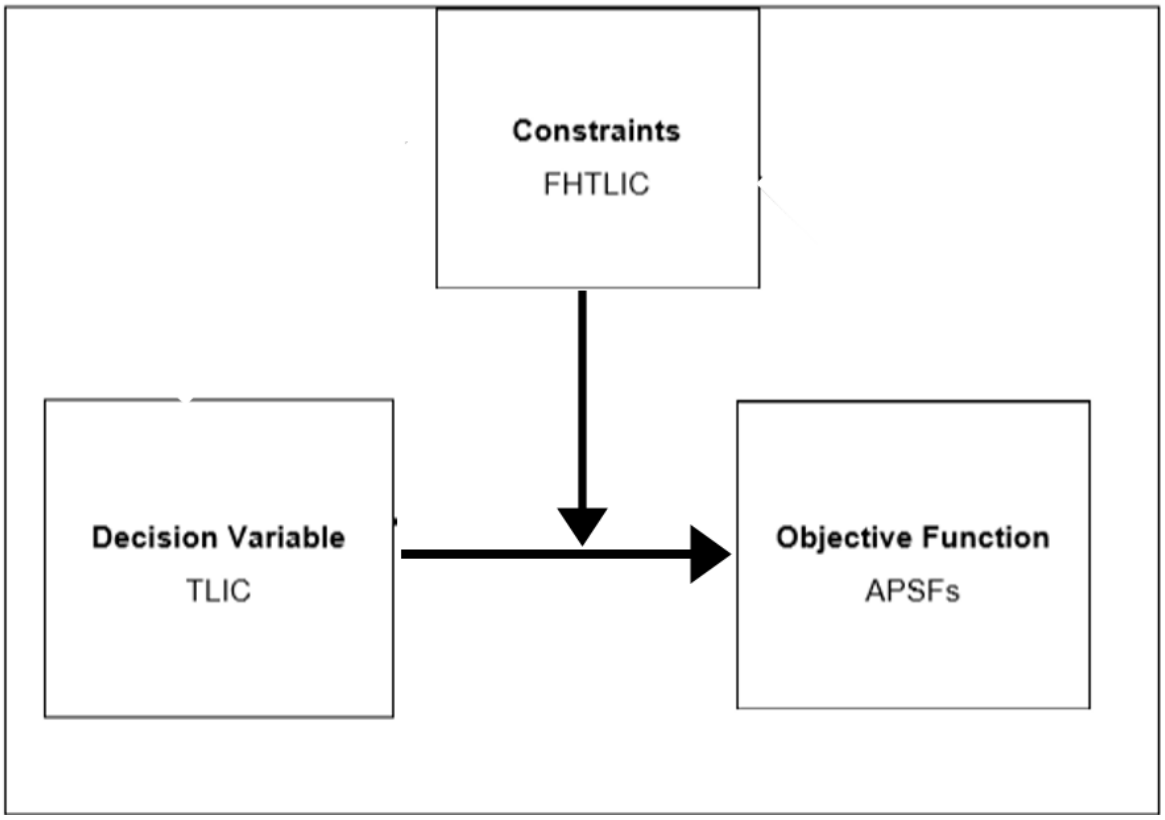

Figure 3.4: *Schematic representation of the proposed structural equation model (SEM).*

NB: TLIC (model antecedent); FHTLIC (moderator) and APSF (model outcome).

In SEM, there are two types of models which are the measurement model and structural model. The measurement model represents the theory that specifies how measured variables come together to represent the theory (Fan *et al*., 2016). The structural model represents the theory that shows how constructs are related to other constructs. In this case, APSF; FHTLIC, and TLIC are the measurement models that will be saturated in a structural model to evaluate direct and indirect effects through CFA. Each measurement model was tested for model fitness as described in section 3.7.2. This was done in preparation for model evaluation in an SEM. Path analysis and fitness indices were diagrammatically illustrated using SPSS Amos graphics path diagrams in the model.

There are five sequential steps in SEM which are model specification, identification, parameter estimation, model evaluation, and model modification (Kline 2010; Hoyle 2011; Byrne 2013). The model specification describes the theorised associations between the variables in an SEM as supported by literature and empirical evidence. Model identification is to check if the model is over-identified, just-identified, or under-identified. Model coefficients can only be estimated in the just-identified or over-identified model. Model evaluation measures model performance or fit, with quantitative indices calculated for the overall goodness of fit. Model modification adjusts the factor model to improve model fit. Lastly, validation is the process to improve the reliability and stability of the model.

Factor structure for each model (FHTLIC; APSF & TLIC) as well as for the moderating model (Figure 3.4) were tested and validated on how well the measured variables or items represent the identified factor structures. This was done to assess model fitness for the direct effect of TLIC to APSF and moderating indirect effects through FHTLIC (Baron & Kenny, 1986). It is important to first observe if the data used is normally distributed as the main assumption behind SEM. Hence, using this technique for model evaluation necessitated normality assessment as described in section 3.7.2. Structural equation modelling is built on the assumption of multivariate normality of error terms. It is the underlying condition in which the direct, indirect, and total effects are defined (Bollen & Pearl, 2012). For this reason, normality assessment was performed as described above for CFA.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are the pillars that support the objectivity, validity, and reliability of the study results. The researcher is required to abide by ethical conduct not to jeopardize his/her integrity nor of the research participants, and provide accurate and reliable information that reflect the objective views of the community. This section summarizes the ethical considerations that were used in the current study.

Before the commencement of data collection, this study was presented to the University of Venda Higher Degrees Committee for initial approval. Secondly, it was submitted to the University of Venda Research Ethics Committee for ethical clearance. Once, the university level approval was sought, a letter to the Thulamela, Collins Chabane, and Greater Giyani Municipalities where the agricultural projects and TBAs are located was obtained. Permission to conduct the study was also sought from the participating TBAs in the study. Approval from the municipalities and TBAs meant that agricultural projects and individual members could now be consulted for consent seeking. Saunders *et al.,* (2009: 194) states that "it is important to make sure that all official channels are cleared by formally requesting permission to conduct a study".

Participants were explicitly informed of the intent of the study and what their participation meant. Furthermore, participants were informed of their rights to participate in the study. Participants were also informed of what the research was all about, how it will affect them, the risks and benefits of participation (Kumar, 2019) if any. Also, respondents were informed that the study is voluntary, and they were at liberty to refuse participation should they choose to do so with or without giving any reason whatsoever. Rubin & Babbie (2000:513) define anonymity as "the moral principles that shield the participants to remain unknown and their recognition is protected from disclosure". For this study, personal information such as names and specific location details of the respondents were not requested for confidentiality purposes. Also, the collected information was coded and encrypted to prevent a possible situation in which the data could be attributed back to the respondents. Lastly, the collection of the questionnaires was randomised to eliminate sequences and systematic ways to minimize the identifiability of the participants. This ensured the protection of the respondents from social harm that might come from participants ranting their dissatisfaction from TBAs and municipalities. Moreover, population groups such as key informants, farmers, and TLI were consulted separately. This further ensured confidentiality and avoidance of future prejudices.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The section outlined the methods and research strategies used to gather, and analyse data for this study. An exploratory sequential mixed method design was used.. The chapter also shows the sequence that was followed in the study. The views of the participants were explored first prior to the building of the model. The qualitative data was analysed thematically, while quantitative data was analysed through, mean score, CFA, reliability analysis and regression analysis. These methods and techniques were used to build and test the model of the study. The following chapter presents the results on the challenges and success factors for rural agricultural projects.

CHAPTER 4

DETERMINING KEY CHALLENGES AND SUCCESS FACTORS FOR RURAL AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS

Abstract

Declining rural agricultural output, increasing rural poverty, and food insecurity, as well as stagnant economic growth, points to deep-rooted and unique challenges faced by rural farmers. This happens despite the acceptance that agriculture is a sustainable strategy for rural development. This study investigated threats to success, and factors that lead to the prosperity of rural agricultural projects. An exploratory study design was used to collect qualitative data using interviews and focus groups from farmers and key informants in Limpopo province, South Africa. With the aid of Atlas Ti version 8.4.1 a thematic analysis, revealed that “lack of know how” and “water related challenges” were among the most common threats to success of agricultural projects. “Effective project management” and “improved support from local stakeholders” are part of the themes that conditions key to the success of rural agricultural projects. The results suggested that these factors were also related. It is recommended that in developing intervention strategies, the relationship between success factors as well as how threats and challenges connect are considered.

Keywords: Agrarian reforms, agriculture, agricultural projects, farmers, success factors; rural development.

4.1 Introduction

Agriculture is an important economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa including South Africa. It is at the heart of rural development and progress as a source of food and nutrition security, income generation, and job creation for sustainable rural livelihoods (Chauvin *et al.,* 2012; Sobczyk, 2014). It contributes significantly to the protection of vegetation and animal diversity (Sobczyk, 2014), releases labour, resources, and capital for other businesses (Lanjouw & Lanjouw, 2001; McMichael, 2013). However, due to multilayered and context-specific problems, the success of rural agriculture is not easily achieved fast enough to yield significant benefits to rural livelihoods. Thus, it is not a surprise that agricultural output and food insecurity is on the rise in most rural areas. Continuous efforts through rural agricultural development programmes designed to support farmers still fail to sustainably achieve desired results. It is clear that there are challenges that uniquely affect rural farmers. Equally, what it takes for them to succeed remains a mystery and moving target. This study established threats and their effects on success to know which factors are necessary for the prosperity of rural agricultural projects. It is crucial.

In South Africa, several programmes such as Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, 1994); Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) (2003); and One Household One Hectare (2015) (Tshuma, 2012; Netshipale *et al.,* 2017) were introduced since 1994 to reduce the vulnerabilities of rural farmers and improve output. The CASP of 2004/5 is a flagship programme which aims to reverse the inequities in farmland access and use rights inherited from the apartheid era. The objectives of the programme are to offer on and off-farm infrastructure support; enhance knowledge and information management, technical and advisory services; as well as training and capacity building to most black farmers mainly in communal lands. Despite this dedicated support to rural agricultural projects, success in the sector remains elusive (Quinn *et al*., 2011, Vetter, 2013). Further to that, those supported lack the sustainability prowess to carry on after the support is withdrawn. This explains why rural farmers face the triple challenges of limited growth, dependency syndrome, and consummate failure (Křičková, 2015).

Common challenges like market access, climate change, land fragmentation (Dung & Jenicek, 2008; Ha *et al.,* 2015) and success factors inform most of the programmes interventions. The failure of current interventions, indicate a misdiagnosis of the problem. It could also be that support systems are rooted in the top-down and one-size fit all approach as earlier noted by Beckman (2001). Such approaches contradict, the admission that societal norms, values, and perceptions shape the way agriculture is viewed, valued, and how challenges in the sector are tackled (Meijer *et al.,* 2015). Hence, context is pertinent in addressing challenges facing communal farmers in different rural settings. Unlike, commercial farmers who relish the

economies of scale, communal farmers do not have enough capital and technological sophistication to acclimate to the harsh conditions. A recent report on quarter to quarter annual growth rates by sector shows a negative growth (-3.6%) in the agricultural sector (StatsSA, 2019). Most of these failures are among the communal farmers. Thus, any support program that ignores these facts is poised to fail.

Most studies focus on either challenges or success factors. There are no studies that have simultaneously investigated both the threats and success factors for rural farmers. This is particularly in Vhembe district. Such an analysis is likely to shed more light on how challenges affect success. Furthermore, a two-sided analysis offers more tools to view farmer problems and solutions simultaneous from their perspective. Challenges as well as prerequisite conditions for the success of rural agricultural projects were therefore studied.

4.2 Materials and Methods

4.2.1 Research Design, sampling, data collection tools and procedure

The methods and study design used in this study are detailed in Chapter 3. The chapter discusses the study design, methods, population and sampling techniques. Data collection and analysis as well as ethical procedures followed are also presented in detail.

4.3 Results

This section presents, the results of the study including the demographic information for the study.

4.3.1 Demographic Composition

Table 4.1 presents the demographic information of the participants. One hundred and three (103) participants participated in this study. More than half of the respondents were female in both the first (53.4%). To add on, over three quarters of respondents were over the age of forty indicating lower participation of youth in communal farming. Most of the participants had matriculated. Although, those with tertiary education were the least, their proportion was little above a quarter of the respondents (25.6%).

4.3.2 Characteristics of agricultural projects

All the projects studied were involved in horticultural production. Maize, sweet potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, and pepper were the crops cultivated among the projects. About 31 % of the projects practiced mixed farming with inclusion of poultry rearing. Moreover, about 23% of the respondents were involved in other specialized crops. For instance, aside from horticultural crops such as vegetables, a project in Collins Chabane produced herbs and specialised in sweet potato. Again, another farm in Giyani also specialized in producing a herb called Lipppia Javannica [*Musudzungwane*]. The herb is used

to produce oils for both mosquito repellents and perfumes. The farm sizes ranged from 3 to 12 hectares. On average, the farm size was 5.81 ha.

4.4 Threats to the success of agricultural projects

Unusable and unavailability of information; water scarcity, financial constraints; lack of technical know-how and skills; inadequate support from local stakeholders; and unstable and inaccessible markets were identified as the common and shared threats to the success of rural farmers (Table 4.2). The results are discussed below thematically

4.4.1 Unusable and unavailability of Information

Limited and lack of access to information emerged as a threat to the success of agricultural projects. Although extension and municipal officers, indicated that information is given regularly, farmers said the information was generic (4 FGDs). Further to that, farmers could not reconcile information given with their daily challenges. Also, information shared lacked seasonality, matter specificity, and context-relevance. (7 FGDs of in all municipalities).

Farmers noted that distant location of information service providers where they go to consult is another factor. A farmer explained the impact of this stating that, "*It takes time for us to know some of the diseases or pests that infest our plants. After reporting our problems to the extension officers, they take time to visit and diagnose the problem. … most plants die before we get help"* **(Interview B16)***".* These sentiments were also alluded to by an LED officer and NGO representative. For example, a**n NGO representative** said, "*sometimes all their plants get infected or attacked while waiting. In my observation, … they have learned to uproot all the plants suspicious of diseases and infections"* (**Key Interview 22).** Thus, farmers record stock loss and decreased farm output (5 FGDs from Thulamela & Collins Chabane municipality). The use of indigenous knowledge systems and uprooting of infected crops were coping mechanisms utilised as the last resort. However, the shelve breeds or crop varieties are new, exotic, and react differently to these indigenous farming methods.

Table 4.1: Demographic information (n = 103) collection

CATEGORY	F	%
Gender		
Female	55	53.4
Male	48	46.6
Age		
Less than 30 years	8	7.8
31 to 40 years	24	23.3
41 to 50 years	34	33.0
51 to 60 years	27	26.2
61 years and above	9	8.7
Level of Education		
Secondary Education and below	39	37.9
Matriculated	36	35.0
Tertiary qualification	27	26.2
Respondent type		
Farmers	69	67.0
Traditional leaders and council members	27	26.2
Government institutions	4	3.9
Non-governmental organisation	3	2.9

4.4.2 Unavailability of Water

The results show that water challenges were multifaceted. Water scarcity challenges were climate-induced and a result of resources constraints. Climate variabilities such as low seasonal rainfall and high temperatures were of major concern to farmers. Limited capital due to poor access to credit lines, farmers were unable to build resilience mechanisms such as borehole drilling and erecting irrigation systems (LED municipal official and an extension officer in Thulamela region). A project member vividly narrated the extent of this challenge. "*We need an irrigation system to have a meaningful harvest and currently, we cannot afford it. The one which was donated to us now requires maintenance and unfortunately, we are struggling to service it*" **(FGD 17)**. *What makes it worse for rural farmers, in this region is that they do not have enough capital or means to erect irrigation structures that can support their farming activities." (***Key Informant Interview 25)**

4.4.3 Financial Constraints and Management

Financial constraints also emerged as a threat to the success of rural agricultural projects (11 FDGs). This was reflected by farmers in all the municipalities. Financial management practices like poor record keeping as well as mixing personal finances and that of the farm worsened the financial challenges among projects ***(*Interview 8 & 15)**. Financial constraints limited the ability of projects to purchase farming implements, inputs, and key infrastructure necessary for sustainability and increased productivity such as irrigation systems and tractors. Although, projects accessed government, private and international grants, a project leader in Giyani region said, *most of these grants are not sufficient to buy some of the key equipment such as tractors and are restricted to training mainly* (**Interview 11**). The inability or lack of knowledge to engage fundraising activities made it difficult for farmers to access funding. A key informant from Thulamela municipal area, said while grant or proposal writing assistance is provided to farmers, not all get assistance.

Furthermore, the current land ownership system of Permit to Occupy (PTO) hinder access to credit to rural farmers (2 LED municipal official and a NGO representative). The system only gives farmers permission to occupy and use land, however it does not qualify as collateral to financial institutions.

Table 4.2: Threats to the success of rural agricultural projects in Limpopo, South Africa

Threats to Success	Cause Description	Effect to Success
Limited Support from Local Stakeholders	• No real value is placed on agriculture & lack of interest • Limited resources • Role ambiguity and lack of accountability • No understanding of work done • Stakeholder's failure to see their role in agriculture	• Vulnerability to the internal and external environment • Limited ability to mobilize resources • Unbalanced representation of farmer's interests • Unfavourable and inappropriate support policies • Lack of motivation
Unstable and Inaccessible Market	• Inconsistent quality of farm produce • Far markets • Reliance on free independent traders & buyers • Inability to penetrate the market	• Low prices & vulnerability to clearance pricing • Financial losses • Loss of stock
Financial Constraints and Management	• Scarce information on funding opportunities • No collateral • Little or no funding proposal writing skills • Too much paperwork	• Inability to access grants • Failure to access credit • No capital and reduced production • Failure to access developmental funds
Lack of Technical Know-How and Skills	• Low level of education • Limited training opportunities • Failure to adopt and operate new farming technology	• Failure to manage and run farm activities • Failure to embrace new technologies • Outdated use and application of farming techniques • Low output
Unusable and Unavailability Information	• Generic information • No prompt information services and sources	• An indifferent effect on the success • Loss of stock
Unavailability of Water	• Climate Change • Low rainfall • No money for drilling boreholes	• Loss of Crops

4.4.4 Lack of Technical Know-How and Skills

Another major challenge to farmers was limited knowledge and farm management skills. For example, Low level of education, changing weather patterns and the use of new breeds posed a major challenge for farmers (One project leader in Giyani municipality supported & 4 FDGs). Although, they sometimes use online information services and attend training courses only a few members could access such services and opportunities. Language barrier was another factor. Majority of the courses and information online is in English language hence; farmer comprehension and understanding is limited. Another farmer noted that, *"If we could learn more and receive new information on the production of new breeds, it can help us survive"* (**FGD 20; FGD 17).** Also, farmers and key informants suggested that lack of farm management skills and low level of education could explain little to no adoption of new farming technologies.

4.4.5 Limited Support from Local Stakeholders

The analysis also revealed that limited or lack of support and interest in agriculture by local stakeholders was a threat to the success of agricultural projects (6 FDGs). This was seen in all participating municipalities. An NGO representative in Collins Chabane area, said, "general community leaders and the community take less interest in local farming practices". This explained why farmers found it difficult to collectively mobilise and harness resources for sustained agricultural growth (Project leader, in Thulamela area & 2 NGOs representatives from Thulamela and Giyani). Limited support from local and regional players predisposed projects to harsh external risks and vulnerabilities. This demotivated and discouraged many rural farmers.

4.4.6 Unstable and Inaccessible market

Limited access to and lack of reliable market was also a common challenge among agricultural projects (2 project leaders in Giyani and Thulamela region; Key informant interview 23; 4 FDGs. Poor market access for rural farmers was found to be multi-leveled. Issues such as "inconsistent quality of produce"; "far markets"; "reliance on free independent traders & buyers"; and "inability to penetrate the market" (Table 4.2) were characterized as market challenges. For instance, independent buyers or traders and far markets forced farmers to sell their produce at low prices and in some cases below the break-even point prices. Occasionally, stock is lost through rot before it gets to the market.

4.5 Factors Determining Success for Agricultural Projects

This presents critical success factors for rural agricultural projects. The proposed success factors and challenges identified above were used to build comprehensive factor of success to agricultural projects. The success factors were thus systematically analyzed in light of how

they directly respond to the everyday farmers' challenges. Active, responsive, and inclusive stakeholder participation; open and accessible market; access to land and financial resources; access to the skilled workforce and continuous training and learning; effective project management and control; and an adequate number of workers describes a combination of success factors identified.

4.5.1 Active, responsive and inclusive stakeholder participation

Farmers in two FGD in Giyani and Thulamela municipality noted that local partners who understood their roles and work closely with farmers and offer opportunity to solve multi-leveled challenges facing farmers. Results revealed that supportive and involved local stakeholders could assist farmers mobilise resources such as sourcing funding and linking farmers with different stakeholders. Moreover, the results show that active and inclusive support by local stakeholders could ease financial constraints, as well as limit market access challenges, poor information quality, and water-related problems (Figure 4.2).

4.5.2 Access to land and financial resources

Access to land and financial resources also emerged as a determinant of success to agricultural projects. Access to fertile, adequate size, and arable land were critical factors pre-requisite to the success of agricultural projects (11 FGDs). Challenges to land access were related to the land tenure system as previously stated.

4.5.3 Open and accessible market

Market access dynamics emerged as a challenge to the success of rural agricultural projects. Hence, farmers stated that market strategies like prices, transport and quality farm produce is poised to address market related challenges. Also, ready market was stated as a key factor in the success of projects. Ready market addresses challenges related to rotting and low market prices. In that case, they, open and accessible market stands to improves the chances of success for farmers by stabilizing market dynamics and increasing profits for farmers.

4.5.4 Access to the skilled workforce and continuous training and learning

Availability of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce determines between a successful and failing agricultural projects. For example, a farm manager in Giyani municipality noted that lack of skills slowed down production and required extra monitoring of farmworkers. Farmers, TLs, NGOs, and municipal officers stated that in a rapid technological advancement, environment, continuous learning and skills acquisition build survival resilience for farmers. The results indicate that a flexible and skilled workforce is likely to manage market dynamics, engage in fundraising activities, keep records and manage farm practices. Another ability is to web-search for relevant and specialized information in line with their farming activities.

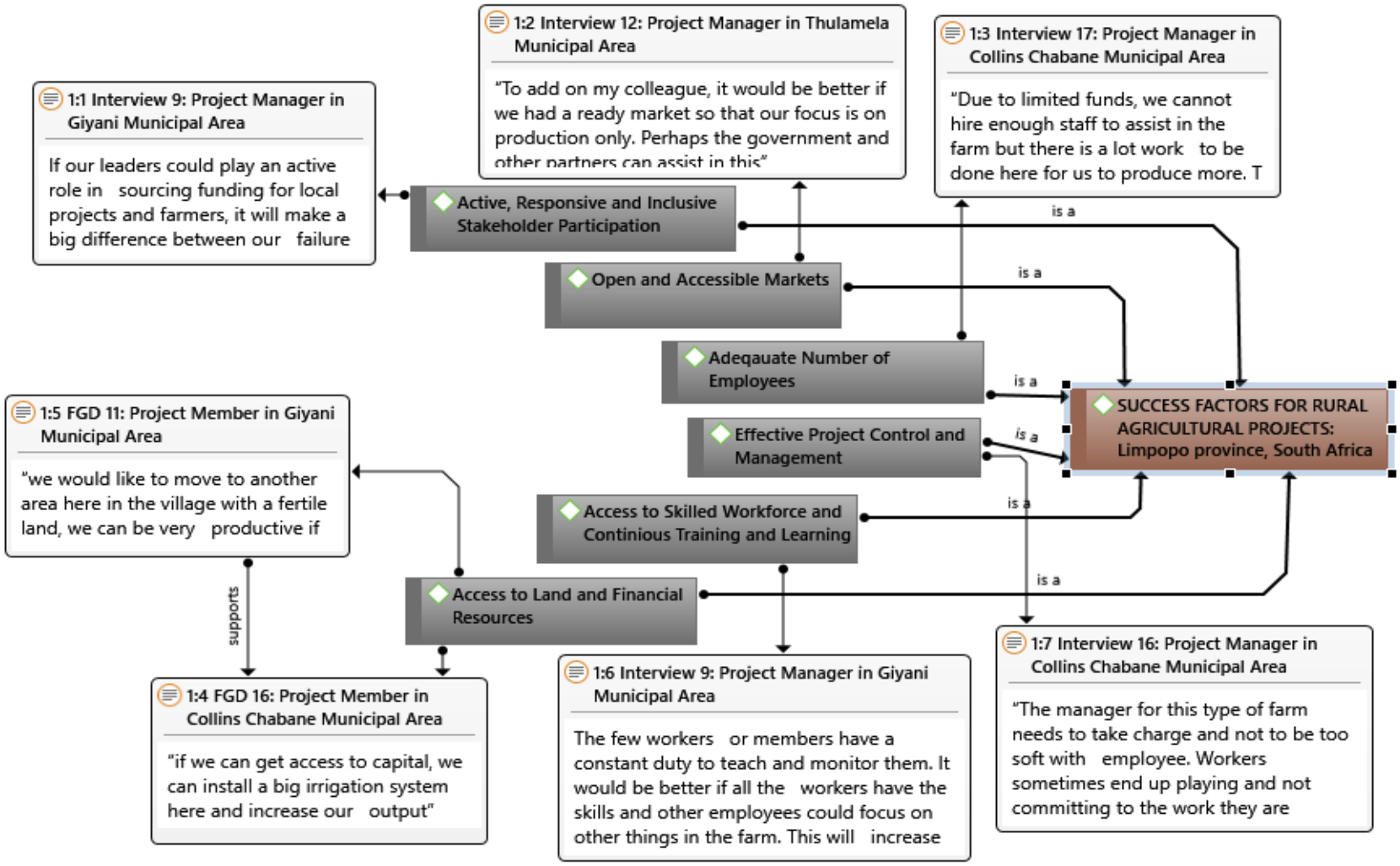

***Figure 4.1**: Critical success factors for rural agricultural projects in Limpopo province, South Africa*

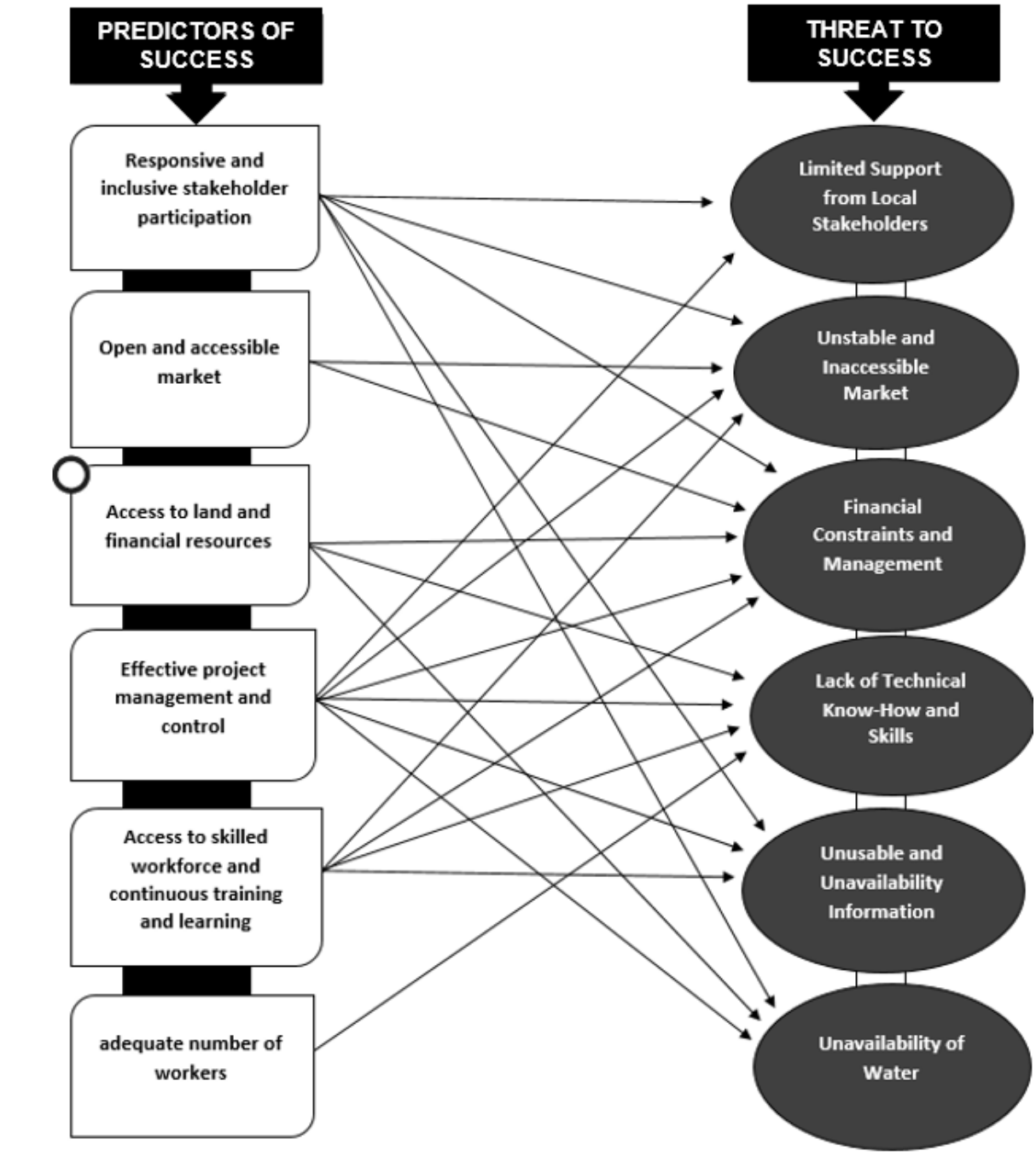

***Figure 4.2**: The intersection between threats to and predictors of success for rural agricultural projects in Limpopo province, South Africa*

4.5.5 Effective project management and control

Record keeping; information search; activity monitoring and evaluation; and functional staff management systems emerged as important tools of project management required to promote the success of agricultural projects. Clear staff management systems or arrangements including monitoring progress made by workers/members and providing skills improvement opportunities ensures that farm activities run smoothly and are well managed. Farmers, also pointed out that, managers and owners need to involve them in the future projects to boost their commitment and not to look for green pastures elsewhere. Moreover, the results show that with increased locus of control, common farmer challenges like market challenges, financial constraints and improve stakeholder relationships are likely to be addressed (Figure 4.2).

4.5.6 Adequate number of workers

Although results suggested that inadequate farmworkers were part of their challenges, they emerge as not an immediate threat. Farmers stated that, due to financial constraints they now rely on volunteer workers. This was also observed during the study. For instance, at the inception of this study a project in Mopani district, had 18 workers. This number decreased to between 7 and 11 in a year and months. Further, the farm manager resigned from the projects and fewer workers remained.

4.7 Discussion

Effective project management and control; access to the skilled workforce and continuous training and learning; access to land and financial resources; an adequate number of active workers , responsive, and inclusive stakeholder participation emerged as key success factors for rural agricultural projects. Similar observations were made by Mukwevho & Anim (2014), Sjauw-Koen-Fa *et al*. (2016), and Yusoff *et al*. (2016). The results revealed that market challenges were not related to unavailability, but rather relate to transport, inadequate marketing skills, and limited access to maket information. These findings concur with Khapayi & Celliers (2016) observation that there is a missing link mainly information related between the market and rural farmer producers.

The results of the this study as well as the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) (2012) support that effective project management and control is one of the major challenges for rural farmers. Farmers are unable to effectively plan and control farm activities and programmes. Continuous monitoring and good record-keeping of financial and project operations differentiates between a successful and a failed project (Vukelić & Rodic, 2014; Yusoff *et al.*, 2016).

The results demonstrated the importance of access to skilled workforce and continuous learning for the success of agricultural projects. Apart from the numbers, Yusoff *et al.* (2016) points out that technical skills proved important to the success of small ruminant farmers' in Malaysia. Both farm workers and managers need adequate skills and access to continues learning opportunities to adapt to the changing farming environment. Collier & Dercon (2014) and Salami *et al.* (2017) stress on the need for skills by indicating that workers and managers need to be aware and learn appropriate farming techniques and methods used. Amid changing weather conditions and farming technology globally, continuous training and learning for farmers is imperative to adapt to modern farming techniques. Adequate number of workers is an important factor to rural farmers, mainly they have limited capital and cannot afford to purchase and benefit from advanced technology for their business. In addition, Nuthall, (2012); Etim & Okon, (2013) Akintayo & Lawal (2016) observed that the number of workers matters to rural farmers due to over-dependence on manual labour contrary to commercial or well-off farmers that rely on technology from land tillage to harvesting.

Results indicate that support from local stakeholders was critical for the agricultural projects to prosper. This factor is also confirmed in the literature by (Vermeulen *et al.,* 2012; Fan *et al.,* 2013). Results suggested that local support improves farmer resilience to swiftly respond to environmental and seasonal challenges by utilising networks of partners available. This study shows that, farmers require support from local stakeholders such as family; community, and its institutions; extension services; NGOs, and governance to succeed (Vermeulen *et al.,* 2012; Raleting & Obi, 2015). Hence, these findings imply that active, responsive, and inclusive stakeholder participation is a valid and reliable success factor for rural agricultural projects.

The results also revealed that financial resources and access to land is an important factor required for farmers to succeed. Garnevska *et al.* (2011) as well as Sutherland & Burton (2011) concur with empirical evidence, and state that access to key resources such as land and finance are critical and a requisite for improved farm productivity. Land access example, provides soil for farming and act as collateral for credit access (White, 2012). Globally, capital and financial shortages are a major concern (Gillah *et al*., 2012; Heyi & Mberengwa, 2012; Kepe, & Tessaro, 2014).

4.8 Conclusion

Threats to farmers' success and factors that determine success for rural agricultural projects were investigated. Farmers experienced several challenges that relate to information access, management skills, and limited support for farmers from local stakeholders. Good project management, access to skilled workers and ability to manoeuvre the market dynamics emerged as most important factors in determining success for agricultural projects. These

factors were also related. For example, results suggest that proper project management, could address challenges like market fragmentation, and access to finance and credit. Programmes that seek to improve farmer conditions need to observe the relationship between these factors. Equally, how challenges interact with success factors must be studied and observed. The proposed success factors are important for devising appropriate and relevant intervention measures to farmers' challenges. The following chapter reports the results on specific roles of the TLI in agriculture.

CHAPTER 5

IDENTIFYING THE ROLES OF THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION TO THE SUCCESS OF RURAL AGRICULTURE PROJECTS

Abstract

The lack of specific documented traditional leadership institution (TLI) roles and practices that promote success to different rural development sectors poses a challenge to its effective participation in rural development. Despite available legislative provisions, its contribution to important sectors like agriculture remains elusive. This study identified, assessed and categorised a set of important TLI institutional practices and activities perceived to positively impact the success of rural agricultural projects. An explorative study was conducted in Vhembe and Mopani district in Limpopo province, South Africa. The data was collected from farmers, traditional leaders and key informants (N =103). A thematic analysis performed through Atlas Ti version 8.4.1 identified an eight-factor structure of the roles perceived to influence the success of agriculture projects. The results revealed that facilitating and promoting “social capital” between stakeholders like agricultural projects, non-governmental organisations, and government departments in partnership development, as well as service delivery advocacy are part of the main TLI practices and activities that create conditions of success for rural agricultural projects. It is, therefore, recommended that the TLI institutional contributions be further studied, and analysed to strengthen and reinforce their contributory effectiveness for collective action towards tangible and viable outcomes for rural agricultural projects.

Keywords: Agriculture projects, Local institutions, Participatory development, Rural development, Traditional leadership roles, Traditional leaders.

5.1 Introduction

The TLI is recognised as a strategic partner in promoting rural development in most sub-Saharan African countries with dedicated legislative provisions and ongoing financial support. During the colonial rule, the TLI roles were tempered and reduced to administrative roles. However, at the end of colonial era and apartheid in South Africa, the government has made numerous significant strides to improve its participation in local community decision making as a viable rural development player. The TLI is expected to initiate, support and promote local community development initiatives in its own unique way. For instance, the Traditional Leadership Governance and Framework Act (TLGFA) 41 of 2003: Section 20, states that the TLI could promote rural development concerning economic and agriculture development *inter alia*. Furthermore, the TLGFA 41 OF 2003 established the traditional councils to augment and be the vehicle of activities of the TLI. Similarly, Section 81 and Schedule 6 of the Local Government in Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 incorporates the participation of TLI in municipal councils to represent the different developmental needs of its community. Nevertheless, how these roles are to be performed in practice is yet to be clarified and specified legislatively and in research.

Each TLI is t expected to promote rural development in line with its customary practices. It is not a surprise that, TLIs in the same municipal area or adjacent to each other that their level of involvement in rural agriculture and rural development is widely varied. It is part of the reasons why, more than twenty-seven years into democracy, it remains difficult to pull out an important set of institutional activities and practices that positively influence the success of sectors like agriculture (Mawere & Mayekiso, 2014; Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017). While there is historical and observational evidence of key TLI roles that influence the success of agriculture, this evidence has not been scientifically studied and documented. The evidence remains scattered. More so, it is not known which of the practices are practical and should be prioritised given the current institutional and societal settings. As part of efforts to improve its participation, it is therefore important to isolate and prioritise the key TLI contributions that improve the conditions of success for rural agriculture projects. Uphoff (2004) and Logan, (2013) show that local-level institutions like the TLI play a vital role in community decision-making towards augmenting and supporting local development.

Easing decision making; reduction in the cost of doing business; and enhancing collaborations between development actors and agricultural projects are benefits associated with responsive local players involved in community decision making (Uphoff, 2004; Hansen *et al.,* 2016). The importance of local institutions like the TLI is also of global importance for sustainable development as reflected in Sustainable Development Goals, precisely Goal 16. The charter

states that sustainable development in communities is attained through effective, accountable, participatory, and inclusive community institutions at all levels (Abegunde, 2009; FAO, 2016). Therefore, identifying a set of TLI practices that promote the success of rural agricultural projects adds to the local network of support to agriculture development.

Agriculture is a main economic activity in most rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa including South Africa (Losch, 2016; Swaffield *et al.,* 2019). Agriculture has the potential to stimulate the local economy through job creation and unlocking resources for the agri-business and services sector (Swaffield *et al.,* 2019). Agriculture presents a viable option to eradicate the triple challenges of unemployment, inequality, and poverty facing most rural communities. The current observed decline in agricultural output and challenges faced by communal farmers necessitate the need to build a comprehensive and effective support network of local stakeholders (Neef & Neubert, 2011; Chambers, 2013). Specifying and prioritizing key TLI roles in policy and otherwise, may positively influence the success of agricultural projects. An effective and involved TLI is likely to contribute in reducing the multifaceted farmer challenges like insecure land rights, inadequate access to quality inputs and financial services, and limited partnership options with the private sector. Moreover, a supportive TLI may increase the ability of farmers to mobilize resources and gain broad community support for improved resilience (Earlier *et al.,* 2003; Centeno *et al*., 2017). The participation of TLI in local community decision making processes provides a unique opportunity to build operative multi-stakeholder collaborations for sustained rural agriculture development (International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), 2012). Against this backdrop, the study assessed, documented, and ranked TLI roles that promote the success of rural agricultural projects.

5.2 Materials and Methods

5.2.1 Research Design, sampling, data collection tools and procedure

The study adopted an exploratory sequential mixed method design. The detailed methodology on research participants, data collection tools, procedure followed, and data analysis is presented in Chapter 3.

5.3 Results

The results revealed eight roles and contributions of TLIs that are important for the success of agricultural projects. They were categorised into representing farmers' needs in agricultural policy formulation and design; support and coordinate agricultural development programmes; service delivery advocacy, easing funding access, promote land access; coordinate and facilitate information access; attract agro-processing industry and infrastructure development; and ensure social capital between stakeholders (Table 5.1). Each theme is discussed below.

5.3.1 Agricultural policy development and representation

“Advocating for farmers' needs and challenges in local agricultural policy development” was identified as one of the key roles. This role was performed by bringing forth “farmers’ needs” to the government mandatory local development instrument, like the “Integrated development planning (IDP) (**Interview 3, 7, 8, 9, & 19; FGD 2 &15**). Furthermore, results show that TLI can contribute through participating in local economic development planning discussions that support targeted local development initiatives like agriculture projects. “Open door policy” and “proximity” were cited as key attributes that give the TLI its unique way to understand and share an intimate understanding of challenges that threaten the success of agricultural projects in their area of jurisdiction.

Results further show that this role is mostly performed in areas where there is an active person from the TLI to talk about projects. In so doing, the TLI “amplifies the voices and representation of farmer needs” and help “adapt and align local polices opposed to top-down approaches. A municipal official stated the TLI consults farmers in various aspects that affect their projects such as land, financial and labour challenges. This was also echoed by farmers (**FGD 12 & 17**).

5.3.2 Support and coordinate agricultural development programs

The results revealed that the TLI could play the role of coordinating and facilitating local agricultural development programs that support agricultural projects. TLI played this role by “forming part of overseers” and “acting as monitors” in the implementation of local agricultural development support programmes (**FGD, 2, 5, 15, & 19; FGD 13 & 17**). Moreover, the result from FGDs showed that TLI has the potential to be a local “watchdog” in the running of public or private agriculture support programs. Respondents said, its community leadership status accords the TLI a rapport, and facilities to rightfully “lobby for and initiate partnerships” with government, NGOs and the private sector to support farmers in various agriculture support programs (**Interview 11 & 15; FGD 17, 19 & 24**). Giving the “necessary approbations, endorsements and guarantor support” in partnerships or collaborative support programmes for agricultural projects emerged as ways in which the TLI supports agriculture development programmes. The result further showed that its incorporation in agriculture, TLI could play a vital role in monitoring, evaluating, and implementation practices of government and privately funded agricultural development initiatives.

Table 5.1: Important traditional leadership institution contributions to the success of rural agriculture projects in Limpopo Province, South Africa

CRITICAL ROLES	DESCRIPTION
Agricultural policy development and representation	1. Represent farmer's needs in LED and local agriculture policy development 2. Act for the interest of farmers in policy adaptation 3. Amplify the farmer's voices in local policy development
Support and coordinate agricultural development programs	1. Forms part of overseers. e.g. Project watchdog for local agriculture support programs 2. Monitor project progress role e.g. assessing and resolving constraints encountered. 3. Advocacy role e.g. initiating partnerships in agriculture support programs 4. Endorsement and guarantor support
Service delivery advocacy	1. Relay farmer service needs in local government policy 2. Pressure local government service providers. e.g. extension and municipal services 3. Provide checks & balances to local service delivery 4. Advocate for improved services to different stakeholders
Easing funding access	1. Endorsements for funding application e.g. stamps, support letters 2. Guarantor e.g. proof of land lease as collateral 3. Signatories to funding support programs for agriculture projects 4. Source of linkage and unity for potential funders in their jurisdiction
Promote Land access	1. Land allocation e.g. purchasing for new and existing projects 2. Offering affordable land prices e.g. price per hectare to consider the financial conditions of farmers. 3. Land disputes resolution
Coordinate and facilitate information access	1. Acting as an information collection and distribution center 2. Advocates for projects information needs in policy debates 3. Office's space sharing. E.g. Information service providers utilise tribal offices in partnership with agricultural development programs.
Attract agro-processing industry and infrastructure development	1. Availing land for the construction of infrastructure. e.g. roads to access the market. 2. Attracting private and public sector investment in the agro-processing industry 3. Advocating for and aiding partnerships in the agro-processing industry and infrastructure development
Promoting Social Capital between stakeholders	1. Facilitate networking between farmers & external stakeholders. 2. Facilitate multi-stakeholder collaborations 3. Mediates partnerships between farmers & agriculture support stakeholders E.g. NGOs, government, and private sector 4. Act as a link & unifier in multi-stakeholder targeted local agriculture development support programs. 5. Multi-stakeholder dispute resolver 6. Connects the community and farmers in local agricultural projects. i.e. reduction in theft, reliable local market 7. Assures and builds trust between stakeholders and farmers

It was also revealed that TLI across the three municipalities performed the stated practices in one form or the other. In one TBA, the TLI was incorporated and formed part of the board in a government-funded agriculture development programme. On the other hand, four projects, showed that their relationship with the TLI is limited to land provision and endorsement stamps when applying for funding (**FGD, 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 15, & 19**). Also, it was observed that the World Vision, an international non-governmental organisation, was utilising tribal offices in assisting agricultural cooperatives in the area with capacity building programmes.

5.3.3 Service delivery advocacy

The findings of this study revealed that TLI could also help create conditions of success by acting as a "service delivery advocate" for agriculture projects. The TLI plays this role through "providing checks & balances to both private and public local service delivery providers (**Interview, 13, 16, & 21; FGD 9, 17, & 23**). Also, the results show that the TLI lobbies and pressures local stakeholders such as "extension-municipal services" to deliver services to farmers. Furthermore, in partnership projects, the TLI played the role of an overseer and that of ensuring that the agreed programmes or plans are realised by various stakeholders. The TLI achieves this by frequently registering the needs and challenges of various community development groups like farmers in different service delivery discussion platforms. Reportedly, there are service delivery issues that have been resolved after the intervention of the TLI. For instance, a "farm electricity bill dispute" between a project and the municipality was successfully resolved after engaging the TLI, after months of disconnection (**Interview 8, TBA 1**). These results show that TLI facilitates the relationship between the Department of Agriculture extension services, private partners, local municipality, and farmers in support of rural agricultural projects.

Although important, advocating for farmer's needs, resulted in heightened tensions and poor relations between the TLI and service providers in some instances (2 FGDs). Reportedly, some stakeholders and service providers, do not view the role of service delivery advocacy to rest with the TLI (**Interview 5, 11, 14, 19, 21 & 23; FGD 7, 13, 19**). For instance, municipal officials and councillors often perceived such actions as an overreach by the TLI, (Interview 11, 21 & 23). The results showed that TLI remains a key player in service delivery advocate for rural agriculture projects. These sentiments were echoed by a municipal official (**Interview 20)** saying, *"most of these farming projects are in the land directly administered by the chief, if there are problems the chief informs us and we see how we can work together to help them from a municipality standpoint of service delivery. This collaboration is important to ensure responsive and efficient service delivery for local farmers"*

5.3.4 Easing funding access

Coordinating and supporting farmers to secure funding was also identified as an important role played by the TLI in promoting rural agricultural development. The TLI emerged as a key player in mobilising and facilitating agriculture support programmes. The respondents stated, the TLI could collaborate, and partner with various stakeholders such as research institutions, private sector, and government departments to access agriculture development grants that support farmers. Its symbolic status acts as a guarantor, boosts trustworthiness and increases the chances of success to the funding application (**Key informant interview 19**). Correspondingly, providing endorsement letters, stamping services, and underwriting the property rights as collateral for projects are some of the TLI practices that made it easier for farmers to access funding. Moreover, a project leader added and gave an example that, *"a TBA in the area (the name is given) established a community trust. It helps in sourcing funding for the community or individual development projects like farmers and small businesses to apply for funding, conduct business feasibility analysis, and offer basic skills training. I believe, the work done by this TBA could be replicated in our area and other TBAs for the development of local farmers" (***Interview 16 in TBA 4)**.

5.3.5 Promoting access to land

Ensuring efficient and equitable access to land for farmers emerged as an important factor that determines the success or failure of agriculture projects. As a land administrator, the TLI could improve land access by addressing common challenges such as barren land (soil infertility, degradation), small farm sizes and high land prices. Farmers revealed that, land prices per square meter have steadily risen in the past decade. As such, farmers find it difficult to get more land and expand to their farming activities (**FGD 5, 11, 12 & 17; Interview 10, 20, 24**). Also, youth with no capital found it difficult to penetrate farming and start their own ventures due to higher and increasing land prices. On the other hand, results from TLI show that land was basically free. However, the minimum administrative costs related to pegging were charged per square metre

5.3.6 Facilitating access to information

The results suggested that the TLI has the potential to organise, coordinate, and disseminate information to rural agriculture projects. Respondents said, the TLI could be a partner in gathering information and creating platforms in which such information could be acquired (**FGD 9 & 13**). However, respondents noted that this is only possible if the TLI council members are trained to coordinate and gather such information. Respondents added that council members must be linked or work with the extension services and research institutions **(Interview 4)**. A farm manager stated that, working with members of the tribal authority, would improve the delivery of extension services to agricultural projects. Currently, extension service

officers seldom visit or provide information to farmers (**Interview 8, & 14; FGD 5, 6, 8, ,11, 14, 19 & 20**). For instance, a farmer stated that extension officers have not visited the farms in the last 8 months (FGD 17). An extension officer interviewed said, the Department of Agriculture only relied on two officers. One for crops and another for animals, given the vast number of farmers who need their services, two officers could not adequately perform this function. Hence, incorporating a trained information coordinator within the TLI, therefore, stands to bridge this gap. Additional, the extensions officers can relay and obtain information effectively and efficiently.

Respondents also suggested that, regular community meetings, the TLI should host quarterly farmers' meetings with various experts. In this way, farmers will interact with agriculture experts, researchers, potential funders, and different practitioners in a unique platform.

5.3.7 Ensure Social Capital between stakeholders

The TLI could also promote the success of agricultural projects by fostering social capital and cohesion in local stakeholder collaborations and partnerships. Linking, and resolving disputes, being a "source of identity" to local communities, mobilising community support to agricultural projects are the descriptors of this theme. The results suggested that, through its facilitation, the TLI could broaden networks and multi-stakeholder collaboration with "potential partners" and "external stakeholder to support to local projects. The TLI was also described "as an important link & unifier in multi-stakeholder partnerships in local agriculture development support programmes. The TLI commands high respect among government, farmers, NGOs and the private sector, hence, it acts as a source of unity. Moreover, a key informant, noted that they accorded respect and high regard for TLI as a non-partisan as opposed to elected leaders, gave it advantage to play the role of "dispute resolution. Additionally, the TLI promotes "trust" and broadens local community support". "Reduction in farm or project theft" as well as building a "reliable local market" were mentioned as direct benefits from this role. As an example, a project leader in Thulamela municipality stated that TLI has in numerous occasions, facilitated communication and linkage between them and farmers. Also, farmers stated that some misunderstandings between funders and agricultural projects, were mediated successfully by the TLI. This, further built a concrete rapport for farmers and external partners. It is in this view that, the TLI is envisaged as an important partner to farmers for building sustainable networks, partnerships, and collaborations for rural farmers with external stakeholders.

5.3.8 Promoting agro-based industry and infrastructure development

The analysis revealed that the TLI could also promote success of farmers though attracting and encouraging investment from agro-processing businesses. Findings of the study,

revealed that the ability of the TLI to work with and effectively partner with civil society, local community, government, NGOs, and private business determines the level of investment in different communal areas. Potentially, such investments might have ripple effects for infrastructure development. For instance, lobbying the government and other stakeholders to partner in the construction and erection of structures such as roads and community halls is another example given of how the TLI could potentially play this role. Infrastructure developed such as roads is important for farmers to reach the market, access services and lower the cost of production. As captioned by a key informant and supported by a municipal official from Thulamela, farmers stand to benefit if the TLI releases resources like land to businesses and investors in their area. For instance, farmers noted that a new shopping mall provides new markets for farmers.

5.4 Discussion

Qualitative results demonstrated that TLI plays an important role in promoting harmonious and symbiotic relations between farmers, communities, and other developmental partners. It emerged that the TLI is instrumental in facilitating and ensuring mutual collaborative, and cohesive relations between agricultural projects and development actors. These include local and international NGOs, private businesses, community, government, and local support services like that of extension and municipal officers. Similar, to this observation, Walo (2016) avers that apart from the economic benefits, indigenous institutions like TLI contribute to the development of social capital a necessary ingredient for the success of development initiatives. Accordingly, the TLI could facilitate and mobilise local community and development actors to support and stand together regardless of their differences such as economic, political, and other demographic elements in support of agricultural projects. Correspondingly, the existence of strong moral bonds is important for mediating and ease the resolution of conflicts for sustained collaborations between agricultural projects and other stakeholders. In the same vein, Beugelsdijk & Smulders (2003); Sutherland & Burton (2011), and Carrico *et al.,* 2015) add that local institutions such as TLI can group people or individuals from similar and different backgrounds to create strong bonds for collective action and support. Moreover, such institutions promote mutual help and collaborations.

A study in the Netherlands showed that sustainable regional development in rural areas benefits from shared leadership where collective values, feelings, mutual trust, and energy provide the basis for mobilising private and public actors around joint regional development goals (Ina & Frans, 2013). At the community level, TLI promotes community social capitals and helped farmers mitigate day to day challenges. For example, challenges such as random incidences of theft and equipment were minimised. This result indicates that TLIs are key

drivers of social capital not only at the community level, but nurtures candid relationships among various development stakeholders and agricultural projects. In so doing, the conditions of success for agricultural projects are enhanced. Thematic analysis revealed that promoting and coordinating agricultural development programs is a useful and important TLI role that supports farmers' success in the qualitative results. The TLI has the potential to be a key partner in attracting and coordinating agricultural development programs that could support the success of agricultural projects. For instance, collaborating with other local stakeholders such as the municipality, district department of agriculture, institutions of excellence such as colleges and research institutions, and NGOs, TLI could not only host agricultural development programs that empower farmers without their assistance.

To reiterate Epstein *et al*. (2001) and Bikam & Chakwizira (2014: 148) views, "the Integrated Development Plan, as provided for in the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, is an instrument from which the role of traditional leaders can be incorporated. The Act provides for TLI to initiate and implement rural development projects mutually with elected municipal officials. Dzvimbo *et al.* (2017) studied the link between rural institutions and rural development in Zimbabwe. The study concluded that such "institutions are of paramount importance in that they buttress the strength of successful implementation of rural development projects and activities" (Dzvimbo *et al.,* 2017: 51). Furthermore, it emerged that this role in Zimbabwe has seen fruition in collaborations between the TLI with donors and private institutions. Walo (2016) in Ethiopia also stated that development actors prefer to partner with indigenous institutions over government institutions because they offer more accessible services and are less reliant on ruling party affiliation. Thus, the TLI is a critical player in promoting the success of supporting, initiating and endorsing agriculture support programmes. However, the limited resources and manpower challenges, makes achieving this goal a challenge.

Coordinating and supporting farmers to source funding was also revealed as part of the TLI's contribution that enables the success of agricultural projects. It emerged that TLI assisted farmers with support letters, stamps, and acting as a guarantor in some funding applications by farmers. A research by Dzvimbo *et al.* (2017), revealed similar findings that the TLI coordinates government and NGO agriculture support grants meant for agricultural projects development. An article in Good News Daily (2019) titled "Eastern Cape farmers and traditional leaders unite", in South Africa, shows how TLI worked with commercial farmers to support the success of small-scale farmers. This is evidence that through collaborative efforts TLI plays an important role in helping farmers secure funds through support programmes. However, the results showed that not all farmers were beneficiaries in some of the grants coordinated through TLI. In general, most agricultural projects received support from the TLI to secure funding in the form of stamps, motivational letters, and general support.

Advocating for better service delivery to farmers from local government and other stakeholders was another TLI role identified as important for the success of agricultural projects. Its apolitical status or non-political affiliation placed TLI as an appropriate partner for putting pressure on the local government or municipality and extension services to deliver on their mandate. The TLI is perceived as a neutral strategic partner that could in its unique way thrust service providers to deliver efficient and quality services to agricultural projects. Reportedly, the TLI is instrumental in resolving some service delivery disputes, between agricultural projects and local municipality. Thus, the TLI bridges the gap between farmers and service delivery providers.

A study in Bangladesh (Islam & Nursey-Bray, 2017); another in Ethiopia (Walo, 2016), and another in Zimbabwe (Wekwete, 2014) shows that building partnerships with more community-based institutions is another strategy for promoting local economic development and augmenting service delivery to farmers. Similarly, Pike *et al.* (2015) in Europe revealed that local institutions like TLI could facilitate and mobilizes local actors in the public, private and civic sectors to render adequate support and services to local development initiatives. However, it is important to note half the time, the TLI is viewed as overreaching by performing this role. This partly explained the animosity and visible conflicts between TLI and service providers like the municipality. Although, the TLI should advocate for better service delivery to farmers, this role must be exercised with caution and conflict resolution skills applied. This is so because unidirectional pressure that leads to conflicts between TLI and service providers could result in a "conflict spill over effect" with an adverse impact on the success of agricultural projects. In conclusion, despite the emergence of conflicts, TLI is viewed as an important partner with a role to ensure and promote effective service delivery to farmers.

Results revealed that TLI plays an important role in advocating for and representing farmers' needs for targeted agricultural policy development and local support systems. The TLI increments the voices of farmers' needs in local policy development. Similarly, Tshitangoni & Francis (2014) showed that traditional leaders were considered effective in engaging communities, which resulted in people-centered decisions making. Moreover, it emerged that they planned and held regular, well-attended meetings that involved residents of the areas under their jurisdiction. Its proximity and intimate relationship with rural agricultural projects is an asset for garnering evidence from local farmers. Thereafter, the TLI presents and advocates for farmer needs where the policies are made, for example, in the council meetings where traditional leaders have a seat (The Municipal Systems Act of 2000). Moreover, the established community meetings between the community including farmers and TLI creates another unique platform to discourse problems faced by farmers.

The TLI also has an open-door policy. Hence, farmers could log in their grievances at any time with the TLI. This result suggests that the TLI has an intimate understanding and relationship with common farmer challenges in their areas of jurisdiction. It is this thrust that, gives the TLI the ability to rightfully represent farmer needs and contribute to adapting local targeted agricultural support policies and mechanisms in the local government planning. However, due to the current participation of the TLI, community decision making practice to promote agriculture is greatly limited. For example, the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 only allows participation of the TLI in policy development with no voting rights. Bikam & Chakwizira (2014), in their study on the involvement of TLI in the development of local projects in Limpopo South Africa, alluded to this similar predicament. They concluded that "at the local level, traditional leaders do not have the legislative powers to alter the planning process nor take decisions on issues related to land use planning and development projects" (Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014:148). Despite the limited decision-making powers, Hechter *et al.* (2018) shows that this role is important. A study by Pike *et al*. (2015) on the role of local institutions and local economic development in England highlights that institutions like TLI play a vital role in local-level policy formulation. It can, therefore, be concluded that although the TLI represents development projects in policy development, its influence on resultant policy is indirect as it does not have decision making powers.

Promoting access to land was among the chief roles of the TLI in promoting the success of agricultural projects. The importance and practicability of the TLI in ensuring access to land for farmers, fundamental dates to olden days, is among the list of roles stipulated in the legislative framework (TLGFA of 41 2003). Currently, the TLI is a custodian of land on behalf of the rural communities. Nalere *et al.* (2015) in Uganda, found no significant relationship between rural institutions and the promotion of land access. The authors, explained that rural farmers did not consider access to land a major challenge as it was generally available, hence, lower importance. Garnevska *et al*. (2011) further states that the problems of land for rural farmers is associated with the tenure system as opposed to availability or access. Thus, the result of this study might suggest that there are technical problems in the promotion of land access by the TLI. This explains why farmers noted that they could not access enough land, not because of its unavailability but due to prices that have soured in the last few years. Based on the results, it could be concluded that promoting land access is an important role of the TLI. However, there is a need to remove technical barriers to access like prices and lease agreements.

The TLI also encourages and facilitates infrastructural development. It does this by collaborating with different partners to attract investment in the community for sustainable local economic development. The promotion of erecting shopping malls and road construction

eased access to markets, and facilitated collaboration with other stakeholders to establish the agro-processing industry. Furthermore, results revealed that control of land by the TLI is an asset that could be used to effectively negotiate and attract investment opportunities that integrate farmers with the industry. For instance, grocery shops and other players in the agricultural value chain in traditional land, could empower, and support local farmers in different forms. For example, market provision for fresh produce and stocking agro-processed products from local farmers.

This empirical evidence is supported in the literature by (Di Gregorio *et al*., 2008; Nalere *et al.,* 2015), although the nature of the institutions differs. Thus, the TLI can participate through creating, enabling stage and environment for local investments that stand to utilise local agricultural output. Mechanisms such as land lease agreements, property rights, and land costs could be used to attract such investments. Upnoff, (2004); Basurto & Coleman (2010), and Deneke *et al.* (2011) state that local institutions influence the investment environment. The actions or inactions of the TLI impact the level of investment in the locality.

Information intermediary was revealed as another way in which the TLI promotes efficient decision making by helping farmers access information faster. It emerged in the study that capacitating members of the council and linking them to extension services and other stakeholders could enhance, access to information to local agricultural projects. On the contrary, Nalere *et al.* (2015 in Uganda found no significant evidence that rural institutions could effectively facilitate information access. (). This might explain why Muchara & Mbatha (2016) found that there were weak local institutions, in promoting access to information and other services, to rural farmers in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. As a result, smallholder farmers resorted to self-regulated institutions to ensure timely access to farming services and information. It shows that although identified as important, results indicate that the TLI has limited capacity to perform this task. That is why perhaps, the respondents noted that the council members will require training to perform this task effectively.

5.5 Conclusion

The study identified the specific roles and contributions of TLI that promote the success of the development of agricultural projects. Eight crucial TLI roles were identified. These include advocating for better service delivery to agricultural projects, promoting social capital, representing farmers in local agricultural policy, ensuring and facilitating access to land, and fostering partnerships that attract investment in agro-processing industry. For example, facilitating access to funding through land assurity, signature support, stamping, and other authorisations were ways in which the TLI promoted success of agricultural projects. Also, the results show that other roles depended on each other and were related. For example,

promoting access to land was directly related to promoting access to funding, attracting infrastructure and agro-processing, industry development. The study findings provide a preliminary outlook and areas of contribution by an effective TLI in support of agriculture development. Moreover, the results provide a useful guide that can be used to build a robust and practical integrative mechanism for TLI to effectively participate in promoting rural agriculture development. The relationship between these factors must be observed in endeavours or list of priorities targeted to strengthen institutional contributions effectiveness. The following chapter discuss the perceived barriers to the participation of the TLI in community decision platforms and practices that promote the successes of rural agricultural projects.

CHAPTER 6

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION OF THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION IN PROMOTING SUCCESS OF RURAL AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS

Abstract

Even though multi-stakeholder inclusion and participation has been given prominence in national development processes, the Traditional Leadership Institution (TLI) is reportedly excluded and side-lined in rural development. This study assessed the reasons why and barriers to the participation of traditional leadership institution's community decision-making processes and practices that promote success of agricultural projects. The study was conducted in Limpopo province, South Africa and data collected from a sample of (n = 103) participants comprising of farmers, traditional leaders, and key informants. The interviews and focus group discussions were utilised to solicit data. Thematic content analysis was applied to pull out the barriers from lived practical experiences of experts. Results identified four broad categories of barriers with fourteen sub-themes. Further to that, barriers were interconnected in a causational complex web of networks. It is, therefore, recommended that the network of linkages be considered for prioritisation of the most problematic barriers. If the most problematic are addressed first they are likely to simultaneously reduce the impact of other barriers in the participation of the TLI in practices that promote the success of agricultural projects.

Keywords: Agriculture, Communal farmers, Rural development, Traditional leadership institution

6.1 Introduction

While the traditional leadership institution (TLI) is part and expected to participate with a variety of responsibilities, their visibility and roles to different sectors of rural development are elusive. In most countries, (Alexander, 2006; Chinsinga, 2006) including South Africa (Logan, 2013; Mawere & Mayekiso, 2014; Tshitangoni & Francis, 2014), the institution is an important and strategic partner for inclusive local decision making in participatory development (Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014). Agriculture is one such sector in which they are expected to demonstrate their contribution to sustainable rural economic transformation (TLFGA Act of 2003). However, it remains not clear what their specific roles are and what they are supposed to be doing to promote rural agriculture development. This imparts that twenty-six years into democracy, numerous underlying multifaceted historical and legislative problems governing the participation of TLI in rural development remain unresolved (Ndlovu, Mwale & Zuwarimwe, 2020). It is, therefore, not surprising why it is regarded as an ineffective and weaker development partner (Logan, 2009; Duot, 2013; Koenane, 2018). Similarly, Cramb & Willis, (1990), Mamdani (1996) and logan, (2009) observe that the TLI is incapable, outdated, incapacitated, and undemocratic. For that reason, it should be done away with. In South Africa, local government legislation of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, advocates for their inclusion through IDP as central tenets to sustainable rural development initiatives. Efforts to improve their participation especially in key sectors like agriculture are still not reflected in practice. Thus, it remains difficult to pull their specific role in the sector. Hence, this study investigated the reasons why it is difficult for the TLI to effectively participate in commmunity decision practices that promote the suceess of agricultural projects.

Improved TLI participation has the potential to provide tools that could be used to address the challenges faced in rural agriculture projects. Notably, poor access to finance, services delivery, stakeholder support as well as markets (Aliber & Hall, 2012; Desmond & Salin, 2012). The success of this thrust requires that well-established criteria and a list of activities that could be adopted as important, especially those that offer more tangible outcomes for the rural agricultural projects be isolated. In particular, the poor farmers in communal lands. This is more important than ever, in light of growing rural poverty, and increasing unemployment levels. This situation is likely to be aggravated amid and post the COVID-19 pandemic. Several challenges hamper the participation of TLI to rural development in general, suggesting even more dire challenges in participation in individual sectors like agriculture. This further indicates sector-specific challenges that are expected to impact the way and level of participation by the TLI. Hence, building and diagnosing sector-specific deeper understanding of barriers to TLI participation in agriculture makes it possible to devise appropriate as well as context-relevant solutions. Agriculture is an important economic activity to which most rural

livelihoods depend (Aliber & Hall, 2012; Desmond & Salin, 2012). It is viewed as one of the key sectors of rural development. Hence, it is critical that an effective support network of local players is built to support rural agricultural projects. Potentially, it stands to effectively address hunger and poverty challenges facing most rural areas such as Limpopo province where the study was conducted.

Limpopo has the highest headcount of people living in poverty and it is estimated that over 50% of the population lives in poverty (Stats SA, 2019). Limpopo province is predominantly rural (De Cock *et al*., 2013), and has about 10% of South Africa's arable land producing a wide range of agricultural produce. Mainly produced crops are grain sorghum (43%), dry beans (22%), soybeans (4%), wheat (7%), and sunflower (10%) (Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (DAFF), 2019). Cotton, groundnuts, and maize are also the main crops produced. Agriculture is an important sector in the province. Currently, the establishment of Agri-parks, farming co-operatives, agro-processing industry, and support for youth in farming and rural farmers are key provincial government initiatives.

Smallholder or communal farmers play a significant role in the agricultural sector in the province. The province is committed to growing the agricultural sector as it is an important part of rural development. Annually, it is reported that more than 1 000 rural farmers receive training to improve their skills for improved agricultural production (DAFF, 2019). These are some of the initiatives geared to support rural farmers. Despite all these efforts, poverty is on the rise. Armed with this information and on the acknowledged importance of strengthening local institutional support. It is important to know what roles they play in the sector. However, it is even more crucial to assess the current situation. This is important for establishing hindrances to the participation of TLI that can be tackled and pave a way to add an extra layer of support to rural agriculture projects. It is for this reason that the present study identified and ranked the most problematic barriers.

6.2 Materials and Methods

An exploratory design was used in the study as detailed in Chapter 3. Topics on the participants' selection process, data collection tools used, the procedures followed, and how the data was analysed are presented.

6.3 Results

Figure 6.1 shows broad and sub-themes describing factors that make it difficult for the TLI to be an effective partner in community decision making in promoting agriculture. Broad categories are human resources; political and relational; capital and financial resources; and organisational barriers. Table 6.1 exhibits FDGs results associated with identified themes and

their frequency of mentions per district and municipal area. The presentation of explorative results combines both interviews and FDGs.

6.4 Barriers

Figure 1 shows broad and sub-themes describing factors that make it difficult for the TLI to be an effective partner in community decision making and in promoting agriculture. Broad categories are human resources; political and relational; capital and financial resources; and organisational barriers. Table 6.1 exhibits FDGs results associated with identified themes and their frequency of mentions per district and municipal area. The presentation of explorative results combines both interviews and FDGs.

6.4.1 Political and relational barriers

Political and relational barriers had the most frequency of similar responses (32) from both FDGs and interviews. Among them, “poor working relations” was the most cited barrier evidenced by the highest frequency of mentions with 7 in interviews and 6 in FGDs (Table 6.1). Few notable cases, suggested that there were signs of “poor working relations” between traditional leaders and agricultural projects. Predominantly, a functional challenged relationship with the municipal officials was the most common. This was not only evidenced by traditional leaders but by farmers and traditional council members who held a similar view as shown in the FGDs results.

A further analysis has been illustrated below through an Atlas Ti network diagram in Figure 6.1, which shows that these barriers were also connected to non-political barriers. For instance, “unclear roles” explained why there were “overlapping duties” between the municipality and traditional leaders. Whereas, “lake of role clarity” and “perceived incapacity of the institution contributed to poor relations. Furthermore, lack of role clarity, explained why there was service delivery “power-play games” between the municipal official and TLI. To explain “power play” dynamics, in an interview, a member of a local NGO with more than 5 years in the area, described this situation as “ongoing soft and visible power contestation between the two structures” thereby reducing the benefits that are associated with collaborative partnership in support of local development initiatives.

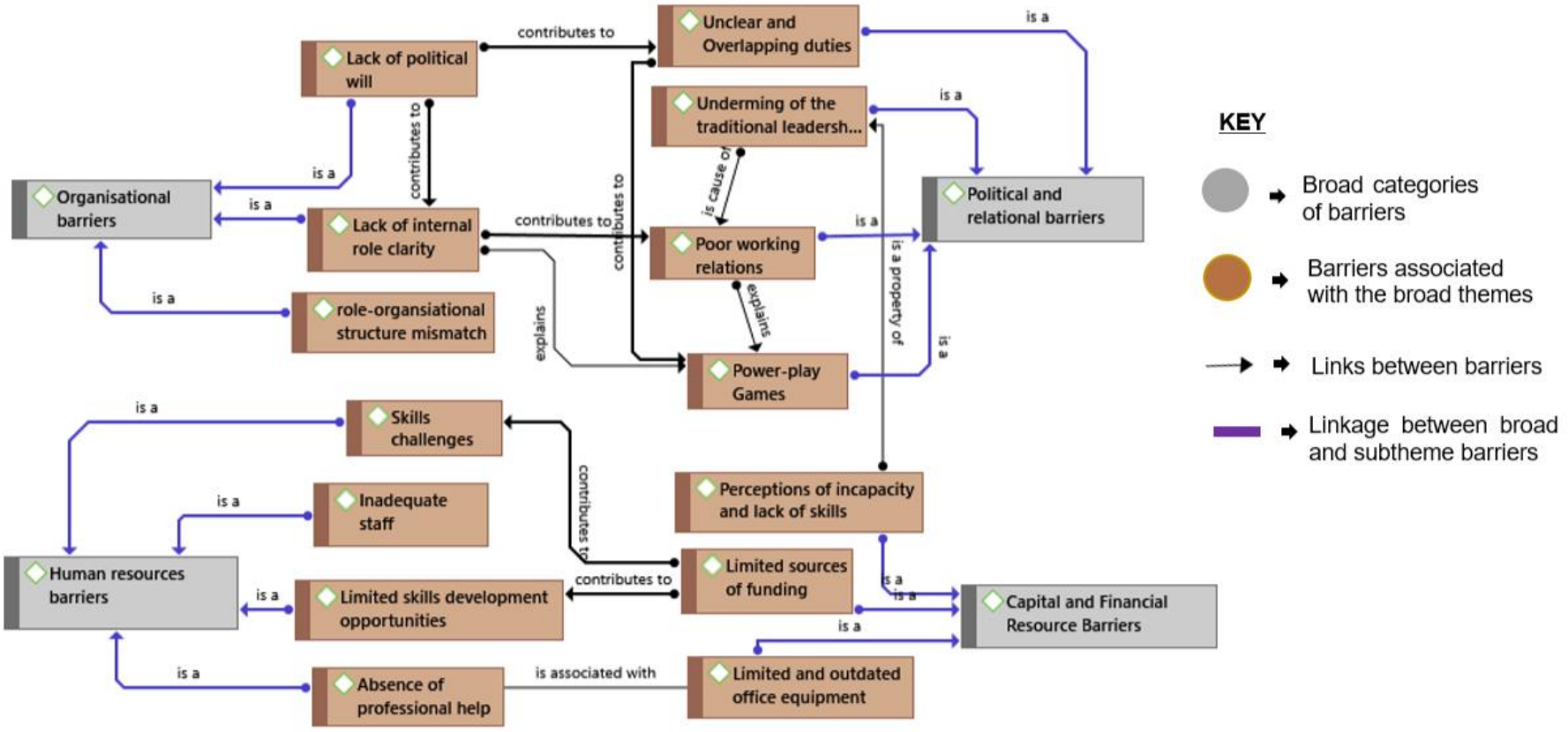

Figure 6.1: *Atlas Ti network diagram on barriers to the participation of the traditional leadership institution in promoting rural agriculture projects in South Africa*

Poor relations manifested in the form of antagonistic service delivery relationship between the traditional leaders and municipal officials. For example, in a project where the TLI is visible and actively involved, the municipality is likely to withdraw its support to the project. To explain this, a senior traditional leader in Mopani district said that, "*We have a challenge with the scope and extent of our work. Many times, we don't agree with the municipality on the extent and scope of our work in practice and this has contributed to limited partnerships in support of local agriculture. Also, when we perform certain functions and duties the councilors view us as competitors for community work"* (**Interview 1**). In addition, states that, "*we have worked with the traditional leader in this project for a long time including in a funded program by the Department of Science & Innovation. Our experience is that, when we ask the TLI to intervene when there are service delivery problems in the project, there is a perception that the traditional leaders are overreaching and going beyond their scope of work. Our electricity bill challenge bears testimony to this".* Although, the intervention of the traditional leaders paid off, "power-play", was shown as the first few service delivery advocacy interventions were resisted.

The results showed that "it is not easy to initiate collaborative work between the TLI and the municipality. Where partnerships exist, or have occurred is driven mainly by the need to comply to local government legislation. Also, external development actors such as, "research institutions, government departments, and NGOs helped facilitate partnerships and bridge the gap between the TLI and municipality. In similar views, a traditional leader from Vhembe district, pointed out the political exclusion of the TLI in government practice, and stated that, *"the municipality and councilors have more power than us"* and *"they are better connected to the government than us and are listened to better"* (**Interview 5**). Moreover, the results showed that there is role competence mistrust. A traditional leader in Vhembe district said, "we are only taken seriously (by the municipality and other partners) when there are cultural events". This undermines the role of the TLI in promoting rural development including agriculture.

Table 6.1: Themes on barriers to the participation of the traditional leadership institution associated with 21 focus group discussions

Location	Focus Groups (FDG)	Themes and sub-themes											
		Human Resources			**Political and relational barriers**				**Capital and Financial resources barriers**			**Organisational barriers**	
		Inadequate staff	Skills challenges	Limited skills development opportunities	Poor working relations	Unclear and overlapping roles	Undermining traditional leaders	Power play games	Limited and outdated office equipment	Limited funding and fewer sources of income	Perceptions of incapacity and lack of skills	Role-structure organisational miss-match	Internal lack of role specificity
Mopani District													
Giyani Local Municipality													
	FGD4		X			X					X		
	FDG5	X		X									
	FGD6					X	X	X	X				X
	FGD7		X		X					X		X	
	FGD8				X					X			
	FGD9					X	X						
Vhembe District													
Thulamela	FGD10		X								X	X	X
	FGD11				X	X							
	FGD12		X		X		X	X					
	FGD13		X								X		X
	FDG3	X					X	X	X	X			X
Collins Chabane	FGD14												
	FGD15									X			
	FGD16										X	X	
	FGD17		X					X					
	FGD18												
	FGD19				X						X		
	FGD20												
	FGD21			X									
	FGD1						X						
	FGD2		X	X	X	X			X			X	X
Total Tallies		**2**	**7**	**3**	**6**	**5**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**4**	**5**

KEY: FGD 1 to 3 are for traditional leadership councils; FGD 4 to 21 are for agricultural projects members

6.4.2 Human resource barriers

"Inadequate staff", "limited skills development opportunities" and "skills challenges" formed the descriptors of the human capital related barriers that hinder the TLI from participating in promoting agriculture projects. Amongst them, "skills challenges" had the highest number of similar responses (11) in both interviews and FGDs while "inadequate staff" and "absence of professional help" were the least represented common barriers. Although, the TLI is expected to be part of local partners in making community decisions that support agriculture, "lack of specification on what roles are to be performed" in this regard also made it difficult to determine what specific skills are required to effectively promote agriculture projects. Further to that, "limited sources of funding" was also cited as one of the reasons why there are "skills shortage" among the traditional leadership council members.

The study findings also highlighted that due to lack of sector-specific roles and otherwise, their participation in rural development including agriculture development programmes, is largely ceremonial. To illustrate this, farmers said the role played was mainly in land distribution, ceremonies through invitation, and random visitations. However, the results further showed that their involvement in multi-stakeholder partnership development programmes, had a unifying effect. For instance, all things being equal, it could bring together development partners such as NGOs, municipality, private sectors, and government in development programmes that support agriculture development.

A traditional leader in Mopani district area was quoted saying, "with adequate budget allocation, training programmes could be adopted to capacitate the council", particularly in coordinating rural development activities in our context as "traditional communities". This will include finding a way and deciding on specific activities that can be done to support of farmers in tribal lands. ." Even though the role of coordinating and support services was noted as primarily for extension services. Respondents proposed that traditional council members could augment their activities in their unique way. For instance, direct information dissemination and gathering information about challenges facing agriculture projects.

6.4.3 Capital and Financial resources barriers

This component has the following as its descriptors "limited funding" for the institution's activities, thought to be caused by, supposedly "lack of political will" to increase funding by the government. The perception that TLIs are not competent or formatted in the manner that can meaningfully contribute to promoting rural development, was cited as the reason for the government's reluctance to swiftly deal with inadequate financial resources. In this category, "limited funding" and "limited and outdated office equipment" occurred the most in the list of descriptors with 11 and 7 total quotations from interviews and FGDs, respectively. These were

sentiments fairly shared across all the participating geographical areas. Specifically, “limited funding”, was mentioned five times in Giyani, four in Thulamela while the Collins Chabane region had the least high number of similar responses (2). Also, funding challenges were thought to be a result of a descriptor best called “fewer sources of income”. As an example, while acknowledging, limited available funding resources from the government, it emerged that the unwillingness and reluctance to improve this situation was to an extent politically motivated. Available financial resources were said to be only enough for rudimentary service delivery activities by the traditional leaders.

The analysis also indicated that some barriers in this category were related to other political and human resource barriers (Figure 6.1). Despite its supposed contribution in support of different sectors of rural agriculture development, the result suggested that the belief that the institution might be incapacitated in terms of skills availability and adequacy influenced budget allocation. A key informant, project leader, and traditional leader gave testimonies to this situation. To show the interlink and causal effect between descriptors, “perceived incapacity and lack of skills” appeared to cause “poor working relations” between traditional leaders and local municipal officials. On the other hand, “limited funding” appeared to contribute to and explain why there was also “skills scarcity” among the traditional leadership council members. For example, one traditional leader in Vhembe district hinted that with adequate funding, some “financial resources could be channelled to not only give skills or capacitate its members” but to further devise ways to improve “coordination and support of rural development initiatives including agricultural projects” in their area.

It was also highlighted, that “outdated and shortage of basic modern office-related equipment” made it difficult for the traditional leadership institution to adequately support and improve service delivery in local development projects. “Stationary”, “computers”, “office furniture”, “reliable internet access equipment” and “printing machines” were among the basic office equipment required. All these financial and capital-related barriers made it difficult for TLI to be involved and participate effectively in supporting local development activities including agriculture projects.

6.4.4 Organisational barriers

The “organogram” and “lack of role specialisation” within the institution were cited as organisational barriers that explain why it is difficult for TLI to participate effectively in community decision making platforms that promote agricultural projects. It emerged that, the current TLI organogram, did not reflect role specialisation as it relates to promoting sector-specific rural development activities. It also does not spell out the functional organisational structure as to, who, how, and which unit in the institution is responsible for what in terms of

coordinating and supporting specific rural development initiatives. In addition, the extent is not known. Other barriers like, “lack of political will” appeared to influence why there was perceived slow progress in defining and clarifying the roles.

This was said to be true within the institution itself and at the government level. In stating organizational issues and composition of the TLI, a key informant from an NGO in Collins Chabane municipality said, “… *how our tribal offices are organised, there is little they can do in support of agriculture projects or agriculture in general. As you already know, there is a senior traditional leader who is a chair in the institution. The nominated and elected council members are supposed to be the long arm of the institution, in doing its work. However, they are only a handful. Also, it is not specified who should work wherewith who and how. Other institutions in the municipal area, do not have this structure in place, and in the case where it exists, there are issues of skills and capacity”* Similarly, a municipal official in Giyani municipality also pointed out that although the TLGFA Act 41 of 2003 point to the fact that TLs are supposed to also contribute to agriculture development, the subsequent policies do not further clarify who among the institutional members is responsible for which task. This explained why it remained difficult for the institution to effectively participate in rural development, let alone in agriculture. This lack of specialisation, means that the aspect of agriculture and their intimate challenges were not adequately represented in policy development. Thus, contradicting the statement that TLI should represent the developmental needs of their communities in the Integrated Development Planning (IDP). This took away the opportunity from having local agriculture support policies and systems that are context-specific and relevant for projects to succeed.

Results suggested that although legislative provisions exist for the establishment and recruitment of traditional council members, there are no indications of task specialisation among members as it relates to the rural development coordination work of the institution. A traditional leader in Thulamela attested to this and said, *“we recruit council members as required of us by the law and they are supposed to assist us in running traditional communities”.* Despite legal provisions on how to constitute the structure of councillors, it is up to each tribal authority to operationalise and decide how to support community development.

The four-identified barriers emerged as the factors hindering the participation of the TLI in local community decision making platforms to contribute effectively in promoting rural agriculture development. These best describe and exhibit challenges confronting the interface of the TLI in community development decision making for successfully promoting rural development.

6.6 Discussion of results

As evidenced by the analysis, political and relational barriers posed the most challenge. “Poor working relations”; “unclear and overlapping roles”; “undermining of the traditional leadership”; and “power-play games” were used to describe how these barriers manifested. Furthermore, “poor relations” between the traditional leaders, project management team, and the municipality was thought to be caused by other barriers like unclear and overlapping roles, as well as the undermining of the capability of the TLI. Ultimately, there was evidence of power-play games centred around service delivery conflicts particularly between the municipality and traditional leaders. As such, there were limited collaborations and partnerships in support of agricultural projects. Similarly, Bikam & Chakwizira (2014) and Mathonsi & Sithole (2017) in South Africa noted similar results. The political and relational barriers resulted in unintended consequences such as elongated hostilities, tensions, and disagreements that negatively impact beneficial multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development.

The combination of these factors is part of the reasons why it is difficult to know the specific roles to be performed by the TLI apart from land use and distribution. Similarly, Mabunda (2017) in South Africa found that not all stakeholders knew what their roles were in partnership policing between traditional leadership and South African Police Services. These results further confirm that; lack of role clarity is common not only in the agriculture sector but also in other sectors. Again, Mabunda (2017) suggested training of all stakeholders in partnership development. This might be useful in this case to reduce tensions, demystify role boundaries, and avoid unhealthy conflicts between stakeholders.

Unresolved conflicts, resulted in a scenario described as “role burnout’. Role burnout is when power games or conflicts caused by organisational issues like role ambiguity, result in one partner in the relationship giving up their roles and duties (Järvinen, *et al.,* 2015; Chigwata, 2016). This perhaps explains why a lack of financial resources and political support in terms of policy and role specification limited and burnout the appetite for the TLI to activiely participate in promoting part or some rural development sectors. For example, there is lack of clarity on how TLI is expected to coordinate, facilitate, and promote agriculture development. Factors such as lack of political will contributed to the reasons why to date the TLI roles as suggested in TLFGA 42 of 2003 are yet to be clarified and adopted. Hence, it remains critical that conflict management challenges and role specifications are addressed. This will faciliate the participation of TLI in its unique way as an important viable partner in supporting agricultural projects.

Thematic analysis revealed that some barriers could be categorised into human resource barriers. These were described in the context of having no adequate and specialised

personnel, limited skills, and lack of training and development opportunities. Although this factor had the third most quotations from the explorative results. An analysis of the central tendency of the number of quotations with an upper and lower limit of 25 to 20 quotations, results show that there was no significant difference in standard deviation from the mean (22.5) between the two variables. Specifically, it emerged that traditional leadership council members did not possess adequate skills and the know-how to coordinate local development activities. Thus, the absence of standardized clear roles and activities to be done and extent, makes it difficult to achieve a systematic and result based integration of TLI to support agriculture projects.

Literature revealed similar results, that human resource barriers such as skills challenges are a common challenge among rural indigenous institutions in promoting rural development (Alvarez, 2008; Antony *et al*., 2012; Ortas *et al.,* 2019). Its effects are shown by the absence of standardized criteria or measures on how they are supposed to promote rural agriculture development. Hence, the absence of clear roles, subsequent human skills including training programs, and the required personnel exhibit and determines the level and extent of commitment in this process. Furthermore, management literature demonstrates that institutional effective participation lies in the mix of how clear the roles and processes are, as well as corresponding organogram and skill capacity (Middlehurst, 1995; Shibru *et al.,* 2017). It is, therefore, paramount that these are clarified with prioritisation to ensure the effective participation of the TLI.

“Role-structure organisational miss-match” was most cited with five quotations while the other two organisational barriers were commonly equal. Furthermore, the results showed that currently, the institutional organisational structure does not indicate which unit or branch and who within the institution is responsible for the role of promoting agriculture development. From the analysis, this was caused by the “lack of political will” to define and definitively integrate the institution as part of the agriculture support network in its unique way. As revealed by the results, despite the existence of traditional leadership council members to offer to augment the work of the institution, organizational issues related to what should be done, by who and with what skills, impedes the integration process and institution's effectiveness. Kessey (2006) observed a similar result in Ghana about conflicts caused by unclear roles between two institutions at the same level of community decision making.

Analysis of literature, links organogram, and role specification challenges to be embedded in the institutional historical and evolutionary processes. Precisely, during the colonial period. For example, during that period, the roles and the organisational structure were defined and designed to serve the apartheid regime (Mthembu, 2008; Ncube, 2017). The Black Administration Act, 1927 (Act 38 of 1927), and The Bantu Authorities Act, 1951 (Act 68 of

1951) bear true testimony to this. Arguably, this might have deterred and hindered its ability to adapt to the changing needs of society and in support of rural development projects. This is why, soon after the end of apartheid, the TLGFA Act of 2003; COGTA and Municipal Systems Act of 2000 were enacted to define how the institution is to be involved in rural development. Although, traditional leadership council was established to aid the work of the traditional leaders, to date organizational design challenges exist. Thus, hindering the service delivery to rural development including promoting agriculture development. An organogram that exhibits specific responsibilities, duties, functions, tasks, and processes to different departments, units, and individuals within the institution is therefore a necessity.

Capital and financial resource barriers manifested in the form of “limited funding and fewer sources of income”, “limited and outdated office equipment”, inadequate offices for the traditional council members”. Lack of political will to improve financial support for the activities of traditional leaders could explain why the TLI is perceived to be a weaker partner with inadequate capacity to perform various functions of rural development as expected by the TLFGA Act 41 of 2003. This explains why COGTA (2017: 9) stated that “for TLI to function more effectively, there is a need to provide more resources in terms of finance and office equipment. An investigation about the role of traditional leaders in rural development projects, and their challenges, Bikam & Chakwizira (2014) and COGTA, (2017), respectively, shows that if adequately resourced they could improve service and initiate rural development support systems.

Literature shows that comprehensive and impactful support for local development activities comes from multi-stakeholder partnerships (Adekunle & Fatunbi, 2012; Kuijpers *et al.,* 2015). Towards making the TLI an effective partner in promoting the success of agricultural projects, it is therefore important that these barriers are minimized. Uphoff (2004) and the 4th World Forum of Local Economic Development (2017) state and show that multi-stakeholder and mutual participation of local institutions like TLI creates multifaceted opportunities and support to local farming activities. This cements the need to add the TLI as a critical and active player in rural development.

6.7 Conclusions

The study revealed deep-rooted internal and external factors summed as organisational; capital and financial resources; human resources; and political and relational barriers that hinder effective participation of TLI local community decision-making to promote rural agricultural projects. The barriers to their participation encompass a complex mix of technical, organisational, regulatory, and historical evolutionary cultural elements of the institution. While some of these might be partially overcome through greater regulatory and political support or

political will to such modes of decision-making, it is evident that others such as organisational and human resource barriers, require an internally driven intervention strategy to be minimised. Given the results, it can be concluded that political and human resource barriers, can be targeted as the most problematic to minimise their effect. In addition,, the interconnectedness and causal effect of each barrier to another project that by targeting the most common, other barriers are likely to be simultaneously addressed. For example, availing training programmes for skills development including multi-stakeholder engagement and conflict management will likely improve poor working relations not only with municipality but with agricultural projects for impact. Results show multifaceted and interlocking challenges hindering the participation of the TLI in local decision making in the network of support to local farmers. These findings provide a useful and multidimensional approach to TLI institutional effectiveness assessment to improve its conditions and address its service delivery barriers. The next chapter shows the evaluation results for the direct and indirect effects of TLIC on APSF though FHTLIC based on measures developed in chapter 1, 2 and 3.

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATING THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUCCESS OF RURAL AGRICULTURE PROJECTS

Abstract

Despite numerous attempts to improve the participation of traditional leadership institution (TLI) in rural development, it is still not clear what are its sector-specific roles and contributions including in agriculture (TLIC). Furthermore, how these roles impact the success (APSF) and the barriers to TLI's effective participation (FHTLIC) remains unknown. Therefore, the study evaluated the direct and indirect effects of the TLIC on APSF through FHTLIC. A structural equation model was used for the evaluation through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences IBM Amos version 26. An explorative study was conducted first using focus groups and interviews (N =103) for constructing measures in the model. Afterwards, a self-administered survey questionnaire (N = 211) was utilized to collect quantitative data for model testing and evaluation. Communal farmers, traditional leaders, and key informants in Vhembe and Mopani districts in Limpopo province, South Africa provided data for the study. The study revealed that four of the five validated factors in TLIC significantly impacted the conditions of success for rural agricultural projects in multiple regression analysis. The TLI's contribution through promoting social capital by aiding networking, partnerships, and collaborations for farmers with development actors like government, non-governmental organizations as well as other local players had the most effect. Furthermore, the results indicate that FHTLIC, is a significant moderator in the relationship. Thus, higher levels of TLI participation and low effect of FHTLIC, improves the level of conditions of success for rural farmers. Therefore, efforts that minimize the effect of the four identified barriers while enhancing the capacity of the TLI to promote rural agricultural projects are recommended.

Keywords: Agriculture, Farmers, Institutional Effectiveness, Traditional leadership contributions, Structural equation model

7.1 Introduction

Several studies have attempted to investigate the participation of the traditional leaders in rural development in a novel way (Chinsinga, 2006; Kamoto *et al*., 2013; Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017). While existing studies offer insights on the roles of the traditional leadership institution (TLI) in rural development, many of them are not sector-specific and little evidence is available on their contributions to rural agriculture (Oomen, 2000; Tshitangoni & Francis, 2014; Baramiya, 2017). Existing sector-specific investigations include social cohesion, local governance, social development, land use planning, environment, rural development projects, and development in general (Logan, 2009; Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014; Baramiya, 2017; Koenane, 2018). Largely, institutional activities and practices that promote rural agriculture development have not been fully investigated in Southern Africa (Baldwin, 2016; Baramiya, 2017). That is why even today; it remains a challenge to pull out the TLI's set of activities, community decisions, and practices that promote and influence the development of the rural agricultural sector as expected (TLFGA Act 41 of 2003). It remains critical that these important sets of TLI practices and activities are identified towards improving local support for rural agricultural projects.

Evidence detailing the specific TLI contributions to rural farming, how they impact and influence the success of the rural agriculture sector is available but scattered and not scientifically documented. In this situation, distilling institutional practices and unpacking agricultural projects' success factors is likely to be positively influenced in this relationship is paramount. This stands to clarify and prescribe an ideal interface that enhances success opportunities for rural agricultural projects. Studies also indicate that there are barriers to the effective participation of the TLI in rural development such as lack of role clarify, limited funding, and lack of basic requirements that aid the activities of the institution (Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014; Tshitangoni & Francis, 2014; Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017; Ndlovu, Mwale & Zuwarimwe, 2020). Barriers to participation, limit, and affect the strength of the relationship and may explain why the TLI is considered a weaker development partner in rural areas. As such, it helps to identify and estimate the moderating effect posed by these barriers.

Agriculture is an important economic sector and has the potential to resuscitate rural economies and alleviate poverty and hunger if necessary support is provided in an inclusive decision-making process by various local stakeholders (Fokwang, 2005). Evidence from the United Kingdom (Haven -Tang & Jones, 2012); Zimbabwe (Mutenje *et al.,* 2011); Ghana (Boafo, 2001), and South Africa (Kamoto *et al.*, 2013) support that active participation of local players such as TLI, could potentially establish constraints, easy decision making, minimize costs of doing business and increase benefits for rural agricultural projects. Moreover, Horlings & Padt (2013) posit that sustainable rural development benefits from shared leadership where

collective values, feelings, trust, and energy provide the base for mobilising resources, private and public actors to attain regional development agenda.

In line with Sustainable Development Goal number 16, to improve conditions for the success of agricultural projects it is paramount to build supportive, involved, and accountable local institutions for sustainable communities (Food and Agriculture Organisation, 2016). This is important for rural poverty and hunger eradication by 2030 as also stated in the South African National Development Plan. The quality and effectiveness of institutional contributions largely depend on its internal and external environment such as history; skills capital; leaders; and its ability to adapt to the changing needs of the community it serves. Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Pa (2019) described institutional effectiveness as a process of ongoing institutional self-evaluation to systematically measure and re-evaluate achievements and approaches used to meet the institution's mission or roles. Against this backdrop, this study evaluated the impact of TLI's roles in agriculture on influencing the success of rural agricultural projects. Also, the moderating effect of barriers was tested and estimated.

To achieve the objective of this study, firstly, evidence-based conceptual and theoretical measurement scales concerning, the TLI contributions in rural agriculture development (TLIC); conditions key to the success of rural agricultural projects (APSF); and barriers to TLI's effective participation (FHTLIC) were developed exploratively. Later, a second phase was set to collect quantitative data to statistically evaluate the relationships between these measured variables. Figure 7.1 illustrates the conceptual model that TLIC has a direct effect on APSF while barriers to participation moderates this relationship. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the direct effects whereas the structural equation model (SEM) was used to perform moderation. The following hypotheses guided this study.

***H_a**: Traditional leadership institutional contributions positively influence the success of rural agricultural projects.*

***H_a**: Barriers to participation moderate the relationship between potential TLI contributions and how they impact conditions of success for rural agriculture projects.*

7.2 Methods and materials

An exploratory sequential mixed method design used in the study is detailed in Chapter 3. In the same Chapter, detailed information is provided on the selection of research participants, data collection tools used, procedures that were followed in model building and testing.

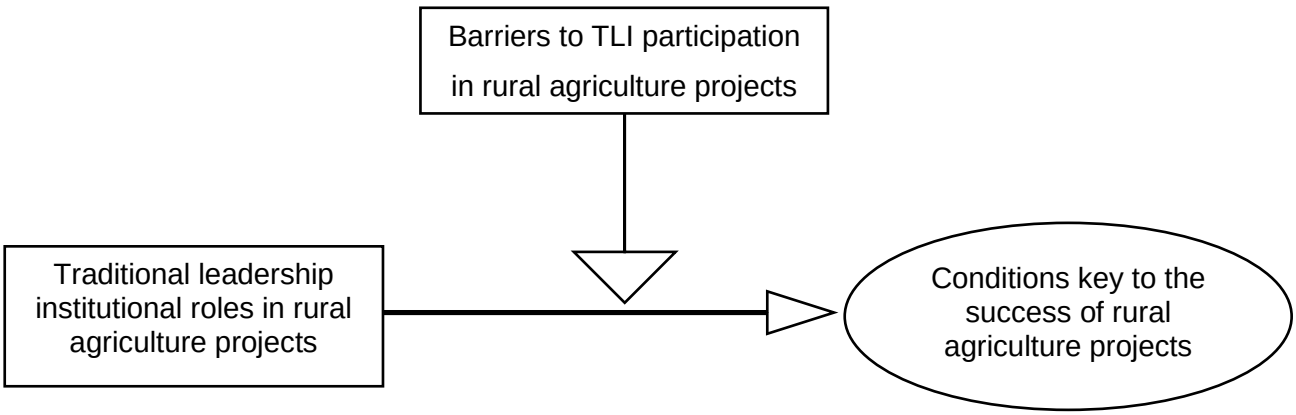

Figure 7.1: *Study conceptual model*

7.3 Results

Firstly, the demographic information of respondents is described (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). Thereafter, broad categories of the variables on TLI contributions, success factors, and barriers to TLI's effective participation in the decision-making process and practices that promote agriculture are outlined. Before testing the effects of TLI contributions on success factors for agricultural projects, measurement scales are firstly tested for convergent and discriminant validity as well as reliability using CFA and Cronbach's alpha coefficient respectively (Segars & Grover, 1993; Fan *et al.,* 2016). Using the validated and reliable factors, regression analysis is then performed to determine the direct effect of the TLI contributions on the success factors. Lastly, the moderating indirect effect of the barriers to TLI participation in promoting rural agricultural projects is modelled and tested. A discussion of results and conclusions concludes the chapter.

7.4 Exploratory study results

This section outlines variables used in the measurement scales based on the empirical explorative study and literature review as outlined in chapters 4, 5, and 6. All the measures were used as a five-point Likert scale with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 5 strong agreement. The original version of the measures is presented in Appendix 1.

7.4.1 Traditional leadership institutional contributions

A 31-item questionnaire was developed and used to measure the traditional leadership contributions (TLIC) indicating the roles and practices that are perceived to have a positive influence on conditions of success for rural agriculture. These were categorized into, agricultural policy development and representation (APDR); support and coordinate agricultural development programs (SCADP); service delivery advocacy (SDA); easing funding access (EFA); promote access to land (PAL); coordinate and facilitate information access (CFIA); attract agro-processing industry and infrastructure development (AAID) and ensure social capital between stakeholders (ESCB).

7.4.2 Barriers to TLI participation in rural agriculture

Human resources (HRB); political and relational (PRB); capital and financial resources (CFRB); and organisational (OB) barriers were the four broad categories in a 14-item questionnaire representing factors that make it difficult for the TLI to partake in local decision making and perceived activities that possibly create conditions of success for farmers. In a nutshell, these reflected institutional barriers that precipitated from its environment, settings, and how it is organized. These barriers provide a possible explanation as to why the TLI is considered less visible in participating in activities or community decision-making levels that support the development of agricultural projects.

7.4.3 Conditions necessary for the success of rural agriculture projects

The thematic analysis of empirical and literature data revealed a 22-item six-factor questionnaire on the success factors or conditions that if present and nurtured, create a conducive environment for the success of agricultural projects. These were identified and summed into, active, responsive, and inclusive stakeholder participation (ARISP); open and accessible market (OAM); access to land and financial resources (ALFR); access to the skilled workforce, and continuous training and learning (ASWCTL); effective project management and control (EPCM); and the adequate number of workers (ANW). This study, considered TLIC influence these conditions.

7.5 Cross-sectional study results

Before testing the direct and indirect effects, the empirical and literature-based factors were assessed for item analysis, convergent, and discriminant validity using CFA. Also, the Cronbach alpha's coefficient was used to test the instrument or measure reliability. Kurtosis and skewness were also performed to check if the data was normally distributed as the base assumption for moderation using SEM. The results are described below.

7.5.3 Testing of the normality assumption

Data was assessed for normality using skewness and kurtosis. The cut-off point for skewness was set at -2 to +2 (Hair *et al.*, 2010) and -7 to +7 for kurtosis (Bryne, 2010). Normal distribution of data is the underlying assumption in multivariate analysis and its absence affects the reliability and validity of results (Hair *et al.,* 2010). It is also, where direct and indirect effects are based in SEM. It is also important to note that although the scales in the data collection instrument were the same, the variables were standardized in SPSS before importation to SPSS Amos for SEM analysis. This counters problems associated with an abnormality in the data distribution.

7.5.1 Confirmation factor analysis

7.5.1.1 Traditional leadership institutional contributions

An eight-factor measure was specified in path analysis and tested for factor structure validity through CFA. The initial assessment showed unsatisfactory validity using recommended model fit indices (CFI 0.748; RMSEA = 0.075) against the recommended cut off points of CFI ≥ 0.90 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and RMSEA ≤ 0.08 (Hooper *et al.,* 2008). The path diagram model matrices were observed to improve fitness. Variables with lower factor loadings of regression weights were targeted first and systematically deleted (Segars & Grover, 1993). After each was deleted, model fitness indices were observed to check if the minimum threshold had been satisfied. Resultantly, a five-factor measure was confirmed valid as the reliable combination of TLI contributions that potentially influence the success of agricultural

projects (CFI = 0.916; RMSEA = 0.059). These were SDA; EFA; CFIA; AAID; and ESCB which were, further used for moderation testing in SEM.

7.5.1.2 Barriers to the TLI participation

All the four factors on barrier to participation were proven valid in this data set (CFI = 0.901; RMSEA = 0.052). However, this was achieved after deleting an item in SCSQ from the initial unfit model.

7.5.1.3 Agricultural projects success factors

Except for market access, all the factors were consistent with the data that they represent, success factors or conditions necessary for the success of agricultural projects. Also, items in other factors included were deleted in model modification to improve model fit. Fit indices improved from (CFI = 0.828 and RMSEA = 0.083) to (0.912 and RMSEA = 0.067) to support ASWCTL; ARISP; EPCM; ALFR; and ANW valid factors.

7.5.2 Item analysis

All items for each factor structure drawn from the literature and empirical study were tested in the Amos measurement scale reliability using standardized regression weights, by examining the loading of each item and assessing the correlation between each item and its corresponding construct. Items with lower factor loadings below 0.6 were deleted in CFA (Hair *et al*., 2010). Accordingly, it could be concluded that the items measuring all constructs had adequate reliability.

7.5.3 Construct validity

The validity of the model variables was assessed through convergent and discriminant validity. The average variance extracted was examined to test how items per construct converged to each other. In line with Hair et al (2010)'s recommendation for convergent validity', AVE cut-off value was set at ≥ 0.5. All the factors were satisfied with the minimum threshold (Table 7.1) and hence, valid. Moreover, no discriminate validity was found as the Squared AVE was higher than the correlation value.

7.5.4 Construct reliability

Barriers to participation measure yielded Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.719, whereas TLIC and success factors measures scored 0.788 and 0.884 respectively (Table 7.1). A coefficient value of 0.6 was utilised (Robinson *et al.,* 1991). However, there were different rules of thump for satisfactory reliability such as 0.5 (Pallant, 2001); 0.7 (DeVellis (2003); and 0.8 (Nunnally, 1970). Hence, all constructs were reliable.

Table 7.1: Construct validity and reliability

Factor	CR	AVE	TLIC	FHTLIC	APSF
TLIC	0.788	.539	**0.734**		
FHTLIC	0.719,	.893	0.707	**0.893**	
APSF	0.884	.780	0.412	0.320	**0.780**

Note: Factor correlation matrix with the square root of AVE on the diagonal. **CR** = construct validity; **AVE** = average variance extracted; **TLIC** traditional leadership institution contributions; **FHTLIC** = barriers to participation; **APSF** = agricultural projects success factors.

7.6 Regression analysis

The results of the F test (F test) indicate that the significance value of 0,000 is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, meaning that the model used in this study is feasible. This result gives the meaning that the TLI independent variables can predict or explain conditions of success for rural agricultural projects. The combined effect of the TLIC as predictors that might influence the success factors of agricultural projects explained 24.9% of the variance (R - square = F = 13.613), p = .000) using R-square in linear multiple regression analysis (Table 2). This explains the percentage of the predictive ability of validated TLICs towards creating conditions that are necessary for the success of rural agricultural projects. All factors in TLIC except for easing access to funding significantly predicted APSF. For instance, service delivery advocacy role significantly predicted the success factors (t = 2.826, p = .005, sr = .256). Furthermore, the results show that social capital promotion predicted the most percentage variance (β = .325; t = 4.982; p = .000) followed by promoting infrastructure development and agro-processing (AAID) (β = 315; t = 4.966; p = 0.043). Easing funding access was not significant (β = 110; t = 1.475; p = 0.114). Given, the results null hypothesis is not supported.

7.7 Mean ranking

The factors of TLIC and FHTLIC were ranked according to importance using mean scores. In terms of TLIC, Mean score ranking results suggest that the role of promoting collaboration unity and harmonious relations between various stakeholders with farmers (μ = 5.6) and representing farmers' needs during targeted agricultural policy formulation and support systems (μ = 3.29) were the most important in that order (Table 7.3). Whereas, coordinating and facilitating information access to agricultural projects was regarded as the least important in this data set (μ = 2.38). “Political and relational barriers” accounted for the most effect (μ = 3.32) those related to “capital and financial related resources barriers” were found to have the least effect on the impact of TLIC on APSF (μ = 2.43).

Table 7.2: Direct effects of traditional leadership institutional contributions on success factors

Dependent variable: Success Factors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.269E-15	.060		.000	1.000
Infrastructure and agro-processing promotion(AAID)	.315	.069	.315	4.966	.000
Agricultural policy development and representation (APDR)	.218	.069	.218	3.139	.002
Social capital promotion (ESCB)	.325	.076	.325	4.981	.043
Service delivery advocacy (SDA)	.256	.090	.256	2.826	.005
Easing Access to Funding (EFA)	.110	.085	.110	1.475	.114
R-Square	0.249				
F	13.613				

Table 7.3: Mean score ranking

Measure	Mean	SD	Rank
TLIC			
Ensure social capital between stakeholders	5.71	2.36	1
Easing funding access	3.25	2.64	2
Service delivery advocacy	2.52	2.36	3
Agricultural policy development representation	2.51	1.84	4
Attract agro-processing industry and infrastructure development	2.45	1.87	5
FHTLIC			
Political and relational barriers	3.32	1.87	1
Human resources barriers	2.50	1.86	2
Organisational barriers	2.44	2.12	3
Capital and Financial resources barriers	2.43	1.81	4

7.8 Moderating effect

The relationships between constructs were tested after supporting the validity and reliability of the measurement model. SEM was used to test the hypothesised moderating effects of the barriers to participation on the direct effect of TLIC on APSF in SPSS Amos version 26 (Figure 7.1). A combination of model fit indices is recommended for model testing. As such, RMSEA and CFI were model fit indices observed to detriment the moderating effect in SEM (Hair et al., 2010). The two are more reliable with both large and small samples unlike, Chi-square, and normed fit index (Bollen & Pearl, 2012). The model fit indices in this model were above the threshold of CFI > 0.90; RMSEA < 0.08) (Figure 7.1). The estimated values of fit indices have shown a good structural model fit to the data in the proposed research model in this study.

Results revealed that TLIC significantly and positively influences success factors for rural agricultural projects (B = 0.32; p = 0.000) as illustrated in Table 7.4. Furthermore, the interaction effect was negative and significant (B = -0.070; p = 0.024). Thus, barriers to the participation of TLI in local decision making negatively influenced the way conditions for the success of projects are shaped in rural areas. All the estimates were significant hence, moderation occurred. Thus, the null hypothesis is supported.

The interaction slope was plotted using unstandardized regression estimates (Aiken & West, 1991; Dawson & Richter, 2006; Dawson, 2014). As illustrated, in Figure 7.2 TLI participation increased with the low effect of the barriers. The conditions of success for rural agricultural projects improve significantly as shown by the slope. On the other hand, the graphs show that in the presence of high effects of barriers no matter increased attempts to participate, the effect of the TLI contributions to creating a conducive environment for the success of projects significantly decreases.

Table 7.4: Moderating coefficients of regression weights in the model

Model: TLIC, APSFs, FHTLI	**Estimate**	**S.E.**	**Sig**
TLIC → APSF (a)	0.320*	0.086	0.000
TLIC_X_FHTLIC→ APSFs (b)	-0.070*	0.670	0.024
FHTLIC → APSFs (c)	-0.096*	0.174	0.000

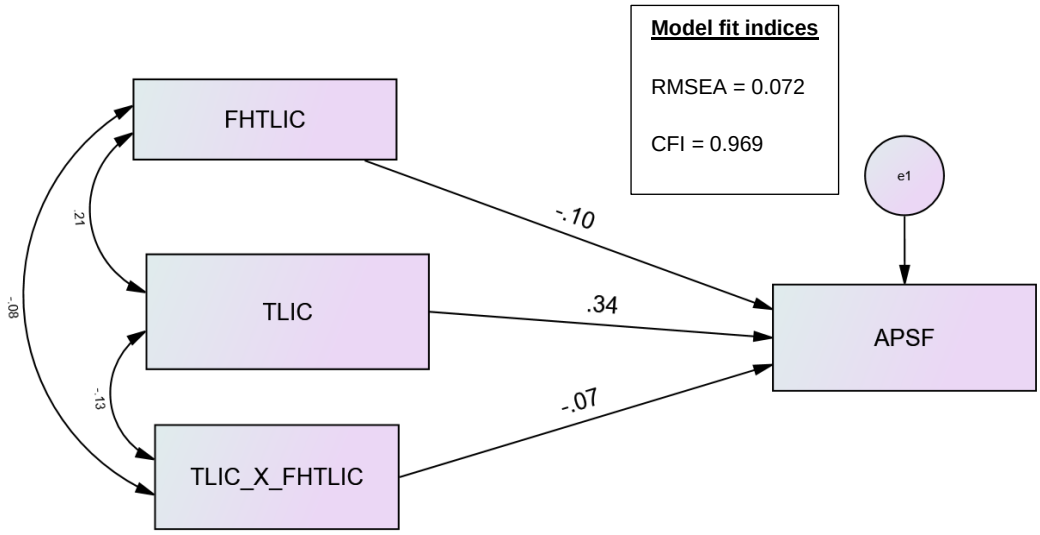

Figure 7.1: Amos graphics diagram for the moderating effect of traditional leadership contributions to the success of rural agricultural projects

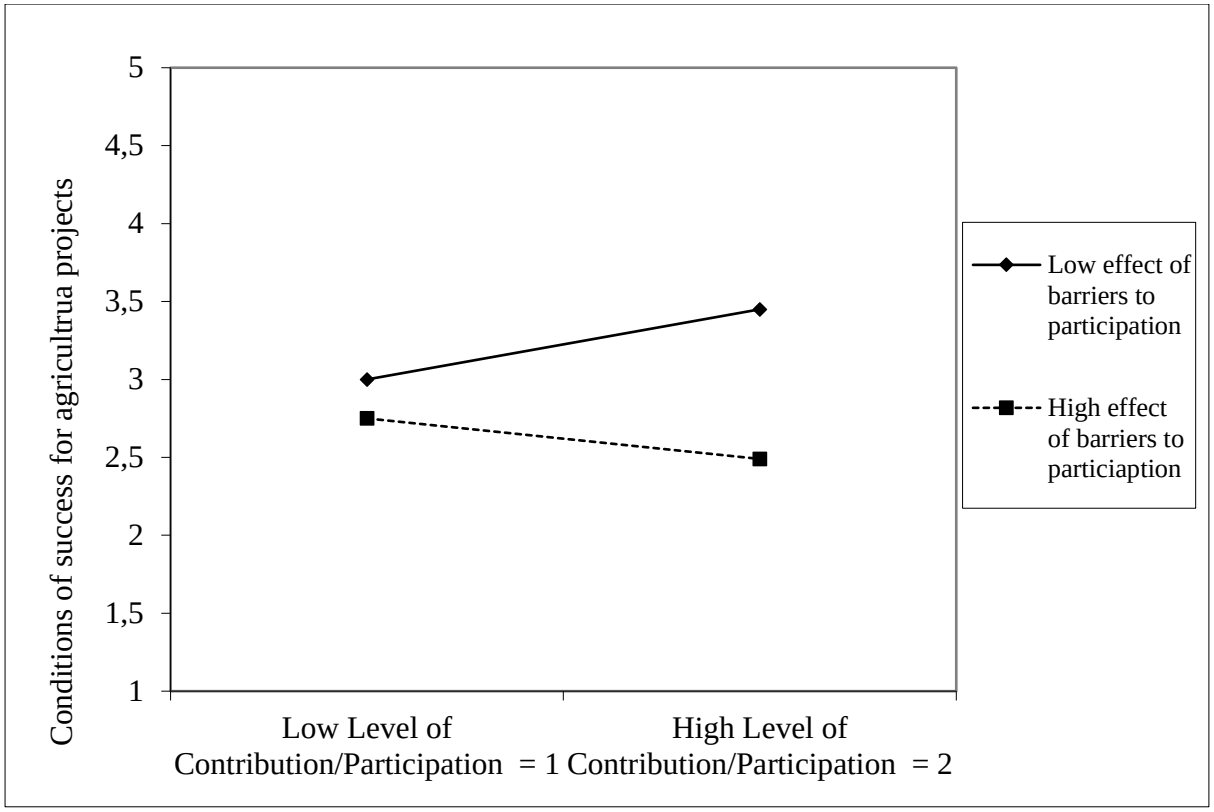

Figure 7.2: *Interaction slope for the participation of the traditional leadership institution in promoting rural agricultural projects in Limpopo province, South Africa*

7.9 Discussion

The result of the direct effect analysis in Amos graphics revealed that all validated factors in TLIC except information intermediary, significantly and positively influenced the success of agricultural projects. It emerged that TLIC significantly influenced conditions of success for rural agricultural projects by representing the needs of farmers in agricultural policy development at the local level community decision making. Specifically, in the mandatory and statutory Integrated Development Planning (IDP). Thus, amplifying the challenges and needs of farmers in the tribal authorities were believed to contribute to achieving comprehensive support systems for local rural agricultural projects. Bikam and Chakwizira (2014) supported by Pike *et al*. (2015) show that local players like TLI are important stakeholders and argue that if fully incorporated could lead to adaptive and responsive local-level development policies that address the needs of the different sectors in their community. Furthermore, the representation of farmers from multiple stakeholders has the potential to improve resource mobilization and reduced transaction costs for agricultural projects.

The results further show that TLI played a crucial role in building social capital among local stakeholders with agricultural projects. The institution has the potential to promote and foster harmonious relations between local stakeholders such as the local municipality, extension services, NGOs, private and the community. Also, this role emerged as the most crucial for promoting partnership in developing agricultural support programs where different stakeholders converge to support projects. This role was crucial in fostering collective action in resource mobilization to support farmers. In the same vein, Beugelsdijk & Smulders (2003); Ina & Frans (2013); Carrico *et al*. (2015); and Sutherland & Burton (2011) add that local institutions like TLI can group people or individuals from similar and different backgrounds to create strong bonds for collective action and support. This results in shared leadership where collective values, feelings, mutual trust, and energy provide the basis for mobilising private and public actors around joint regional development goals in support of agricultural projects.

Regression analysis also supported that TLI plays a significant role in supporting and promoting rural agriculture development through advocating for better service delivery to farmers. These stakeholders include private and public development actors such as municipal and extension services as well as NGOs with intimate experience in the local agricultural sector. Its non-political affiliation was cited as a strength and pillar that could be taken advantage of and used to put pressure on the local government or municipality and extension services to deliver on their mandate. Wekwete (2014) in Zimbabwe; Islam & Nursey-Bray (2017) in Bangladesh; and Bikam & Chakwizira (2014) in South Africa show that TLIs are important players in ensuring and facilitating service delivery in support for farmers. These

results support that TLI's service advocacy activities contribute to mobilizing local actors in the public, private, and civic sectors to render adequate support and services.

Easing access to funding for farmers through issuing support letters, signature support, partnering with external stakeholders to fund projects, and giving guarantee to land ownership were key ways in which the TLI could promote the success of rural agriculture projects. Its ability to work and converge with different development actors and support institutions were said to be instrumental in mobilizing financial resources through agricultural development programs. Similarly, Dzvimbo *et al.* (2017) in Zimbabwe, observed that TLI partnered with donors and private institutions in funded agricultural development programs that support the growth and development of small-scale farmers in rural areas.

Furthermore, results indicate that such collaborations potentially attract the establishment of agro-based industry and infrastructural development. As an important player in community development, TLIs were also seen to be responsible for creating a conducive environment for local investments. This included releasing land and lobbying different stakeholders both private and public for infrastructure development. For instance, it has the potential to solicit partners in agro-processing support programmes in their area of jurisdiction. Furthermore, TLI could advocate for the improvement of development enablers such as roads that improve access to services and markets for farmers. As supported by Upnoff, (1986); Basurto & Coleman (2010), and Deneke *et al.* (2011), local institutions like TLI influence the investment environment. Hence, the actions or inactions of the TLI impart on the level of investment in the locality. Therefore, an effective TLI that works and partners with the private sector, the community, and the government has the potential to enhance the prospects of success among the agricultural projects.

7.10 Implications of Moderating effect

The moderating effect of the barriers to participation was examined through IMB-SPSS Amos using regression weights estimates. The findings revealed that moderation occurred in the relationship between TLIC and conditions of success for rural agricultural projects. The results are supported by literature findings showing that barriers to participation such as inability to vote in the local policymaking made it difficult to create conditions of success for rural development projects (Bikam & Chakwizira, 2014). According to the Municipal Systems Act 41 of 2000, traditional leaders should be part and parcel of local decision making, however, they are not allowed to vote along with councillors. Furthermore, limited skills in rural development in line with modern governance were also cited as a cause for poor participation by the TLI in local-level decision making.

Limited skills were also associated with a lack of adequate financial resources to support the work and activities of the TLI to effectively contribute to the development of rural agriculture. The study findings revealed that with adequate financial resources, TL council members could be trained and deployed to gather information, assess farmers' challenges as well as play a part in building collaborations and partnerships for farmers. Sharma, (n.d); Middlehurst (1995), and Shibru et al. (2017) state that an organisation or institution that clearly understands its mandate and has the necessary pool of skills, is likely to be more effective in executing its roles. Given these results, it remains critical to consider training and skills development for members of the traditional leadership council and leaders to improve the effectiveness of the institution in line with this function.

Poor relations between TLI and other stakeholders such as projects and local service providers like municipal officials and extension services also posed a challenge in the full participation of the TLI in promoting local development. Results revealed that poor relations were mainly caused by a lack of clarity and specification of TLI roles in agriculture. This caused conflicts for example, between the TLI and municipal officials. This was also observed by Tshitangoni & Francis (2014). Islam & Nursey-Bray (2017) in Bangladesh, Walo (2016) in Ethiopia (Walo, 2016), and Wekwete (2014) in Zimbabwe state that clear lines of communication and good working relations, development partners, and community-based organization, is critical as a strategy for promoting local economic development and augmenting service delivery to rural farmers. Uphoff (2004) and Pike et al. (2015), add that multiple stakeholder participation that involves local players such as TLI play a vital role in the development of context-relevant policies and intervention mechanisms. Dzvimbo *et al.* (2017) in Zimbabwe found that the success of rural smallholder farmers in funded agricultural development programs benefitted functional working relations between TLI, donors, and private organizations

The results indicated that political and relational barriers were the major barrier to the effective participation of the TLI in activities and community decisions that create a conducive environment for the success of agriculture projects. This barrier negatively impacted and interfered with all the validated important TLI roles that have a positive effect on the success of agricultural projects besides attracting agro-based industry and infrastructural development. Although empirical and literature evidence suggested that political and relational barriers had a negative effect on the role of attracting agro-based industry and infrastructural development, this was not supported in this data set in SEM evaluation. This might be explained by the fact that there are available national, regional, provincial, and local level legal instruments and provisions available for the TLI to partner with private and public sector in attracting investments in the locality. Although empirical evidence suggested that poor working relations

between TLI and local government structures such as the municipality interfered with this role, the effect was insignificant. Thus, in the presence of political and relational barriers, partnerships with various stakeholders in support of the agro-processing industry remain possible. Available legal provisions and institutional legitimacy give rapport to the TLI to lobby and advocate for rural infrastructure development which may include agriculture hubs and construction of roads.

The results indicate that in the current settings, the TLI is faced with several obstacles that hider its effective participation in creating a conducive environment that promotes success among rural agricultural projects in their area of jurisdiction.

7.11 Conclusion

The findings suggest that TLI participation in community decision making platforms and practices that promote rural agriculture development is strongly associated with creating conditions that are conducive for the success of agricultural projects. Of the five validated TLI contributions, promoting social capital with the community, local government and the external partners explained the most variance. Whereas, playing a role in being an information intermediary was insignificant. Given this result, it is not concluded that TLIC affects directly the success of rural agriculture projects. It is, however, inferred that the involvement and effective participation of the TLI in community decision-making processes that promote agriculture, the conditions of doing business by rural agriculture projects are likely to improve. For example, improved resource mobilisation, access to land, and potential availability of more collaboration opportunities in the form of localised support. Furthermore, the results indicate that barriers to participation, are a significant moderator in the relationship between TLI contributions and success factors for agricultural projects. Overall, with higher levels of TLIC or TLI participation with the low-level effect of barriers to participation, conditions of success for rural farmers are improved. Moreover, the higher-level effect of the barriers to TLI participation affected the impact of the TLIC even with increased participation. Poor working relations as the most, problematic barrier mainly caused by role ambiguity, regular multi-stakeholder collaboration training might enable stakeholders to partner, share responsibilities, and knowledge in support rural development projects, including those in agriculture. It is further recommended that future researches refine the current model, and investigate the moderating effect of individual four broad categories of barriers to further refine the model and add to the body of knowledge.

CHAPTER 8

SYNTHESIS, THEORETICAL MODEL CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter shows how the objectives were achieved. The main objective of the study was to evaluate the contributions of TLI to the success of agriculture projects in Limpopo province, South Africa. The key findings from the study are presented and these inform conclusions of the study and recommendations thereof. The strengths and weaknesses of the proposed model for improving participation of the TLI in community decision making and practices that support and promote the success of rural agricultural projects are outlined. Further to that, contributions of the study findings to scholarship; discovery, integration, practice, community engagement, and research methods, and further research are discussed in this chapter. The chapter further outlines a context relevant theoretical model for improving the participation of and collaboration with the TLI in promoting the success of rural agriculture for rural development. Key themes and sub-components are provided to be used to identify, understand, and evaluate TLI community decision-making processes and practices that promote agricultural projects among communal farmers.

Despite the legislative and financial support for the TLI to effectively participate and contribute to rural transformation in different development spheres such as agriculture, the categorical institutional contributions remain blurry and have little or lack scientific evidence. In the context of agriculture, this presents a three-faced challenge. Firstly, the absence of an inability to pull out the most paramount TLI roles or practices that contribute to creating conditions promotes the prosperity of rural agricultural projects. Additionally, it is difficult to understand and estimate the extent of these contributions. Secondly, factors or barriers specifically inhibiting the participation of TLI in community decision making processes and practices that create favourable conditions for the success of rural agriculture projects are not known and scientifically evaluated. Thirdly, contextual critical success factors or conditions key to the success of rural agricultural projects among communal farmers in the studied area not known. The direct effect of the TLIC categorical to agriculture contribute towards creating favourable conditions that positively influence the survival of rural agricultural projects were also tested. Lastly, how the identified barriers to effective participation impart on this direct relationship was assessed. To achieve this, multiple regression analysis and SEM were utilised. This enabled the estimation and testing of the direct and indirect effects of TLIC on APSF and FHTLIC, respectively. SEM is recommended in modelling for policy recommendations, decision making and theory generation.

8.2 Realisation of Study Objectives and Research Questions

8.2.1 Critical success factor for agriculture projects

Results revealed six critical success factors that if nurtured, agricultural projects could prosper. These include open and accessible markets; access to land and financial resources; access to the skilled workforce, continuous training and learning; and effective project management and control. However, only five were confirmed as valid in a larger data set from all three municipalities. Moreover, results showed that effective project management and control; access to the skilled workforce, and continuous training and learning were the first and second most important, respectively. As an example, it emerged that with access to learning and skills development opportunities, higher literacy among workers for learning purposes and general access to skilled labour agricultural projects are likely to succeed. A farm manager in Giyani municipal area was quoted saying, "*lack of skills slowed down production as it required extra monitoring of farmworkers by the manager and the few skilled workers"*. These views were also echoed by a worker who said, "*access to skills development would be instrumental in assisting us to manage and understand the requirements for taking care of the new breeds and varieties available in the market"*.

The analysis further showed that all the factors were highly correlated. For instance, effective project management affected how the project members or workers will access training to develop their farming skills as well as financial resources. On the other hand, accessing training and financial resources influence how well a project will be managed. The detailed process of factor identification and validation was conducted to determine their suitability and applicability elsewhere. In consideration of intervention programs, these factors present contextually-relevant critical success factors for rural agricultural projects. These results show that for rural agricultural projects to succeed, governmental, private sector, community leadership, and non-governmental activities and practices that enable the creation of these key conditions should be harnessed and utilised for improved communal farmers' success. Also, targeting the most important is practically likely to positively influence other lower-order factors/barriers. In this study, it was conceptualised that the contributions and effective participation of the TLI in rural agriculture positively influences and enhances the these factors.

8.2.2 Traditional leadership contributions

Eight roles played by the TLI that positively influence the success of rural agricultural projects were identified using an explorative initial study. These were categorized into broad themes such as promoting social capital between stakeholders; supporting and coordinating agricultural development programs; easing funding access; and advocating for better service delivery. Among them, mean score ranking, suggested that promoting social capital among

stakeholders, was the most critical of the eight roles. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis results confirmed and supported only five of these roles as practical and more important using model fit indices (CFI = 0.916; RMSEA = 0.059). Additionally, all five validated roles were found to have a significant and positive effect on conditions that are conducive to the success of agricultural projects. Thus, active and effective participation of the TLI is likely to improve or add to creating positive conditions necessary for the success of agriculture projects. Hence, it remains paramount that the identified institutional roles be nurtured and strengthened systematically on a consultative basis with all groups concerned. Given the study findings, it was concluded that to strengthen these roles it requires the involvement of all the stakeholders such as the institution of traditional leadership, communal farmers, municipal officials, government departments, and other key stakeholders should be part of the process.

Results, also revealed that although the TLI may play a critical role in advocating for service delivery from other government departments, private sector, and municipal official to farmers, conflicts and poor relations between stakeholders ensued. Due to a lack of clear and sector-specific roles, stakeholders like municipal officials, regarded such actions as overreach by the TLI. Also, these TLIC were related. For instance, TLI practices that promote social capital such as mediating, overseeing, and being a linkage in multi-stakeholder agricultural development support programmes also enhance and positively influence the attainment of the service delivery advocacy role. Hence, targeting and nurturing the most important TLI roles is imperative as it is likely to impact on the delivery of TLI roles.

8.2.3 Barriers to the delivery of traditional leadership institutional contributions

Results revealed that the institution of traditional leadership encounters multifaceted obstacles in attempting to deliver or participate in activities and practices that promote a conducive environment for agricultural projects to prosper. Categorically, these were inherent, legal, and environmental rooted. Specifically, the obstacles were categorised into organizational; political, and relational; financial and capital; as well as human resources barriers. Using a CFA, all the four barriers were supported as valid in this data set and hence they were all tested in the theoretical model based on the fit indices (CFI = 0.901; RMSEA = 0.052). Among them, political and relational barriers posed the most challenge whereas, capital and financial resource-related barriers were the least problematic. It emerged that poor working relations between municipal officials and TLI for example, negatively affected how services were delivered to farmers by the two parties as well as other stakeholders. In the quest to improve institutional contributory effectiveness, the most problematic factor should firstly be targeted and managed. This is likely to simultaneously address other barriers. For example, targeting poor working relations between municipal and other government support structures as the most problematic barriers would reduce power play games between TLI stakeholders.

Additionally, adequate capital and financial resources to TLI will contribute to addressing political and relational related barrier, based on the notion that TLI is incapacitated and do not have the know-how to execute their roles by other stakeholders. A traditional leader in Giyani municipal area said, "*with adequate budget allocation, training programmes could be adopted to capacitate the traditional council, particularly in coordinating rural development activities in our context as traditional communities".* This shows that due to financial constraints, also human-resource-related barriers such as opportunities for skills development and capacity building were negatively affected. In conclusion, it is, therefore, important that the relational network on how each broad and sub-themes of different barriers intersect and relate with other factors. This forms the basis for calibrating a specific and flexible programme(s) for addressing the challenge facing the participation of the TLI in rural development, particularly in agriculture.

8.3 Theoretical model

The main objective of the study was to evaluate TLIC to APSF. The model was based on two key assumptions. Firstly, TLICs positively influence APSF, secondly it was hypothesized that FHTLIC moderates this relationship. The first explorative study revealed an eight-factor structure as measures of the important TLICs; a six-factor structure of APSF, and a four-factor structure on FHTLIC. While all the four identified barriers (FHTLIC) were supported by the confirmatory factor analysis and valid to be used in model assessment (CFI = 0.901; RMSEA = 0.052), adjusted five-factor structure for both TLIC (CFI = 0.916; RMSEA = 0.059) and APSF (0.912 and RMSEA = 0.067) were found valid for the model testing of this study. Supported important TLI roles were, agricultural policy development representation; ensuring social capital development between stakeholders for collaborations; service delivery advocacy; facilitating access to funding through endorsement for example, and playing a role in influencing agriculture development programmes that promote agro-processing industry and infrastructure development. Whereas, supported critical success factors were, active, responsive, and inclusive stakeholder participation; open and accessible market; access to land and financial resources; access to the skilled workforce and continuous training and learning; effective project management and control; and an adequate number of workers. Lastly, the barriers to participating effectively in promoting projects were categorised as human resources; political and relational; capital and financial resources; and organizational related barriers.

SEM was utilised to evaluate proposed theoretical model based on the study hypotheses. Categorically, the direct effects of TLI roles that contribute in creation of conditions that positively influence success among rural farmers, were tested. Thereafter, the moderating or indirect effect of the barriers was assessed utilizing path analysis in Amos. TLIC positively and

significantly influence conditions for success among the rural agricultural projects. Results further showed that FHTLIC moderated the relationship between TLIC and APSF (B = -0.070; p = 0.024). Hence, hypothesis one and two were supported.

Of the four, political and relational as well as human resource barriers were found to be the most problematic in that order. This result suggests that targeting minimisation of the effect posed by human resources as well as political and relational barriers first stands to ameliorate the contributory efficacy and participation of the TLI in support of local rural agriculture development. The model is utilizable in understanding TLI roles in rural development and challenges limiting its participation in attempting to effectively participate in activities and decisions that are important for realising tangible results for communal farmers.

The importance and relevance of the TLI to rural development continue to face scrutiny particularly among practitioners, policymakers, and scholars. Its role in modern-day rural development is the ball for contention. This is done despite its resilience and wider support it enjoys from local rural communities. In most sub-Saharan, African countries like South Africa, the TLI is constitutionally recognised with dedicated national, provincial, and local level legislation. Post-colonial legislative provisions, and policies on the TLI roles, exhibits continued efforts to decisively integrate and improve their participation as a viable partner in supporting different sectors of rural development. Despite this, there is still a lack of clearly stated criteria or a set of practices to be performed by the TLI in support of key sectors with the potential of tackling rural poverty, like agriculture. This does not only hinder its potential to effectively contribute to creating the necessary conditions and building resilience for the success of rural agriculture projects, it makes accountability and institutional performance assessment difficult. This gap, explains why its relevance is contested and viewed as a weaker rural development partner by some scholars. Surprisingly, these contestations do not offer any viable solution, instead, ignore vast unique opportunities presented by incorporating the TLI as another player in the local support network of rural development including agriculture.

As illustrated in Figure 8.1, the proposed model for effective TLI participation in decisions and practices that influence the success of rural agricultural projects is comprised of three phases. These are areas and ways of potential participation; participation decision making and improvement zone; and indicator of effective participation.

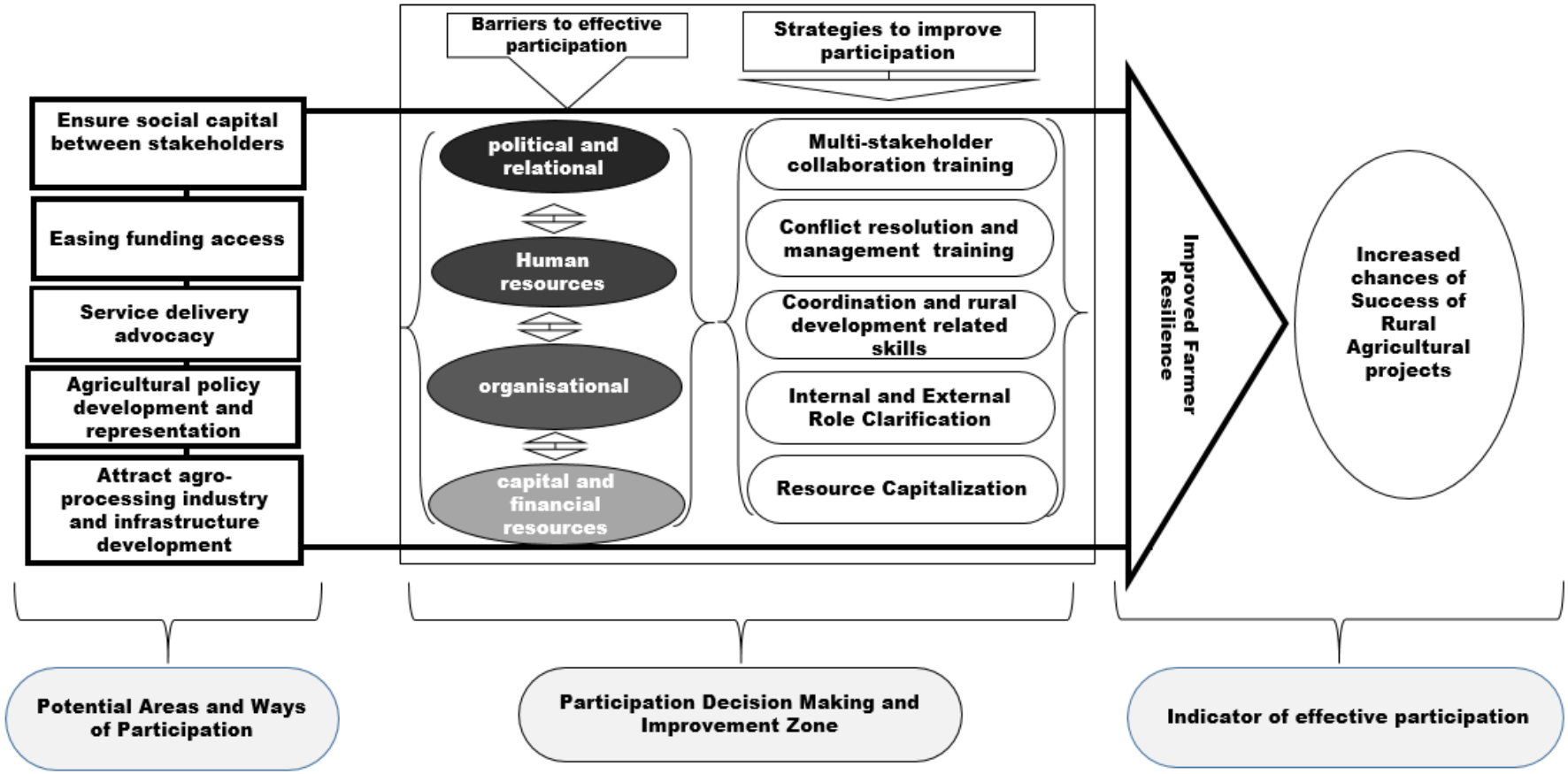

Figure 8.1: Theoretical model for TLI institutional effectiveness in community decisions making and practices that influence the success of rural agrarian reforms in agricultural projects

The model shows the key roles that are perceived to positively influence the conditions of success for communal farmers. Further, the model shows that effective participation of the TLI is important for building rural agricultural projects' resilience simultaneously increasing their potential to succeed. However, in the decision-making and improvement zone, exists barriers that make institutional contributions difficult, limiting its participation. These barriers are related and influence each other as indicated by two-directional arrows.

Darkest shaded barriers are the most problematic hence, should be targeted first as they have the potential of reducing the effect of other barriers. It is in this zone where decisions and effectiveness of the TLI participation are made. Furthermore, in attempting to improve TLI participation, attention and priority should be placed at this level. The indicator of effective TLI participation is conceived to improve the resilience of rural agriculture and, projects in particular. Thus, the model reflects the imperatives of understanding institutional constitutions' effectiveness against disruptive eventualities in promoting rural agriculture development.

A combination of multiple data analysis techniques from both a qualitative and quantitative approach was utilised in this study. Specifically, thematic content, CFA, regression analysis, mean score ranking, SEM, and reliability analysis also ensured the triangulation of results. Thus, the robust methods used further strengthened the theoretical model building. Furthermore, CFA ensured that factor structures in each measurement model are unidimensional by specifying a latent variable that emerged from literature and empirical evidence. It is unlike the commonly used exploratory factor analysis, which randomly allocates latent variables and creates a possibility of altering the original concept of the model as experienced by participants.

Applicability of this model should also consider the model fitness indices used in its design. Thus, the accuracy and practicality of the model should consider the validity and reliability of the fitness of indices in literature. The use of and combining the most reliable model fit indices of CFI and RMSEA ensured the accuracy and robustness of the model. For instance, RMSEA is regarded as “one of the most informative fit indices” (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000: 85). Its sensitivity to the number of estimated parameters in the model gives it this advantage in comparison with other model fit indices. MacCallum & Austin (2000) recommend a cut-off point for the RMSEA index of 0.10 while Hooper *et al.* (2008) recommends any value less than 0.08. To ensure model accuracy and robustness, the later cut off point was adopted for this study. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was also used to further enhance the model fitness. Values closer to 1.0 indicate a good fit. A CFI ≥ 0.90 is the minimum cut off point (Hu & Bentler, 1999). This method is considered more appropriate compared to model fit indices like normed fit and Chi-square that are sensitive

to sample size. For this reason, CFI is one of the most reported in the literature for mode fitness (Fan *et al.,* 2016).

The use of SEM allowed the testing and estimation of unmeasurable latent variables in the measurement models used. Statistical tests like singular regression, ANOVA, and MANOVA can only assess a single relation between independent and dependent variables. On the other hand, in SEM, independent and dependent variables are tested and estimated simultaneously. This allowed testing at the same time, the direct and indirect effects of traditional leadership contributions to creating a conducive environment, to the success of rural agriculture projects through the factors that impede its effective participation. Also, the fact that SEM can show reciprocal relationships between latent variables among the constructs in each measurement equations improved the strength of the model.

8.3.1 Strengths of the Model

The strengths and weaknesses of the model are rooted in its conceptual soundness, empirical evidence, and methodologies used to evaluate it. Content, convergent, and discriminant validity were used to validate and develop the traditional leadership institution's effectiveness model through SEM in the context of rural agricultural projects. This model was approached using two phases. Firstly, the explorative study ensured that the accurate and intimate realities of the three measurement models are captured through direct interviews and focus groups. Also, relevant literature was consulted to formulate scientifically sound and comprehensive roles, barriers, and success factors. Thus, ensuring content validity. Secondly, based on the first study this reality was then tested in a much larger data sample for confirmation and validation using quantitative data. This two-phased methodological approach to the study and use of multiple methods ensured that only valid and supported measures are used for the theoretical model evaluation in the current study. Furthermore, the model provides practitioners, academics, and policymakers alike, a homogeneous point of reference for building a comprehensive strategy for ascertaining and improving the participation of TLI and the usefulness of their contributions towards the prosperity of rural agriculture projects.

8.4 Contribution to scholarship

This section is dedicated to unravelling the importance and relevance of this present study to scholarship. As stipulated by Boyer (1990) this study contributed to the scholarship categories of discovery, integration, practice, community engagement, and methodological approaches. The

contributions to the scholarship emanating from this study are presented in the next sections categorically.

8.4.1 Contribution to discovery

Contribution to discovery entails originality and knowledge production (Boyer, 1990). Thus, the scholarship of discovery is about knowledge advancement and providing new insights about the studied problem. The major outcome of the study was the traditional leadership institutional contributions effectiveness model. It is a unique model that presents a multidimensional understanding of the dynamics and circumstances involved in the interface between rural agricultural projects and the TLI theoretical model was developed and evaluated to prioritise and show which TLI roles or contributions significantly and positively influence the conditions necessary for the success of agricultural projects. Furthermore, the model exhibits barriers that must be mitigated and managed to improve institutional contributory effectiveness. The model is unique and distinct from the existing studies which have attempted to diagnose the roles of the traditional leadership to rural development in three ways. Firstly, it is sector-specific. Secondly, unlike simple identification of the TLI roles to rural development, this model shows the potential causal effect of TLICs on the success of agricultural projects. Lastly, the model demonstrates how this direct relationship is moderated by barriers to the effective participation of the TL in community decision making processes. Moreover, the literature review specifically on the roles of TLI to rural development highlighted the scarcity and lack of models that assess the institutional contributory effectiveness in a three-phased approach. The existing approaches are generic as they do not test to the extent to which the institution is effective and what factors make it difficult to deliver on the mandate. Therefore, the current model is a new and unique discovery that advances the traditional leadership institutional effectiveness in promoting rural development, particularly in agriculture. Also, the procedures and processes followed in developing the model form part of the blueprint to be tested and applied for future similar studies in the field.

8.4.2 Contribution to integration

Integration in the scholarship context entails multidisciplinarity and applicability to both specialists and non-specialists. In this context, integration is, therefore, the link between the current study and how it relates to other disciplines. This is central to the thoroughness and robustness of the work done by ensuring the cross-validation of the developed theoretical model. In the current study, roles, and contributions of local institutions similar and at the same level of TLI in terms of community decision making were consulted. Furthermore, literature in management,

organisational analysis, rural institutions, community organisations, and business science was consulted to define and produce a comprehensive theoretical model.

Methodological approaches and related challenges for evaluating institutional contributions in different sectors or environments were sought first from scholarly literature. This was done before deciding on suitable and appropriate methodological and theoretical modelling techniques to use in the current study. For instance, the theoretical model building in this study was grounded on theories applied and developed across different disciplines. This helped to understand a broader picture regarding the contextual and methodological gaps in existing studies on evaluating the effectiveness of the institutional contribution in different sectors. Thus, a universal and yet localised approach to institutional effectiveness assessment that reflected the true realities of the interface between TLI, APSF, and FHTLIC. As stated and explained in Chapter 2.11 on approaches to evaluation, Theory Driven Evaluation was adopted and it guided the overall conceptual model and design. While the Success Case Approach was applied to develop typical success conditions or factors for rural agricultural projects. Moreover, the Systems Approach was used to calibrate the theoretical model to ground and explain the direct and indirect effects in the model. In this study, the TLICs are understood in the context of a system that has an impact on other sectors (APSF) and is also affected by factors in this relationship (FHTLIC). Lastly, the application of SEM in social science particularly in rural development contributes to integrating methods commonly used in other disciplines such as psychology, business, and economics.

8.4.3 Contribution to practice

Contribution to practice entails the applicability of the knowledge produced in practice to alleviate or minimise the problem for individuals or institutions (Boyers, 1990). The model for improving the participation of the TLI in promoting rural agricultural projects is in line with the imperatives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, goal number 16 of building strong, accountable, inclusive, and responsive institutions at all levels for sustainable communities. Thus, the study contributes to building strong support networks for rural agricultural projects for food security and poverty alleviation as stipulated in SDGs 1 and 2. This is achieved through, specifying, and evaluating the contributory effectiveness of the TLI in rural agriculture. Besides this, the model shows what areas or conditions of success for the rural agricultural project are likely to improve more by interacting with different TLI roles. It also, indicates which factors pose the most challenge in this relationship. Thus, this theoretical model is a vital tool for guiding institutional strengthening towards achieving a positive outcome for rural agricultural projects and SDG goal 16 of attaining responsive institutions at all levels in local communities.

Nationally, the South African local governance legislation emphasizes the need for cooperative governance including improving the participation of the TLI in promoting local economic development. For instance, the National Framework for LED of 2006, NDP Vision 2030, Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, and the TLGFA of 41 2003. However, there is a limited understanding of the sector-specific contributions of the traditional leadership institutional effectiveness in rural areas. Despite all the legislative provisions, there is still no scientific model that assesses the TLI roles to a specific sector simultaneously, with the barriers to their effective participation. The absence of such a model means policymakers, practitioners, TLIs, and agricultural projects, are not adequately equipped with tools to improve the participation of the TLI into different rural development sectors. Thus, the developed model will provide government, agricultural projects, researchers, and TLIs with a checklist for use in identifying areas of collaboration and issues that need to be targeted for successful agricultural project support programs. Consistent application of the model helps to determine changes in TLI contributions and provides policy directions on specific areas where the TLI requires support for effective participation.

8.4.4 Contribution to community engagement

The contributions to community engagement were addressed in several ways. The study used participatory research techniques such as in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions used in a cross-sectional survey were utilised to actively engage, farmers, TLI members, and key informants as beneficiaries in the development of the model that best represents their circumstances. Participatory methods used reflected the community engagement practices that are inclusive, engaging, and responsive to needs context realities as recommended for researchers. The science of engagement is a set of activities or interactions that involve mutual learning through dialogue as opposed to one-way communication (McCallie *et al*., 2009). It allows both the researchers and participants to engage with each other and validate results together. More so, there is a back-ward and forward exchange of information on the subject of interest to the community problems. This current study adds to the community engagement scholarship methodology of participatory research. Specifically, on how to engage TLIs and rural agriculture projects among communal farmers. This model reflects the true reality of the conditions in the relationship between the institutions of traditional leadership and the rural agricultural sector. They are actively involved in the study, the model built a sense of ownership and understating of application to their true practical environment.

8.4.5 Contribution to research methods

A mixed-method design was utilised for this study. The application of mixed methods in the institutional analysis, specifically on the TLI roles or contributions to rural development, are scarce and rare in the context of rural agricultural projects. Sequentially, the study builds three situations to understand the relationship between the institutional roles and agricultural projects. Further, the effect of barriers to effective participation is also estimated. An explorative sequential design was used to build a typical case scenario qualitatively, and later build a quantitative study to estimate the relationships and effects in a model. The lack of understanding regarding the sector-specific TLI roles, barriers to participation, and conditions that are critical for the success of rural agricultural projects necessitated the use of an explorative in-depth qualitative approach firstly. The use of interviews and focus groups through semi-structured interview guides completed the triangulation validation. Furthermore, collecting data from multiple groups of participants and utilisation of different techniques, ensured fair assessment and exploration of roles, barriers, and success factors. Literature shows that specific roles of TLI in rural development are subjectively misunderstood. This warranted an institutional contribution situational analysis to understand the dynamics affecting the presumed relationship.

To improve the inherent weaknesses in the qualitative explorative study, a cross-sectional survey quantitative study design was used. The use of the survey was aimed at, increasing the sample size, further interrogation of explorative study results, derivation of inferences, as well as estimating the direct and indirect effects in the model. A survey questionnaire was built based on the variables developed based on the established relationships between the roles, barriers, and agricultural project success factors from 211 respondents. The participants in the second phase constituted additional participants and all from the first phase under the same categories.

8.5 Theoretical implications

It was hypothesized in this study that TLICs and their barriers to participation in the rural area as well as the success factors for rural agricultural projects in the studied area are not known. Further to that, it was studied how the TLICs interface with conditions that may positively influence the growth and development of rural agricultural projects. This study provides a theoretical model on the areas and ways in which the TLI may positively influence the success of communal farmers. In addition,, the model shows the relationships that exist between the TLICs and APSFs including how this relationship is moderated or impeded by the barriers to participation.

8.6 Conclusion

Important roles of TLI to the success of the rural agricultural projects were determined in this study. The study responds directly and promptly to the strategic intent of specifying the sector-specific roles of the traditional leaders and the institution itself in creating conditions that positively promote the success of rural agricultural projects. The results highlighted that all the five validated TLI roles were perceived to positively influence conditions for success in the rural area for agricultural projects. For instance, promoting social capital in the form of strengthening collaborations between stakeholders in private and government-funded agricultural project development programmes was the most important TLI contribution among the eight. Results revealed that this role manifested in the form of strengthening networks, partnerships, acting as a unifier, conflict resolver, and linkage between key stakeholders in the programme. In some instances, leaders are signatories to such programmes. Participants from all three municipalities attested to this fact. Additionally, , political and relational barriers presented the most challenge or obstacle for the TLI to effectively participate in community decision-making processes and practices that promote or create a positive environment for the success of agricultural projects.

The interconnectedness of the barriers suggests that to understand the route and adequately diagnose the nature of the challenge posed by each barrier, its sub-themes and how they intersect or relate to other sub-themes in different barrier categories should be observed. For instance, the perception that TLI has no adequate personnel and required technical skills to promote rural development (Human resource barrier) in general was perceived to contribute to the reasons why the institution was allocated limited funding for rudimentary services (a capital and financial resource barrier). Another example is the of lack of clear TLI roles (organisational barrier), caused poor working relations between multiple stakeholders such as municipal officials, elected leaders, and extension services. Thus, in attempting to specify the roles and improve the participation of the TLI in processes and practices in areas where it has the potential to add an extra layer of support for the success of agricultural projects, the two barriers should also be considered. The theoretical model proposes ways of tailoring and moving towards improving the participation of the TLI in specific sectors of rural development.

8.7 Recommendations

This section presents recommendations to policy and practices including the implications of the study findings in the following sub-headings.

8.7.1 Policy recommendations

Defined and guided participation of the key rural institutions such as the TLI is key to creating a conducive environment for promoting success for rural development projects including agriculture. Based on the results of the study the following policy recommendations were made.

a) There is a need to define and propose key areas and ways in which the TLI could participate in specific sectors of rural development. For instance, the TLFGA Act 41 of 2003 and Municipal Systems Act 2000 paves the way for localised policy adoption in local policy instruments like IDP and local municipality LED strategy development, for example, should specify the areas and ways in which TLI should participate effectively in sector-specific areas of rural development.

b) Local-level policymakers such as councillors and the municipal officials need to specify in their areas, how the contributions of TLI could be harnessed to promote sector-specific development.

c) Other local government structures and support institutions such as the district municipality, district-level Department Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development, through their extension service, should create an equitable environment that allows for effective participation of the TLI in local agriculture development for area-specific needs such as those provided by this study. In this way, customised rather than generic support for agriculture development that enables sustainable rural agricultural projects can be achieved.

d) Lastly, the theoretical model in this study provides key areas of participation and a major network of challenges that needs to be addressed to improve TLI participation in rural and agricultural development. Thus, policymakers could utilize this model for monitoring and continuous assessment of the TLI's participation in rural development. In this way, it is envisaged that this would facilitate the success of rural agricultural projects among communal farmers.

8.7.2 Recommendations and implications to practice

The prosperity of rural agriculture largely depends on the support that it gets from local stakeholders in collaborative efforts. Local stakeholder development partnerships are important for the sustainability and viability of rural development sectors. The study brings to the fore, positive TLI contributions through community decision-making platforms and practices that promote rural development with a focus on agriculture. Potentially, this might improve awareness

and enhance communication and partnerships among farmers as well as with various stakeholders in communal areas/tribal land. This section, therefore, outlines the potential implications and recommendations of the study findings to practice by various stakeholders and users such as farmers, and TLIs.

a) The government, private sector, non-governmental organizations on rural economic development including communal farmers should build stronger and sustainable collaboration for tangible support towards the success of rural agricultural projects.

b) Local stakeholders such as municipal managers and officials; extension services; Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development; Non-governmental organizations; and the private sector should utilise the results of this study for improved support to rural agricultural projects. Furthermore, practitioners, and academics alike could adopt and adapt this model in strengthening and building flexible ideal interface between TLI and agricultural projects.

c) Farmers are encouraged to use the identified critical success factor for agricultural projects and challenge, therefore, to learn and build coping strategies peculiar to their environment. Furthermore, the farmer through the results of this study should utilise this theoretical model to prioritise factors that matter the most for their success as well as learn from experiences from other farmers in the area.

d) It is also recommended that traditional leaders and council members use the study findings and participation model to pick ways they are likely to effectively contribute and participate in promoting rural agriculture development. Furthermore, using the results of this study, traditional leaders and council members will take note of the challenges in the participation cycle, and potentially devise ways of mitigating them.

8.8 Future research

The current study developed a contextualized theoretical model that estimated the direct and indirect effects of TLIC on APSF through FHTLIC. The recommendations bulleted below suggest the direction for future studies based on the findings of this study.

a) It is recommended that future studies focus on testing and replicating this model to diagnose a context-specific model to test its generalisability in different environments. This is critical given the fact that in SEM through SPSS Amos, given the same data and similar measurement equations, different researchers will certainly produce varying models. This

is mainly due to the multiple analysis tools that SEM provides to researchers. A common example, putting in or getting out latent variables in the model, or by adding or deleting paths, the various modified model can be made. Hence, the accuracy and of the resultant model lies greatly on the SEM procedure followed and analysis tools applied. In this study model generation approach was used in which there was an initial tentative model. The lack of fit in the initial analysis led to model modification and retesting until a satisfactory model was achieved. This is contrary to other SEM techniques like strict confirmatory where a model should be accepted or rejected on the onset. Also, alternative models approach where there are various proposed models, one model should be selected based on the same data.

b) Future studies should consider distilling and further assessing individual TLIC and FHTLIC to further understand how each factor operates in practice and theory. This will further strengthen each factor and its related variables for developing a robust theoretical model for TLI effective participation in the context of rural agriculture in different geographical areas.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Attendance Register

Title: Evaluation of the contribution of TLI towards the success of agricultural projects**.**

Name of the Village ……

Name of the project ……

Municipality ……

Date ……

No	Name and Surname	Designation	Gender	Education	Age	Phone No	Signature
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
21							
22							
23							

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Faculty of Engineering, Science and Agriculture

Institute for Rural Development

Hello, my name is **Ndlovu Wiseman.** I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Venda and I am conducting a study on "**EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP INSTITUTIONS TOWARDS THE SUCCESS OF AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS**". The study is for academic purposes only and your information will be kept strictly confidential. Your assistance in participation in this discussion will be highly appreciated.

Name of the Village _____

Municipality _____

Name of the Project _____

Number of Group Members _____

1. **a).** What are the challenges hindering the success of agricultural projects in this area?
   b). What are the key pre-requisites for the success of agricultural projects in this area?
2. **a)**. What are the roles of the Traditional Leadership Institution; and how has it contributed or assisted in this and agricultural project?
   b). In an ideal situation, in what way, can the traditional leaderships institutions contribute towards the success of the agricultural projects?

1. **a).** Based on your observations, and experience, what challenges are faced by traditional leadership in participating in practices and community decision making processes that promote rural agricultural development in the area?
   b). How could these threats or barriers be overcome or addressed?

Appendix 3: Cross-sectional Survey Questionnaire

Faculty of Engineering, Science and Agriculture

Institute for Rural Development

Hello, my name is **Ndlovu Wiseman.** I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Venda and I am conducting a study on "**Evaluating the Contribution of Traditional Leadership Institution Towards the Success of Rural Agricultural Projects**". The study is for academic purposes only and your information will be kept strictly confidential. Your assistance in completing this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male	1		Female	2	

2. Age

Less than 30 years	1	
31-40	2	
41-50	3	
51-60	4	
61 and above	5	

3. Level of education

Secondary Education and below	1	
Matriculated	2	
Tertiary qualification	3	

4. Ethnic group

Venda	1		Afrikaans	6	
Ndebele	2		Xhosa	7	
Tsonga	3		Sotho	8	
Pedi	4		Tswana	9	
Swati	5		English	10	
			Other	11	

Project Name: _____

Location: _____

Section B: Rural agrarian Reforms Success Factors for Agricultural Projects

Instructions: Using the key below, pick the option that best suits your case or you agree with.

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)	**2 = Disagree (D)**	**3 = Neutral (N)**	**4 = Agree (A)**	**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Effective project control and management					
1. Poor management of project resources					
2. Inexperience and limited skills in project management					
3. Absence of pro-active and foresighted project leadership					
4. Lack of proper planning					
5. Ineffective supervision and management of project activities					
Open and Accessible Market					
1. Lack of ready market					
2. Fragmented local markets					
3. Distant or far markets					
Access to Skilled Workforce and Continuous Training and Learning					
1. Absence of continuous training and learning opportunities					
2. Unskilled workers					
3. Skills acquisition constraints e.g. literacy challenges					
4. Outdated knowledge and skills mismatch					
Active, Responsive, and Inclusive Stakeholder Participation					
1. Limited support from the community					
2. Lack of interest from community leadership					
3. Inadequate support from the local stakeholders					
4. Poor service delivery from local support structures					
Access to Land and Financial Resources					
1. Inaccessibility of funding					
2. Limited land access and affordability					

3. Red tape	
Adequate Number of Workers	
1. Inadequate number of workers	
2. Inability to recruit or afford enough temporary or seasonal workers	
3. High labour costs	

Section C. Contributions and ways of participation by the Traditional Leadership Institution

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)	**2 = Disagree (D)**	**3 = Neutral (N)**	**4 = Agree (A)**	**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

	SD	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
Representing Farmers in Agricultural Policy Development and Formulation					
1. Represent farmer's needs in LED and local agriculture policy development					
2. Act for the interest of farmers in policy adaptation					
3. Amplify the farmer's voices in local policy development					
Promoting and Coordinating Agricultural Development Programmes					
1. Form part of overseers. e.g. Project watchdog in agriculture support programs					
2. Monitors implementation and progress in in agriculture support programs					
3. Advocacy role e.g. initiating partnerships in agriculture support programs					
4. Endorsement and guarantor support					
Fostering Social Capital, Networking, Partnerships and Collaborations					
1. Facilitate networking between farmers & external stakeholders					
2. Facilitate multi-stakeholder collaborations					

3. Mediates partnerships between farmers & agriculture support stakeholders. e.g. NGOs, government, and private sector	
4. Act as a link & unifier in multi-stakeholder targeted local agriculture development support programs	
5. Multi-stakeholder dispute resolver	
6. Connects the community and farmers in local agricultural projects. i.e. reduction in theft, reliable local market	
7. Gives assurances and builds trust between stakeholders and farmers	
Service Delivery Advocacy role	
1. Relay farmer service needs in local government	
2. Pressure local government service providers. e.g. extension and municipal services	
3. Provide checks & balances to local service delivery	
4. Advocate for improved services to different stakeholders	
Easing funding access for Farmers	
1. Endorsements for funding application e.g. stamps, support letters	
2. Guarantor e.g. proof of land lease as collateral	
3. Advocacy role e.g. initiating partnerships in agriculture support programs	
4. Endorsement and guarantor support	
Promoting Access to Land	
1. Land allocation e.g. purchasing for new and existing projects	
2. Offering affordable land prices e.g. price per hectare to consider the financial conditions of farmers	
3. Land disputes resolution	
Coordinating and facilitating Information exchange	
1. Information collection and distribution centre	
2. Advocate for information needs and sharing	
3. Act as a link to farming information service providers	

Promoting Rural Agro-Based Industry and Infrastructure Development	
1. Availing land for the construction of infrastructure. e.g. roads to access market	
2. Attracting private and public sector investment in the agro-processing industry	
3. Advocating for and aiding partnerships in the agro-processing	

Section D: Barriers to the participation of Traditional Leadership Institution

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)	**2 = Disagree (D)**	**3 = Neutral (N)**	**4 = Agree (A)**	**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

	SD	D	N	A	SA
Human resources barriers					
1. No adequate staff					
2. Absence of professional help					
3. Skills challenge					
4. Limited skills development opportunities					
Political and relational barriers					
1. Poor working relations					
2. Unclear and overlapping roles					
3. Undermining of the traditional leadership					
4. Power-play games					
Capital and financial resources barriers					
1. Limited and outdated office equipment					
2. Limited funding and fewer sources of income					
3. Perceptions of incapacity and lack of skills					
Organisational barriers					
1. Internal lack of role specificity					
2. Role-structure organisational miss-match					
3. Lack of political will					

Appendix 4: Permission Letter

To the Tribal Authority/Municipality

(*insert the name of tribal authority/Municipality*)
(*insert the name of Town)*
South Africa

(*insert the Date*)

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC STUDY WITHIN THE (*insert the name of tribal authority/Municipality*) concerning THEIR ROLES IN AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS WITHIN THE AREA

I do hereby write this letter applying for permission to conduct a study with the ***(insert the name of tribal** authority/Municipality*) **and** identified Agricultural Projects in the TBA. My name is **Ndlovu Wiseman** studying towards a **Doctoral Degree in Rural Development** at the University of Venda.

My study is titled, "**Evaluation of The Contribution of Traditional Leadership Institution Towards the Success of Agricultural Projects**". The study seeks to explore the current and potential roles that could be played by the traditional leadership in promoting the success of agricultural initiatives or projects in the TBA.

The specific study questions are as follows;

2. **a).** What are the challenges hindering the success of agriculture among communal farmers in this area?
   b). What are the key pre-requisites for the success of agricultural projects in this area?
3. **a)**. What are the roles of the Traditional Leadership Institution; and how has it contributed or assisted in this and agricultural project?
   b). In an ideal situation, in what way, can the traditional leaderships institutions contribute towards the success of the agricultural projects?
4. **a).** Based on your observations, and experience, what challenges are faced by traditional leadership in participating in practices and community decision making processes that promote rural agricultural development in the area?
   b). How could these threats or barriers be overcome or addressed?

The responses to the questions above will contribute towards the development of a model for fostering effective participation of the traditional leadership institution in the development of rural agriculture. As part of the national and international commitments, the study seeks to stimulate a bottom-up approach to development by finding ways for ensuring the effective participation of local stakeholders such the traditional leadership institution. It is for this reason the study was sanctioned. Increased agricultural output the world over, has the potential to successfully transform rural economies and lead to improved general living standards of rural people and ensure food security.

The study is for academic purposes only; the collected information shall be used as such. No part of the information collected shall be referred to any of the respondents. If granted permission the researcher will engage the consenting Agricultural Projects. It is envisaged that within a reasonable period data collection will be completed. The data collection procedure will be done in two phases with several interfaces with the respondents including key informants.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated, and I am looking forward to your positive response.

_____

Yours faithful,

Ndlovu Wiseman
Mobile: 0736000807
wiseman.ndlovu@outlook.com

Appendix 5: **Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form**

Faculty of Engineering, Science and Agriculture
Institute for Rural Development

INFORMATION SHEET

INTRODUCTION

My name is **Wiseman Ndlovu,** a student at the University of Venda registered for Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development (PHDRDV). I am researching: **"Evaluation of The Contribution of Traditional Leadership Institution Towards the Success of Rural Agricultural Projects"**

I kindly request for your participation in this study by expressing your honesty views on the topic or subject. The study seeks to explore roles played by the traditional leadership council in the local economic development initiatives, particularly agricultural initiatives.

The study is specifically aimed at bringing about the understanding of the roles currently played by the traditional leadership council and map the way on what they can do to improve and foster local economic development of agricultural projects in the area. This will in turn improve the economic activities in the rural areas by boosting employment and increasing agricultural output in the area. As a result, this will lead to improved general living standards of rural people and will ensure food security.

Your participation is voluntary, and you will be asked to respond to questions related to the research topic. You are also reminded that should you feel that questions are not proper, you can choose not to answer, and you have the right to withdraw from the study even after you started the interview. The interview will take about 45 minutes to complete. The questions do not require you to provide your details such as your name and contact details. Thus, your confidentiality will be protected, and the information provided will not be shared with third parties without your consent.

Therefore, you are kindly asked to give your honest opinion to this effect to assist the attainment of the objectives of this study.

Appendix 6: Informed Consent Form

In terms of the ethical requirements of the University of Venda, you are invited to complete this form as an indication of your permission to voluntarily participate in this study

I _____ hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the purpose, procedures, and activities of the study. The rights and risks of participation have also been fully explained to me. I was given full opportunity to ask any questions and I understand that participants can withdraw from the study at any stage and time, without giving any reasons.

I therefore hereby freely **Give/Do not give** my consent for the staff and any relevant member to voluntarily take part in the study as outlined **(Delete the inapplicable).**

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Researcher signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix 7: Ethical Clearance Certificate

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:
Mr W Ndlovu

Student No:
11613058

PROJECT TITLE: **Evaluation of the contribution of traditional leadership institutions towards the success of agricultural projects.**

PROJECT NO: **SARDF/18/IRD/06/2111**

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr M Manjoro	University of Venda	Promoter
Dr J Zuwarimwe	University of Venda	Co - Promoter
Mr W Ndlovu	University of Venda	Investigator – Student

ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Considered: November 2018
Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted
Signature of Chairperson of the Committee: .....
Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Senior Prof. G.E. Ekosse

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA
DIRECTOR
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
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"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive University"

Appendix 8: Proof editing and reading letter

Editing and Proofreading Report

22 August 2021

This letter serves to confirm that I, Mercy Precious Mujakachi of the English Department, University of Venda, have proofread and edited a PhD in Rural Development titled **Evaluating The Contributions Of The Traditional Leadership Institution To The Success Of Rural Agriculture Projects** by Mr Wiseman Ndlovu (Student No. 11613058).

I carefully read through this thesis, focusing on proofreading and editorial issues. The recommended suggestions are clearly highlighted in blue ink and can either be accepted or rejected using the Microsoft Word Track Changes System.

Yours Sincerely

Mercy P. Mujakachi: PhD candidate English Lit, MA (English), BA Honours in English and Communication
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