COMMUNITY GROUP ENVIRONMENT FOR PEOPLE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores participatory development methods which may be engaged with a smaller community interest group to create an environment conducive to free and effective participation towards empowering more participants in rural communities. The study was conducted in Makhuduthamaga Municipal area in Sekhukhune District of Limpopo Province. The data was collected through participants observation during application of Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques, community groups’ documents reviews, and groups and individual interviews. The study looked into participation procedures and pattern during Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques, groups’ institutionalisation and internal participation environment. The study also conducted comparative analysis between community interest groups and organisational linkage structures, in order to establish how free and conducive the groups’ internal environments are between the cases.

The study found that: interest groups are more common, accessible and empowering in rural communities than organisational linkage structures. People participate and attain self-esteem and self-reliance, making them participate and develop a sense of responsibility and ownership. The findings will therefore inform development agents in government departments and NGOs about the elements to consider in the implementation of development programmes, and to make appropriate choice of participatory models for effective participation and empowerment. The study’s theoretical contribution is in sustenance participation theory, which argues that for people to effectively participate in their development, they should be made to participate by being given responsibilities which may motivate them to participate in finding solutions, own the outcomes, and participate towards sustaining them.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................... x
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS .................................................. xii
LIST OF TABLES ............................................................. xiii
LIST OF APPENDICES ...................................................... xv
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ................................. xvi

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ................................. 1

1.1 OVERVIEW .......................................................... 1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM ................................. 3
1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY ............... 4
1.4 THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY .............................. 5
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY ................................. 6
1.6 CHAPTER LAYOUT .................................................. 7
1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS .................................. 7

CHAPTER 2: VIEWS ON PEOPLE
PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT ............. 10

2.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................ 10
2.2 CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT ................................... 11
2.3 PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT ........... 18
2.4 PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT THEORIES
IN PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT ........................................ 23
2.4.1 The approach of empowering through
participation in community development .......... 26
2.4.2 Conscientisation for community empowerment .... 32
2.4.3 Humanistic approach towards people empowerment ...

2.4.4 empowering through people-centred development theory .......................................................... 37

2.5 EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT METHODS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT ............................................ 39

2.5.1 Participatory research methods as empowering tools in community development ............. 40

2.5.2 Facilitation method in enhancing people participation and empowerment ......................... 47

2.6 COMMUNITY GROUPS’ INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT FOR PEOPLE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT .......................................................... 50

2.6.1 Interest group in community development .......... 54

2.6.2 Community organisational linkage structures in community development .............................. 59

2.6.3 Leadership in community groups ......................... 60

2.7 SOUTH AFRICAN RESEARCH ON PEOPLE PARTICIPATION .................................................. 62

2.8 PEOPLE PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA ................................................. 68

2.9 CONCLUSION .......................................................... 72

CHAPTER 3: FIELD RESEARCH:
PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN GROUP ENVIRONMENT ...................................................... 74

3.1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................... 74

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN .................................................. 74

3.3 AREA OF STUDY ...................................................... 75

3.4 STUDY TARGET GROUP .............................................. 78

3.5 SAMPLING METHOD .................................................. 80
### CHAPTER 3: DATA COLLECTION METHOD

- 3.6.1 Participants observation .................................................. 84
- 3.6.2 Group interviews ............................................................. 89
- 3.6.3 Document study ............................................................... 90
- 3.6.4 Individual interviews ......................................................... 91

### CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 4.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 106
- 4.2 FINDINGS FROM OBSERVATION OF PARTICIPANTS IN COMMUNITY INTEREST GROUPS .................................................... 106
  - 4.2.1 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) on people participation .................................................. 107
  - 4.2.2 The responsibility and ownership factors on people participation in community development ............ 116
  - 4.2.3 Community group’s meeting environment and participation ....................................................... 119
- 4.3 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS OF COMMUNITY GROUPS ............................................................... 127
  - 4.3.1 Group structural setup for participation of the group members ..................................................... 128
  - 4.3.2 Membership sizes and composition of community groups for free people participation ..................... 129
  - 4.3.3 Organisational meeting procedures in groups for free people participation ..................................... 133
  - 4.3.4 Observance of organisational statutes for participatory group environment ................................. 135
  - 4.3.5 Empowerment of the participants through group participation ............................................................. 138
4.3.6 Collective sense of responsibility and ownership among participants in the groups .......... 139

4.4 FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW OF COMMUNITY GROUPS' ORGANISATIONAL DOCUMENTS .......... 140

4.4.1 Community group dynamics and participation for people empowerment .................................. 141

4.4.2 Participation as an end in community groups .......... 142

4.4.3 Community groups' mechanisms for enhancement of people participation .................................. 147

4.4.4 Responsibility and ownership of development in community groups .................................. 148

4.5 FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS OF INDIVIDUAL GROUP MEMBERS ......................... 153

4.5.1 Community group membership variables .......... 153

4.5.2 Reason for participating in groups .......... 158

4.5.3 Responsibility, ownership and participation in community groups .................................. 161

4.5.4 Organisational meeting environment for free participation in decision making processes .......... 162

4.5.5 Leadership's role and participation environment in community groups .................................. 163

4.5.6 Self esteem derived from group participation .......... 165

4.6 CONCLUSION ........................................ 169

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ........................................ 171

5.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................ 171

5.2 SUMMARY ........................................ 171

5.2.1 Participation as an end of development in community groups .................................. 172

5.2.2 Participation and sense of responsibility .......... 174

5.2.3 Participation and sense of ownership .......... 174
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.2.4 Community group dynamics and participation environment</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.5 The role of culture on participation environment</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.6 Participatory method for enhancement of people participation and empowerment</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.7 The findings’ response to the research question</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.8 Theoretical contribution</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.9 Limitation of the study</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 CONCLUSION</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.1 Creating free and conducive participation environment</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.2 Practical application of the findings</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.3 Area of further research</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

3.1 Sekhukhune District in Limpopo Province
(Municipal Demarcation Board 2004:1) .................. 76
3.2 Sekhukhune District locality map ....................... 77
3.3 Makhuduthamaga geographic position in
Sekhukhune District ............................................ 78
4.1 The village and the proposed broiler
project site mapped by youth task group
number 1 .................................................................. 112
4.2 The village and the proposed broiler project site
mapped by youth task group number 2 .................... 113
4.3 The village and the proposed broiler project site
mapped by task group number 3 ............................... 114
4.4 The breakdown of the groups in percentages ........... 130
4.5 Illustration of group sizes according to
farming commodities ........................................... 131
4.6 Illustration on participation in farming
commodity groups ................................................ 131
4.7 Membership sizes and composition of community
groups between community interest groups and
organisational linkage structures .............................. 133
4.8 A highlight from the statute of Sekhukhune
Association for the Care of Disabled on
constitutional provisions for commitment on
free participation and equality among the group
members ................................................................. 143
4.9 A highlight from the statute of Matsogo ga a
Bewe Agri-Business: Egg production .................... 144
4.10 An example of an application form reflecting provision for reasons to join a group ...................... 146
4.11a An example of community group’s minutes ............ 150
4.11b Page 2 of the example of community group
minutes ................................................................ 151
4.12 Illustration on age variations of group members ...... 154
4.13 Breakdown of gender composition in
community groups .................................................. 155
4.14 Illustration on participants’ level of literacy ............ 156
4.15 Illustration on number of years in community
group participation ............................................... 157
4.16 Gender breakdown in community groups’
leadership .................................................................. 164
4.17 Illustration of the participants’ period of years in
leadership of community groups .............................. 165
5.1 Sustenance participation theory ............................. 184
5.2 Flow line diagram on sustenance participation
theory ....................................................................... 184
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

PHOTOGRAPHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photograph Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>One part of the youth group on transect walk</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Youth task group 1 during the mapping session</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Youth participant from task group 1 presenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their mapping outcomes</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Youth participant from task group 3 presenting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the outcomes of their mapping exercise</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Circular seating pattern in the youth group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>during task group discussion sessions</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Circular seating pattern in the elderly group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meeting</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Separation between men and women in the elderly group meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>The elderly group’s meeting with women in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>small sections</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

3.1 Sample breakdown with sampling and data collection methods ........................................ 82
3.2 Analytic tabulation of data from participants observation on meeting procedures and participation ........................................ 94
3.3 Breakdown of data from groups’ interviews according to group categories ...................... 95
3.4 A comparative analysis of data from groups’ interviews on membership sizes and gender composition ........................................ 96
3.5 Community group sizes per farming commodities ................................................... 97
3.6 Analytic tabulation of data from community groups’ interviews on meeting procedures and participation ........................................ 98
3.7 Analytic tabulation of data from community groups’ document reviews on meeting procedures and participation ........................................ 99
3.8 An analytic tabulation of demographic data from individual members .............................. 100
3.9 The motives for people to participate in community groups ........................................... 101
3.10 Number of years of participation in community groups according to farming commodities ........................................ 102
3.11 Tabulation of data from individual members’ interviews on leadership in community groups ........................................ 103
3.12 Analytic tabulation of data from individual group members’ interviews on meeting procedures and participation ........................................ 104
3.13 Triangulation of data from four data sources .......... 105
4.1 Presentation of factors between elderly and youth group participation environment .................. 127
4.2 Presentation of factors on organisational practices... 152
4.3 Summary of reasons for participating in community groups ................................................. 160
4.4 Presentation of factors on participation and empowerment between community interest groups and organisational linkage structures .......... 168
4.5 Presentation of factors between member community interest groups and the interest group’s individual representatives in organisational linkage structures ................................................. 168
LIST OF APPENDICES

1 Observation schedule for community groups ............ 205
2 Questionnaire for community group interviews .......... 209
3 Questionnaire for community group members
   development workers ........................................... 216
4 List of sorghum groups ........................................ 224
5 List of maize farmers associations ......................... 225
6 List of irrigation schemes .................................... 226
7 List of broiler groups ......................................... 227
8 List of egg production groups ............................... 228
9 Statute of Mabodibeng Farmers Association ............ 229
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASED</td>
<td>Broadening Agricultural Services and Extension Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>Church Aid in Need</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Communal Property Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>GtZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit</td>
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<td>DFR</td>
<td>Durban Functional Region</td>
</tr>
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<td>EMYUO</td>
<td>Elias Motswaledi Youth Umbrella Organisation</td>
</tr>
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<td>FFS</td>
<td>Farmer Field School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Integrated Development Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDA</td>
<td>Limpopo Department of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASOPA</td>
<td>Makhuduthamaga Sorghum Producers Association</td>
</tr>
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<td>MEC</td>
<td>Member of Executive Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>PRA</td>
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<td>RDP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Resource Management Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANParks</td>
<td>South African National Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFG</td>
<td>Small farmer Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFGA</td>
<td>Small farmer Group Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFCA</td>
<td>Transfrontier Conservation Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>