

**Exploring the development of communication strategies for Indigenous
Knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village, in Thulamela
Municipality of Limpopo Province, in South Africa**

By

Nematswerani Rendani
11563402

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Department of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Heritage Studies
Faculty of Humanities Social Sciences and Education
University of Venda
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Supervisors: Prof V.O Netshandama

Mr A.E Budeli

Ms L.D Tshikukuvhe

Declaration

I, **Rendani Nematswerani**, hereby declare that this dissertation - **EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE-BASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE IN TSHIDZIVHE VILLAGE, IN THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE, IN SOUTH AFRICA** - is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree at any other university or institution and that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all reference materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

Signed (student):..........Date...24/07/2024.....

Student Introduction

I am Rendani Nematswerani, a Master's student in African Studies whose passion is in Communication and Marketing. I also have a passion for indigenous knowledge produce. It is for this reason, the title of my study is - "Exploring the development of communication strategy for Indigenous Knowledge-based agricultural produce, in Tshidzivhe village, in Thulamela Municipality of Limpopo Province, in South Africa".

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the following people:

1. Chief Mazikule Netshidzivhe of Tshidzivhe community for granting me permission to conduct the study - “Exploring the development of communication strategy for Indigenous Knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village, in Thulamela Municipality of Limpopo Province, in South Africa”. Your comprehensive guidance on cultural values is very much appreciated. I can honestly say I have learnt a lot from your upholding of the VhaVenda culture and tradition.



Chief Mazikule Netshidzivhe

2. The co-researchers from Tshidzivhe community who made it possible for the study to be conducted.
3. My family - wife, Tshifhiwa Mudau and daughter, Ritonde Velika Nematswerani - for the mental support they gave me throughout the journey of this study.
4. The Phungo family - Mr Matodzi Watson Phungo and Mrs Tshikhathi Esther Phungo - for always believing in me and that I can, successfully, complete this study.
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4. Dr Dolphus Nevhudoli for always checking with me on the progress of the study.

Glossary of terms

<i>Tshibavhe</i>	:	Momordica charantia
<i>Mushidzhi</i>	:	Blackjack
<i>Mushakaladza</i>	:	River firethorn currant
<i>Mutshikili</i>	:	Trichilia emetica
<i>Musudzungwane</i>	:	Lipia javanica

Abstract

Indigenous knowledge surrounding agricultural produce is an essential part of the lives of the rural people. Their livelihood depends on their capacity to produce agricultural and other produce for consumption and sale, to ensure sustainable livelihoods. In South Africa, examples of common produce visible in rural areas are - millet, sorghum, maize, nuts, beans, cowpeas, dried vegetables, sweet potatoes, melons - as well as other produce which may revolve around herbs obtained from indigenous trees. Communities relying on indigenous knowledge have always known how to maintain a sustainable livelihood through crop production and other activities, however, information about these is communicated through channels that can no longer be sufficient nor relevant in the modern society. Existing traditional-cultural communication strategies, mainly word-of-mouth, are largely village-bound, thus, cannot reach larger markets. This study, therefore, aims to explore the possibility of the development of alternative communication strategies for marketing indigenous produce in Tshidzivhe village, using a participatory methodology. Data was generated using the qualitative research approach and collected through, focus-group discussions, storytelling and workshops. The key findings of the study are that, agricultural produce from Tshidzivhe village that naturally grow or are cultivated, include - maize, finger-millet, beans, indigenous vegetables, such as *Tshibavhe* (*Momordica charantia*) and Black jack (*Mushidzhi*). The villagers who are also Indigenous Knowledge Holders (IKHs) attest that produce take time before they are sold. This, they believe, is due to limited access to modern communication and marketing technologies, difficulties in accessing the village due to poor road infrastructure, villagers' minimal digital literacy and channels, as well as, no access to the internet. In this environment, the communication strategies recommended entail - effective use of community radios, local newspapers and bulletin; establishment of marketing boards; cooperative marketing and appropriate attractive packaging, as well as, innovative branding. Participants also acknowledged the urgency of sustained deliberate partnerships and nurturing of the IKS produce ecosystem.

Key words: Communication strategy, Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous agricultural produce, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, co-design, livelihood

List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

IKS: Indigenous Knowledge Systems

IK: Indigenous Knowledge

IKH: Indigenous Knowledge Holders

CCC: Co-creation Conceptual Framework

WOM: Word-of-mouth

eWOM: electronic Word-of-mouth

GCIS: Government Communications and information Systems

DSI: Department of Science and Innovation

CBPR: Community-based participatory research

FGD: Focus-Group Discussion

EJF: Environmental Justice Fund

GEF: Global Environment Facility

TEK: Traditional Ecological Knowledge

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This chapter covers introductory details about this research such as, background; purpose of the study; problem statement; significance of the study; objectives of the study; research questions; explanation of key terminologies for comprehension of the research as well as, the chapters' arrangement.

The literature on indigenous knowledge gives different definitions of the concept. The World Bank Group (2004), for example, defines 'indigenous knowledge' as knowledge suitable for local perceptions in areas such as - agriculture, health and natural resource management. Indigenous knowledge is information that has been transferred from earlier generations, where men and women in each new generation conform and add, in a constant adjustment to changing situations and environmental conditions.

In French, the equivalent term of indigenous is '*autochtone*' which comes from the ancient Greek word '*khton*' (land). '*Autochtone*', hence, is defined as "he who comes from the area where he lives and who did not migrate to the area"; thus, a significant defining element of indigenusness is its specific historical link to a territory (Gilbert, 2006).

Ogle and Grivetti (1985) declare that through indigenous knowledge, communities ensured the effective production of a variety of foods, long before modern agriculture was introduced; similarly, Hart and Mouton (2005) state that traditional mixed and intercropping of vegetables enabled communities' maximum use of their land and reduction of erosion and weeds. Traditional farming methods have exploited the ability of manure to maintain high agricultural production levels over a period of time as was evident in studies conducted by Lupwayi, Girma and Haque (2000) where it was shown that not all nutrients are released from manure in one season. This ensures that nutrients are retained in the crop fields or gardens for the next planting season. Indigenous practices have also been applied at various crop production stages, such

as, land preparation, ploughing, planting, weeding, pest and diseases control and harvesting. In addition, to ensure food security, indigenous farmers have developed diverse and locally-adapted agricultural systems for centuries and have managed them with indigenous practices, such as mixed farming, agroforestry and water diversion ditches that are effective in ensuring food sustainability (Altieri, 2004). Ketterings, Wibowo, Van Noordwijk and Penot (1999) report on other practices that indigenous farmers commonly use, such as, the slash and burn method for land clearing.

In South Africa, there is variety of crops - millet, sorghum, maize, nuts, beans, cowpeas, dried vegetables, sweet potatoes, melons, as well as herbal produce - from indigenous trees (Notsi, 2012). Proponents of indigenous knowledge-based agriculture present it as an effective production system for reversing environmental problems caused by current scientific practices (Nanyunja, 2006). Mafongoya and Ajayi (2017) add that even though changes have been occurring over generations, rural farmers have been adapting to these changes throughout their life, using local indigenous knowledge.

Research has confirmed that indigenous knowledge has been used in various current disciplines, such as environmental management (Risiro, Tshuma & Basikiti, 2013). These scholars continue to state that these usage practices have been passed from generation to generation, often in the forms of stories, proverbs, folklore, cultural values, rituals, beliefs, community laws, as well as, local languages. Nguluvhe (2002), however, asserts that indigenous knowledge is fading as there seems to be no proper methods of communicating about it. This seems to be mainly due to the fact that much of indigenous knowledge is preserved in oral forms, in human memories, hence, it is slowly disappearing due to community members forgetting and deaths (Dlamini, 2016). In some instances, such knowledge is not appropriately communicated as there might not be effective communication strategies to reach the wider public.

Verderber (1998) explains that communication can be looked at as a verbal transaction or message creation. Craig (2006) focuses on the aspect that communication is also a means of linking people or places. Munodawafa (2008) adds another dimension to

communication, seeing it as the transmission of spoken and non-spoken messages and it consists of a sender, a receiver and method of communication. The whole process occurs in a context consisting of physical space, cultural and social values and psychological conditions.

1.2. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore the development of strategies for communicating details about indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that can be exploited by the people in Tshidzivhe village.

1.3. Problem statement

Indigenous communities have always produced excess agricultural and other produce for immediate consumption, selling and for storage to cater for drought seasons and the information is known among community members through oral strategies (Ogle & Grivetti, 1985). This ensures that there is always some knowledge amongst community members regarding who has a particular product and at which time of the year, however, the oral system of communication seemed to be no longer appropriate as it only linked small rural communities. This inappropriateness, thus, was mainly due to the fact that the demand for information has increased substantively in accordance with populations expansion. Information about indigenous knowledge produce was usually communicated through word-of-mouth, thereby, information took time to reach community member as well as the public, in the modern-day society.

As a result, oral indigenous knowledge is not communicated in time, hence, some of the information arrived for the target audience, outdated. The inappropriateness of this communication system has led to some of the knowledge's gradual disappearance; this translates to no further knowledge transfer to the next generation. This study, therefore, intends to explore communication strategies appropriate in rural settings, to ensure that knowledge reaches a wide spectrum of community members and the general public as well.

1.4. Significance of the study

Communication on indigenous knowledge produce and services, is key to its recognition, marketing and produce beneficiation in any setting, for example, in Tshidzivhe village. Using a participatory approach, it is anticipated that this study will bring awareness to researchers and co-researchers (participants) regarding how rural communities may communicate details about their produce to a larger population for improved marketing. Improved communication of details enhances the chances of the produce being available to more markets, improving sales, thereby benefiting the rural producers.

Communication about indigenous knowledge produce was barely taking place, generally. This is due to the historical notion that IKS operates by word-of-mouth, and targeted at specific localities. Modernisation's influence, and pop culture warrant that for such produce to be known, there should be ways of re-imagining communication that can reach a wider audience. This would help to popularise these products, and, hopefully, create markets that may benefit producers, financially and otherwise. This study is also significant as the process enabled collaborative learning between the researcher and the co-researchers. Collaborative learning or knowledge co-creation assisted in creating effective marketing communication. In this regard, the study contributed to the National Science Communication Strategy which states that a lively and active civil society is one that widely recognises the need for public participation.

1.5. Objectives of the study

- 1.5.1. To identify indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are produced in Tshidzivhe village,
- 1.5.2. To document ways in which the details of these produce were communicated to potential market,
- 1.5.3. To explore any challenges in communicating about indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce' details in Tshidzivhe village, and
- 1.5.4. To develop alternate strategies for communicating details about indigenous-knowledge produce in Tshidzivhe village.

1.6. Research questions

- 1.6.1. What are the indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are available in Tshidzivhe village?
- 1.6.2. How are details about these produce being communicated in Tshidzivhe village and to the general public?
- 1.6.3. What are the challenges in communicating the details about indigenous-knowledge produce from Tshidzivhe village?
- 1.6.4. What alternate communication strategies can be used to communicate, effectively, the details of indigenous-knowledge-based produce from Tshidzivhe village?

1.7. Definition of key concepts

Below are discussions to clarify key concepts of the study:

1.7.1. Communication strategy

According to Effendy (2006), a communication strategy means the direction, planning and organization of information to achieve goals that have been set in an organization. Skinner and Rampersad (2014) state that a communication strategy is a well-orchestrated set of actions to achieve specific objectives through the implementation of a blend of specific communication techniques.

1.7.2. Indigenous knowledge

Indigenous knowledge can be defined as the different, traditional as well as local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of people indigenous to a certain area (Behera, 2000). It is learned through - observation, practicing, exposure to previous generation's knowledge, and in sustained contact with the natural environment and phenomena.

1.7.3. Indigenous agricultural produce

Indigenous agricultural produce relate to food, particular to a community. According to Ayanwale (2016), indigenous food is seen as foods originating in a specific bio-region in combination with foods that were introduced into the country and are now recognized as aboriginal due to them being integrated into the local food culture. Mbhenyane (2017) refers to local foods as non-commodities (something for which value is not recognized) that form part of a large portfolio of genetic, agroeconomic, economic, social, and cultural factors.

1.7.4. Indigenous Knowledge Holders

To Sillitoe (1998) 'Indigenous Knowledge Holders' refers to individuals or communities within indigenous cultures who possess and transmit traditional knowledge, wisdom, and practices that have been developed and transmitted down through generations. This knowledge encompasses a wide range of information on topics such as - traditional medicine, agriculture, ecological stewardship, stories, and spiritual practices. Indigenous Knowledge is deeply rooted in the specific cultural and environmental contexts of communities.

1.7.5. Co-design

Co-design is a democratic concept whereby people affected by a design are involved in or are part of its conceptualization, decision-making and designing processes (Sanoff, 1990). In other words, it is seen as using joint-creativity throughout the whole cooperative process, to create a phenomenon (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). It is a process, hence, in which actors from various disciplines / contexts share their knowledge of both the design process and content of an idea (Kleinsmann & Valkenburg, 2008).

1.7.6. Livelihood

Livelihood is related to people's own priorities, understanding and capabilities in their general life activities (Meikle, Ramasut and Walker, 2001). People are at the middle

of the livelihoods framework and are perceived as capable actors and not abandoned victims. A livelihood, therefore, draws on the wealth of knowledge, skills and adaptive strategies of people. It is centered on households and communities; it is location-sensitive and household members contribute in different ways, depending on their various roles, responsibilities and capabilities.

1.8. Chapters' arrangement

This section outlines the arrangement and flow of the study, according to chapters.

This study is arranged into five chapters as presented below.

1.8.1 Chapter One

This is the initial chapter of the study which presents the background on issues around indigenous people and communication about their produce. The discussions focus on - the purpose of the study, problem statement, significance of the study, objectives of the study and research questions.

1.8.2 Chapter Two

This chapter covers the conceptual framework and the literature review, hence, provides details on the theories underpinning the study. The literature was reviewed in order to establish the approach that the study took, as well as what other scholars have said in relation to the topic.

1.8.3 Chapter Three

The methodology that structured the study is discussed in this chapter, based on the adoption of a qualitative research design. In the discussions - the study area, population, sampling procedures, data collection and the analysis process - are outlined and justified. Lastly, the research ethics considered and measures to ensure trustworthiness of the whole research are presented.

1.8.4. Chapter Four

This chapter presents the analysis data collected. Data was analyzed thematically and the following are the themes that emerged - produce available at Tshidzivhe; how details about the produce are communicated to the market; challenges in communicating details about indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce from

Tshidzivhe village; development of relevant and effective strategies for communicating details about indigenous-knowledge produce from Tshidzivhe village and the results of a SWOT analysis undertaken. The findings of the study were informed by the objectives and drawn from the data gathered from the co-researchers.

1.8.5. Chapter Five:

This is the last chapter of the study which summarizes the findings, gives a conclusion, offers recommendations based on the findings and possible areas of further research.

1.9. Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of this study. Based on the introduction, the problem statement outlined challenges associated with traditional-cultural communication strategies, in providing details about traditional produce. These were identified as being largely by word-of-mouth and are village-bound, thus, cannot reach larger markets. This issue motivated the researcher and co-researchers to explore what could be other strategies that can best communicate information on indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter covers the conceptual framework and the literature review. The literature review covers areas like – indigenous-knowledge systems in the world, Africa and South Africa; communication of Indigenous knowledge and its importance; challenges in communicating IKS as well as strategies/models that can be used for communicating/sharing information about IKS. It is within these themes that different scholars offer views about communication strategies that can assist to inform any recommendations.

2.2. Conceptual framework

Ravich and Carl (2016) state that conceptual frameworks are generative structures that reflect the thinking of the entire research process, therefore, the application of a local-based conceptual framework that is co-creative, as well, drove the thinking. Co-creation is what Hawkins, Madden, Fletcher, Midgley, Grant and Cox (2017) referred to as “co-design” or “co-production,” as they focus on collaboratively producing, designing or creating of a phenomenon.

The Co-creation Conceptual Framework (CCC) underpinned the study to indicate appreciation of knowledge co-creation with co-researchers and respect for Afrocentricity. Concepts applied in the study, thus, represented co-creation and respect as the phenomenon (indigenous knowledge) being studied is diverse and dynamic as Asante (2009) stated in explaining the Afrocentric theory.

2.3. Literature review

This section covers the literature reviewed, which is outlined under the following headings – indigenous knowledge systems in the world, Africa and South Africa; communication of indigenous knowledge and why it is essential; challenges in communicating IK and recommended strategies for appropriately communicating information about IK.

2.3.1. Indigenous knowledge systems in the world, Africa and South Africa

Magocha, Soundy, Muchie and Magocha (2019) revealed the necessity of recognizing and practicing indigenous knowledge for sustainable livelihood. Mafongoya and Ajayi (2017) also concluded that indigenous knowledge is relatively cheap, readily available to rural communities, and it is a climatically-smart tool for sustainable agricultural development, for different communities across the world. Communities on the African continent and internationally have their respective ways of applying this readily-available indigenous knowledge which may, at times, be referred to as 'frugal innovation'.

The Maori communities, in New Zealand, have been able to use land assets to establish successful agricultural and food-processing organizations which also compete on the international markets. These companies develop processes and product innovations and incorporate technologies to increase productivity. To support their supply chain, there are specialised training programmes, in promoting entrepreneurship in indigenous produce as a career option for young people, by mentoring them, awarding of enterprise awards and promotion in the local media (OECD, 2009).

India has its ways of applying indigenous knowledge. It is a hotspot of traditional culture with more than 427 tribal communities that make herbal products (Swati & Diwanji, 2000). It is for this reason that several researchers have started to study this knowledge throughout India (Anil-Kumar & Patole, 2001). Lutfi, Belinda and Umanilo (2019) shared how the Indonesian Provincial Regulators, in Maluku Province, went about the preservation and sharing of community's culture. Indigenous organisations, such as the Adat Institute, has the mandate to foster, preserve and share community culture and customs, as well as the relationship between the people and the government of the villages.

To prove communication is not being sufficiently done, Ngoma and Sassu (2004) add that indigenous African people, for instance, also build their houses, very technically but communication about such work is not sufficient. In Ethiopia, one aspect of the

people's indigenous knowledge system is invested in beekeeping; communities in the country have the highest bee density and innovative widespread practices in beekeeping. Research conducted in these agricultural areas, however, have not characterized and documented the details on this significant activity, such as the medicinal value of bee products and the potential of honeybee produce for the treatment of various diseases and ailments. Documenting traditional medicinal knowledge through further research in the region, therefore, is vital to facilitate, for example - the discovery of new sources of drugs, promote the beneficial effects of bee produce on the human body, and promote a healthy lifestyle through the use of these produce. Kanu and Ndubisi (2020) recommend that indigenous knowledge should be documented and preserved in writing so as to enhance its communication, as well as encourage its intellectual evaluation.

On the subject of intellectual discourse, the historic year of 2020 comes into one's mind. On 05 March 2020, the first case of Covid 19 was reported in South Africa, from a 38-year-old male who travelled to Italy with his wife (National Institute for Communicable Diseases 2021). The announcement was followed by a hard lockdown of 21 days announced by President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa (South African Government News Agency; SAnews.gov.za 2020). Nhlapo (2020) lamented that the South African government sidelined African indigenous healers, although the World Health Organization had observed that about 80% of people in developing countries were using traditional medicine, during the pandemic. When the traditional healers were sidelined, one may assume that it was because communication about their herbal medicinal products had not been sufficiently done, which led to them being questioned, thereby, stressing the significance of effective communication strategies.

2.3.2. Communication about indigenous knowledge produce - its importance

O'Sullivan (2003) justifies the necessity of effective communication of indigenous knowledge produce by maintaining that the process can influence changes in individuals and society, build new community norms and even promote other programs, which can bring about useful changes towards a better social and economic lives (Nasfi, 2020). Such change, by necessity will have elements of community

participation in development planning, thus, will combine traditional and modern systems, to create a combination of old and new thinking. The role of communication has been widely discussed by experts with the agreement that information exchange has an important role in development, therefore, the role of communication must be linked to the direction of change. This implies that communication activities must be co-created and be able to advance movement towards economic development (Nasfi & Nagara, 2020).

Dilla (2007) contends that effective communication is a key to improving information flow and ensuring that agriculture activities and produce eventually reach potential consumers who may be thousands of miles away, however, Hajar (2019) alerts that communication requires convincing language that can make people who hear the message becoming influenced by the language and the contents, hence, tailor-making communication strategies is crucial.

2.3.3. Challenges in communicating details about IK-based agricultural produce

Challenges faced in communicating IK-based agricultural produce, according to Masduki and Widyatama (2019) can be fully appreciated if one understands certain features of communication. The authors explain that communication can be classified as effective, appropriate and achievable with the following conditions: (1) at the time the decision is made, the communicator must ensure that the communication carried out is well-suited to the audience; (2) the message conveyed is easy to understand, (3) mentally and physically, the receiver is able to carry out what is received and, (4) the content is expected to be in accordance with the personal interests of the person being communicated with.

In this regard, the challenges in communicating details about IK-based agricultural produce might be due to its these conditions - message conveyed not easy to understand; the interlocutors are not able to carry out what has been received and the message is not in accordance with the personal interests of the person being communicated with. When one learns about these requirements/conditions and link

them with the problem of this study about communities' failure to communicate about their produce to a wider public, it prompted an investigation into strategies to overcome challenges in communicating IK.

To overcome challenges in communicating IK-based agricultural produce, a number of suggestions were made by Hybels and Weaver (1992) which include:

Information burden should be discouraged. Message should be shared in the quantity the recipient can readily interpret. It is essential, that any research should explore how producers of IK-facilitated produce should deliver information, which can be well understood by the customers. One solution is for messages to be repeated a number of times to prevent misinterpretation and problems should always be communicated about quickly because delays sometimes create negative impact, as well as cost money (Lawson, 2006). This recommendation does not negate the fact that there could also be information-overload, hence, the speaker should be aware of the right volume of content in a communication event.

Appropriate channels of communication should be selected for transmitting information. The choice of channel is dictated by the nature of the message to be transmitted. Yemer, Desta and Workie (2021) recommend that different terminologies and content should be chosen depending on the nature of the audience. Deshpande and Paturkar (2020) state that interest in the communication being maintained by the consumer is reliant upon the relevance of the communication and the receptivity level of the target receiver of the information, hence, the researcher and the co-researchers in this study, need to co-design strategies relevant to communicate IK produce.

2.3.4. Strategies/models for communicating/sharing information about IK-based agricultural produce

For effective communication to take place, the speakers need to use appropriate communication strategies. According to Rastegar and Gohari (2016), communication strategies are comprised of approaches, specially focusing on transmitting meaningful information to the recipients. The authors present two perspectives on the classification of communication approaches: the interactional view and the

psycholinguistic view. From the interactional perspective, communication approaches are seen as problem-solving strategies to compensate for communication distractions and the using of pragmatic functions to improve messages. Next, the psycholinguistic view looks at communication as a problem-solving strategy, on the part of the communicators to reduce/ get rid of the gaps in their knowledge about a phenomenon. At this point the relevant question to ask is - *Why does communication sometimes fail?* Communication is said to have failed when the message sent by the sender is not received the way the sender had intended. For some communicators, when oral communication fails, the problems may snowball to affect other performance in other language-related areas, thus creating a cycle of miscommunication for the communicators (Rahmat, 2020).

Each community, usually, may have different communication strategies, according to the situation or variations that occur in the organization or context. Ashkenas and Francis (2000) emphasized that effective communication approaches are vital in any organizational structure to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization. This is because, for example, when an organization undergoes change or transformation, then the leader or top management needs to have an approach to realize the targeted new goals and this is reliant on communication, hence, one of the strategies of a leader is an effective communication strategy.

Using an analogy, Mustaffa (2015) maintains that in public institutions, the job of civil servants is to channel services to consumers and one of the aspects assessed is the competence of a civil servant in the information exchange that takes place. Information exchange requires individuals to have certain skills, especially, communication competence. The communication competence possessed must cover a comprehensive aspects in terms of - the ability to communicate accurately and effectively; meet the interlocutors' needs, in accordance with time and situation, as well as select appropriate channels to successfully achieve the communication's goals.

Communication strategies help to identify suitable communication tools for presenting ideas and issues in achieving organizational objectives. According to Effendy (2006),

communication strategy requires guidance during communication planning and management to achieve the goals that have been set in an organization. Hallahan (2007) also agrees that communication strategies used by organizations aim to fulfill a predetermined mission. Organizational managers or leaders, rely on strategies to make them effective communicators to overcome barriers that often occur when there is a transformation in the organization so as to overcome work problems of subordinate staff (Downs & Adrian, 2004).

Communication strategies can overcome the barriers in organization by disseminating knowledge and information among stakeholders; increasing motivation of workers for significant works and present opportunities for personal and professional growth. Perspective from the past, normally does not provide a map to guide current communication, hence, strategic decisions focus purely on the context (Leandro, 2019).

An organization is defined as a group of people who are in a combination of groups and members in the group are categorized by positions and responsibilities to enable them to carry out determined activities (Aziz, 2012). An organization serves as a mechanism to achieve the goals of its members collectively, in addition to having its own system in determining the boundaries of what can or cannot be done. A study by Pruzan and Miller (2006) showed that an organization is a gathering of individuals who develop a coordination system by specifying activities to achieve a goal, in a predetermined time period, with effective communication (Awang & Abdullah, 2012). Tarone (1980) as cited by Huang (2010) reiterates that communication strategies are used to close the gap between the knowledge of the targeted party and that of the sender, in real communication situations, in order to avoid disruptions in daily situations.

Extant literature reveals that, depending on the area of study, there are different measures of communication strategy, thus, communication strategy is conceptualised as a - broadcasting strategy, reactive strategy or engagement strategy - as advanced by Etter (2014). The author explicates that, a broadcasting strategy is when firms simply propagate their details while not bothering to react to queries raised by the

customers; a reactive strategy is pursued when firms only respond to concerns but do not anticipate nor respond to other members; and when entities act in response to questions and remarks and also anticipate and respond directly to other relevant members, then they are using an engagement strategy. This is in agreement with an earlier study done by Degeneffe (2009) which suggested the necessity for the advancement of a communication strategy that is not reactionary but one that ante-dates the responses of customers, in case a query actually occurs.

Several scholars agree that appropriately designed and delivered communication strategies can lead to predetermined and desired outcomes; for instance, according to Kuchi (2006), organizations which use relevant communication, strategically gain support for their corporate enterprises. Okazaki (2006) revealed that there is effectiveness when firms localized their communication strategies in line with their target markets for the dissemination of information. This conclusion was later supported by Laukkanen, Sinkkonen, and Laukkanen (2009) who showed that when different and suitable strategies are used at each stage of a communication event, this leads, for example, to successful adoption of new products and their selling.

Another study done, in America, by Baum (2010) that focused on presidential communication strategies in three media platforms, revealed that a complex and multi-tiered communication strategy was effective in reaching large audiences which led to the successful campaign to the White House by Obama. Degeneffe, Kinsey, Stinson, Ghosh, Degeneffe, Kinsey and Ghosh (2009) concluded that effective messages that are crafted to deal with the concerns of consumers, lead to positive results. In the context of politics, for example, coalition parties craft their communication very skillfully to strategically convey their distinctive policy primacies to the voters with an aim to qualify their already-taken policy decisions (Sagarzazu & Sagarzazu, 2015).

Some studies have demonstrated mixed results on the effects of competent use of communication strategies. A study done by Colleoni (2013), found that engaging information strategies do not, necessarily, lead to alignment of all stakeholders' social expectations. Another research by Etter (2014), in an attempt to identify how organizations make use of social media – twitter - to contribute to symmetric

communication and relationship-building, revealed that broadcasting strategy, neither supports proportionate communication nor relationship-building. Haer, Botzen and Aerts (2016) contend that the commonly-used strategy of top-down government communication was not as effective as tailored, people-centred flood-risk communication. This suggests that organizations that use broadcasting strategy do not upgrade communication commitment and passively react to concerns of the consumers, making trust, involvement, and commitment illusive.

It is apparent that the debate on the role of communication strategies on product adoption or achievement of intended results, remains unsettled, although, the communication strategies adopted by institutions in the form of mass-media strategies and word-of-mouth (WOM) are well documented (Lopez & Sicilia, 2013). The content aspect focuses on what the message is about, while the relational level “gives off” information on how the message is to be understood (Griffin, 2012). It is, therefore, clear that when the receiver of information does not properly understand the content due to low levels of literacy, then the uptake of services is jeopardized. This point is augmented by Mindra and Moya (2017) who posit that individuals with a low levels of literacy find it hard to evaluate and ultimately use produce and services; this compromises achievement of communication objectives. This implies that, although, communication strategies ultimately drive adoption of a new product (Mansor, Shariff & Abdul Manap, 2012), unless consumers are communication-literate, the goal of inclusion after a communication event, would remain unachieved (Kalia, 2011).

There is consensus in extant literature that appropriately-designed communication strategies lead to successful innovations’ adoption (Laukkanen et al.,2009; Lopez and Sicilia, 2013; Sagarzazu & Sagarzazu, 2015). Driven by the fact that product acceptance and inclusion are pre-requisites for sustainable and inclusive growth, therefore, appropriate communication strategy is no longer a policy choice but a policy compulsion (Naser & Wahab, 2011); for example, financial institutions led by their respective central banks have embraced communication strategies to inspire financial produce’ diffusion. In financial institutions, the commonly-adopted communication strategies are mass media - the use of TV, radio, print publications and websites, and word-of-mouth (WOM), using various on-line platforms like e-mail, blogs and social

networking sites - to inform their targeted public about available financial products (Lopez & Sicilia, 2013).

Martín and Fernandez (2022) stated that the electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) user-generated content has become an essential element of the social media, due to the advent of novel technologies. These technologies are sources for the development of - social media posts, text, digital images, micro-blogs and general comments (Grover, Kar & Dwivedi, 2022) and to establish social networking sites (SNSs), - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, among others (Erkan & Evans, 2016). In the past, customers of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) used to rely on a single way of communication of information that can be accessed and shared by marketers (Chopra, Lim & Jain, 2022); this resulted in making customers passive marketing-messages' recipients (Jolly, 2021).

Ulvenblad (2015) proposed a model that asserted that - content-centred, behavior-centred and adaptive-centred - are the main strategies that form effective communication practices. Other researchers, like Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016) suggested six supportive social media strategies of communications, namely, egocentric, conversational, selective, openness, secretive and supportive. A content-centred communication strategy answers the 'what question' and encompasses communicative practices like stories centred on self, others or structures. A behavior-centred communication strategy focuses on the 'how question' and communicative practices focusing on self or others. The adaptive-centred communication strategy is one that adapts to the prevailing situation of this study (Ulvenblad, 2015). According to Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016), an egocentric strategy involves sharing information through social media pages, but no engagement in conversation with customers or fans. The conversational strategy requires entities to respond to every comment shared by customers to establish a connection and moderate any conflict, while selective strategy aims at filtering out only positive comments and paying attention to them, while ignoring any negative feedback.

Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016) continue that while an open communication strategy is where posts are not deleted, and companies respond publicly to every remark shared

with customers, a secretive strategy aims at managing conflict that occurs within the social media page through another private channel like mail or Facebook or when derogatory posts are deleted. Supportive communication strategy aims at providing information about offers and quotations and helping clients during all phases of the purchase process, including information search, purchase and post-purchase. It is, therefore, clear that the conceptualization of communication strategy is domain specific, hence, for strategies in the domain of brand extensions, stakeholders on social media, or corporate social responsibility, are uniquely construed.

Hadiyanto (2008) recommended 'Participatory Communication Development' as an approach that can be a "powerful tool" to facilitate communication strategies, in line with the dynamics of the community, to meet brand aspects. The notion of Participatory Communication Development can also be translated as a carefully-planned activity, a communication strategy, that is applied throughout the development process (Amerta, 2018). Emphasis on the development process is encouraged because no community can exist without communicating or transferring meaning/ knowledge among its people (Robbins & Judge, 2006). Budiwan (2005) predicted that the marketing-communication mix can be relevant in the process of development of communities, through communication of indigenous knowledge.

In the South African Government Communications and information Systems (GCIS) Handbook (2022), it is noted that the processes leading to communication should be taken into consideration. The processes might not be mechanical and yield automatic results, as the steps may be integral to developing and implementing a communication strategy. Strategizing communication is about how to articulate and achieve objectives, for if these are unclear or wrong, then all the subsequent steps will be of little or no value. The handbook further indicates that communication strategizing processes entail the identification and establishing of the following core elements - background, objectives, environment, communication challenges, messages and themes, messengers, target audiences and channels, types of events, communication programme (phased or not phased), structures and processes, and finally, an action plan.

The South African Department of Science and Technology (2002), now the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) reported that the South African cabinet had approved a National Research and Development Strategy in June 2002. Within this Strategy, it was mentioned that there was a need to develop a clearly-articulated research agenda for indigenous knowledge, based on desired research priorities and outputs, given the challenges mostly experienced when communicating indigenous knowledge.

The DSI (2015) noted that for efficient science-communication strategy, there are three essential areas in which improvements are needed. The first has to do with improvements that could be achieved in corporate communications efforts within the DSI stable; the second has to do with a shortage of science communication skills outside the DSI, its entities, and other public science councils, specifically, in the realm of science journalism, and the general coverage of science, technology and innovation in the media. The third area in which science communication can and must be improved is within the science fraternity and its relevant institutions.

It is for this reason that DSI Strategic Aim 3 is designed to promote science communication that will enhance science engagement in South Africa. This is with the assumption that without effective science communication, no science engagement is possible. This strategic aim also resonates with the developing and nurturing of culture and communicating information to the public, providing incentives and platforms for scientists and researchers to communicate their work. Higher education institutions and school learners will be among the stakeholders to address this aim (Department of Science and Innovation: Science Engagement Strategy, 2015). Addressing this aim will also make communities engage as co-researchers to co-create an appropriate communication strategy for indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce.

There are national communication policies outlined in other parts of the world. Servaes (1999) states that the first 'official' description of communication policies was outlined during a meeting of experts on Communication Policies and Planning, held in Paris, July 1972. Communication policies are sets of principles and norms established to guide the behavior of communication systems. Their orientation is fundamental and long range, although they may have operational implications of shortrange significance. Proposal for an International Program of Communication Research,

elaborated by a consultants' committee meeting in Paris in September 1971, had made the concept of communication policies already more concrete: "If something is socially significant it should be self-evident that people need to know something about it".

It is also noted that Third World countries have jumped from oral to electronic media. One of the results of skipping the intermediate stages of literacy and the printed word, is that broadcasting organizations are highly centralized, at the national level and know little about their audiences, therefore, they treat them as undifferentiated. The fact that a large proportion of the programs must be imported, combined with the cultural-levelling effects of mass media, may threaten the traditional and autonomous forms of self-expression and may impoverish the cultural life of people. If a government intends to encourage local initiative and wants to enrich local cultural identity, it has to make this concrete by, for instance, providing majority of the citizen access to local communication systems to serve as effective feedback to the government concerning its development goals and plans.

Alan Hancock (1981) claims that the history of communication policies and planning is one of gradual, sometimes barely perceptible, moves towards integration - towards the perception of coherent systems in communication. It is implicit in such documents as the reports of UNESCO research meetings on mass communication, which often pick up with considerable accuracy, the mood of a particular time.

Tanzania, for example, long resisted the pressures to introduce television. The Tanzanian government did not feel that the country was ready for television, primarily because only an urban elite could make use of it. In addition, there would be an almost total dependence on imports of foreign software as well as hardware, hence, the government opted instead to introduce a video system ('Tanzania Year 16') which served the rural areas primarily. This video equipment is used for horizontal communication between the *ujamaa* villages and the government. It is a relatively inexpensive medium through which important contributions can be made to social development and political consciousness. It was at the same time a significant beginning in the development of an indigenous communication infrastructure and by using minimum imported technology, there was less danger of a dependent media system (Ng'Wanakilala, 1981; Kivikuru, 1990).

Hancock (1984) maintains that successful technology transfer cannot occur unless a certain level of capability has already been built up in the recipients. This condition becomes aggravated because imported technology often neglects the application and development of local knowledge and local resources; it is primarily the end product of the technological process that is transferred, not the knowledge itself.

In most African traditional societies, as can be found elsewhere, people identify and express their lifestyles through their indigenous languages, therefore, thoughts, ideas, perceptions, emotional feelings and actions can be communicated traditionally in diverse ways, either verbally or through non-verbal (visuals) means. The first non-verbal means of communication is the demonstration form that involves conveying of ideas through folk music, signals and iconographics (use of objects and flora media), therefore, objects or indexical resources may signify events, things, concepts, and so on, in socio-cultural settings. All materials of folklore are indexical signs, indicating the relationship between the people and certain objects in their culture; for instance, the presentation to guests of - a plate of kola nuts, garden eggs, a glass of water, cowries and bracelets - at different occasions are symbolic in different African societies. Expressive acts like rituals, sacrifices, pouring of libations, and initiations, are demonstrative methods of communication.

These oral traditions are performed dramatically and aesthetically for audiences to see, interpret and transmit from one generation to another. There is also a visual form of communication which entails the use of pictures (images) in communicating ideas, thoughts and feelings to audience; here, the information is not communicated through spoken nor written languages. Visuals, like verbal languages, are effective media of human communication as they are capable of carrying both factual and affective meanings in the messages to audiences in societies. Unuabonah (2010) stated that non-verbal communication is concerned with the process of sending and receiving messages through wordless and visual medium which aid verbal language, thus, communication can be carried out through gestures, touch, postures, and facial expressions.

Unamma (2004) admits that communities in rural area possess a wide range of indigenous communication channels that have significantly contributed to the

improvement of agricultural systems, in relation to production and post-harvest techniques. These indigenous communication channels operating in the rural communities have the power to change behaviours of the people, identify and find solution to farming problems from different sources of information. The author also acknowledges that communication is the bloodstream of every community. There are no explicitly-designed communication forms, and different types of agricultural information are communicated through, for instance, extension agents and mass media which are dominated by the views and interests of government officials and development agents, which rarely entertain community members' needs.

In this context, there are challenges from - insufficient extension staff (especially given that extension staff-to-farmer ratio is 1:1300), the government-operated extension system being top-down, hence, cannot listen to farmers demands, as well as dwindling resources which had affected the agricultural sector (Unamma, 2004). With the mass media, such as radio, television, and newsletters, communication is mostly targeted. The western world has dominated the political, social-cultural and developmental spheres of the developing nation, but they have not been effective in communicating with and mobilizing the rural communities which are the food baskets and resource base of many nations (FAO, 2011).

This is because the farmers in rural communities are, usually, poor, illiterate and innovations in agriculture are aired when the farmers are either on their farms, busy with other responsibilities or the communication is in a foreign language. As such every community has developed its indigenous modes and channels of communication which characterize its organization structure and development goals. These communication modes and channels form the basis on which the communities, especially, the rural ones progress. According to Ekong (2010), a rural community is an aggregation of families habitually living together, within a definite geographical location. These communities are more or less rooted in the land they occupy, living in the state of mutual interdependence, supporting some basic social measure of political autonomy, in relation to other communities. A community is characterized by the organization of functions of a locality living together, within a definite location and interacting on face-to-face basis (Anyanwu, 2013).

Members may also use common institutions and facilities and maintain a consciousness of oneness, through the sharing of common values, norms, traditional, prejudices and sentiments (Nwachukwu, 2013). In majority of rural farming communities, an overwhelming percentage of the population are small-scale farmers, each working with less than two hectares of land. These farmers represent hundreds of different communities with distinct languages and ethnic groups; they are resources –poor and rural-based and derive their livelihoods mainly from agriculture (Nkeme & Ndaeyo (2011) and Makinde & Shorunke (2013).

Indigenous media, a form of conceptualization, were initiated by indigenous peoples around the globe as vehicles for communication on issues such as - cultural preservation, cultural and artistic expression, political self-determination and cultural sovereignty (Wilson, Pamela & Michelle, 2008). These types of indigenous media address local interests and concerns in local languages and use idioms that the audience is familiar with and understands, therefore, they are considered appropriate communication channels for populations in rural areas. Research has shown that most farmers, men and women, do not learn about new technologies through the media or the extension services but rather from their friends, neighbours or through their own experiments.

Indigenous media make it possible for messages to be packaged and transferred in locally-popular artistic forms (Essien, 2014). This cannot be rivaled by any other means of communication with regard to addressing the realities. Examples exist where, song, drama, debate and dance groups are used for encouraging advances in farming, health, nutrition, family welfare, agricultural reforms, and to promote campaigns against social ills. From the foregoing, one can see that indigenous communication is indisputably a veritable tool for information dissemination (Nwachukwu, 2013).

According to Uwem, Ubong & Adautin (2013) and Akpabio (2015), indigenous communication is *“the communication system which existed before the arrival of (contemporary) mass media and formerly organized bureaucratic systems, and still exists today despite changes.”* Nwachukwu (2014), suggested that indigenous media should be used effectively to reach farmers since the existing mass media approaches

have been less effective in disseminating the necessary technologies and information to the farmers, therefore, this study explores the development of communication strategies in relation to IK produce. Adopting a science communication approach ensures the using of relevant tools for target audience.

2.3.4.1. Science Communication

Burns, O'Connor & Stocklmayer (2003) clarify 'science communication' as the use of appropriate skills, media, activities, and dialogue to provide scientific responses to phenomena. It includes familiarity with affective responses, for example, appreciating science as entertainment or art, through using different media like storytelling (Olson, 2015). It is for this reason that the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2020) recommends that audience sub-categories must be managed with expertly-packaged information, tailored to mixed identities, hence, using audience-appropriate language is critical to successful communication. This is because science has developed into many specialized fields with their own vocabularies, hence, scientists in different disciplines may struggle to communicate with others in different disciplines (Funk, Hefferon, Kennedy & Johnson, 2019).

Science communication must initially perform these interrelated tasks: identify the science most relevant to the decisions that people face, then determine what people already know and design communication to fill the critical gaps (between what people know and need to know) (Fischhoff & Scheufele, 2012). The research platform, then becomes one on which co-researchers will exercise their own preference and not be stuck to certain pre-conceived notions of conducting research, nor positivism, but basically as knowledge co-constructivists.

This is because every community is different, not only demographically but also with respect to background knowledge, personality, worldview, cultural norms, and preference. Kahan (2012) notes that often, in the science communication literature, typical social labels are usually the preferred criteria for audience analysis based on - race, gender, ethnicity, age, level of education, religious identity and, increasingly, partisan affiliation. Each society already has natural, human and organizational resources of its own, such as traditional social values and institutions; for instance,

Thailand with its long tradition of *'likay'* folk opera can successfully combine with modern media. Through stories and songs on radio and television programs, the traditional Thai culture can, for instance, be propagated and renewed (Servaes, 1999). In this context, Tshidzivhe village is different in terms of its farmers' produce, hence, the different stakeholders' voices should be heard when generating data, thus, knowing the communities, then becomes critical for connecting with them (Wilson, Ramey, Donaldson, Germain & Perkin, 2016).

Some studies on science communication had previously engaged with communities by providing very extensive ethnographic detail, for example, studies by Irwin and Wynne (1996), however, recent high profile science communication research papers barely mention such details and the word was neither used in the editorial (Fischhoff and Scheufele, 2013), despite the paper's title – "Communicating Science in Social Settings". On the other hand, Dietz's paper focused on public deliberation and identified the importance of what he called 'community expertise' (Dietz, 2013) but did so cursorily and illustrated the concept with a society-level example about 'members of the public'. A paper by Kahan (2015) on a similar topic – "The Science of Science Communication" - used the word 'communities', but it did not engage with its meanings in relation to science communication.

It is, therefore, necessary to make sure that the information one shares is of appropriate complexity, for example, details about a product cannot be communicated to young people in the same way it is communicated to elderly people. Crafting the information so that it is relevant to the audience, is to ensure effective communication as Davis (2018) maintains that without effective communication, the scientific community cannot fulfil its promise to society or secure the trust needed to support its enterprise. Science affects stakeholders with diverse backgrounds, interests, and agenda, thus, appropriate communication involves contributions from across broad social and behavioural sciences.

Nickerson (1999) added that the audience defines how scientists need to craft communication in terms of - the language, images, and format to choose and the take-home message these scientists want everyone to remember. Based on that, Wenzel (2020) advocates for community-centred journalism built on interpersonal

relationships and intimate knowledge of shared place for similar, equity-based communication.

Varner (2014) regards science communication as a process that requires continuous evaluation, reflection, and adaptation to see if appropriateness is being achieved. This is motivated by the fact that producers may know what they want to say but may not know how to say it. It is also noted that demands for science communication do not only fall on producers but also on researchers. Researchers need to conduct and report on their studies with their co-researchers in a participatory informed manner. This concern resulted in Nickerson (1999)'s utterance that researchers can be incompetent people when it comes to sharing effective communication. Scientific form of communication, therefore, requires researchers to create platforms, recruit stakeholders, disseminate messages, adhere to ethics and culture diversity, as well as collect feedback.

Dialogue and deliberation between the participants and researchers are regarded as the most appropriate way of engaging in science communication (Bauer, Allum & Miller, 2007; Trench, 2008; Brossard & Lewenstein, 2010). This has resulted, over the last two decades, in a growing call for participatory research that includes indigenous ways of knowing in research, that affect indigenous peoples (Cochran, Garcia-Downing, Kendall, Cook & McCubbin, 2008; Government of Canada, 2020; Wong, Ballegooyen, Ignace, Johnson & Swanson, 2020). Once such research is ready to be published, the question of authorship and how to respectfully recognize indigenous ways of knowing, comes into play, hence, precedents are being set (Bawaka Country, Wright, Suchet-Pearson, Lloyd, Burarrwanga & Ganambarr, 2006). Gastil (2017) maintains that the focus for most models of science communication, in the public participation paradigm, is a two-way communication, that is, dialogue and (sometimes) deliberation between the co-researchers and researchers. The focus on two-way communication is informed by the fact that in Participatory Action Research, knowledge is co-constructive and co-researchers' voices are heard as a demonstration of collaboration between them and the researcher, forcing Chen and Dahlman (2004) to emphasize that the amount of knowledge available in a given society plays an essential role in its economic development.

This is demonstrative of the fact that there is no single approach to science communication (Weigold, 2001), thus, no “one-size-fits-all” approach. Multiple approaches to science communication, therefore, are worthy of adoption given that there might be non-expert stakeholders with whom researchers mostly interact with, ranging from - interested to non-interested laypeople, engaged stakeholders and policymakers, and scientific colleagues from other disciplines. Efforts in participatory forms of engagement are most likely to bring positive change in participants (Monroe, Andrews & Biedenweg, 2008) and are captured in contemporary definitions of science communication (Burns, 2003; Bublea, Nisbet, Borchelt, Brungers, Critchley & Einsiedel, 2009). This then talks to agricultural producers alerting researchers that their customers should be engaged in a participatory manner so that a relevant communication strategy that talks to their realities may be co-designed.

Internal consultation among collaborators will also need to proceed in a way that is mindful of power, since failure to identify and manage power dynamics could result in damage to a project (Bennett, Gadlin & Marchand, 2018). Trench and Bucchi (2010) remind us of this point by noting that - science communication concerns the interaction between communities of scientists, interest groups, policy-makers and various public members - although, we have to consider whether science communication also covers communication between and within various scientific institutions and communities of scientists. This has received significantly less attention than the cross-sectoral communication between scientific communities and those of the wider society.

When communicating details about IK-based agricultural produce, there are certain factors that should be considered to complement any science communication recommended, namely, brand awareness, brand trust and brand loyalty. Brand awareness is a driver of brand choice (Valavi, 2014); it refers to the ability of customers to realise that a particular brand belongs to a certain service. It has an order which is divided into four levels from “being unaware of the brand” to “the top of mind,” and each stage needs a different type of recall test (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness is categorized into two aspects, namely, brand recognition and brand recall (Keller, 1993).

Brand recognition is the overall level of awareness towards a specific brand; recognition of a brand name is an essential part of brand awareness (Davis, Golicic & Marquardt, 2009). On the other hand, brand recall, means remembering the brand name and it refers to its association or its resemblance to features of a similar brand group. In a similar vein, awareness can be seen as the extent to which customers consider a brand when provided with a product category which is similar (Netemeyer, Krishnan, Pullig, Wang, Yagci, Dean, Ricks & Wirth, 2004). A brand with a strong brand recall, can influence a person's choice within a service offering (Kimpakorn & Tocquer 2010). Scholars also confirmed that brand awareness leads to brand loyalty (Pappu, Quester and Cooksey, 2006), however, Kim and Kim (2005) expound that awareness is a first and necessary step but insufficient to influence the choice of a brand.

Brand Trust is the ability of a brand to meet customers' expectations and their needs, and sometimes even going beyond their expectations (Lei and Li, 2014; Lau and Lee, 2000). In this context, trust comes when a brand is able to meet the needs of a customer. According to Ballester and Aleman (2001), having brand trust is based on a product being reliable and fulfilling what it intends to offer to a customer. Brand trust relates to what the customers expect, although there might be risks involved in trusting the brand (Rai & Medha, 2013; Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014).

Brand loyalty is the behavioral pattern of customer deliberately targeted at the search, purchase and usage stages of a particular brand, even when other competitors reduce the prices of the same product (Jacoby & Chesnut, 1978). According to Aaker (1991), a major factor, that serves as sales advantage in areas of - new customer creation, marketing cost reduction, and improvement of organizational financial leverage - is customer loyalty to a brand. Aaker (1996) maintains that brand loyalty includes a positive attitude towards a brand and a regular purchase pattern by customers. It is believed that brand loyalty is built upon satisfaction of customers' need in terms of expectation fulfillment and provision of unique produce over other competitors offering the same produce. A customer is said to be 'brand loyal' when he/she purchases a brand frequently against other alternatives.

Customers' buying pattern of a certain product is influenced by their attitude towards a product, hence, in marketing parlance, it is a composite of what constitute belief and intentions towards a particular brand or retail store (Jobber, 2004). These major components - belief, intentions and feelings - are seen as based on the level of mutuality and their influence on customer reactions towards a product or brand. Customer perception relates to the decision in the mind of market participants on the distinctiveness, quality and supremacy of a product or service (Netemeyer et al., 2004; Zeithaml, 1988). It is also defined as the overall decision with respect to the dimensions of brand values (Aaker, 1991; Jacoby & Chesnut, 1978).

Customer perception is a deliberate behavior which is influenced by the assessment of the expected and actual performance of a product or service (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Leonard Berry, 1985). Perceptions relates to the overall superiority of a brand in relation to its intended purpose and relative to alternative brands in the minds of the customers (Hsu & Cai, 2009). Parasuraman et al. (1985) proposed five dimensions of perception - reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, empathy, and assurance. Meanwhile, in the study by Lassar, Mittal and Sharma (1995) brand performance was used to measure perception. Perception presents value to customers, influencing them to buy the brand, and it is an important point of distinction (Aaker 1996; Hsu et al., 2011; Balaji 2011). As the perceptions of brand quality improve, this will increase customer consumption and directly influence producers' performance (Aaker, 1991; Zeithaml, 1988).

2.3. Conclusion

This chapter presented what other scholars have recorded in order to establish the relation between communication strategies and details about indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce. The notion of science communication was deliberated upon in this chapter and served as a yardstick that whatever communication strategy one may think of, one should think of the appropriateness of the strategy to the end-users and also make it a point to co-create it with those who will use it. Scholars also recommend awareness of the technological era the world is in, hence, communication strategies should be in line with current technology in order to reach a wider spectrum of the public.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1. Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology that underpinned the study. It is within this chapter that there are discussions of the - research design, research site, population of the study, recruitment of co-researchers, data generation, data analysis and ethical consideration.

3.2. Research methodology

Schwardt (2007) notes a research methodology as concerning how an inquiry should proceed, focusing on how research can be done scientifically. In other words, a research methodology aims to describe how research can be conducted and explains, succinctly, areas, such as – design of the project, methods for data generation and analysis, selecting of participants and how to treat them ethically, limitations and resources, as well as presuppositions and consequences. In the sections below, therefore, will be deliberations on - research design, research site, population of the study, recruitment of co-researchers, data generation and data analysis, ensuring trustworthiness and ethical considerations adhered to.

3.3. Research design

Leedy (1997) outlines a ‘research design’ as a plan for a study which provides the overall framework for collecting data. In addition, MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) explicate the phrase, as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data generation procedures to answer the research question(s). This study took a qualitative route with a participatory study design to ensure knowledge co-creation between the researcher and co-researchers.

3.3.1. Participatory study design

The design of this study was participatory and appreciative using qualitative data-generation methods, such as, interviews, storytelling, and focus-group discussions. This is in line with Mayan (2010) who notes that effective and ethical community-based work demands that researchers and co-researchers “equitably design and implement” projects, and that research is not simply done on or in ‘native’ communities but is completed with them. This allowed the co-researchers to co-create knowledge with the researcher through all the steps (for example, planning, observation and reflection).

3.4. Research site

The research site means the location(s) where the research is actually conducted. The research site was Tshidzivhe village which is located within Thulamela Municipality in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province (Figure 1). Limpopo is the northernmost Province of South Africa and is named after the Limpopo River, which forms the Province's western and northern borders. Vhembe District is located at the North-western tip of South Africa, in the Limpopo Province. It is bordered by Zimbabwe to the north and Botswana to the northwest.

Tshidzivhe village is amongst the villages in Vhembe that has a potential of producing quality IK-based produce. Most of the farmers in the village produce IK-based agricultural produce through organic farming forms, about which, not much has been communicated.

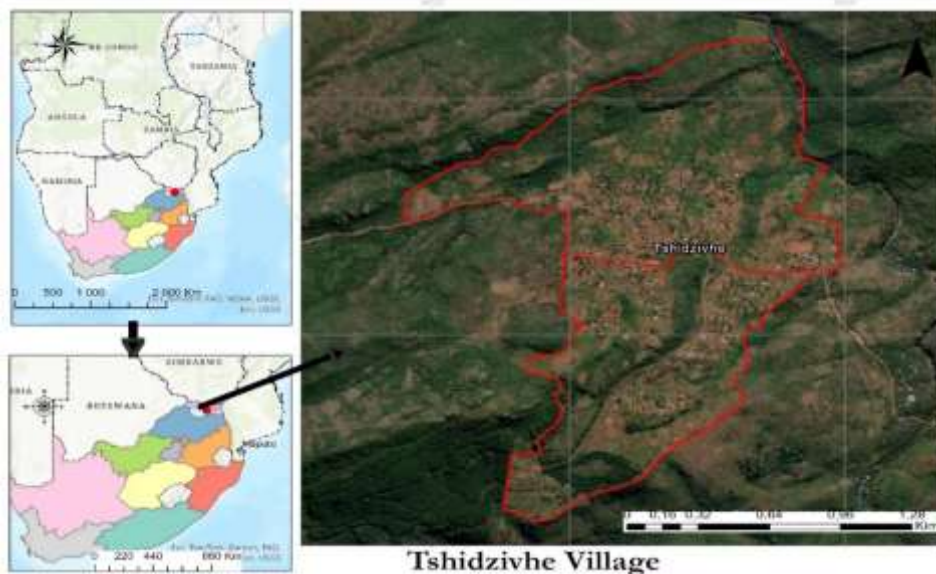


Figure 1: Map for Tshidzivhe village

3.5. Population of the study

Shukla (2020) referring to 'population' maintains that it consists of all the units on which the findings of research can be applied / generalised. In other words, a population is a set of all the units that possesses various characteristics required under the study. The population of this study are people, also referred to as 'co-researchers', who are making identified produce in Tshidzivhe village. The population was those who produce indigenous produce, such as finger-millet, beans, indigenous vegetables and trees as they could relate to what the research was about.

3.6. Recruitment

The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is known as recruitment or sampling (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber 1998; Polit & Hungler, 1999). The procedure followed was that, Tshidzivhe village members were approached through *Vhamusanda* (the traditional leader, commonly known as 'chief'). When access was granted by the chief, a recruitment of 30 producers of indigenous produce/co-researchers from the research site, was done through consultation, therefore, the study adopted a non-probability recruitment method.

3.6.1. Non-probability sampling / recruitment

The non-probability sampling or recruitment method means the non-implementation of probability sampling mechanisms (Vehovar, Toepoel & Steinmetz, 2016). The non-probability recruitment method employed was purposive sampling (also known as 'judgmental sampling') where selection follows some judgement or arbitrary ideas of the researchers in looking for a kind of 'representative' sample. Researchers may even explicitly seek for diversity (deviant case samplings) and in this case sometimes units are added sequentially until researchers satisfy some criteria. The researcher decided to recruit 30 producers in Tshidzivhe village. Recruitment considered gender balance -15 men and 15 women - so that the sample was representative of both genders who were co-researchers, however, the number was not fixed, therefore, the researcher was free to add and reduce due to saturation or in line with the objectives.

3.7. Data generation

Data generation methods included workshops, storytelling, in-depth individual interviews and appreciative focus-group discussions. This was informed by the fact that for a communication strategy to be tailor-made, there had to be co-researchers involved in the research through appreciative process. The data generation process was embedded in in-depth interviews and focus-group discussions.

3.7.1. In-depth interviews

An in-depth interview is one of the fundamental research methods, technique or procedure used to collect primary data when conducting qualitative research (Della Porta, 2014). With this method, the co-researchers were able to share what they perceive as communication strategies for IK-based agricultural produce.

3.7.2. Focus-group discussions

A Focus-Group Discussion (FGD) is a forum where participants / co-researchers are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, experiences, and attitudes towards a phenomenon, idea, concept, service, programme, among others (Henderson, 2009). Babbie (2021) clarifies that a focus-group discussion, which is also called 'group interviewing', is essentially a qualitative method and can be structured, semi-

structured, or unstructured. Henderson (2009) adds that a focus-group discussion is essentially group interviews in which a particular group of people – usually between 4 and 10 individuals - are gathered together to discuss a subject and exchange views. The researcher not only acts as moderator, but also asks specific questions to direct the discussions. Focus-group discussions produce data and insights that would be less accessible, without the interaction found in a group setting; listening to others' verbalized experiences, stimulates memories, ideas, and experiences in other participants. The co-researchers were gathered at the chief's kraal as a convenient place for them to have the discussions.

3.8. Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is generally described as a non-linear, iterative process (Lester, Cho & Lochmiller, 2020). An analysis' purpose is to summarize the generated data and organize it in such a manner as to yield answers to the articulated research questions. In simple words, it means, studying the data to determine its inherent facts (Ibrahim, 2015). The researcher adopted the thematic analysis format.

3.8.1. Thematic analysis

Clarke & Braun (2016) explain thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data. Thematic analysis provides accessible and systematic procedures for generating codes and themes from the collected qualitative data. The selection of a thematic analysis was not informed by seeking to summarize the data content, but to identify, and interpret, key, but not necessarily all, features of the data, guided by the research question/s. Research questions sometimes are not fixed and can evolve throughout coding and theme development during the process of analysis.

3.9. Delimitation

There was a challenge regarding the road infrastructure to access the community during data generation. During the data generation process some of the co-researchers felt their time was being wasted as they had to attend to their agricultural chores, hence, this may have affected their contribution to the study. Weather

conditions were also extreme and that led to some of the community members being unable to participate as they could not stand the heatwave that was being experienced during that time.

For the co-researchers to gather, they had to go to the Chief's kraal as the standard procedure. As the way to go there is steep and most of the co-researchers were elders, it was not easy for them to join the team for data generation. That led to organizing different sessions so to accommodate those who could not make it on time to the Chief's kraal.

3.10. Ethical consideration

Fleming (2018) highlights some ethical dilemmas commonly encountered as an 'insider researcher', including the power differentiation and ongoing relationships with co-researchers. It is, however, essential to consider the fundamentals of ethical research involving co-researchers. In this study, the following ethical considerations were observed:

3.10.1. Permission to conduct the study

Permission to conduct the study was obtained through writing a letter to the representative / messenger who informed the Chief of Tshidzivhe village about the intent of the study. When permission had been granted, a gift or *nduvho* for the Chief was given as a form of paying respect to him. The study was then allowed to be conducted. The researcher got ethical approval - the certificate number is FHSS3/23/DS/01/1907.

3.10.2. Informed consent

The cornerstone of ethical research is 'informed consent' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The term consists of two elements - informed and consent - with each requiring careful consideration. Informed consent is a process in which a person learns key facts about a study (for example, a clinical trial), including potential risks and benefits, before deciding whether or not to participate in the study (Noble, Donovan, Turner, Metcalfe, Lane, Rowlands, Martin, 2009). The details of informed consent are - informing the

co-researchers/participants or clients of the nature of the intervention or study, possible alternatives, and the potential risks and benefits of the intervention or study. Informed consent is a process or concept, not just a form.

Co-researchers were therefore fully informed of what was required from them, how the data will be used, and the consequences (if any) there could be. The aspects of 'informed' involves clear explanation on aspects like - who the researcher(s) are; what the intent of the research is; what data will be generated with co-researchers; how the data will be generated with co-researchers, what level of commitment is required from co-researchers; how the data will be used and reported, and what the potential risks of taking part in the research are. Co-researchers were informed that participation was on voluntary basis. The co-researchers were provided with explicit details, afterwards, they signed the consent forms to take part in the research, after being made aware of their right to access their information and the right to withdraw, at any point.

3.10.3. Confidentiality and anonymity

Literature notes a number of harms that might arise from people being identified - embarrassment and / or resultant violence (Lee, 1993). Ethical guidelines and methods note the necessity of offering anonymity to co-researchers through the use of pseudonyms, however, there is now an increasing awareness that co-researchers, particularly children and young people, may want to be identified and not anonymised in research outputs (Bera, 2004; Grinyer, 2002). There were, therefore, some negotiations with the co-researchers before data generation process in order to establish from them if their preference was for anonymity or otherwise; they indicated that they would waive their right to anonymity but their ages should not be disclosed. This was in line with Mayan (2010) advise that co-researchers should be involved in designing the research process.

3.10.4 No risk of harm

Harm, can affect people - physically, economically (from resource loss, including time) and emotionally, (by tarnishing their reputation). When considering the potential for harm, the approach should be, in descending order - to eliminate, isolate, and minimize

- the risk with the co-researchers being fully informed on what the risks are. This was ensured as the researcher familiarised himself with all ethical issues before undertaking the research, hence, was able to comprehensively explain the concept of harm to the co-researchers.

There is quite a large literature (Sluka, 1990 & Loftsdottir, 2002) on how researchers can guard against inflicting physical harm on participants, by, for example, skillful fieldwork, good relations among all parties, honesty in respect of sponsorship, intentions, as well as caution about the expression of opinions.

3.11. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness or rigor of a study, refers to the degree of confidence in the data, its interpretation, and the methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot and Beck, 2014). To develop trustworthiness in qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) initially presented four criteria: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability and in 1994, these researchers added a fifth criterion, authenticity. Credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant views, their interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2012). The researcher ensured that data generated with the co-researchers represented the opinions of both parties. This was ensured through the criteria below:

3.11.1. Dependability

This refers to the constancy of the data over similar conditions (Polit & Beck, 2012). In order to address the dependability issue more directly, the processes within the study will be reported in detail, thereby enabling future researchers to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004). Dependability was ensured through sticking to the details as outlined in the introductory Chapter One and in the informed consent form.

3.11.2. Confirmability

Confirmability relates to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data represent the co-researchers' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints (Polit &

Beck, 2012). The concept of confirmability is a qualitative investigator's concern with objectivity. For this to happen, steps must be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than arising from the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). Such was possible, as the researcher took the appreciative route for data generation to avoid misrepresentation of co-researchers.

3.11.3. Authenticity

Authenticity refers to the ability and extent to which the researcher expresses the feelings and emotions of the participants in a faithful and truthful manner (Polit & Beck, 2012). Throughout the research process, the researcher appreciated moments that the co-researchers expressed themselves during data generation, as anything to the contrary would have contradicted the appreciative nature of the research.

3.12. Conclusion

The design of this study was participatory and appreciative using qualitative data-generation methods, such as interviews and focus-group discussions. That allowed both the researcher and the co-researchers from Tshidzivhe to have equal share of opportunities in co-designing communication strategies for selling their IK-oriented produce. The co-researchers co-owned the study as they led the discussions themselves as opposed to waiting for the co-researcher to do the leading.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and analysis the data collected on the topic - *Exploring the development of communication strategy for Indigenous Knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village, in Thulamela Municipality of Limpopo Province, in South Africa*. In this chapter the geographical location, the culture and practices of Tshidzivhe people are described as an example of an indigenous way of living. The community is still under the traditional leadership of Chief Mazikule Netshidzivhe and the Vho Makhadzi Netshidzivhe as his support. The livelihood of Tshidzivhe people is predominantly entrenched in the traditions and practices of the Vhavenda people.

These traditions and practices are transferred to the younger generation in collaboration with the Dzomo La Mupo organization, that advocates for nature conservation and biodiversity. The indigenous knowledge within the community encompasses producing indigenous trees and organic farming as well as preservation of sacred sites. Most of the Indigenous Knowledge Holders (IKHs) in Tshidzivhe village farm through organic agricultural methods. Below is a picture of a portion of Tshidzivhe village. (see Figure 2)



Figure 2: Tshidzivhe village set-up

5.2. Profiles of co-researchers from the Tshidzivhe village who took part in the study

Names	Gender	Who they are
Co-researcher 1	Male	He was there to give guidance on activities that are carried out within his community of Tshidzivhe. His role is also to give consent on activities that have to be conducted with involvement of the Tshidzivhe community. He played a big role in giving consent for the study to be conducted within his community.
Co-researcher 2	Female	She is a knowledge holder within Tshidzivhe village who is rich in indigenous knowledge given to her by her ancestors. This same knowledge she has shared with the younger generation or youth. She is responsible for the protection of the sacred sites and observation of beliefs around them. She has travelled outside South Africa to countries, such as Kenya, in order to exchange indigenous knowledge in relation to preservation of seeds.
Co-researcher 3	Female	She supports the Chief in all the decisions he has to make about the community. She is one of the indigenous knowledge holders within the community of Tshidzivhe. She is amongst those elders who can take decisions in the Chief's absence.
Co-researcher 4	Female	She is rich in knowledge on indigenous-food processing, such as the processing

		of indigenous fruits into other indigenous produce, such as <i>tshitakada</i> . She has been sharing her knowledge with the youth on how certain produce are processed.
Co-researcher 5	Female	Her passion is for indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce. This enables her to participate in exhibitions, as well as to benchmark with other communities on their practices. Her role in the community is that she is amongst those who share their knowledge with the younger generation. She also preserves seeds of indigenous agricultural produce.
Co-researcher 6	Female	Her expertise is in eco-mapping wherein she is able to share with the younger generation the knowledge about the changes of the seasons. This also informs what the community should produce so that they are in line with the given seasons. She visits the schools around Tshidzivhe and teaches such knowledge to the younger generation.
Co-researcher 7	Female	She is one of Tshidzivhe's youth who is active in terms of learning about indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce. She is also the one who assists in communicating details about what are produced at Tshidzivhe village, via digital platforms such as WhatsApp, as well as assisting in showcasing the products at exhibitions.

Co-researcher 8	Male	He is part of the support structure to the producers in terms of transporting them to workshops and events that they are invited to.
Co-researcher 9	Female	She produces maize, sweet potatoes and indigenous vegetables.
Co-researcher 10	Female	She is a beekeeper in the community and also produces indigenous fruits and dries them when they are ready, as a way of preserving them.
Co-researcher 11	Female	He is in beekeeping and is a support structure to those who are into indigenous trees' production.
Co-researcher 12	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 13	Female	She produces indigenous herbs, maize, sweet potatoes, indigenous fruits and dried vegetables.
Co-researcher 14	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs. She is also well-versed regarding the sacred sites.
Co-researcher 15	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs. She likes observing beekeeping activities.
Co-researcher 16	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 17	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.

Co-researcher 18	Female	She produces indigenous trees for commercialization purpose. She is also interested in beekeeping.
Co-researcher 19	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs. She also facilitates eco-mapping workshops.
Co-researcher 20	Female	Her focus is on cultivating indigenous trees and maize during the summer season.
Co-researcher 21	Female	She has expertise in producing indigenous vegetables and drying them for commercialization purposes.
Co-researcher 22	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 23	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 24	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 25	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs. She also facilitates the eco-mapping workshops.
Co-researcher 26	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 27	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 28	Female	She produces maize, as well as indigenous trees and herbs.

Co-researcher 29	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.
Co-researcher 30	Female	She produces indigenous trees and herbs.

Figure 3: Profiles of co-researchers

5.3. Presentation of data

This section on presentation of data generated focusses on –indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are available in Tshidzivhe village; how the details about the produce are communicated; challenges in communicating about the produce and effective communication strategies that can be used.

5.3.1. Produce that are available in Tshidzivhe village

Response 1	<i>“At Tshidzivhe we have different indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that include - mealies, indigenous vegetables such as vowa, nngu, dzaluma and others that naturally grow and we nurture them. These are products that we thank our ancestors that they gave them to us.”</i>
Response 2	<i>“We have different produce, such as mealies, beans, finger-millet and also indigenous trees from which we collect seeds, from the bush and plant. When talking about millet, we are talking about a sacred product that means a lot to us as Vhavenda people because there are certain rituals that we perform using finger-millet.”</i>
Response 3	<i>“We have a variety of agricultural-based produce, such as mealies, beans, peanuts and indigenous vegetables such as tshibavhe, mufungwi, dzaluma and others. These mentioned vegetables are indigenous for they grow in the forests given to us by the ancestors. The most important issue I can also share is that we are able to dry these vegetables so that we can be able to use them by the time food is scarce. This also assists as we share this knowledge with the younger generation so that they can live without having to rely on mechanized</i>

	<i>materials. It is also a way of ensuring that the youth appreciate how their elders used to live in the past.”</i>
Response 4	<i>“We have different produce such as finger-millet, mealies, peanuts, beans and others for which we got the seeds from our grandparents who passed them down until they got to us. The seeds that we have will also be transferred to our next generation. With this, we are promoting the culture of preserving food amongst our communities.”</i>
Response 5	<i>“We have a lot that is available, such as mealies, indigenous fruits as well as indigenous vegetables that grow behind our backyard. I would also like to mention the honey that we produce as we are also doing beekeeping. There is an expert here when it comes to beekeeping who is also sharing knowledge with the University of Venda. We work with the University so that even the students who have no knowledge about beekeeping are able to get the knowledge.”</i>
Response 6	<i>“At Tshidzivhe we produce a lot of things with the inclusion of indigenous fruits such as mbula that help us produce something called tshitakada. These are the fruits that young people do not know as they have now moved to Western fruits only. It is however strange because some shops are selling these indigenous fruits that the youth say they don’t eat; yet they go to the shops and buy them. Sometimes they even buy processed food made out of those products.”</i>
Response 7	<i>Tshidzivhe is rich in different kinds of produce, such as finger-millet, indigenous trees such as mutu, mugwiti and others.</i>
Response 8	<i>The produce that are here at Tshidzivhe range from finger millet, indigenous maize, indigenous fruits and others as already mentioned.</i>
Response 9	<i>Tshidzivhe village is very rich in indigenous food, such as indigenous fruits, indigenous trees for medicine and others</i>

	<i>which I cannot disclose because it is not allowed in my culture to just disclose information.</i>
Response 10	<i>We have herbs that we produce, such as <i>Acmella caulirhiza</i>, <i>Centella asiatica</i>, <i>Riocreuxia torulosa</i>, <i>Bidens Pilosa</i>, <i>Pentarrhinum insipidum</i>, <i>Stapelia gigantea</i> and <i>Aloe chabaudii</i></i>
Response 11	<i>I do beekeeping, so I will mention beekeeping because it is my expertise.</i>
Response 12	<i>We have dried vegetables processed from indigenous vegetables and indigenous maize. We also have sweet potatoes.</i>

Figure 4: Indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are available in Tshidzivhe village

Below are pictures of some of the products from Tshidzivhe; they range from indigenous trees, vegetables, as well as processed food. Figure 5 depicts indigenous trees such as - Mushakaladza (River firethorn currant); Mutshikili (*Trichilia emetica*); Musudzungwane (*Lipia javanica*) and vegetables such as Tshibavhe (*Momordica charantia*); Mushidzhi (Blackjag). Figure 6 shows indigenous products, such as - sweet potatoes, beans and indigenous maize meal - cooked at Tshidzivhe.



Figure 5: Indigenous trees and vegetables produced at Tshidzivhe village



Figure 6: Food produced at Tshidzivhe village

The co-researchers shared in Figure 7 below, how details of the produce are communicated as per Objective 2.

5.3.2. How details on the produce are communicated to the market

Response 1	<i>We are really struggling in terms of communicating about the produce to the wider public. The way we mostly use is the one for exhibition when Dzomo la Mupo has invited us to the events.</i>
Response 2	<i>It is just a word-of-mouth that we use currently as we are not familiar with other ways of communicating about the produce.</i>
Response 3	<i>We just communicate amongst ourselves using word-of-mouth. As for the people outside Tshidzivhe, we have not really figured a way of communicating with them expect reaching out to them through exhibitions that we do, when invited to events, such as the one at the University of Venda and other organizations.</i>

<p>Response 4</p>	<p><i>The details about the produce we do not have any specific way of communication except through the word-of-mouth that we have all along been using. These days our youth have tried to device some means where they publicize what we produce via WhatsApp; however, it is really not being seen by the wider public as even the WhatsApp group is for people whom we have already accessed as we work with them.</i></p>
<p>Response 5</p>	<p><i>The details about the produce are not sufficiently communicated as there are no other ways except by the word-of-mouth where the produce are being communicated about. There is a website developed under an organization called 'Dzomo La Mupo' that assists in communicating about the produce.</i></p>
<p>Response 6</p>	<p><i>We talk amongst ourselves as the elders because we normally exchange the produce when they are ready. As for selling to other people, it is difficult to reach out to them.</i></p>
<p>Response 7</p>	<p><i>I really do not have any idea on how information is communicated because I even don't have them at my home. But I think they use word-of-mouth since those producing them are mainly the elders who are not well versed with the technological platforms.</i></p>
<p>Response 8</p>	<p><i>Our young people should be the ones to assist us as they are familiar with technologies of today. Now we are old and we cannot do anything in this regard.</i></p>
<p>Response 9</p>	<p><i>Like what the previous speaker said, we need young people to be involved in this.</i></p>
<p>Response 10</p>	<p><i>When we go out to meetings with other communities, we take our produce along so that people may see them and know that we are in business. We encourage them to further tell communities about what we are selling so that we may have further business.</i></p>

Response 11	<i>I really do not have any ideas on this, as strategies that we have tried seem to be failing and we need assistance from the universities on this since you are more educated than us.</i>
Response 12	<i>I would need advice from you as you are people who have researched more and I assume you might be having more information than us. I see these days people sell their produce in social media. My grandchildren showed me and I was so interested that my produce may also be sold via the same channels.</i>
Response 13	<i>We just need assistance as we are old and we have run out of ideas.</i>
Response 14	<i>We need the youth to become involved in our business but they seem not to be interested as our business does not seem to generate a lot of money. So, they regard our work as time-wasting for them.</i>
Response 15	<i>I share the same sentiments with what has been said; that youth do not want to participate in this also because they are more interested on what they studied for at school, as opposed to our work as it does not seem to generate much income.</i>
Response 16	<i>Radios should assist in communicating about our work. It is just that these days everything is about money and they expect payment when they sell our produce on air.</i>
Response 17	<i>It is a challenge because we are far from the town and communicating about the products from deep rural villages to other areas is not easy, especially, when even people staying around are few. The young ones should assist to sell our business using their phones through social media.</i>

Figure 7: How details about the produce are communicated in Tshidzivhe village

It is also important to note that communication about and marketing of indigenous produce in Tshidzivhe often involve a combination of traditional and some modern strategies. Here are some common approaches:

4.3.2.1. Community Markets

Tshidzivhe village often organizes local markets where community members can directly sell their indigenous produce. This fosters a sense of community oneness and allows for face-to-face interactions with consumers. These involve local events that are organized for community members within and other people from the surrounding villages. Sometimes the consumers are tourists who go to visit Tshidzivhe and they get exposed to the produce.

4.3.2.2. Word-of-Mouth

Word-of-mouth remains a powerful communication tool in the community. Positive experience with a particular product or producer leads to recommendations within the community. Those who buy the produce share their details with others, which gives Tshidzivhe producers a wider market base.

4.3.2.3. Community events and festivals

Participating in or organizing community events and festivals provides an opportunity to showcase indigenous produce. These gatherings attract local residents and visitors, increasing exposure for the produce. These include raw and processed food that get sold during those events.

4.3.2.4. Social media and online platforms

While access to the internet may be limited in some rural areas, the use of social media and online platforms can still play a role in marketing indigenous produce. Local producers or community groups might use social media for promotion and connecting with a broader market, hence, Tshidzivhe producers have been linked to Dzomo La Mupo website so that their produce can be showcased, as well as marketed.

4.3.2.5. Collaboration with local businesses

Partnering with local businesses, such as restaurants, cafes, or specialty stores, can create additional distribution channels for indigenous produce, hence, these businesses may also contribute to marketing efforts. Partnership is also possible with

caterers who need organic food when they prepare for their events. It is also a fact that when interested parties hold workshops, they prefer food made from locally-produced ingredients as opposed to the food they buy which normally are genetically-modified.

4.3.2.6. Participation in Farmers' Markets

In addition to local markets, participating in larger farmers' markets, even those in nearby urban areas, can expose indigenous produce to a broader customer base. There have been exhibition hosted by organizations based in Polokwane, where Tshidzivhe farmers were amongst those who exhibited their produce.

4.3.2.7. Government and Non-Governmental Organizations' support

Another possible approach for promoting local produce is through government and non-governmental organizations that promote sustainable agriculture, indigenous produce, and rural development. These entities may, sometimes also provide funding, training, or marketing assistance. Sourcing funding from several organizations, such as Environmental Justice Fund (EJF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the Dzomo La Mupo organization, assists the Tshidzivhe community in terms of producing and advertising their produce.

Successful communication and marketing in rural communities often involve a combination of these strategies, tailored to the specific context and resources of each community. The key is to engage community members and leverage local networks, not only to celebrate the cultural significance of indigenous products but also their health benefits.

4.3.3. Challenges in communicating details about indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village

The co-researchers shared some challenges encountered in communicating details about their produce; these are depicted below.

<p>Response 1</p>	<p><i>We have a challenge of not knowing how we can advertise our produce. The products are just sitting there without being bought and when they stay for a long time they are no longer marketable to the customers. As rural communities, we often</i></p>
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	<p><i>face environmental challenges, such as extreme weather conditions, which can affect the timing and effectiveness of communication efforts. We often have limited access to modern communication technologies. This hinders the distribution of information through digital channels such as the internet or mobile devices. Insufficient infrastructure, such as poor roads and transportation networks, impede the distribution of produce and make it challenging to reach other areas.</i></p>
Response 2	<p><i>We do not know who to talk to about our produce. We just grow these products because of the passion we have. Those who need to buy, negotiate for low prices and it is difficult to us to sustain the business considering that we would have travelled and paid for transport, which makes us operate at a loss. The other challenge is that there is no market within our area because most of the people around may have the same produce that one might be selling.</i></p>
Response 3	<p><i>We are old and we no longer have the energy to carry out this work. So, the youth need to take charge in order to communicate about these products to the wider public as they are familiar also with ways they can use to communicate which are nowadays very modern. The youth will also be able to negotiate better prices for the produce as we tend to be taken advantage of because we are not familiar with the markets of the day.</i></p>
Response 4	<p><i>The challenge we have as Tshidzivhe people is that, we do not know who we can sell our produce to as we cannot sell to each other locally.</i></p>
Response 5	<p><i>“Indigenous Knowledge is deeply rooted in culture and traditions which most young people take for granted. Communicating about IK produce must be approached with cultural sensitivity and respect for local customs and beliefs.</i></p>

	<i>Failure to understand and respect cultural nuances may lead to misinterpretation and rejection of the communication efforts.</i>
Response 6	<i>The other challenge is that, when we go out for exhibitions and we have come back and the produce have not been bought, then we have to throw them away as some of them will no longer be marketable at this late stage, although we would have paid for transport.</i>
Response 7	<i>We have low literacy rates in the village, making use of written communication, therefore, is not effective. So, other channels of communication that we are familiar with, such as word-of-mouth, and through exhibition might assist us as the elders of Tshidzivhe.</i>
Response 8	<i>We do not have roads; this limits the number of customers that come and buy from us. We rely on events that we get invited to sell our produce but it becomes a challenge when our produce are not bought; they become waste, especially food.</i>
Response 9	<i>We do not know where to start in order to communicate about the products as we have not been given any training on this. We are really struggling as old people.</i>
Response 10	<i>We communicate about these products but people are more interested in produce that they get from the shops as they do not like our packaging. So, if we can improve our packaging, it may attract customers as they would have been attracted by it.</i>
Response 11	<i>The challenge is that us as producers we are working as individuals but if we can team up, we can be able to assist each other in addressing the challenges we have together. This is because we rely on word-of-mouth to communicate about our produce and it is not sufficient for our produce to be known.</i>
Response 12	<i>The challenge is that we no longer know who our target market is because the old people who we thought are our main</i>

	<i>customer base, are no longer interested in organic food as in their houses they buy groceries from shops. So, they are not interested when we tell them about our produce.</i>
Response 13	<i>We do not know other channels we can use for communicating about the products, so, the University needs to assist in order to show their benefits to the communities.</i>
Response 14	<i>The youth must come on board to assist us so that our dreams may come true. We need them to share with the wider communities that organic food is the way to go.</i>
Response 15	<i>Government must do some trainings in order for us to know what to do when communicating about our products. What we know is to produce but not to communicate. So, we need assistance on that part.</i>
Response 16	<i>I share the same sentiments that we need some training and involvement from the youth who don't seem interested, also because they do not even eat this kind of food.</i>
Response 17	<i>The challenge is that the people we communicate about this produce to are reluctant to eat this food as they are not familiar with it. It then limits the motivation for them to buy the food.</i>

Figure 8: Challenges in communicating details about indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village

It has also been noted through the focus-group discussions that communicating about Indigenous Knowledge (IK) produce in rural communities require carefully-considered and culturally-sensitive strategies. Below are some issues which have posed challenges:

4.3.3.1. Cultural sensitivity and respect

Indigenous knowledge in most communities, including Tshidzivhe village, is deeply rooted in culture and traditions. Communicating about IK produce must be approached with cultural sensitivity and respect for community members' customs and beliefs;

failure to do this may lead to misinterpretation and the rejection of the communication efforts and the products being advertised.

4.3.3.2. Language barriers

Tshidzivhe community has its own specific ways of communication. Communicating in a manner that is not understood or appreciated by the consumers may lead to misunderstandings and lack of engagement. Translating information accurately while maintaining cultural context, therefore, is crucial for effective communication.

4.3.3.3. Limited access to technology

The community has limited access to modern communication technologies. This has hindered the distribution of information through digital channels, such as the internet or mobile devices. Alternative methods, such as using community meetings, radio broadcasts, or printed materials need to be employed.

4.3.3.4. Lack of infrastructure

Insufficient infrastructure, such as poor roads and transportation networks, impeded the distribution of physical materials and make it challenging to reach other remote communities, with communication efforts.

4.3.3.5. Low literacy rates

Members in the Tshidzivhe community have low literacy rates, making written communication less effective. Visual aids, oral storytelling, and other non-text-based methods would be more appropriate.

4.3.3.6. Historical distrust

The community has a history of exploitation and mistreatment, leading to distrust of external entities. Building trust is essential for effective communication, however, it is taking time, for community members to overcome these historical barriers.

4.3.3.7. Environmental factors

The Tshidzivhe community often faces environmental challenges, such as extreme weather conditions, which affect the timing and effectiveness of communication efforts. Difficulties in accessing the village, for example, due to poor road infrastructure are depicted in Figure 9:



Figure 9: Poor road infrastructure due to extreme weather conditions

4.3.3.8 Community involvement and consultation

Effective communication requires the active involvement of the community in the planning and implementation of communication strategies. Failure to involve community members may result in a lack of ownership and non-acceptance of the information; hence, the Tshidzivhe community, usually, have community gatherings to address issues affecting the community.

4.3.3.9. Sustainability and continuity

Effective communication is an ongoing process. Developing sustainable communication strategies that can be maintained over time is essential for ensuring the long-term impact of IK products. Addressing these challenges experienced by Tshidzivhe community requires collaboration with community members, local leaders, and cultural experts to develop communication strategies that are respectful, inclusive, and contextually relevant.

4.3.4. Development of strategies for communicating details about indigenous-knowledge-based produce in Tshidzivhe village

In designing relevant effective communication strategies, the co-researchers shared some views, as displayed in Figure 10.

Response 1	<i>We plead with you as the University that you invite us to the events that you do so that we can exhibit our produce to the wider public as opposed to us waiting for people to come and buy from Tshidzivhe. During this process, we would prioritize cultural sensitivity and respect for our local traditions and beliefs in all communication materials and methods.</i>
Response 2	<i>I think the youth are the ones who know better as we are old school. The challenge is that these youths are not interested in the work that we do. So, it is difficult to answer this question as to what can be the strategies. So, we encourage you, as the young ones to assist us implement the strategies that can best sell the produce. As the saying goes - “Maudu a khovhe ndi vhana vhayo”.</i>
Response 3	<i>I think exhibition is a strategy that we can utilize as we have seen it does work for us as people of Tshidzivhe. We have seen it work after we exhibited at the University of Venda and Polokwane in different events. Linking us to radio stations in order to advertise our produce will also help.</i>
Response 4	<i>First and foremost, the youth must be involved so that they can assist us market the produce. We are very proud of the work done by the University of Venda students who already are assisting us with marketing our produce through the digital platforms of Dzomo La Mupo organization, the websites and sharing information via WhatsApp. We somehow feel that at least other people are getting to know our produce. We should then use a variety of communication channels, considering the community's access to technology and literacy levels.</i>

<p>Response 5</p>	<p><i>“We should use existing community spaces such as cultural centers, community halls, or gathering areas for communication about our produce. We should also incorporate information into community events, festivals, or celebrations to reach a broader audience. As the elders of Tshidzivhe, we should identify and collaborate with local champions or respected community leaders who can endorse and support the communication efforts.”</i></p>
<p>Response 6</p>	<p><i>The first thing to consider is to involve the community in the planning and development of the communication strategy. We should seek input from community leaders, elders, and other key stakeholders. We should also hold community meetings or workshops to gather insights, address concerns, and ensure that the selected communication approach is inclusive and representative to avoid community tensions. This is because there are those people who will always say they were sidelined, so, we are always solving such issues.</i></p>
<p>Response 7</p>	<p><i>The strategy of communication that we grew up knowing and practicing is the oral tradition and storytelling, which seemed to be effective communication tools, at that time. That is because narratives and storytelling enhance understanding and retention of information. We should then work with local storytellers or elders to convey messages through traditional storytelling methods. That in turn will be playing a big role in intergenerational learning.”</i></p>
<p>Response 8</p>	<p><i>Communication about the produce must be in the local language, Tshivenda so that when communicating about these products we will be at the same time teaching the young ones the language which seems to be disappearing from them.</i></p>
<p>Response 9</p>	<p><i>The strategy should not leave the older people out because we see it happening with social media. Youth are able to</i></p>

	<i>communicate with each but the older people are left out of it because they do not even have the phones to communicate with.</i>
Response 10	<i>We need the involvement of youth. As you see here there is no youth. So, what kind of world will it be without the involvement of youth?</i>
Response 11	<i>We need to have dialogues with youth on how the products can be sold. This is because if they do not become involved, the ideas we come up with, will fade away. They were even supposed to be part of these discussions.</i>
Response 12	<i>As old people it is not easy for us to come up with ideas but what one can say is that we encourage the involvement of the University to train us on how best we can sell our produce because the University is where more knowledge come from.</i>
Response 13	<i>As old people we have run out of ideas, so it is important that the University organize workshops with youth so that there can be a good transition from the older generation to the younger generation when it comes this business.</i>
Response 14	<i>My challenge is that even if we come up with the strategy, it may not work because if the youth are not involved in our business, we cannot be able to do it on our own. Maybe one has to ask them as to what could be reason they do not get involved.</i>
Response 15	<i>Businesses should be talked about at our community gatherings as opposed to only talk about negative things. It should be the culture that people sell their businesses whenever they meet.</i>
Response 16	<i>I think the strategy should just improve on whatever we already have so that we can understand how to use it and it will be representative of us.</i>

Figure 10: Strategies that can be used to communicate, effectively, about the details of indigenous knowledge-based produce in Tshidzivhe village

Developing an effective communication strategy for providing details about Indigenous Knowledge (IK) produce in rural communities requires careful consideration of the cultural context, community needs, and available resources. It was, therefore, necessary to conduct a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, as reported upon below, to determine the feasibility of communication strategies. Below is a general breakdown of what the SWOT analysis produced:

<p>Strengths</p>	<p>Cultural expertise</p> <p>Tshidzivhe community possesses deep cultural knowledge and expertise, allowing for the development of culturally-sensitive and relevant communication methods that talk to its members and surrounding communities. So, taking an advantage of such distinct characteristics may assist in communicating comprehensive details about their produce. The community also partners with the University of Venda and international partners through the Dzomo La Mupo organization. The Organisation has facilitated a process that enabled a number of local seeds being reintroduced, including finger millet, maize, beans, sesame, indigenous vegetables, as well as increasing awareness of some wild greens and fruits. The finger millet is a sacred seed of the VhaVenda people, and Dzomo la Mupo (DLM) is assisting in the revival of this crop. DLM encourages members to plant their own nurseries of indigenous trees and to restore them in local areas where indigenous forests have been destroyed.</p> <p>Community trust and respect</p> <p>Strong ties of the Tshidzivhe Chief with the communities and a history of respectful engagement have built trust, facilitating more effective communication that is needed</p>
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	<p>to market the produce. The community members rely on his consent to take decisions, as a way of showing respect to him. All activities that have to be carried out in the village need to be brought to him for his approval before such activities can be implemented.</p> <p>Local language proficiency</p> <p>Proficiency in local languages enables the Tshidzivhe community to communicate in ways that resonate with the surrounding communities, fostering better understanding. Tshivenda is the language that is used within the community that is accommodative of every generation. So, the community effectively leverage oral tradition and storytelling; these are traditional communication methods that are powerful among the community members.</p> <p>Community involvement</p> <p>Actively involving the community in the communication strategies' development ensures that the approach aligns with community needs and preferences.</p>
<p>Weaknesses:</p>	<p>Limited technological infrastructure</p> <p>Lack of access to modern communication technologies in the community of Tshidzivhe, is limiting the reach of the current communication strategy being used. This is also exacerbated by the fact that the Tshidzivhe community is in a deep rural area with limited access to roads, especially under extreme weather conditions.</p> <p>Resource constraints</p> <p>Limited financial resources and manpower within the community restrict its ability to implement and sustain a comprehensive communication strategy. The community</p>

	<p>struggles to share information on its products as there is lack of familiarity with investing in marketing due to low financial strength.</p> <p>Low literacy rates</p> <p>Low literacy rates within the community is because most of producers are elders and this limits the effectiveness of written communication materials. The low rate of interest from youth also exacerbates the low literacy rate as the elders are on their own when it comes to production and marketing.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Collaboration with external partners</p> <p>Collaborating with external organizations such as Earthlife, educational institutions, such as the University of Venda, and government agencies could provide resources and support for communication initiatives, although, currently these seem not sufficient.</p> <p>Technological advancements</p> <p>As technology advances, opportunities for using digital platforms and mobile applications for communication may increase, therefore, roping in the youth may be very necessary and useful for the community. The collaboration with the University of Venda, hence, is crucial as it allocates its students to assist rural communities with communicating details about their produce.</p> <p>Knowledge exchange programs</p> <p>Participating in knowledge-exchange programs with other communities or organizations can bring in new ideas and best practices for communication. The partnership with the University of Venda and international</p>

	<p>universities is empowering the community in terms of strengthening the strategies through which students can engage with the community.</p> <p>Grants/funding</p> <p>Identifying and securing grants and funding for communication projects can alleviate financial constraints on the community and enhance its communication capabilities. Grants that Tshidzivhe community benefits from through Dzomo La Mupo are assisting a great deal in connecting it with other stakeholders through the programmes that the organisation runs.</p>
<p>Threats</p>	<p>Cultural appropriation</p> <p>The risk of cultural misrepresentation in communication materials created by external entities harms the credibility of communities as there are those external organisations that do not observe some of the protocols of communities. When community members, for instance, instruct that certain aspects of village life should not be photographed, it is imperative that such an instruction be respected and observed.</p> <p>External misinterpretation</p> <p>Some external entities misrepresent indigenous knowledge, leading to misunderstandings and potential conflicts. For instance, there are certain protocols that may need to be observed while farming certain items so that there can be a good yield. There is a practice in the community, for example, that young children are the</p>

	<p>ones to actually plant the seeds as opposed to the elders, as it is believed that the young possess a better future and fortune than the older people.</p> <p>Environmental challenges</p> <p>Environmental challenges, such as natural disasters, can disrupt communication infrastructure and activities. Transport becomes a challenge in the village, especially when it rains, resulting in roads becoming too slippery to be travelled on.</p>
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Figure 11: SWOT analysis

Based on these results of the SWOT analysis, below are key elements for consideration in any communication strategy dealing with IK:

4.3.4.1. Cultural Sensitivity and Respect

Prioritizing cultural sensitivity and respect for local traditions and beliefs, in all communication materials and methods, should be done. There should, hence, be a collaboration with community members, elders, and cultural experts to ensure that any designed communication strategy aligns with cultural norms.

4.3.4.2. Community Involvement and Consultation

There should be an involvement of the community in the planning and development of any communication strategy. Community leaders, elders, and other key stakeholders should give input to whatever communication strategy that is being designed. In order to do that, there should be community meetings or workshops held to gather insights, address concerns, and ensure that the communication approach is inclusive and representative.

4.3.4.3. Language considerations

Using local languages or dialects in communication materials to enhance understanding and engagement, should be considered. There should also be a

provision for quality control of translated materials when necessary, ensuring accurate and culturally appropriate versions.

4.3.4.4. Multimodal communication

When using a variety of communication channels, there should be a consideration of factors, such as the community's lack of access to technology and low literacy levels. There should, therefore, also be visual aids, audio recordings, community radio, and other non-text-based methods to reach the diverse audience.

4.3.4.5. Capacity Building

Inclusion of capacity-building components in the communication strategy to empower community members to understand, use, and share indigenous knowledge produce, should be taken into consideration. There should also be a provision for training sessions or workshops on relevant skills and knowledge in creating comprehensive information on indigenous produce.

4.3.4.6. Local champions and leaders

Efforts should be made to identify and collaborate with local champions or respected community leaders who can co-design with the community members in creating any appropriate communication strategy. Engaging the leaders to facilitate discussions and promote the relevance of indigenous knowledge will serve as motivation and exhibit respect for the leaders. Using existing community spaces such as cultural centers, community halls, or exhibitions will also add value and facilitate the reaching of a broader audience.

There should also be an establishment of feedback mechanisms to allow community members to provide input, ask questions, and express concerns as well as to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of any communication strategy; such a process will enable regular adjustments, based on community members' feedback.

4.3.4.7. Adaptation to local context

Tailoring communication materials and methods to the specific needs, preferences, and context of Tshidzivhe community will ensure that any designed communication strategy is relevant. Taking note of factors like - the community's daily routines,

seasonal variations, and cultural events in the timing and design of communication activities will assist in aligning the communication materials to the local environment.

4.3.4.8. Sustainability and long-term engagement

There should be a development of a sustainable communication plan that considers long-term engagement with the community, thus, fostering ongoing relationships to ensure that any information continues to be shared and updated as needed.

4.3.4.9. Respect for Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)

There should be an acknowledgement and incorporation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) into the communication strategy, recognizing its relevance, alongside other forms of knowledge. By integrating these elements into an IKS communication strategy, one can enhance the effectiveness of the communication efforts and promote a meaningful provision of information on indigenous produce within rural communities.

4.4. Discussion of the findings of the study

The findings of the study were developed in line with the objectives of the study highlighted in the first chapter. The discussions below presents a summary of the findings of the study.

4.4.1. Indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are produced in Tshidzivhe village

Indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are produced at Tshidzivhe range from mealies, indigenous vegetables, such as *Tshibavhe* (*Momordica charantia*) and *Mushidzhi* (*Blackjack*) and others that naturally grow and are nurtured. These are products that the co-researchers thank their ancestors for making them available to the community.

4.4.2. How details about the produce are communicated in the market

The co-researchers asserted that the details about the produce are not being communicated about in any specific way, except by word-of-mouth; that is the

traditional strategy that they have been using. Co-researchers also shared that the youth have tried to devise some other means where they publicize what is produced via WhatsApp groups, however, such information is really not visible to the wider public as these groups are accessed by people who know / work with each other. Relevant and effective techniques of communicating details about the products, hence, are still a challenge to the co-researchers.

4.4.3. Challenges in communicating about indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce at Tshidzivhe village

The co-researchers emphasized that low literacy rates of community members, makes written communication less effective. So, other channels of communication that they can access, such as word-of-mouth and through exhibitions have been deemed as able to assist as they have tried these techniques and they seem to work.

4.4.4. Development of strategies for communicating details about indigenous-knowledge-based produce in Tshidzivhe village

Oral traditions, such as storytelling were recognized by the co-researchers as the most common tools they had relied upon as effective communication tools. That is because narratives and storytelling enhance understanding and retention of information. Co-researchers suggested working with local storytellers or elders to convey messages about the products as an effective tool for communication.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the conclusions and recommendations on the topic - *Exploring the development of communication strategy for Indigenous Knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village, in Thulamela Municipality of Limpopo Province, in South Africa.*

5.1.1. Conclusion of the study

The study aimed to develop a strategy for communicating details about indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce in Tshidzivhe village. The objectives were as follows: i) To identify indigenous knowledge-based agricultural produce that are produced in Tshidzivhe village, ii) To document ways by which details about the produce are communicated to potential markets, iii) To explore the challenges of communicating indigenous-knowledge-based agricultural produce' details in Tshidzivhe village, and iv) To develop strategies for communicating details about indigenous-knowledge produce in Tshidzivhe village. While exploring the different communication strategies, the researcher together with the co-researchers, realized that whatever these communication strategies are, they should be tailored to the specific needs and context of the Tshidzivhe community, requiring an understanding of the community's unique characteristics, as a one-size-fits-all approach would not be effective.

5.1.2. Recommendations from the study

Based on the unique situation of Tshidzivhe village and the indigenous produce under consideration, the following general recommendation is made:

Any communication strategy should be considerate of the producers, who are mainly the elders who cannot read and write. A recommended relevant strategy, therefore, should focus on the art forms they normally share with each other, such as -

storytelling, singing and poetry. There is a lot of knowledge shared while people are singing. Marketing can therefore be done through singing as community members are able to communicate, quite effectively through it - it will like talking to the target audience.

This acknowledges that there are other channels that may be used which are more relevant to the customers, however, they cannot, necessarily, be used by the producers. Channels such social media and online platforms, for instance, are well understood by the youth but the producers may not be able to use those platforms, which will leave the producers not feeling competent, rather inconvenienced. Communication strategies should be innovation, however, it is also extremely important to use what is already there and working, as that gives a better chance for the users to develop their ideas further.

As mentioned earlier, the audience needs to be fully consulted and engaged before the design and implementation of any kind of strategy. Workshops that communities run, for example those in partnership with the University of Venda, can come in handy to engage the community members and the youth in order to familiarize them with new strategies available of communicating about their produce. The strategies will also serve as entertainment to any international visitors who may be available. Publishing or recording such communication activities/work is also advisable; to make such outputs worthwhile, producers will need to consider subtitles on videos for those who may not understand the content created in the vernacular.

5.1.3. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the fact that for any communication strategy to be effective, it should be co-created by different stakeholders of the community. Tailor-making communication strategies, such as storytelling, poetry and singing (indigenous media) were deemed effective to communicate about the produce.

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It is hereby confirmed that the under mentioned person is a registered student at University of Venda Production.

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Name: RENDANI NEMATSWERANI
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Appendix C: Language editing letter:

PROOF OF EDITING

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This is to certify that I, Dr P Kaburise, have proofread the dissertation titled - **EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE-BASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE IN TSHIDZIVHE VILLAGE, IN THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE, IN SOUTH AFRICA** - by Nematswerani Rendani (student number: 11563402). I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect before the final dissertation is submitted.



Dr P Kaburise (0794927451/ 0637348805; email: phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com)

Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Cambridge University, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second Language Teaching, (Wellington, New Zealand); PhD University of Pretoria (South Africa).