

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE



**THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION BY SMALL SCALE FARMERS IN
THE DEVELOPMENT AID FROM PEOPLE TO PEOPLE FARMERS' CLUB
PROJECT IN
MAZOWE DISTRICT OF ZIMBABWE**

A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Development Studies
Institute for Social Development (ISD)
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS)
University of the Western Cape (UWC)

By

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June, 2016

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis entitled: *The nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the Development Aid from People to People Farmers' Club project in Mazowe District of Zimbabwe* is my own work. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university and that all the sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signed:

Date:



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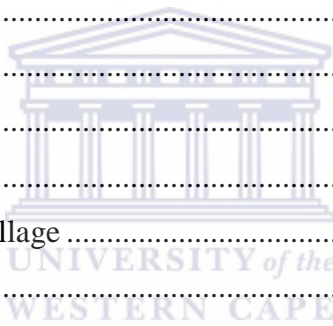


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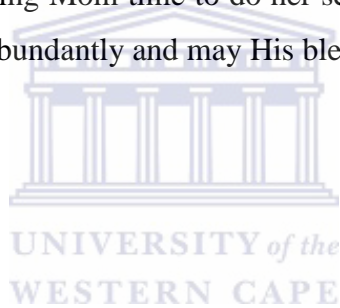
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Abstract

The conventional top-down approach to development has been rendered unsustainable and is regarded as a poor strategy to achieving community empowerment and development. The past few decades have seen the promotion of bottom-up techniques whereby governments and developing agents collaborate with target beneficiaries and view them as equal partners in the development of their own communities. It is generally believed that the participation of farmers in agricultural projects improves the performance of the agricultural sector. However, despite the adoption of participatory models, agricultural societies have remained plagued by poverty. It is against this background that this research using the Mazowe District as a case study investigated the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) Farmers' Club in order to document the extent to which farmers have been empowered. The study made use of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to gather relevant data. Broadly the findings indicate that the participation of farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project was substantively high. The results also suggest that the project empowered farmers to farm more productively in the case study area. In light of the findings the study recommends that governments and NGOs should follow the values and principles of the people-centred development (PCD) theory when implementing agricultural projects as it has proven to be an empowering approach. This practice may transform societies as there is an opportunity to address societal needs at grassroots level. In view of this research it can be argued that capacitating farmers through training and improving their farming skills can improve their agricultural production.

Keywords

- Zimbabwe
- Mazowe District
- Development Aid from People to People
- Farmers' Club project
- People centred development
- Agriculture
- Small scale farmers
- Development
- Participation
- Empowerment
- Decision making



List of Abbreviations

AGRITEX	Agriculture Extension Services
DA	District Administrator
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MRDC	Mazowe Rural District Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PCD	People Centered Development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UFF	Ulandshjaelp fra Folk til Folk
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

Chapter One: Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

Agriculture plays a significant role in the lives of many people across the globe. Since the advent of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the world has acknowledged the significance of this sector in poverty reduction and alleviation of hunger (African Development Bank Group, 2010). The value of agriculture is more evident in Third World countries ((Muhammad-Lawal et al., 2009) such as Zimbabwe where it is a major source of employment and food. As Zimbabwe is endowed with a favorable climate ideally suited for agricultural purposes many Zimbabweans make a living from the land and at the same time participate in the development of their communities. It is distressing to note that the country's agricultural production of essential crops like maize, wheat and sorghum has notably slowed over the past ten years. The past decade has seen, Zimbabwe, formerly called the *bread basket* of the Southern African region, moving from the state of a food surplus and exporting country to a food deficit and importing nation (Newsday, 2013). Currently it is estimated that more than 3 million Zimbabweans are in need of food aid (Herald, 2016). Zimbabwe's agricultural performance has been hard hit by political, economic and climatic challenges. These challenges have greatly limited the potential of rural small scale farmers in feeding their families and producing surplus for sale.

However, the nature of small scale farming calls for a range of support that may empower and capacitate these farmers since their activities are vital sources of food and earnings. Whereas the Zimbabwean government has implemented various initiatives to alleviate the situation its efforts have been crippled by unstable macroeconomic policies, droughts, inadequate funding as well as lack of skills. The Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) is one organization that has been providing training and participatory approaches to improve the outcome of agricultural production amongst small scale farmers in various districts in Zimbabwe. It is noteworthy that the literature on participatory development illustrates that this approach is a vehicle for empowerment which, when implemented, has the potential to bring about changes in societal transformation and increase food security. However, despite DAPP's efforts, there is still much that needs to be done to address the challenges that small scale farmers face. Given this context, this research seeks to explore the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the

DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District. Questions such as who participates, when do they participate and what is the nature of their participation are important avenues of investigation in this context.

1.2 Background and contextualization

Various scholars contend that participation has been linked to rural development as early as the 1950s (Chifamba, 2013). However, agricultural development which brings about improved output without rural beneficiaries actively participating in their own development may not be sustainable in the long term. Treurnicht (2000) argues that rural agricultural development initiatives should include indigenous knowledge of the local populace in critical decision making processes to ensure sustainable development. Within this view IFAD (2010) notes that small scale farming has the potential of improving rural lives when it is approached in a participatory manner.

Literature within the field of agricultural development confirms that various governments and development agencies have shifted their focus from the traditional top-down approaches to development where officials decide what development interventions communities need, to actively involving farmers in identifying and solving their own local agricultural challenges (FAO, 2007). Current thinking supports the bottom-up approach to development which is mainly centred on an all-inclusive community participation approach (Abbott, 1995). Participation enables communities to be at the centre of all development initiatives. Proponents of this approach are of the view that beneficiaries must be actively involved in all stages of the process including project identification, planning, implementing, evaluation and monitoring of development interventions (Swanepoel, 1996a). This will ensure that communities develop a sense of ownership of the projects and are capacitated to learn the required skills.

Current literature indicates that several organizations in Zimbabwe have applied participatory approaches which are mainly centred on the idea that farmers are the main actors who have the capacity to analyze, recognize problems and test different alternatives for solving problems (Ministry of Agriculture and Practical Action Southern Africa, 2010). However, little academic attention has been placed on the participation of small scale farmers in agricultural projects in the Mazowe District, which is the focus of this research. The DAPP Farmers' Club project provides

a platform for small scale farmers to identify their common needs, network as a group, and collaborate in an effort to help themselves to chaperone the development of their community. In this regard, this investigation seeks to explore the nature and extent of participation in the DAPP Farmers' Club by small scale farmers who are significant players in the economy in order to document the advantages of participation in agricultural projects and the extent to which farmers have been empowered.

1.3 Rationale and significance

Although the people centred approach to development has shown significant effectiveness and influence in promoting positive results in rural development programmes, little research has been done on the value of participation in improving agricultural production in the area of study. Recent literature indicates that there is a direct correlation between farmers' participation and an increase in agricultural production (Elias et al., 2013; Dogba et al., 2013). Given this evidence, the value of participation in terms of agricultural production by small scale farmers in the area of study needs to be investigated. Moreover, some scholars have noted that literature on farmers' participation in agricultural projects has mainly focused on the benefits of participation, whereas there is a lack of information on the nature and extent of participation (Bernard & Spielman, 2009; Davids, 2009). In this regard, this research will contribute to the limited literature available on this topic and will further provide insights on the potential benefits of participation of small scale farmers in development initiatives to a range of stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

1.4 The case study area

Zimbabwe is subdivided into five main ecological regions in which several economic activities are undertaken. The various natural regions of Zimbabwe are illustrated by Table 1.1 below. The selected case study area is located in Mazowe, one of the seven administrative districts within the Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. Mazowe District lies entirely within natural Region 11 which is suitable for intensive farming production. The average rainfall received in the district is between 750-1000mm which is higher than the average rainfall received in the country (Mazowe District Profile, 2015). As such there is a diversity of farming activities in Mazowe District.

Table 1.1 Natural Regions of Zimbabwe

Region	Area/extent (million ha)	% of total	Description
I	0.62	1.6	<i>Specialized and diversified farming:</i> High annual rainfall > 1000mm). Temperature <15°C. Suitable for dairying, forestry, tea, coffee, fruits, maize, beef ranching.
II	7.31	18.8	<i>Intensive farming:</i> Annual rainfall 750-1000mm. Ideal for rain fed maize and tobacco, beef, cotton, winter-wheat and vegetables.
III	6.85	17.6	<i>Semi-intensive farming:</i> Annual rainfall 650-800mm, mostly as infrequent heavy storms. Severe mid-season dry spells. Marginal for maize, tobacco and cotton. Favors livestock production with fodder. Requires good management to retain moisture during growing season.
IV	12.84	33.0	<i>Semi-extensive farming:</i> Annual rainfall 450-650mm, subject to seasonal droughts and severe dry spells during the rainy season. Found in hot, low-lying land. Marginal for rain fed maize. Ideal for drought-resistant fodder crops.
V	11.28	29.0	<i>Extensive farming:</i> Annual rainfall < 450mm and too low and erratic for most crops. Very hot, low-lying region. Suitable for animal husbandry with drought resistant fodder crop under irrigation. Below the Zambezi escarpment, this region is infested with tsetse fly.

Adapted from PlanAfric (2000:30)

DAPP Farmers' Club Project supported 500 small scale communal farmers in the Mazowe District in Zimbabwe. The Farmers' Club promoted collective action amongst farmers living in the same area so that they could network and jointly use their resources to promote the agricultural production of each club member. Moreover, the small scale communal farmers were organized in small groups which met regularly and at times worked on projects to raise yields, improve crop variation, increase product quality as well as develop simple and sustainable farming methods. In addition to group projects, both women and men participated in their personal capacities in the club as small scale communal farmers who have their own land.

1.5 Problem statement

Small scale farming in Zimbabwe has failed to make a significant impact in terms of improving people's lives and addressing poverty (Kangethe & Serima, 2014). Whereas there have been efforts to commercialize small-scale farming, and incorporate more successful black local farmers into the Zimbabwean economy (Shumba & Whingwiri, 2006), participatory approaches have been adopted to reinforce the capabilities of the farmer (Kangethe & Serima, 2014). However, small scale farmers have remained poor despite the adoption of participatory approaches to improve agricultural production. This implies that the participatory approaches which were meant to capacitate and empower these farmers and lead to sustainable development have failed to do so.

Scholars like Chifamba (2013) argue that development agencies and the participatory approaches used by them are either not effective or applied as advocated by the theorists. While participation is acknowledged in principle as an empowering practice (Gaventa, 1998), there is need to investigate its true nature and extent as in many cases the literature on participation indicates that it has failed to bring the anticipated results due to social exclusion of proposed beneficiaries from development processes (Chazovachii & Tagarirofa, 2013). As indicated earlier on, small scale farming contributes to the overall economy of rural areas. Thus, it can be presumed that when the agricultural sector performs poorly, the whole economy is affected. It is against this background that this research sought to understand the nature and extent of farmers' participation in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District and how this participation benefits the agricultural sector and improves agricultural production.

1.6 Research aim and objectives:

The principal aim is to create an understanding of the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in agricultural development in Zimbabwe. Therefore this research seeks:

- To provide an overview of the nature of participation by small scale farmers in various agricultural activities in the DAPP Farmers' Club in the Mazowe District.
- To investigate the extent and level of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club.
- To assess the factors promoting or hindering small scale farmers participation in the case study area.
- To examine the relationship between the participants, local government and the development agency (DAPP).
- To provide recommendations and policy implications to the stakeholders involved in the project.

1.7 Research design

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) a research design is a blue print detailing the procedures of how one intends to collect and analyse data. On a similar note Saunders et al., (2009: 600) describe a research design as “the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions”. Adding to the discussion, Yin (2003:19) stated that “colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from *here* to *there*, where ‘here’ may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and ‘there’ is some set of (conclusions) answers”. In this research, a case study design was adopted in which small scale farmers who were participating in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in Chinehasha village of the Mazowe District in Zimbabwe were studied to gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the identified problem (see Maree, 2007).

While the results from a case study cannot be generalized to a larger area, the researcher adopted this approach since it enabled her to understand the participants within their natural social context which is significant in social science studies. Moreover, this approach accommodated the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Yin, 2003) and allowed the researcher to

gather, analyze and interpret data from various sources. The research design also made it easier for the researcher to use *how* and *why* questions so as to understand the phenomenon under study (Yin, 1994). The other advantage of case study research design is that usually there is limited or no research that would have taken place using the same case study which justifies the need to carry out such an investigation. Within the context of this research, the use of a case study research design was consistent with the research questions and objectives of the study. This study focused on a single case which is Chinehasha village in Ward 3 in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. This village was selected for the study as it is one of the villages where DAPP operated and it presents striking similarities with many other communal villages throughout the country. The village was selected purposively and conveniently as it was accessible to the researcher.

1.7.1 Research methodology

The research methodology is determined by the nature of the research problem, research objectives and questions, data sources and the procedures to be followed when analyzing the data (Neuman, 2006). To achieve the objectives of this study, the research was informed by both positivistic and interpretive research philosophies. Within this view, the study adopted an integrated methodological approach to gathering data. Qualitative and quantitative research tools were employed to gather non numerical and numerical data required to answer the research questions. The rationale for this choice is that a mixed-method approach provides a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation since the weaknesses of each method can be compensated for by the strengths of the other (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The use of the mixed method approach is further supported by Morse and Niehaus (2009:15) who argue that “the complexities of the phenomenon studied in social science and the limitations within methods means that there are occasions when a phenomenon cannot be described in its entirety using a single method”.

In this regard, a questionnaire was used to gather socio-economic data and to obtain information relating to the various activities in which farmers were involved in. It was also used to measure the level and extent of their participation. Qualitative methods enabled a more in-depth analysis of the participation processes, the relationship between the key stakeholders and the benefits of

participation. Thus a mixed approach promoted a comprehensive investigation into the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers as numerically reflected and revealed by the participants' views, experiences and perceptions. Data collection instruments used included a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and personal observation.

1.7.2 Research instruments

According to Creswell (2006:10) “mixed methods research is practical in the sense that the researcher is free to use all methods possible to address a research problem. It is also practical because individuals tend to solve problems using both numbers and words, they combine inductive and deductive thinking”. Within this sense the research made use of both qualitative and quantitative research tools to give the study a numerical and conceptual significance.

1.7.3 Quantitative methods

Scholars such as Babbie and Mouton (2001) point out that quantitative research is more concerned with numbers while Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) further note that quantitative methods gather numerical data. The advantage of quantitative research tools is that a large amount of data can be collected and it is an objective tool of data gathering. In this research a questionnaire was compiled and used. The section below discusses this research technique and the sampling strategy that was used.

- **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was used to capture demographic and socio-economic information from the participants. Further to that, the questionnaire gathered information relating to the number of activities the farmers have been participating in, factors promoting and hindering farmers' participation in various activities in the club and the extent of farmers' participation in various agricultural activities. Thirty self-administered questionnaires were distributed to small scale farmers in Ward 3 in Chinehasha village, which is located in the Mazowe District. The questionnaires consisted of closed as well as open ended questions. The use of open ended questions enabled the participants to provide responses in their own words, as argued by White (2005:131) that “open-ended questions probe deeper than the closed question and evoke fuller

and deeper responses”. The closed ended questions enabled the respondents to select from a range of possible answers. This made the coding and classification of responses easier for the researcher.

- **Sampling strategy**

The average number of households that participated in villages in the Mazowe district amounts to be between 30 and 60 households. A sample size of 30 households was targeted for this research. The household was used as a unit of analysis and a systematic random sampling technique was used to select the participants. This was done through numbering the household dwellings of people who were participating in the DAPP Farmers’ Club in Chinehasha village. Every second unit from the household list was selected which led to the 30 required households in the sample. This sampling technique was adopted because it eliminated bias and affords subjects equal opportunity of being selected (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

1.7.4 Qualitative methods

The method of qualitative inquiry was very pertinent to a study of this nature as it is concerned with the way that human beings “understand and interpret their social realities” (Bryman, 1988: 8). From this perspective, meanings are considered to emerge from social actors. Therefore a qualitative inquiry was adopted to further understand the problem from the views, experiences, feelings and opinions of the participants. The intention was to uncover the participants’ experiences in light of the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative methods were significant in allowing a deeper analysis of the phenomenon under study since participants were given the autonomy to identify and express their priorities and concerns independent from investigators’ limitations and assumptions (Krishna & Shrader, 2000). Moreover the rationale for using qualitative methods in this research was to explore the opinion of key informants on the nature and extent of farmers’ participation in the DAPP Farmers’ Club project. The qualitative methods used in this research were semi-structured interviews and observation. These two methods will be discussed below.

- **Semi-structured individual interviews**

De Vos et al., (2005) identify interviews as the main method of data collection when using qualitative methodologies. In this study, the semi-structured interviewing method enabled the researcher to source detailed information from the interviewees. It also provided the opportunity to seek clarity where there was need and furthermore illuminated the phenomenon from a different angle. Purposive sampling was used to select participants whom the researcher felt would provide the most relevant and useful information. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted using open ended questions. Four interviews were done with the local leadership which included the Member of Parliament, the District Administrator, the Ward Councillor and the Village head. Two interviews were conducted with extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and one interview was held with the Farmers' Club coordinator from the Development Agency (DAPP).

Three interviews were conducted with the Farmers' Club committee leaders in Chinehasha village. Semi structured questions were used to solicit information on the roles and responsibilities of the respondents, benefits of the Farmers' Club project, participatory methodologies used by the agency and the nature of the relationship between the agency, local authority and the small scale farmers.

- **Observation**

Observation was done throughout the research process. Babbie and Mouton (2001:294) postulate that "the greatest advantage of observation is the presence of an observing, thinking researcher at the scene of the action". The purpose of this method was to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the events and dynamics under study through observing the manner in which participants related and the manner in which meetings were conducted as well as the behavior of the participants throughout the research process. Moreover, this technique enabled the researcher to visit the farmers' fields and to gather information on the socio-economic and physical characteristics of the case study area.

- **Literature review and secondary analysis**

The study drew heavily on an extensive literature search on information related to the matter under study. The purpose of the literature search was to obtain background knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation. An extensive literature review enabled the researcher to familiarize herself with key concepts such as participation, empowerment, sustainability, small scale farming as well as other available literature on the topic. Relevant textbooks and websites were used. The secondary analysis undertaken involved examining DAPP policy documents, Farmers' Club official documents and reports as well as minutes of meetings. The local authority and key government departments also provided official documents which were used in this study.

1.8 Data processing, analysis and presentation

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. According to De Vos (2007:333) qualitative data analysis involves "...bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data". In this research, interviews were tape recorded and carefully transcribed. Thereafter they were thematically coded and analyzed using the content analysis technique. The data was presented in the form of verbal descriptions and quotations. Quantitative data was coded, tabulated and analyzed using SPSS version 20. Results were then presented in the form of tables and graphs.

1.8.1 Validity and reliability

To ensure validity and reliability of the study, the objectives of the research were clearly explained to the participants and they were guaranteed of anonymity and confidentiality. This was done to promote honesty and full disclosure during data gathering. A literature review was done so that the researcher would familiarize herself with the phenomenon under study. Data was collected using several methods, which is referred to as triangulation, and which, according to Blaikie, (2000), helps in ensuring validity and reliability.

1.9 Ethical considerations

This research was undertaken after approval was granted by the relevant authorities which included the University of the Western Cape Senate, the Higher Degrees Board of the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) and the Institute for Social Development. Scholars such as Fontana and Frey (1994:372) warn investigators to take into consideration issues of 'informed consent', 'right to privacy' and 'protection' from harm. Accordingly, before conducting this study permission was sought from the District Administrator (DA) of the Mazowe District and the development agency (DAPP).

Prior to the commencement of the research voluntary consent was sought from participants. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents by explaining to them the particulars on the information sheet and the consent form and asking them to sign the consent form if they agreed to participate in the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw their participation at any stage of the research. Respondents were guaranteed that the researcher would ensure that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained throughout the research process and that information gathered would be used for the intended purpose only. Participants were informed that no information was going to be shared which would expose their identities and that pseudonyms would be used in the final report and in all published reports. The researcher ensured that the dignity of participants was not violated during the entire study. The local values and practices of the case study area were respected at all times.

1.10 Tentative chapter outline

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. The scope of the dissertation highlighting the contents of each chapter is presented below.

Chapter One introduces the study. It then contextualizes the research and provides background information to the study. This is followed by the problem statement, research aim and objectives. Finally the research design and methodology of the study is presented.

Chapter Two provides the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. It will also provide a comprehensive review of literature related to farmers' participation in agricultural activities.

Chapter Three gives an overview of the case study area. The socio-economic characteristics of the Mazowe District and Chinehasha village are highlighted and a detailed description of DAPP Farmers Club project is provided.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the research based on information gathered from respondents in the case study area. These findings relate to the research question which focuses on an examination of the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District.

Chapter Five provides general conclusions derived from the research findings. Thereafter it presents recommendations and suggests areas for further investigations.



Chapter Two: Theoretical framework and literature review

2.1 Introduction

People Centred Development theory emphasizes that people are central to achieving sustainable development and stresses that participation builds local capacity, self-reliance and ownership of community projects. It is within this context that the first section of this chapter will present a brief discussion of the traditional classic theories of development. The weaknesses of the classic theories of development will be highlighted which will provide some insights on the evolution of the People Centred Development (PCD) theory. Thereafter attention will turn to alternative development approaches and a more in-depth account of the People Centred Development theory will be presented. This will provide the theoretical framework and conceptual platform for this research. The last section of this chapter reviews the relevant literature pertaining to this study. The section begins by contextualizing small scale farming before bringing in case studies highlighting the participation of small scale farmers in agricultural projects across the globe, in Africa and lastly in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Modernization theory

During the 1950s, modernization theory provided the main paradigm for development in Third World countries. Some of the ideas that contributed to the theory are attributed to the early publications by a host of scholars such as Darwin (1859), Parsons (1951) and Rostow (1960). Coetzee (2001:27) defines modernization as, “the transformation which takes place when a traditional or pre-modern society changes to such an extent that new forms of technological, organizational or social characteristics of advanced society appear”. Broadly, modernization theorists believed that underdeveloped countries could be transformed into modern states by simply following a model of development characterized by greater levels of industrialization and financial growth as well as sophisticated technologies and infrastructure (El-Ghannam, 2001). Scholars such as Kreutzmann (1998) noted that modernization theory focused on developing the Third World states by “applying growth-oriented strategies” that had been developed by the USA and other European nations. In this regard, it was recommended that technologies that were designed in developed countries should be transferred to underdeveloped nations for them to develop. This theory proposed that underdeveloped nations had to go through certain stages of

evolution until they resembled western societies (Graaff, 2003). Within this view, less developed countries in Africa, Asia and South America had to relinquish their traditional indigenous norms and adopt western values in order to progress. From the perspective of the modernization theory, rural development initiatives were planned and executed by governments alongside technocrats without finding out the needs of rural people. Generally, development organizations and governments made decisions for the local people since it was largely believed that communities did not possess the knowledge to transform their own lives (Kottack, 1996). Development was viewed “as a state of national economy rather than a state of human wellbeing” (Dipholo, 2002: 63). This theory mainly focused on the economic aspects of development while disregarding the broader wellbeing of citizens. Human beings seem to have had little significance to early development experts who had an impression that they knew the answers to all challenges confronting humanity and that only their recommendations were accurate since the local populace had little education (Dipholo, 2002).

It is pertinent to highlight that modernization theory ignored the participation of intended beneficiaries in development thereby undermining majority interests (Brohman, 1996). As a result, many of its imposed strategies failed to provide sustainable development in Africa and scholars such as Reid (1995) reported that modernization failed to benefit the masses. Furthermore, the FAO (1996a) noted that the top down style of development approaches have basically failed to transform rural societies which resulted in Shepherd (1998:2) lamenting that “the majority of rural populations are still marginal to their societies’ developmental path, institutionally they are not incorporated”. While modernization theory emphasized that the benefits of the economic growth would trickle down to the wider population that did not happen. Instead the gap between the rich and the poor widened. In Africa, for instance Botswana experienced a high level of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the late 1960s but research indicated that despite the growth in GDP poverty amongst the local populace increased (Dipholo, 2002). Various scholars have expressed their reservations about the theory with Brohman (1996) concluding that the theory is just *eurocentric* and *ethnocentric* in nature. The scholar advances the notion that the theory failed to produce positive results since it was premised on replicating the western nations instead of promoting locally brewed development in less developed countries. Moreover, it failed to take into account the diverse historical contexts of Third World

countries, the legacy of colonialism, the dominance of multinational companies over less developed economies and the uneven pattern of trade between the developed and less developed countries. The failure of modernization theory to address issues of underdevelopment in Third World nations led to the emergence of dependency theory.

2.3 Dependency theory

Although various scholars have contributed significant literature on the dependency theory, Andre Gunder Frank is credited with popularizing it (Graaff, 2004). Proponents of this theory indicate that the international world is mainly characterized by two sets of states namely the dominant core and periphery countries (Graaff & Venter, 2001). Central to the dependency theory is the notion that the underdevelopment of peripheral countries has been perpetuated by the global capitalist structure (Davids, 2009). This theory asserts that periphery states serve as markets for expensive finished goods from the core region while they supply cheap commodities in the form of raw materials and labour. The core states offer capital, goods and services based on their own stipulated economic conditions at the expense of the interests of the periphery countries. These uneven relations of world trade and investment have promoted dependency since the conditions are favorable to the industrially advanced economies and have made it difficult for the developing countries to escape poverty (Graaff, 2004).

Within this perspective the prosperity of the industrialized countries can be attributed to the unbalanced pattern of trade that underdeveloped the less developed countries (Matunhu, 2011). For dependency theorists there is no hope of “development outside the overthrow of capitalist system” (Graaff, 2004:39). It is precisely for this view that the theory is criticized for failing to explain the growth of South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong from the peripheral *status quo*. Seemingly while the theory offered a remarkable explanation for underdevelopment in Third World countries, scholars such as Ferraro (2008) noted that it fell short on offering a considerable model for development. Echoing these sentiments, scholars such as (Davids, 2009: 16) state that these aforementioned theories, “offer oversimplified macro-solutions to the development problematic of less developed countries”.

2.4 The alternative development approach (People Centred Development)

The alternative development approach resulted from discontentment with the traditional theories during the 1970s and their failure to address the increasing global poverty (Chambers, 1992; Rahman, 1993). People Centred Development (PCD) refers to people participating in their own development. Central to the PCD theory is the idea that people should be designers of their own future (Chambers, 1997). It argues that, “the goal of development is not to develop things but to develop man” (Mathur, 1986:14). As such, Vlaenderen (2001: 91) posits that PCD advocates for a “quality of life” which is not only measured in terms of economic wealth. Adding to the discussion, Tagarirofa (2013) observed that the PCD theory portrays a paradigm shift from the macro top down approaches of development programmes to a two way micro humanistic approach which is informed by the local populace at grassroots level. Within this perspective people centred development theory purports to “free local people from the cradles of domination and oppression” (Chazovachii et al., 2013: 78).

The PCD theory is defined by Korten (1990:76) as a “process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their aspirations”. This definition indicates that within the PCD perspective development processes are mainly focused on enhancing both individual and institutional capacities. The definition emphasizes issues of sustainability, justice and inclusiveness. It recognizes that only the societies themselves can ascertain what they view as advances in the quality of their lives. The World Bank (1996) states that people centred development promotes bottom up participatory grassroots development. Scholars such as Chambers (1983) emphasized the idea of *putting the last first* as critical in rural development initiatives. This means that the poor beneficiaries must take a central role in their development. For Swanepoel and De Beer (2011:49), the main essence of the PCD theory is that beneficiaries of development have the potential to “shape their own life in cooperation and reciprocity with others, rather than being passively shaped or pushed around”. The approach advocates for the underprivileged and marginalized groups of society to have the opportunity to influence development projects in their communities (Davids, 2009). The inclusive nature of the approach calls for two-way symmetrical and excellent approaches to communication (Steyn & Nunes, 2001) which promote open communication and effective

dialogue amongst all those involved in the project. People centred development theorists view beneficiaries as key role players and stakeholders in development initiatives and accordingly should be actively involved in the entire decision making procedures of a project (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011). When all the target beneficiaries participate in the decision making processes that affect their lives they gain the confidence, self- esteem and knowledge to develop new skills thus they become empowered to be designers of their future.

It should be emphasized that the PCD approach does not challenge the technical proficiency of development practitioners. The approach considers that development practitioners are fundamental to development processes. However, development processes cannot only be informed by development technocrats' knowledge (Dipholo, 2002). Dipholo further emphasizes the need to blend the technical knowledge possessed by the development agents with local perspectives. Within this perspective, Coetzee (2001) posits that development processes need to be cognizant of variability in knowledge as ignorance of such has led to the failure of many projects. The PCD theory stresses that development cannot be achieved through imposed policies or strategies. Fundamental to the PCD theory is the aspect of participation. The UNDP (1993) states that greater participation enhances the best use of human capabilities, which is paramount in increasing social and economic development. As such, during the 1970s and 1980s terms such as participation, empowerment, ownership, self-reliance and sustainability became common concepts in development initiatives (Rahman, 1993). Given this context, people centred development became an alternative mechanism for development.

2.5 Conceptualizing development

Literature on development shows that it is an elusive multidisciplinary concept. Todaro (1987:85) views development as “a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty”. Coetzee (2001:120) sees development as “the connotation of favorable change moving from worse to better; evolving from simple to complex; advancing away from the inferior; a form of social change that will lead to progress...the process of enlarging people's choices acquiring knowledge and having access

to resources for a decent standard of living.” This is supported by Chambers (2004) who associates development with positive change.

Adding to the discussion, the United Nations 1994 *Human Development Report* states that, “human beings are born with certain potential capabilities. The purpose of development is to create an environment in which all people can expand their capabilities and opportunities can be enlarged for both present and future generations” (UNDP, 1994: 13). Scholars such as Amartya Sen, extends this point of view by stating that “development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states” (Sen, 1999:3). Within this continuum development is viewed as the enhancement of people’s abilities to achieve what they value in life (Sen, 1999). In the context of this research, development is viewed as the enhancement of small scale farmers’ capabilities to mobilize and support themselves so that they can engage in various socio-economic opportunities that improve their lives.

2.6 Participation in development initiatives

The concept of participation is at the heart of the people centred development approach. This was confirmed by the United Nations (2009:5) at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in 1979 in Rome when it stated that participation by rural societies in the organizations that govern their lives is “a basic human right”. Since then, Stirrat (1996, cited in United Nations, 2009:5) observed that it was:

... difficult to find a rurally based development project which does not in one way or another way claim to adopt a participatory approach involving bottom-up planning, acknowledging the importance of indigenous knowledge, and claiming to empower local people.

Jennings (2000:1) extends this point of view stating that while there have been differences in defining participation, various scholars seem to contend that “participation refers to involvement by local populations in the creation, content and conduct of a programme or policy designed to change their lives. Participation requires recognition and use of local capacities and avoids the imposition of priorities from the outside”. In this regard participation entails “negotiation rather

than the dominance of an externally set project agenda” (OECD, 1994 cited in United Nations, 2009:6).

The notion of participatory development supports the philosophy that citizens have the right to shape their own destiny. Within this perspective, participation is seen as a decision making process whereby communities are empowered to make informed decisions about their own development. In this regard, Korten (1984) suggests that decision making must be done by the people who are capacitated and who have the rights to instill their subjective values and needs into the development process. While participation has been viewed as inevitable in the area of rural development, it has been interpreted differently by different scholars (Jennings, 2000). However, most sources emphasize that beneficiaries of development initiatives should partake actively in the identification, forecasting, instituting, executing and assessing of countrywide and communities’ development programmes (Chazovachii & Tagarirofa, 2013). In this regard, communities become players instead of being recipients (Chambers, 1997).

The United Nations (2009) noted that there have been many debates on the real meaning of participation and the way in which it can be applied. The debates have been prompted by the fact that various actors have abused the approach, principles and methods to suit their own agendas. Within the range of literature on participation there is a clear dichotomy between scholars who view participation as vague and ambiguous and those who argue that participation is a key concept in People Centred Development (Penderis, 2012). This renders participation a highly contested “new orthodoxy of development” (Henkel & Stirrat, 2001 cited in United Nations, 2009:5). It is paramount to note that participation involves the distribution of power. Echoing the above sentiments is Mohan (2007) who warns that, “like many radical approaches that potentially upset established power relations, participatory development has been co-opted and tamed by some organizations so that ‘participation’ is relatively thin and meaningless”. While participatory development stresses active participation of beneficiaries there are certain power dynamics that limit participation in communities (Mohan, 2008). In most instances the local elite monopolize power, which is detrimental to meaningful participation of the poor (Mohan & Hickey, 2004).

As such, Vilakazi (2013) advocates for the distribution and sharing of power in a manner that promotes justice and equality in collective participation and decision making processes.

Similarly Moyo (2012) advises that there is need to build the capabilities of communities and enhance their power to participate meaningfully in development initiatives. Contrary to the above views, White (1996: 6) advances the notion that “participation may also be the means through which existing power relations are entrenched and reproduced”. On the other hand, Cornwall (2003:1331) notes that participation may be “tokenistic rather than transformative”. Within this view various scholars lament that development agencies are merely paying lip service to participation where organizations simply pretend that there is local participation (Brett, 2003; Cornwall, 2008; Kapoor, 2002). Stoker (1997, cited in Chifamba, 2013) observed that the problem for various development organizations is that they require and yet fear grassroots participation. While development agencies need local support they also fear that a more inclusive approach may slow down development processes and increase project costs.

Regardless of the opposing views surrounding the impact and value of participation, it has been hailed for promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of community projects as well as consolidating the rights of citizens and adding their voice in local governance and policy making. Penderis (1996) sees participation as an approach which can be used to attain developmental objectives by raising levels of awareness through personal transformation, development and consolidating capabilities of recipients in development projects. It is within this context that the people centred development theory will provide the conceptual framework and theoretical lens through which this study will examine the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers’ Club project in Zimbabwe.

2.7 Levels of participation

There are numerous scholars who provide insight into the different intensity levels of participation (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; Kumar, 2002). These range from passive participation of beneficiaries in projects to active empowering participation where beneficiaries are equal role players in development initiatives. Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation (see Figure 2.1) is a valuable instrument in analysing the degree of influence and power citizens have in shaping development processes. The ladder has eight rungs which range from manipulation to citizen control. The ladder views participation as being a power struggle between the powerless citizens who want to control and agencies or governments which strongly centralize and hold

onto power. On the other hand, Pretty (1995) highlights the levels of participation ranging from passive participation to self-mobilization.

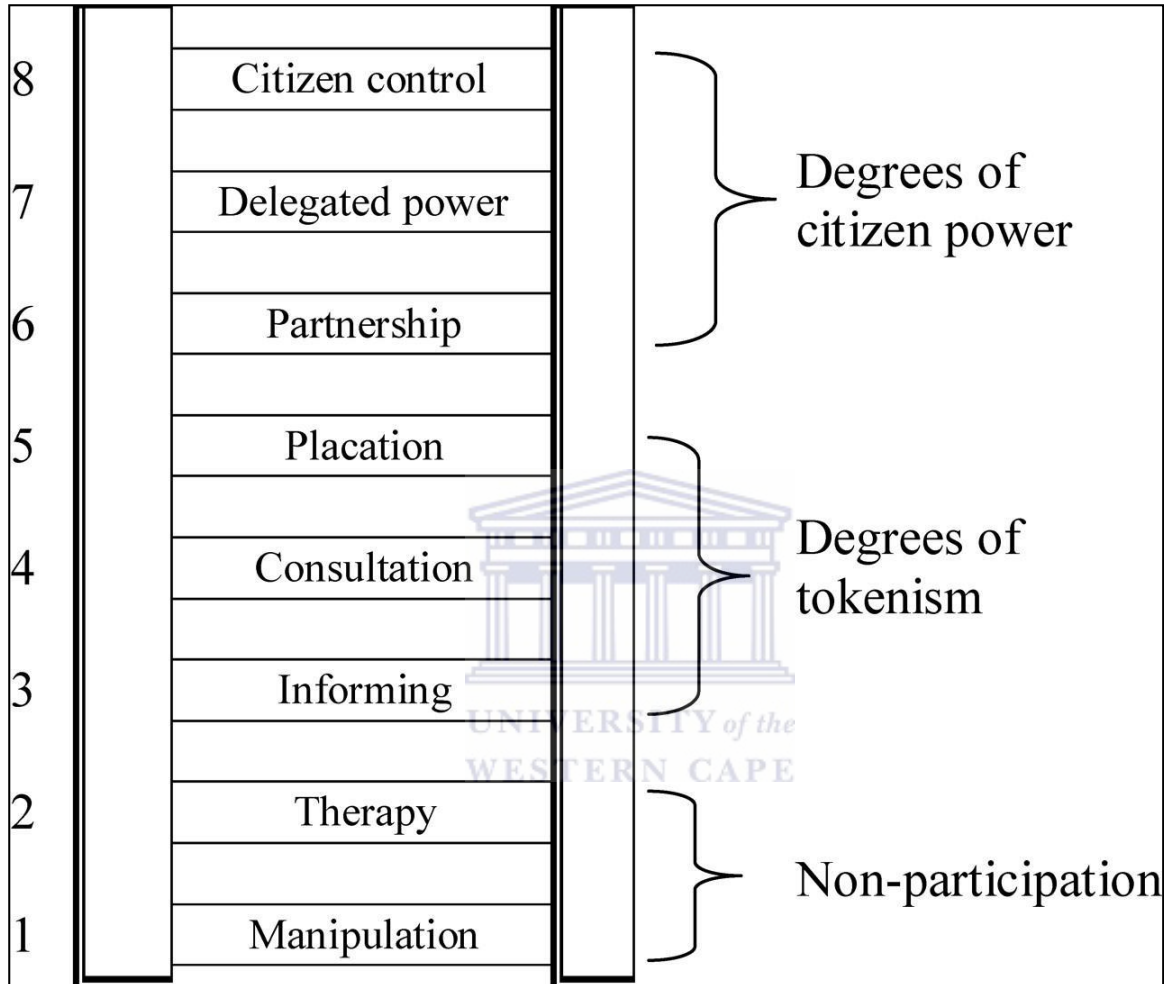


Figure 2.1 The ladder of participation (Source adapted by author from Arnstein, 1969).

The participation typologies of both Arnstein (1969) and Pretty (1995) imply that different positions are related to different degrees of participation. At the bottom of the ladder there is manipulation and therapy which is viewed as non-participation. At these levels, citizens cannot be involved in planning but they can offer support to foreign designed plans. This is followed by the informing, consultation and placation levels which are regarded as tokenism participation. At these levels, citizens have opportunities to raise their views; however, they lack the power to

influence decision making. At the top of the ladder there is partnership, delegation and citizen control. Negotiations and joint decision making can be witnessed at this level. Moreover, there is decentralization of power through delegation and citizens are involved in the planning and management of projects. Arnstein's (1969) model will be used in analyzing the level of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project.

2.8 The rationale for public participation

Throughout the world, public participation is viewed as an essential component of democracy and creates an important link between policy makers and the public. Within the democratic context there are a number of benefits of an involved and participatory public. Public participation boosts the relevance of projects so that they are designed according to the desires and circumstances of recipients. Moreover it promotes empowerment, capacity building and sustainable development. The following section will discuss these concepts.

▪ Empowerment

There is a significant correlation between empowerment and participation. Narayan (2002:14) views empowerment as an increase of “assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives”. In the same vein Chambers (2003: 220) writes that “empowerment, unless abused, serves equity and well-being”. On the other hand, Tacconni and Tisdell (1993) define empowerment as having the power to decide. These scholars assert that power should be transferred to individuals through provision of substantive information vital in decision making. Shaffer (1994, cited in Vlaenderen, 2001) adds that the power should be genuine, official and authentic. Within this spectrum, Gaventa (2004) states that power can inhibit or promote participation. As such, various scholars advocate for *power to* the people not *power over* the people (Chambers 2003; Swanepoel & De Beer 2011). In other words, *power to* the people capacitates communities to participate in the decision making spaces. In light of the significance of participation to community empowerment, it has been dubbed “the heart that pumps the community’s life blood” (Reid, 2000: 3). De Beer and Swanepoel (2002) posit that empowerment is the end result of meaningful and real participation. Racelis (1986) argues that participation taps on the energy and capabilities of many people, thus building a culture in society in which the previously

underprivileged bulk of the population will escape their poverty and transform themselves into a populace with rights and responsibilities. Thus empowerment promotes self-awareness which consequently addresses abstract development needs (Swanepoel & De Beer, 1997). Simply put, empowerment provides people with a possible route out of poverty (Swanepoel, 1996a).

- **Capacity building**

The level of capacity a community has determines its ability to develop itself. A community development process will not be complete without having created and increased the community's abilities. According to Phillips and Pittman (2009), a community's capacity is the degree to which community members can work in partnership efficiently to cultivate and maintain resilient networks; solve challenges, make collective decisions; and cooperate effectively to plan and formulate goals. Social capital within a community accelerates collaboration and partnership; hence there is a need to tap into it (Mattessich & Monsey, 2004). People need to synchronize their personal capacities and potential during the development process. Zadeh and Ahmad (2010:13) note that "participation offers new opportunities, creative thinking and innovative planning". In this regard, participation promotes ordinary people's capacity to freely and successfully deal with pertinent concerns in their communities.

- **Sustainability and self-reliance**

According to Chambers (1997), participation should bring economic, social, institutional and environmental sustainable development. Sustainability is closely linked to self-reliance in that the community should be in a position to continue with the project after the agent withdraws. The challenge of ensuring the sustainability of development initiatives is believed to be solved by the appropriate inclusion of target beneficiaries in the provision and management of resources, services and amenities (Cleaver, 2001). Swanepoel and De Beer (2011) observed that participation allows communities to use their local knowledge in sustaining projects as well as adapting to challenges. Simply put, active participation promotes a sense of ownership, which is paramount for the sustainability of the project.

2.9 Contextualizing small scale farming

Throughout the world, of the total number of people living in poor countries, it is estimated that 1.5 billion are small scale farmers. Of this number, the majority are extremely poor and they live below the poverty line (FAO, 2012). It is estimated that these farmers occupy over 80 per cent of the world's estimated 500 million small farms and produce over 80 per cent of the food consumed primarily in the developing nations (IFAD, 2013). There is no single definition of small scale farmers as definitions are either contextually or ecologically based. Small scale farming is often referred to as “smallholder, family, subsistence, resource poor, low input, or low technology farming” (Heidhues & Bruntrup, 2003 cited in Oksana, 2005:3).

Using land size as a variable, scholars such as Chamberlin (2008) concluded that small scale farmers farm between 0.1 and 10 hectares of land. Likewise, the FAO (2012) states that these farmers manage farms ranging from below one hectare to above ten hectares. The South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) (2012) expands on this definition and defines small scale farmers as those farmers who own small pieces of land on which they farm mostly food crops and limited cash crops. It further states that the livelihoods of these farmers are sorely dependent upon farming which fully relies on family labour. This definition is echoed by various scholars who contend that small scale farmers make use of family labour for production with farming produce being their main source of income (FAO, 2012; Lininger, 2011; Narayan & Gulati, 2002).

2.10 International experiences of small scale farmers

This section examines the international context of small scale farmers. Several researchers have carried out studies that focus on small scale farmers' participation in agricultural projects. In Greece, research conducted by Damianos and Giannakopoulos (2002) revealed that age, general education, knowledge in agriculture, size of the land, participation by fellow neighbours or families generally inspire farmers to participate in some agri-environmental schemes. Further afield, in Mexico, studies done by Meinzen-Dick (1997) highlighted that farmer participation in an irrigation project mainly depended on trust between the farmers and the development agency as well as clear designation of roles and responsibilities. A comparative study conducted by Boas and Goldey (2005) comparing conditions in Cruz Alta and Pantano in Brazil revealed that socio-

economic features were not very important in influencing the level of farmers' participation in farmers' groups. The study revealed that farmers are motivated to participate when participation is associated with more benefits in the form of access to equipment, services and inputs.

Contrary to the findings in Brazil, Karli et al., (2006) postulate that factors such as education, communication skills, high income, farm size, as well as technology motivate farmers to join agricultural cooperatives in Turkey. A 2011 study conducted by Garnevska et al., in China revealed that women were the main participants in farming activities. However, while women were the main participants, meeting attendance and decision making were being done by men who were migrant workers in other places. This highlights the marginalization of women farmers in decision making processes. Further research conducted by Aref (2011) in Iran revealed that farmers were not part of planning and decision making in agricultural development. Decisions were mainly passed by government agencies while farmers only participated at the implementation stage. Unlike the situation in Brazil where farmers were lured into participating by the available incentives, this study revealed limited access to incentives. Drawing from Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation mentioned earlier on, Aref (2011) concluded that the types of farmers' participation in the province of Fars in Iran were merely consultative, informative and manipulative. Farmers' projects were being run without considering the farmers' opinions and agricultural projects were developed and packaged by elite agencies without farmers' inputs.

2.11 Small scale farming in Africa

2.11.1 The African Context

According to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI, 2009) about 65% of African societies depend on agriculture. Oksana (2005) noted that there are about 33 million small scale farms in Africa. These small scale farmers produce above 90% of the continent's agrarian outputs (IFPRI, 2009). The crops grown by small scale farmers vary depending on the geographical location (Lininger, 2011). For instance, cocoa is produced by mainly small scale farmers in countries such as Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire (World Cocoa Foundation, 2012). In Cameroon these farmers produce maize along with plantains, cassava, peanuts and cocoa

(Gockowski et al., 2005). The challenges faced by these farmers include lack of access to credit facilities, poor infrastructure and market access, poverty, climate change and low participation of small scale farmers in agricultural policy matters (IDASA, 2009). Regardless of these challenges, a report published by IFAD (2013) concludes that small scale farmers are a vital component of the world's agricultural community, whose significant contribution to food security and poverty reduction cannot be underestimated.

2.11.2 African experiences of small scale farming

Within the African context, a research project conducted by Beach (1993) in Southern Chad revealed that some of the factors that promote farmers' participation in agricultural projects include literacy, economic status and the size of land owned. Interestingly, these findings are similar to those highlighted by Damianos and Giannakopoulos's (2002) study in Greece mentioned in the previous section. Further studies by Asante et al., (2011) found that the size of the farm, access to loans as well as equipment influence farmers' participation in farmer organizations in Ghana. Dogbe et al.,'s (2013) study in Ghana revealed that gender has an influence on farmers' participation in agricultural projects - male farmers are more likely to participate in agricultural projects since they normally have better access to resources.

Kumba (2003) noted that conventional top down decision-making is one of the main aspects contributing to the failure of agricultural projects in Namibia. He contends further that such approaches do not empower or capacitate farmers. Echoing these sentiments, Iqbal (2007) observed that numerous agricultural projects have failed simply because when they are planned, indigenous values, socio-economic features and farmers are simply ignored and external designers end up developing and recommending inappropriate technologies that are not relevant to the targeted area. Contrary to the findings in Namibia, the UNDP (2012) notes that smallholder farmers of the Muliru project in Kenya are actively involved in the decision making and long term direction of the organization. As such, the project has empowered the community. The project has promoted community collaboration, "trust and social capital – all of which are essential ingredients of the collective action needed to address common challenges" (UNDP, 2012:8).

Regarding farmers' participation in agricultural activities, Botlhoko and Oladele's (2013) investigation in South Africa indicated that the size of the household and proper designation of roles and responsibilities promoted farmers' participation in an irrigation project. A similar study conducted by Bahta and Bauer (2007) in South Africa revealed that membership in farmers' groups promotes farmers' participation in agricultural projects since farmers' groups are viewed as an efficient approach to rural development. However, research conducted by Nxumalo and Oladele (2013) in South Africa revealed that limited access to resources such as land and credit inhibits farmers' participation in agricultural projects. These scholars also indicate that farmers with high levels of education are more likely to participate in agricultural projects. While the literature indicates that farmers do participate to some extent in agricultural projects designed by organizations and agencies, a recent investigation conducted by Diale et al., (2013) in South Africa revealed that farmers do not participate in the planning processes of the project. The project was dominated by traditional leaders and there was evidence of nepotism in allocating resources. Due to the lack of active participation, farmers were not constantly aware of the daily operations of the project. Furthermore, these authors found that apart from traditional leaders dominating the project, males also dominated women in decision making.



2.12 The Zimbabwean context

Various scholars contend that agriculture is a significant socio-economic sector in Zimbabwe (Nyanga, 2013; African Development Bank Group, 2010; Newsday, 2013). It is estimated that it contributes between 15 and 18% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and more than 40% of the country's exports. The sector supplies 60% of raw materials required in agro-industries and it is a source of livelihood for over 70% of the country's population. The agricultural sector employs 20% of the country's economically active people. The common agricultural products produced by small scale farmers are maize (the staple food), groundnuts, soya beans, vegetables, meat and milk. This sector has created job opportunities for different categories of people including brokers, transporters, traders, supermarket chains and others who have become involved in activities ranging from producing to marketing farm products. Whilst small scale farming is a significant sector in the Zimbabwean economy, it is generally characterized by poor access to inputs, limited technical extension support, and restricted access to markets (FAO, 1996b).

2.12.1 Participation of small scale farmers in Zimbabwe

Recent studies conducted by Murisa (2011) in Zimbabwe highlight the limited participation by group members in decision making and in the regular activities of the farming groups and cooperatives to which they belong. In most of the groups, decision making is the preserve of the group chairman. The above research findings provided evidence that the chairman does not consult other executive members when making decisions that affect the whole group, which consequently causes conflict in the group. The author also highlights low attendance in group meetings which he attributes to the lack of exposure to how associations operate. In this regard, Murisa's (2010) study encourages further research into how unequal power relations influence participation in farmers' projects and in decision making processes.

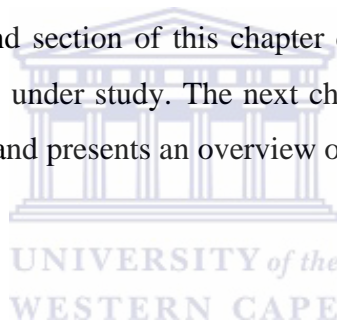
Earlier investigations by Gukurume and Nhodo (2010) attribute the failure of a farming project focusing on conservation in Maringire and Mhandamabwe in Zimbabwe to a large extent due to the project being imposed on local people. These authors reported that in most circumstances, local people were only asked to partake during the implementation phase of the project (Gukurume and Nhodo, 2010). Undoubtedly, this shows a top down approach to development which relegates the local people to passive participants. While participatory development theory asserts that local people should identify their own needs, Gukurume and Nhodo's (2010) investigation clearly indicates that in many cases local people are marginalized and become passive recipients of development initiatives.

Research conducted by Chifamba (2013) in Zimbabwe also shows that local people have little power over projects that they participate in. Despite the fact that participatory rural development should lead to the empowerment of local people as well as to transformation, Chifamba's (2013) study warns of practices that "perpetuate and trigger the antithesis of community liberation, devolution and distribution of power among various stakeholders". The research of Makumbe (1998) and Gukurume and Nhodo (2010) corresponds with these findings and for them power is concentrated in the hands of governments and foreign specialists rendering the local people powerless and voiceless. Contrary to the above studies, the Ministry of Agriculture and Practical Action Southern Africa (2010) highlight how Madwaleni Ward 14 farmers in Zimbabwe actively participated and took charge of their development process. This was enabled by the farmers participating in a five-day workshop. These farmers were given the opportunity to analyze their

local conditions and to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Thereafter they designed a community based action plan. The workshop was attended by all interested parties who were given the platform to share their personal challenges and visions. This evidence shows the positive results that can be achieved by engaging local people to participate in agricultural projects in their communities.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter provided the theoretical framework and relevant literature for this study. Drawing on a range of literature it gave some insights into the classic theories of development. The chapter highlighted the main tenets of these theories and also discussed their weaknesses. It then traced the evolution of the PCD theory and examined the values and principles underpinning this approach. Various debates on the theory were explored and key concepts within PCD were defined and explained. The second section of this chapter discussed numerous studies around the globe which relate to the topic under study. The next chapter provides detailed background information of the case study area and presents an overview of the DAPP Farmers' Club project.



Chapter Three: The case study area

3.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this chapter is to provide a general overview of the organization Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) and an examination of the district and village within which it operated. Attention will first focus on providing an overview of the Mazowe District with regards to its physical location, institutional structure, socio- economic characteristics and system of governance. This will be followed by a description of the rural village, Chinehasha where the fieldwork took place. The second part of the chapter will focus on the DAPP organization which operated in Mazowe and the Farmers' Club project which is the focus of this study. DAPP is a non-governmental organization in Zimbabwe which runs various development programmes. The Farmers' Club project has been designed under DAPP's Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development programmes. The Farmers' Club project's objective is to empower small scale farmers to become food secure through building their capacity, knowledge and skills on sustainable methods of farming. A literature review of documents and reports supplied by DAPP, the District Administrator's office, the Mazowe Rural District Council and various line ministries provided much of the required information presented below. Informal discussions with the local leadership and personal observation during the research process complemented the available literature. This chapter provides the platform from which to launch the empirical fieldwork.

3.2 Overview of the case study area

3.2.1 Location and settlement patterns

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located on the southern part of the African continent. It is bordered by South Africa to the south, Mozambique to the east, Botswana to the west and Zambia to the north and north-west. It supports a population of about 12 973 808 people (ZIMSTAT, 2012a). The country has a total of ten provinces. Mazowe District, the case study area of this research, is located in the north east of the country in the Mashonaland Central Province (see Figure 3.1 below).

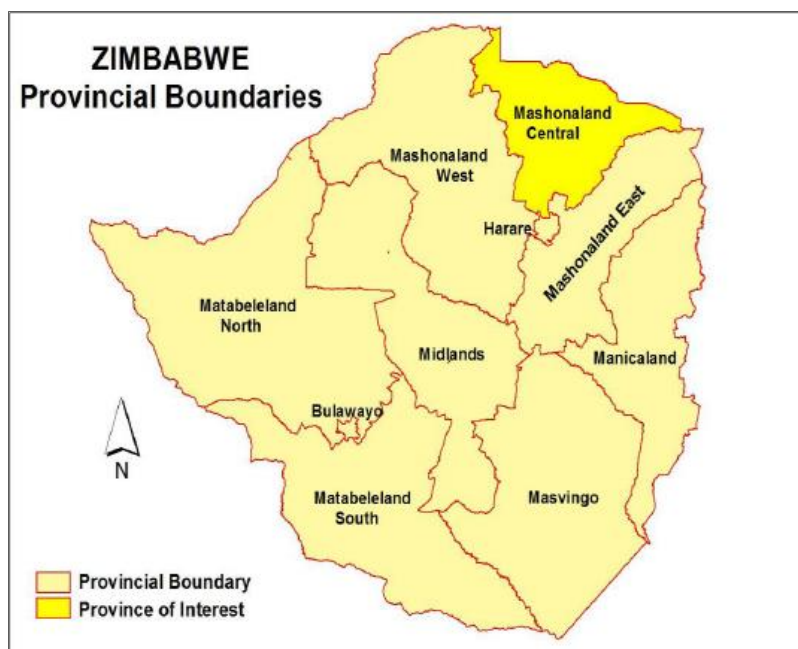


Figure 3.1 Mashonaland Central Province in Zimbabwe (Source: Adapted by author from Chandaengerwa, 2014:13).

According to ZIMSTAT (2012b), the province has a population of 1,139,059 people comprising about 8.8% of the country's total population. Mashonaland Central is mainly a commercial farming province and the 2012 census data indicates that 69% of those employed, work within the agricultural sector (ZIMSTAT, 2012b). Mazowe is one of the seven administrative districts in the province and is located about 125 kilometers from Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe (see Figure 3.2). Mazowe District is surrounded by Goromonzi District to the east, Muzarabani District to the north and Guruve District to the west. The district is well connected to Harare, the capital city by road, rail and telecommunication services. It covers a total of 453 892 000 hectares of land. Of these, about 1330 square kilometers are within the district's communal area (Mazowe District Profile, 2015). Communal areas in Zimbabwe are popularly known as *ruzevha* which means rural areas. About 51.4% of the Zimbabwean population lives in communal areas (ZIMSTAT, 2012a). People in communal areas live in villages which have separate areas designated for residential, farming and grazing purposes.

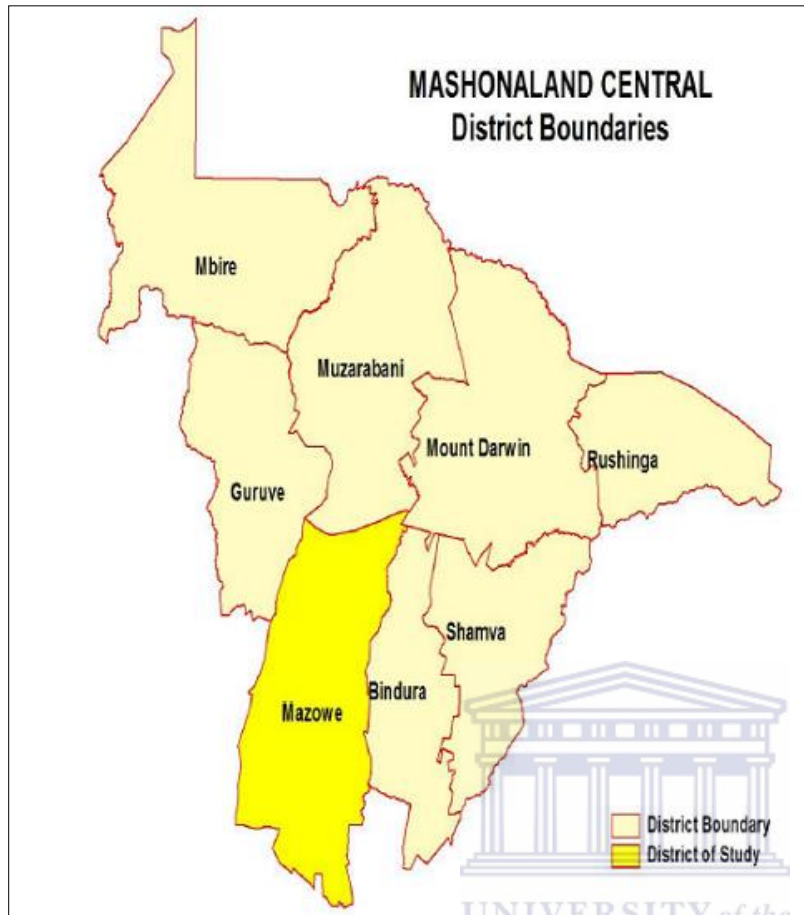


Figure 3.2 Mashonaland Central Province Districts (Source: Adapted by author from Chandaengerwa, 2014:13).

3.2.2 Institutional and governance structure

A total of 1200 wards are contained within the 59 districts of Zimbabwe (ZIMSTAT, 2012a). Mazowe District has a total number of 35 wards and 3 administrative centres which are Glendale, Concession and Mvurwi (Mazowe District Profile, 2015). The headquarters of the Mazowe Rural District Council is in Concession. The District Administrator is the head of the district and chief coordinator of all government programmes. The district has three traditional chiefs who are Chief Negomo, Chief Chiweshe and Chief Makope. The research was carried out in the case study area of Chinehasha, a village located in Ward 3 of the Mazowe District's communal lands (see Figure 3.3). This village falls under the Makope chieftaincy.

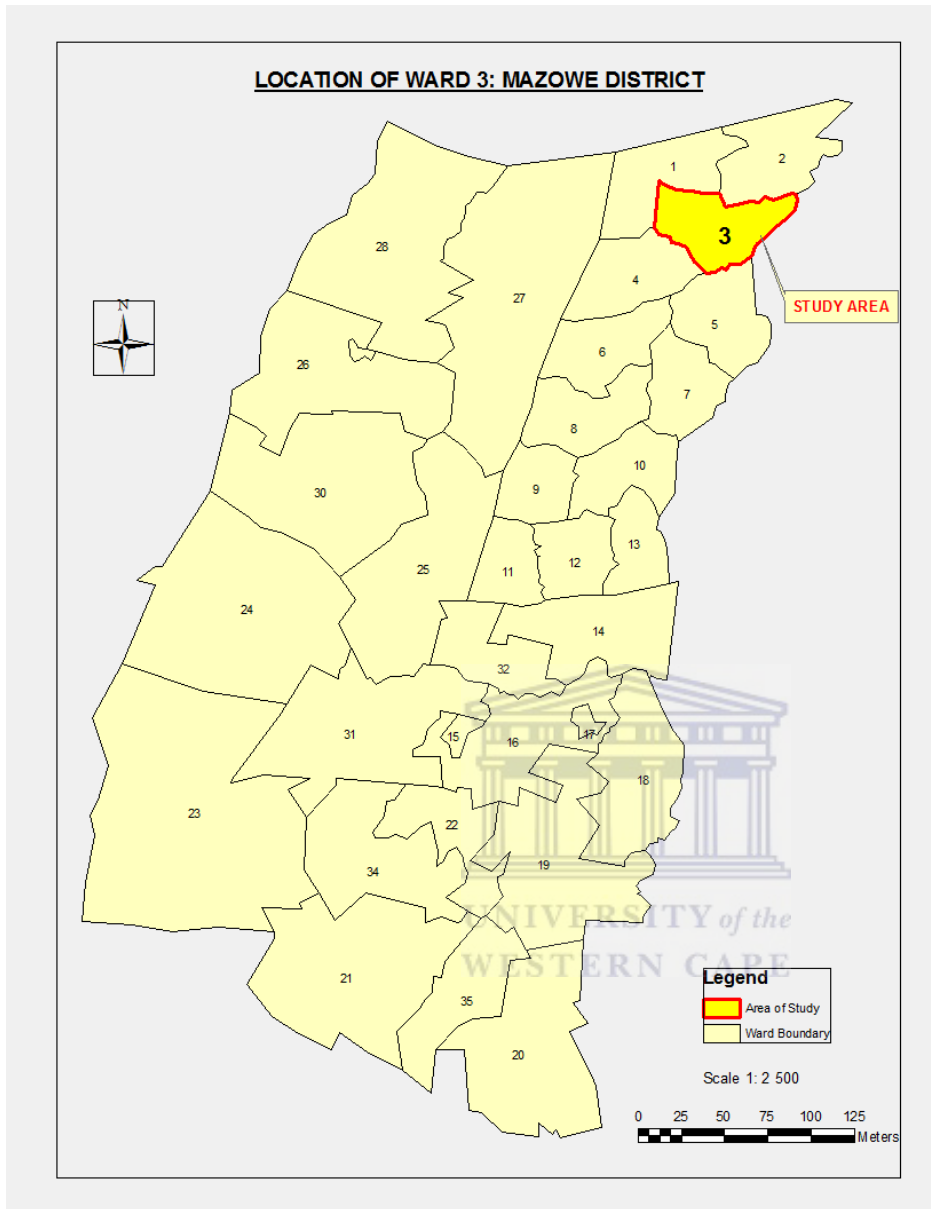


Figure 3.3 Ward 3 of Mazowe District (Source: Adapted by author from Chandaengerwa, 2014:14).

In the rural areas of Zimbabwe, wards are further sub-divided into smaller developmental sections referred to as villages. Each village has an average of about thirty-five households. Figure 3.4 below shows an aerial view of Chinehasha village which was selected as the case study area for this research.

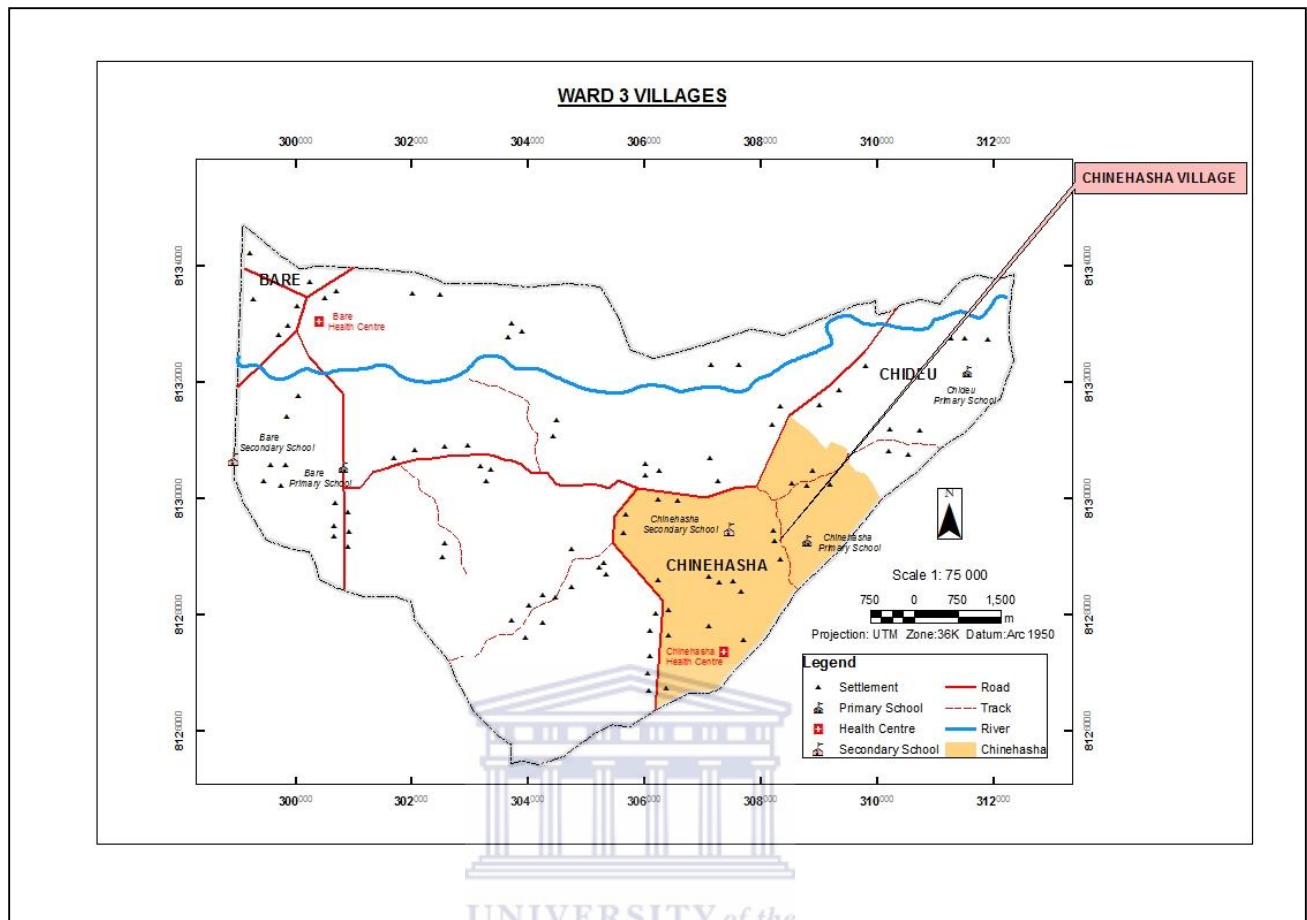


Figure 3.3 Chinehasha village

The dawn of independence saw the Zimbabwean government establishing structures which promote citizen participation in local development. These structures were established following the 1984 Prime Ministerial Directive on decentralization and development in the country (Helmsing et al., 1994). This directive saw the establishment of village and ward development committees which were code named VIDCO and WADCO respectively. The same directive also provided the space for public representation at district and provincial level. Nevertheless, the highest institution of authority remained the central government at national level which is responsible for policy formulation with regards to local governance in the country. Each province has a provincial council whose function is to promote socio-economic development in the province as well as to coordinate the implementation of government programmes (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013). The Provincial Administrator runs the province and each ministry has a provincial department which carries out ministerial roles at provincial level. The District

Administrator is the head of the district and chief coordinator of all government programmes. The District Administrator supervises the Mazowe Rural District Council (MRDC) which is chaired by the Council Chairman (Mazowe District Profile, 2015). All ward councillors are members of the Mazowe Rural District Council. Most ministries are represented at district level and they perform ministerial roles at this level. Ward councillors perform their duties at ward level and chair the Ward Development Committee which consists of the councilor and village heads.

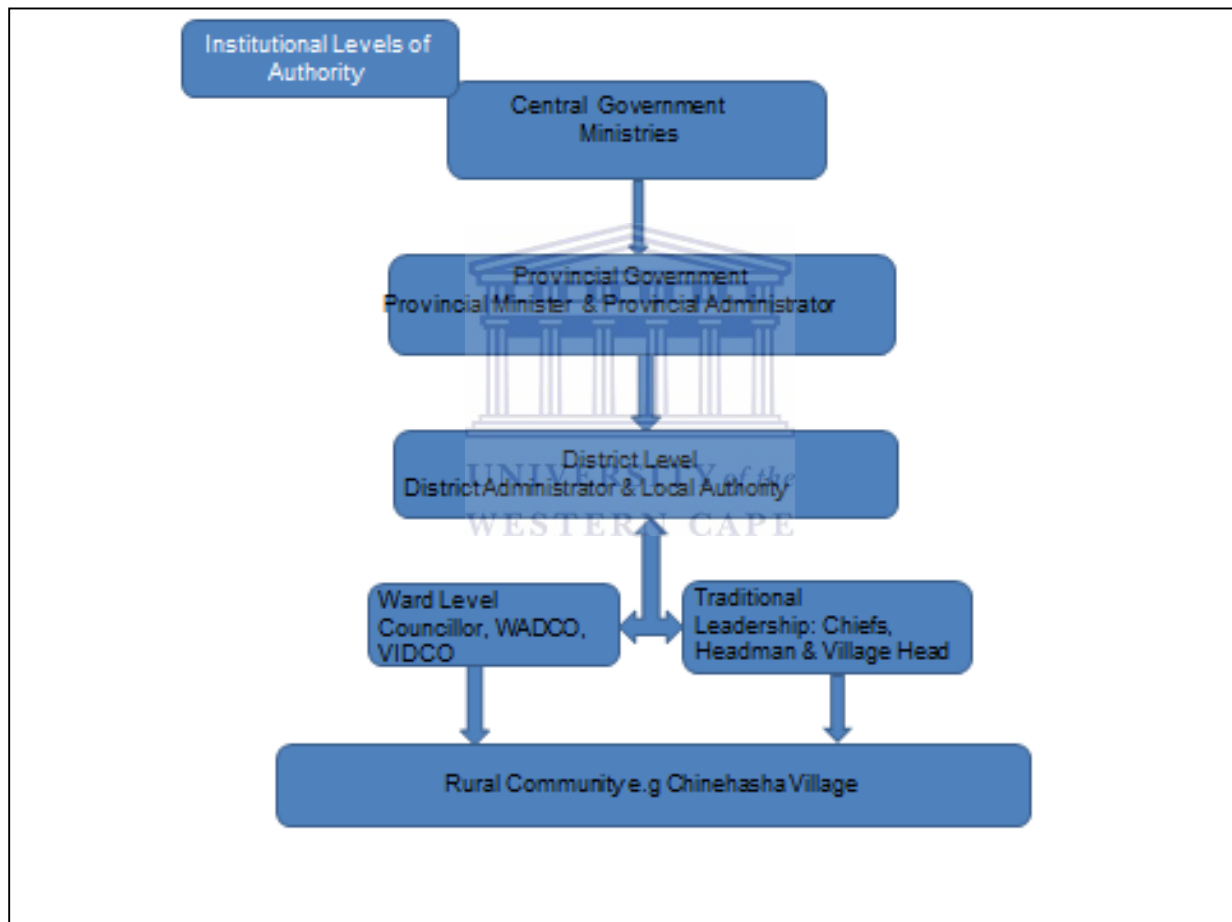


Figure 3.4 Governance and Institutional Structure (Source: Adapted by author from Sibanda, 2011:46).

In light of the institutional and governance structure that characterize Zimbabwean communities, Chinehasha village falls directly under Village Head Chinehasha and Councilor Chopamba of Ward 3. Figure 3.5 above depicts the governance and institutional structure in the area of study. The diagram above shows that the Village Development Committee (VIDCO) and Ward

Development Committee (WADCO) are the structures that are closer to the people in Chinehasha village. These platforms are institutionalised spaces in which the local populace can become designers of their own development. It is through these structures that citizen participation is promoted in the area of study since all villagers are urged to attend village assemblies. The primary role of the village assembly is to define local needs. The village assembly appoints members who sit in the VIDCO, which is chaired by the village head (Chigwata, 2010). The VIDCO then presents the local needs to the WADCO, which is chaired by the ward councilor. In this instance the WADCO then submits a ward development plan which consists of input from all the villages in Ward 3 to Mazowe Rural District Council. Figure 3.6 below illustrates how citizens can influence policy making in the area of study.

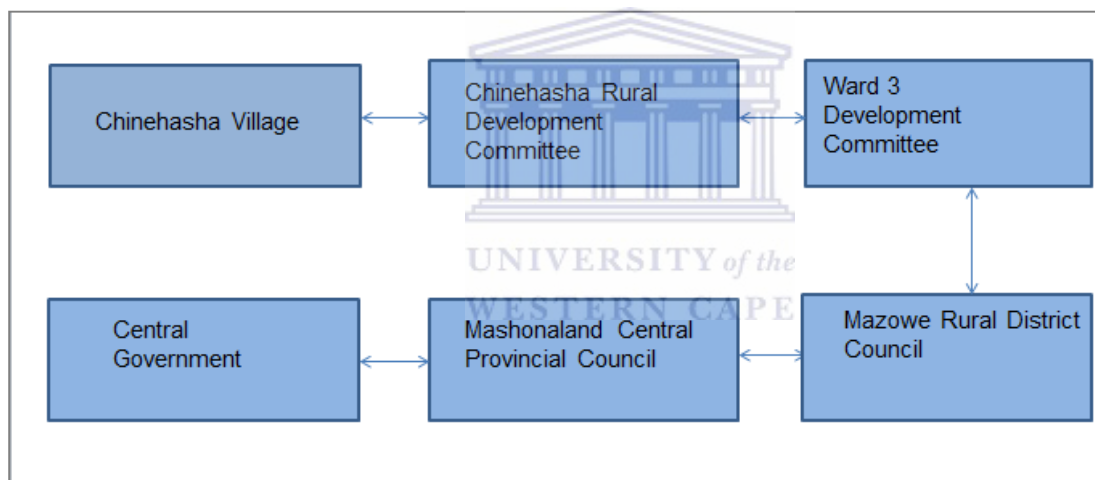


Figure 3.5 Participatory Structure

Mazowe Rural District Council submits its district plan to the Provincial Council of Mashonaland Central Province which then submits a consolidated provincial plan with input from the other districts in the province (see Figure 3.2) to the Central Government in Harare.

3.2.3 Demographic and socio-economic characteristics

The population of Mazowe District stands at 233 450 with an average household size of four people (ZIMSTAT, 2012a). Ward 3 where Chinehasha village is located has a population of about 2500 females and 2200 males. The dominant ethnic group in the district is the Shona speaking VaZezuru people. The main agricultural activities in the district include citrus and dairy

farming, horticulture, seed and cash crop production. The major crops grown include burley and Virginia tobacco, wheat, soya beans, and maize. One of the largest Grain Marketing Board's silos in Zimbabwe is located in the Mazowe District. This reinforces the notion that Mazowe is indeed a farming district. According to Chiweshe (2011), the major crops grown for sale in the area are tobacco and soya beans while maize remains the staple food. The district is also rich in minerals such as gold, chrome and limestone and this has prompted mining activities although on a smaller scale compared to agriculture. While there are some tourist attraction centres in the district they have not been fully developed.

3.2.4 Land ownership

Land ownership is vital in Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political development. Mazowe district's fertile and arable land was distributed under the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). The FTLRP began in July 2000 (Zikhali, 2008). This programme saw the compulsory acquisition and resettlement of the native people on the previously white owned commercial farms. The fast track programme comprised of two resettlement models, namely the A1 and A2 models. The A1 model was targeted at allocating a minimum of 6 hectares to subsistence farmers and the A2 model intended to promote commercial farming amongst black Zimbabweans. Under the A2 model, farmers were allocated farms ranging from thirty-five to more than one thousand hectares. Mazowe District has 6382 A1 farmers and 1187 A2 farmers. These farmers have been allocated offer letters by the government which confirm their ownership of the land they are occupying (Mazowe District Profile, 2015). It is interesting to note that Mazowe's prime land distributed to more than seven thousand A1 and A2 farmers was previously owned by only a few white farmers. This brings to attention the fact that under colonial rule land ownership in Zimbabwe was extremely racially biased.

According to the Zimbabwean Constitution (2013:128), "traditional leaders have authority, jurisdiction and control over the communal land or other areas for which they have been appointed...". As such the chiefs delegate the village heads to oversee land allocation in the villages. In turn the chiefs report back to the Mazowe Rural District Council. In Chinehasha village farmers have been allocated land by the Village Head. However, they do not have title deeds to the land they occupy and farm. Councilor Chopamba explained the issue of land administration and ownership in the area of study. He stated that:

... land in the villages is allocated by the village head. In most instances people farm the land that belongs to their families. If I die my child will farm my land it goes like that; it is like family land, land is inherited and when it comes to grazing land, it belongs to the whole community (7 July 2015).

Adding to the topic on the dynamics of land ownership in communal areas, Gaidzanwa (2011:3-4) notes that, “the male head of the household is the one who is recognized as the holder of the land. This precludes women from holding primary land rights, relegating them to holding secondary rights derived from and negotiated through the husband”. This scholar’s observation points to the fact that patriarchal tendencies still dominate issues of land ownership in communal areas of Zimbabwe with Chinehasha village not being an exception.

Chinehasha village has sandy loamy old soils with low fertility. In spite of that, the majority if not all of the inhabitants rely on subsistence small scale farming. Apart from subsistence farming, villagers are also involved in cattle rearing and poultry production. The community is poor and this is confirmed by the fact that most households do not own cattle, which is a symbol of wealth in rural Zimbabwean communities. Moreover, quite a number of people rely on food aid from the Ministry of Social Services, handouts from NGOs as well as remittances from relatives working in the cities. This points to the fact that while Mazowe is popularly known as a farming district the communal areas have generally lagged behind in this respect.

3.2.5 Settlement patterns

Information obtained from the Mazowe Rural District Council shows that the majority of people in the district live in their own dwellings as owners. The types of dwelling units differ. People who live in Mvurwi, Glendale and Concession urban areas live in modern houses which are electrified and have access to running tapped water. However, this is not the case in communal areas where people do not have access to electricity and tapped water. The types of dwellings in Chinehasha village are shown in Figure 3.6.



Figure 3.6 Housing patterns in Chinehasha

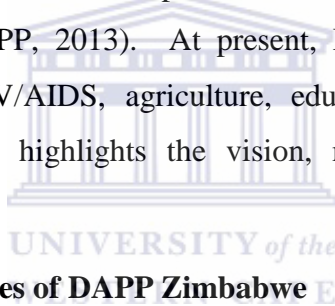
A homestead comprises of a traditional *dagga* and brick kitchen with a thatched roof. The kitchen is meant for cooking purposes. Most homesteads have a separate two to three bedroom house constructed with bricks and roofed with asbestos. The majority of the homesteads have a fowl run and a kraal for goats and cattle. Deforestation is evident since villagers use firewood for cooking and keeping warm in winter. Very few households have solar panels which are used mostly for lighting the homestead. There are no tarred roads in the village. The village is connected to the outside areas by gravel roads and footpaths.

There are virtually no public phones in Chinehasha village. Villagers have cellular phones but they hardly use them due to poor network signal. Chinehasha village has one primary school which was established in 1919 and one secondary school which was established in 1984. There is only one clinic in the village. The clinic services Chinehasha village as well as other villages such as Chideu and Chigwida. The village is serviced by the Chinehasha business centre which has quite a number of grocery shops.

3.3 The DAPP Organization

Development Aid from People to People, popularly known as DAPP is a non-governmental organization in Zimbabwe¹. The NGO was registered in June 1980 under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. DAPP was established under the laws of Zimbabwe and the organization is governed by an elected Executive Committee. DAPP is currently operating in the provinces of Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Manicaland, Harare and Masvingo. Its headquarters is in the Shamva District of Mashonaland Central Province (DAPP, 2013).

DAPP Zimbabwe is the brain child of a group of young people from Scandinavia who came to Zimbabwe willing to partake and assist in the country's reconciliation, reconstruction and resettlement programmes after the war of liberation. These Scandinavians collaborated with some Zimbabwean citizens to form DAPP as a private volunteer organization. In the early 1980s DAPP was involved in infrastructure development such as building and reconstruction of schools, bridges and clinics (DAPP, 2013). At present, DAPP Zimbabwe runs projects in various areas which include HIV/AIDS, agriculture, education, child aid and community development. The section below highlights the vision, mission and objectives of DAPP Zimbabwe.



3.3.1 Mission, vision and objectives of DAPP Zimbabwe

According to Du Toit et al., (2010) a mission statement articulates the organization's purpose. It addresses issues such as why the organization exists and what it does. The Mission of DAPP Zimbabwe is to *implement quality community-led projects in order to empower the people with knowledge, skills and tools to improve their well-being in five sectors, namely community development, agriculture, education and health*. Regarding an organization's vision, scholars such as Smit et al., (2011:88) postulate that a vision "portrays the dream for the future and it helps to keep decision making in context as it provides focus and direction". In other words, a vision statement gives a perspective of the change that the organization aspires to see. DAPP envisions *a loving, caring and responsible society where all people live a healthy life with dignity and honor*. For DAPP to realize its vision and accomplish its mission certain objectives inform its planning processes. These include bringing about solidarity between the people around the world and promoting social and economic development in Zimbabwe and the Southern

¹ Most of the information presented in this section is derived from reports published by DAPP.

African Region through the implementation of development projects in the areas of training, education, social welfare, health, culture, environment, production, agriculture, and trade. Simply put, DAPP desires to promote a better life for the underprivileged and the most needy sector of the population.

3.3.2 The Farmers' Club Project

In the policy framework of Zimbabwe (2012-2032), the agricultural sector envisions “*a prosperous, diverse and competitive agricultural sector, ensuring food and nutrition security significantly contributing to national development*” (Mwenye & Chikumbirike, 2013:6). The broad aim of the policy is to ensure household and national food security. The poor performance within the agricultural sector in Zimbabwe has been widely attributed to a range of factors such as inadequate knowledge and expertise, poor technologies, unpredictable rainfall patterns and high-priced inputs (DAPP, 2013). The government of Zimbabwe faces a huge challenge of ensuring food security since all the provinces in the country are in need of food aid (Herald, 2016). It is distressing to note that even those areas which used to be food secure are now in dire need. As such, DAPP purports to complement the government's efforts of ensuring food security through the Farmers' Club projects.

3.3.2.1 Aims and objectives of the project

The broad aim of the Farmers' Club project is to *empower small scale farmers in Zimbabwe to improve livelihoods and break out of poverty by using agricultural potential available and strengthening their organization*. Specific objectives include increasing food security and sustainable farming systems among farmers participating in the project. The organization focuses on creating viable structures in the project area in which farmers can be organized to articulate their own interests. Lastly, the organization is concerned with spreading improved agricultural techniques to a wider range of farmers through the extension services under the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Farmers' Club project in Mazowe District was a three-year funded project which was implemented from December 2009 to December 2012. At the end of 2012 the organization handed over the project to the community. The organization laid out an exit strategy through collaboration with significant stakeholders such as the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (AGRITEX).

The Farmers' Club project was funded by the Project Advice and Training Centre (PATC) and Ulandshjaelp fra Folk til Folk (UFF) Denmark. DAPP engaged small scale communal farmers in Wards 3 and 5 who aspired to acquire knowledge on economical modern technologies to improve their farming and livelihoods. The project worked with 500 communal farmers from these two wards. The 500 farmers were organized into 10 Farmers' Clubs. This means that a Farmers' Club unit comprises of 50 farmers. Government departments such as AGRITEX provide technical support to the project and farmers. DAPP provided two project leaders for the Mazowe Farmers' Club project. The project leaders facilitated self-organization amongst farmers such that they would establish permanent structures which would run the Farmers' Club project. Each club selected a five member committee whose role was to oversee the club's daily operations. The focus was on equipping farmers with both theoretical and practical knowledge.

3.3.2.2 Farmers' club activities

The Farmers' Club project created various structures that promoted knowledge and information sharing amongst farmers. For instance, the project initiated monthly *DAPP club member and committee member meetings* where farmers could convene and discuss issues pertaining to the Farmers' Club project. Various activities were also initiated as part of the Farmers' Club project. These include *demonstration plots* which were established to grow sorghum, soya beans, cowpeas and maize. This is meant to equip farmers with knowledge on how to grow various crops. New techniques were introduced in the demonstration plot and farmers apply the skills learnt in their respective fields. The project also introduced *self-help group gardens* where the farmers work in groups to ensure that different vegetables are planted in the garden throughout the year. This is meant to boost the farmers' income as they can sell the produce from the gardens. Figure 3.8 below shows vegetable harvesting by one of the groups in the Farmers' Club project.



Figure 3.7 Vegetable harvesting (DAPP, 2012:17)

The club also conducts *topic days* where farmers make suggestions of issues to be discussed. Some of the issues suggested by farmers include weed control, bookkeeping, management, crop rotation and compost making. Women members of the DAPP Farmers' Club project also take part in the *Women's Forum workshops* in which women are encouraged to venture into other income generating projects apart from farming. The women are urged to make use of the skills that they have acquired in the Farmers' Club project in their everyday lives. This is a platform for encouraging women to set up structures that would be responsible for securing markets for their farm produce. Various *field days* are conducted in the Farmers' Club project and are code named *Increasing Yields through Conservation Farming and Promotion of Crop Diversification*. During field days farmers are urged to make use of conservation farming techniques and are also educated about the effects of climate change and how they can adapt. With regards to training, farmers are trained on land preparation, compost making, harvesting, processing of crops, record keeping and budgeting. Figure 3.9 below illustrates compost making in the Farmers' Club project.



Figure 3.8 Compost making (DAPP, 2012:7)

Agricultural shows were also introduced in the Farmers' Club and farmers are encouraged to participate in these shows. These shows provide a platform from which farmers could network and interact with other farmers sharing experiences, challenges and creating solutions that may help them. The community workers provided by DAPP *conducted field visits* to all the farmers in the project in their respective fields with the intention of assisting the farmers at household level. During these visits farmers are urged to establish weekly plans and maintain records for all their farming activities. Farmers also had the opportunity of attending *exposure visits*. Arrangements were made for the farmers to visit other DAPP projects in the Shamva District of Mashonaland Central Province. The intention was for farmers to learn something from how the farmers in Shamva run their projects. Other farmers in Shamva presented lessons to Mazowe farmers on running piggery and poultry projects.

The Farmers' Club project also initiated a *pass on loan programme*. This project saw some members of the Farmers' Club receiving goats and chickens from DAPP on the basis that the farmers would pass on the first off-springs to other farmers. The idea is to have every farmer in

the Farmers' Club project getting involved in small income generating projects at household level. The piggery project was also launched under this theme. Various participatory activities are done in the club, which include discussions, group purchasing of inputs, common marketing and competitions. This is meant to impart skills to farmers.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter contextualized the research by presenting a broad overview of the DAPP's programme and the characteristics of the geographical location where it operated. The first section of this chapter described the physical, infrastructural, socio-economic characteristics and governance structure of Mazowe district and the rural village of Chinehasha where the Farmers' Club project is located. The second part described the DAPP Farmers' Club project which includes an account of the historical background of DAPP in Zimbabwe. It provided information on the various projects that DAPP is responsible for and describes its overall vision, mission and objectives. Attention finally turned to a detailed description of the Farmers' Club project and its objectives in Mazowe District. The researcher used both primary and secondary data as source material. An in-depth description of the project was also made possible by analyzing information gleaned from various documents supplied by DAPP. While this chapter described the case study area and provided the context and background for the fieldwork, the next chapter presents the empirical data and findings of this investigation.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and research findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research based on information gathered from respondents in the case study area. These findings relate to the research question which focused on an examination of the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District. Quantitative data was collected using a total of 30 semi-structured questionnaires which were administered to the small scale farmers in the DAPP project. Qualitative data was gathered from 10 semi-structured interviews which were conducted with key informants in the case study area. The chapter begins by highlighting the demographic and socio economic characteristics of the participants. This is followed by a discussion of the nature and extent of the farmers' participation. It further outlines the relationship between the development agency, local authorities and the farmers. The chapter concludes by discussing the benefits of farmers' participation in the aforementioned project.

4.2 Demographic and socio-economic background

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents which include age, gender and marital status.

4.2.1 Demographic characteristics

The data presented in Table 4.1 reflects that the majority of respondents at 37% are between 40 and 49 years. About 30% are above 50 years of age, while 27% are within the range of 30 to 39 years. Only 7% of the farmers were found to be between 20 and 29 years. These results show that about 67% of the farmers are older than 40 years of age. This finding is consistent with Kwanele's (2013) study in the Nkonkobe District Municipality of South Africa which revealed that most of the farmers were over 40 years of age. Kwanele (2013) further reports that young people usually migrate from the rural areas thus the majority of participants in her case study area were older people who were permanent dwellers of rural communities. However, the finding of this study differs from those of scholars such as Dogbe et al.,'s (2013) investigation in the Northern Region of Ghana which revealed that young farmers are more likely to participate in agricultural projects since they tend to be more innovative and ambitious in terms of adopting

new skills. Within this study though, the reason for the larger number of older farmers can possibly be due to the fact that younger farmers in Chinehasha might have left the village in search of jobs in the nearby commercial farming areas.

Table 4.1 Age profile

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20-29	2	6.7	6.7	6.7
30-39	8	26.7	26.7	33.3
40-49	11	36.7	36.7	70.0
50 and above	9	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

With regards to the gender profile of farmers, Figure 4.1 reflects that women are the overwhelming majority constituting 67% of the participants. This can be attributed to the fact that in most rural Zimbabwean communities women farm the land while their husbands work in the cities. This view has been substantiated by Shumba (2011) who postulates that in Zimbabwean communal areas, women are primary role players in small scale farming as they provide 70% of the labour required in this sector. However, Nxumalo and Oladele's (2013) study on participation in agricultural projects in the Zululand Districts in South Africa produced different results. Their research revealed that male farmers were dominant since women were relegated to mere domestic chores. They rationalized that communities in the Zululand districts still hold the belief that agricultural activities should be conducted by male members of the community.

This patriarchal system is very prevalent in Africa and women are not given equal opportunities to participate in this space. This view is supported by scholars such as Kevane (2004:2) who alleges that women do not receive equal opportunities with men in various aspects of life. The above scholar further states that this weakens women's capacities to fulfill their "life aspirations". Beyene's (2008) study and a report by FAO (2013) on the state of food security in the world affirm this assertion. Nevertheless the gender profile of the participants in this study points to the fact that women are highly involved in agricultural activities in the case study area.

The fact that most of the participants in this study are women is encouraging since participation and empowerment of the marginalized groups is what is advocated by the PCD theory.

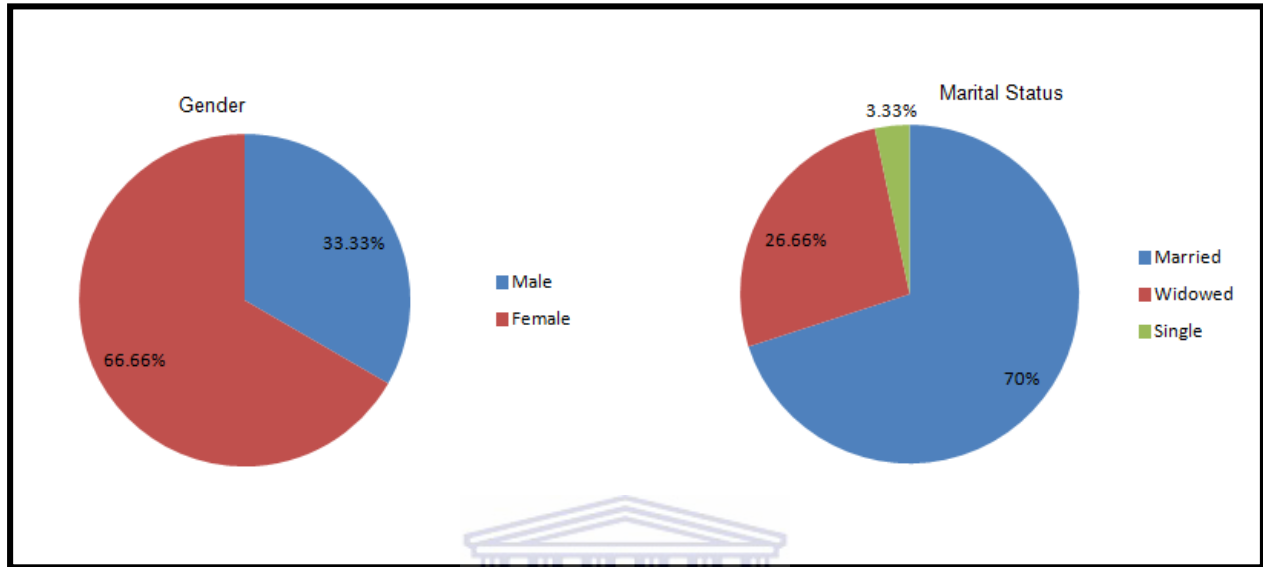


Figure 4.1 Gender and Marital status

Regarding marital status illustrated in Figure 4.1 the data reflects that 70% of the participants are married. About 27% are widowed and 3% are single. The fact that most of the participants are married may be possibly due to the fact that they are older and marriage is also highly regarded in traditional Shona culture. The importance of marriage amongst the Shona people has been observed by Tafira (2010) who notes that marriage earns one respect in the traditional Shona culture. A study on participation in rural agriculture conducted by Nhadi and Akwiwu (2008) in Nigeria discovered that farmers who are married are more likely to participate in agricultural projects since they will be more concerned with ensuring food security in their households. The same could be true for farmers in Chinehasha village.

4.2.2 Socio-economic characteristics

This section documents the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents which includes educational background, farming experience, income status and ownership of farm assets.

4.2.2.1 Educational background

The educational background of participants illustrated in Figure 4.2 below indicates that only 10% of the farmers do not have formal education. The majority of the participants, at 43.3%, have completed secondary level education, 16.7% attended secondary school but did not complete while 16.7% have completed primary school and 13.3% attended primary school but did not complete it. It is noteworthy highlighting that most of the participants have some degree of formal education. This finding deviates from the studies conducted by Kwanele (2013) and Nxumalo and Oladele (2013) in South Africa which revealed that the majority of the farmers involved in agricultural projects did not have formal education. What is noteworthy to mention though is that, Zimbabwe has one of the highest literacy rates in Southern Africa (Harber, 2013). When Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980, the government prioritized access to free education at all levels (Kariwo & Shizha, 2011). This possibly explains why the majority of the participants have received formal education. However, none of the participants in the sample indicated that they had a tertiary qualification.

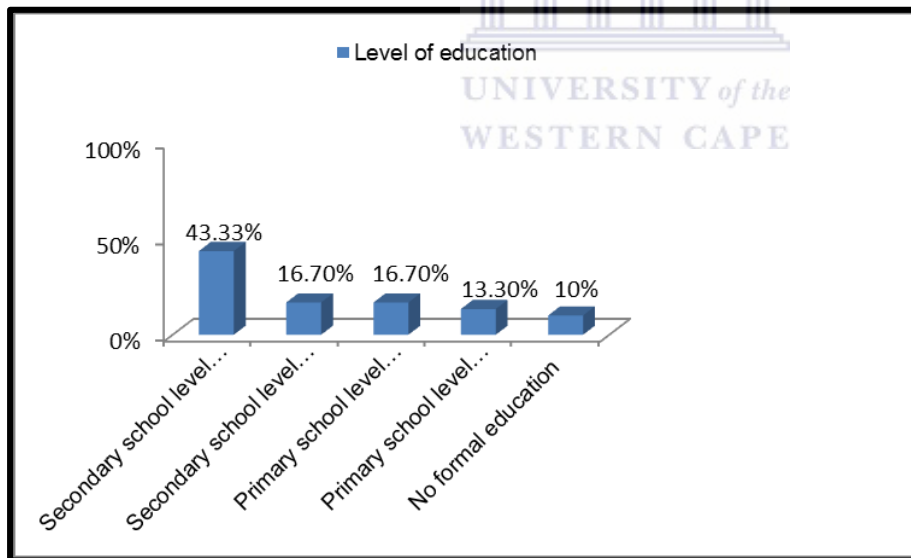


Figure 4.2 Educational background

4.2.2.2 Farming experience

An investigation into the farming experience of respondents revealed that 73% of the participants have more than 10 years' farming experience. About 20% of the participants disclosed that they

have between 7 and 9 years and 7% indicated they have between 4 and 6 years' experience. These results indicate that participants in the case study area are seasoned farmers. The experience of the farmers is most probably related to the older age of respondents. Nxumalo and Oladele's (2013) study in South Africa also found that about 60% of farmers had more than 10 years of farming experience. This confirms Aref's (2011) assertion that farming is the dominant source of livelihood in rural areas. With regard to crops grown by the respondents, all farmers in this study indicated that they grow maize. This is expected since maize is the staple crop in Zimbabwe. The second most common crop is tobacco. While it is labour intensive the majority of farmers grow it for commercial purposes. Other crops that the participants mentioned include soya beans and groundnuts.

4.2.2.3 Economic characteristics

Figure 4.3 below illustrates the monthly income status of respondents. The vast majority, at 73%, revealed that they earn less than US \$100 per month from their agricultural activities. About 16.6% indicated that they earn between \$100 and \$199 while 10% indicated they earn between \$200 and \$299. Only 3.3% specified that they earn more than \$300. The farmers' major source of income is farming and other income generating projects such as buying and selling household goods, goat, poultry and pig production. While the majority revealed that they earn a monthly income of less than \$100, it is far below the national average income of \$253 per month (Hobbes, 2014).

This finding tallies with similar investigations in rural Zimbabwe and South Africa (Mutami, 2015; Nxumalo & Oladele, 2013) which revealed a trend of low monthly earnings from agricultural activities. Nxumalo and Oladele (2013) further reported that farmers had to rely on other sources of income which typically included social grants and earnings from non-agricultural income generating projects. However, although there is relatively weak earning power in Chinehasha village, money is not the only medium of exchange as farmers also practice barter trading. Personal observation during fieldwork in the case study area revealed that farmers exchange farm products such as maize for clothes and household groceries.

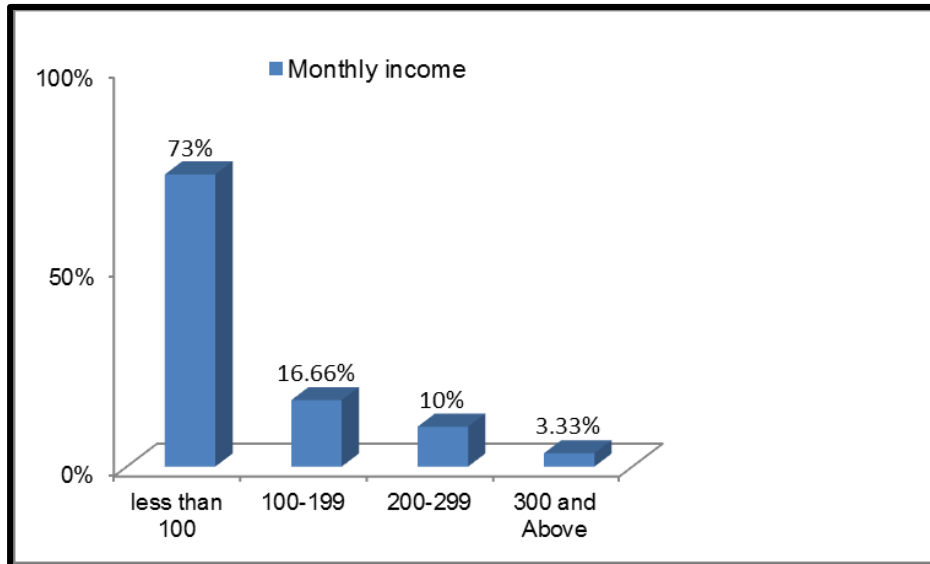


Figure 4.3 Monthly income status

Table 4.2 below depicts the farm assets of respondents. Survey responses revealed that all households in the case study area own some farming assets. About 97% of the participants own a plough, 50% own a harrow whilst 47% own cattle as well as scotch carts. About 40% own a spade and 30% own a cultivator. It is interesting to note that almost all farmers own a plough which is a basic farm asset in communal areas. Scotch carts are equally important in the case study area. These are ox drawn and used for transportation purposes. During farming seasons other farming implements such as ploughs, harrows and cultivators are transported to the fields using a scotch cart and during harvesting seasons scotch carts are used to fetch the farm products from the fields to the farmers' homesteads. Apart from the use of scotch carts in farming related activities they are also used to transport sick people to local clinics and the elderly to attend meetings and funerals.

Table 4.2 Ownership of farm assets

Farm Asset	Frequency	Percentage
Spade	12	40
Harrow	15	50
Plough	29	97
Cultivator	9	30
Cattle	14	47
Scotch cart	14	47
Land	30	100

Most households in rural areas use cattle for tillage purposes as they provide draught power. Cattle waste is used as manure in fields and gardens. Apart from that in times of drought cattle can be sold for money or exchanged for grain. The data however indicates that a substantial 53% of the households do not own cattle. This implies that the community is considered poor as owning cattle is a symbol of wealth in rural Zimbabwean communities. This finding is consistent with Masunda's (2014:139) research in the communal areas of Mazowe District. He concluded that the results of his investigation made him "recognize the realities of poverty in the area" and that there was a positive correlation between poverty and the assets that households possess (Gombiro, 2012 in Masunda, 2014:139). Figure 4.4 below shows a cattle-drawn scotch cart spotted in the case study area.



Figure 4.4 Cattle drawn scotch cart

Land is a key resource in Zimbabwean communities. It is noteworthy pointing out that all the participants in the study indicated that they own the land they are farming. The data highlights that 40% of the participants own less than a hectare of land while 47% own between 1 and 3 hectares; 10% own between 4 and 6 hectares while 3% own more than 7 hectares. The size of the land owned by individual farmers confirms the FAO's (2012) assertion that small scale farmers manage farms ranging from below one hectare to above ten hectares. Research done by Dogbe et al., (2013) in Ghana highlights that farmers who have larger pieces of land may participate more in agricultural projects such that they may have access to farm inputs, organized markets and skills. However, in this study the majority own less than 3 hectares which conforms to the national average in Zimbabwean communal areas and documentation that small scale farmers own an average of two hectares of land (Irin News, 2008).

4.3 Nature and extent of participation

The nature of participatory activities that the respondents were involved in refers to the type of farming activities they participated in and the manner in which these activities were communicated to farmers. The extent of their participation focused on the level and depth of engagement in the different activities.

4.3.1 Nature of participation

The survey questionnaire revealed that farmers participated in various community meetings such as village assemblies, mass meetings, DAPP club member and committee member meetings. It became clear during interviews that the medium of communication between the development agency and the farmers is paramount in transmitting and relaying information. The different types of communication channels and the nature of participation will be discussed in the section below.

4.3.1.1 Communication channels

People centered development theory advocates for the full and active participation of project beneficiaries. Scholars such as Aye (1993) postulates that this new style of development highly regards listening to beneficiaries as well as enabling them to fully and actively participate in development processes. As such, Steinberg (2007) advises on the importance of effective communication between government bodies, organizations and local community members in order to facilitate participation and encourage input from local residents. Within this context the research investigated the channels of communication that the development organization uses to communicate with the Farmers' Club members. It is interesting to note that 80% of the farmers indicated that DAPP makes use of Agricultural Extension Officers to transmit information to them. The other 20% indicated that communication was done during meetings. In the Zimbabwean context, Agricultural Extension Officers are expected to interact closely with farmers and play an advisory role in agricultural development. In other words, Extension Officers are catalysts who are influential in facilitating effective dialogue between the farmers, government bodies and the development agency.

These results are in line with Opara's (2008) research in the Imo State of Nigeria. The study found that most of the farmers received information through extension workers and that the majority of farmers agreed that the extension agent was their most preferred source of information compared to other channels of communication. This finding does not however tally with what was revealed in a 2013 study in Malawi by Kamwenda et al., (2013). These scholars report that the main means of communication between the National Smallholder Farmer's Association of Malawi and farmers was the national radio and quarterly newsletters. The difference in the means of communication can be attributed to the fact that Chinehasha village is

in a rural setting where there is poor signal for radio and villagers do not have access to newspapers unless they travel to cities. Drawing from PCD theory, Davids (2009) reminds us that communities should have the opportunity to influence development projects which are meant to benefit them. In this regard, DAPP most probably used Extension Officers as a channel of communication since they promote inclusivity and bottom up participation. Moreover, Agricultural Extension Officers are closer to the people, which make it easier to establish a two way symmetrical communication process between the farmers and the development agency.

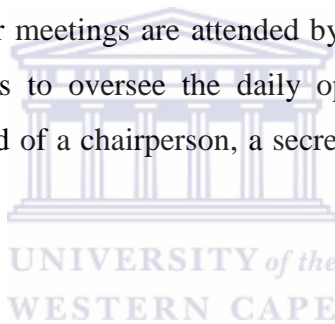
4.3.1.2 Community meetings

Fieldwork in the case study area revealed that there are different mechanisms used by the local government to promote citizen participation in the development of their communities. It was discovered that there are a range of meetings that are available for the small scale farmers to attend and express their views. The different types of meetings are as follows:

- Village assembly meetings: Information gleaned from a qualitative interview with the local councillor revealed that all residents of Chinehasha village attend a *village assembly* which is held once a month. This is an institutionalized space, organized by the government, in which all adult village members gather and discuss issues relating to their needs and challenges within the community. The councillor stated that this meeting is open to all the villagers and such meetings are usually conducted at the township or local school premises. The village heads are responsible for chairing these meetings. Some of the issues discussed at such meetings include the general welfare of the local populace and infrastructure development.
- Mass public meetings: Mass public meetings are *ad hoc meetings* that are called for either by the village head, councillor or chief. Information obtained from the qualitative interviews with the community leaders points to the fact that these mass meetings provide the platform for community leaders to update the village members of any developments that may be occurring in the

village. This platform provides the space for community leaders to discuss with local residents any challenges that may arise in the community and the possible solutions. Community leaders reiterated that these structures are inclusive platforms which enable both male and female village members to express their views freely.

- DAPP meetings: Respondents indicated that small scale farmers could attend monthly DAPP club member and committee member meetings. The club member meetings were open to all farmers who participate in the Farmers' Club project. The focus of these meetings is to promote discussions of various issues pertaining to the Farmers' Club project. It is also at these meetings where farmers raise their views and suggestions. On the other hand, the committee member meetings are attended by a committee of 5, who are elected by the farmers to oversee the daily operations of the club. This committee is composed of a chairperson, a secretary and other non-portfolio committee members.



4.3.2 Extent of participation

Numerous sources highlight that participation occurs at different levels ranging from passive participation to meaningful participation, which is an empowering process. This section describes the intensity of farmers' participation in the project cycle and in various project-related activities.

4.3.2.1 Participation in the project cycle

Mompoti and Prinsen (2011) remind us that PCD advocates for the full participation of the beneficiaries of a project which includes problem identification, project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In support of this view, people centred development theorists stress that beneficiaries of a development project should participate in all the stages of the project cycle (Chambers, 1997; De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998; Jennings, 2000). However, many sources refer to the practice where beneficiaries of development projects are merely consulted or coerced to consent to externally designed projects or are only invited to participate

in the implementation of the project (Penderis, 2012; Swanepoel & De Beer 2011; Chifamba, 2013). It is within this context that this research investigated the intensity of farmers' participation in the various phases of the Farmers' Club project. A simplified version of the project cycle is illustrated in Figure 4.5 below.

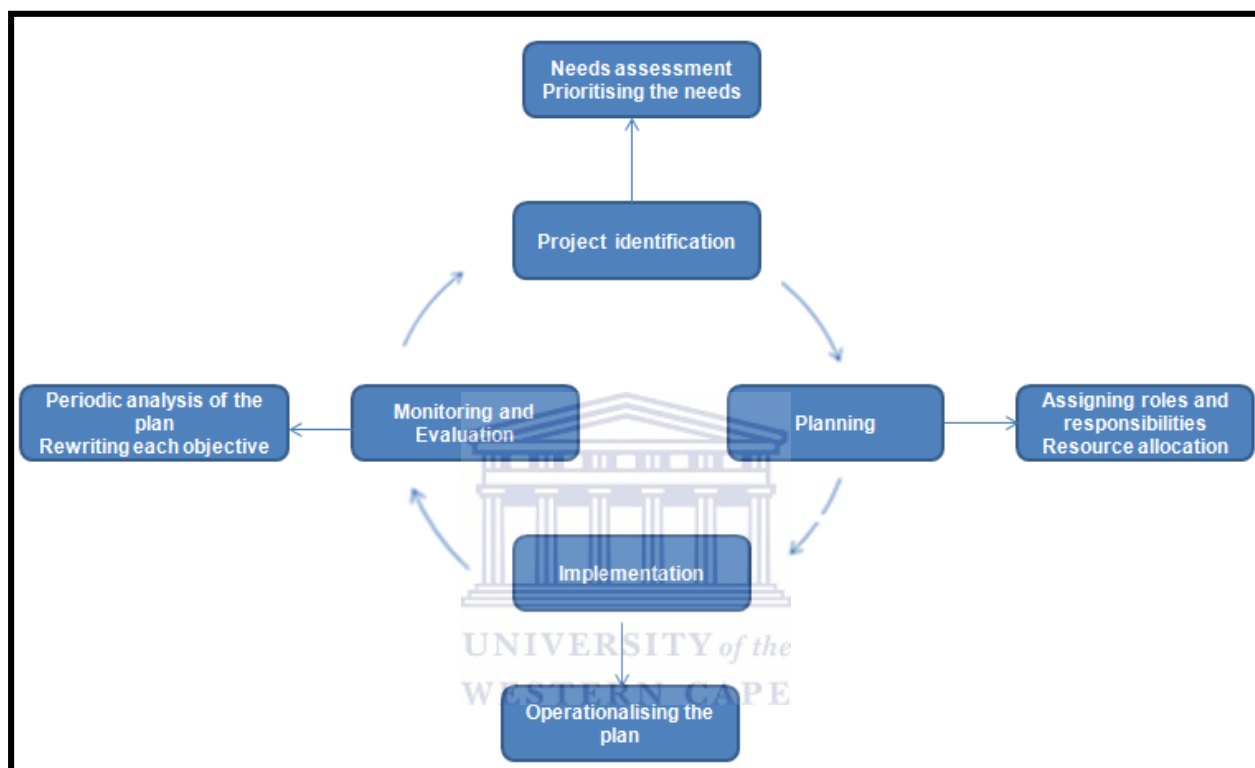


Figure 4.5 Project Cycle

Contrary to the notion that the majority of the project beneficiaries typically only participate in the implementation phases of the project (Sibanda, 2011; Chifamba, 2013) this study revealed that 77% of the participants were actively involved in all the stages of the DAPP Farmers' Club project cycle. These results are encouraging as such active participation will build the farmers' skills and capacity. About 17% of the respondents indicated that they only participated in project implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation while 17% specified that they participated only in the project implementation phase. Earlier investigations by Gukurume and Nhodo (2010) highlight that the failure of a farming project focusing on conservation in Maringire and Mhandamabwe in Zimbabwe was to a large extent due to the project being imposed on local

people. The above authors reported that in most circumstances local people were only asked to participate during the implementation period. Studies done by Aref (2011) and Chazovachii and Tagarirofa (2013) echo these sentiments. Undoubtedly, this top down approach to development relegates the local people to passive participants. While participatory development theory asserts that local people should identify their own needs, Gukurume and Nhodo's (2010) investigation clearly indicates that in many cases local people are marginalized and become passive recipients of development initiatives.

As noted above, the majority of the farmers indicated that they participated in all the phases of the project. The participants noted that they participated in the identification process of various projects in the Farmers' Club and were given the opportunity *to decide* as farmers and beneficiaries on the projects that were viable in their community. Farmers also indicated that during the planning phase they would plan in their committee and club member meetings on the strategy they would use to implement the projects. Reflecting on Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation discussed in Chapter 2, the participation of farmers in project identification and planning phases signifies partnership, delegated power and citizen control. This indicates that the farmers were in a position to design interventions that would address their needs. Simply put, the farmers were not passive beneficiaries of Farmers' Club projects but active participants. Scholars such as White (1996) are of the opinion that this kind of participation is transformative and empowering since it capacitates the farmers to address their challenges at local level.

It is also significant to highlight that all respondents participated in the implementation phase of the Farmers' Club project which enabled them to use the knowledge acquired in the club in their respective fields and experience gained from participating in group projects in the club. Furthermore, such participation built the capacity of the farmers through learning new implementation skills which they could then apply in future projects. Various scholars provide insight into the dimensions of participation where it is viewed as a *means* or an *end* (Kumar, 2002; Skinner, 1995; Burns & Taylor, 2000). Participation as an *end* is viewed as a long term active process which focuses on enhancing and improving the capabilities of the beneficiaries of a project, whereas participation as a *means* simply use people's participation to accomplish set goals and objectives. In this instance, participation in the implementation stage can be seen as

one of the numerous attempts to build farmers' skills and confidence as well as a *learning by doing* exercise thus rendering it participation as an end. Scholars such as Chifamba (2013:7) conclude that participation as an *end* empowers the beneficiaries of a project "in terms of acquiring skills, knowledge and experience, leading to greater self-reliance".

The farmers remarked that since this is a farming project, monitoring and evaluating the project was a daily exercise. They indicated that they had to monitor the germination and growth rate, weeds and pests so that they could make informed decisions on weeding, spraying or even harvesting time. The farmers stated that they were in a position to evaluate their farming activities as they had learnt budgeting and record keeping during the Farmers' Club project. Some farmers remarked that they were part of the monitoring and evaluation team which consisted of various stakeholders who were involved in the Farmers' Club project. This points to the fact that DAPP made an effort to adopt a participatory monitoring and evaluation programme for the participants of the programme.

Information gathered from the semi-structured interviews conducted with respondents supported the quantitative data pertaining to the intensity of participation of farmers in the project cycle. Respondents were asked the reasons for the project being implemented in the Mazowe District. The DAPP Farmers' Club coordinator provided significant information in this regard:

Basically what we did is we went and met the local authorities in Mazowe District. After we had gone through some of the Zimvac reports that show how the agricultural trend in Mazowe District was happening, then we did a mini-survey where we wanted to find the basic needs of farmers. Farmers participated when we did the survey where they were coming up with suggestions on what could help them, if we could have high level interventions (30 June 2015).

The above information illustrates how DAPP came to be involved in the Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District. Participation of the farmers in the needs assessment mini survey shows that the farmers took part in the identification of the problem. Proponents of the PCD theory stress the need for the involvement of local people in defining their own needs and prioritizing

these needs (Theron, 2009). Drawing from the above information, it can thus be argued that DAPP recognizes that “it is the democratic right of people to participate in matters affecting their future” (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2006:28). The DAPP Farmers’ Club coordinator further highlighted that:

We had a stakeholder meeting with local authorities and the farmers and then they selected the Bare area and the Mukodzongi area and that we should support 500 farmers from those areas. From the beginning to the end farmers were participating where they would come up with their own opinions on what they thought could change their lives as rural farmers (30 June 2015).

The organization of a workshop by DAPP suggest that DAPP management understand the rationale behind People Centered Development theory, as indicated by scholars such as Chhetri (2013), and that without inclusive participation, local people will not be truly empowered. When analyzing the participant’s responses it can be concluded that the small scale farmers were given a meaningful opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives. With regards to power relations and reflecting on Nelson and Wright’s (1995) power dimensions, it can be argued that the small scale farmers were given the power to make decisions through their active participation in the decision making spaces created by DAPP. This indicates that farmers were given the opportunity to take the centre stage in determining their future which is in line with the principles and values of the PCD approach. This outcome agrees with the findings of the Ministry of Agriculture and Practical Action Southern Africa (2010) which reported that the Madwaleni Ward 14 farmers participated actively and took charge of their development process. This was enabled through the participation of farmers in a five-day workshop which gave them the opportunity to analyze their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. After the SWOT analysis the farmers designed an action plan which was basically a strategy for addressing their challenges. This resonates further with Swanepoel and De Beer’s (2011:52) assertion that “empowerment is simply related with having decision-making power”.

4.3.2.2 Depth of participation in decision making

Fundamental to participation in development projects is having the *power* to make decisions. Scholars such as De Beer and Swanepoel (1998) stress that all adults, regardless of their

economic status, should be involved in the decision-making mechanisms affecting their future. Along these contours, McCarthy (2004:107) postulates that, “people must be free to make autonomous choices so that they can improve their control over resources, determine their own agenda and make their own decisions”. For DAPP to be able to support the needs of the community it had to incorporate the farmers in its decision making processes. It is within this context that farmers were asked to provide information relating to participation in decision making processes. The quantitative data shows that 80% of the participants were involved in the decision making processes.

Semi-structured interviews with the committee members support the quantitative data. The respondents remarked that farmers participated in processes which included deciding on the ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting times. Farmers also had the autonomy to decide on the crops to plant at a particular time and the market to sell their farm produce. It was the prerogative of farmers to decide on the meeting dates as they wanted to avoid clashes with other village commitments. Whilst other studies, such as those conducted by Aref (2011) in Iran, revealed that farmers were not part of decision making in agricultural projects, participants in this study reiterated that they played a key role in decision making as DAPP would approach them for their input on needs and priorities and decisions would be taken during meetings with everyone’s contribution. Interestingly is a remark made by a female committee member during a qualitative interview who exclaimed as follows, “why not deciding as a woman. I am happy and when I am given an opportunity to decide I will do that. Beijing gave us the power long back!” (7 July 2015).

The above quote is in reference to the Fourth World Conference on Women which took place in Beijing in 1995. The renowned conference advocated for the empowerment and active participation of women in various sectors of society. The conference was premised on the notion that inclusion of women in decision making platforms and their access to power is paramount in the world’s efforts towards gender equality, development and peace (United Nations, 1995). The researcher was surprised to hear the rural woman uttering a statement about Beijing so she further probed for more information on this topic. Quite interestingly, the woman narrated that she did not know much about Beijing but officials from the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender

and Community Development always referred to it when they visited the projects in the area. For the woman participant, Beijing was associated with women's power. This quote draws attention to the fact that DAPP adheres to a multi-stakeholder approach to development as there is evidence of partnership with other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development. Moreover, equal participation in decision making is what is advocated by the National Gender Policy (2013-2017) of Zimbabwe. The policy envisions a *gender just society in which men and women enjoy equity, contribute and benefit as equal partners in the development of the country*. Many other research efforts such as the earlier mentioned Aref's (2011) study revealed that in most cases decisions were mainly passed by government agencies and farmers were relegated to participate in the implementation stage only. The high percentage of farmers' participation in decision making in this project can be attributed to the fact that the development agency provided the opportunity for farmers to do so and had insight into the values and principles of PCD.

4.3.2.3. Intensity of participation in meetings

The research sought to understand the extent of participation through examining the intensity of meeting attendance. The data presented in Table 4.3 shows that participation in village and mass meetings was substantially high. It is encouraging to note that a significant 83% of the participants indicated that they had regularly attended club member meetings and 82% regularly attended mass meetings. A total of 76% of respondents noted that they participated in village assembly meetings. A lesser 17% attended both the club member meetings and committee meetings. The researcher further probed the issue of meeting attendance and it was revealed that amongst the participants there were also committee members who were expected to attend both meetings. Ordinary club members who were not committee members could only attend club member meetings, which accounts for the low attendance at these meetings.

It can thus be concluded that the level of participation in all meetings was very high considering that there were only five participants who were committee members and had to attend both club and committee meetings. This finding deviates from Penderis' (2014) observation of poor attendance of community meetings in her study in Delft which focused on the participation of citizens at ward and community meetings. Although Penderis' study does not focus on participation in an agricultural project, it gives an insight into community meeting attendance

and the lack of opportunity afforded to residents despite the institutionalization of participatory structures.

Table 2.3 Participation in meetings

	Never	Not so often	Regularly
Participation in village assemblies	-	24%	76%
Participation in mass meetings	-	18%	82%
Participation in DAPP club member meetings	-	-	83%
Participation in both club and committee member meetings	-	-	17%

Nonetheless, the extraordinary level of meeting attendance in the case study area can be partly attributed to the high level of enthusiasm of the participants which the researcher observed during her first encounter with the participants. After observing the protocol of conducting research in the area, the researcher was invited by the councillor to meet the farmers who were participating in the DAPP Farmers' Club project before the research was conducted. On that day, the researcher discovered that all participants arrived before the scheduled meeting time and with their identity documents. Even farmers who were not participating in the Farmers' Club project attended the meeting which leads one to surmise that there is general willingness to attend meetings in the area and interest in new developments. An interesting encounter was when a woman arrived barefoot to the meeting and the farmers asked her why she had done that. Her response was as follows: "I overslept and when I woke up I realized the sun was already shining so I just washed my face and left the house running..... I don't want to miss anything about DAPP" (11 July 2015).

Drawing from this excerpt it can be concluded that people are more willing to attend meetings that are related to NGOs and more specifically to DAPP and there is high level of respect that

local people have for the organization. This possibly explains the high rate of meeting attendance in the DAPP club member meetings. Moreover it should be taken into account that the farmers' club project was initiated in 2009 following a severe drought that was experienced in the country in 2008 which led to a desperate situation for the majority of farmers. The World Food Programme, cited in Berger (2008) reported that in 2008 about half of the country's population was in need of food relief with the situation so dire in rural communities where most of the farmers had harvested next to nothing. It further noted that most families were reportedly surviving on one meal per day, barter trading their livestock for maize as well as eating wild fruits. This gives some insights into the hardships that many rural communities had gone through. Understandably, it can be argued that the high levels of participation of farmers in these meetings can be partly attributed to the fact that they were very anxious to improve their agricultural production which had been hampered during the previous year due to the drought.

4.3.2.4 Participation in the Farmers' Club activities

The literature on the DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District reveals that the Farmers' Club offers various participatory activities which include workshops, demonstration events, and field days. The research investigated the extent to which farmers participated in these activities and all farmers indicated that they had at least participated in one of the activities. However, the extent of participation varies between activities. It is remarkable to note that 90% of the farmers indicated that they often participated in self-help group gardens, field days, demonstration events and workshops whilst 7% mentioned that they often participated in field days and demonstration events. About 3% however indicated that they often participated in field days. This is satisfactorily high considering that the farmers have other commitments besides attending the Farmers' Club activities. Farmers further remarked that they had all participated in the Pass On Loan programme where all of them benefited through receiving small livestock. One of the extension workers narrated that:

Farmers who were in the DAPP Farmers Club Project participated in various activities as no one wanted to be left behind. It is during these activities that farmers are empowered and their skills are developed. Moreover during these activities information flows from all angles.

The above excerpt partly explains the reasons behind the high level of participation in the DAPP Farmers club project activities. The extension worker's observation is further supported by scholars such as Schenck et al., (2010:260) who advances the notion that "people who have information have power". Understandably farmers may be participating in these activities to be better informed.

Besides participating in the Farmers' Club activities data revealed that farmers participated in various other activities which include planting, ploughing, weeding, harvesting and marketing. Table 4.4 shows the extent of farmers' participation in farming activities related to the Farmers' Club project. In ploughing, 17% indicated their participation was high, while 37% indicated their participation was medium with the majority, 50% indicating their participation was low. However, the low participation in ploughing can be attributed to the fact that most households do not own cattle thus they hire farmers with cattle to plough for them. In this regard, participation in ploughing is bound to be low. About 87% indicated that their participation was high in planting while 13% indicated that it was medium. No one signaled low participation in planting, weeding and harvesting.

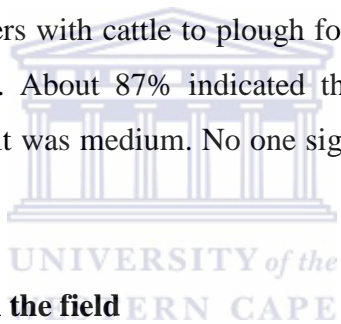


Table 4.4 Rate of participation in the field

	High	Medium	Low
Ploughing	17 %	37%	50%
Planting	87%	13%	0%
Weeding	70%	30%	0%
Harvesting	87%	13%	0%
Marketing	20%	27%	53%

In weeding 70% indicated their participation was high while 30% indicated their participation was medium. In harvesting, 87% indicated their participation was high while 13% indicated that their participation was medium. On the other hand, 53% indicated that their participation was

low in marketing. The farmers revealed that there were a few farmers who were tasked with securing markets for the whole village. Therefore, those few farmers were responsible for marketing which explains their lower participation rate. This tallies with the figures reflected in Table 4.4 above. The farmers' high rate of participation in the field activities confirms one community leader's sentiments during the qualitative interviews who remarked that "farming is the major form of business here and people in this village are all involved in farming"(7 July 2015). This partly explains the high level of farmers' participation in the field activities.

Participants were further asked to reveal the time they were spending on agricultural activities per day. However, it was noted that their farming is mostly rainfed and farmers mostly spend time in the fields in summer. In this regard they were asked to indicate the time spent in both winter and summer for comparative purposes. The majority, 67% indicated that they spent between 5 and 6 hours in agricultural activities during summer. This is followed by 27% who remarked that they spent between 7 and 8 hours and about 7% however pointed out they were involved between 3 and 4 hours. The responses reflect that farmers do not spend a lot of time in the fields in winter as the majority 53% indicated they just spend between 0 and 2 hours followed by 47% who just spent between 3 and 4 hours per day.

Personal observation during the research process also indicates that there was virtually no activity in the fields as they were dry. Farmers remarked that they had finished harvesting during the months of April and May. This partly explains low participation in the fields during the winter season. Figure 4.7 below depicts one of the farmers' maize field taken during the research process in June 2015. Since the field was already harvested only dry brown maize stalks could be seen lying idle.



Figure 4.6 A field in Chinehasha village

4.4 Factors determining participation

Literature indicates that there are several factors which may determine farmers' participation in agricultural projects. This section discusses survey responses with regard to factors that promote or hinder farmers' participation in the case study area.

4.4.1 Factors that inhibit or promote participation

Nxumalo and Oladele (2013) revealed that limited access to resources such as land and credit inhibits farmers' participation in agricultural projects in parts of South Africa. The field work data with regards to the DAPP Farmers' Club project found that factors that inhibited participation in the project include lack of knowledge, laziness, conflict and the fact that beneficiaries look forward to material incentives. It further revealed that farmers' participation in the DAPP Farmers' Club project has been promoted by several factors such as age, gender, education, land size, farming experience, income, other sources of income, leadership, number of dependents and sources of information. This finding tallies with Damianos and Giannakopoulos' (2002) study in Greece which revealed that age, general education, knowledge in agriculture, size of the land, participation by fellow neighbours or families generally inspire farmers to participate in agri-environmental schemes. On the other hand, this study differs from a comparative study conducted by Boas and Goldey in (2005) comparing conditions in Cruz Alta

and Pantano in Brazil which revealed that socio-economic features were not very important in influencing the level of farmers' participation in farmers' projects.

4.5 Level of satisfaction with yields and benefits of participation

This section describes the respondents' satisfaction with their farm yields as well as the benefits of participation in the Farmers' Club project.

4.5.1 Level of farmers' satisfaction with yields

Figure 4.7 illustrates that 40 % of the respondents indicated that their farm yields were fair. This was followed by 37% who remarked that they were good while 13% felt that they were very good. Only 10 % pointed out that their yields were excellent. It is noteworthy highlighting that the majority of the participants at 60% indicated that at least their yields ranged from good to excellent. The qualitative data in this instance echoes the sentiment that yields are good overall and have improved through participating in the DAPP Farmers' Club project. It is noteworthy highlighting that no participant in the case study area was of the opinion that his/her yield was poor. It can thus be argued that the Farmers' Club project has been successful in meeting its intended objectives of empowering small scale farmers in the case study area in terms of improving their yields.



Figure 4.7 Level of satisfaction

4.5.2 Benefits of participation in the club

For Boas and Goldey (2005), participation emerged as a strategy of working in collaboration with the beneficiaries of a project in agricultural development with the intention to empower and capacitate farmers to improve their lives and communities. All the participants in the DAPP Farmers' Club project agreed that there are benefits in participating in the project. Farmers remarked that their yield had increased from participating in the Farmers' Club project and most of them were now involved in other income generating projects which have raised their overall income. Moreover, the farmers indicated that they had been empowered and capacitated in skills such as conservation farming, zero tillage, mulching, budgeting, crop rotation, leadership skills and team work. This finding is aligned to data reported by the UNDP (2012) in which the Muliru Farmers' Conservation Group, which is a community based organization in Kenya, empowered small scale farmers. The small scale farmers who participated in the conservation group benefited from various skills on sustainable farming methods. The UNDP reported that the conservation group promoted the establishment of networks amongst community members, which is vital in collective action. Likewise, farmers in Chinehasha village perceived that the skills they acquired from participating in the club would help them to improve their farming. Table 4.5 below shows their perception of the extent to which these skills improve the participants' agricultural production.

Table 4.5 Extent to which skills improve farming

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Somewhat	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
Undecided	1	3.3	3.3	20.0
Very much	24	80.0	80.0	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

It is noteworthy pointing out that 80% of the participants indicated that the skills they acquired from participating in the Farmers' Club project helped them in improving their farming to a large extent. About 17 % indicated that the skills slightly improved their farming while 3% were undecided. The fact that a high percentage of the respondents remarked that the skills they acquired greatly improved their farming translates to the fact that the project has been responsive

to the farmers' needs. This has been made possible by allowing the farmers to be involved in most phases of the project.

Significant information gleaned from the qualitative interviews with the committee leaders supports the information obtained from the quantitative questionnaire. One Member of Parliament in the Mazowe District rightly pointed out that:

When people are working in a club they share responsibilities and ideas which will better their lives. People's lives were changed - some people managed to send children to school, some built houses; their lives changed through the Farmers' Club projects. (7 July 2015).

For Chhetri (2013), participation endeavors to promote self-reliance. In addition, Burton (cited in Chifamba, 2013:7) sees participation as an empowering mechanism that enables beneficiaries to acquire skills, expertise and knowledge important for greater self-reliance. The proponents of PCD theory assert that real participation is a vital precondition for the upliftment of rural communities. Figure 4.8 below depicts a two bed-roomed house that was built by a widow through the income that she obtained from participating in the Farmers' Club project. The female participant narrated that before the Farmers' Club project was initiated she only had a kitchen at her homestead where she would cook and sleep (see Figure 3.6).



Figure 4.8 Two bed roomed house

Qualitative research methods also established that the Farmers' Club project has empowered and capacitated the rural farmers. Within this context, the sentiments stated below from a Farmers' Club leader is a clear testimony to this:

Yes it did, many people have started to compete with us DAPP Farmers. They have seen we are making money. So they are now starting their own gardens and planting vegetables like us. In fact, I can say things like vegetables and tomatoes are now readily available which also improves the nutrition of people. (11 July 2015).

This information presented by one of the respondents points to the fact that farmers' lives have been changed by the Farmers' Club project. The project has served as a source of income and it has promoted creativity in the community. The fact that other community members are starting their own initiatives shows that the community endeavors to become self-reliant. The village head supports the above respondent's view and points out that the DAPP Farmers' Club project has empowered the farmers to gain important knowledge. The village head reiterated that the DAPP Farmers' Club project empowered the community through providing a platform for

knowledge sharing and building farmers' capabilities which saw an increase in agricultural yields.

The PCD theory states that meaningful and genuine participation should lead to empowerment (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2006). This has been achieved in Chinehasha as the farmers were empowered through participating in the DAPP Farmers' Club project. This finding agrees with the observation made by Action Aid Zimbabwe (2013) where farmers are reported to have benefited from the knowledge they acquired from participating in the training offered by the Health Education and Food Security Organization. It is an organization that seeks to promote sustainable farming techniques in the Mawindi Village of Ward 16 in the Nkayi District of Matabeleland North Province in Zimbabwe. The beneficiaries of the project received training on sustainable farming techniques in order to capacitate the farmers such that they could raise their farm production. On the issue of benefits the Action Aid (2013) presents striking similarities with the research conducted in this area. The researcher observed that participants were proud of themselves as they were able to gain more income to sustain their households and their participation in the garden project enabled the community to obtain vegetables for their families. The participants were also happy that they were able to donate some of the produce from their gardens and fields to the vulnerable members in the village such as orphans and the elderly, which promotes social cohesion in the community. One of the female farmers commented happily, "I can now eat what I want!" (7 July 2015) which points to the fact that her quality of life has changed.

4.6 The relationship between stakeholders and the role of DAPP community workers and community leaders

This section documents the relationship between the major stakeholders in the DAPP Farmers' Club project. It also looks at the role of DAPP community workers and community leaders in Chinehasha village.

4.6.1 The relationship between DAPP, local authorities and farmers

Swanepoel and De Beer (2006) postulate that the success of a project is determined by the approach used by the aid agency. In the same vein, Iqbal (2007) noted that various agricultural

projects have failed since they do not take into consideration local farmers indigenous knowledge, values, beliefs and socio-economic characteristics when projects are planned. PCD theorists further assert that aid agencies should respect local beliefs, customs and values (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011). By doing that, local people will feel respected and there is bound to be a cordial relationship between the different parties. In this instance, a healthy relationship between DAPP, local authorities and the farmers provides a fertile ground for the success of the project.

In light of this, the research sought to understand the nature of the relationship between DAPP and the farmers. The DAPP Farmers' Club coordinator pointed out that there was a cordial relationship between the agency and the local leadership. He further alluded to the fact that the local leadership and the small scale farmers expressed their views openly during meetings and decisions in the Farmers' Club project were made collectively. Firstly the DAPP Farmers' Club coordinator's sentiments point to the fact that there was some level of cooperation and collaboration towards addressing farmers challenges in the case study area. Secondly the fact that farmers could express their views during meetings signifies that they had confidence in offering solutions to their own problems which signals that the farmers were capacitated and empowered to become masters of their own destiny. On the same issue, one village head echoed the DAPP coordinator's sentiments when he commented that:

The relationship was good. The development agency would come to us before engaging with the farmers and everything that they were doing was empowering farmers in many ways (7 July 2015).

Drawing from the above viewpoints, it is notable that the organization values local leadership to a large extent. Quantitative data also reflects that about 93% confirmed that DAPP valued local knowledge. Only 7% remarked that the organization did not value indigenous knowledge. Given this evidence, it can be inferred that DAPP was to a very large extent mindful of indigenous culture. For instance in Shona culture a village head is like a father to the whole village. This therefore means that an outsider cannot come and engage with the 'children' without asking the father for permission. The fact that DAPP engaged with the village head first is in accordance

with local culture and tradition and points to the fact that the agency was mindful of the local values. This is in line with people centred development theory which advocates that agencies should value and respect local culture.

4.6.2 The role of the community worker and community leaders

According to Dogbe et al., (2013), the role of the community worker has become more biased towards partnering and coaching farmers in identifying and solving local agricultural challenges. This implies that the community worker should play a facilitatory role in agricultural development. Simply put, aid agencies are there to help the communities in making informed decisions and assisting them in realizing their strengths and opportunities. Swanepoel (1996) brings to attention the fact that when governments and aid agencies take a leading and top-down role, local people will merely become passive beneficiaries. Within this perspective, the qualitative interviews investigated the role of DAPP community workers in the Mazowe Farmers' Club project. The councilor clearly pointed out that:

When the project came DAPP urged us to work in groups so people formed groups and later on people were educated on how it was important to work in groups plus how people should farm in their groups. They would ask farmers what to do and the farmers would decide what can be done. For instance, after gardening activities farmers were asked on what to do and its them who decided to start a poultry production project (7 July 2015).

The sentiments above depict the facilitatory role played by DAPP community workers in the implementation of the project. From the PCD perspective the role of agricultural experts is centred on advising farmers in making sound farming decisions (Kumba, 2003). Given this excerpt one can deduce that indeed community workers provided by DAPP promoted self organization amongst farmers which was necessary considering the nature of the project. On the same matter one of the small scale farmers reiterated that:

I was the one who was keeping the register and at first people had a problem of coming together, so I would move around urging people to come to meetings and

activities and the leader whom we had, we had a mutual relationship we could share ideas and he would listen to what we knew and we would listen to what he knew (7 July 2015).

However these sentiments are not aligned to the findings of Chazovachii and Tagarirofa (2013) who assessed local participation in a small dams rehabilitation project in Zimbabwe. A community worker from CARE an NGO operating in Zimbabwe commented that:

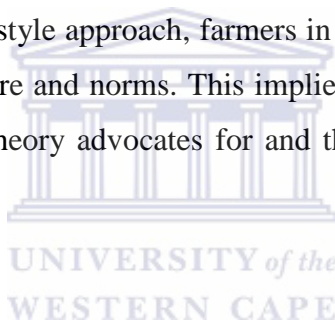
The truth is that these people should be mere spectators in our executions because in most cases they need to be taught a lot of stuff before we begin any project which in turn is wastage of time since we can just make the project functional for them ... (Chazovachii & Tagarirofa, 2013:79)

This viewpoint is in conflict with the PCD theory. It is consonant with modernization theory approaches and top-down methodologies used by some organizations in order to hasten the development process. However, during the time spent with the DAPP Farmers' Club coordinator, the researcher observed that he possesses a sound knowledge and understanding of the principles of the PCD approach which he uses when implementing projects in the Farmers' Club. It is this insight which has undoubtedly played an important role in empowering participants in the DAPP programme.

Significant information obtained from observation, points to the fact that community and political leaders have great influence in their areas of jurisdiction in the case study area. While the District Administrator's office is the first port of call for all stakeholders who may want to operate in the district councillors, chiefs and village heads also play a pivotal role. The popular old adage is *ndovaridzi vedunhu* meaning they are the owners of the land. These leaders are also important as they are opinion leaders and to have any relationship with the communities the opinion leaders should demonstrate that they are supportive of such relations. One community leader acknowledged that they have socio, economic, moral and political responsibilities of promoting and supporting developmental projects within their respective communities. This is echoed by scholars such as Dodo (2013) who state that the role of community leaders is centred

on overseeing the welfare of the people in the communities. As such, community leaders are highly regarded within their communities.

The role of community leaders is further illuminated by what the researcher observed during the entire research process. For instance, when the researcher visited DAPP offices in Harare she was given contact details of farmers in Chinehasha village whom she could approach for information relating to the Farmers' Club project. While she made efforts to book appointments with them, they all told her that she had to speak to the councillor first since he was the one who was leading them in the Farmers' Club project. The researcher initially thought this reflected on the nature of power that the local councillor possesses. However, through the conversations held with the farmers they stated that it was a sign of respect and the researcher observed that local people seemed content with it. Whilst the researcher as an outsider felt that the behavior of the farmers hints on the top down old style approach, farmers in Chinehasha village indicated that it was in line with their values, culture and norms. This implies that there might be a challenge in trying to balance what the PCD theory advocates for and the cultural values and traditions of certain communities.



4.7 Sustainability of the project

This section presents respondents' views on the sustainability of the Farmers' Club project in Chinehasha village in the absence of DAPP.

4.7.1. Sustainability of the DAPP Farmers' Club project in Chinehasha village

The research investigated farmers' perceptions on the sustainability of the Farmers' Club project in the absence of the NGO. About 10% felt that the project was not sustainable while 87% felt they would be able to sustain the project. It is encouraging that most of the participants felt they could sustain the project on their own. This finding resonates with the assertion made by Tagarirofa and David (2013) that when people are given the opportunity to develop their skills in development initiatives, they will ultimately become capable in progressing with development projects even when the development agency leaves the area on completion of the project. The PCD theory asserts that active participation promotes a sense of ownership which is paramount

for the sustainability of the project. On the other hand qualitative interviews unveiled contrasting views on the issue of sustainability of the project. Some participants felt that DAPP should *come back* and hinted on the need for financial support to sustain the project whilst others felt that they could mobilize resources on their own and sustain the project. The responses bring different perspectives on the same issue which relate to the assertion made by Creswell (2006) that qualitative research brings in subjective and multiple realities.

4.8 Conclusion

Drawing from the People Centred Development theory, this chapter presented the research findings into the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. The findings were discussed in line with the research questions and objectives. The chapter commenced by highlighting the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. It further described the nature and extent of farmers' participation, the relationship between the participants, local government and the development agency as well as the benefits of participating in the Farmers' Club project. The researcher provided both positivistic and interpretive analysis of findings. Over and above this research discovered that farmers's participation in the DAPP Farmers' Club project was substantially high. The final chapter will present the conclusion, offer recommendations and suggest areas for further investigation.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This research focused on investigating the nature and extent of participation by small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club project in Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. This chapter provides the relevant conclusion and recommendations derived from the research findings. It begins by summarizing the key findings of this research. This is followed by a number of recommendations to significant stakeholders interested in improving the performance of small scale farmers. Drawing on the PCD theory, the chapter reflects on the nature and extent of farmers' participation in the Farmers' Club project. It concludes by summarizing what has been covered in the whole dissertation.

5.2 Summary of findings

The nature of farmers' participation was assessed by investigating the participatory activities that farmers were involved in. Further to that, the investigation examined the partnership between DAPP and the farmer beneficiaries and the methods they used to consult and communicate with each other. The extent of farmers' participation was established by examining the level and depth of engagement in various activities in the project. An analysis of the empirical and secondary data that was gathered to address the research questions and objectives point to the following general findings:

5.2.1 Nature of participation

The government of Zimbabwe institutionalized participation and has created platforms that promote community driven development. There are various structures such as ward and village committees that function as platforms for community residents to contribute towards development processes. This is also true for the case study area. Regarding the nature of participation in the case study area, research findings show that beneficiaries were actively involved in the Farmers' Club project through DAPP club member and committee member meetings. Extension workers were identified as the common and mostly used model of communication between DAPP and the farmers' club beneficiaries. This model of

communication was seen as ideal as it provided room for feedback and eliminated barriers that may arise in the communication between the farmers and DAPP.

5.2.2 Extent of participation

The research discovered that the extent of farmers' participation in the Farmers' Club project was notably high. The study revealed that beneficiaries of development projects did not relegate themselves to mere spectators on issues that affect their lives. The project was not imposed on the farmers as it was reported that the farmers participated in the project identification processes where they took part in a needs assessment mini survey in the case study area. This gave the farmers the opportunity to identify their needs themselves. The investigation also discovered that the majority of the farmers participated in all the phases of the project cycle which placed them in a better position to wield control over the activities of the project.

Apart from participation in the project cycle, the findings of this investigation further point to the fact that Farmers' Club officials enabled a bottom up approach with regard to decision making which gave the farmers some level of power and influence over the decisions and activities in the Farmers' Club project. It was reported that most of the farmers participated in decision making through the DAPP Farmers' Club committee member meetings. The investigation further revealed that farmers' participation in several meetings in the case study area was relatively high which placed them in a favourable position to influence various development processes in the area.

5.3 Theoretical reflections

Central to PCD theory is the idea that beneficiaries of development programmes should be actively involved in all the phases of a project. This approach to development is supported by prominent scholars such as Korten (1990), Chambers (1997), Jennings (2000) and Swanepoel et al., (2011) who advocate that development should not be imposed on people from above but that community residents should be the designers and architects of their own future (Korten 1990; Chambers 1997; Jennings 2000; Swanepoel et al., 2011). The principles and values underpinning a participatory bottom up approach include empowerment, capacity building, human orientation, inclusiveness, equity, sustainability, self reliance and justice (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011). At a societal level the PCD approach is concerned with promoting participatory decision making and

social justice (Korten, 1984). The approach values capacitating beneficiaries of development projects through acquiring new skills so that they become self reliant. It emphasizes the fact that the poor beneficiaries who are the primary target for development projects should be involved in the decision making processes that affect their lives.

5.3.1 Participatory development

As highlighted throughout this research, participation is central to people centred development. The significance of participation has been well articulated by Burkey (1993:56) who upholds that:

Participation is an essential part of human growth, which is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and cooperation. Without such development within the people themselves, all efforts to alleviate poverty will be immensely difficult, if not impossible. This process whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems is the essence of development.

With regards to this study, survey data points to the fact that small scale farmers from Chinehasha village actively participated in the DAPP Farmers' Club Project. This finding is outstanding as many previous studies in Zimbabwe (Sibanda, 2011; Chazovachii & Tagarirofa, 2013; Gukurume & Nhodo, 2010) suggest a lack of participation by beneficiaries in most phases of projects. The findings of this study confirm that the majority of beneficiaries fully and actively participated in the farmers' club project with regard to problem identification, project planning, project implementation and the monitoring and evaluation of the project. The findings also indicate that a bottom up approach was adopted by the officials in the Mazowe Farmers' Club project. More interestingly is the fact that the majority of the respondents confirmed participation in decision making.

Literature on participatory development signifies that active and meaningful participation leads to empowerment. The Reconstruction for Development Programme (RDP) White Paper cited in Sibanda (2011: 39) draws attention to the fact that "development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry". In the context of this study, development involves empowering farmers in terms of skills and knowledge acquisition to improve their agricultural production.

This study has revealed that farmers in Chinehasha village have been empowered through participating in the DAPP Farmers' Club project. The farmers' participation in the Farmers' Club project has enabled them to transform from being a powerless community to one which is empowered and with new opportunities for greater development initiatives. Survey data indicate that farmers' participation in the Farmers' Club project has been a transformative and emancipatory process in terms of positively changing the farmers' lives. Such findings are aligned to the views of PCD theorists such as Rahman (1993), Chambers (1997) and Jennings (2000) and their insistence that active participation is empowering and emancipatory for beneficiaries.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the overall investigation and the research findings presented in Chapter 4 the following recommendations are made for governments, NGOs, DAPP and farmers:

- It is critical for governments and other NGOs to take the responsibility of capacitating and educating their community workers on the application as well as values and principles of the PCD approach. This will undeniably place them in a better position when following a PCD approach. If the community is involved in contributing to a development project from the onset the frustration that comes with imposition of projects from above and its unsustainability can be avoided.
- The Farmers' Club project has been very successful in empowering farmers who participated in the project. As such DAPP should reconsider scaling up its operations so that a larger number of farmers benefit from the programme. The number of target beneficiaries in the villages could be increased. The organization should further consider extending its operations to other wards and villages in the Mazowe District. On the same note other organizations may also buy in the idea of supporting farmers through the Farmers Club projects and following the example and methods of DAPP in the execution of projects.

- DAPP should consider capacitating more farmers in terms of resource mobilization which is critical for the continuity of the Farmers' Club project. Community assets can be identified through various participatory rural appraisal methods. Moreover, the organization should embark on advocacy campaigns on self reliance with the intention of empowering the farmers to have confidence in sustaining the project that has changed their lives.
- The government of Zimbabwe should roll out programmes that promote the use of sustainable farming methods such as those practised in the farmers' club projects as they have been reported to be cheaper and environmental friendly. Government departments involved in supporting farmers such as AGRITEX could be influential in training farmers at a broader scale in terms of using sustainable farming methods.
- There is need to create platforms that will enable officials who are facilitating and farmers who are participating in various NGO or government supported agricultural projects to network and learn from each other. Moreover it is important to promote linkages with national farmers' organizations like the Zimbabwe Farmers Union. This will provide the opportunity for farmers who are participating in the farmers' club project at a local level to present input into national interventions.
- The benefits of participation in the Farmers' Club project are evident. Nevertheless the empowerment and self-reliance will be short lived if farmers cannot sustain the project in the absence of NGOs. While active and meaningful participation is bound to promote sustainability of the project, it is important however to note that a dependency syndrome has the potential to cripple the sustainability of the farmers' club project. In this regard, farmers are urged to be cognizant of the possibility of donor dependency as over

reliance on external funding has a direct bearing on the sustainability of projects.

- The full application of the PCD theory requires a multifaceted approach, which cuts across organizational, national and regional boundaries. Proper application of the PCD approach requires that state institutions and government structures support participatory decision making. This then means that there should be political will from the government to educate the local populace about their right to participate in projects that seek to change their lives.

5.5 Suggested areas for further research

Participation of small scale farmers in NGO supported agricultural projects is an under researched area in Zimbabwe. As such further research into the participation of small scale farmers in other NGOs agricultural projects will be valuable in the Zimbabwean context. While the study revealed that participation of farmers in this project has been generally high, a comparative analysis of the participation of small scale farmers in the DAPP Farmers' Club projects in various Zimbabwean districts may shed more light on how DAPP is succeeding in applying the PCD approach on a broader front. It may also be significant to explore the challenges that are encountered by NGOs in their activities to support agricultural projects and promote farmers participation.

5.6 Concluding remarks

The significance of agriculture in the Zimbabwean economy is well documented. The level of agricultural production in the country has an impact on the people's well being and the overall development of the nation at large. Literature within the field of agriculture points to the fact that local production remains significant in ensuring food security. Various NGOs in Zimbabwe have directed their efforts towards supporting communal farmers in the country. This research has focused on the role of DAPP and its support to small scale communal farmers through the Farmers' Club project in the Mazowe District. It is envisaged that participation of farmers in the Farmers' Club project will play a significant role in empowering them to farm more

productively. The study was informed by PCD theory which emphasizes that the beneficiaries of development should actively participate in development processes. It argues that beneficiaries involvement results in capacity building, empowerment and transformation.

This research commenced by providing a broad overview of the topic under investigation. It then contextualized and presented background information to the area under study. The methodological approach adopted in addressing the research aim and objectives was clearly laid out. This was followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework that informed this research and a review of the relevant literature. The case study area was clearly defined and analyzed and this was followed by a presentation of the research findings.

The analysis of secondary data gathered to address the research questions and objectives shows that, while the PCD approach offers a rational theoretical paradigm for promoting development around the globe, there seems to be challenges in putting theory into practice. Nonetheless, with regard to the particular case study the findings have demonstrated that DAPP values people centred development and farmers can actively participate in agricultural projects when there is an enabling environment. The success of the DAPP Farmers' Club project in Chinehasha village in the Mazowe District, Zimbabwe, is a clear testimony of the active and meaningful participation of farmers in the project.

Over and above, the Farmers' Club project empowered and improved farmers' lives which is the main purpose and philosophy of participatory development initiatives. Moreover, NGOs such as DAPP have been very successful in applying the PCD approach and improving the lives of people in the case study area. The research found that PCD principles were largely adhered to and that DAPP should be credited for applying PCD theory in its implementation of the farmers' club project in the case study area. Undoubtedly, this has resulted in a project that addressed the needs of the community which is the main idea behind participation. The success of the Farmers' Club project is a clear testimony that meaningful participation in decision making processes is paramount to achieving success in agricultural and other beneficiary projects.

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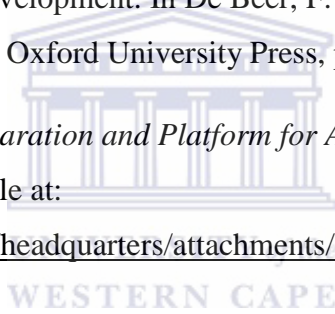
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