The role of opinion leadership among maize farmers in Lesotho

by

Remaketse Frederick Williams

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ABSTRACT

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by

REMAKETSE FREDERICK WILLIAMS

Supervisor : Professor G.H. Düvel
Department: Agricultural Economics, Extension and Rural Development
Degree **:** Masters in Agricultural Extension

The purpose of the study was to investigate the intermediary role that opinion leaders can play in the dissemination of agricultural technologies among the rural farmers in Lesotho in order to bridge the gap between extension and the farmers. A structured questionnaire was administered to 200 randomly sampled maize farming households, representing a 20 percent sample, from three villages in the Qeme area, namely Ha Mohasoa, Ha Pita and Ha Jimisi. Opinion Leadership was measured on the basis of number of nominations within and beyond the sample.

The research findings confirm the importance of opinion leadership, which exists among both male and female farmers, but varies according to the degree of influence (number of nominations). Thirty-nine percent qualified based on influence as opinion leaders, but the strong opinion leaders were between 6 – 10 percent.

Of the various personal and environmental factors that were assumed to have influence on opinion leadership, only some but not all actually had influence. The factors having influence were age, marital status, gender, farming efficiency and exposure to mass

media. Factors having no influence were formal education qualifications, scale of farming operation and the reliance on farming as a source of income.

Competence and accessibility appeared to be key dimensions of opinion leadership. However, in the study area, accessibility – was formal to be a precondition for the effective flow of information – was not a constraint. Ninety percent of all opinion leaders were, for example, assessed to have a high or very high accessibility. This accessibility was influenced by friendship, and gender, but social status appeared to have no bearing on it. Physical accessibility was also an important factor, which was emphasized by the finding that 85 percent of the strongest opinion leaders resided within a distance of less than 2km from the followers.

In general, the opinion leaders were of a polymorphic type and seem to be consulted over a wide variety of subjects or commodities. Although there were indications of the stronger opinion leaders being more involved in reciprocative consultations, this tendency was much less pronounced than what has been found among white commercial farmers in South Africa (Düvel, 1996)

Based on the similarities of findings of this study and those of Adupa & Düvel (1999) on small scale farmers in Uganda, it was recommended that more research should be conducted to interrogate and exploit the use of opinion leaders in the diffusion of information and innovations in Lesotho.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The influence of opinion leaders on their fellow farmers in the adoption of new technologies has being underestimated in many farming communities in developing countries. There has been a considerable use of resources such as radio and print media in the dissemination of new agricultural technologies, but research findings indicate that these channels have negligible effects on actual decisions made by the farmers. The discontent of authors to report the unexpected negative findings on the mass media influence of the 1940 U.S presidential election campaign brought up questions on

1. how people make up their minds? and
2. why they change them?

Also, if the mass media are not major determinants of an individual's vote decision, then what could it be (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1966).

The investigation of this problem made authors pay more attention to the influence which other people have on others in their decision-making. It became apparent that people make decisions the way their associates do; wives like husbands, and workers like fellow employees. This was still not adequate because the next question was, who influences the influentials? Mass media re-entered and the suggestion was that ideas often seem to flow from radio and printed media to opinion leaders and thus forming a two-step flow of communication to less active sections of the population. The other role of opinion leaders according to the findings of Düvel and Adupa (1996), is not merely relaying information, but also the endorsement and legitimization of new ideas they want to have adopted. It is widely accepted that diffusion campaigns are likely to succeed when focused on opinion leaders, and thus the change agents' success is positively related to the extent that they work through opinion leaders (Rogers, 1983;

Düvel & Adupa, 1996). This study aimed to investigate the role of opinion leadership among maize farmers in Lesotho.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND SITUATION AND PROBLEM

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Lesotho is situated in the Southern part of Africa, and is the only SADC member state that is surrounded by one country, namely the Republic of South Africa. According to the 1996 population census, its total population stood at 2 million, of which 51 percent was female.

Lesotho's total area is 3,035 thousand hectares. It is divided into four ecological zones. The lowland zone, which is the most densely populated and the most intensively cultivated. The foothills are less densely populated than the lowlands and have less rainfall. Wheat is not commonly grown in this zone but maize, sorghum and summer peas are commonly grown. The mountain zone is characterized by very cold winters with snow and is the least populated of all other zones. Livestock farming is commonly found in this zone. Senqu River Valley is the smallest zone. It runs from east to west across the districts of Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek and Quthing, along the banks of Senqu river. Three hundred thousand hectares or nine percent is suitable for farming (Bureau of statistics, 1999/2,000).

2.2 BACKGROUND HISTORY OF LESOTHO'S EXTENSION WORK

The role of the Lesotho Extension system is to assist farming communities to achieve their agricultural goals, consistent with the objectives of the 6th five-year Development Plan by;

(a) assisting them in problem analysis and goal setting,
(b) facilitating linkages between farming communities and the government of Lesotho, the private sector and other providers of services and inputs,
(c) providing relevant knowledge, information and skills, and

(d) Assisting in the implementation of programmes in pursuit of farming community goals.

The extension service is fully funded by the Government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Agriculture. From the 1880's until 1933, agricultural development in Lesotho was focused mainly in the livestock sub-sector. Angora goats and merino sheep were very important, horse breeding was encouraged, and animal pest and disease control programmes implemented. During this time, Lesotho was also a major grain supplier to the mining towns of South Africa. Crop extension was added in 1933 as a result of severe drought in that year, but extension priorities of the time were indicated by the fact that dip tank supervisors were in charge of crops extension.

The department of agriculture was established in 1935 with three sections; veterinary services, crops and cooperatives, and soil conservation. The extension approach adopted was a generalist one, with messages communicated to farmers through agricultural demonstrators.

In 1966 when Lesotho gained its independence from the British, the Ministry of Agriculture was created with three departments; Livestock, Crops, and Conservation. Each department had its own extension section. Currently, there are three extension approaches in Lesotho; The client demand system, the participatory approach, and a modified version of T&V (Ministry of Agriculture Cooperatives and Land Reclamation, 1997).

Under the client demand system, farmers are informed of innovations and services, and are invited to approach Extension workers and other Ministry of Agriculture advisory services to obtain information and/or assistance. Client demand is stimulated through mass media campaigns and public meetings with chiefs, village development committees and the general rural communities through *pitsos* (meetings). Each district is divided into resource center areas, under the supervision of the Area Supervisor. The function of the resource center is to provide office space, training and extension facilities, housing for staff, and to communicate Subject Matter Specialists' (SMS) inputs to district headquarters. On-farm demonstrations are designed for interested farmers, with input packages distributed free of charge through the resource center.

The participatory approach commences with a Village Headman Workshop conducted over 3-5 days, with the area team of SMS's using Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) techniques. The group conducts a community need assessment. The community and the team, sometimes with specialists participating from other Ministries, then develop plans to achieve defined goals, and in the process common interest groups are identified.

The T&V approach is where progressive farmers are used as the information channels to individual farmers in the community. It accommodates livestock, rangeland, horticulture, field crops, and nutrition.

Agricultural information division is responsible for broadcasting 12 radio programmes per week. The radio programme takes place for 15 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening. It also covers a 15-minute T&V programme per week.

Until recently, development in rural areas of Lesotho consisted mainly of farmers and communities being told what to do, often by institutions that had not taken time to assess the real needs of the farmers. This is a factor that caused a decline to Lesothos' agricultural production, because rural people did not have any sense of ownership of the ideas that were imposed on them. The Ministry of Agriculture recognized the need to move away from a top-down approach to a more participatory one, that is likely to enable local farmers to take a leading role in developing and fulfilling their goals. A variety of Extension approaches have been used in Lesotho, introduced through externally funded projects such as Participatory Approach. This approach uses Headman Village Workshops. It was promoted by Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). The Client Demand approach, that was promoted by Soil and Water Conservation and Agroforestry Programme (SWaCAP). Finally the Training and Visit System that was promoted by Deutsche Gesellschaft fur technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). Elements from these approaches were combined to form a single extension approach for the whole country, and this was named a Unified Extension System (UES) (Ministry of Agriculture Cooperatives and Land Reclamation, 2002).

To avoid duplication of efforts, the planning becomes a more interdisciplinary one, involving all relevant disciplines and departments both internal and external. The role of extension workers under the new system is to facilitate activities initiated by the farmers (Department of Field Services – Ministry of Agriculture, 2001). In the author's opinion coming up with a new system without a sufficient number of qualified extension workers, may not solve the already existing problem of dissemination of agricultural technologies. The use of opinion leaders may still be the best alternative. The Maseru District Extension Officer indicated that, due to the shortage of extension workers, they resort to the use of lead farmers or opinion farmers?.

2.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Time and resources have been spent in Lesotho in an effort to develop agriculture. The major focus has been on how best agricultural extension can impact the rural populations because they mostly depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.

The government of Lesotho has been experimenting with various extension approaches through area based projects since 1970's. There are currently three approaches which have been evaluated at great length, and these are training and visit, client demand, and participatory approaches. These were reviewed by the District Agricultural Officers (DAO's) in July 1995 in order to consolidate experiences from each approach and formulate a unified extension approach for the whole country that is believed to be capable of stirring demand, facilitating the assessment of farmer's needs, and promoting the best utilization of public resources (Ministry of Agriculture Cooperatives and Land Reclamation, 1996).

The national average of approximately 720 farm households is served by one extension agent, which seems satisfactory. This figure hides limitations, which significantly reduce the effective coverage of the farming populations in Lesotho. Extension agents in Lesotho are essentially specialists. One who has been employed to serve livestock division does not serve crops division, and vise versa. The extension agent's low level of education and inadequate staff training reduce their effectiveness. Lack of necessary resources such as transport and finances make it

difficult for agents to contact rural farmers. In addition to above mentioned problems, poor infrastructure and the location of other settlements on mountain tops, and steep valleys also contribute to the difficulties the extension agents face when delivering information to rural populations (Ministry of Agriculture Cooperatives and Land Reclamation, 1997).

Many other researchers in different cultures have conducted studies of personal influence/ opinion leadership, and there seems to be some differences in the findings. This was a motivation to conduct a similar study in Lesotho. Focusing messages on certain influential individuals makes one to assume that it hastens the diffusion of agricultural technologies to members of the target audience, because it could be viewed as a self–generating diffusion process, perhaps more a multiplication effect.

The most fundamental principle of human communication is that the exchange of ideas most frequently occurs between two individuals who share a set of similar characteristics, common meanings, and a mutual value position (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981). Both electronic and print media seem to be inadequate as extension strategies in Lesotho due to high levels of illiteracy, difficult terrain, and low coverage by such media in remote areas.

The extension approaches that are currently used, may not have a strong impact when used alone without taking into consideration an impact that the use of opinion leaders may have as an alternative extension approach. It has a great capacity of relaxing the constraints already mentioned. This, may also have a budgetary relief since opinion leaders do not have to be budgeted for in order for them to provide their services. Focusing messages on them can also be very convenient to farmers because they have local access to information.

2.4 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the intermediary role that opinion leaders can play in the dissemination of agricultural technologies among the rural farmers in Lesotho.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the intermediary role that the opinion leaders play between the extension agents/mass media and the farmers in the communication of new technologies,

2. To ascertain the presence and the important role of opinion leaders among both male and female farmers in Lesotho.

3. To determine how different characteristics of opinion leaders such as status, farming efficiency, scale of operation, gender, education, exposure to mass media, and reliance on farming as source of income.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature reviewed provided a basis for comparison of the results. Also, it brought into perspective some of the gaps that have not adequately being explored, which need to be researched. The theoretical background that is provided by many different authors formed a benchmark for this research hypotheses. The study aimed at assessing the importance, nature and characteristics of opinion leaders.

The purpose of this section was also to highlight the communication networking that the farmers engage in when exchanging agricultural information. This helped to bring into context how social interaction and personal relationships are organized, and how opinion leaders fit into the larger communication structure of the entire community.

3.2 OPINION LEADERSHIP

Opinion leadership, as defined by Rogers *et al* (1988), is the ability to informally influence individual's attitudes or behaviour in a desired way with relative frequency. Severin and Tankard (1979) refer to opinion leaders as members of small social groups who influence other members of their group. Another way in which Severin and Tankard (1979) look at opinion leadership, is that it is a two-step flow of communication, in which messages flow from the media first and reach the opinion leaders, who then pass them to associates or followers who look to them as influentials. This tells us that opinion leaders play an intermediary role between mass media and their followers, to influence them in their innovation decision-making process. It can then be inferred that the role opinion leaders play, can be very valuable especially where the extension: farmer ratios are too wide. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) confirmed that opinion leaders do actually exceed non-opinion leaders in mass media exposure, and therefore have the capability of bridging the communication gap between extension and the farmers, Düvel and Adupa (1996) indicate that, this can be

achieved by focusing communication messages on certain influential individuals with the hope that their influence will come to bear in further diffusion and influence to other members of the target audience.

Opinion leaders and their followers are very similar and usually belong to the same groups. Severin and Tankard (1979) indicated that it is highly unlikely that the opinion leader is very far ahead of his or her followers in level of interest in a given topic, and that interpersonal relations are not only networks of communication but also sources of social pressure to conform to the group's norms, and sources of social support for the values and opinions an individual holds. On the other hand, Van den Ban (1981) stated most of the ideas are in agreement with the group norms, but in some situations opinion leaders take the initiative to change these norms.

Who will lead, and who will follow, is determined to a large extent by the subject matter under consideration. Researchers found that an opinion leader in one area is unlikely to be one in another unrelated area. In general, however, people talk most often to others like themselves (Severin and Tankard, 1979), implying homophilous relationships.

3.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF OPINION LEADERS

Researchers have found out that opinion leaders are found at all levels, and have concluded that factors such as technical competence, monomorphism and polymorphism, social and physical accessibility, homophily and heterophily, differentiate leaders from their followers. These will be discussed individually below.

3.3.1 Technical competence

Personification of values or who one is, is another way of saying that the influential is someone that his or her followers wish to become as similar as possible with him, because of his or her admirable achievements. On the other hand, to be regarded as an opinion leader, one must be knowledgeable or competent in the area in which his or

her leadership is sought. It is seldom that attention is paid to the opinions of people who lack these qualities (Severin & Tankard, 1979).

Other attributes that are worth considering are that opinion leaders are well-liked and respected by their communities for

1. making wise decisions,
2. operating with a clear understanding of local needs and conditions,
3. proving successful in their particular occupations,
4. willing to be of service in helping to improve conditions in their communities and
5. having the same economic, social and cultural background as the people they lead (Savile, 1965).

The question that most researchers have is similar to that of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966), that is: who or what influences the influentials. This is a worthwhile question, because whatever or whoever does so, makes them to be more competent than their followers. Through investigations, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) became convinced that opinion leaders have more contact with external sources of information than their followers, especially radio and printed media. It was further suggested by Severin and Tankard (1979) that mass media channels are relatively more important than interpersonal channels for earlier adopters (most of whom are opinion leaders) than for late adopters (most of whom are the followers), because at the early stages, there are few interpersonal channels available to the early adopters. Cosmopoliteness is another factor that is believed to be contributing significantly to the competence of opinion leaders.

Another indication of the importance of competence in interpersonal communications, is by looking at countries with a well developed mass media system. In this setting, farmers usually get their first information on innovations. However, they like to discuss it with somebody in whose competence and motivation they have confidence, before they decide to adopt. Farmers depend on good and trustworthy information for their livelihoods, and in this regard they turn mainly to farmers with a higher level of technical competence than they have themselves (Van den Ban & Hawkins, 1998).

Opinion leadership being the type of informal leadership is earned, and can only be maintained by technical competence, social accessibility and conformity to system's norms (Rogers, 1988).

3.3.2 Polymorphism and Monomorphism

Polymorphism is the degree to which an individual acts as an opinion leader for multiple topics. The opposite is monomorphism, which relates to opinion leadership limited to only a single topic (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981).

Bembridge (1991) indicated that, Ryan and Gross, (1943); Katz and Lazarsfeld, (1955); Rao, (1981) all perceived monomorphic opinion leadership to usually occur in more progressive communities, with high adoption rates of technology. This implies that polymorphic opinion leadership is more likely to be found in less progressive communities with low adoption rates of technology.

Bembridge's (1991) findings from a tradition community indicated that those sought for advice on crops were also consulted on livestock, and were more often than not considered to be good farmers. Indications are also that, those nominated as best friends were not always the same people as those sought for advice on crops and livestock. This serves as indication that accessibility is not the only criterion for opinion leadership, in that opinion leadership and friendship are not synonymous. Respondents also differentiate farmers according to their different degrees of opinion leadership and fields of knowledge. Van den Ban (1981) refers to research indicating that there is no clear distinction between leaders and non leaders, but that there are different degrees of leadership. This implies that opinion leadership is relative, and that it might be more appropriate to differentiate degrees of opinion leadership rather than identify whether somebody is an opinion leader or not.

3.3.3 Social accessibility

It has been established by many authors that an opinion leader has to be someone who is regarded knowledgeable in the area in which his or her opinion leadership is sought. However, knowledge without accessibility to other members of a social system will prevent this knowledge becoming available to others. Düvel's (1996) findings suggest that competence, although a pre-condition, does not appear to be the most critical variable. Invariably, accessibility appears to be more important. Accessibility is very crucial in the establishment of consultative relationship.

Savile (1965) maintains that to be a local leader, an individual must be willing to be of service in helping to improve conditions of his or her community, and also act as a mediator in spreading the teachings of the extension worker to the neighbours and friends. What results from this initiative is popularity and respect from members of the community.

Apart from being more exposed to all forms of channels that communicate new ideas, opinion leaders are more socially accessible to their followers. In referring to their influence, Rogers (1958) also makes mention of credibility of the information, which is closely related to competence but not independent of accessibility.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) pointed out another variation of personal influence which relates to accessibility, namely gender. Their findings indicate that, specific influentials are in most cases found inside the family, and this is especially so among the married women. Give-and-take conversation about public affairs is largely carried on within the family circle. Few women, apart from those whose family ties are broken, apparently talk such things over with their neighbours or friends. Married women depend mainly on their husbands, and single women on their parents.

Information given by extension agents to male opinion leaders often reach farm women very slowly and in a rather distorted form, if it reaches them at all (Van den Ban and Hawkins, 1998).

3.3.4 Physical accessibility

Physical distance is one of the major determinants of interpersonal influence. Allen's (1977) findings on the spatial aspects of network links in R & D organizations, suggest that the relationship of physical distance to interaction is not linear. Instead, the relationship is a decreasing curve; there are many links at close proximity, followed by a sharp decrease until the middle distance and then a slower decrease over greater distances. Longer- distance network links are less stable over time, unless other social structural variables are involved such as kinship. Shorter-distance links predominate the system. A general finding emerging from a wide variety of investigations is that individuals tend to be linked to others who are close to them in physical distance and who are relatively homophilous in social characteristics. This is regarded as an indicator of least- effort (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981).

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966) indicated that the most promising prospect for the study of opinion leadership, is that of the actual influence that is often derived from the compromise between higher estimations of competence and easier accessibility. High estimations of someone's competence and trustworthiness make that person more likely to influence, but since such persons are often not accessible, their potential may not fully be realized. The more easily accessible persons in the immediate environment, may thus often be able to exert influence at the right moment when it is needed.

There cannot be frequent contacts unless individuals are physically accessible to one another. This means that the closer the individuals are to each other, the more they are likely going to have frequent discussions. The frequent contact also results in the development of norms of behaviour, implying that outsiders are often not trusted, especially by traditional villagers. Any deviance is normally discussed extensively in the neighbourhood. Contrarily, the problem with local ideas is that they may not be as valuable as those from outside, due to similarities that people who exchange information often have (Van den Ban, 1981).

3.3.5 Homophily and heterophily

Homophily is the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, values, education and social status. The opposite of homophily is heterophily, the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are different in certain attributes (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981).

The most fundamental principle of human communication is that the exchange of ideas most frequently occurs between transceivers who are homophilous, because this ensures more effective and rewarding communication. However, Rogers and Kincaid (1981) indicated that numerous researches suggest the generalization that for new ideas to diffuse, dyadic communication must connect individuals who are somewhat heterophilous, because these are not interlocking personal networks as are homophilous links. Consequently, a new idea is communicated to a larger number of individuals, and traverses a greater social distance. Weak ties are regarded to be more informative, but because of their heterophilous nature, the communication flow is more difficult.

3.4 HYPOTHESES

In view of the problems associated with extension work in Lesotho, an awareness of the opportunities offered by the opinion leaders in the dissemination of information, gave rise to the following hypotheses, which have been identified in an effort to achieve the set objectives of the study.

1) Opinion leaders differ according to the degree of influence they exert to others.

2) Opinion leadership is influenced by various personal and environmental factors such as age, farming efficiency, scale of operation, gender, education, exposure to mass media, and reliance on farming as source of income.

3) Opinion leadership is a function of competence and accessibility.

4) Accessibility, both physical and social, is a critical dimension of opinion leadership, and is influenced by social status, friendship, level of education, gender and cosmopoliteness.

5) Opinion leaders in traditional rural communities tend to be polymorphic rather than monomorphic.

6) Relationships between opinion leaders and followers are characterized by (a) being homophilous and (b) by the consultation being of a reciprocal nature.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presented the methodology that was followed in this study. The section included study area selection, sample selection, collection of information, measurement of opinion leadership and data processing.

4.2 STUDY AREA SELECTION

In order to have a general background that would give guidance to the selection of the most suitable study area, preliminary interviews were conducted with the Maseru district extension staff.

The study area that was selected is Qeme, which consists of the three villages, Ha Pita, Ha Mohasoa, and Ha Jimisi. It is a rural area 20 kilometres south of Maseru the capital of Lesotho. This is an area where agriculture is the main economic activity, carried out in most of households. This includes both livestock and crop husbandry.

Despite the geographical location of the study area (Qeme), which is in the lowlands of Lesotho, where there are many other economic activities, it was considered to be sufficiently representative due to its high dependence on agriculture. In addition, the selection of this area was also done taking into consideration the limited financial resources to conduct this research. The area is easily accessible by public transport and no lodging was necessary for both the researcher and the three research assistants.

4.3 SAMPLE SELECTION

Sampling was based on the population of the three villages of which the 1996 population census figures were available. These figures were projected to the year

2002 by adjusting them with 2 percent annual population growth rate of Lesotho, and used to calculate the average number of households see Table 4.1

Table 4. 1: Population, number of households and sample sizes of villages sampled

Village	Population (in 1996)	Population in 2002 (adjusted)	Estimated no. of households	Number of sampled households	%
Ha Pita	1837	2,075	415	83	20
Ha Mohasoa	1352	1,525	305	61	20
Ha Jimisi	1264	1,400	280	56	20

A total of 200 households were sampled, which ensured sufficient representation and fell within the constraints of the research budget. Households were sampled by starting randomly and then selecting every fifth household. Whenever an identified household was not involved in maize farming, the next maize farmer on the route was selected. The reason for focusing on maize producers was to delineate the scope of the study and restrict it to the most important farming commodity.

4.4 COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

Structured interviews using questionnaires were the main source of information. Three enumerators were selected in order to complete the survey within a period of three weeks. They were selected on the basis of their educational background, that is completed high school education. Their training was extended over one week and was provided by the researcher. The initial emphasis was on an understanding of the questions, their purpose and the relevant scales. Also, included issues like creating the necessary rapport, and more specifically the appropriate ways of introduction and greeting, introducing and explaining the purpose of the visit and requesting the respondent's collaboration.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in ten households in the Thaba-Bosiu area, which falls outside the study area, and has similar farming conditions. This served to test the

clarity of the questions, and also served the purpose of further training the research assistants.

Research assistants were monitored daily in turns for the first two weeks. The problems that were encountered during the day were discussed in the evening meetings, and solutions suggested.

A problem encountered during the survey was that it coincided with the general elections of Lesotho. This is the time when there is a lot of animosity among individuals of clashing political affiliations, and could have had an influence on the nominations of opinion leaders.

Further limitations were that questions needed farmers to base their responses on recalling, of which the reliability may be doubted. Providing information about other people might have been regarded as sensitive even though the purpose of the interviews was initially explained.

4.5 MEASUREMENT OF OPINION LEADERSHIP

Since the focus of the study was to identify the presence and the role that opinion leaders can play, their selection formed a vital part of the research. The selection of opinion leaders was made from 200 respondents, and from other farmers they nominated as people they consult for advice in maize production. This led to an identification of 78 opinion leaders among the 200 respondents (nominated respondents) and a further 312 beyond the original sample of 200 respondents (nominated non-respondents). The selection criterion that was used for identifying opinion leaders, was based on the number of nominations received, with the stronger opinion leaders having received more nominations. Individuals having received three or more nominations were classified as strong opinion leaders.

4.6 DATA PROCESSING

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were structured and had coded responses. Data that were gathered and entered using SPSS.10 Standard version program.

Mmistakes were checked and corrected. The tabulations were formed using case summaries and frequencies, and cross tabulations. These tabulations formed a major input into the study.

The final approach involved a consolidation of information from all the sources used. Chi-square test and correlation coefficient were used in other cases to support the analysis findings.

CHAPTER 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF OPINION LEADERS AND NON LEADERS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The characteristics of opinion leaders such as age, marital status, educational background, and economic activities, are generally assumed to have an influence on opinion leadership. Though these characteristics have already been explored by other researchers, the findings need not to be verified in different situations and cultures. The degree in which each characteristic may influence opinion leadership, may in part, depend on the systems norms, and the level of development. The characteristics analysed in the following section and related to opinion leadership are those of the respondents who were interviewed in Qeme area.

The selection of opinion leaders was based on individuals consulted for advice in regard to maize production. A total of 388 individuals were nominated as opinion leaders, of which 78 were among the respondents, while 310 fell outside the sample of respondents.

5.2 THE DEGREE OF OPINION LEADERSHIP

The degree of opinion leadership is determined by how many people consult an individual for advice on a certain enterprise. It is assumed that the number of people who nominate an individual reflect the amount of influence he/she has on them. This means that the lower the number of nominations, the weaker the degree of opinion leadership, while the higher the number of nominations, the stronger the degree of opinion leadership. This does imply that, opinion leadership is not an absolute characteristic, but that the influence can vary from very small to a significant level.

Table 5.1 represents respondents and those nominated by respondents (here referred to as non-respondents) and indicates the degree to which they have been nominated as opinion leaders in the field of maize production.

Table 5. 1: Frequency distribution of respondents and non-respondents according to the degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Opinion leadership (No. of nominations)	Respondents (part of sample)		Non-Respondents (nominated but not part of sample)		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
>3	13	6.5	6	2	19	3.7
3	10	5	14	4.5	24	4.7
2	21	10.5	54	17.3	75	14.6
1	34	17	238	76.2	272	53.1
0	122	61	0	0	122	23.8
Total	**200**	**100**	**312**	**100**	**512**	**100**

An indication of the scope of opinion leadership can be gained from the nominations within the group of respondents. According to these findings, 39 percent have been nominated and thus qualify as opinion leaders. This implies that about one- third of a population can be regarded as opinion leaders with insignificant potential influence in diffusion. The strong opinion leaders are significantly less, namely 11.5 percent, and this agree with the hypothesis which suggests that opinion leaders differ according to degrees of influence they exert (Hypothesis 1). The relatively large percentage of opinion leaders about 39% indicated that many of the influence relationships are within friendship circles or cliques and that these could perhaps be used to effectively mobilize the influence of opinion leaders.

5.3 AGE OF OPINION LEADERS

Age is one of the factors that is believed to have an effect on opinion leadership. The general assumption is that individuals who have gained practical experience over many years, and who are still farming actively, are likely to have more influence than the younger farmers.

Table 5. 2: Frequency distribution of respondents according to age and degree of opinion leadership as reflected in number of nominations

Age	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)										Total	
	>3		3		2		1		0			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
<30 (1)	0	0	0	0	1	5	4	12	13	11	18	9
31-40 (2)	1	8	3	30	7	33	13	38	31	25	55	27.5
41-50 (3)	5	38	6	60	3	14	9	26	38	31	61	30.5
51-60 (4)	5	38	0	0	8	38	5	15	30	24	48	24
61-70 (5)	1	8	1	10	1	5	2	6	7	6	12	6
>70 (6)	1	8	0	0	1	5	1	3	3	3	6	3
Totals	**13**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**34**	**100**	**122**	**100**	**200**	**100**
Wt. Mean	**3.7**		**2.9**		**3.1**		**2.7**		**3.0**		**3.0**	

r = -0.069 ; p =0.332
χ^2 = 149.16; df =20, probability = 0.0

The majority of maize producers, namely 82 percent fall in the 30-60 year age category. When comparing the relationship between age and opinion leadership, there appears to be some relationship. The correlation is not significant (r = -0.069); (p = 0.332) but there are significant differences (Chi-square = 149.16, p =0.0) between the opinion leadership groups in terms of age. Fifty-four percent of strongest opinion leaders (with more than 3 nominations) were above 50 years of age, while only 24 percent of weakest opinion leaders (with 1 nomination) fell into this category. Similarly only 8 percent of the strongest opinion leaders were less than 41 years of age, as opposed to 50 percent in the weakest opinion leadership category. This is further supported by the fact that, there is no strong opinion leader (with 3 or more nominations) below the age of 30, which is in agreement with Hypothesis 2, stating that, opinion leadership is influenced by various personal and environmental factors. This indicates that opinion leadership tends to become- stronger with age, and more years of accumulated experience, but then again decreases beyond a certain threshold value. This implies a non-linear or parabolic relationship between opinion leadership and age, evidence of this is the non- significant correlation coefficient (r = -0.069) ; (p = 0.332) but the highly significant chi-square value (χ^2 = 149.16, p =0.0). It is perhaps logical to find most of the strong opinion leaders in the middle age category of 40-60 years, because they depend mostly on farming for their livelihoods, dedicate all their efforts to it, and have considerable experience.

5.4 MARITAL STATUS OF OPINION LEADERS

Though marriage is one of the cultural universals, the way it is conducted, and the age that is considered to be appropriate for both males and females to get married may differ from culture to culture. Marital status, namely; whether married, divorced, widow, widower or single, is also given different interpretations in different cultures, which may affect the way an individual is perceived, and thus, be consulted or not for advice. It is a common believe, especially in Lesotho, that good advice can only be obtained from married individuals who can be characterized as good farmers, wise decision makers, well respected, experienced, and responsible.

The majority of respondents 66 percent are married and only 17 percent unmarried/single. In spite of this limited variation the differences between the marital status categories are significant $\chi^2 = 218.75$, df = 16, p = 0.0. The difference lies in the fact that more leaders 70-85 percent than non-leaders 57 percent are married. This as well as the phenomenon that the strongest opinion leaders with more than 3 nominations have the highest percentage of about 85 percent of married individuals, while 24 percent of single respondents that falls in the category of non-leaders, seems to indicate that being married contributes towards opinion leadership.

This seems to correspond with the general viewpoint in Lesotho that a married person is regarded to be responsible and can be consulted for advice when needed. Divorce appears to have a negative influence on opinion leadership. Evidence of this is the fact that there are no divorcees among the strongest opinion leaders, while one of the strong leaders with 3 nominations is divorced. Depending on the reasons for divorce, people who are divorced are considered to be irresponsible, and this may be the reason why they are consulted less frequently, which suggest that marital status may have influence on opinion leadership hypothesis 2. Opinion leadership is influenced by various personal and environmental factors such as age, farming efficiency, scale of operation, gender, education, exposure to mass media, and reliance on farming as source of income.

Table 5. 3: Frequency distribution of respondents according to marital status and degree of opinion leadership as reflected in number of nominations

Marital status	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)										Total	
	>3		3		2		1		0			
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
Married (5)	11	85	7	70	17	81	27	79	70	57	132	66
Divorced (4)	0	0	1	10	0	0	2	6	9	7	12	6
Widow (3)	0	0	0	0	3	14	1	3	7	6	11	5.5
Widower (2)	2	15	0	0	1	5	1	3	7	6	11	5.5
Single (1)	0	0	2	20	0	0	3	9	29	24	34	17
Total	**13**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**34**	**100**	**122**	**100**	**200**	**100**

χ^2 =218.75 ; df = 16; p =0.0

5.5 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF OPINION LEADERS

Education is a factor that can be assumed to be contributing positively to the amount of influence an individual has on others. It is normally believed that an educated person makes wise decisions, and is likely to be respected and be considered a good farmer.

Table 5. 4: Frequency distribution of respondents according to educational background and degree of opinion leadership as reflected in number of nominations

Education	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)										Total	
	>3		3		2		1		0			
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
None (1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.9	1	0.8	2	1.0
Primary (2)	8	61.5	4	40.0	11	52.4	8	23.5	19	15.6	49	24.5
Secondary (3)	4	30.8	3	30.0	5	23.8	11	32.4	41	33.6	64	32.0
H. School (4)	1	7.7	2	20.0	3	14.3	11	32.4	37	30.3	54	27.0
Tertiary (5)	0	0	1	10.0	2	9.5	3	8.8	23	18.9	29	14.5
Degree (6)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.8	2	1.0
Totals	**13**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**34**	**100**	**122**	**100**	**200**	**100**
W. Mean	**2.5**		**3**		**2.8**		**3.2**		**3.5**		**3.3**	

r = - 0.257 ; p = 0.01

χ^2 =107.86 ; df =20 ; p = 0.00

The majority of maize producers, about 99 percent had formal education, although 42.5 percent had more than a secondary level of education. When relating educational background with opinion leadership, there appears to be a negative relationship ($r = -0.257$, $p = 0.01$), which means that the less qualified respondents tend to have fewer or less prominent opinion leaders. This is also supported by the weighted means, which differ significantly, and show how the formal qualification increases with a decrease in strength of opinion leadership, with the non-leaders having the highest qualification.

These findings are not in accordance with hypothetical assumptions, but in Lesotho most of the people who are engaged in farming are those with low educational background. This can be attributed to the fact that those who have higher educational background have more opportunities of being employed elsewhere, thus, making farming an occupation of the least educated. This is evidenced by the total percentage of people with secondary education or lower, about 57.5 percent, and a sharp decrease in percentage of those with higher educational backgrounds, namely high school and above.

This negative correlation between opinion leadership and level of formal education does confirm that this is a community of farmers with a low general education. Hence education does not seem to contribute to opinion leadership. The contrary may be the case. On the other hand, this negative correlation could be attributed to the relationship between age and educational background, the relationship is significant ($r = -0.192$, $p=0.01$), meaning that the younger an individual is, the bigger the chances of being more educated and being in another specialized sector while an older individual with low education will be in farming. Thirty point eight percent of the strongest opinion leaders have secondary educational background, while 32.4 percent of the weakest opinion leaders have the same educational background. There are no strongest opinion leaders who have either tertiary education or a degree, while those with less nominations and the followers do. These findings are in contrast with those of Rogers and Burdge (1972) who found education to contribute positively to opinion leadership. In Lesotho,good farming does not yet seem to be perceived as a function of good education, which disagrees with Hypothesis 2 of this study which says that opinion leadership is influenced by various personal and environmental factors.

According to these findings, more focus should be on individuals with primary or secondary educational background when searching for individuals who could be used in diffusion of innovations in Lesotho because they appear to be the strongest in opinion leadership.

Table 5. 5: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders' according to their three most important sources of income

Relative importance	Source of income	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)										Totals	
		>3		3		2		1		0			
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
1st	None	1	7.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.5
	Others	8	61.5	4	40	12	57.1	15	44.1	78	64	117	58.5
	Part-time Farming	2	15.4	2	20	7	33.3	12	35.3	27	22.1	50	25
	Full-time Farming	2	15.4	4	40	2	9.5	7	20.6	17	13.9	32	16
	Totals	13	100	10	100	21	100	34	100	122	100	200	100
2nd	None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Others	8	61.5	8	80	21	100	26	76.5	87	71.3	150	75
	Part-time Farming	4	30.8	2	20	0	0	7	20.6	26	21.3	39	19.5
	Full-time Farming	1	7.7	0	0	0	0	1	3	9	7.4	11	5.5
	Totals	13	100	10	100	21	100	34	100	122	100	200	100
3rd	None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	.8	1	.5
	Others	10	77	9	90	14	66.7	29	85.2	83	68	145	72.5
	Part-time Farming	3	23	1	10	7	33.3	4	11.8	38	31.2	53	26.5
	Full-time Farming	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	.5
	Totals	13	100	10	100	21	100	34	100	122	100	200	100

1st: r = 0.048, p= 0.503 ; **2nd**: r =- 0.067, p =0.345 ; **3rd**: r =-0.068, p = 0.338
χ^2 = 144.28, df = 12, p = 0.0, χ^2 = 162.13, df = 12, p= 0.0, χ^2 =276.72, df =12, p = 0.0

5.6 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF OPINION LEADERS

Opinion leaders are said to be wealthier than their followers. Therefore, their occupations have to be considered to be the most important in their area.

According to the findings as presented in Table 5.5, there is no relationship between opinion leadership and the source of income. The probable reason for this is that for most respondents, including the opinion leaders, the main source of income is neither full- or part-time farming.

5.7 INCOME FROM FARMING

Opinion leaders are normally assumed to be more competent than their followers and consequently it could be postulated that, opinion leaders generate more income than their followers from farming, and/or from other sources. In Table 5.6, the relationship between opinion leadership and percentage income from farming was investigated.

Table 5. 6: Frequency distribution of respondents' income from farming according to degree of opinion leadership as reflected by the number of nominations

Income from farming	**Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)**										Totals	
	>3		3		2		1		0			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	**%**
<25%	4	30.8	2	20.0	1	4.7	9	26.5	28	23	44	22.0
25-49%	3	23.0	3	30.0	6	28.6	17	50.0	41	33.6	70	35.0
50-74%	6	46.2	5	50.0	9	42.9	6	17.6	38	31.1	64	32.0
75-99%	0	0	0	0	5	23.8	1	2.9	14	11.5	20	10.0
100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2.9	1	0.8	2	1.0
Totals	13	100	10	100	21	100	34	100	122	100	200	100
W.Mean	2.2		2.3		2.9		2.1		2.3		2.3	

$r = 0.012$, $p = 0.862$
$\chi^2 = 90.05$, $df = 16$, $p = 0.0$

According to the findings in Table 5.6, only 11percent of the respondents earn more than 75 percent of their income from farming. Again, there is no relationship with opinion leadership r = 0.012, p = 0.862. There are some significant differences between opinion leadership categories in terms of percentage from farming $\square^2$ = 90.05, p = 0.00, and these seem to indicate that the opinion leaders with medium influence of 2 – 3 nominations tended to be most dependent on farming as an income, but in general there is no support for the assumption that the percentage income from farming has a bearing on opinion leadership as stated in Hypothesis number 2.

CHAPTER 6

NATURE OF OPINION LEADERSHIP

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of opinion leaders relates primarily to the differences between opinion leaders and their followers. The differences that exist can be used as a guideline towards their identification and an understanding of their potential influence in diffusion campaigns. The aspects assumed to be important are individually covered in the sections below.

6.2 FREQUENCY OF CONSULTING INFORMATION SOURCES

The identification of important sources of information for the farmers is important, especially where there is an obvious shortage of extension workers. The sources which are used by opinion leaders may be a useful link between them and the extension personnel in the dissemination and adoption of innovations. These sources can also be assumed to be the most important, mainly because opinion leaders bear the responsibility of influencing other farmers.

According to the findings in Table 6.1, radio is the most frequently used source of information per year in all nomination categories for both general advice and maize production, with total means of 276.44 and 162.41, respectively. However, the intensity of using radio increased, with the exception of the leadership category of 3 nominations, and with increasing leadership strength. The strongest opinion leaders with >3 nominations had a mean of 362 contacts per year while their followers, that is, no nomination had 245. This does indicate that opinion leaders have more exposure to mass media than non-leaders, which is in support of the findings of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1966), and the second hypothesis of the study which says that opinion leadership is influenced by various personal and environmental factors.

Table 6. 1: **Mean number of contact with different sources of information per year**

Sources	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)					Total[1]
	>3	3	2	1	0	
	n=13	n= 10	n=21	n=34	n=122	N=200
(a) General advice						
Radio	362	264	348	316	245	276.44
Research	2	25	8	10	15	13.07
Printed media	25	48	29	30	33	32.30
Extension	2	2	6	6	7	6.15
Fellow farmer	26	30	22	32	38	34.12
(b) Maize production						
Radio	203	137	250	134	153	162.41
Research	2	25	8	10	14	12.46
Printed media	25	48	29	29	33	32.13
Extension	2	2	6	6	7	6.15
Fellow farmer	27	30	20	39	42	37.61

An explanation as to why radio is the most frequently used source of information in Lesotho, is its accessibility and the government's daily presentation of programmes by the agricultural information division in carrying out the government policy, 15 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the evening (Agricultural Sector Investment Programme, 1997). In view of the often mediating function of opinion leaders, their preference is perhaps even more important. These findings are presented in Table 6.2.

Normally ideas are assumed to be flowing from radio to opinion leaders and from opinion leaders to less active sections of the population. This is supported by the fact that fellow-farmers is the second most frequently used source after radio, while printed media is the third in both general and maize specific advice. When comparing the strongest opinion leaders (>3 nominations) with their followers (no nominations) in the field of general agriculture (a) and maize production (b), strongest opinion leaders have, on average, 27 contacts per year, while their fellow-farmers had 42 contacts. This could be indicative of the fact that non-leaders depend more on opinion

[1] *Total = (summation of mean contacts per year, per information source* n in each nomination category).*

leaders as sources of information, while opinion leaders depend more on other non-personal sources such as the radio.

Another perhaps more valid and accurate indication of the importance of information sources is obtained by an assessment of their rank order. Ranking the sources of information in order of importance is more likely to reflect their relative importance or usefulness.

Table 6. 2: Importance rank order of information sources according to degree of opinion leadership as reflected in weighted values expressed as a percentage

Sources	Opinion leadership category (number of nominations)					Total
	>3	3	2	1	0	
	n=13	n=10	n=21	n=34	n=122	N=200
Extension	100	83.33	76.92	69.05	38.68	56.6
Research station	0	75.00	0	0	10.00	12.9
Radio	34.62	11.11	35.71	32.35	60.00	48.7
Printed Media	16.67	25.00	42.86	20.83	17.71	20.8
Fellow-Farmer	61.54	72.22	52.38	67.65	67.77	65.9

In order to facilitate quick adoption of innovations, the most important and credible information sources should be selected and given preference.

Though farmers normally get their first information from mass media, the tendency is to discuss that information with somebody in whose competence and motivation they have confidence before they decide to adopt (Van den Ban & Hawkins, 1998). The findings in Table 6.2 above do reflect that, in general, fellow-farmers rank highest in importance, with a total percentage of 65.9 percent as compared to other information sources. This emphasizes the importance of opinion leadership

However, when considering all the opinion leadership categories from 1 - >3 nominations, it seems that extension has the highest percentages than other information sources. The importance of extension increases with the strength of opinion leadership, as indicated by the fact that the strongest opinion leaders of >3 nominations have 100 percent, and then there is a decrease in importance up to 69.05

percent of the weakest opinion leaders with 1 nomination, and 38.68 percent of the followers. The results also support the fact that, opinion leaders have a close identification with extension agents than their followers (Rogers et al, 1988). When comparing the sources of information under the nomination category of the followers, it appears that, fellow-farmers are by far their most important source of information. The followers normally fall in the category of later adopters of which personal influence is strongest (Rogers & Beal, 1958).

6.3 NUMBER OF OPINION LEADERS

Critical for any diffusion campaign strategy based on opinion leaders, are the number of opinion leaders in a community. This information was obtained by asking the respondents to nominate the people that they consult when they need advice in the field of maize production. Because the survey sample was based on the maize farmers, conclusions regarding the number of opinion leaders in a population can only be based in maize farmers. To get an indication of the number of opinion leaders, the nominees outside the sample were ignored, and the findings are shown in Figure 6.1.

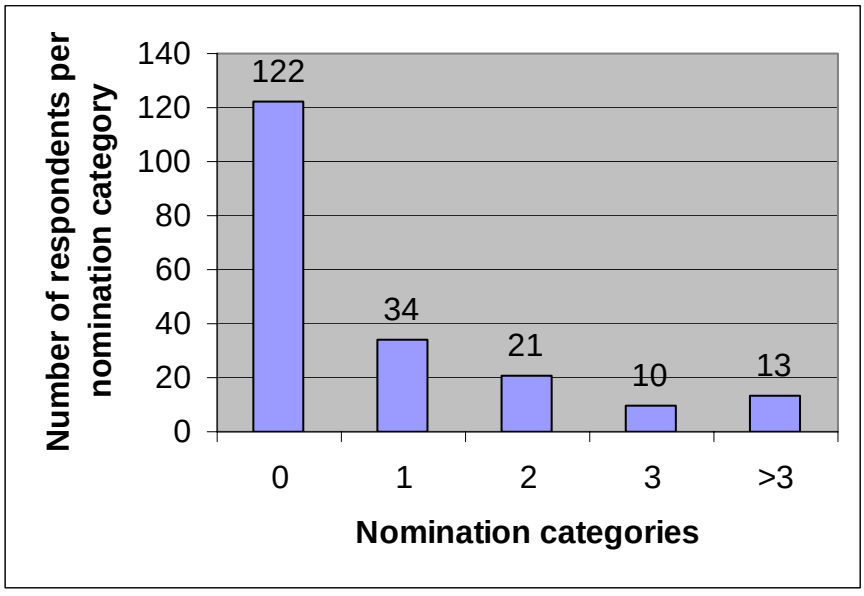

Figure 6. 1: Frequency distribution of respondents according to their number of nominations

Rogers and Burdge (1972) stated that an opinion leader is respected as a good farmer, who makes wise decisions, For that reason, he is the key influential in the diffusion system. This does not answer the question regarding the degree of opinion leadership or when an individual becomes or ceases to be an opinion leader. The degree of opinion leadership varies with respect to the number of nominations each individual received, which could be, 0,1,2,3 or >3 nominations.

The findings provide evidence in support of Hypothesis 1, showing clearly that opinion leaders vary in terms of the influence they exert on others.

In Figure 6.1 above, with exception of nomination category 3, it is very evident that as the strength of opinion leadership increases, so the numbers decrease. There are only 13 opinion leaders in the category of the strongest opinion leaders with >3 nominations while there are 34 in the category of the weakest with 1 nomination and 122 of their followers. Assuming that a reasonable opinion leader should have more than 2 nominations, we therefore have about 12 percent of the population being opinion leaders, which does indicate that opinion leadership actually exists in our communities, perhaps rare due to its unique characteristics. When using the criteria for opinion leadership to be an individual with nominations equal or greater than one (≥ 1), which may be less reliable, due to the fact that some may have been nominated only because of being neighbours, and therefore more accessible, the total number of opinion leaders in maize farming is 78, which represents 39 percent of the respondents.

6.4 ACCURACY OF NOMINATIONS

Opinion leadership in this research is based on individuals who were actually consulted for advice on maize production. However, it appeared that there were those who could be consulted and yet for some reason, some of them were not consulted and were the Quasi opinion leaders. Similarly, there were those who were said to be knowledgeable, but some of them ended up not being consulted. In this section, the assessment of the accuracy of the consultations was on how many of the quasi opinion leaders and knowledge opinion leaders had actually been consulted for advice in maize production as Opinion leaders.

In order to get a more comprehensive picture, the assessment will be based on respondents' nominees in general of respondents and non-respondents.

Table 6. 3: Frequency distribution of Opinion leaders expressed as a percentage of total Quasi opinion leaders

Quasi opinion leaders		Quasi and maize opinion leaders		Total	
N	%	n	%	N	%
201	50.1	200	49.9	401	100

In Table 6.3 above, the total number of quasi opinion leaders (401) was found by counting each individual once. It does appear that nearly half of the individuals who would be consulted were actually consulted. However, the number of opinion leaders (200) above, represents 51% of all opinion leaders in the sample and outside the sample (390), which could be regarded significant enough.

Table 6. 4: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders expressed as a percentage of all those who are regarded knowledgeable

Knowledgeable		Knowledgeable and maize opinion leaders		Total	
n	%	n	%	N	%
185	48.3	198	51.7	383	100

Though accessibility might have contributed significantly to the results in Table 6.4, in that some of the consultations could have been based more on casual exchange of information rather than competence, it does appear that more than half (51.7%) of the consultations were based on competence as stated in Hypothesis number 3. Furthermore, opinion leaders in Table 6.4 represents 50.8 percent of all opinion leaders in the sample and outside the sample of 390 which supports the general believe that opinion leaders are knowledgeable people.

The results in Table 6.5 indicate that the majority, about 58.3 percent of knowledgeable quasi opinion leaders were also maize opinion leaders while the minority, 41.7 percent were not. Despite the other factors that may have contributed

for not consulting every knowledgeable quasi opinion leader in maize production, the results do confirm that the consultations have mostly been accurate.

Table 6. 5: Frequency distribution of nominees who are knowledgeable quasi opinion leaders but not maize opinion leaders

Knowledgeable, quasi opinion leaders		Not maize opinion leaders		Total	
N	%	n	%	N	%
151	58.3	108	41.7	259	100

6.5 MONOMORPHISM AND POLYMORPHISM OF OPINION LEADERS

Farmers have different expertise in relation to particular enterprises. Some may be experts in only one of the enterprises, hence designated as monomorphism, while others may be experts in more than one enterprise that is polymorphism. This implies that the identification of opinion leaders should be done in relation to specific enterprises. The selection of opinion leaders was based on maize production, therefore their assessment in three major fields namely maize, livestock, others, three sub fields that is, cultivars, fertilization, diseases and a combination fields of knowledge will indicate the extent of their expertise, the fields include: Maize production, choice of cultivars, fertilization, pest and disease control, other crops, and livestock.

From Table 6.6, which brings the relation of the degree of opinion leadership with the number of fields in which they were consulted, it can be observed that with an increase in degree or strength of opinion leadership, there tends to be an increase in the number of fields of knowledge in which they are consulted. For example, 100 percent of the leaders with more than three nominations, and 90 percent of those with three nominations are consulted in five or more different fields, while 23.5 percent of those with one nomination advise their followers in at least five different fields. This could be an indication that the stronger opinion leaders were more polymorphic, but could also be a mere result of the increased consultation, and consequential. Also, the likelihood that more fields were covered within the enterprise of maize production. Rogers and Beal (1958) explained accessibility and credibility as being advantages of

personal influence. The above results support Hypothesis 6, which states that opinion leaders in traditional rural communities tend to be polymorphic rather than monomorphic.

Table 6. 6: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to the number of fields and degree of opinion leadership

	Fields of knowledge													
	1		2		3		4		5		6		Total	
	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Respondents														
>3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	38.5	8	61.5	13	100
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	5	50.0	4	40.0	10	100
2	0	0	0	0	4	19.1	5	23.8	4	19.1	8	38.0	21	100
1	1	2.9	8	23.6	10	24.4	7	20.6	3	8.8	5	14.7	34	100
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
(b) Non-Respondents														
>3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	40.0	6	60.0	10	100
3	0	0	0	0	2	14.3	2	14.3	5	35.7	5	35.7	14	100
2	0	0	2	4.6	10	22.7	12	27.3	13	29.5	7	15.9	44	100
1	16	6.6	103	42.2	65	26.6	34	14.0	17	7.0	9	3.7	244	100
Total	**17**	**4.4**	**113**	**29.0**	**91**	**23.3**	**61**	**15.6**	**56**	**14.4**	**52**	**13.3**	**390**	**100**

In Table 6.7, it appears that in general, the number of fields increases with the number of nominations. This is evidenced by the fact that 84.6 percent of the respondents with more than 3 nominations and 87.5% of non-respondents were knowledgeable in all three fields, and none in one field of knowledge. Furthermore, except for respondents with 3 nominations, the percentage of opinion leaders who are knowledgeable in three fields, increases with an increase in the number of nominations.

The other factor that has to be considered is that, the percentage of non-respondents with one nomination decreases with an increase in the number of fields, while there is an increase among the respondents. This could be caused by physical accessibility of individuals who were outside the sample, by not having regular contacts with those in the sample.

Table 6. 7: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to three major fields (maize, livestock, other crops) and degree of opinion leadership

	Fields of knowledge						Total	
	1		2		3			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Respondents(number of nominations)								
1	6	18.2	13	39.4	14	42.4	33	100
2	2	10.0	3	15.0	15	75.0	20	100
3	0	0.0	4	40.0	6	60.0	10	100
>3	0	0.0	2	15.4	11	84.6	13	100
(b) Non-respondents								
1	114	48.7	75	32.1	45	19.2	234	100
2	6	13.6	16	36.4	22	50.0	44	100
3	1	7.7	3	23.1	9	69.2	13	100
>3	0	0.0	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
Total	**129**	**34.4**	**117**	**31.2**	**129**	**34.4**	**375**	**100**

In Table 6.8 opinion leaders have been assessed in four fields of knowledge. This includes maize only (1 field), maize and one sub-field (2 fields), maize and two sub-fields (3 fields), and maize and three sub-fields (4 fields).

Table 6. 8: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to maize and the three sub- fields (cultivars, fertilization, diseases) and the number of nominations

	Fields of knowledge									
	1		2		3		4		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Respondents (number of nominations)										
1	8	26.7	9	30.0	6	20.0	7	23.3	30	100
2	0	0	7	33.3	4	19.1	10	47.6	21	100
3	0	0	0	0	3	30.0	7	70.0	10	100
>3	0	0	0	0	2	15.4	11	84.6	13	100
(b) Non-respondents										
1	30	12.7	147	62.0	44	18.6	16	6.7	237	100
2	4	10.0	11	27.5	8	20.0	17	42.5	40	100
3	0	0	1	8.3	3	25.0	8	66.7	12	100
>3	0	0	0	0	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
Total	42	11.3	175	47.2	71	19.1	83	22.4	371	100

It seems the above results still follow more or less the same pattern as in the case of the major fields in Table 6.7, except the fact that among the respondents, there were no opinion leaders with 2 nominations and more who were knowledgeable in one field. Furthermore, there are none with 3 nominations, and more who have less than three fields of knowledge. There is also a consistency of the percentage that increase with the number of nominations for both respondents and non-respondents who are knowledgeable in four fields.

6.6 DECISION MAKING

The need to make decisions, rather than acting instinctively and without thought stems from the uncertain environment facing the human species, coupled with their desires to make rational choice between alternative courses of action (Blackie & Dent, 1979). There is a high possibility that most opinion leaders make important decisions, namely: major decisions and all decisions, because they would not have influence on others if they did not.

In Table 6.9, 93 percent of the respondents made decisions concerning their farming enterprises, and 80.5 percent of them made all decisions, while 7 percent take no decisions. The relationship between decision-making and degree of opinion leadership is significant r =0.135, p =0.05, which indicates that the stronger opinion leaders are

Table 6. 9: Frequency distribution of respondents according to scope of decision making and the degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Type of decision-making	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)											
	0		1		2		3		>3		Totals	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
No decisions	10	8.2	3	8.8	1	4.8	0	0	0	0	14	7
Major decisions	18	14.8	3	8.8	3	14.3	0	0	1	7.7	25	12.5
All decisions	94	77.0	28	82.4	17	80.9	10	100	12	92.3	161	80.5
Totals	122	100	34	100	21	100	10	100	13	100	200	100

r = 0.135, p = 0.05
χ^2 = 5.47, df = 8, p = 0.706

more inclined to take all their decisions themselves. The differences are, however small $\chi^2 = 5.47$, df = 8, p = 0.706, probably due to the limited variation. For example, over 90 percent of the strong opinion leaders with three or more nominations took all decisions themselves, while 77 percent of the followers did the same.

An assumption that individuals who do not make decisions can only be found within the nomination categories of the followers and opinion leaders with medium influence, is supported by the fact that 100 percent of the strong opinion leaders with 3 nominations and above made decisions, while 4.8 percent of those with 2 nominations, 8.8 percent with one nomination, and 8.2 percent of the followers made no decisions. Similarly, more than 92 percent of strong opinion leaders with 3 nominations and above made all decisions, while less than 83 percent of opinion leaders with medium influence had 1-2 nominations made all decisions, and 77 percent of the followers make all decisions. The above results indicate that the stronger the degree of opinion leadership the more are the chances of making all decisions.

In this section, it should however be pointed out that the limitation was to establish whether taking own decisions comes after seeking advice from others or not.

6.7 RECIPROCITY OF CONSULTATIONS

The consultations of the farmers are either one-way or two-way that is they reciprocate in the sense that a person is being consulted, but also consults a person who consulted him. Respondents were asked to nominate three individuals whom they consulted for maize production, and also indicate how many of them who were consulted reciprocated the consultation. The findings are summarized in Table 6.10.

According to the results in Table 6.10, the majority of farmers, that is, 54 percent did not reciprocate the consultations. There is no clear tendency of how the consultations reciprocate in different nomination categories. However, it seems that, with the exception of opinion leaders with three nominations, the chances of not reciprocating the consultations decreased with an increase in the degree of opinion leadership depending on the number of nominations. The majority of respondents of above 70.5

percent with no nominations do not reciprocate the consultations, while 23.1 percent of the strongest opinion leaders with >3 nominations did not reciprocate consultations. These findings offer some support for Hypothesis number 6 which assumes a relationship of reciprocal consultations of opinion leaders and the individuals consulting them.

Table 6. 10: Distribution of respondents according to the degree of reciprocity of the consultations and the degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of the nominations

Degree of consultations reciprocity	Frequency distribution per opinion leadership category (number of nominations)											
	0		1		2		3		>3		Totals	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
0	86	70.5	12	35.3	6	28.6	1	10	3	23.1	108	54.0
1	16	13.1	7	20.6	6	28.6	2	20	4	30.8	35	17.5
2	7	5.7	7	20.6	3	14.2	5	50	3	23.1	25	12.5
3	13	10.7	8	23.5	6	28.6	2	20	3	23.1	32	16.0
Totals	**122**	**100**	**34**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**10**	**100**	**13**	**100**	**200**	**100**

χ^2 = 41.659, df= 12, p= 0.000 r = 0.306, p = 0.000

* column percentage

The Chi-square test value χ^2 = 41.659, df = 12, p = 0.000 and the correlation coefficient r = 0.306, p = 0.000 do indicate that reciprocity of consultations is statistically significant. The high percentages of individuals who do not reciprocate their consultations, is probably in line with the general feeling that, reciprocity of consultations takes place where there is mutual benefit, and in this case the weaker opinion leaders and the followers, have the highest chances of not being consulted by the individuals they previously consulted.

CHAPTER 7

ACCESSIBILITY OF OPINION LEADERS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

It is assumed that somebody with high competence and trustworthiness is likely to influence others, but if that person is not accessible, his potential influence on others may not materialize. It is, therefore likely, that a less competent person with a higher accessibility may have more influence. Both the physical and psychological accessibility are important if influence is to occur.

7.2 PSYCHIC ACCESSIBILITY

The assessment of psychic accessibility of opinion leaders gives an understanding of the social proximity of individuals as far as exchange of information is concerned. It is logical to assume that the presence of opinion leaders directly depends on individuals' willingness to approach and be consulted by fellow-farmers. Leaders with the most influence, according to number of nominations, would be those who are most competent and accessible.

Social proximity can be interpreted as an indicator of least effort (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). For an individual to be an opinion leader, he or she has to be approached by individuals willing to seek his/her advice. The willingness to do this varies in degrees between individuals, and may be experienced to be very easy or more difficult.

In this sub-section, the psychic accessibility of opinion leaders who were consulted for maize production, the quasi opinion leaders, and knowledgeable opinion leaders were investigated.

Table 7. 1: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders, quasi opinion-leaders, and knowledgeable persons according to their degree of psychic accessibility and their degree of leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per degree of psychic accessibility								Total	
	Very low		Low		High		Very high			
	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders N =200 χ^2 = 19.873, df= 9, p = 0.019										
1	2	2.2	7	7.8	48	53.3	33	36.7	90	45
2	0	0	3	7.3	13	31.7	25	61.0	41	20.5
3	0	0	6	22.2	13	48.2	8	29.6	27	13.5
>3	1	2.4	0	0	21	50.0	20	47.6	42	21
Total	3	1.5	16	8	95	47.5	86	43	200	100
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 χ^2 = 9.223, df = 9, p= 0.417										
1	5	5.2	8	8.3	46	47.9	37	38.5	96	48
2	1	2.1	3	6.4	15	31.9	28	59.6	47	23.5
3	2	7.1	2	7.1	15	53.6	9	32.1	28	14.0
>3	1	3.4	4	13.8	12	41.4	12	41.4	29	14.5
Total	9	4.5	17	8.5	88	44.0	86	43.0	200	100
(c) Knowledge leaders N =200 χ^2 = 10.169, df = 9, p = 0.337										
1	8	9.3	6	7.0	42	48.8	30	34.9	86	43.0
2	2	4.0	5	10.0	19	38.0	24	48.0	50	25.0
3	1	5.3	2	10.5	6	31.6	10	52.6	19	9.5
>3	0	0	2	4.4	21	46.7	22	48.9	45	22.5
Totals	**11**	**5.5**	**15**	**7.5**	**88**	**44.0**	**86**	**43.0**	**200**	**100**

* Column percentage

In Table 7.1, 43 percent of all leaders that is opinion, quasi, knowledgeable were very easy to consult, since they were a very highly accessibility. There were significant differences between the strength of opinion leadership with the number of nominations and the assessed accessibility χ^2 = 19.873, df = 9, p = 0.019, but there is

no clear tendency or relationship between strength of opinion leadership and degree of accessibility.

For the assumption that the accessibility of opinion leaders is the highest, followed by the quasi opinion leaders, and finally the knowledgeable individuals, there is no clear evidence, but slight indications. Marginally, most opinion leaders fall in the high and very high accessibility category, than is, the case with the quasi opinion leaders and knowledgeable leaders. This leads to the conclusion that the differences between opinion leaders and quasi opinion leaders was not understood during the interview, or do not exist. The latter would indicate that, unlike what Düvel (1996) found among commercial farmers in South Africa, there is little danger in the Lesotho culture that the wrong opinion leaders are identified. This could be because the knowledge gap between the farmers is not very big, or because there are no accessibility constraints, irrespective of leadership category.

7.3 PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY OF OPINION LEADERS

The general belief is that people in the immediate environment are likely to have more influence than those who are far, because they are physically more accessible when their advice is needed. Therefore, it can be assumed that most opinion leaders are in relatively close proximity of those who consult them.

Rogers and Kincaid (1981) indicated that individuals form network links require the least effort. In Table 7.2, 46.3 percent of all the leaders in the opinion, quasi, knowledgeable were categories within a distance of less than 1 kilometre, while 9.5 percent were located more than 5 kilometres away. The negative correlations $r = -0.043$, $p = 0.546$: $r = -0.106$, $p = 0.135$: $r = -0.175$, $p = 0.013$ suggest that, at least as far as the opinion leaders is concerned, increasing distance is associated with a decreasing number of opinion leaders. For example, 80-89 percent of all the strongest leaders with >3 nominations were within 2 kilometer radius, while 11-20 percent were within 3 or more kilometers. The results are in agreement with Hypothesis 4 of this study, which states that accessibility, both physical and social is a critical dimension of opinion leaders.

Table 7. 2: Frequency distribution of opinion, quasi opinion, and knowledge leaders according to their physical accessibility and their degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per degree of physical accessibility									
	<1km		1-2 km		3-4 km		>5 km		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 χ^2 =2.465, df= 9, p= 0.982 r = - 0.043, p = 0.546										
1	42	46.7	30	33.3	10	11.1	8	8.9	90	45
2	20	48.8	15	36.6	5	12.2	1	2.4	41	20.5
3	13	48.2	9	33.3	3	11.1	2	7.4	27	13.5
>3	20	47.6	16	38.1	4	9.5	2	4.8	42	21
Totals	95	47.5	70	35.0	22	11.0	13	6.5	200	100
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 χ^2 = 14.408, df = 9, p = 0.109 r = -0.106, p = 0.135										
1	38	39.6	35	36.5	7	7.3	16	16.7	96	48.0
2	20	42.6	22	46.8	3	6.4	2	4.3	47	23.5
3	16	57.1	10	35.7	0	0	2	7.1	28	14.0
>3	13	44.8	9	31.0	5	17.2	2	6.9	29	14.5
Totals	87	43.5	76	38.0	15	7.5	22	11.0	200	100
(c) Knowledge leaders n =200 χ^2 =14.879, df= 9, p= 0.094 r = - 0.175, p = 0.013										
1	39	45.3	22	25.6	8	9.3	17	19.8	86	43.0
2	24	48.0	20	40.0	3	6.0	3	6.0	50	25.0
3	8	42.1	8	42.1	2	10.5	1	5.3	19	9.5
>3	25	55.6	15	33.3	4	8.9	1	2.2	45	22.5
Totals	96	48.0	65	32.5	17	8.5	22	11.0	200	100

* column percentage

7.4 FACTORS INFLUENCING ACCESSIBILITY

7.4.1 Social status

Westermarck (1981) indicateds that farmers may not always seek information from those farmers whose advice they value most. Therefore, the expectation would be to

find more farmers consulting opinion leaders of the same status level. Accessibility in relation to social status is summarized in Table 7.3.

Table 7. 3: Frequency distribution of opinion, quasi opinion, and knowledge leaders according to their status level and their degree of accessibility

Leader category (degree of accessibility)	Frequency distribution per status level							
	Lower		Same		Higher		Totals	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 7.408$, df = 6, p = 0.285 r = 0.061 p = 0.387								
Very low (1)	1	4.3	0	0	2	3.5	3	1.5
Low (2)	3	13.0	11	9.2	2	3.5	16	8.0
High (3)	11	47.8	56	46.7	28	49.1	95	47.5
Very high (4)	8	34.8	53	44.2	25	43.9	86	43.0
Totals	**23**	**11.5**	**120**	**60.0**	**57**	**28.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	3.1		3.4		3.3		3.3	
(b) Quasi leaders N = 200 $\chi^2 = 6.250$, df = 6, p = 0.396 r = -0.014 p = 0.842								
Very low (1)	1	3.7	5	4.0	3	6.3	9	4.5
Low (2)	5	18.5	9	7.2	3	6.3	17	8.5
High (3)	10	37.0	53	42.4	25	52.1	88	44.0
Very high (4)	11	40.7	58	46.4	17	35.4	86	43.0
Totals	27	13.5	125	62.5	48	24.0	200	100
Weighted. Mean	**3.1**		**3.3**		**3.2**		**3.4**	
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 14.750$, df = 6, p = 0.022 r = 0.076 p = 0.286								
Very low (1)	4	21.1	4	3.2	3	5.5	11	5.5
Low (2)	2	10.5	7	5.6	6	10.9	15	7.5
High (3)	5	26.3	63	50.0	20	36.4	88	44.0
Very high (4)	8	42.1	52	41.3	26	47.3	86	43.0
Totals	19	8.5	126	63.0	55	27.5	200	100
Weighted. Mean	2.9		3.3		3.3		3.3	

* column percentage

The distribution over the three status categories is very similar in all three leadership categories and also very close to a normal distribution. In general, these findings reveal no relationship between opinion leadership and status. Evidence of this is that a minority, namely 28.5 percent of the respondents consult opinion leaders that have a higher status than their own. Sixty percent consult opinion leaders that have the same status while in a significant number of cases about 11.5 percent of the opinion leaders were rated to have a lower status. The finding that status is not related to opinion leadership is also reflected in the insignificant chi-square value $\chi^2 = 7.408$, df = 6, p = 0.285 and correlation coefficient r = 0.061 p = 0.387. It can, therefore, be concluded that these findings regarding status are not in agreement with those of Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955) and Van den Ban (1981). Also, do not support Hypothesis 4 of the study which says that accessibility is influenced by social status. The fact that status is ostensibly not related to opinion leadership in the Sesotho culture can probably be attributed to the fact that accessibility is no constraint. Evidence of this is that more than 90 percent of the opinion leaders were assessed to have a high or very high accessibility. A competent source is the key factor and is clearly more important than the accessibility.

7.4.2 Gender

Katz & Lazarsfeld (1966) indicated that females always look to males for competence. This could be true especially in agricultural matters, because in most cultures, fields belong to males. The degree of accessibility according to gender is summarized in Table 7.4 below.

As far as the relationship between the strength of leadership and gender is concerned, the non-significant correlations r = -0.045, p= 0.524 and Chi-square values $\chi^2 = 6.263$, df = 3, p = 0.100 suggest that gender is not associated with the strength of leadership, and therefore does not support this part of Hypothesis number 4 which assumes that accessibility, is influenced by gender. The lack of variation with regard to accessibility may be the reason for this.

Table 7. 4: Frequency distribution of opinion, quasi opinion, and knowledge leaders according to their gender and degree of accessibility

Leader category (Degree of accessibility)	Frequency distribution by gender				Totals	
	Male		Female			
	n	%	N	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 χ^2 = 6.263, df =3, p = 0.100 r = -0.045 p = 0.524						
Very low (1)	3	2.4	0	0	3	1.5
Low (2)	6	4.8	10	13.3	16	8.0
High (3)	61	48.8	34	45.3	95	47.5
Very high (4)	55	44.0	31	41.3	86	43.0
Totals*	**125**	**62.5**	**75**	**37.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.3**		**3.3**		**3.3**	
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 χ^2 =0.497, df =3, p = 0.920 r = -0.021 p = 0.766						
Very low (1)	5	3.8	4	5.8	9	4.5
Low (2)	11	8.4	6	8.7	17	8.5
High (3)	59	45.0	29	42.0	88	44.0
Very high (4)	56	42.7	30	43.5	86	43.0
Totals*	**131**	**65.5**	**69**	**34.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.3**		**3.2**		**3.3**	
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 χ^2 = 1.962, df =3, p = 0.580 r = 0.021 p = 0.772						
Very low (1)	9	6.8	2	3.0	11	5.5
Low (2)	10	7.5	5	7.5	15	7.5
High (3)	55	41.4	33	49.3	88	44.0
Very high (4)	59	44.4	27	40.3	86	43.0
Totals*	**133**	**66.5**	**67**	**33.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.2**		**3.3**		**3.2**	

* Row percentage

7.4.3 Friendship

Consultations for advice normally start within the family and extend to those with whom there are close relationships like friendships and are focused on those

individuals who are considered to be competent and trustworthy. Based on this assumption, the expectation is that friends have comparatively high accessibility than other categories. The findings are summarized in Table 7.5 below:

Table 7. 5: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders, quasi opinion and knowledge leaders according to their relationship and degree of accessibility

Leader category (Degree of accessibility)	Frequency distribution per relationship							
	Fellow-farmer		Acquaintance		Friend		Totals	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 χ^2 =49.455, df =6, p = 0.000								
Very low (1)	7	6.3	0	0	2	2.6	9	4.5
Low (2)	5	4.5	0	0	14	17.9	19	9.5
High (3)	67	60.4	5	45.5	11	14.1	83	41.5
Very high (4)	32	28.8	6	54.5	51	65.4	89	44.5
Totals*	**111**	**55.5**	**11**	**5.5**	**78**	**39.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.1**		**3.5**		**3.4**		**3.3**	
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 χ^2 = 34.391, df =6, p = 0.000								
Very low (1)	5	4.4	1	11.1	3	3.8	9	4.5
Low (2)	2	1.8	2	22.1	13	16.7	17	8.5
High (3)	65	57.5	5	55.6	18	23.1	88	44.0
Very high (4)	41	36.3	1	11.1	44	56.1	86	43.0
Totals*	**113**	**56.5**	**9**	**4.5**	**78**	**39.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.3**		**2.7**		**3.3**		**3.3**	
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 χ^2 = 37.855, df = 6, p = 0.000								
Very low (1)	5	4.5	2	12.5	4	5.5	11	5.5
Low (2)	4	3.6	3	18.8	8	11.0	15	7.5
High (3)	68	61.3	6	37.5	14	19.2	88	44.0
Very high (4)	34	30.6	5	31.3	47	64.4	86	43.0
Totals*	**111**	**55.5**	**16**	**8.0**	**73**	**36.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.2**		**2.9**		**3.4**		**3.3**	

* Row percentage

The findings in Table 7.5 confirm the importance of friends and close relatives as influentials. Of all the opinion leaders, they make up about 44 percent. More or less the same applies to the other leadership categories, which does pose some questions regarding the real difference between the categories.

A noteworthy finding is that the friendship relationship is highly significantly correlated with accessibility. Evidence of this are the highly significant Chi-square values (χ^2 =49.455, df =6, p = 0.000; χ^2 = 34.391, df =6, p = 0.000; χ^2 = 37.855, df = 6, p = 0.000). This implies that, although the overall accessibility of all opinion leaders, quasi opinion leaders and knowledge leaders is high, those of friends are even higher. Since friendship appear to be related to family relationships, this implies that the family structure can be used as a focus for diffusion campaigns. These results support Hypothesis 4 which states that accessibility is influenced by friendship.

7.4.4 Education

The level of education can be expected to have influence on whom one consults for advice, because being educated mostly means more knowledge. The findings are summarized in Table 7.6.

It appears from Table 7.6 that 50.5 percent of the opinion leaders have a higher and 30 percent the same level of qualification as the followers or respondents. This represents a certain potential flow of knowledge. However, the fact that almost 20 percent of the opinion leaders were perceived to have a lower qualification than the followers does suggest that education is not the only indicator of credibility.

The fact that more than 50 percent of the opinion leaders have a higher level of education than the followers, indicate that qualification is an important determinant of opinion leadership. However, there is no relationship r = -0.017, p= 0.808 between accessibility and the level of education, which implies that a higher qualification does not make the opinion leaders less or more accessible, and this does not support Hypothesis number 6.

The tendencies with the other leadership categories were very similar. In fact, the close similarity between the leadership categories, questions in a way their validity or existence.

Table 7. 6: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders, quasi opinion and knowledge leaders according to their level of education and their accessibility

Leader category (Degree of accessibility)	Frequency distribution per level of education						Totals	
	Lower		Same		Higher			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 12.22$, df = 6, p = 0.057 r = - 0.017, p= 0.808								
Very low (1)	2	5.1	0	0	1	1.0	3	1.5
Low (2)	0	0	4	6.7	12	11.9	16	8.0
High (3)	23	59.0	26	43.3	46	45.5	95	47.5
Very high (4)	14	35.9	30	50.0	42	41.6	86	43.0
Totals*	**39**	**19.5**	**60**	**30.0**	**101**	**50.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.3**		**3.4**		**3.3**		**3.3**	
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 2.413$, df = 6, p = 0.878 r = - 0.003, p= 0.962								
Very low (1)	1	2.1	5	6.8	3	3.8	9	4.5
Low (2)	4	8.5	5	6.8	8	10.0	17	8.5
High (3)	22	46.8	33	45.2	33	41.3	88	44.0
Very high (4)	20	42.6	30	41.1	36	45.0	86	43.0
Totals*	**47**	**23.5**	**73**	**36.5**	**80**	**40.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.3**		**3.2**		**3.3**		**3.3**	
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 5.346$, df = 6, p = 0.500 r = -0.013, p= 0.850								
Very low (1)	2	4.5	4	5.7	5	5.8	11	5.5
Low (2)	2	4.5	4	5.7	9	10.5	15	7.5
High (3)	24	54.5	33	47.1	31	36.0	88	44.0
Very high (4)	16	36.4	29	41.4	41	47.7	86	43.0
Totals*	**44**	**22.0**	**70**	**35.0**	**86**	**43.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.2**		**3.2**		**3.3**		**3.3**	

* Row percentage

7.5 COSMOPOLITENESS

Cosmopoliteness is one of the ways in which knowledge within a community can be increased, namely through linkages that individuals have with other communities.

Table 7. 7: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders, quasi opinion and knowledge leaders according to their degree of cosmopoliteness and degree of accessibility

Leader category (Degree of accessibility)	Frequency distribution per category of cosmopoliteness							
	Lower		Same		Higher		Totals	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 χ^2 = 4.575, df = 6, p = 0.599 r = 0.123, p= 0.082								
Very low (1)	1	2.4	1	1.1	1	1.4	3	1.5
Low (2)	6	14.3	6	6.7	4	5.8	16	8.0
High (3)	20	47.6	45	50.6	30	43.5	95	47.5
Very high (4)	15	35.7	37	41.6	34	49.3	86	43.0
Totals	**42**	**21.0**	**89**	**44.5**	**69**	**34.5**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.2**		**3.3**		**3.4**		**3.3**	
(b) Quasi leaders N=200 χ^2 =16.082, df = 6, p = 0.013 r = 0.003, p= 0.966								
Very low (1)	1	2.9	3	3.1	5	7.4	9	4.5
Low (2)	6	17.6	2	2.0	9	13.2	17	8.5
High (3)	15	44.1	51	52.0	22	32.4	88	44.0
Very high (4)	12	35.3	42	42.9	32	47.1	86	43.0
Totals	**34**	**17.0**	**98**	**49.0**	**68**	**34.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.1**		**3.3**		**3.2**		**3.4**	
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 χ^2 = 16.148, df = 6, p = 0.013 r = 0.121, p= 0.088								
Very low (1)	3	7.1	4	4.2	4	6.5	11	5.5
Low (2)	6	14.3	3	3.1	6	9.7	15	7.5
High (3)	19	45.2	52	54.2	17	27.4	88	44.0
Very high (4)	14	33.3	37	38.5	35	56.5	86	43.0
Totals	**42**	**21.0**	**96**	**48.0**	**62**	**31.0**	**200**	**100**
Weighted. Mean	**3.0**		**3.3**		**3.3**		**3.4**	

* Column percentage

Very often, the more cosmopolite individuals have reference groups outside the community can be expected to be less accessible to members within the community.

Because the cosmopoliteness was determined in relative rather than absolute terms, the scope of it in the Lesotho communities cannot be easily assessed. It is, however, worth mentioning that about 34.5 percent of the opinion leaders are regarded to be more cosmopolite than their followers.

There is only a weak indication of a relationship with $r = 0.123$ and $p= 0.082$ between cosmopoliteness and opinion leadership. However it is opposite to what normally would have been expected. Instead of an increased cosmopoliteness being associated with a decreased accessibility, the findings – although not statistically significant – tend to indicate the opposite, which is in fact, does not support Hypothesis 4. A possible reason for this is that accessibility is not a serious constraint and that the limited variation in terms of accessibility does not allow conclusive findings.

CHAPTER 8

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The environmental factors, such as farming efficiency and the scale of operations and the personal factors namely: gender and educational background are believed to have an influence in opinion leadership. These factors are all assessed individually below in order to compare whether the level of the opinion leaders is lower, the same, or higher than that of their followers. The comparison will be done in relation to the degree of opinion leadership in each leadership category.

8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

8.2.1 Farming Efficiency

Farming efficiency could be believed to be having a relationship with opinion leadership, because individuals normally consult those who achieve better results. Respondents were asked to compare their farming efficiency with that of the people they consult for advice, and indicate whether it was lower, the same or higher than their own. These findings, related to the different leadership categories, are summarized in Table 8.1.

The findings in Table 8.1 indicate the general tendency of the majority of the followers to consult opinion leaders with the same or higher farming efficiency as their own. This partially supports Hypothesis 6, which assumes a homophilous relationship between opinion leader and follower.

Table 8. 1: Frequency distribution of consulting opinion leaders according to their level of farming efficiency and degree of opinion leadership

Leader category(number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per level of farming efficiency							
	Lower		Same		Higher		Totals	
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders: N=200 χ^2 = 4.821, df=6, p = 0.567 r = 0.013 p = 0.851								
1	4	66.7	54	43.2	32	46.4	90	45.0
2	0	0	30	24.0	11	15.9	41	20.5
3	1	16.7	14	11.2	12	17.4	27	13.5
>3	1	16.7	27	21.6	14	20.3	42	21.0
Totals *	**6**	**3.0**	**125**	**62.5**	**69**	**34.5**	**200**	**100**
(b) Quasi leaders: N=200 χ^2 =16.983, df=6, p = 0.009 r = -0.066 p = 0.354								
1	21	42.0	35	44.3	40	56.3	96	48.0
2	9	18.0	28	35.4	10	14.1	47	23.5
3	9	18.0	11	13.9	8	11.3	28	14.0
>3	11	22.0	5	6.3	13	18.3	29	14.5
Totals *	**50**	**25.0**	**79**	**39.5**	**71**	**35.5**	**200**	**100**
(c) knowledge leaders: N=200 χ^2 =10.983, df=6, p = 0.089 r = 0.049 p = 0.495								
1	30	58.8	27	35.5	29	39.7	86	43.0
2	6	11.8	23	30.3	21	28.8	50	25.0
3	3	5.9	10	13.2	6	8.2	19	9.5
>3	12	23.5	16	21.1	17	23.3	45	22.5
Totals *	**51**	**25.5**	**76**	**38.0**	**73**	**36.5**	**200**	**100**

* row percentage

The findings in Table 8.1 indicate that there is no relationship between farming efficiency and the degree of opinion leadership χ^2 = 4.821, df = 6, p = 0.567 and r = 0.013, p = 0.851. The fact that hardly any opinion leaders with a "lower than own" farming efficiency were nominated (3%) as opposed to knowledge leaders (25.5%) could be an indication that the knowledge leaders were much less important than opinion leaders. A possible explanation for this is that opinion leaders tend to be

polymorphic rather monomorphic and consequently maize farming efficiency may be only one of several considerations.

8.2.2 Scale of operation

It is a normal practice for people who are more competent in a farming enterprise, to diversify their production area through farm rentals or engagement in a sharecropping system with those who are less competent and can no longer afford to farm on their own. The stronger opinion leaders would therefore be expected to be operating on a relatively larger scale of diversification than their followers. The findings are summarized in Table 8.2.

Table 8. 2: Frequency distribution of consulting opinion leaders according to their scale of operation and degree of opinion leadership

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per scale of operation						Totals	
	Lower		Same		Higher			
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders: N=200 χ^2 = 10.047, df=6, p = 0.123 r = 0.023 p = 0.751								
1	16	39.0	49	51.0	25	39.7	90	45.0
2	6	14.6	23	24.0	12	19.0	41	20.5
3	5	12.2	11	11.5	11	17.5	27	13.5
>3	14	34.1	13	13.5	15	23.8	42	21.0
Totals *	41	20.5	96	48.0	63	31.5	200	100
(b) Quasi leaders: N=200 χ^2 =5.638, df=6, p =0.465 r =0.046 p = 0.522								
1	21	53.8	39	47.0	36	46.2	96	48.0
2	5	12.8	25	30.1	17	21.8	47	23.5
3	7	17.9	9	10.8	12	15.4	28	14.0
>3	6	15.4	10	12.0	13	16.7	29	14.5
Totals *	39	19.5	83	41.5	78	39.0	200	100
(c) knowledge leaders: N=200 χ^2 =3.548, df=6, p =0.738 r =-0.004 p =0.953								
1	16	39.0	40	44.4	30	43.5	86	43.0
2	10	24.4	23	25.6	17	24.6	50	25.0
3	4	9.8	11	12.2	4	5.8	19	9.5
>3	11	26.8	16	17.8	18	26.1	45	22.5
Totals *	41	20.5	90	45.0	69	34.5	200	100

* row percentage

The findings in Table 8.2 do indicate the general tendency of opinion leaders to operate mostly on the same scale as their followers in all the leader categories that is opinion, quasi, knowledge. As far as opinion leadership is concerned, more than 40 percent of the opinion leaders operate on the same scale and 31.5 percent on a higher scale of operation than their followers. Similar tendencies are found regarding quasi opinion leaders, but the level of operation is not related to the degree of opinion leadership r = 0.023, p = 0.751. Based on this, it can be concluded that the scale of operation is in contradiction with Hypothesis number 2, and not an important determinant of opinion leadership. This could be attributed to the situation in Lesotho, where individuals keep their land to maintain ownership, even when farming is no longer profitable for them.

8.3 PERSONAL FACTORS

8.3.1 Gender

In societies where fields are regarded to be belonging to males, it could be expected to find less females taking part in farming. Therefore, based on this fact, the question is whether both sexes feature equally prominent as opinion leaders (Adupa & Düvel, 1999). The results are summarized in Table 8.3.

The results in Table 8.3 indicate that male opinion leaders were more prominent than female opinion leaders. More than 60 percent of leaders, in all leader categories were males, while less than 40 percent were females.

The mere limited role of female opinion leaders is also evident from the fact that, there is a negative relationship between the degree of opinion leadership and gender r = - 0.190, p = 0. 007. This means that the stronger the opinion leadership, the less do the female farmers feature. Similar tendencies are found in the case of quasi opinion leaders r = - 0.159, p = 0.024 and knowledge leaders r = - 0.176, p = 0.013. The results support Hypothesis 4, which says that accessibility is influenced by gender.

Table 8. 3: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to their gender and degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per gender				Total	
	Male		Female			
	N	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders: N =200 χ^2 = 15.950, df = 3, p = 0.001 r = -0.190, p = 0.007						
1	54	43.2	36	48.0	90	45.0
2	18	14.4	23	30.7	41	20.5
3	17	13.6	10	13.3	27	13.5
>3	36	28.8	6	8.0	42	21.0
Totals*	**125**	**62.5**	**75**	**37.5**	**200**	**100**
(b) Quasi leaders : N =200 χ^2 = 6.393, df = 3, p = 0.094 r = -0.159, p = 0.024						
1	58	44.3	38	55.1	96	48.0
2	28	21.4	19	27.5	47	23.5
3	22	16.8	6	8.7	28	14.0
>3	23	17.6	6	8.7	29	14.5
Totals*	**131**	**65.5**	**69**	**34.5**	**200**	**100**
(c) Knowledgeable leaders: N = 200 χ^2 = 15.550, df = 3, p = 0.001 r = -0.176, p = 0.013						
1	56	42.1	30	44.8	86	43.0
2	26	19.5	24	35.8	50	25.0
3	11	8.3	8	11.9	19	9.5
>3	40	30.1	5	7.5	45	22.5
Totals*	**133**	**66.5**	**67**	**33.5**	**200**	**100**

* Row percentage

The question that arises is whether female farmers are more inclined to consult opinion leaders of their own gender or not. The situation in this regard is summarized in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 shows clear differences in this regard χ^2 = 3.810, df = 1, p = 0.051. While 33.3 percent male farmers consulted female opinion leaders, 48.2 percent female farmers consulted female opinion leaders. This leads to the conclusion that, although

female opinion leaders are not as important, they are relatively more important for female farmers than male farmers, and cannot be ignored in diffusion processes.

Table 8. 4: Frequency distribution of respondents consultations by gender in relation to the opinion leaders' gender

Leader category (Gender)	Frequency distribution per respondents gender				Totals	
	Male		Female			
	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 χ^2 = 3.810, df = 1, p = 0.051 r =0.138 p= 0.051						
Male	96	66.7	29	51.8	125	62.5
Female	48	33.3	27	48.2	75	37.5
Totals	**144**	**72.0**	**56**	**28.0**	**200**	**100**

* Column percentage

8.3.2 Education

A relatively higher educational level, normally makes individuals to be more informed than those who have lower or no formal education because they read more. The general assumption could be that opinion leaders have a higher level of educational background than their followers.

The results in Table 8.5 indicate a general tendency of opinion leaders in all their categories namely opinion, quasi, knowledge, to be having a higher educational level than their followers. For example, 50.5 percent of the leaders in the opinion leader category have higher educational background than their followers, 30 percent the same level, and 19.5 percent a lower level. This supports Hypothesis number 4.

There is however, no clear tendency between the level of education and the degree of opinion leadership based on the number of nominations, r = - 0.028, p = 0.698.

Table 8. 5: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders, quasi opinion leaders, and knowledge leaders according to the degree of opinion leadership, and the level of education compared to respondents

Leader category (Number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per educational level						Totals	
	Lower		Same		Higher			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%*
(a) Opinion leaders : N = 200 χ^2 = 5.262, df = 6, p = 0.511 r = -0.028 p =0.698								
1	20	51.3	22	36.7	48	47.5	90	45.0
2	5	12.8	15	25.0	21	20.8	41	20.5
3	5	12.8	7	11.7	15	14.9	27	13.5
>3	9	23.1	16	26.7	17	16.8	42	21.0
Totals *	**39**	**19.5**	**60**	**30.0**	**101**	**50.5**	**200**	**100**
(b) Quasi leaders: N =200 χ^2 =,11.151 df =6, p = 0.084 r = 0.076 p =0.283								
1	26	55.3	30	41.1	40	50.0	96	48.0
2	12	25.5	23	31.5	12	15.0	47	23.5
3	2	4.3	10	13.7	16	20.0	28	14.0
>3	7	14.9	10	13.7	12	15.0	29	14.5
Totals *	**47**	**23.5**	**73**	**36.5**	**80**	**40.0**	**200**	**100**
(c) Knowledgeable leaders N = 200 χ^2 = 11.817, df =6, p = 0.066 r = -0.080 p =0.260								
1	18	40.9	23	32.9	45	52.3	86	43.0
2	11	25.0	17	24.3	22	25.6	50	25.0
3	7	15.9	7	10.0	5	5.8	19	9.5
>3	8	18.2	23	32.9	14	16.3	45	22.5
Totals *	**44**	**22.0**	**70**	**35.0**	**86**	**43.0**	**200**	**100**

* column percentage

CHAPTER 9

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL FACTORS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

It is generally believed that opinion leadership is a function of a large number of personal and environmental factors that are assumed to be important in understanding the influence of opinion leadership.

9.2 FRIENDSHIP

Düvel (1996) found a strong positive relationship between friendship and opinion leadership when investigating the possibility of using friendship as an indicator of opinion leadership. In this section, friendship will be assessed in relation to the impact that it has on the degree of opinion leadership. The findings are summarized in Table 9.1.

The results in Table 9.1 indicate that the over half, 55 – 56 percent of the opinion leaders in all the leadership categories fall into the category of fellow-farmers. However, a high percentage of about 39 percent of the consultations that are based on friendship, does indicate the high level of influence that friendship has in opinion leadership. This together with the phenomenon that only 5.5 percent are assessed as mere acquaintances, emphasizes the importance of friendship in opinion leadership Hypothesis number 4.

The negative correlation between friendship, that is closeness of relationships and opinion leadership, $r = -0.138$, $p = 0.05$ does however indicate that the stronger opinion leaders appear to be less closely related. This does suggest that the more important or influential opinion leaders tend to be found beyond the inner circle of friends.

Table 9. 1: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to the relationship with the followers

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per relationship with opinion leaders						Total	
	Fellow-farmers		Acquaintances		Friends			
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N= 200 χ^2 = 12.610, df = 6, p=0.050 r = -0.138 p = 0.051								
1	47	42.3	6	54.5	37	47.4	90	45.0
2	16	14.4	3	27.3	22	28.2	41	20.5
3	19	17.1	2	18.2	6	7.7	27	13.5
>3	29	26.1	0	0	13	16.7	42	21.0
Totals *	**111**	**55.5**	**11**	**5.5**	**78**	**39.0**	**200**	**100**
(b) Quasi leaders N = 200 χ^2 =4.915, df = 6, p=0.555 r = -0.061 p = 0.394								
1	53	46.9	3	33.3	40	51.3	96	48.0
2	26	23.0	1	11.1	20	25.6	47	23.5
3	17	15.0	2	22.2	9	11.5	28	14.0
>3	17	15.0	3	33.3	9	11.5	29	14.5
Totals *	**113**	**56.5**	**9**	**4.5**	**78**	**39.0**	**200**	**100**
(c) Knowledge leaders N=200 χ^2 =9.819, df = 6, p=0.133 r = -0.124 p = 0.081								
1	42	37.8	10	62.5	34	46.6	86	43.0
2	29	26.1	1	6.3	20	27.4	50	25.0
3	9	8.1	3	18.8	7	9.6	19	9.5
>3	31	27.9	2	12.5	12	16.4	45	22.5
Totals *	**111**	**55.5**	**16**	**8.0**	**73**	**36.5**	**200**	**100**

* row percentage

9.3 SOCIAL STATUS

Van den Ban (1981) indicated that status is a very important factor in opinion leadership, especially in developing countries. Therefore, it could be assumed that, the stronger the opinion leadership, the higher the social status in comparison to that of the followers. The findings are summarized in Table 9.2.

Table 9. 2: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to their social status and degree of opinion leadership as reflected in the number of nominations

Leader category (number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per social status						Totals	
	Lower		Same		Higher			
	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 11.280$, df = 6, p = 0.080 r = 0.086 p = 0.227								
1	11	47.8	52	43.3	27	47.4	90	45.0
2	5	21.7	29	24.2	7	12.3	41	20.5
3	4	17.4	19	15.8	4	7.0	27	13.5
>3	3	13.0	20	16.7	19	33.3	42	21.0
Totals *	**23**	**11.5**	**120**	**60.0**	**57**	**28.5**	**200**	**100**

* row percentage

The results in Table 9.2 indicate that around 60% of the opinion leaders in all the leadership categories have the same social status as their followers, followed by those with a higher social status of about 28.5 percent and those who are lower recording 11.5 percent. There is no clear tendency of social status being associated with the degree of opinion leadership, which is in agreement with the findings regarding accessibility as observed in Chapter 7, subsection 7.4.1, and suggests that the social status is not a constraint when consulting opinion leaders, and therefore does not agree with Hypothesis number 2, which suggests that social status has an influence on opinion leadership.

9.4 COSMOPOLITENESS

It is generally believed that opinion leaders have greater cosmopoliteness than their followers. Three levels of cosmopoliteness namely, lower, same, and higher have been used in the assessment, and these are summarized in Table 9.3.

The results in Table 9.3 indicate that the majority of the opinion leaders in all three categories namely opinion, quasi, knowledge have the same cosmopoliteness as their

followers, namely 44.5 percent in the case of opinion leaders, 49 percent in the case of quasi opinion leaders, and 48 percent in the case of the knowledge leaders.

Table 9. 3: Frequency distribution of opinion leaders according to their cosmopoliteness and degree of opinion leadership

Leader category(number of nominations)	Frequency distribution per cosmopoliteness						Totals	
	Lower		Same		Higher			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
(a) Opinion leaders N=200 $\chi^2 = 3.492$, df = 6, p = 0.745 r = 0.093 p = 0.191								
1	22	52.4	39	43.8	29	42.0	90	45.0
2	9	21.4	18	20.2	14	20.3	41	20.5
3	4	9.5	15	16.9	8	11.6	27	13.5
>3	7	16.7	17	19.1	18	26.1	42	21.0
Totals *	**42**	**21.0**	**89**	**44.5**	**69**	**34.5**	**200**	**100**
(b) Quasi leaders N = 200 $\chi^2 = 5.077$, df = 6, p = 0.534 r = 0.103 p = 0.145								
1	19	55.9	47	48.0	30	44.1	96	48.0
2	7	20.6	27	27.6	13	19.1	47	23.5
3	3	8.8	13	13.3	12	17.6	28	14.0
>3	5	14.7	11	11.2	13	19.1	29	14.5
Totals *	**34**	**17.0**	**98**	**49.0**	**68**	**34.0**	**200**	**100**
(c) Knowledge leaders N =200 $\chi^2 = 10.139$, df = 6, p = 0.119 r = 0.128 p = 0.071								
1	23	54.8	36	37.5	27	43.5	86	43.0
2	13	31.0	23	24.0	14	22.6	50	25.0
3	2	4.8	13	13.5	4	6.5	19	9.5
>3	4	9.5	24	25.0	17	27.4	45	22.5
Totals *	**42**	**21.0**	**96**	**48.0**	**62**	**31.0**	**200**	**100**

* row percentage

There appears to be no relationship between cosmopoliteness and the degree of opinion leadership in all three leader categories, $\square^2$ = 3.492, df = 6, p = 0.745: $\square^2$ = 077, df = 6, p = 0.534: $\square^2$ = 10.139, df = 6, p = 0.119, although indications of this are found among the knowledge leaders, where stronger knowledge leaders tend

to be more cosmopolite. It does seem that cosmopoliteness is not an important factor among farmers in this area, or their cosmopoliteness does not relate to farming but other issues. The results regarding cosmopoliteness do not provide evidence in support of Hypothesis number 2.

CHAPTER 10

10.1 CONCLUSIONS

Opinion leaders are important sources of information and fulfill an important function in the diffusion of agricultural information. The importance can be deduced from respondents' use of various sources of information. Opinion leaders or fellow farmers is one of the most frequently used sources, and is only surpassed by the radio, which can be attached to the governments' policy of daily presentation of agricultural programs.

Using a number of nominations as an indication of leadership, the findings clearly suggest that opinion leadership is a relative concept and that the degree of influence varies. This supports the first hypothesis that opinion leaders differ according to the degree of influence they exert on other people.

Significant evidence was found in support of Hypothesis 2, namely that opinion leadership is influenced by certain personal and environmental factors. One of these factors is age, and although there is no clear correlation with the degree of opinion leadership, it appears that opinion leaders, in order to have a strong influence, must be at least 50 years of age and married.

Formal education has no influence on opinion leaders in the study area, which is somewhat in contradiction with the findings of the other researchers, and can be attributed to the fact that education is not yet regarded so highly or that the prevailing levels are not high enough to differentiate.

Environmental factors like the scale of the farming operation, and the degree of reliance on farming as a source of income, have no significance, but as far as farming efficiency is concerned, respondents tended to consult opinion leaders with a higher efficiency than their own.

As far as gender is concerned, male opinion leaders seem to be favoured by respondents. This applies particularly to male farmers, but even female farmers tended to consult more males than females, although the difference is not as big.

Competence and accessibility appear to be key dimensions of opinion leadership. Due to an oversight the influence of knowledge was not properly analysed, but the mere fact that more than 51 percent of the opinion leaders were assessed to be very knowledgeable, emphasized its importance.

The importance of physical accessibility (assumed to be a function of distance) is emphasized by the finding that 85 percent of the strongest opinion leaders reside within a distance of less than 2 kilometres from the followers. The lack of variation in psychic accessibility did not allow a clear conclusion regarding its role in opinion leadership. Ninety percent of all opinion leaders were, for example, assessed to have a high or very high accessibility, which implies that accessibility is not a constraint. This is further illustrated by the fact that, unlike the finding of Düvel (1996), no significant difference in accessibility was found between the opinion leaders, the quasi opinion leaders, and the knowledge leaders.

A noteworthy finding is that the friendship relationship is highly significantly correlated with accessibility. This implies that, although the overall accessibility of all opinion leaders, quasi opinion leaders and knowledge leaders is high, those of friends are even higher. Since friendship appear to be related to family relationships, this implies that the family structure can be used a focus for diffusion campaigns.

The findings that social status had no influence on accessibility, is also in contradiction with the findings Düvel (1996), but can be attributed to the limited variation regarding accessibility or the fact that it is not a constraint in the Lesotho culture. The latter seems to be in agreement with Düvel & Adupa (1996) finding from Uganda and could indicate that black cultures are more open, allowing free access between the different status categories.

In general the opinion leaders are of polymorphic type and seem to be consulted over a wide variety of subjects or commodities. Although there are indications of the

stronger leaders being more involved in reciprocative consultations, this tendency is much less pronounced than what Düvel (1996) found among commercial farmers in South Africa.

The clear resemblance between these findings and those from black small scale farmers in Uganda (Düvel, 1996) as opposed to significant difference with those from white commercial farmers in South Africa, does suggest the opinion leadership has clear cultural dimensions. However, to fully exploit the use of opinion leaders in the diffusion of information and innovations, more research will be required.

10.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

With the tremendous challenges facing extension in the field of agricultural and rural development, in Lesotho every possibility to improve the extension delivery and impact must be investigated. It is in this context that the use of opinion leaders deserves special attention, especially, also, in view of their importance as suggested by the findings of this study.

Although many questions are still unanswered, there is already enough evidence to encourage the use of opinion leaders. The apparent reason for this is the almost complete absence of accessibility in the black cultures.

With accessibility not being a significant constraint, competence or knowledge becomes the critical factor. This study failed to give sufficient attention to this issue, and consequently, more research is called for, especially regarding the following issues or questions:

A comparison of frequency and value of information in the context of opinion leadership.

A further analysis of the concept of friendship as a dimension of accessibility and opinion leadership, and the comparative importance of the family ties within the extended family.

Finding better and more refined measures for quantifying the degree of influence of opinion leadership.

More detailed analysis of the type of opinion leaders in respect of polymorphism, the comparative role of formal and tribal leaders as well as the occurrence and distribution of negative opinion leaders.

The occurrence of social cliques and the potential use and limitations of opinion leaders in penetrating the cliques or cells and in diffusion of information and influence within them.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

A. PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME _____

RESPONDENT NUMBER ---------- [ ][ ][ ] V1

ENUMERATOR …….. (1)
…… (2) [ ] V2
…… (3)

VILLAGE : QEME (1) [ ] V3

SEX: MALE (1) [ ] V4
FEMALE (2)

1. How old are you ?
(age as of the last birthday) [ ] V5

1.1
< 30 years (1)
31 - 40 years (2)
41 - 50 years (3) [ ] V6
51 - 60 years (4)
61 - 70 years (5)
> 70 years (6)

1.2
Knows age (1)
Uncertain (2
Age judged - does not know (3) [ ] V7
Age judged - refused (4)

2. What is your marital status?

Married (1)
Divorced (2) [ ] V8
Widow (3)
Widower (4)
Single (5)

3. How many years of formal education have you completed? ☐ V9

Nil	(1)
< 4years	(2)
4 - 7 years	(3)
8 - 10 years	(4)
11 - 12 years	(5)
> 12 years	(6)

☐ V10

4. To what degree do you make decisions concerning production of maize in your household?

All decisions	(3)
Major decisions	(2)
No decisions	(1)

☐ V11

5. What percentage of your income comes from farming? ☐ V12

100%	(5)
75 - 99%	(4)
50 - 74%	(3)
25 - 49%	(2)
<25%	(1)

☐ V13

6. What are your three major sources of income? (indicate the sources of income and their percentages in the boxes provided below the highest percentage under 3 the second under 2 and the lowest under 1)

Full-time farming	(7)
Part-time farming	(6)
Trading	(5)
Full-time occupation	(4)
Part-time occupatio	(3)
Other (specify) ….	(2)
None	(1)

	3	2	1	
source of income				V14 - V16
Percentage				V17 - V19

B. HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

7. How many hectares is your farm ? ☐ V20

Use the scale below to indicate the size

>21 hectares	(6)
16 - 20 hectares	(5)
11 -15 hectares	(4)
6 -10 hectares	(3)
1 -5 hectares	(2)
<1 hectare	(1)

☐ V21

7.1 How many hectares did you use for maize production this year? ☐ V22

>21 hectares	(6)
16 - 20 hectares	(5)
11 -15 hectares	(4)
6 -10 hectares	(3)
1 -5 hectares	(2)
<1 hectare	(1)

☐ V23

7.2. How many hectares of other crops did you plant this year? ☐ V24

- Sorghum ☐ V25
- Beans ☐ V26
- Wheat ☐ V27
- Other (specify) ☐ V28

7.3 How many bags of maize did you consume or sell this year? ☐ V29

7.4 How many bags of maize did you harvest this year? ☐ V30

Total number of bags per hectare (7.1/7.3) ☐ V31

7.5 Use the scale below to indicate the type of your maize production.

Commercial	(3)
Commercial and subsistance	(2)
Subsistance	(1)

☐ V32

7.6 What percentage of your farm income comes from selling maize? ☐ V33

100%	(6)
70 - 99%	(5)
50 - 69%	(4)
30 - 49%	(3)
10 - 29%	(2)
<10%	(1)

☐ V34

7.7 What is the total number of livestock do you have? ☐ V35

- large stock ☐ V36
- small stock ☐ V37

C. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

8. Indicate the frequency at which you consult each of the following sources for:- (a) advice (b) maize production
(The responses should be calculated based on a year)

		(a)		(b)
(a)Extension agent. …….	V38	☐	V43	☐
(b) Research station ……	V39	☐	V44	☐
(c) Radio……..	V40	☐	V45	☐
(d) Printed media……..	V41	☐	V46	☐
(e) Fellow farmers……	V42	☐	V47	☐

8.1 Rate the sources of information according to the quality of information they provide you with when you need it for maize production.

		V48	V49	V50	V51	V52	V53
Extension agent	(1)						
Research station	(2)	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Radio	(3)						
Printed media	(4)						
Fellow farmer (opinion leader)	(5)						
Other (specify)……	(6)						

D. PEOPLE YOU CONSULT FOR ADVICE

.

i. Who would you consult when you need advice on maize production?

(1)……..	V54
(2)……..	V55
(3)……..	V56

ii. Who do you regard as very knowledgeable regarding maize production?

(1)……..	V57
(2)……..	V58
(3)……..	V59

iii. Who do you actually consult when you need advice on maize production?

(1)……..	V60
(2)……..	V61
(3)……..	V62

iv. Who do you consult for advice concerning the following:

(a) Choice of maize cultivars

(1)…… ☐ V63

(2)…… ☐ V64

(3)…… ☐ V65

(b) Fertilization

(1)…… ☐ V66

(2)…… ☐ V67

(3)…… ☐ V68

(c) Pest and disease control

(1)…… ☐ V69

(2)…… ☐ V70

(3)…… ☐ V71

v. Whom do you consult for advice on livestock enterprises?

(1)…… ☐ V72

(2)…… ☐ V73

(3)…… ☐ V74

vi. Whom do you consult when you need advice on other crops?

(1)…….. ☐ V75

(2)…….. ☐ V76

(3)……. ☐ V77

vii. Do people that you consult for advice also consult you for advice? Lets take the example of Thabo:

(a) How often did you consult him during the last year?

(b) How often did he consult you during the last year?

Fill only the boxes provided under (a) and (b) the ratios will be calculated by the researcher.)

		(a)	(b)	
0 : 5	(1)	☐	☐	☐ V78
1 : 5	(2)			
2 : 5	(3)	☐	☐	☐ V79
3 : 5	(4)			
4 : 5	(5)	☐	☐	☐ V80
5 : 5	(6)			
5 : 4	(7)			
5 : 3	(8)			
5 : 2	(9)			
5 : 1	(10)			
5 : 0	(11)			

(vii) If you were asked to give the names of farmers who regularly consult you or seek your advice, who would they be?

(1)…….. ☐ V81

(2)…….. ☐ V82

(3)…….. ☐ V83

Nominee number…… ☐☐☐ **V84**

D.1 (a) People you consult for advice

i. Sex

Male (1)
Female (2) ☐ V85

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband (5)
wife (4)
close friend (3)
distant relative (2)
none (1) ☐ V86

iii. Friendship

Best friend (4)
Good friend (3)
Acquaintance (2)
Fellow farmer (1) ☐ V87

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice (4)
Easy to consult for advice (3)
Difficult to consult for advice (2) ☐ V88
Very difficult to consult for advice (1)

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km (4)
3 - 4 km (3) ☐ V89
1 - 2 km (2)
< 1km (1)

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent (5)
Higher than that of respondent (4)
Same level as that of respondent (3) ☐ V90
Lower than that of respondent (2)
Much lower than that of respondent (1)

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V91
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V92
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V93
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V94
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number……. ☐☐☐ V95

D.1 (b) People you consult for advice

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V96

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)	
wife	(4)	
close friend	(3)	☐ V97
distant relative	(2)	
none	(1)	

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)	
Good friend	(3)	☐ V98
Acquaintance	(2)	
Fellow farmer	(1)	

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)	
Easy to consult for advice	(3)	
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)	☐ V99
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)	

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km (4)	
3 - 4 km (3)	☐ V100
1 - 2 km (2)	
< 1km (1)	

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)	
Higher than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V101
Lower than that of respondent	(2)	
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)	

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V102
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V103
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V104
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V105
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number……. ☐☐☐ **V106**

D.1 c) People you consult for advice

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V107

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)	
wife	(4)	
close friend	(3)	☐ V108
distant relative	(2)	
none	(1)	

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)	
Good friend	(3)	☐ V109
Acquaintance	(2)	
Fellow farmer	(1)	

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)	
Easy to consult for advice	(3)	
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)	☐ V110
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)	

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km	(4)	
3 - 4 km	(3)	☐ V111
1 - 2 km	(2)	
< 1km	(1)	

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)	
Higher than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V112
Lower than that of respondent	(2)	
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)	

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V113
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V114
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V115
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V116
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number…… ☐☐☐ **V117**

D.1 (d) People you consult for advice

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V118

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)	
wife	(4)	
close friend	(3)	☐ V119
distant relative	(2)	
none	(1)	

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)	
Good friend	(3)	☐ V120
Acquaintance	(2)	
Fellow farmer	(1)	

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)	
Easy to consult for advice	(3)	
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)	☐ V121
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)	

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km	(4)
3 - 4 km	(3)
1 - 2 km	(2)
< 1km	(1)

☐ V122

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)
Higher than that of respondent	(4)
Same level as that of respondent	(3)
Lower than that of respondent	(2)
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)

☐ V123

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)
Same level as that of respondent	(3)
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)

☐ V124

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)
Higher than respondent	(4)
Same as respondent	(3)
Lower than respondent	(2)
Much lower than respondent	(1)

☐ V125

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)
Higher than respondent	(4)
Same as respondent	(3)
Lower than respondent	(2)
Much lower than respondent	(1)

☐ V126

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)
Higher than respondent	(4)
Same as respondent	(3)
Lower than respondent	(2)
Much lower than respondent	(1)

☐ V127

Nominee number…… | | | | **V128**

D.1 (e) People you consult for advice

i. Sex

Male (1)
Female (2) | | V129

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband (5)
wife (4)
close friend (3)
distant relative (2)
none (1) | | V130

iii. Friendship

Best friend (4)
Good friend (3)
Acquaintance (2)
Fellow farmer (1) | | V131

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice (4)
Easy to consult for advice (3)
Difficult to consult for advice (2)
Very difficult to consult for advice (1) | | V132

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km (4)
3 - 4 km (3)
1 - 2 km (2)
< 1km (1) | | V133

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent (5)
Higher than that of respondent (4)
Same level as that of respondent (3)
Lower than that of respondent (2)
Much lower than that of respondent (1) | | V134

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V135
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V136
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V137
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V138
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number ☐☐☐ **V139**

D.2 (a) People who consult you for advice

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V140

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)	
wife	(4)	
close friend	(3)	☐ V141
distant relative	(2)	
none	(1)	

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)	
Good friend	(3)	☐ V142
Acquaintance	(2)	
Fellow farmer	(1)	

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)	
Easy to consult for advice	(3)	
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)	☐ V143
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)	

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km	(4)	
3 - 4 km	(3)	☐ V144
1 - 2 km	(2)	
< 1km	(1)	

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)	
Higher than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V145
Lower than that of respondent	(2)	
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)	

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V146
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V147
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V148
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V149
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number ☐☐☐ **V150**

D.2 (b) <u>People who consult you for advice</u>

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V151

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)	
wife	(4)	
close friend	(3)	☐ V152
distant relative	(2)	
none	(1)	

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)	
Good friend	(3)	☐ V153
Acquaintance	(2)	
Fellow farmer	(1)	

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)	
Easy to consult for advice	(3)	
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)	☐ V154
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)	

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km	(4)	☐ V155
3 - 4 km	(3)	
1 - 2 km	(2)	
< 1km	(1)	

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)	
Higher than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V156
Lower than that of respondent	(2)	
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)	

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V157
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V158
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V159
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V160
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number | | | | **V161**

D.2 (c) People who consult you for advice

i. Sex

Male (1)
Female (2) | V162

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband (5)
wife (4)
close friend (3)
distant relative (2)
none (1) | V163

iii. Friendship

Best friend (4)
Good friend (3)
Acquaintance (2)
Fellow farmer (1) | V164

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice (4)
Easy to consult for advice (3)
Difficult to consult for advice (2)
Very difficult to consult for advice (1) | V165

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km (4)
3 - 4 km (3)
1 - 2 km (2)
< 1km (1) | V166

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent (5)
Higher than that of respondent (4)
Same level as that of respondent (3)
Lower than that of respondent (2)
Much lower than that of respondent (1) | V167

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)	
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)	
Same level as that of respondent	(3)	☐ V168
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)	
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)	

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V169
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V170
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V171
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

Nominee number ☐☐☐ **V172**

D.2 People who consult you for advice

i. Sex

Male	(1)	
Female	(2)	☐ V177

ii. Kinship/relationship

Husband	(5)
wife	(4)
close friend	(3)
distant relative	(2)
none	(1)

☐ V178

iii. Friendship

Best friend	(4)
Good friend	(3)
Acquaintance	(2)
Fellow farmer	(1)

☐ V179

iv. Accessibility(psychic)

Very easy to consult for advice	(4)
Easy to consult for advice	(3)
Difficult to consult for advice	(2)
Very difficult to consult for advice	(1)

☐ V180

v. Accessibility (physical)

> 5km	(4)
3 - 4 km	(3)
1 - 2 km	(2)
< 1km	(1)

☐ V181

vi. Educational level

Much higher than that of respondent	(5)
Higher than that of respondent	(4)
Same level as that of respondent	(3)
Lower than that of respondent	(2)
Much lower than that of respondent	(1)

☐ V182

vii. Scale of operation

Much bigger than that of respondent	(5)
Bigger than that of respondent	(4)
Same level as that of respondent	(3)
Smaller than that of respondent	(2)
Much smaller than that of respondent	(1)

☐ V183

viii. Farming efficiency

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V184
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

ix. Cosmopoliteness

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	☐ V185
Lower than respondent	(2)	
Much lower than respondent	(1)	

x. Social status

Much higher than respondent	(5)	
Higher than respondent	(4)	
Same as respondent	(3)	
Lower than respondent	(2)	☐ V186
Much lower than respondent	(1)	