

## CHAPTER 2 TOWARDS PROBLEM CONCEPTUALISATION: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

Agricultural development is a process involving a shift from old methods of production to new, science-based methods of production that include new technological components (Swanson, 1984). Development is a widely participatory process of social change in society intended to bring about social and material advancement, including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over the environment (Rogers, 1976, p133).

The key to economic growth and poverty reduction has to be rural transformation since the bulk of the region's population lives there. Local land and resource control has to be the key material basis for any rural enterprise approach backed by appropriate institutional arrangements such as decentralisation, governance, power sharing, access to markets, access to land, skills development, technology transfer and infrastructure development

(Roth, 1990). Rural people require assurance over present and future cost-benefit streams from the land as well as the right to change from a supply to a demand driven rural economic development agenda.

### 2.2 Land Reform Policy

The government has embarked on a land reform programme. The objective of this policy is to reduce the imbalances of the past and to do justice to those who were directly deprived of their land. The national policy has different components. There is a land redistribution programme, a land restitution programme, a programme to secure tenure rights in tribal land and a law to secure rights of farm labourers.

As far as the restitution program was concerned, every disadvantaged person could submit a claim. The regional offices of the Land Reform Office are processing righteous claims. If the farmer is willing to sell his farm he will be compensated for his land. Although many farms have been in possession for more than 20-50 years, many of present owners are not the original owners. If he does not want to sell, either land or monetary compensation can be offered to the claimant.

Both groups must come to terms to resolve the claim. Since many of the black communities were evicted from the farms across the river, there are claims on many farms spread through the entire Nkomazi / Onderberg area.

Redistribution is another pillar of the policy. Without direct deprivation, it still holds that through racist legislature, access to land has been restricted to the majority of the population. Redistribution is based on a willing seller- buyer principle. A group of willing buyers can apply for a grant from the government and get loans from land bank. In the whole country many claims have been settled already. As for the study area of Nkomazi, the results are meagre; there have been two or three land

redistribution agreements. The reason is that the farms are extremely capital-intensive and very expensive to be bought by the government.

Improved access to land was confirmed to be one of the most important elements of successful agricultural restructuring in South Africa and the rebuilding of a strong rural class, consequently land redistribution is inevitable and necessary for a stable rural environment, which brings the settlement of the small-scale farmers, to address and restore the rights lost during the apartheid era.

To achieve food security and poverty relief and to increase income and employment in the economy, the agricultural sector must perform efficiently.

Any land reform programme should clearly take the above in to consideration

High potential areas are observed to be under utilised and thus provide space for more intensive small-scale farming.

### **2.3 Selection of small-scale farmers**

Farmer selection processes are an important feature of farmer settlement schemes. It is however virtually impossible to select successful farmers from the outset with a high degree of accuracy.

In practice, one of the major problems with selection / screening processes is that of bias and interference whereby certain individuals are favoured above others. In some cases blatant political interference and nepotism are apparent. (Ngoni M, 1991)

In other cases, more fundamental issues such as historical land rights came in to play, while gender sensitivity and balance are seldom adhered to. The transparent, impartial and objective application of selection criteria must be viewed as an essential part of a successful settlement project. (Kinsey and Binswanger, 1993)

In any case, the land is limited and, they cannot afford to under use this valuable natural resource with impunity (Ngoni M, 1991).

### **2.4 Present criteria**

The criteria that are being used are very subjective and unreliable and are according to Kinsey & Binswanger (1993) based on personal rules and prejudice, rather than on scientific founded criteria.

Njobe (1993:2) talks about considerations that could be taken into account for participation in the Reconstruction Program in South Africa. Lombard (1992) indicated that the so called “settler selection rules” which are being used internationally is very subjective in nature, and the only objective criteria used are age, training and experience. All three are independent variables. Therefore, they don’t necessarily have any direct influence on farming success.

A more acceptable approach is the “point scoring system” of the Malaysian Federal Land Development Authority. According to Bahrin (1988:82-128), this system is also subject to the prejudice of decision-makers. Bembridge (1985:20) also supports this concept and indicated that it is due to the lack of pro-active selection of farmers on the Qamata irrigation scheme in the Transkei that they have failed.



## 2.5 Change In Adoption Behaviour

Whether through the influence of formal or informal leadership or through extension, the object of agricultural development directly revolves around change in adoption behaviour. The adoption of practices or innovations is associated with more efficient agricultural production. This behaviour change needs to be understood in order to determine or trace its relative influence on agricultural development.

Rogers (1983,pp.251-252) summarizes research findings on variables related to innovativeness in a series of generalisations which imply amongst others that the earlier adopters have more years of education, higher social status and a greater degree of upward social mobility, larger-sized units, more commercial economic orientation, more favourable attitudes toward credit, more specialised operations, and are more literate.

The value of this present research is mostly focused on the necessity of understanding and predicting adoption behaviour, and environmental factors in sugar farming.

-Firstly, it has been established (Albrecht, 1965, Duvel, 1975) that the potential influence of these variables, that is, whether and to what extent they can become functional is situation-specific.

However, the number of variables that have already been found to be related to adoption behaviour is so extensive, that their identification in a given situation is totally impractical for extension.

Duvel (1991) proposed a solution based on the pre-supposition that the variables or determinants of behaviour have varying positions on the cause /effect or independent / dependent continuum, with the more independent variables having a casual effect on the dependent ones. The intervening or mediating variables he identified as being critical precursors to behaviour or decision-making and through which the influence of all independent variables become manifested are needs, perception and knowledge.

The more specific aspects of needs, perception and knowledge are further specified by Duvel (1991) in a model (Fig.2.1), which serves as a guide to the systematic analysis of what he believes to be direct precursors of behaviours.

These factors are associated with or seen to represent the psychological field forces which according to Lewin's (1951) field theory are instrumental in bringing about change and Duvel (1991) makes a clear distinction between the mediating variables, and the more indirect and independents variables.

## 2.6 Objectives and Hypotheses

The present study aimed at a better understanding of the factors contributing towards the success of sugar cane farmers in Nkomazi area of Mpumalanga. The study was guided by following objectives:

- 1 To develop measures of farming success and characterise respondents accordingly.

- 2 To identify and measure various personal and environmental factors and establish their relationship with farming success under irrigation.
- 3 To develop a scale for the selection of potentially successful small –scale irrigation farmers.

The hypotheses upon which the research design were based on:

- 1.1. Managerial and farming success is dependent on, or function of certain personal and environmental factors.
- 1.2. Behaviour determinants vary in terms of their contribution to the variance of farming success

While the findings of this study will serve to some extent as useful insight, it is however, acknowledged that much can still be done to render them trustworthier. It is with the objective of encouraging further research endeavour in this direction that these findings are presented.