



**DETERMINANTS OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
OF BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS IN MATABELELAND SOUTH PROVINCE OF
ZIMBABWE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Mhlupheki Dube, hereby declare that this dissertation for Masters in Rural Development (MRDV) at the University of Venda hereby submitted by me, has not been submitted previously for a degree at this or any other University, that it is my own work in design and in execution, and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Lack of participation of youth in rural development is a major challenge throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons for this status can have not been well-documented and they seem to be area-specific. It is important to generate this knowledge so as to yield informed youth

To my family, Sihlangusomusa Malufu and Muziwandile Marcus Dominic Dube

In Zimbabwe, aspects of the mandates of Bulilima and Mangoch District Councils in Masvingo Province revealed that youth were not participating actively in rural development programmes within their communities. This situation necessitated carrying out an empirical study to investigate the factors that promoted or discouraged youth participation in the rural development programmes. An exploratory study that involved 106 respondents (categorized into female youth, male youth, women and men) was conducted in three wards of Mangoch and Bulilima Districts, respectively. Semi-structured interview guides and formal questionnaires requiring responses on a Likert-type scale were used to collect data relating to the perceptions of female youth, male youth, women and men who were organized into reflection circles. Significant differences in perceptions on youth participation were observed across age, gender and changes of age of the participants. Perceptions of youth and adults regarding food for food programmes significantly differed ($p < 0.05$). Significant differences ($p < 0.01$) in perceptions relating to youth branding programmes and local marketing programmes were also noted between women and men, and Mangoch and Bulilima Districts. Perceptions relating to foster parenting of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) between Mangoch and Bulilima District were not the same ($p < 0.01$). In addition, significant differences were observed in the perceptions of youth and adults regarding 'provision of various skills' ($p < 0.05$) and 'provision of technical skills' ($p < 0.01$).

The results of this study highlighted the fact that youth participation in rural development programmes could be achieved if the appropriate and effective strategies to differences in age, sex and geographical area of residence. It was revealed that youth were not comfortable to participate in rural development programmes. The study led to the conclusion that it is important to carry out a study to investigate how to bridge the gap between youth and adults. It seems there were gender-based differences in the perceptions of youth and adults regarding various household chores while male youth played a major role. All these factors encouraged the participation of female

youth in rural development programmes need to address these issues in order to enable the female youth to participate more actively in rural development programmes.

Lack of participation of youth in rural development is a major challenge throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons for this *status quo* have not been well-documented and they seem to be area-specific. It is important to generate this knowledge so as to yield informed youth empowerment and development programming.

In Zimbabwe, analysis of the records of Bulilima and Mangwe District Councils in Matabeleland South Province revealed that youth were not participating actively in rural development programmes within their communities. This situation necessitated carrying out an empirical study to investigate the factors that promoted or discouraged youth participation in the rural development programmes. An exploratory study that involved 106 respondents, categorised into female youth, male youth, women and men was conducted in three and five wards of Mangwe and Bulilima Districts, respectively. Semi-structured interview guides and formal questionnaires requiring responses on a Likert-type scale were used to collect data relating to the perceptions of female youth, male youth, women and men who were organized into reflection circles. Significant differences in perceptions on youth participation were observed across age, gender and Districts of origin of the participants. Perceptions of youth and adults regarding *food for work programmes* significantly differed ($p < 0.05$). Significant differences ($p < 0.01$) in perceptions relating to *cattle breeding programmes* and *brick moulding programmes* were also noted between males and females, and Mangwe and Bulilima Districts. Perceptions relating to *foster parenting* for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) between Mangwe and Bulilima District were not the same ($p < 0.01$). In addition, significant differences were observed in the perceptions of youth and adults regarding "*provision of various skills*" ($p < 0.05$) and "*provision of entertainment*" ($p < 0.01$).

The results of this study highlighted the fact that youth participation in rural development programmes could be achieved if the approaches used were sensitive to differences in age, sex and geographical area of residence. It was revealed that youth were not comfortable to participate in rural development programmes that adults led. It is important to carry out a study to investigate how to bridge the gap between youth and adults. It seemed there were gender-based stereotypes such as burdening female youth with endless household chores while male youth enjoyed abundant free time. All these factors discouraged the participation of female

youth in rural development programmes. There is need to address these issues in order to enable the female youth to participate more actively in rural development programmes.

I am deeply indebted to Professor J. Francis and Dr P.K. Chauke for tirelessly guiding me through this study and being infinitely patient with me in this long and arduous journey. My sincere appreciation also goes to the community members in Mpoeng, Ngwenyana, Izimnyama, Maseru, Masandu, Mawana, Somnene, Nizane, and Vukndele wards, who took their time to participate in the study. Data collection and entry would not have been possible without the patience and diligence of Bilal Muzizi and Phoebe Michalis Moyo who served as my research assistants. Special gratitude goes to my family who rendered all the support they could and continuously urged me to soldier on even when the cross became a little heavier to carry.

Also, I would like to honestly and sincerely thank the University of Venda for the support rendered during the period of study through the Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Ms Aniah Matodzi, the Librarian for the School of Agriculture for her time and patience of ploughing through huge volumes of reading material in support of this study.

Let me thank God for their assistance and allowing me to use its resources to carry out this study. My sincere gratitude also goes to my work mates and colleagues, in particular Phiso Moya and Tshepo M. Ontaba who proof read my excessive drafts.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
TABLE OF FIGURES	xi
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 Background and Rationale	13
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem.....	16
1.4 Objectives of the Study	17
1.5 Research Questions	17
1.6 Hypotheses	17
1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts	18
1.8 Organisation of the Dissertation.....	19
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	21
2.1 Introduction	21
2.2 Youth.....	22
2.3 Youth Participation	26
2.4 Negative Connotations about Youth	29
2.5 Theoretical Framework of Determinants of Youth Participation in Rural Development	34
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	34
3.1 Introduction	34
3.2 Description of the Study Area.....	35
3.3 Research Design and Sampling Procedures	37
3.4 Data Collection.....	37
3.4.1 Exploratory stage.....	38
3.4.2 Perception validation stage.....	40
3.6 Data Analysis	41
3.5 Ethical Considerations.....	

3.5 Summary of Research Methodology	42
CHAPTER 4 COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS	43
4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Demographic Details of Research Participants	43
4.3 Community Perceptions on the Meaning of Youth Participation.....	44
4.4 Perceived Youth Participation by Age, Sex and District	44
4.5 Youth Participation in Rural Community Development Projects	45
4.5.1 Differences in perceptions relating to participation in rural development projects by age of respondent	50
4.5.2 Differences in perceptions relating to participation in rural development projects by sex of respondent	50
4.5.3 Inter-District differences in perceptions relating to projects that respondents participated in.....	50
4.6 Perceptions Relating to Youth Participation in Rural Development Projects	51
4.8 Discussion	55
4.8.1 Meaning of youth participation in rural development.....	55
4.8.2 Age and sex as factors of participation in rural development	56
4.8.3 Existence of rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts.....	57
4.8.4 Reasons for poor participation of youth in rural development.....	59
4.9 Conclusions	61
CHAPTER 5: FACTORS PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WITHIN BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS	62
5. 1 Introduction	62
5.2 Community Perceptions on the Factors Promoting Youth Participation	62
5.3 Discussion	65
5.4 Conclusions	67
CHAPTER 6 FACTORS LIMITING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED IN BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS	68
6.1 Introduction	68
6.2 Results	68
6.3 Discussion	69
6.3.1 Drinking and gambling.....	72
6.3.2 Early marriages	72
6.3.3 Lack of knowledge	73

6.3.4 Parents denying youth permission to participate in rural development.....	74
6.3.5 Incomplete projects	75
6.3.6 Lack of incentives	75
6.4 Conclusions	76
CHAPTER 7 GENERAL DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	77
7.1 Introduction	77
7.2 Understanding Youth Participation	77
7.3 Availability of Rural Development Programmes	78
7.4 Factors Limiting Youth Participation in Rural Development Programmes	79
7.5 Factors Promoting Youth Participation in Rural Development Programmes	81
7.6 Recommendations for Further Research	82
Appendix 1 Semi structured interview guide which was used during the exploratory phase	91
Appendix 2: A Likert-type questionnaire that was used to gather community perceptions during the validation stage.....	92

they participated in.....	49
Table 4.3 proportion of responses in respect to which projects youth participate in by District ..	52
Table 4.5 Effect of age, sex and District on the perceptions of community members with respect to reasons of low youth participation.....	54
Table 5.1 Proportion of responses on perceptions of factors that encourage youth participation by District	63
Table 5.5 differences in perceptions on factors promoting youth participation due to age, sex and District of interviewees	64
Table 6.1 Community perceptions on factors that limit youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulima and Mangwe Districts.....	70
Table 6.2 Effect of age, sex and District on community members' perception with respect to factors discouraging youth participation.....	71

TABLE OF CONTENTS
LIST OF TABLES

Figure 2.1 Theoretical/conceptual framework of investigating the determinants of youth participation 27

Table 2.1 The eight level of youth participation 27

Table 2.2 Characteristics and forms of participation 28

Table 3.1 Summary of the research process in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts 36

Table 4.1 perceptions of residents of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts on what youth participation means 45

Table 4.2 differences in perceptions on the meaning of youth participation between age groups, sexes and Districts 46

Table 4.3 proportion of residents who participated in rural development projects per District 47

Table 4.4 Effect of age, sex and District on community members' perceptions relating to projects they participated in 48

Table 4.5 proportion of responses in respect to which projects youth participate in by District 52

Table 4.6 Effect of age, sex and District on the perceptions of community members with respect to reasons of low youth participation 54

Table 5.1 Proportion of responses on perceptions of factors that encourage youth participation by District 63

Table 5.6 differences in perceptions on factors promoting youth participation due to age, sex and District of interviewees 64

Table 6.1 Community perceptions on factors that limit youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts 70

Table 6.2 Effect of age, sex and District on community members' perception with respect to factors discouraging youth participation 71

ABSTRACT TABLE OF FIGURES CONTENTS

Figure 2.1 Theoretical/conceptual framework of investigating the determinants of youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe.....	31
Figure 3.1 Men participating in a reflective circle at Natane ward.....	38
Figure 3.2 Female youth discussing in a reflective circle at Ngwanana ward	39
Figure 3.3 A female youth presents her group's responses during a plenary session at Ngwanyana ward.....	39

NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PAAP	Poverty Alleviation Action Programme
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
SPW	Students Partnership Worldwide
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
UNIVEN	University of Venda
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CADEC	Catholic Development Commission
DLLRR	Department of Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PAAP	Poverty Alleviation Action Programme
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
SPW	Students Partnership Worldwide
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

Youth are defined in many different ways, including from the perspective of a particular age group (McIlwaine and Datta, 2004) and as a stage of life or as an attitude (Blum, 2007). Because of the various ways of classifying youth, there is no universally accepted definition. Sociologically, youth denotes an interface between childhood and adulthood but in general youth as a social group are defined in terms of age. Thus, a spectrum ranging from 11 to 35 years old has been used in various studies to define youth (Chigunta, 2002). The age ranges for youth vary from one country or organization to another. The upper limit of age in most sub-Saharan Africa varies from 35 years in South Africa to 40 years in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Blum, 2007). Also, definitions of youth include those that are purely of a legal nature and others with a functional basis (Keke, 2004). In Zimbabwe, the National Youth Policy of 2000 classifies youth in terms of age, ranging from 10-30 years. Thus, this age guideline for youth was adopted for this study.

Ngcobo (2004) observes that it is commonly assumed that young people are unwilling to participate in community activities or in broader societal activities even though the accuracy of such an assumption is questionable. In this regard, participation should not only entail cursory or superficial involvement but also the right to make decisions. Meaningful youth participation builds the capacity of youth, respecting their views, allowing them to assume decision-making roles, leading to community development (Amsden and Van Wynsberghe, 2005). Despite this, shared decision-making is most beneficial to both young people and adults (Webster, 2004). There is also another school of thought which contends that young people are most empowered when they make decisions without the influence of adults (Mtaka, 2004). Youth participation promotes resilience, reduces risks, encourages positive youth development, enhances youth health, improves youth programmes and services and promotes commitment (Checkoway, 2008). Real participation implies that development choices are taken under conditions of full information and full representation of all interests (Binswanger, and Aiyar, 2003). Keke (2004) recognises the following as the benefits of youth participation:

- a) providing an opportunity for exploration of the youth's own potential;
- b) providing opportunities to acquire skills in debating, communication, negotiation and individual or group decision-making and to learn how individuals, groups and even national political systems work;
- c) encouraging young people to be active in creating the services they use rather than being passive consumers of services provided for them;
- d) enhancing services that reflect the interests and problems defined by young people. Young people can bring new perspectives and influence outcomes in new and unexpected ways. Policies and programmes incorporating young people in their design and delivery are likely to be more efficient, effective and recognise the needs of the young people;
- e) helping in preparing young people to participate in wider societal decision-making;
- f) improving the image of the youth and challenging any negative stereotypes perpetuated in the community; and
- g) promoting the use of open and accountable services, which encourage respect for democratic principles.

Based on the issues presented above, the fact that youth participation is a key component of community development, including rural transformation cannot be contested. In any nation, youth must demonstrate interest in taking over the reins of power as the older generation retires or passes on. This does not happen easily because young people are often portrayed in negative ways such as being labelled gang members, juvenile delinquents, or reckless trouble makers who seek to inflict damage on "adult" society (Beauvy, 2006). Despite their vulnerability to exploitation, youth have proved that they can be a force for the good where society is searching for answers (Mchakulu, 2006). It is worth pointing out that youth were in the forefront of decolonizing Africa and other parts of the world. This suggests that they can still play crucial roles in processes that promote rural development.

In trying to address the issues that young people in Zimbabwe face and to promote their participation and inclusion in development programmes, the government of Zimbabwe formulated the National Youth Policy of 2000. The policy has, among others, the following goals:

(a) promote youth participation in development activities; and (b) provide opportunities for youth employment and initiatives. Although this is the case, it is still questionable whether youth take advantage of these provisions of the policy to empower themselves. More still needs to be done to promote active youth participation, in particular in rural development programmes.

A study undertaken in the Zambezi Valley of Zimbabwe revealed that cultural values in some societies placed women and youth under the control of a senior male family member (Chinsinga, 2003). The study concluded that this affected youth participation in community activities because quite often they were denied access, responsibility or a voice, either by the male folk or by the community at large. Lack of political will to enforce the participation of youth even in cases where legislation to promote this exists can be blamed for the less than satisfactory youth involvement in community development (Webster, 2004). It is not clear whether these facts also explain the lack of youth participation in development programmes throughout Zimbabwe. This justifies conducting area-specific studies that would help close this gap in information. Thus, this study was carried out in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province focusing on this issue.

In Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe, for example, despite the fact that young people constituted more than 50 % of the population (Central Statistical Office: CSO, 2002), a negligible proportion of them was visible in rural development work. Social services records of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts in the same province confirmed this state of affairs (Social services annual reports, 2009). The lack of participation in community development programmes and projects also originates from the lack of interest, skills and knowledge about ways of involving youth in the projects (Sader and Weideman, 2004).

Social services reports and minutes of both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts reveal that various community development initiatives were implemented in rural areas for decades. Examples of such initiatives include among others, the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 2001-2003), Poverty Alleviation Action Plan (PAAP), Freedom from Hunger Campaign, Give a Dam Campaign, World Vision's Area Development Programme (ADP, 1996 to date), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF, 1988 to date), many programmes in water and sanitation, the

Catholic Development Commission (CADEC, 2003 to date) as well as Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA, 2005-2007) programmes. Because a broad range of programmes were implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, they constitute a fertile ground for carrying out the study that seeks to distil the determinants of youth participation in rural development initiatives.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In general, elderly people have been spearheading implementation of development initiatives in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, with almost negligible participation of youth (Social services annual reports, 2009). This situation compromises the sustainability of the community development initiatives because of lack of clear succession planning especially when the fact that the elderly retire or pass on is taken into account. To date, to the best of the researcher's knowledge no scientific research has been carried out in both Districts to determine the factors that dictate the extent to which youth participate in community development initiatives.

This study sought to explore, collate and analyze community perceptions relating to the extent of youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. Specifically, the factors that enabled or limited participation of the youth in development work were examined. Currently, there is inadequate empirically generated information on this subject. The results of this study will help the stakeholders involved in rural development work such as community leaders and development practitioners, encompassing governmental and non-governmental organisations, to understand the dynamics of youth participation. Such an understanding is likely to help develop responsive policies and strategies that promote more effective youth participation in rural development.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to analyze the factors that promoted or hindered youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- a) determine what young people and adults perceived as the definition of youth participation in rural development initiatives;
- b) investigate the perceptions of community members on the extent to which youth participated in community development; and
- c) assess the factors that promoted or hindered youth participation in development programmes or projects.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated:

- a) What do the youth and adults in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts perceive as youth participation in rural development initiatives?
- b) To what extent are youth and adults satisfied with the current level of youth participation in rural development?
- c) What factors promote or hinder active youth participation in rural development?

1.6 Hypotheses

The hypotheses or assumptions for this study were:

- a. Youth in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts participated actively in rural community development work;
- b. Rural communities have a long history of implementing development programmes in which youth were eligible to participate;
- c. Perceptions on youth participation in rural development varied across Districts; and
- d. Age and sex of individuals influenced their perceptions on youth participation in rural development.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Various key terms are defined here in order to contextualise their meanings to this study.

Rural development refers to schemes aimed at improving the countryside or peripheral areas, with a characteristic agrarian population (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008). According to these authors, rural development deals with a range of activities, involving the mobilization of resources (human and material) in order to empower the people to break away from all the structural disabilities that prevent them from enjoying better living conditions and to have similar characteristics. Also, rural development is a strategy that enables a specific group of people such as poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need (Chambers, 2001). It denotes actions and initiatives taken to improve the standard of living in non-urban neighbourhoods, countryside and remote villages. Historically, rural development has been inextricably linked with agriculture (European Commission, 2004).

It is important to note that rural development is multi-faceted in nature and unfolds into a wide array of different and sometimes, interconnected practices (Van Der Ploeg, Renting, Bruno and Knickel, 2000). In this dissertation, rural development is regarded as a set of deliberate programmes aiming to improve the socio-economic conditions of community members in areas outside the urban set up. These could be infrastructural or social development programmes which improve the wellbeing of the community.

Community development refers to the process of people working together at a local level to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions in the neighbourhood

(Laverack, 2001). Some of the salient components of community development are capacity building, citizen participation, consensus building, problem solving, visioning and action planning (Brennan, Barnett and Baugh, 2007). In this study, community development refers to deliberately planned and executed processes of capacity building and skills transfer intended to empower the people in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts so that they champion their own socio-political and socio-economic development.

There are many different interpretations of *participation* that range from taking part, being present or being consulted (Tafira, 2006). According to Dorsner, (2004), participation is used to describe many different processes and covers a wide continuum of involvement, which makes it a multi-layered concept. As Tafira (2006) points out, participation in social groups fosters a feeling of connectedness and belonging, helping young people to develop a sense of identity. The experience of contributing to a cause, decision, and/or group can be a crucial part of the development of a sense of responsibility, purpose and self-worth. In broad terms, participation also means that people play a part in the change that occurs during the process of development. People must determine the goals of this change and work together to bring it about (Rousmasset, 2003). In some instances, participation might involve the transfer of power such that the visions and aspirations of the participants influence their decision making (Mpofu, 2003). In the context of this study, participation is defined as the active involvement of community members in planning and implementing programmes that determine the nature of their lives.

1.8 Organisation of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into chapters which are devoted to address various objectives of the study. Chapter 1 primarily sets out the background of the study and clarifies the meanings of some salient terms and concepts. Also, it covers the objectives and research questions which the study sought to answer.

In Chapter 2, the literature on youth participation in rural development programmes is reviewed. This lays a solid foundation for the study and discusses fundamental concepts such as youth participation and the negative connotations of youth. Chapter 3 is devoted to the research

methodology which was used for all the studies reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The methodology encompasses research design, sampling techniques and data analysis procedures. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the description of results and including discussion of the findings of the study. Lastly, Chapter 7 pulls out the conclusions from the study and the recommendations for further research. Soon after Chapter 7, the reference list is given. A range of appendices occupy the terminal part of the dissertation.

Many studies have been carried out in the past leading to generation of a considerable volume of literature on the concept of youth and their participation in organized activities, whether civic or extracurricular. Several explanations have been given in trying to understand youth and their participation in development work. For example, it has been argued that youth are too busy and are always in a hurry because of their involvement in various organized activities (Mahoney, Harris, and Eccles, 2003). However, many questions relating to youth and their participation, particularly taking into account their heterogeneity, remain unanswered. The heterogeneity implies that what may be applicable to youth in one area are unlikely to be applicable to those found elsewhere. Youth behaviour and response to programmes in their areas are likely to depend on many factors, for example geographical location, age, sex, urban or rural, and educational attainment, among others. This means that while some aspects and concepts about youth can be generalised, more site-specific studies need to be conducted in order to draw conclusions and interpretations that target specific groups.

This chapter presents a review of literature on youth participation in development work. First, a wide range of terms are explained. Thereafter, the concept of participation is unpacked in its various forms. Also, the chapter discusses why youth participation in community development is important. Information that the study sought to cover, namely the lack of empirically generated information on youth participation in rural development programmes of Bulima and Mangoch Districts in Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe, is considered. A summary of the key results of the review marks the end of Chapter 2.

2.2 Youth

As revealed in Chapter 1, there is no universally accepted definition of youth. As a result, youth are described in various ways. The most frequently used criteria to describe youth is age

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Many studies have been carried out in the past resulting in generation of a considerable volume of literature on the concept of youth and their participation in organized activities, whether civic or extracurricular. Several explanations have been given in trying to understand youth and their participation in development work. For example, it has been argued that youth are too busy and are always in a hurry because of their involvement in various organized activities (Mahoney, Harris, and Eccles, 2006). However, many questions relating to youth and their participation, particularly taking into account their heterogeneity, remain unanswered. The heterogeneity implies that what may be applicable to youth in one area are unlikely to be applicable to those found elsewhere. Youth behaviour and response to programmes in their areas are likely to depend on many factors, for example geographical location, age, sex, urban or rural, and educational attainment, among others. This means that while some aspects and concepts about youth can be generalised, more site-specific studies need to be conducted in order to draw conclusions and interpretations that target specific groups.

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2.2 Youth

As revealed in Chapter 1, there is no universally accepted definition of youth. As a result, youth are described in various ways. The most frequently used attribute to describe youth is age

group. According to Blum (2007), age groups that define youth vary from one society to another and also from country to country. For example, the United Nations defines youth as all individuals 15-24 years old. In contrast, the Commonwealth uses the 15-29 years age band. Available country-specific definitions encompass age ranges of 8-40 years (Blum, 2007). However, in most African countries youth refers to any person 15-30 years old (Chigunta, 2002). Youth is also viewed or explained as the quality or state of being young; part of life following childhood; the period of existence preceding maturity; and age group of 15-25 years (Bennell, 2007). This study adopted the age category of 10-30 years as defined in Zimbabwe's National Youth Policy of 2000. Now that the meaning of youth has been clarified, in the next section attention shifts towards building an understanding of what participation in development practice entails.

2.3 Youth Participation

Because participation has broad meanings, this study specifically focused on the involvement of youth in development work. Gobeli (1995) defines youth participation as the involvement of young people in responsible, challenging action that meets genuine needs. Promoting youth participation can take many forms, namely from encouraging them to volunteer in community development projects to empowering young people to offer their perspectives on world issues, serving as members of advisory boards, becoming peer mentors and leading development programmes (Beauvy, 2006).

The concept of youth participation as a field of study continues to pose many questions and there are no universally accepted answers. Checkoway (2010: 340) poses some of the fundamental questions as, "What is participation, who are the participants, what do they do, and with what outcomes? When we say that someone participates, is it about 'community service,' or 'social action,' or 'civic engagement?'"

Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2003) explain real youth participation as young people's active involvement and influence in the decisions that affect their lives, not their token or passive presence in adult agencies. Furthermore, they argue that participation of youth will not be measured in terms of how many of them attend a particular activity but by the quality of their contribution. Biggs and Smith (1998) suggest that youth participation should go beyond just selecting a few of them to represent others in an activity. These authors note that it is wrong to

assume that simply “including” certain kinds of people in an activity is sufficient to effect the participation of the group they are taken to represent. Apparently taking this into account, Kothari (1996) contends that real participation is achieved only when those involved are informed, consulted and ideally, encouraged to decide and manage. McGillicuddy (1991) extends this view, arguing that youth should not be considered as leaders of the future because they have crucial roles to play in today’s world.

Real participation implies that development choices are taken under conditions of full information and representation of all interests. Young people need to be included in local and broader planning and decision-making processes so that their needs are addressed, which goes beyond traditional adult-run structures such as committees and one-off consultations, to develop processes that engage their unique energy and expertise (Binswanger and Aiyar, 2003).

Webster (2004) believes that youth participation must take place at a level where young people have citizen power to implement their own projects and also be part of local government or municipal initiatives. For this to be achieved there is need to involve young people in sharing information and making strategic decisions on development work. In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the fact that youth possess leadership capabilities that can only be tapped through practice. Partly, this is why youth should participate in local community development initiatives.

According to Mohamed and Wheeler (2001), acceptance of the fact that youth need leadership skills for them to be able to engage in both personal and community development programmes prompted various philanthropic organisations to introduce training initiatives. The rediscovery of youth leadership transformation as a core component of their positive development strategies and programmes has an even more significant impact. This constitutes what is termed civic engagement, which refers to a strategy that creates an enabling environment for young people to develop and exercise leadership while effecting concrete changes in their communities. Through civic engagement, young people contribute their energy and ideas as they participate in community building and work towards social change. Gobeli (1995: 45) buttresses the importance of youth involvement and points out that:

“Too often, the missing ingredient in strategies to address severe problems facing communities and societies, whether rural or urban, is the active solicitation and

engagement of young people in problem-solving, leadership and advocacy and direct service. Young people have a role in building and rebuilding themselves, their families, their communities, and the larger institutions that shape the quality of life. They can be enthusiastic, energetic, creative, and interested in solving problems and concerned about their future and the future of their communities.”

Kothari (1996) explains that effectively practiced participation can lead to empowerment of the individual using the knowledge and psychological fulfillment gained as well as empowerment of the local community through articulating and realizing its goals. For this reason, extension agents, programme developers and policy makers must have a solid understanding of the role of youth in community development and equal the benefits of involving them.

Despite the obvious benefits that result from youth participation, involvement of young people in rural development work remains unsatisfactory. Ngcobo (2004) attributes the lack of youth involvement in community development to youth-adult conflict. He points out that conflict arises between adults and youth mainly because the latter see young people as self-absorbed, fun-seeking and lacking discipline, commitment and interest in long-term plans. Youth counter this belief with the view that adults are too demanding, unwilling to give adequate space and are not ready to allow them to demonstrate what they are capable of accomplishing. However, it is important to note that for effective youth participation to take place adults need to be more supportive. This means that adults should view youth as resources to be developed as opposed to problems to be solved (Urban, 2008).

Tafira (2006) observes that while it is inevitable that youth are the future of any society, many youth development-focused organisations and programmes have failed to take seriously the need for youth participation, voice, input and power in decision making. In these programmes, young people are rarely viewed as partners. As a result, this has created a culture of “adulthood”, which assumes that adults are superior to young people and are entitled to act upon them without agreement or consent (Mohamed and Wheeler, 2001). Yet, there is considerable evidence highlighting why young people should be given opportunities to develop the values, attitudes and skills they need in order to actively participate and succeed in the spheres of family, workplace and community both today and in future. Failure to assign roles to youth in

development discourse has disastrous consequences on countries across the world, both in the short- and long-terms (Beauvy, 2006).

Keke (2004) believes that despite the existence of ideals which encourage their participation such as peer education and peer counselling, youth are often tokenised. This means that although they are allowed to serve in committees, usually they have no real power to influence decisions. Taking this issue into account, Sader and Weideman (2004) cite four barriers to young people's participation in civic and/or political activities as:

- a) Young people often do not know how to become involved or how to participate effectively;
- b) The benefits of participation are not apparent to most young people;
- c) There are disagreements among young people with respect to the issues that must be prioritised; and
- d) In the case of non-governmental organisations or community-based organisations' programmes, the methods used by and the personalities of staff are crucial in keeping young people interested and motivated.

In support of the arguments highlighted above, Kothari (1996) distils seven basic human needs that must be met, viz. a sense of safety and structure; group belonging; self-worth; independence and control over one's life; closeness through relationships; and competence. This implies that there is need for opening enough space for youth to participate in rural development work if they are to enjoy these basic needs. While youth participation in rural development work is a plausible concept, there is need to guard against its misuse by individuals or organisations that superficially involve young people and then claim to be championing their participation. Pittman (1996) warns that "the goal of youth participation should be to teach and charge/change young people to define and articulate concerns of interest to them and to design and negotiate and implement solutions to those concerns". Also, Pittman (2000) explains that youth participation should be promoted as a community principle and not as a community programme. This is due to the fact that young people grow up in communities and not in programmes.

Table 2.1 shows the various levels of youth participation while Table 2.2 unpacks the general forms of community participation. Both sets of literature indicate that participation can occur and be interpreted in various forms and at different levels. Youth participation can occur at superficial levels such as tokenism and decoration or it can take real forms such as youth initiating and directing their own ideas (Table 2.1). In Table 2.2, it is shown that participation can be passive, consultative or be in the form of self-mobilisation by community members.

2.4 Negative Connotations about Youth

Quite often, development practitioners initiate programmes that label youth negatively, resulting in inappropriately crafted intervention goals and strategies. Sometimes, young people are described as gangsters, juvenile delinquents or reckless trouble makers who seek to inflict damage on “adult” society (Beauvy, 2006). Such labeling alienates the youth and does not help in moulding them into responsible citizens. This situation must be reversed. The best starting point is for development practitioners and the community to view youth as part of a solution to existing problems, “instead of referring to the programme or target audience with ‘problem words’ such as drug, pregnancy or dropout prevention, children of alcoholics or high risk; accentuate what is positive and creative” (Kothari, 1996). This shift in thinking is likely to encourage youth participation.

Source: Adapted from Moolanighan (2006)

Table 2.2 Characteristics and forms of participation

Table 2.1 The eight level of youth participation

Level of participation	Description
Level 8: Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults	Projects or programmes are initiated by youth and decision-making is shared with adults. Such projects empower youth while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experiences and expertise of adults.
Level 7: Youth-initiated and directed	Young people initiate and direct a project or programme, with adults playing only a supportive role.
Level 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with youth	Projects or programmes are initiated by adults but decision-making is shared with the young people.
Level 5: Consulted and informed	Youth give advice on projects or programmes designed and run by adults. The youth are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.
Level 4: Assigned but informed	Youth are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.
Level 3: Tokenism	Young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.
Level 2: Decoration	Young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.
Level 1: Manipulation	Adults use youth to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by the latter.

Source: Adapted from Mcclenaghan (2000)

Source: as cited in Mpofu (2003)

Table 2.2 Characteristics and forms of participation

Type	Characteristics of each type
1. Passive Participation	People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is unilateral announcement by an administration or project management team without listening to people's responses. The information being shared belongs only to the external professional.
2. Participation in information giving	People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings as the findings of the research are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
3. Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted and external people listen to views. These external professionals define both problems and solutions and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
4. Participation for material incentives	People participate by providing resources such as labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. Much on-farm research falls in this category as farmers provide the fields but are not involved in the experimentation or process of learning. It is common to see this participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when the incentives end.
5. Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organisation. Such involvement does not tend to be at early stages of project cycles or planning, but rather after major decisions have been made. These institutions depend on external initiators and facilitators, although they may become self-dependent.
6. Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or strengthening of existing ones. It tends to involve inter-disciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systematic and structural learning processes. These groups take control over local decisions and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
7. Self mobilisation	People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resource and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used. Such self-initiated mobilisation and collective action may or may not challenge existing inequitable distribution of wealth and power.

Source: as cited in Mpofu (2003)

Pittman, Irby and Ferber (1997) argue that for young people to participate meaningfully in development work, it is important to stop viewing them as recipients of services, support and training. They must be given opportunities to contribute to local and national development. Therefore, there is need for involving youth in ways that respect their ideas, foster their initiative and include them in decisions of organisational significance that promote self-worth and competence. Rather than alienating and stereotyping youth with negative terms which might further drive them to immoral behaviours such as drug abuse and prostitution, development practitioners and the community at large should devise appropriate strategies that encourage young people to participate in development projects and activities. Kothari (1996) supports this view and clarifies the fact that youth participation in development projects offers them an alternative to gang activity and other abominable acts.

2.5 Theoretical Framework of Determinants of Youth Participation in Rural Development

Participation of youth in rural development programmes is increasingly gaining prominence among rural development academics and practitioners (Mufune, 1999). There are various reasons why there is suddenly a paradigm shift towards mainstreaming the involvement of youth in rural development programmes. These include the need to keep youth occupied and divert their minds from engaging in anti-social behaviours such as drinking alcohol and sexual promiscuity (Pruitt, 2007). However, it has also been observed that youth do not just participate in rural development to avoid being idle but to learn and gain several skills such as leadership skills and like skills in general (Serido and Borden, 2009; Perkins and Noam, 2007). Chigunta (2002) reinforces the importance of skills transfer in stimulating the participation of youth in rural development by noting that most governments have moved from equipping youth with skills for white collar jobs to vocational training.

Youth also participate in rural development as a means for earning a decent living since most African countries are severely affected by continuously rising unemployment levels (Mufune, 1999). Youth have been observed to participate in rural development programmes which yield direct material benefits to them with limited participation in non-remunerated work (Chant and Jones, 2005). The need for employment among youth can also have a negative effect on the

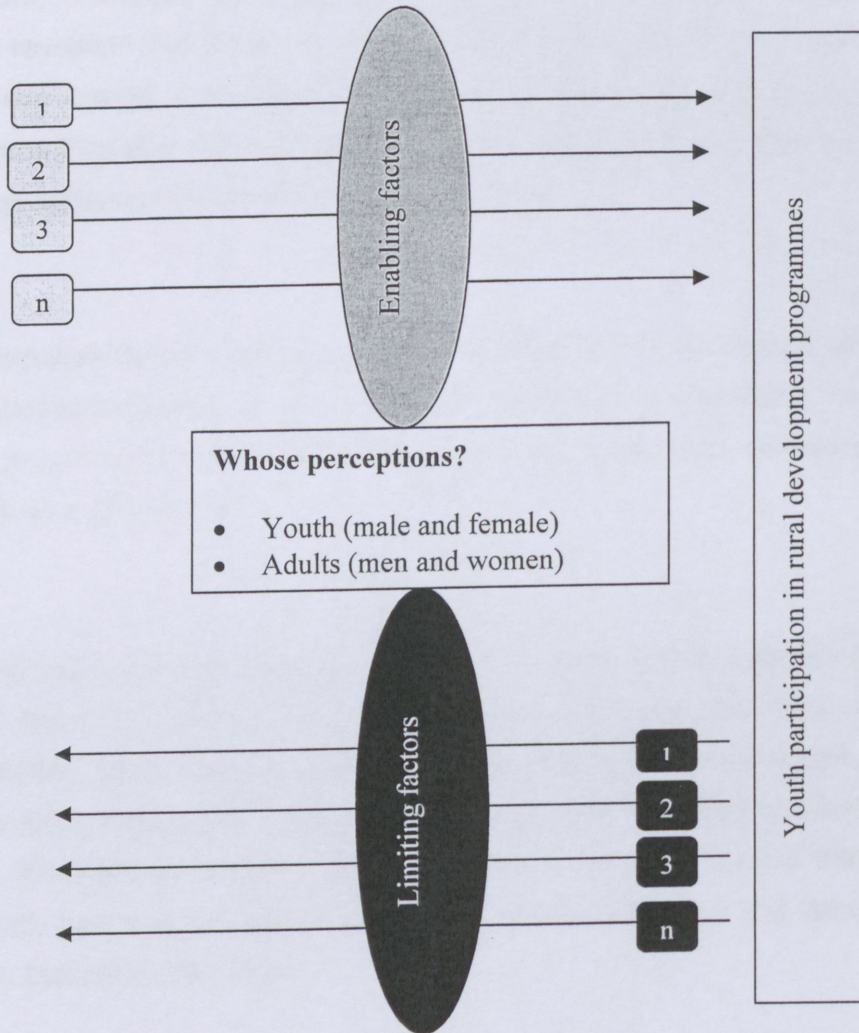
levels of participation of youth in rural development activities. Youth tend to migrate either to urban areas or to neighbouring countries in search of job opportunities (Gough, 2008). The type of rural development programme being implemented has also been noted to determine the level of youth participation. In general, youth seem to participate extensively in social programmes that provide entertainment and reduce boredom (Wegner and Flisher, 2009). In urban areas and other rural centres with access to information technology such as the internet, youth have been noted to participate significantly (Halewood and Kenny, 2008). This is mostly likely to result from the entertainment that internet provides.

Apart from the factors that promote youth participation in community, there are also many issues that limit their involvement in rural development activities. These could be intrinsic within the design of the programme itself or socio-culturally based (Checkoway and Richards-Schuster, 2003). Some programmes are poorly designed such that there is no proper information, which makes it difficult for youth to decide how to participate. Some programmes are designed and led by adults, ostensibly representing youth. There is evidence indicating that youth do not feel comfortable to participate in programmes that involve adults (Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkins, 2005).

Some factors which limit youth participation have their roots in socio-cultural stereotypes which relegate female youth to general household chores while male youth are left with a lot of free time (Okoje, 2003; Chant and Jones, 2005). As a result, there is limited participation of female youth in rural development activities. Early marriages among the female youth compound this challenge. Naudean, Cunningham, Lundberg and McGinnis (2008) argue that most young girls get married too early and they end up being burdened by reproductive and household roles.

Alcohol abuse, gambling and general loitering around places of drinking by youth are regarded as major factors which cause youth not to participate in rural development programmes (Okoje, 2003; Gough, 2008). Therefore, it is important to develop a clear understanding of these determinants of youth participation when designing programmes for youth so that their buy in can be achieved.

This study sought to investigate the determinants of youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe. Figure 2.1 depicts the framework used to build this understanding.



Key: 1..n are the factors either limiting or promoting youth participation

n = nth factor

Figure 2.1 Theoretical/conceptual framework of investigating the determinants of youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province of Zimbabwe

2.6 Summary of Review of Literature

The literature reviewed in this chapter covered a range of salient aspects of youth participation in development work, in addition to explaining the key terms and concepts underpinning this study. It has been revealed that there is no universally accepted definition of youth. However, most practitioners use age as a distinguishing factor since this is the commonest classification variable that countries throughout the world apply. For the purpose of this study 10-30 years old was considered appropriate as commonly used in Zimbabwe.

Even though participation takes many forms and meanings, it can be viewed as taking part, being present to being consulted. In general, youth participation entails the involvement of young people in programmes that they initiate and make controlling decisions about the direction the programme should take.

Apart from clarifying the meanings of the key terms and concepts, the reviewed literature has also revealed that there are various models that both community and youth development practitioners use as they try to make sure young people participate in rural development work. These include tokenising, consulting and giving the youth space to initiate and implement their own programmes. Although the models differ, there is a general agreement that meaningful participation of youth can only be achieved if young people are given the latitude to make decisions on issues that affect their lives.

Common perceptions of adults about youth were also uncovered. Quite often, adults view youth in a negative light and tend to stereotype as well as alienate them. This discourages the youth from participating in rural development initiatives. Chief among the perceptions is the tendency to label youth as problems and also seeking solutions rather than answers to development questions. This means that adults and society should view youth as people who can contribute positively to community development instead of the current approaches that focus on problems.

It is important to recognise that the factors that discourage youth participation are deeply entrenched within the youth themselves. Their failure to know how to participate and recognise the benefits associated with this are some of the commonly identified reasons. The benefits of youth participation include the ability to enable young people to contribute their energy and ideas towards community building and social change.

Although the literature that has been reviewed cited many negative aspects, there is unanimity in the need for promoting youth participation. In spite of this fact, none of the studies have distilled the perceptions of young people on what youth participation entails especially in rural development programmes of Bulilima and Mangwe. Nor are there studies that attempted to compare the perceptions of youth and those of the other members of their communities with respect to participation in rural development work.

The situation highlighted above necessitated the current study, which attempted to fill the identified void in information. It aimed at contributing towards a deeper understanding of the perceptions of youth with respect to participation in rural development programmes of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. In addition, it sought to unravel the perceptions of adults and use them to make recommendations on how to harmonise and manage the relationships between adults and youth. Presumably, when such space is created each one of the two interest groups within communities would participate more meaningfully in rural development. The current study was also undertaken with the hope of equipping rural development practitioners with an in-depth understanding of what youth participation entailed.

3.1 Introduction

This study was carried out in order to generate empirical evidence relating to the factors that hinder or promote youth participation in rural development activities in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. It was organized into two broad categories, namely the exploratory and community perception validation phases. Both phases were designed to derive community perceptions with respect to the determinants of youth participation in rural development initiatives.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was carried out in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. The province had an estimated population of youth which is around, 84 215 males and 92 575 females (Central statistical report, 2002). Both came into existence after the division of the then combined Bulilimamangwe District. They are found in the western part of Zimbabwe and share national boundaries with Botswana. Bulilima District is located on the northern side of Plumtree town and is adjacent to Tsholotsho District. Mangwe District lies on the southern end of Plumtree town with Matobo District being its neighbour.

Bulilima District is made up of 22 wards, which cover a geographical area of about 6 308 km² while Mangwe District has 17 wards that make up 5 459 km² (Department of Lands, Land Reform and Resettlement: DLLRR, 2008). There are predominantly four main types of land uses in the two Districts, namely large-scale commercial, small-scale commercial, villagized resettlement and communal area farming. The Bulilima Rural District Council Turnaround Strategy of 2005-2007 describes this area as predominantly characterized by Savannah type landscape with mopane (*Colophospermum mopane*) and marula (*Sclerocytrea birrea*) woodlands. Based on the agro-ecological zonation system in Zimbabwe, both Districts fall within region V (five) (Cattle Producers Association, 1998). Because of low and erratic annual rainfall, extensive farming is the recommended system. Extensive cattle rearing or game ranching is the only suitable farming system. Mean rainfall averages about 650mm (DLLRR, 2008).

LIBRARY

3.3 Research Design and Sampling Procedures

The study was mainly quantitative in nature. The first phase of the study, which sought to obtain community views on youth participation in rural development activities implemented in their wards, was mainly exploratory. Only those wards known to have been recipients of development programmes participated in this study. Five (5) such wards in Bulilima and three (3) in Mangwe Districts were sampled for the study. This was based on information relating to development programmes obtained from the local District Council records. Thus, purposive sampling was used to select the wards. Purposive sampling involves using one's own judgment to choose, for a particular purpose, exactly who would be included in the sample (Feuerstein, 1986). Purposive sampling ensures that rightful respondents pertaining to the study are included in the sample and hence focusing the study. However in some cases the rightful respondents may not be enough to be fully representative of the study population.

Multi-stage sampling was adopted for the whole study, with a combination of sampling techniques at various stages. Firstly, purposive sampling was used to select five wards in Bulilima District and three in Mangwe District, taking into account the extent to which they were actively involved in rural development programmes. The number of rural development programmes running in the identified wards reflected in the records of the two District Councils gave insight into the potential wards to concentrate on for this study.

Random sampling was used to select one ward in each District to participate in the exploratory phase of the study. Stratified random sampling was chosen to define the composition of reflection circles. A reflection circle refers to a number of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the study (Sim, 1998). Age and gender were used to define the strata.

During the perception validation stage (phase 2 of the study), the remaining four (4) wards in Bulilima and two (2) in Mangwe Districts participated. The two (2) wards that participated in the exploratory stage were not included in the validation phase because their perceptions had been captured and used to develop the questionnaire. As was the case in the exploratory phase, in the perception validation phase, stratified sampling was also used to form reflection circles based on age and gender.

Table 3.1 Summary of the research process in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts

Step in research process	Activity	Bulilima District		Mangwe District		Result
		Number of wards	Number of participants	Number of wards	Number of participants	
1. Sampling of wards for the study	Purposive sampling of wards which were active in rural development	5	-	3	-	Study wards chosen
2. Sampling of wards to participate in the exploratory stage	One (1) ward randomly selected for the exploratory stage	1	-	1	-	Natane (Bulilima) and Ngwanyana (Mangwe) wards selected
3. Exploration	Community-facilitated workshop held to obtain the perceptions on youth participation in rural development	1	59	1	47	Community perceptions, which were then consolidated into a questionnaire requiring responses on a Likert-type scale
4. Perception validation	Community-facilitated workshops held to confirm or reject perceptions obtained during the exploratory stage using the questionnaire	4	143	2	60	Completed questionnaires validating community perceptions

3.4 Data Collection

As described above, data collection was carried out in two phases, namely the exploratory and perception validation stages. The exploratory phase simply served to generate perceptions that would be incorporated into a questionnaire used to collect data in phase 2. The results obtained during the exploratory stage were generally representative of the views of the various social categories that were interviewed as more than one reflective circle was carried out per social category so as to enable triangulation of the views. Table 3.1 summarizes the data collection process from the sampling stage, giving details on the number of wards covered, participants who were interviewed as well as the method of sampling that was adopted. Data were collected through reflection circles that took into account age and sex as possible factors of the way the participants perceived youth participation in rural development initiatives.

3.4.1 Exploratory stage

One researcher-facilitated community workshop was held in each of Natane and Ngwanyana wards in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, respectively. Participants in these workshops were constituted into various interest groups taking age and gender into consideration. A semi-structured interview guide made up of open-ended questions (see Appendix 1) was used to collect data. This took place through reflection circles (Figures 3.1 and 3.2). Each reflection circle was made up of 6-10 participants. Gender and age were critical variables when constituting the reflection circles. Thus, the following interest groups were constituted as reflection circles: female youth; male youth; men and women. In each workshop, reflection circle deliberations were followed by a plenary session where each group presented its perceptions in response to the semi-structured interview guide questions (Figure 3.3). The researcher, working with research assistants, ensured that in the various reflection circles there were no domineering members. In addition, the research team ensured that even the quiet members of the reflection circles contributed their perceptions. In each ward, at least two reflection circles were constituted for each interest group. This enabled triangulation. Triangulation is an approach to data collection and analysis that synthesizes data from multiple sources (Sandelowski, 2000). This is necessary because it helps to validate the results of the study.

3.4.2 Perception validation stage

The results obtained during the two exploratory workshops held in Natane and Ngwanyana wards were collated and consolidated into a questionnaire requiring responses on a Likert-type scale of 1 (disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) (Appendix 1 and 2). Clason and Dormody (2008) note that a traditional Likert scale has five response alternatives, namely strongly approve, approve, undecided, disapprove and strongly disapprove. They further point out that the responses may be as many as seven depending on the researcher's preferences.

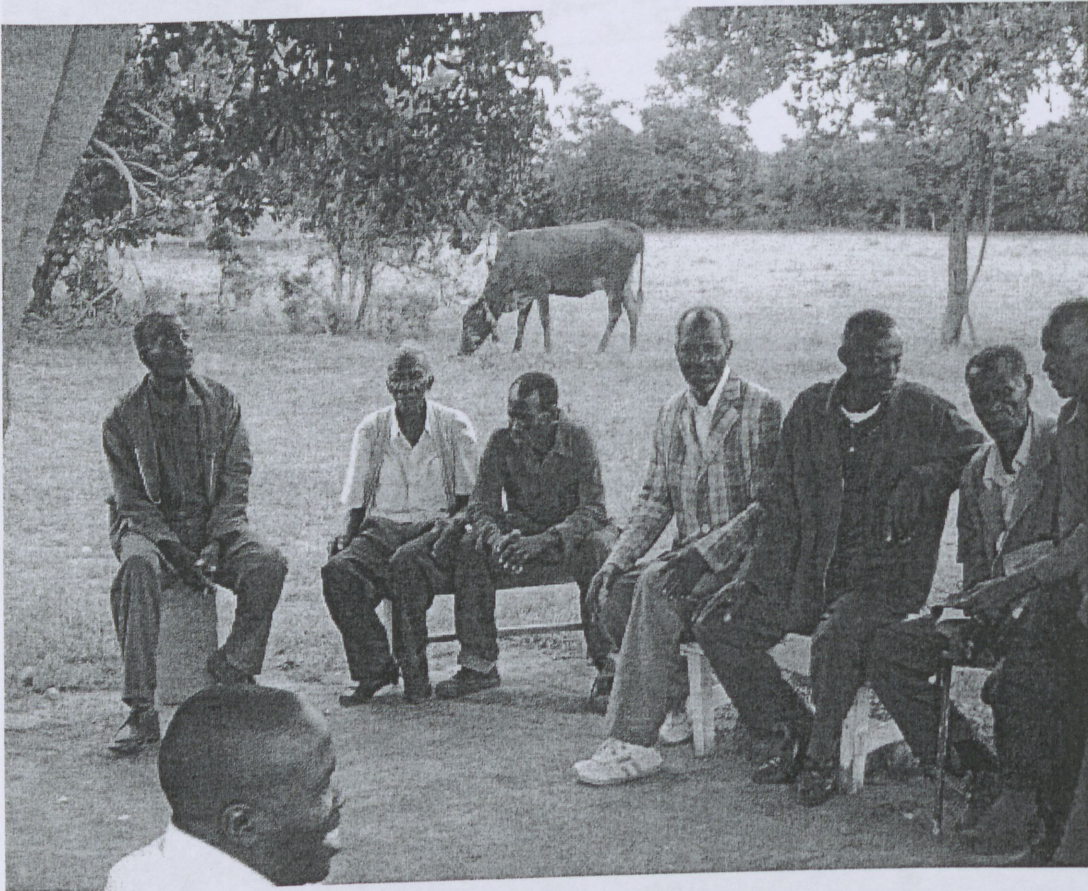


Figure 3.1 Men participating in a reflective circle at Natane ward

Figure 3.3 A female youth presents her group's responses during a plenary session at Ngwanyana ward

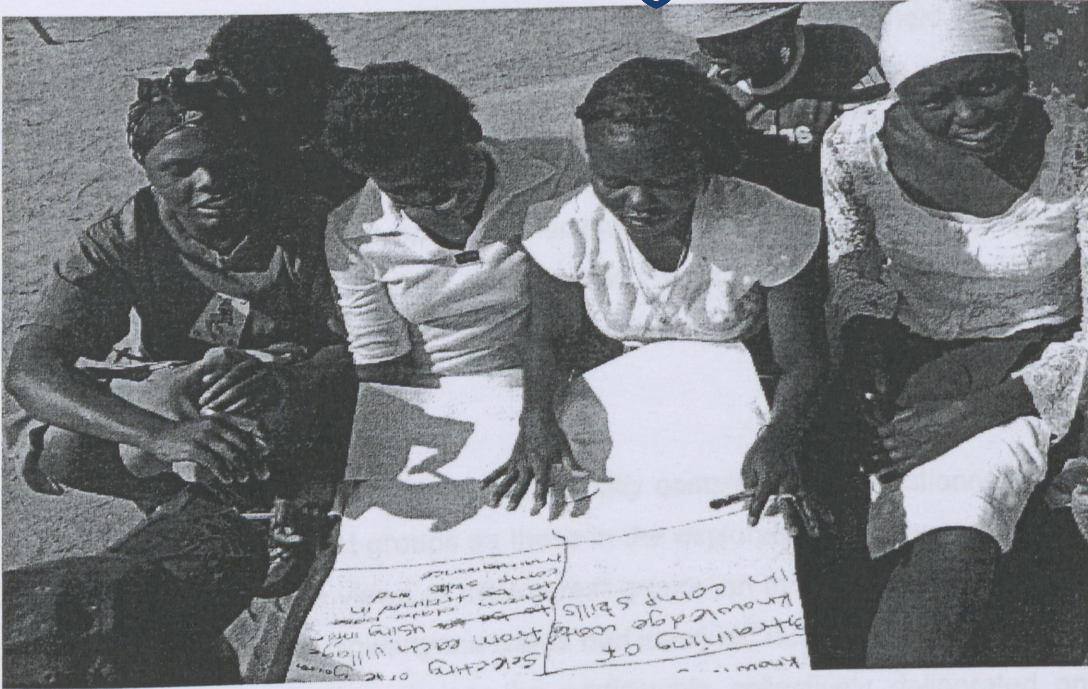


Figure 3.2 Female youth discussing in a reflective circle at Ngwanyana ward

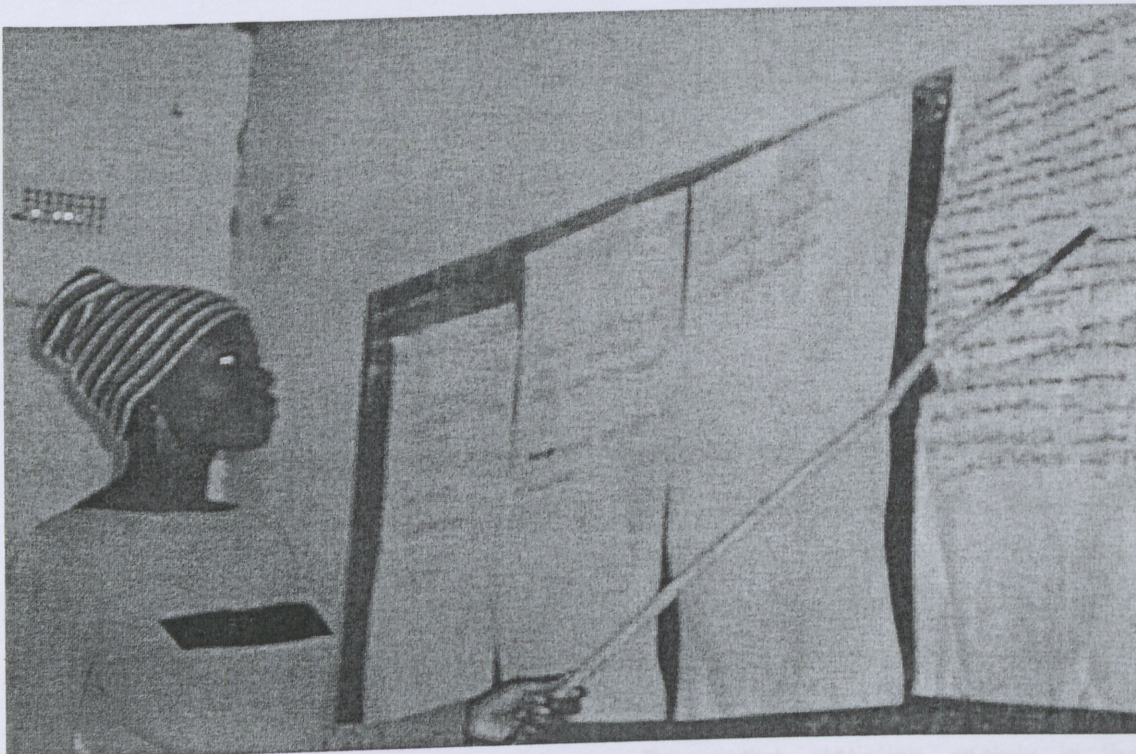


Figure 3.3 A female youth presents her group's responses during a plenary session at Ngwanyana ward

In this study, six researcher-facilitated community workshops were held in four and two wards of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, respectively. All the answers to the questions obtained during the exploratory stage were presented as possible answers that the respondents had to consider as they scored the extent to which they agreed with each one of them. Each respondent completed the questionnaire on his or her own prior to being assigned a reflection circle. The results obtained through analysis of data that the individually completed questionnaires were used to prepare Chapters 4-6.

After each workshop participant had individually completed the questionnaire, reflection circles made up of similar interest groups as those in the exploratory stage were constituted. This was done to obtain collective views of the interest groups on the validity of the perceptions that the residents of Natane and Ngwanyana wards had identified during the perception validation stage. In the respective reflection circles, the participants collectively deliberated on each of the perceptions and assigned one unanimously agreed score. There was unanimous endorsement of the perceptions.

In both the exploratory and perception validation stages, research participants completed a detailed attendance register that captured the demographic information such as age, sex, education level, ward and village of origin of individuals.

3.6 Data Analysis

Both qualitative data and quantitative data were collected. Qualitative data were generated during the exploratory phase of the study when community members gave responses to questions contained in the semi-structured interview guide. The data obtained during this phase were collated and consolidated into a questionnaire requiring responses on a Likert-type scale. As reported earlier, the questionnaire was then used during the perception validation stage. The predominantly nonparametric data were appropriately coded and stored as Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) spreadsheets. Descriptive statistics, mainly in the form of frequencies and cross-tabulations, were computed. Differences in perceptions among the age

groups, sex and District of origin were tested using the Kruskal-Wallis and Mann Whitney U tests.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Existing community leadership structures mobilised local residents who participated in the research workshops held at ward level. The structures included councillors, traditional leaders and representatives of other community-based organisations, where applicable. Chief Executive Officers of both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts provided the written consent to carry out the study after the lead researcher had submitted a detailed proposal that spelt out the whole research, including the fact that the results of this study would be used to prepare a dissertation for Masters in Rural Development degree. The same detailed document was made available to community leaders and research participants.

All the interviewees were informed of their right to withdraw their participation in the study at any stage. Details regarding the entire study were fully disclosed to all participants to enable them to make informed decisions on whether they wanted to participate or not. This helped secure informed consent. According to Family Health International (2001), informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular study to enable them to decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate. An assurance was made that when the results of the study are reported on, names of the participants would not be disclosed. Nor would the results be used for any other purpose besides the dissertation and publication in journals or other academic avenues of sharing research results. The researcher allowed the community members to manage the workshops the way they normally facilitated similar gatherings. Only when accorded the platform to engage the participants did the researcher facilitate the data collection. Upon completing the data gathering exercise the researcher handed over to the community leadership for the purpose of closing the workshop. This was done following the normally adhered to local protocols.

The researcher assured the participants that community feedback on the findings of the research would be given. Further assurance was that written reports would be made available to

the ward councilors and traditional leaders. This would enable community leaders to have an improved understanding of their respective communities. Lastly, the communities were informed that they were free to decide on what to do with the recommendations of the study.

4.1 Introduction

3.5 Summary of Research Methodology

A two-phased research methodology was adopted. Phase 1 was exploratory and collected qualitative data that were consolidated into a questionnaire that required responses on a Likert-type scale. Using reflection circles, collective perceptions of the following interest groups: female youth; male youth; men and women, were obtained. However, only the data collected from individuals using the questionnaire were used to develop Chapters 4-6. The data were mainly nonparametric and thus were analysed using Kruskal-Wallis and Mann Whitney techniques. In Chapters 4-6, the results of this study are presented and discussed.

4.2 Demographic Details of Respondent Participants

Of the 47 people in Ngwenyane, 10 were women and 37 were men. The majority of the participants were aged between 18 and 30 years, with the remainder being aged between 31 and 40 years.

CHAPTER 4 COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS

4.1 Introduction

Youth participation as a concept has gained significant attention from scholars and rural development practitioners in recent years. However a lot of effort has been put in trying to understand what youth participation entails such that suitable models and methodologies could be developed and implemented in trying to ensure that youth participate. Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2003) argue that youth participation entails young people discussing their own problems rather than ones given by adults, designing their own age-appropriate methods rather than uncritically accepting adult ones. Checkoway (2010) points out that youth participation strengthens personal and social development as well as providing expertise for youth. It is against this background that this study sought to understand community perceptions on youth participation in rural development programmes.

Chapter 4 reveals what communities in both Districts perceived as the meaning of youth participation in rural development. The projects in which youth participated are identified. Also, the chapter discloses what the community perceived as the reasons for unsatisfactory youth participation in rural development programmes.

4.2 Demographic Details of Research Participants

Of the 47 people in Ngwanyana ward who participated in the exploratory study, 32 were youth with the remainder being adults. Almost 60 % of the total number of respondents were male.

Forty-one adults and 18 youth in Natane ward participated in the exploratory study, almost 68 % of whom being females.

During the perception validation stage, 203 respondents from the two Districts were interviewed. There were 60 interviewees from Mangwe District, constituting 30 % of total number of respondents while Bulilima District had 143 interviewees who accounted for the remaining 70 %. Vulindlela ward of Bulilima District had the largest number of respondents (62) while Somnene ward had the least (10). Somnene ward is a small-scale farming area with 46 plots. Thus, it is not surprising that such a small number of people turned up to participate in the research workshops.

4.3 Community Perceptions on the Meaning of Youth Participation

Table 4.1 provides information on what the respondents from both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts regarded as youth participation in rural development. Eighty percent (80 %) of the respondents in Mangwe District and an almost equal proportion (82 %) of those in Bulilima viewed youth participation in rural development programmes as young people implementing self-generated ideas and innovations. Other perceptions on the meaning of youth participation were: being involved in community development work in their wards (78% in Mangwe and 84% in Bulilima District); and participating in social activities such as AIDS action clubs. Adults, in particular, viewed assisting in general community duties or chores such as organizing community meetings and functions as youth participation.

4.4 Perceived Youth Participation by Age, Sex and District

As shown in Table 4.2, the perceptions of adults and youth on the meaning of youth participation were similar ($P > 0.05$). Nor were there significant differences in the perceptions between Mangwe and Bulilima Districts (Table 4.2). However, the mean rank for females (102.46) was greater ($P < 0.05$) than that for males (101.26).

4.5 Youth Participation in Rural Community Development Projects

Most of the interviewees indicated that they had participated in some of the rural development projects and programmes presented in Table 4.3. The projects and programmes were both social and infrastructural in nature, including AIDS action clubs, caring for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), toilet construction, borehole rehabilitation and agricultural initiatives.

About 15 % of the interviewees in Mangwe District had not participated in any of the rural development programmes or projects compared to 8 % in Bulilima. Between 50 and 60 % of the interviewees in both Districts had participated in predominantly social programmes such as soccer, netball and drama (Table 4.3).

Table 4.1 perceptions of residents of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts on what youth participation means

Perceptions	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n=60) who:			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n=143) who:		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
a) Involvement in sports	8	14	78	16	14	70
b) Involvement in community development work	9	13	78	5	11	84
c) Participating in social clubs such as AIDS action clubs	8	12	80	7	14	79
d) Assisting in different community chores	13	15	72	13	11	76
e) Implementing own ideas and innovations	3	17	80	9	9	82
f) Being trained in various skills	20	30	50	16	18	66

n = sample size (total number of respondents)

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Table 4.2 differences in perceptions on the meaning of youth participation between age groups, sexes and Districts

Perceptions on what youth participation means	Mean ranks for age groups		Mean ranks for sexes		Mean ranks for Districts				
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n = 72)	Significant difference	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Significant difference	Mangw (n = 60)	Bulilima (n = 143)	Significant difference
a) Involvement in sports	105.45	95.73	ns	95.43	106.10	ns	100.08	102.81	ns
b) Involvement in community development work	106.19	94.38	ns	107.53	98.55	ns	98.02	103.67	ns
c) Participating in social clubs such as AIDS action clubs	103.56	99.17	ns	100.71	102.80	ns	104.38	101.00	ns
d) Assisting in different community chores	105.66	95.33	ns	105.50	99.82	ns	100.36	102.69	ns
e) Implementing own ideas and innovations	101.41	103.08	ns	101.26	102.46	*	100.12	102.79	ns
f) Being trained in various skills	103.86	98.62	ns	92.89	107.68	ns	91.08	106.58	ns

* = $p < 0.05$ ** = $p < 0.01$ *** = $p < 0.001$ ns = no significant difference n = sample size (number of respondents)

Table 4.3 proportion of residents who participated in rural development projects per District

Project that respondents participated in	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n=60) who:			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n=143) who:		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
a) None	77	8	15	84	8	8
b) Food for work	42	18	40	32	13	55
c) Soccer	38	7	55	39	6	55
d) Netball	32	18	50	36	10	54
e) Drama	28	15	57	41	6	53
f) AIDS Action clubs	45	15	40	41	11	48
g) Sibambene projects	65	18	17	56	18	26
h) Catholic development commission	65	22	13	58	20	22
i) Toilets construction	65	20	15	56	20	24
j) Mvuramanzi Trust projects	63	23	14	58	16	26
k) Borehole rehabilitation	59	18	23	57	9	34
l) Building	50	17	33	48	12	40
m) Vocational training	48	13	39	45	11	44
n) Agriculture(crop production)	50	15	35	39	15	46
o) Carpentry	56	10	34	41	13	46
p) Brickmoulding	58	23	19	41	22	37
q) Cattle breeding	65	15	20	51	13	36
r) Goat keeping	73	9	18	56	8	36
s) Foster parents for OVCs	68	8	24	47	12	41

n = sample size (total number of interviewees)

Table 4.4 Effect of age, sex and District on community members' perceptions relating to projects they participated in

Projects participated in	Mean ranks for age groups			Mean ranks for sexes			Mean ranks for Districts		
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n = 72)	Significance difference	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Significance difference	Mangwe (n = 60)	Bulilima (n = 143)	Significance difference
a) None	102.98	100.21	ns	105.71	99.69	ns	107.51	99.69	ns
b) Nutrition gardens	99.06	107.35	ns	99.08	103.82	ns	94.28	105.24	ns
c) Poultry	98.60	108.18	ns	102.05	101.97	ns	97.88	103.73	ns
d) Food for work	95.64	113.57	*	102.04	101.98	ns	90.66	106.76	ns
e) Soccer	98.43	108.49	ns	108.88	97.71	ns	102.53	101.78	ns
f) Netball	100.94	103.92	ns	87.22	111.22	**	99.98	102.85	ns
g) Drama	107.93	91.22	*	102.21	101.87	ns	108.63	99.22	ns
h) AIDS Action clubs	106.15	94.44	ns	106.61	99.12	ns	98.88	103.31	ns
i) Student Partnership Worldwide	103.35	99.53	ns	106.25	99.35	ns	94.44	105.17	ns
j) Sibabene projects	101.63	102.67	ns	107.78	98.39	ns	93.53	105.56	ns
k) Catholic development commission	102.23	101.58	ns	106.28	99.33	ns	94.69	105.07	ns
l) Toilets construction	100.42	104.88	ns	101.78	102.14	ns	93.97	105.37	ns
m) Mvuramanzi Trust projects	97.22	106.60	ns	97.51	102.37	ns	93.40	103.54	ns

Projects participated in	Mean ranks for age groups			Mean ranks for sexes			Mean ranks for Districts		
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n = 72)	Significance difference	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Significance difference	Mangwe (n = 60)	Bulilima (n = 143)	Significance difference
n) Borehole rehabilitation	102.29	101.47	ns	110.04	96.98	ns	97.34	103.95	ns
o) Building	103.45	99.37	ns	106.62	99.12	ns	97.71	103.80	ns
p) Vocational training	101.45	103.01	ns	103.01	101.37	ns	96.77	104.20	ns
q) Agriculture(crop production)	100.00	105.65	ns	103.62	100.99	ns	90.58	106.79	ns
r) Carpentry	101.48	100.13	ns	111.60	94.28	*	90.75	105.26	ns
s) Brickmoulding	101.52	102.87	ns	100.22	103.11	ns	85.29	109.01	**
t) Cattle breeding	96.19	112.56	*	89.42	109.85	**	89.56	107.22	*
u) Goat keeping	97.77	109.70	ns	94.73	106.54	ns	88.95	107.48	*
v) Foster parents for OVCs	96.37	112.24	*	92.68	107.82	*	86.59	108.47	**

* = p < 0.05 ** = p < 0.01 ns = no significant difference n = sample size (total number of interviewees).

4.5.1 Differences in perceptions relating to participation in rural development projects by age of respondent

In general, youth and adults had participated in similar rural development programmes in both Bulilima and Mangwe (Table 4.4). The mean ranks for adults were higher for most programmes except those of a social nature such as drama and also those that are traditionally youth-focused such as Student Partnership Worldwide.

Although youth and adults had similar perceptions regarding the extent of participation of young people in most types of projects implemented in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, significant differences ($P < 0.05$) were observed with respect to food for work, drama, cattle breeding and foster parenting for OVC (Table 4.4). The mean ranks for adults were higher than those for youth with respect to food for work programmes, cattle breeding as well as foster parenting for orphans and vulnerable children. However, for drama, the mean rank for the perceptions of youth was significantly higher ($P < 0.05$) than that for adults.

4.5.2 Differences in perceptions relating to participation in rural development projects by sex of respondent

Besides netball, carpentry, cattle breeding and foster parenting activities, no significant differences were observed in the perceptions of male and female interviewees regarding participation of young people in most rural development programmes (Table 4.4). The mean ranks for the perceptions of females were higher for netball and cattle breeding ($P < 0.01$) and foster parenting activities ($P < 0.05$). As for carpentry, the mean rank for the perceptions of males was higher ($P < 0.01$) than that for females.

4.5.3 Inter-District differences in perceptions relating to projects that respondents participated in

The mean ranks for the perceptions of females on brick moulding and foster parents for OVCs, were significantly higher than those for males ($P < 0.01$), and cattle breeding and goat keeping

($P < 0.05$). As shown in Table 4.4, there were no differences in mean ranks for the perceptions of males and females relating to the other programmes implemented in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts.

4.6 Perceptions Relating to Youth Participation in Rural Development Projects

Youth were said to participate mostly in programmes and projects presented in Table 4.5. Almost all the interviewees in Mangwe and Bulilima identified soccer as the major activity in which youth, especially males were participating in. In numerical terms, participation of youth in AIDS action clubs, brick moulding and gardening projects was more common in Mangwe compared to Bulilima District (Table 4.5).

The reasons for poor youth participation in rural development programmes are shown in Table 4.6. More than half of the interviewees in Mangwe (58 %) and Bulilima (60 %) believed that youth were not interested in participating in development programmes. Approximately, 70 % of the interviewees in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts said that youth were migrating to Botswana and South Africa (Table 4.6). As a result, their participation in rural development was not visible. The few youth who remained in the two Districts rarely attended development-focused meetings where programmes were either formulated or introduced. This observation seemed to be linked to the observation made by some respondents that parents denied the youth the opportunity to participate in meetings. There was also a perception that there were no programmes or projects specifically designed for youth in both Districts.

Table 4.5 proportion of responses in respect to which projects youth participate in by District

Projects/programs in which youth participated	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n=60) who:			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n=143) who:		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
a) Soccer	6	2	92	6	4	90
b) Mvuramanzi Trust projects	33	53	14	43	30	27
c) AIDS action clubs	13	12	75	33	12	55
d) Building	28	32	40	34	21	45
e) Vocational trainings	18	33	48	21	18	62
f) Agriculture	32	33	35	29	17	54
g) Cattle rearing	42	43	15	47	28	25
h) Carpentry	28	20	52	32	13	55
i) Brick moulding	21	7	72	31	7	62
j) Garden projects	13	10	77	18	5	77

n = sample size (Total number of interviewees)

Table 4.6 proportion of respondents with respect to reasons of low youth participation by District

Perception on reasons for low youth participation	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n=60) who:			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n=143) who:		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
a) No interest in development activities	27	15	58	25	15	60
b) Youth migrate to South Africa	15	13	72	11	8	81
c) No projects for youth ^a	42	25	33	31	19	50
d) Few youth attend meetings	20	12	68	13	12	75
e) No programs for youth ^b	33	25	42	29	23	48
f) Denied permission to attend by parents	23	14	63	15	16	69
g) Not encouraged to participate	28	17	55	25	11	64

n=sample size (number of respondents)

a and b; programmes usually comprise a number of projects deigned to achieve a certain goal.

Table 4.7 shows that the mean rank for the perception, "Not encouraged to participate" for adults was significantly lower ($P < 0.05$) than that for youth. There were no differences in perceptions of adults and youth in relation to all the other perceptions (Table 4.7).

Table 4.6 Effect of age, sex and District on the perceptions of community members with respect to reasons of low youth participation

Perceptions on reasons for low youth participation	Mean ranks for age groups		Mean ranks for sexes		Mean ranks for Districts				
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n= 72)	Significant difference	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Significant difference	Mangwe (n = 60)	Bulilima (n = 143)	Significant difference
a) No interest in development activities	100.77	104.24	ns	98.87	103.95	ns	100.31	102.71	ns
b) Youth migrate to South Africa	103.17	99.87	ns	110.47	96.47	ns	94.01	105.35	ns
c) No projects for youth	101.10	103.64	ns	109.40	97.38	ns	90.53	106.81	ns
d) Few youth attend meetings	106.47	93.88	ns	108.39	98.01	ns	93.58	105.53	ns
e) No programs for youth	103.55	99.19	ns	104.28	100.58	ns	97.31	103.97	ns
f) Denied permission to attend by parents	102.21	101.63	ns	99.16	103.77	ns	98.53	103.45	ns
g) Not encouraged to participate	108.08	90.93	*	105.56	99.78	ns	94.26	105.25	ns

* = p < 0.05 ns = no significant difference n = sample size (total number of interviewees)

4.8 Discussion

Respondents' understanding of youth participation in rural development and associated effects of age, sex and district are explained. In addition, the reasons for poor youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts are discussed.

4.8.1 Meaning of youth participation in rural development

Most adults and youth perceived youth participation as just being present in some events and providing manual labour whenever needed. This was revealed by the fact that most respondents agreed with the view that youth participation meant "involvement in community development activities" or "involvement in sports" but could not qualify what "involvement" entailed. Checkoway (2010) notes that youth participation is a process of involving young people in the institutions and decisions that affect their lives with active engagement and real influence. He argues that passive presence or token roles in adult agencies was not youth participation. In this study, youth pointed out that their participation meant "implementing own ideas and innovation". This meant that the youth felt that they were merely implementing adult-conceived programmes with no opportunity to generate and implement their own ideas. One youth from Vulindlela ward remarked: *'sifuna ukuzenzela inhlelo zethu senze samaphutha ukuze sifunde kuwo kumbe sijabule nxa senze kuhle'* (we need to initiate our own programmes, make our own mistakes and learn from them or celebrate our own success). This means youth would generate their own ideas as well as design and lead implementation of programmes. Checkoway (2010) supports this view and observes that real youth participation entails the strategy by which they are involved in goal setting, resource allocation, and programme implementation. In this way, they define the means by which they influence the opportunities and outcomes of the larger society. This ensures that the quality of participation is measured not by inappropriate indicators such as the number of young people who attend certain events but by their effect on the process, extent to which they influence a particular decision, and their input in producing a favourable outcome (Checkoway and Richards-Schuster, 2003). Biggs and Smith (1998) buttress this view by noting that participation should go beyond merely including

certain kinds of individuals to represent a particular group of people as quite often the broader views, aspirations and dreams may not be adequately captured.

Lack of proper understanding of what youth participation meant was indicated by the fact that respondents cited programmes in which youth were involved in instead of the actual activities they participated in. Some of the programmes that were cited included “participating in social clubs such as AIDS action clubs” and “being trained in various skills”. These were merely activities or programmes in which youth participated but they did not define what youth participation entailed.

4.8.2 Age and sex as factors of participation in rural development

The participation of the interviewees in community development programmes followed the traditional trends in most activities with a few deviations from the expected trend. For example, youth participated more than adults in social activities such as sports, drama and clubs. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that drama and sports activities provide entertainment, which invariably attracts youth. However, these recreational activities also help youth to build leadership skills such as communication, cooperation and nonviolent handling of conflict (Wessells and Monteiro, 2006; Perkins and Noam, 2007). Malebo, Van Eeden and Wissing (2007) argue that participation in sport on a collective level could create a shared identity, connectedness as well as a sense of belonging that could translate into nation building.

Females participated mostly in netball activities than males. This was not surprising because traditionally, netball is a sport meant for females. It was interesting to note that a substantial number of males participated in netball activities. However, they served mainly as administrators and organizers of the activities but not as players.

There was a deviation from the expected norm in cattle breeding activities, which showed that females participated more than males. A possible explanation for this could be that in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts the majority of able-bodied males left to seek employment opportunities in neighbouring Botswana and South Africa, leaving behind spouses to look after

families. As such, the females were *de jure* heads of households who had to assume roles that were beyond those traditionally assigned to them (cattle breeding included). Due to the continued absence of males, females assumed leadership of the previously male dominated activities.

The study revealed that adults participated more than youth in foster parenting programmes for orphans and vulnerable children. Presumably, this originated from the fact that foster parenting involved taking guardianship of orphans. Fostering often involves shouldering the responsibility of taking care of or providing basic needs for the orphans. As such, most youth could not participate in such programmes because their resources were not adequate resources to meet the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.

Adults participated more in cattle breeding activities than youth. Cattle are high value assets which grant community members a respectable social status (Jeffrey, 2008). Thus, it is not surprising that adults participated in such programmes that had the potential to change their economic and social standing within their communities. Furthermore, cattle breeding programmes usually take longer periods for the participants to realize benefits and demand a certain level of patience which the highly mobile and often restless youth may not have (Jeffrey, 2008). Bennell (2007) observes that rural youth tend to be relatively mobile across national and international boundaries. The results of this study confirmed this, with the local youth migrating to Botswana and South Africa in search of greener pastures.

Youth, in particular males, seemed to participate mostly in activities such as brick moulding and gardening which could earn them some income on an on-going basis. The possibility of excessive household chores leaving female youth with little time for other activities could not be ruled out as the reason why they did not feature prominently in the brick moulding and gardening projects (Wessells and Monteiro, 2006). Also, some female youth who participated in this study argued that most youth programmes were designed for their male counterparts because quite often they required physical strength which made them only suitable for males.

4.8.3 Existence of rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts

The current study revealed that a considerable number (18) of rural development programmes had been implemented or were on-going in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. They were

mostly externally initiated and funded. The programmes varied in nature, ranging from infrastructural development to social activities. Out of the 18 programmes/projects within the study communities only four were designed for youth, namely drama, soccer, netball and vocational training. Adults mainly participated in the remaining 14 rural development programmes. This implies that most of the available programmes were meant for and led by adults, thereby effectively excluding youth. It can be inferred from the results of this study that youth in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were disadvantaged by the unavailability of programmes meant for them. Serido and Borden (2009) observe that youth-oriented programmes prepare young people for successful transition to young adulthood. Also, Wessells and Monteiro (2006:127) posit that “By engaging youth as advisors in developing programmes and as agents in implementing them, youth take ownership for projects and acquire new competences through their participation”. Therefore, development practitioners need to be sensitive to issues that affect young people when designing and implementing programmes since this has a high potential of ensuring that there is a high level of youth participation. This entails enlisting the assistance of youth when designing the programmes.

Adults mainly participated in most rural development programmes available in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. This implies that most of the available programmes were meant for and led by adults, thereby effectively excluding youth. The culture of the people within both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts entails that youth keep their distance from adults as a sign of respect. There is need to understand and respect this when designing programmes. Fuduka-Parr (2004:5) points out that “understanding cultural traditions can offer insights to human behaviour and social dynamics that influence development outcomes”. Because of this problem, programmes that involve joint participation of youth and adults end up having adults only because the former try to uphold the expected cultural norms.

Despite the fact that there were fewer programmes designed for them, youth still participated in local development programmes. Although this was so, improved youth participation in rural development can only be realized if there are adequate programmes designed for and/by youth. When they participate in such programmes, the youth do not feel excluded from them.

4.8.4 Reasons for poor participation of youth in rural development

Various reasons for poor participation of youth in rural development programmes were cited. Most youth were said to be migrating to neighbouring Botswana and South Africa in search of employment. As a result, only a few remained in the communities. Unavailability of employment opportunities often drives away rural youth to other areas in search of jobs and income sources (Mears, 1997). Bennell (2007) argues that rural to urban migration is an essential part of livelihood coping strategies for youth. In Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, those that remained behind were usually engaged in other informal income-generating activities such as cross border trading.

Okojie (2003) contends that because of stagnant economies and low economic growth rates, youth unemployment is an important and major problem facing African countries today. Most youth are highly mobile as they search for livelihood improvement opportunities. Consequently, their attempt to address immediate and pressing needs forces the youth not to have time to participate in rural development activities. Their needs go beyond financial and material resources to elevate their social status within their communities. Being unemployed has always been associated with low anti-social tendencies in terms of morals, implying that most youth would like to be formally employed so that they can earn the respect of the community. This view finds support from Du Toit (2003) who observes that there is a social dimension to being employed.

The occupation or work that individuals are involved in determines to a large extent where and how they live, the community and organizations in which they participate. Mufune (1999:2) buttresses this point by noting that "Employment constitutes a highly valued activity in Southern Africa, as the most important link between an individual and the economies of these countries is whether or not one has a job". Many other social aspects of lives and social status have long been associated with individuals' jobs. Thus, provision and enhancement of services which focus on employment skills and opportunities for youth are likely to encourage and empower youth (Kaplan, Skolnik and Turnball, 2009).

The absence of programmes or projects specifically designed for and by youth was cited as a major impediment to their participation in rural development. Fairweather (2006) supports this and argues that youth programmes and policies tend to be constructed by members of an older generation. As a result, they lack full appreciation of issues affecting youth. Hartje, Evans, Killian and Brown (2007) support the need for addressing this concern and point out that as attention to the value of promoting positive development in young people increases, greater emphasis should be placed on the role of organized community-based youth programmes. The programmes must be informed by the input of youth themselves. Only when this happens do young people become interested in participating actively in them.

In this study it was indicated that youth were not encouraged to participate in development activities. Some parents even denied the young people the permission to participate in development-focused meetings. Probably, parents behaved in this manner due to a mistaken belief that shutting out the youth from participating in community development work they were protecting them from societal ills (Fairweather, 2006). Such actions stemmed from the ill-informed view that youth are troublesome, violent and destructive (Fairweather, 2006). If this was the reason, parents should be made to understand that youth are complete individuals who have the right and ability to participate in programmes that affect their lives. Urban (2008) believes that most successful programmes view youth as resources to be developed as opposed to problems. Such programmes provide a safe, caring environment where adults are supportive and empower the young people (Richards, 2007). Through assigning activities that are challenging and involving the youth at all stages of the project cycle, young people assume a sense of belonging and feel valued (Urban, 2008).

Benefits of participating in development need to be clearly spelt out to youth. This study revealed that some youth did not participate in development programmes because the benefits of doing so were not clearly visible. Sader and Weideman (2004) share this view, pointing out that the benefits of participation are rarely clear to young people.

Adultism was noted to be a factor which influenced youth participation in rural development. Adults often believe they know the types of programmes that are good for youth (Watts and

Flanagan, 2007). This study indicated that adults' ideas and thoughts did not resonate with the aspirations of youth. For effective youth participation to be achieved the gap between them and adults need to be closed, a view that Nnaemego (2009) aptly captures. He argues that in order for youth engagement to be successful, obstacles which are intrinsic and endemic within communities must be overcome. Such obstacles include, among others the divergence between what adults believe is important for youth to do and what they actually do (Weinstein, Plumb and Brawer, 2006). Adults need to provide moral and social support to the participation of youth in rural development activities. Brennan, Barnett and Baugh (2007) observe that a supportive and reinforcing parental relationship may have a greater contribution to civic engagement of youth. This suggests that adults should stop viewing young people as immature or psychologically disordered as this poses a serious barrier to authentic collaboration (Watts and Flanagan, 2007).

4.9 Conclusions

This study revealed that although there were no significant differences across age, sex and District of origin on the understanding of what youth participation entailed, there were significant differences noted with respect to which project or programme the youth participated in. This implies that meaningful youth participation in rural development can be realized through taking into consideration age and sex of the participants as well as the geographical area of implementation, besides observing local cultural norms and values when designing programmes. Ignoring and not respecting these issues may hinder effective youth participation.

Most rural development programmes were found to be mainly designed for adults. Youth did not realize the material or financial benefits of their participation in rural development programmes. As such, they migrated to Botswana and South Africa in search of job opportunities. It was confirmed that rural development practitioners should unveil more youth-centred programmes. Such an approach would help the youth realize something in the process of participation as they strive to take care of their social and economic needs.

CHAPTER 5: FACTORS PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WITHIN BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS

5.1 Introduction

A myriad of factors influence youth participation in rural development. The factors are socio-economic, cultural and political in nature (Jeffrey, 2008). An interaction of these factors determines the level and nature of participation of youth in rural development programmes. Quite often, the extent to which these factors influence youth participation in rural development vary from one geographical area to another. This necessitates area-specific studies in order to devise local solutions to location-specific factors. In this chapter, the results of an investigation into the factors that promoted youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe are presented and discussed.

5.2 Community Perceptions on the Factors Promoting Youth Participation

The people who participated in this study in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts concurred on the factors that promoted youth participation in rural development programmes (Table 5.1). As shown in Table 5.1, the proportions of respondents who endorsed that these were indeed factors that enhanced participation of youth in rural development were high.

Table 5.1 Proportion of responses on perceptions of factors that encourage youth participation by District

Perceptions on factors that encourage youth participation	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n=60)			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n=143)		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
a) Availability of youth programmes	8	12	80	10	8	82
b) Provision of various skill training	5	12	83	11	9	80
c) Lack of employment	42	26	32	41	18	41
d) Provision of entertainment	10	33	57	20	21	59
e) Sport	12	11	77	20	6	74
f) Curiosity	2	20	78	11	12	77
g) Vocational trainings	3	10	87	9	5	86
h) Provision of scholarships	7	15	78	8	4	88
i) Availability of incentives	3	17	80	11	10	79
j) Existence of different activities	8	25	67	13	23	64
k) Successful projects in the community	0	13	87	11	11	78

n = sample size (number of respondents)

Table 5.6 differences in perceptions on factors promoting youth participation due to age, sex and District of interviewees

Factors promoting youth participation	Mean ranks for age groups		Mean ranks for sexes		Mean ranks for Districts		
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n = 72)	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Mangwale (n = 60)	Bulilim (n = 143)	Significance of difference
a) Availability of youth programmes	102.78	100.58	103.56	101.02	97.44	103.91	ns
b) Provision of various skill training	107.41	92.15	107.46	98.60	98.81	103.34	ns
c) Lack of employment	104.61	97.25	107.13	98.80	98.20	103.59	ns
d) Provision of entertainment	109.89	87.65	109.78	97.14	103.43	101.40	ns
e) Sport	103.75	98.82	105.59	99.76	105.71	100.44	ns
f) Curiosity	105.78	95.12	107.06	98.84	102.56	101.77	ns
g) Vocational trainings	103.51	99.26	108.25	98.10	104.83	100.81	ns
h) Provision of scholarships	103.13	99.94	108.37	98.02	103.18	101.50	ns
i) Availability of incentives	104.52	97.42	103.59	101.01	102.86	101.64	ns
j) Existence of different activities	103.97	98.42	106.83	98.99	101.81	102.08	ns
k) Successful projects in the community	102.52	101.06	104.49	100.45	109.47	98.87	ns

* = p < 0.05 ** = p < 0.01 ns = no significant difference

n = sample size (number of respondents)

It is shown in Table 5.2 that for most of the perceptions, there were no significant differences in the mean ranks for adults and youth, males and females as well as Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. However, the mean ranks were significantly higher with respect to the perceptions, “provision of various skills training” ($P < 0.05$); and “provision of entertainment” ($P < 0.01$) compared to adults.

5.3 Discussion

This discussion is anchored on four major factors identified in both Districts. The factors were “availability of youth programmes”, “provision of various skills trainings”, “availability of incentives”, and “successful projects in the community”. The proceeding sections are devoted to discussing the perceptions on the factors, aiming to explore the implications for development in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts.

It was revealed that youth needed tangible benefits for them to participate in rural development programmes and projects. Most of the youth were not gainfully employed. As a result, they viewed participating in rural development as a way of donating their labour in return for some reward. This argument finds support from Emmett (2000), who says that it is rational and correct for people to expect some kind of return on the time and energy they invest in a community project. “Availability of incentives” as factor coupled with “provision of scholarships” were the other factors that enhanced youth participation

This study was conducted in Rural District Council wards where some disadvantaged youth had received scholarships from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to study in some Universities in Southern African countries, mainly Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. For this reason, it was not surprising that “provision of scholarships” encouraged youth participation in rural development work. Brennan, Barnett and Baugh (2007) support the view that scholarships can encourage youth participation. The authors observe that youth get involved because of hopes of improving their chances of getting into college. Most rural youth are unemployed and are predominantly preoccupied with fending for their lives. Possibly, this explains their need for incentives. Bennell (2007) points out that there is need to focus on livelihood improvement of youth.

The current study revealed that youth tended to participate in rural development programmes and projects which had a noticeable skills transfer component. Serido and Borden (2009) support this view and note that through their participation in such programmes, young people have access to opportunities to learn and build important skills. Mufune (1999) argues for inclusion of skills development as an important component of rural development initiatives if they are to attract participation of youth. He further points out that this seems to compel most governments to move away from youth service programmes which have more paramilitary and political content to those with skills-cum-production activities. Chigunta (2002) believes that relevant and quality skills can help youth to master their lives and contribute to the development of their country.

The people who participated in this study in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were of the view that experience in successful completion of projects in the communities inspired youth to participate in rural development programmes. It was revealed that there were many examples of projects and programmes in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts that had been abandoned before completion. Thus, they were not prepared to be associated with such failures. This is supported by Laser and Leibowitz (2009) who argue that by combining their social capital, youth aim to make a positive contribution in their communities.

Most of the factors that promoted youth participation in rural development in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were related to incentives and tangible benefits (provision of training in various skills, promise of scholarships and availability of incentives). This participation for material gain raises pertinent questions about the sustainability of such programmes. Most likely, once the incentive stimulus fades participation of youth in the development programmes would also stop. In addition, the perpetuation of incentives as handouts to youth would reduce them to a 'charity case'. Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2000) buttress this assertion by pointing out that a charity perspective perpetuates the community as needy. Kakumba and Nsingo (2008) caution against entrenching a dependency syndrome in communities by observing that donor-conceived plans should integrate strategies that enable decision making so as to attain strong local ownership and empowerment. Thus, it is important to continue searching for more

sustainable ways of promoting youth participation in rural community development (Small and Memmo, 2004).

The fact that youth and adults held divergent views in relation to some of the factors that encouraged participation of young people in rural development strengthened the call for adults to let youth make pertinent decisions on the design and implementation of their programmes. This is particularly important because adults are unlikely to be always correct about what youth think and need.

Checkoway (2010) argues that it is difficult for youth to participate when adults view them as deficits rather than resources. Based on this argument, it seems that programmes that bridge the divide between youth and adults would encourage the former's participation in rural development. Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkins (2005) provide compelling evidence of the fact that youth programmes can effectively bridge the gap between adults and youth, thereby strengthening social capital within the community. When this happens, youth may become more productive, visible and better appreciated in their communities. However, the youth programmes should be carefully analyzed for content, process and outcomes. The fact that not all youth development programmes yield positive desired outcomes (Calvert and Zeldin, 2002) informs this argument.

5.4 Conclusions

The factors that were found to enhance youth participation in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts included the following: availability of different programmes for youth; skills training in various fields; unemployment; provision of entertainment; curiosity; probability of sponsorships/scholarships; availability of incentives; successful projects in the community; sport; and vocational training. Considering the fact that youth participation in rural development in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts was mostly incentive-driven, voluntary participation with no tangible benefits would be unlikely to appeal to the youth. This implies that exclusion of incentives in rural development programmes would lead to failure to attract youth involvement.

Also, it is worth noting that the incentives that attract youth are not necessarily monetary. It has been shown in this study that a mere chance to receive training in some vocational skills or a scholarship to pursue studies at a University would trigger youth interest and participation in rural development programmes.

CHAPTER 6 FACTORS LIMITING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED IN BULILIMA AND MANGWE DISTRICTS

6.1 Introduction

A combination of internal and external factors limits the participation of youth in rural development. According to Gough (2008), external factors are mainly in the form of issues emanating from other communities. In contrast, internal factors are mainly socio-economic pushes. There is a strong likelihood that factors that limit youth participation might vary from one community to another. Thus, this study was carried out in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe with the aim of establishing if indeed this was the case.

In this chapter, the factors that limited the participation of youth in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts are presented and discussed. The desire to understand the factors that hampered youth participation in rural development motivated carrying out this study. No doubt, the results of this investigation would lead to more informed programming of rural development and youth empowerment. Equally, the importance of meaningful participation of youth in rural development (Ward and Wolf-Wendel, 2000) cannot be doubted. Only when an enabling environment is created through devising strategies that minimize the factors that constrain youth participation is this possible.

6.2 Results

The factors that the respondents in both Districts identified included early marriages, peer pressure, drinking and gambling, lack of incentives, household chores and lack of knowledge (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). Chief among these factors were early marriages especially among girls, drinking and gambling in particular among male youth and projects which were never completed.

Table 6.1 Community perceptions on factors that limit youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts

There were no significant inter-District differences in the mean ranks for the perceptions on factors that limit youth participation in rural development (Table 6.2). Also, as shown in Table 6.2, age and sex of respondent did not have any significant effect on the way the people perceived the factors.

6.3 Discussion

The factors cited as limiting youth participation in rural development programmes of Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were mostly socio-economic in nature. They included: drinking and gambling, early marriages, peer pressure, parents denial of permission to participate, lack of incentives, projects often left incomplete, household chores and lack of knowledge. It is worth pointing out that 65 % of the participants in this study were youth.

Factor	Bulilima	Mangwe	Total
a) Permission denied by parents	35	15	50
f) Early marriages	5	13	18
g) Peer pressure	17	20	37
h) Drinking and gambling	13	5	18
i) Projects left incomplete	3	5	8

n = sample size (number of respondents)

Table 6.1 Community perceptions on factors that limit youth participation in rural development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts

Perceptions on factors discouraging youth participation	% of respondents in Mangwe District (n = 60)			% of respondents in Bulilima District (n = 143)		
	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree
	a) No factors limit participation	62	23	15	51	21
b) Lack of incentives	18	27	55	18	27	55
c) Household chores	27	25	48	25	17	58
d) Lack of knowledge	20	27	53	18	16	66
e) Permission denied by parents	35	18	47	26	12	62
f) Early marriages	8	13	78	20	8	73
g) Peer pressure	17	30	53	19	23	58
h) Drinking and gambling	13	8	78	11	9	80
i) Projects left incomplete	3	5	92	8	5	87

n = sample size (number of respondents)

Table 6.2 Effect of age, sex and District on community members' perception with respect to factors discouraging youth participation

Factors	Mean ranks for age groups		Mean ranks for sexes		Mean ranks for Districts				
	Youth (n = 131)	Adults (n = 72)	Significant difference	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 125)	Significant difference	Mangwe (n = 60)	Buliima (n = 143)	Significance difference
a) No factors limit participation	99.13	107.22	ns	105.29	99.94	ns	91.88	106.25	ns
b) Lack of incentives	100.25	105.18	ns	97.02	105.11	ns	101.24	102.32	ns
c) Household chores	102.45	101.18	ns	102.42	101.74	ns	96.53	104.29	ns
d) Lack of knowledge	103.90	98.55	ns	109.90	97.07	ns	95.21	104.85	ns
e) Permission denied by parents	101.78	102.40	ns	103.12	101.30	ns	91.68	106.33	ns
f) Early marriages	99.87	105.88	ns	101.78	102.14	ns	102.23	101.90	ns
g) Peer pressure	100.98	103.85	ns	100.44	102.97	ns	101.78	102.09	ns
h) Drinking and gambling	102.85	100.46	ns	102.98	101.39	ns	100.85	102.48	ns
i) Incomplete projects	104.25	97.90	ns	103.97	100.77	ns	100.45	102.65	ns

* = p < 0.05 ** = p < 0.01 *** = p < 0.001

ns = no significant difference

n = sample size (number of respondents)

The similarity in perceptions observed between Bulilima and Mangwe Districts across age and sex categories could be attributed to the fact that they shared boundaries and were once one District (namely, Bulilimamangwe) prior to 2002. Their geographical location and socio-economic environments were similar. Furthermore, both Districts share a national boundary with Botswana, which is a popular employment destination for most youth. They are home to predominantly Kalanga and Ndebele-speaking communities. Their similar cultural practices may explain why parents were said to be denying youth permission to participate in development programmes in both Districts. In the following sections, the factor perceived to be limiting the participation of youth in rural development programmes are discussed one at a time.

6.3.1 Drinking and gambling

Drinking seemed to be a growing problem, particularly among unemployed youth. This situation confirms the views of Silva (1996), who notes that the levels of intake of alcohol by young people are increasingly exceeding those of adults. The fact that most young people are unemployed and spend most of their time congregated at bars, drinking and smoking (Okoje, 2003) compounds this problem. Peer pressure among youth can also be a strong factor that contributes to gambling and heavy drinking (Benson and Roehlkepartain, 2008). It was reported that youth influenced each other to indulge in anti-social behaviours such as gambling, drinking and prostitution. McLwane and Datta (2004) also observe that due to the influence of peers in providing information on sex and other issues, peer education has emerged as one of the most commonly used strategies of HIV/AIDS prevention. Blum (2007) acknowledges the effect of peer pressure on youth by noting that the central element of the importance of peer networks is the adolescent's perception of his/her close friend's behaviours. This finds support in Francis and Rimmensberger (2008) who argues that youth tend emulate what is perceived by their contemporaries as fashionable.

6.3.2 Early marriages

Early marriages were noted to be a major factor limiting youth participation in rural development. Predominantly, early marriages affected female youth who became trapped in household demands and reproductive duties. This factor finds support in Naudean, Cunningham, Lundberg

and McGinnis (2008) who argue that youth do not fully understand the repercussions of early marriages until they are trapped in reproductive responsibilities. It is possible that early marriages were prevalent in Bulilima and Mangwe due to “absentee” parenting since most parents worked and resided in neighbouring Botswana and South Africa, leaving behind child-headed families.

Household chores were reported to be limiting participation of female youth in rural development in comparison to male youth. Girls spend a lot of time doing household chores compared to boys who are left with a lot of free time (Okoje, 2003; Chant and Jones, 2005). MclLwaine and Datta (2004) also note that this is compounded by traditional and often stereotyped views which link women’s roles with reproductive activities and house work. However, evidence in literature indicates that the gap between the treatment of boys and that of girls has narrowed down significantly although girls are still disadvantaged mainly at school and family levels (Blum, 2007; Paintin, 2007).

6.3.3 Lack of knowledge

Lack of knowledge of benefits and programmes implemented in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were singled out as impediments to youth participation in rural development programmes. Most youth who participated in the current study seemed not to know the benefits of participating in rural development work taking place in their communities. In Chapter 4, it was reported that youth were not involved in rural development programmes starting from formulation or inception to full implementation. Thus, it is not surprising that the youth were ignorant of the rural development initiatives being implemented in their wards. Therefore, information needs to be made available to youth so that they can make decisions regarding whether to participate or not (Torimiro and Okorie, 2009). Allowing young people to make positive choices on developmental issues requires providing them with information and guidance so as to assist their choices (MciLwaine and Datta, 2004). Sherrod, Flanagan and Youniss (2002) observe that getting young people involved at all levels is motivational because they may derive satisfaction from contributing to some set of shared norms and values.

Benefits of participating in rural development may accrue to the individual youth and also the community in general. Therefore, it is important to explain these benefits to the youth so as not to create unfounded expectations which may create acrimony and disharmony both within the programmes and communities. Wells and Banning (2008) note the benefits of youth participation in programmes. These authors argue that such participation has the potential to provide several internal assets such as achievement, motivation, integrity, honesty, responsibility and restraint.

6.3.4 Parents denying youth permission to participate in rural development

Parents were said to be denying youth the permission to participate in community meetings where issues such as planned and on-going development programmes were discussed. It was indicated that this parental position was driven by fears that youth, especially girls, would take advantage of such opportunities to engage in promiscuous behavior. Also, there were fears that male youth would get involved in political violence crusades. It was argued that all this was done out of parental concern which necessitated “protecting” the youth.

The situation highlighted in the preceding paragraph suggests that most adults in Bulilima and Mangwe did not perceive youth as capable of making meaningful decisions and choices on their own. Although this was the case, youth development studies point to the contrary as indicated by Serido and Borden (2009) who posit that community programmes provide a training ground to promote individual development and social responsibility. Watts and Flanagan (2007) note that viewing young people as immature or psychologically disordered strains the working relationship between youth and adults. In fact, there is a growing body of literature projecting the negative consequences of strong parental restrictions on youth which tend to create anti-social resistance from youth (Silva, 1996). Brezina (2008: 114) points out that the “problems of recognition may contribute to antisocial behaviour indirectly by fostering attitudes that are antithetical to social cooperation”. This implies that if youth are only viewed in negative terms and their contributions are underestimated and not recognized they are likely to develop negative attitude towards their own community and its leaders (Selvam, 2008).

6.3.5 Incomplete projects

Projects and programmes which are abandoned before completion for whatever reason usually discourage youth from participating in future initiatives. Participants in the current study felt that projects which did not run their full course discouraged youth through making them feel they were cheated and being associated with failed initiatives. It was revealed that externally-driven programmes and projects in particular, did not achieve their goals mainly due to exhausted funding or withdrawal of donor funding. Some programmes failed to up-scale to cover a significant number of people in the communities and wound up operations after serving only a small fraction of the community. This is consistent with the observations of Pittman et al. (1997: 25) who lament the fact that “too many programmes remain at the pilot level, offering services and support to a small fraction of those who need it”.

6.3.6 Lack of incentives

Most of the interviewees in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts seemed to emphasize only material benefits for youth and not other forms of benefits, which could accrue to both the community and youth. Studies have shown that young people would rather take part in remunerated work than rural development activities (Chant and Jones, 2005). In real terms, the benefits of participating in development work for rural youth could be bigger than the financial or material rewards. For instance, they may gain considerable exposure to current development trends and practices as well as acquire some socially useful skills through interacting with peers and the community at large. Resnick (2000) supports this view, arguing that by participating in rural development, youth gain experience in decision making, interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging. Also, community development programmes provide an array of opportunities that enable youth to build their skills and competencies besides enabling them to become engaged as partners in personal and community development (Perkins and Noam, 2007; Ginwright and James, 2002).

6.4 Conclusions

This study isolated the factors that limited youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. Early marriages, peer pressure, excessive drinking and gambling, as well as factors of a programming nature such as projects left incomplete, lack of knowledge and lack of incentives were of particular significance in both Districts. The latter class of factors (that is of a programming nature) could be addressed through proper planning and clear information dissemination, which could enable potential participants to make informed decisions. Community-related factors demanded that parents strongly invested in teaching their children acceptable morals and values that would guide adherence to appropriate behaviour and subsequently, their decisions and choices. Thus, it can be concluded that the factors that limited youth participation in rural development were both intrinsic and extrinsic, suggesting that their resolution required a multi-pronged and holistic approach. Piecemeal solutions would not yield the desired results.

In this chapter, the findings of the entire study are presented and briefly explained. Based on the interpretations of the results, some recommendations for further empirical research are given. It is hoped that this would provide pointers on how to continue contributing to the growing body of knowledge on youth participation in rural development.

7.2 Understanding Youth Participation

The study began by investigating what community members understood to be the meaning of youth participation in rural development programmes. This was done in order to contextualize and ground the concept of youth participation within the study area. This would enable the study to come up with recommendations which are specific to Bulilima and Mangwe youth as opposed to a generic interpretation of issues affecting youth. Also the challenges facing youth would be understood in the context of local cultural factors obtaining in the two districts.

CHAPTER 7 GENERAL DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This study was motivated by the desire of developing a clearer understanding of the dynamics youth participation in rural development programmes implemented in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts of Matabeleland South Province in Zimbabwe. This knowledge was crucial because it would help inform the design and implementation of programmes meant for youth in rural areas. The study had four principal areas of focus. Firstly, it sought to document the types of rural development programmes implemented in the study area. Secondly, the study sought to ascertain the level of youth participation in the identified rural development programmes. Thirdly, it investigated the factors that were limiting youth participation in rural development programmes. Lastly, the factors that promoted youth participation in the rural development programmes within Bulilima and Mangwe Districts were interrogated.

In this chapter, the findings of the entire study are presented and briefly explained. Based on the interpretations of the results, some recommendations for further empirical research are given. It is hoped that this would provide pointers on how to continue contributing to the growing body of knowledge on youth participation in rural development.

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There was a clear disparity between adults and youth insofar as the understanding of youth participation was concerned. Adults understood youth participation mostly in its tokenized form. They indicated that cleaning and preparing venues for adult meetings constituted youth participation. Apart from this, they also classified it in vague terms such as assisting in community work. In contrast, most young people understood youth participation to be the ability to conceive and implement their own decisions. This understanding of participation by youth is in sync with Binswanger and Aiyar (2003) who argue that young people need to be included in broader planning and decision-making processes so that their needs are addressed.

The fact that adult and youth did not understand or view youth participation the same way confirms the observation by Urban (2008) that youth and adults do not necessarily consider the same aspects of youth programmes to be equally important. These results revealed the need to bridge the information gap that youth encountered. The efforts made must ensure that there is a common understanding and harmony between youth and adults (Nnaemego, 2009).

7.3 Availability of Rural Development Programmes

The study areas were judgmentally sampled based on the fact that some rural development programmes had been implemented in them. This investigation went on to study the nature of the programmes running in each District, superimposing the level of youth participation.

Out of the 18 rural development programmes identified in the two Districts, youth participated mainly in four of them. This implies that although many rural development programmes were implemented in the two Districts, most of them were not suitable for youth. Youth did not participate much in infrastructural programmes such as borehole rehabilitation and toilet construction. Instead, adults were mainly involved in these projects. Youth participation was most evident in sports and social programmes such as drama and AIDS action clubs. Both programmes were educational and provided entertainment (Fairweather, 2006; Mchombo, 2006).

The fact that there are number of rural development programmes being implemented in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts and that youth participated in some of them confirmed the assumption that rural communities have long implemented development initiatives in which

youth are eligible to participate. However, in order to ensure that youth feel welcome to effectively participate it is crucial to make some modifications in how the programmes are designed and implemented. Only a few youth participated in the rural development programmes, necessitating the hypothesis that youth in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts participated actively in rural community development.

7.4 Factors Limiting Youth Participation in Rural Development Programmes

Many factors were found to be limiting the participation of youth in rural development programmes in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. The factors included unavailability of programmes designed specifically for youth. Another factor which seemed to limit youth participation in rural development was the perceived interference from adults. Youth felt that they preferred programmes in which they could participate freely without the interference of adults. Brezina(2008) argues that failure to recognize the youth and give them the autonomy of decisions leads to antisocial tendencies, general apathy and contempt for society. Dictates of traditional culture which compel youth to always keep their distance from adults influenced youth participation in rural development programmes. As Fuduka-Parr (2004) points out, for effective youth participation to be realized, programme designers need to understand the cultural dynamics of the host community. These results demonstrate the need for initiating programmes in the community and bridging the gap between adults and youth so that an enabling environment is created for both parties to work together (Jarrett, Sullivan and Watkins, 2005). When this happens, social capital is built within families, resulting in the creation of sustainable communities.

Youth did not feel comfortable to participate in adult-led and dominated programmes. Also, female youth felt that endless household chores limited their participation. Both observations confirmed the hypothesis that age and sex influenced people's perceptions on youth participation in rural development work. This means that programme designers and implementers must consider these social issues if youth participation in rural development is to be achieved.

7.5 Factors Promoting Youth Participation in Rural Development Programmes

Another major factor limiting youth participation was the exodus of youth to neighbouring countries such as Botswana and South Africa in search of employment opportunities. Apparently, the youth who crossed into these countries seemed to live better lives than their peers who opted not to seek employment outside the country. Also, the youth who migrated were increasingly becoming symbols of success and assumed the status of local role models for most youth. These facts seemed to motivate the out-migration tendencies of youth in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. Clearly, formal employment outside Zimbabwe granted one a respectable social status within his/her community. This supports the observation that social status has long been associated with individuals' jobs (Du Toit, 2003). Therefore, the need for employment opportunities often superseded the good of participating in rural development activities (Gough, 2008).

Some parents were said to be refusing their children the permission to participate in rural development-focused meetings. As a result, some youth were left out of community development processes. Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2003) also hold the view that some young people express interest to participate in local development but lack support from adults. Without parental support and encouragement, it is impossible to sustain the zeal that youth require for them to actively participate in rural development programmes.

Other factors identified as limiting youth participation related to the social ills obtaining within the studied communities. The factors included drinking and gambling, early marriages among female youth and peer pressure. Most youth spent their time drinking and loitering with less time for development activities. Silva (1996) and Pruitt (2007) support these views and lament the excessive alcohol intake and substance abuse by rural youth. These social ills among youth were said to be closely linked to unemployment and their idleness. For meaningful youth participation to be realized, rural development programmes must be designed in such a manner that they address youth issues in a holistic manner. Such an approach would eliminate the factors that may drive youth to seek opportunities elsewhere. Rural development programmes should be so incentivising that they keep youth interested and satisfied.

7.5 Factors Promoting Youth Participation in Rural Development Programmes

Provision of incentives to people who participate and availability of diverse programmes and activities that provided a broad range of choices were cited as factors that promoted youth involvement. However, reward-driven participation is not likely to be sustainable. Such programmes may entrench a dependency syndrome and destroy voluntarism (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008). Since the incentives are likely to be externally-sourced, this is difficult to sustain because donors cannot fund a programme until eternity.

Programmes that offered opportunities for participants to receive training in various skills were found to attract the interest of youth to participate in them. This is linked to the provision of incentives. It was revealed that most youth who were idle in the communities within Bulilima and Mangwe Districts did not attain the necessary grades to proceed with their education to tertiary or professional levels. However, vocational colleges could accept them for training in various skills which often demanded lower entry qualification levels. These skills enable youth to be self-employed and useful within their communities (Mufune, 1999). Thus, it was not surprising to find that the interviewees regarded the possibility of securing a scholarship to support the acquisition of skills from a vocational training centre sufficient to entice youth to participate in rural development programmes.

A history of successful completion of projects within local communities was identified as having a motivational effect on youth to participate in development programmes and projects. In contrast, programmes that were abandoned before completion demoralized the youth, resulting in them shying away from such initiatives. Hartjie, Evans, Killian and Brown (2007) point out that some programmes are abandoned due to exhaustion of funds or donors pulling out while others just end at inception phase.

The factors that limited and also those that enhanced youth participation were found to be similar between Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. This led to the rejection of the hypothesis that perceptions on youth participation in rural development programmes varied across districts. Thus, it can be concluded that carefully designed rural development programme are likely to

yield similar levels of youth participation in the two Districts or any other District that experiences similar socio-economic and cultural conditions.

7.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Having identified the factors that either promoted or hindered youth participation in development programmes in Bulilima and Mangwe Districts, this study concludes by recommending some areas for further research. This is done in order to distil the strategies that can be adopted to improve the participation of youth in rural development within the two Districts. There is need for research that helps build an understanding of how to bridge the gap between adults and youth. This was one of the major reasons why youth shunned most programmes wherever adults were involved. It is also important to ascertain the contribution of gender stereotypes to the unequal level of youth participation. Female youth found it difficult to participate more actively in rural development initiatives because of numerous household chores that left them with limited time. In contrast, their male counterparts had more spare time. Yet, the former did not participate in the rural development programmes as actively as desired.

Although the youth shunned being associated with programmes that were never completed, it was not clear what often caused this in both Bulilima and Mangwe Districts. There is need to carrying out a study to assess the extent to which such projects or programmes affected subsequent participation of youth in rural development. Also, this study did not solicit the perceptions of the community members on the strategies required to improve the participation of youth in local development programmes. Nor were the perceptions of development practitioners and community leaders investigated. Yet these key players in development practice wield considerable power and influence. However, appropriate deployment of the results obtained in this study will go a long way in informing youth policy formulation and review.

However, while the study acknowledges that there are areas which still need further investigation, it also recommends that designers and implementers of rural development programmes need to take heed of factors that either hinder or promote youth participation so as to minimize or maximize on them respectively.

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- a) What are the rural development projects/programmes/activities that have been or are implemented in this ward?
- b) Of the programs or projects you have identified, which ones have youth participated in mostly?
- c) Approximately how many youth participate/participated in the programmes?
- d) Which group of youth participates mostly? Is it male or females? Why is this so?
- e) How can you describe those who participate in terms of their economic status?
- f) In your opinion, would you say there is enough youth participation/involvement in rural development work? Why do you say so?
- g) What would you regard to be youth participation?
- h) What are the factors which currently promote or encourage youth participation?
- i) What do you think discourages youth from participating in rural development work in this ward, if this is the case at all?
- j) What do you think are the benefits of having youth participating in rural development work?
- k) What do you think can be done to encourage youth participation?
- l) Are there community/cultural practices that promote or discourage youth participation? Explain your answer.

Appendix 1 Semi structured interview guide which was used during the exploratory phase

- a) What are the rural development projects/ programs/ activities that have been or are implemented in this ward?
- b) Of the programs or projects you have identified, which ones have youth participated in mostly?
- c) Approximately how many youth participate/ participated in the programmes?
- d) Which group of youth participates mostly? Is it male or females? Why is this so?
- e) How can you describe those who participate in terms of their economic status?
- f) In your opinion, would you say there is enough youth participation/ involvement in rural development work? Why do you say so?
- g) What would you regard to be youth participation?
- h) What are the factors which currently promote or encourage youth participation?
- i) What do you think discourages youth from participating in rural development work in this ward, if this is the case at all?
- j) What do you think are the benefits of having youth participating in rural development work?
- k) What do you think can be done to encourage youth participation?
- l) Are there community cultural practices that promote or discourage youth participation?
Explain your answer.

Perceptions on youth participation in rural development programs of Bulilima and Mangwe

Districts

DATE.....

WARD:.....

VILLAGE:
.....

AGE:
.....

SEX:.....

EDUCATION LEVEL.....

	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly

What are the rural development projects/ programmes/ activities that you have been or are involved in

	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree
None				
Nutrition gardens				
Poultry projects				
Food for work				
Soccer				
Netball				
Drama				
AIDS Action Club				
Student Partnership Worldwide				

Other:

Other:

Of these, which ones have youths participated in?

	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Soccer				
Mvuramanzi Trust				
AIDS Action Club				
Building				
Vocational trainings				
crop agriculture				
Cattle breeding				
Carpentry				
Brickmolding				

Garden projects

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Other:

What is the economic status of those who participate and those that do not?

- They are just the same
- Those that participate are from poor families
- Those that participate are from rich families

Other:

	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Disagree				
Not sure				
Agree				
Strongly agree				

In your opinion would you say there is enough youth participation/involvement in your

development work and why

	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree
There is less participation as there is less interest in activities				
Youth involvement is not enough as most youths move to South Africa.				
There is less participation as they are no projects and clubs.				
There is no participation as only a few usually attend				
There is less participation as there are fewer youth programmes				
There is no participation as their parents do not allow them to participate				
Information is not disseminated well.				
Youth participation is inadequate; the youths are not encouraged				

Other:

What would you consider to be youth participation?

Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree

Assisting in different games

Youth involvement in community development

Involvement in projects and clubs like AIDS Action Club (AAC)

Assisting in different works

Working together, implementing own ideas and innovation.

Youth participation is being trained in peer education, knowledge workers

and in computer skills

Other:

What are the factors which currently promote or encourage youth participation?

Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree

Different youth programmes

Trainings in different skills

Entertainment

Love for soccer

Curiosity

Youths to be involved in vocational training centres to improve their skills.

Trainings

Sponsorships

Payments				
Activities such as(i) brickmolding				
(ii) Carpentry				
(iii) Nutrition gardens				
Youths should be encouraged through successful projects carried out in the community.				
Other:				

What do you think discourages youth participation in your community? If any?

	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Nothing				
They do not get paid for the work they would have done				
Household duties				
Lack of knowledge				
Parents do not allow their children to attend youth development meetings				
Early marriages,				
Not understanding community development and peer pressure				
Drinking and gambling				
Incomplete projects				

Other:

--	--

What do you think are the benefits of having youths participating in rural development work?

work?

	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly agree
Nothing				
We assist the elderly in community work.				
Develop our community, develop good communication skills, through working with different kinds of people.				
Developing the community even for generations to come				
For a better future and national development.				
To gain knowledge				
Knowledge workers and information disseminators				

Youths assist in advertising and selling our products

Other:

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What do you think can be done to encourage youth participation?

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implemented.

Parents should encourage youths to be involved in development work

To train youths in skills that can sustain their livelihoods

Other:

--	--

Are there community cultural practices that promote or discourage youth participation? (Explain)

None

Girls are not given equal opportunities as boys

Churches

Politics

Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Other: