EMERGING MAIZE GRAIN PRODUCERS' LIMITATIONS THAT HINDER PROGRESS TOWARDS COMMERCIAL FARMING UNDER DRY LAND IN KING SABATA DALINTYEBO MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE.

By

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the main limiting factors that prevent emerging farmers from progressing from subsistence to commercial agricultural farming in the Eastern Cape Province. The study was conducted in the KSD municipality in Mthatha area by means of a structured questionnaire survey. A sample of 31 maize emerging farmers was drawn from the research area which was chosen based on their experience with regard to farming potential. A descriptive analysis technique was employed to investigate the main limiting factors faced by farming maize farmers in migrating towards commercial agricultural markets. The findings demonstrated that the specific limiting factors emerging farmers face are low yields, lack of support, lack of marketing skills and information, and high transaction costs, insufficient land availability to expand production, lack of agricultural implements to better production, poor production, as well as low education levels which results in an inability to interpret market information to be used in production planning and marketing. The results from the study highlighted that the government has a crucial role to play in increasing market participation of emerging farmers through encouraging group marketing, upgrading of roads to enable smooth accessibility of farmers to output markets and the establishment of local point sales in farming rural areas. Finally the study recommended that government provides planned workshops to all farmers in order to equip them with marketing knowledge.

Keywords: progression; emerging maize farmers, KSD, commercialisation

DECLARATION

I, Bongiswa Konzani, declare that the dissertation hereby submitted by me for the Masters in Sustainable Agriculture (MSA) degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty.

Signature: B. Konzani

Date: 18- 12-2023

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LIST OF ABBREVATIONS

CASP - Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program

DAFF – Department of Forestry and Fisheries

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

NDA – National Department of Agriculture

KSD – King Sabata Dalindyebo

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Science

NARPO - National Emerging Red Meat Producer's Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Both commercial and emergent agricultural techniques are practiced in South Africa (Thamaga, *et al.,* 2014). The innovative and well-established commercial farming system makes a significant contribution to the food security of the country. Prior to 1994, the South African government put in place robust provision and subsidy programs that empowered and supported white commercial farmers, while emerging black farmers, who made up the majority, received little to no support. In South Africa, 45,000 commercial farmers provide around 95% of the country's agricultural output (WWF, 2015). While three million emerging farmers contribute only 5% of the nation's agricultural output, emerging farmers nevertheless produced a negligible amount of agricultural produce. It begs the obvious question: Why do commercial farmers consistently outproduce beginning farmers?

In rural locations, emerging farmers are expected to be the primary provider of food security, jobs, and income. Emerging farmers are often seen as being crucial to the economic development and expansion of many nations, particularly those in Africa (Mutero, Munapo, and Seaketso., 2016). The South African government implemented a number of policies and programs eighteen years ago with the goal of increasing funding for the agricultural sector and for organizations that were essential in helping new farmers (Frequin *et al.,* 2012; National treasury, 2010 & Aliber *et al.,* 2012).

The transition of emerging maize growers into the commercial agriculture sector continues to present challenges (Frequin et al., 2012; Aliber & Hall., 2012).

According to Leahy and Goforth (2014), commercializing emergent farming is essential to co mbating poverty in a way that is sustainable.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The majority of South Africa's rural and urban poor rely on maize as a staple grain, which is produced by up-and-coming farmers (Kapuya and Sihlobo, 2014; Maize Trust, 2014). At the small-scale level, maize output is still low. This is a result of new grain growers receiving insufficient guidance and assiatance. Emerging farmers have less impact on the nation due to their low output level (Mazibuko, 2018). Although The King Sabata Dalindyebo Area has a lot of potential, these farmers face several obstacles. Efficient solutions that are customized to these producer's demand are necessary to transfer from passion to prodictivity, thus research into the elements that would lead Kinga Sabata Dalindyebo Munivipality's emerging maize grain growers to turn to commercial farming is necessary.

1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY (AIM)

The main research objective would be to identify the factors that would transform emerging maize grain producers to commercial farming in King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyse and identify the main challenges faced by emerging maize grain producers in progressing to commercial farming.
- To discern the views of agricultural officers regarding the problems that hamper emerging maize producers from progressing to commercial farming in King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality in the province of Eastern Cape.
- To recommend strategies that can be applied to assist emerging maize producers to progress to commercial farming.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the main challenges faced by emerging maize grain producers of King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality in progressing to commercial farming?
- What are the views of agricultural officers regarding the problems that hamper emerging maize producers from progressing to commercial farming in King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality?
- What strategies can be applied to assist emerging maize producer's progress to commercial farming in King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two agricultural systems that are now in place in South Africa, including emerging farmers and commercial farming. Emerging farmers consist of small farms that use traditional production techniques, which are labour-intensive and lack technical and financial support, while commercial farmers consist of large farms with high turnovers that use modern production techniques and have relationships with both the input and output markets (Freguin *et al.,* 2012).

emerging farmers in South Africa have persisted in maintaining their livelihoods in the face of challenging circumstances. Several authors, including (Azan & Besley, 1991; Makhura., 2001), have identified or highlighted a variety of difficulties faced by low-resource farmers in the Eastern Cape Province over the past two decades. These difficulties include inadequate access to productive resources, the cost of inputs like herbicides and fertilizers, market accessibility, and the cost of transportation. However, it is crucial to note that the difficulties of poor resource farmers in the Eastern Province face restrict the growth of agriculture not just in the Eastern Cape but also in other provinces throughout the nation, such as Mpumalanga and the Free State (Mpandeli, 2006). For farmers to have access to all the necessary resources, it is necessary to maintain high levels of production and quality.

The literary review's job is to present background data by drawing on prior research. This chapter examines the constraints that restrict the production of emerging imports from moving to commercial farming. The obstacles faced by emerging maize farmers in dry lands are social as well as economic elements that could affect the transformation of emerging maize producers to a commercial level. For those who aren't already engaged in commercial farming, the agricultural officer's perspectives on the issues that are preventing them from doing so and what their recommended solutions are. According to Randolph (2009), this can be employed to aid developing maize growers and advance commercial growing in dry lands.

2.2 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR EMERGING FARMERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Little room exists in South Africa's agricultural economy for beginning producers. Previously underprivileged farmers were not supported by a strong support system (Chikazunga & Paradza, 2012), which prevents them from taking advantage of the numerous opportunities that the South African government has been putting in place (Moloi, 2010 & Anyike, 2011). According to a study by Chikazunga and Paradza (2012), the former South African government's significant state subsidies and support programs for commercial farmers allowed the country's agricultural economy to expand quickly. The agricultural economies of the United States of America and Europe were perceived as being supported by similar support programs and state subsidies (Chikazunga *et al*., 2012). At the moment, South African agriculture heavily depends on global markets for the sale of agricultural products (Chikazunga *et al*.,2012).

Many beginning farmers encounter obstacles while trying to enter official agricultural markets. As a result, formal markets don not show much interest in up-and-coming producers. Lack of market engagement is a typical characteristic of rising farmers all over the world and is noted by Bie'nabe & Vermuelen (2011) as a barrier to their development. Emerging farmers find it challenging to participate in commercial markets in underdeveloped rural areas of South Africa due to a variety of limitations (Makura & Mokoena 2001; Wynne & Lyne., 2003). Attempts by farmers to market their products are primarily hampered by inadequate property rights, poor infrastructure (Wynne & Lyne, 2006; Wynne & Lyne, 2004), low education levels among farmers, a lack of credit, and a lack of innovative production methods necessary to increase the yield of produced goods (Bie'nabe & Vermuelen, 2011).

The National Emerging Red Meat Producer's Organization performed research in 2004 that revealed many skill gaps among emerging producers as a significant growth limitation. The new South African government should enhance its efforts to draw young people into the agriculture economy, according to NERPO (2004). Poor financial and social capital, limited access to legal resources, and difficulty changing negative market variables individually make it difficult for new farmers. Emerging farmers continue to be caught up in the cycle of functioning within the market as a result emerging farmers continue to be trapped in cycle of operating within the given market.

2.3 SOCIO- ECONOMIC FEATURE THAT INFLUENCE TRANSFORMATION OF EMERGING MAIZE GRAIN PRODURES TO COMMERCIAL STANDARD.

Socioeconomic characteristics, the following factors could prevent emerging agricultural producers from engaging in commercial farming: age, gender, education level, training received by farmers, membership in agricultural organizations, family income, access to credit, market access, inputs of high quality, land tenure, and size.

2.3.1 Age of a farmer

Few young people see a future for themselves in agriculture or rural areas, despite the fact that rural youth are the future of food security. Rural youth encounter numerous obstacles when trying to earn a living. In many regions of the world, the pressure on arable land is high, making it challenging to establish a farm. Youth frequently lack access to loans and other key productive resources for agriculture. But isn't urban living much cooler even if such obstacles can be overcome? Maybe, but not if you are unable to make a life elsewhere. Rural kids find themselves in such a bind, especially in developing nations (FAO, 2017).

Youth have desirable attributes that can help them handle some of the difficulties affectingthe smallholder farming industry, according to consistent and strong data (Kimaro *et al*., 2015). In order to address the challenges in farming and boost agricultural production, youth need to have a fast rate of learning, higher energy, be open to new ideas, and be able to maneuver throughmodern production technologies (Alao, *et al*., 2015; Lyocks, *et al*., 2013; Naamwinto nme & Bayson, 2013).Therefore, it is crucial to find measures to keep and encourage youth in interested in agriculture if we want to develop and improve the smallholder farming sector.

According to Kimaro *et al*. (2015), integrating youngsters into smallholder farming is a cruci al step in the improvement and development of the industry.

This is due to the adolescents' enthusiasm, energy, inventiveness, dynamism, and receptivity t o new ideas and technology (Alao, *et al.*, 2015; Lyocks, *et al*., 2013; Naamwintonme & Bays on, 2013).

Although young people possess desirable traits that can help them address farming's challeng es and ensure its sustainability in terms of production, the majority of them are leaving the in dustry and losing interest in it (Auta, *et al*., 2010; Mangevere, *et al*., 2014; Kimaro, *et al*., 201 5).This has had an impact on agricultural production and food security by depleting skills, ide as, and labor in farming (Mbah, *et al.*, 2016; Pam, 2014).

Additionally, it has contributed to high unemployment rates and a lack of sustainable livelihoods for young people (Kimaro, *et al*.,2015). The future of the agriculture sector is in danger as the majority of young people are leaving and losing interest in farming. Umeh &

Odom (2011) say that the loss of youth in agriculture diminishes the sector's capacity to modernize and become productive in order to feed the world's expanding population both now and in the future. The necessity to involve youngsters in farming has been highlighted by the international 14 talks. In order to design successful interventions that will hold and attract youngsters involved in farming, it is important to recognize the problems, roles, and possibilities that these youth face (Nnadi & Akwiwu, 2008).

2.3.2 Gender

The prevalence of a gender gap in agricultural output and a wide array of gender imbalances in African communities constitute a different issue that is worth highlighting. This may be related to countries that are predominately patriarchal, in which women historically do not inherit or own land and are entirely dependent on their husbands for income. Alcoholism is becoming a greater problem in rural areas with high unemployment rates. Due to the fact that husbands are the main consumers, it is typical for them to gather money from the harvest and spend the most of it in a bar drinking with a friend before returning home.

According to Liverpool-Tasie, *et al.* (2011), several nations exhibit gender imbalance in agricultural practices. Males have been discovered to be more successful farmers than females, according to research. There was a presumption that male farmers were more focused on growth and profit while female farmers were more concerned with their families' well-being. This led to a low proportion of female farmers succeeding in the farming industry. In the market participation department, men were more successful than women due to their competitiveness, according to Njukia, *et al.* (2011). The study conducted by Leykun and Jemma (2014) further explores the idea that characteristics of farmers, such as being male, reduce their likelihood of being emerging farmers and have a beneficial impact on their progression to commercial farmers. In a different study that was conducted in South Africa, Moyo (2013) asserts and provides evidence in favor of the idea that women have lower odds of becoming commercial farmers. Women, indigenous farmers, and young people are disproportionately denied of training and up-to-date information, according to IFAD's 2012 report. Women generally had far less access to information through agricultural extension services than their male counterparts, according to Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2010), since women were not seen as agricultural decision-makers.

2.3.3 Access to Technology

Insufficient agricultural technology is one of the factors negatively affecting production requirements in rural South Africa, according to Sikwela and Mushunje (2013). A new

technology should be built in such a way that it responds to the actual conditions on farms for farmers to gladly adopt it, according to Buah's (2011) suggestion. Farmers also require appropriate communication to take use of modern technology's benefits for ease of transfer. Training and workshops are two of the strategies recommended by Buah (2011) that can be used to encourage the adoption of new technologies.

- On-site demos that are created in a way that promotes farmer participation.
  Seed fairs, when enhanced varieties are displayed to growers.
- Community outreach initiatives.
- Annual planning meetings.

2.3.4 Market Access.

Gaining access to the lucrative market smallholder farmers in South Africa and the majority of emerging black farmers in developing nations continue to face an unavoidable struggle. There is no immunity to this task for them. Lack of access to markets is a significant barrier that smallholder farmers in developing nations must overcome because they find it challenging to transition from subsistence farming to commercial farming if they lack access to markets. The livelihoods of impoverished farmers can alter, according to scientific research, and if smallholder farmers lack access to these marketplaces, they won't be driven to produce on a sustainable basis. The necessity of emphasizing the fact that emerging farmers will only have access to markets if they have access to comprehensive agricultural support services. Providing emerging farmers with enough assistance and services to ensure their success in high-value markets is a major challenge for the public and private sectors in South Africa. In order for emerging farmers to successfully participate in the market, it is essential that they have access to dependable and high-quality farmer support services, including agricultural inputs, on-farm infrastructure, training, and extension services. The government, through the CASP, should play a substantial role in ensuring that all support services are available to help farmers, especially in rural regions, to ensure that emerging farmers have access to markets.

Being an emerging farmer unquestionably entails being a part of the driving force that creates the foundation for economies in emerging communities like those in East Africa. Despite the large state's dependence on agriculture export for foreign money and regardless of how prosperous this may seem, farmers' lives are riddled with uncertainty and significant problems.

2.3.5 Access to credit

Availability Credit eases financial restrictions and permits farmers to purchase supplies like improved planting materials, fertilizers, and other inputs (Ajewole, 2010). Access to credit can have a significant impact in farmers' decisions to adopt new technology, according to Salasya

et al. (2007). According to Pote (2008), financing is crucial for the purchase of capital goods, home remodelling, and the fulfilment of short-term seasonal demands.

According to Langyintuo *et al*. (2008), because the majority of those people rely solely on social migrants, lending institutions are frequently unwilling to offer loans for emerging agricultural enterprises, including seed production. According to Assefa *et al*. (2008), one of the reasons why financial institutions are unable to offer loans to emerging farmers on a sustainable basis is that they believe emerging farmers to be incompetent because they lack the capacity to effectively use such loans. Mekbib (1997), Hazell (2012), and Wood (2012) all stated that credit has the potential to ease agricultural level liquidity restrictions, which are the cause of the growing inability to buy productivity- technology such as improved maize varieties and fertilizers.

2.3.6 Level of education achieved by farmers

It is mentioned by Martey *et al.* (2012) that educational background is a crucial component of developing farmer commercialization. Low levels of education among new media producers prevent them from having the necessary knowledge and understanding of marketing information. Emerging farmers have better access to the internet, discuss their business ideas, and practice general farm management principles and marketing abilities. The level of education attained by farmers is crucial for their performance in a variety of areas within the agribusiness sectors. It is simpler for farmers to possess many skills and information required for the success of commercialization because of the amount of education they have. This might be done by attending conferences, workshops, and seminars where farmers would have access.

According to Pienaar and Traub (2015), the majority of farmers in South Africa have an average of five years of schooling, or the equivalent of grade five. This has consequences for agriculture because it is undergoing a succession of innovations and development that call for a better-educated farmer (Okpachu *et al.,* 2014). According to AGRA (2015) and Tshuma (2012), the contemporary production technology required to enhance agricultural production caused it to become complex for the illiterate farmers, who are consequently less inclined to accept it. This lessens the chance of modernizing the sector to make it more productive and provide for the population that is expanding (Umeh & Odom, 2011).

According to Huffman (2001), an individual's level of education can increase their capacity to receive, analyze, and interpret information as well as use their resources effectively. Bellon (2011) stated that education level has a significant impact on farmers' decision-making and, consequently, the adoption of improved agricultural practices. According to Bellon (2013),

educated farmers typically have a better opportunity to receive information via new technologies and are more capable of producing, processing, and utilizing it. According to Ransom *et al.* (2003), some farmers also use hybrid farming practices because they lack understanding. However, in order to recycle and maize corn, it must be chosen at the time of harvesting and separated from the others by leaving the husks on. Because of their lack of technology, Murthy (2003) observed that certain crops are either not spelled out and kept at the fireplace until the following planting season, or they are sun-dried and treated with ash to control storage bugs.

2.3.7 Training received by farmers

A study undertaken in the Sub-Saharan African countries, including Nigeria, by Olaove (2014) Increased exposure to farmer training, particularly so in rural areas, where the acquisition of technology skills is important for the transformation of developing farmers into commercial standards. Farmers need technology abilities related to using computers, telescopes, radios, and televisions. According to Olaove (2014), these will enable people to obtain information relating to their farming efforts. In a study conducted in 2009 by Alam Etal, it was revealed that farmers were receiving training focused on agricultural production, including pest control, storage facilities, marketing tactics, and management. There are institutions that are in charge of giving many farmers education and training.

2.3.8 Limited access to production inputs and equipment

The majority of rising nations have difficulties when trying to get agricultural inputs. Farmers lack access to high-quality seeds, planting implements, and other equipment. Lack of access to such inputs and equipment results in poor selection of seed varieties, application kinds and quality of fertilizers, and timing of crop planting. Consequently, this will have a negative impact on the crop production.

2.3.9 Membership to agricultural organisations.

According to Aderemi *et al*. (2014), agricultural organization has a significant role in the successes of emerging commercialization among farmers themselves and the outcomes of high output commercialization. A study undertaken by Ojiagu *et al* was published in 2015. It was discovered that cooperatives create the organizational structures of farmers that should not be undermined. Organizations that are related to each other were discovered. Agriculture advances input supply, processing, financial availability, and service extension. The majority of farmers were able to switch from production focused on family consumption to output focused on the

market. Additionally, it was discovered that organizations were enhancing the viability of farmers, particularly the cash generated by their farming activities. In a different study by Tolno *et al.* 2015, it was determined that agricultural organizations could help farmers by increasing their income and that farmer organizations should provide a platform that is suitable for the distribution of farm production inputs and marketing of output; this can significantly increase farm productivity and increase farm income by contributing to the reduction of poverty.

Belonging to a social group promotes social capital and enables for the free flow of ideas and information (Diro, 2013). Farmers within a social group can learn from one another about the advantages and use of new technologies. Doss (2003) believes that social network effects are significant for individual decisions and that farmers share knowledge and learn from one another in the context of agricultural innovations. The effects of community-based organizations on the adoption of banana technology were the subject of a study done in Uganda (Kariyasa and Dewi, 2011). The results showed that farmers who participated more in community-based groups were more likely to participate in social learning about emerging technologies, increasing their likelihood of doing so. Although numerous academics have noted a favourable impact of social groups on technology adoption, they may also have a negative impact, particularly in situations where free-riding behaviour is present. When studying the adoption of Green Revolution technologies in India in 2011, Mignouna found that not only did learning about externalities within social networks increase the profitability of adoption, but also that farmers appeared to be resenting their neighbours' cost-free use of the new technology. According to Bagheri (2008), who was quoted by Hogset (2005), learning from external sources might have the opposite consequences.

For this reason, the more people who participate in testing out new technologies, the more ad vantageous it will be for everyone involved

2.3.10 Land Allocation

Because emerging farmers tend to be poorer and landless than commercial farmers, land tenu re is a significant problem for them.Emerging farmers only have limited plots of land, and the majority of them practice traditional farming methods, which lowers their level of productivity.This has an impact on how land is allocated to agriculture, which is often done on a limited scale.The allocation of land to GM agriculture can be affected by a number of factors, including the supply of seed, input costs, land access, etc.One of the most crucial r esources in agriculture is land, according to Smith (2003).Thus, ownership and access to this resource determine people's capacity to engage in agricultural operations (Cavane, 2011).Acc

ording to Hassan and Karanja (1997), access to land is a key factor in improving household f ood security through self-employment and other forms of production.

Land plays a significant role in the livelihoods of the majority of rural household according to Kabumbuli *et al.,* (2008).This suggests that food security and poverty reduction cannot be re alized until difficulties with access to land, environmental security, and the ability to use land ssustainably and productively are addressed.

However, Hendriks and Lyne (2009) highlighted the fact that most rural households must cult culivate their own food on their own or borrowed land in order to maintain a livelihood.(Kab umbuli *et al*., 2008) also emphasized that households must be able to own or have access to land in order to be able to cultivate food, and any circumstance that endangers access to land also endangers the livelihood of the household.expenses like seed and fertilizer expenses, ed ucation level in terms of planning and expertise, and income level are just some of the elemen ts that affect how much land is allocated (Halewood *et al.,* 2007).Additionally, age is another element that affects the allotment of land.Age in farming, for instance, impacts how experien ced a farmer is, and in many situations, older individuals are the ones with greater experience and interest in farming than younger generations.However, younger farmers may be more pro gressive in terms of adopting new agricultural techniques and may also be more active in inve stigating new marketing prospects for their produce (Bellon, 2001).Beal (1997) also feels that age may be a factor in determining whether an endeavor is successful.

On the other hand, according to Kabumbuli *et al*. (2008), income is the primary determinant o of household food security in South Africa.Due to labor shortages at crucial times, inadequate or expensive inputs, and restricted access to traction for plowing, agriculture makes up a smll portion of rural household income.In addition, problems with unchecked livestock grazing th that endangers crops, easy local market saturation, households' inability to compete with com mercial farmers, and the pervasiveness of diseases and climatic conditions are all contributing factors to household income, according to Tura *et al*. (2010).

Changes in land use patterns have been observed in several parts of the country, having an impact on the rural population who directly depend on the land for their livelihood in both positive and bad ways Halewood *et al*., (2007). These changes are a result of a variety of causes, such as land privatization and other government policies, population increase and immigration, as well as shifting domestic and global markets for crops and livestock products (CIMMYT, 1993). One of the most noticeable shifts in land use patterns over time has been a decline or rise in the amount of cultivated land accessible to farmers (Alden, 2009).

Because of this, knowledge of the pattern that the changing farm sizes are following is essenti al to helping decision makers choose the most appropriate measures for growth of the Island (Lacy *et al*., 2006).bFor instance, if farmers are able to increase the size of their farms by cultivating more land, extensive agricultural techniques like permitting would be acceptabl e.(Morris,1999),However, if the size of the cultivated areas has been on the idecline, then ther e would be a need to use intensive farming techniques, such as the use of yield enhancing inputs like improved seed, organic manure and fertilizer to boost crop yields (Mekbib. 1997)

2.3.11 Climate change

Farmers are frequently entirely exposed to weather conditions and have no control over changes in the environment, which is another reason why agricultural productivity is declining. Rising temperatures and severe rains have the potential to diminish acceptable producing regions globally. Climate change is creating harvest failure, which makes farmers unable to recoup their production expenses and puts their lives in ever-greater danger.

Climate change, which results primarily from global warning, is the greatest environmental concern currently facing humanity. It has been reported that one of the main causes of decreased agricultural output in many rural areas of South Africa. There is enough evidence to conclude that climate change has already had an impact on agricultural productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa in the second half of the 20th century (Barrios *et al.*, 2018). Most farmers in South Africa are rain-fed, making them vulnerable to weather changes and shifts (Kurukulasuya & Rosenthal, 2003). Additionally, as lands continue to degrade, their resilience has decreased, worsening the consequences of drought on already vulnerable farming populations. It has been claimed that South Africa may have needed to import as much as 7 million tons of maize in 2016. This represents almost half of the country's overall demand. The drought has also led to high food costs and significant food shortages, which are primarily felt by rural residents in underdeveloped communities.

2.3.12 Low quantity and poor quality

According to Baloyi (2010) most of smallholder farmers produce low quantity of produce with poor quality and results to products being ignored by markets. Partnering of emerging farmers with business is limited through these low quantities and poor-quality products, because businesses prefer good quality of maize supplied continuously for the satisfaction of their customers.

2.4 OVERVIEW OF CHALLENGES FACED BY SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

A research conducted by Zhou *et al*. 2013 in Southern Africa highlighted a number of obstacles to smallholder commercialisation. Climate change, a lack of supportive structures, limited access to markets and knowledge, public services such as extension services, and technology. Another study conducted by Hailua *et al*. 2015 revealed that unreliable rainfall, a lack of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, crop pests and diseases, a distance to markets, and a lack of irrigation infrastructure are the main barriers preventing smallholder farmers in Ethiopia from participating in commercial agriculture. Water shortage and management, lack of access to inputs, inadequate availability, lack of quality inputs, non-availability of affordable packages, lack of knowledge, lack of location-specific technologies, and small farmer unfriendliness were some of the challenges faced by smallholder farmers in a study conducted by Kadapatti and Bagalkoti, 2014.

2.5 THE ROLE OF EXTENSION OFFICERS IN COMMERCIALIZATION OF EMERGING FARMERS

According to Peshin *et al*. (2015), extension officers' services are the most sought tools for supporting agricultural development among farmers and continue to be a vital part of the agricultural industry. An effective extension officer needs to possess a number of talents and attributes for the commercial process to be successful. These include great listening skills, punctuality, and honesty; the capacity to interact with others, excitement, common sense, initiative, and the ability to operate independently. According to Van Niekerk (2009), extension officers are essential for assisting farmers with technical and logistical support as well as access to the necessary technology. Extension services are a crucial access point for more advanced agricultural production methods, according to the FAO (2009). However, state-run programs are progressively being phased out in favor of private sector providers, and government extension services rarely reach the most vulnerable sections of the population (FAO, 2010). However, private suppliers don't try to reach out to farmers in remote locations and are more focused on giving advice for the sale of inputs than using low-input external input technologies that are more suited to supplying farmers with resources (FAO, 2010). According to Langyintuo *et al*. (2008), access to agricultural information is a key factor in farmers' awareness of current maize varietals. Extension services are a vital source of knowledge.

Adopting innovative agricultural practices is more likely when farmers have adequate access to extension services (Beal, 1997). Mekbib (1997) underlined the importance of access to extensions as well as the need for adequate quality in extension services. This includes the requirement that such services be customized to meet the requirements and circumstances of emerging maize growers. Seed retailers play a crucial role in the context of farmer education in addition to professional extension agents since they must adequately inform farmers about the qualities of the seeds they sell (FAO, 2010). But some of the seed sellers lack the knowledge required to complete their unnecessary tasks (Kitch 1998, Keetch *et al*. 2005). A number of academics (Doss and Morris, 2000) have stated that extensions are among the most crucial sources of knowledge. It is anticipated that interaction with extension agents, evaluated as a dummy variable, is positively associated to diversity of choice by providing new knowledge to farmers. More exposure to information through a variety of extension agents lessens subjective doubt about the adoption of technology, claims Feder *et al*. (1985).

2.6 AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES FOR EMERGING/SMALLHOLDER FARMERS.

To ensure that there are emerging farmers graduating from subsistence farming to commercial farming requires basic agricultural support services, such as access to production inputs, research and extension, infrastructure, and markets, which should be offered as a package to underprivileged farmers. Rukuni (1999) noted that there is primary evidence that important agricultural organizations in Africa those involved in research, extension, training, finance, marketing, and land reform are currently not operating as a well-oiled system. Because international experience has demonstrated that only one factor is necessary to drive agriculture, these prime movers needed to be produced as a bundle. Sub-Saharan African nations must invest in human capital, agricultural research, interdisciplinary capital formation, and rural institutions if they are to grow these key drivers (Eicher, 1994).

To ensure that emerging farming is viable and contributes to economic growth, emerging farmers must acquire access to farmer support services, reliable markets, and other resources. The transformation of agricultural service institutions so they can offer high-quality services to rural households may be necessary to improve access to support services. It is this fundamental rationale, as well as evidence from Zimbabwe and Kenya, that has led some people to believe that a comprehensive farmer support plan is the best way to promote smallholder agriculture and help it transition from subsistence to commercial farming. Farmers have the ability to increase the overall utilisation and efficiency of agricultural resources if they

support programs that offer complementary, coordinated, and timely services to a large number of farmers (DBSA, 1986).

2.6.1 comprehensive Agricultural support Programme

In South Africa, the National Department of Agriculture (NDA) realized that it was not enough to give prospective farmers land or even finance. The need for the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program (CASP) came from the Strauss Commission report's recommendations for financial sunrise subsidies and the adoption of a sunrise package of enabling conditions for the program's beneficiaries in the islands (NDA, 2002). The goal of CASP is to build a financial support system for farmers throughout the initial stages of their business. Farmers must have the authority to manage their companies properly and efficiently.

The six areas of support listed below were discovered: Information and knowledge management, technical support, consulting services, and regulatory services are all included. Training and capacity-building are also included. Financial assistance and business development on-farm and off-farm infrastructure and production inputs.

The general consensus is that the provision of such services to the smallholder farming sector in South Africa has generally been stagnant due to some service providers' incompetence in working with smallholder farmers. This is in addition to the government's efforts to ensure that small-scale farmers have access to comprehensive agricultural support services. The primary goal of CASP is to support newly arrived farmers who entered the country by the native means. However, the majority of farmers who have accessed the country have not yet gotten any help in the priority areas that have been targeted. According to Machethe (2004), where farmer support services are offered, they are frequently limited to a single service (such as an extension) and are not yet available to the majority of smallholder farmers. Lack of physical infrastructure in rural areas, especially in the erstwhile Homeland 33 regions, continues to be a major barrier to smallholder agricultural expansion in South Africa. Government initiatives to improve the quality and quantity of infrastructure in rural areas through programs like the Community-Based Public Works Program, Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Program, Poverty Relief and Infrastructure Investment Fund, and Comprehensive Agricultural Support Program have only had a limited impact on many rural residents' lives (Everatt & Zulu, 2001).

The issue facing the NDA with regard to the CASP is to practically apply all of the pillars in all of the provinces of South Africa. Despite the fact that CASP is currently being implemented in South Africa, there appears to be a lack of coordination between national and provincial

government authorities. The "package" approach of delivering all the pillars is still not being followed in some provinces, and the erroneous implementation of CASP by the NDA is preventing the program from producing the anticipated benefits over the long term. The general consensus is that the pillars and components of the CASP are not being implemented as a package to support smallholder farmers in South Africa, despite the fact that the lack of convincing studies on the program makes it impossible to draw that conclusion. iIt will be more difficult to promote traditional agriculture and help it transition from subsistence to commercial farming if agricultural support services are not implemented as a package to address the constraints facing smallholder farmers. It is obvious that the socioeconomic costs will exceed the socio-economic advantages if CASP is only partially implemented in South Africa, especially when idealizing with under-resourced farmers.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEACH DESIGN

A research design is a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place (Kathari, 2004). It typical includes how data was collected, what instruments were employed, how the instruments used intended to analyse the data collected. The data was collected using a quantitative data method. The questionnaire was administer to emerging farmers through a face-to-face interaction. According to Bless et al., (2006) a questionnaire is an important tool of data collection because it reduces omission of difficult questions by respodents and can be administered to participants that can neither write or read. The questionnaire was divided into three sections as follows: demographic information and, production profile and factors that could transform farmers and views of extension officers. This was done on face to face with farmers to get clarity of questions. The questions in the questionnaire were designed in English but during the interviews they were translated in isiXhosa by the researcher, the language of the survey area and understood by the participants. The researcher understands that most of emerging farmers have low education levels and people express their views better when they express them in their own language. The respondents were asked to select the challenges that affect them the most from all the common challenges that were listed in the questionnaire. Extension officers were also be provided with their questionnaire to answer questions relevant to them.

3.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

According to Trochim and Donnelly (2006), the unit of analysis is the main thing that is to be analyzed in the research. The proposed research will make use of individual, cooparatives as well as study groups for emerging maize farmers as the sample procedure. A minimum of 30 farmers was selected to answer the questionnaire. The study also includes extension officers as key informants working closely with the farmers. During the period of sampling attention was based on, production challenges, skills available, need for trainings, need for infrastructure, acquisition of land as well as support services from extension officers, and financial support. King Sabata Dalindyebo Municipality is surrounded by poor rural areas with poor resources which lead to poor yields in maize, so suitability of agriculture of the area was considered.

3.3 DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT AND METHODS

Data was collected from King Sabata Dalindyebo local municipality from maize farmers. This was done using a questionnaire with farmers in order to get clarity of questions and make

observations of the farming area. The questionnaire is made up of closed ended questions. Questions will also be translated into the participants language of choice should they not understand English.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data was summarized in Microsoft excel and analyzed through Statistical Package for Socila Science. A descriptive was made and interpreted. Descriptive statistics provide the essence of the study by summarizing the data sample and measuring it into tabular or graphis forms (Allen *et al*., 2019).

Data was collected using the survey questionnaire and anlyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science(SPSS). This is a computer software for analysing data and running statistical tests. Through the use of SPSS, data generated (such as frequencies, percentages and ranges) will be used to analyse variables such as Age, Gender and Educational level of the respondants. Referring to the objective of the study, for objectives distriptive statistics will be used to analyse data and the main descriptive indicators that will be used include frequency tables, percent, mean values and charts.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDARATIONS

Ethical clearance will be applied from the University of Free State ethics committee. The study will be strictly confidential, and respondents will remain anonymous. All participants (famers as well as extension officers) will be given a written consent form explaining what the study would focus on and their obligations and rights. To ensure that participation is voluntary, all data collection tools will be accompanied by written consent form which summarized the study and its objectives.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Through enhancing job opportunities, raising rural agricultural output, expanding the food supply, and also enhancing the nutritional status of rural households, commercialization plays a vital role in raising income levels and promoting rural growth (Baisa 2009). Additionally, Osmani *et al.* (2014) show that emerging farmers' incomes rise dramatically when they move from subsistence to market-oriented (commercial) farming. This allows for the expansion of the production system through upscaling, the affordability of production inputs, and the ability to allocate funds for household need. This is consistent with a study conducted in Tanzania by Zhou *et al.* (2013), where emerging farmers reported that their income level increased as a result of adopting commercially oriented production system, allowing them to use the money for more than just buying production inputs for their household. Furthermore, Pingali (1997) asserts that emerging commercialisation can support economic expansion and the reduction of poverty in emerging nations.

Studies on the subject of emerging farmers' commercialization have been carried out in an effort to increase understanding of the obstacles that prevent such a movement from subsistence to commercial farming. Even with the important knowledge these studies have produced, there is still a startling lack of scholarly literature providing a more thorough picture of the main issues facing beginning farmers.

The study's findings are covered in this chapter. Through the use of standardized questionnaires, extension officers and sampled farmers in KSD municipality provided the data used in this chapter. The identified challenges are presented in this chapter. The study identified the main obstacles preventing emerging maize growers from progressing to commercial farming.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC RESULTS

4.2.1. Demographic information of participants

Table 1 Demographic information of respondent

		Frequency	Valid Percent(%)
Gender	Female	19	59
	Male	12	41
Age	26-30	1	3
	31-35	1	3
	36-40	5	16
	41-45	5	16
	46-50	5	16
	51-55	4	13
	56-60	5	16
	61 and older	5	16
Level of education	Never been to school	5	17
	Grade R to Grade 8	5	17
	Grade 9 to Grade 12	6	21
	Matriculated	7	24
	National certificate	3	10
	Tertiary qualification	3	10
Farming experience	Less than 5 years	14	47
	5 to 10 years	11	37
	11 to 20 years	4	13
	More than 20 years	1	3
Dependants	Yes	29	97
	No	1	3
How many dependants?	1	1	4
	2	2	7
	3	3	11
	4	2	7
	5	4	15
	6	4	15
	8	3	11
	9	2	7
	10	4	15
	12	1	4
	14	1	4

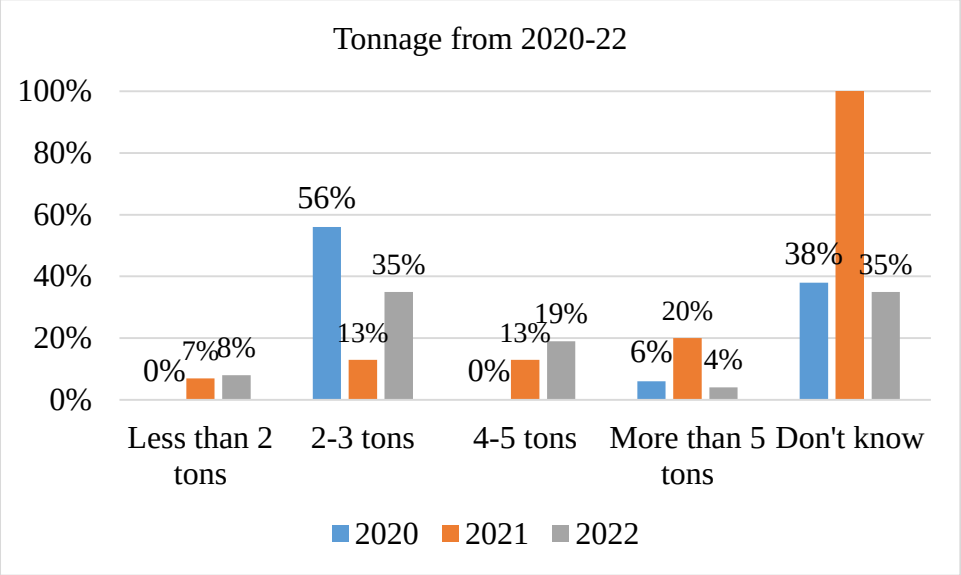
From the demographic results, over 58% respondents were females and 42% were male. It can be concluded that maize farming in KSD is a female dominated practice, this is because males migrate to urban areas in search of jobs. Furthermore, with regards to farmer age, the results

reveal that most farmers who participated in the study were middle aged and older, youth only contribute 6% . This had its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage was that older farmers bring wisdom, the ability to make mature decisions and farming experience. The disadvantages were that older farmers tended to prioritise socio-cultural practices more than making sound economic decisions. More so, the ability to adopt new technologies and change their farming methods becomes a challenge. Furthermore the education level of farmers sampled in KSD was poor. The majority of farmers examined had no further studies they had only completed matric education as their highest level of education. With poor education levels, farmers tend to find it a challenge adopting new technologies, reading relevant information, keeping records, organising, managing and embracing new market orientated technologies (Jaleta et al. 2009). Research by Renkow et al. (2004) indicates that well educated farmers have more capabilities of operating, managing and co-ordinating commercial production systems efficiently. The results further shows the results show that the majority of the sampled farmers had less than 5 years farming experience (45 percent) 3% of 20 years farming experience. farming experience contributes to progress potential in the manner that farmers who have accumulated experience through their livelihood tend to be more knowledgeable, make better decisions and adopt new technologies easier than farmers with minimal experience. (Sebatta *et al.* 2014). The resuilts also indicate that most of the household sizes is 4 being the highest number (15%). These statistics determined the adoption process in that, a larger household had the capacity to relax the labour constraints required during the introduction of new technology (Mignouna et al, 2011).

It is evident from the results that elements such as land size, information access, land availability and irrigating infrastracture in relation to current farmer status indicate that the potential to progress into commercial farming is compromised. Moreover, with market availability.

4.2.2 Production profile

Figure 1: Tons produced from 2020-2022

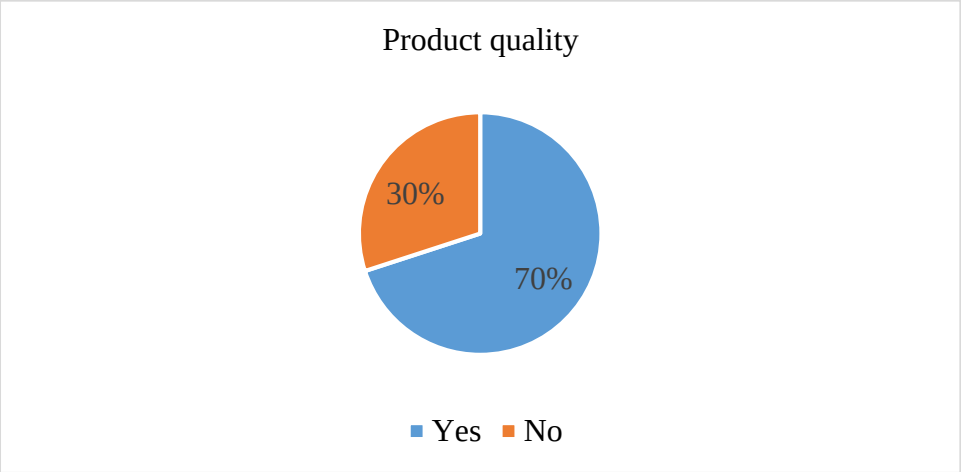


Tonnage is 1000 kg and it is very crucial in maize production. Farmers must get not less than 4tons of maize per/ha if the quality of inputs is good application of fertilizer is recommended and herbicides, fungicides and pesticides are applied.

According to the findings of the study from the above figures 1 and it shows that most farmers in 2020 harvested between 2-3 tons of maize 56% and the tonnage managed to increase in 2021 as majority of farmers 20% harvested more than 5 tons and still in 2022 majority of farmers 35% harvested 2-3 tons. Farmers need to be provided with high standard of inputs to improve their production. Also farmers need to be provided with trainings, as the results indicate that most of the farmers do not know how much they harvested.

4.3 Maize quality

Figure 2:Product quality



Quality of maize According to Baloyi (2010) most of emerging farmers produce low quantity of produce with poor quality and leads being rejected. Partnering of emerging farmers with formal market is limited through these low quantities and poor-quality products, because businesses prefer good quality of maize supplied continuously for the satisfaction of their customers, the results below shows that 70% of the respondants are happy with the quality of maize they produce and only 30% were not satisfied. This means th at these farmers have a potential to progress to commercial farming. The results are presented in the following figure.

4.3.1. Intervention needed to improve product quality

Table 2: Intervention needed to improve product quality.

		Count	Column N%
Attend workshops/Trainings	No	0	0%
	Yes	8	100%
	Total	8	100%
Consult government specialists	No	6	75%
	Yes	2	25%
	Total	8	100%
Engage with other farmers	No	5	63%
	Yes	3	38%
	Total	8	100%

The results indicate that farmers 100% need trainings on the maize production so that they can improve their maize quality. Only 25% have access to government specialist and 38% acquire their knowledge from engaging with other farmers.

4.3.2 Factors affecting yield

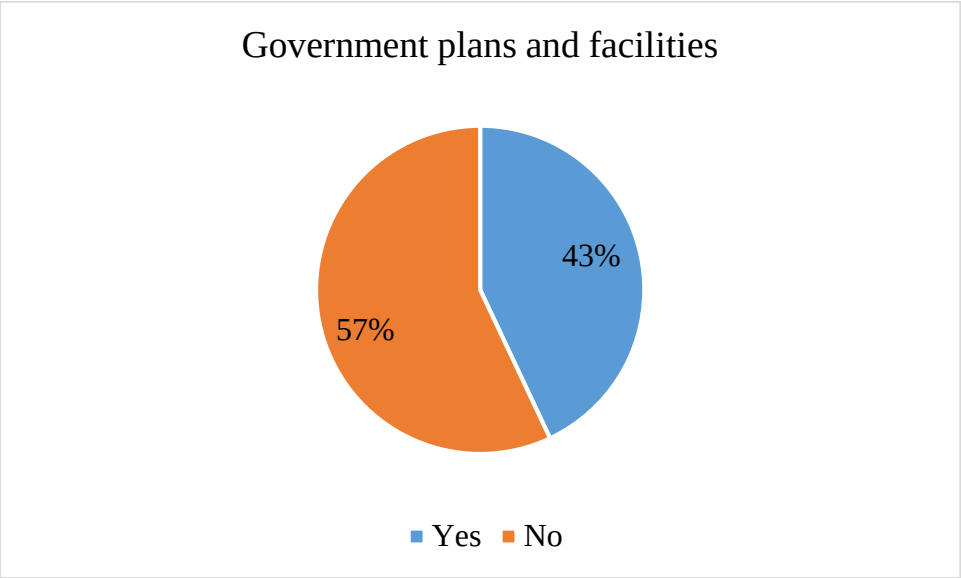
Table 3: Factors affecting yield

		Count	Column N%
Natural calamities	No	13	42%
	Yes	18	58%
	Total	31	100%
Lack of finance	No	3	10%
	Yes	28	90%
	Total	31	100%
Diseases	No	23	74%
	Yes	8	26%
	Total	31	100%
Lack of knowledge	No	13	42%
	Yes	18	58%
	Total	31	100%
Unavailability of resources	No	17	55%
	Yes	14	45%
	Total	31	100%

Table 3 indicate that 58% of respondants their yiled is affected by natural calamities. Natural indeed affect affect product yield. Natural calamities such as floods, droughts and wildfires can damage maize and disrupt the production of maize. These calamities may result in lower yields due to crop damage or loss and reduce quality of harvested product. Lack of finance is another factor affecting product yield about 90% of respondants are affected by lack of finance. Agriculture is a capital intensive business that requires significant investment in land, equipment, inputs and labor. Without access to sufficient finance may not be able to invest in the resources needed to optimize their yields. For instance, farmers may not be able to purchase high quality seeds, fertilizers, or pesticides. Farmers may also access to the technology and equipment needed to optimize the use of resources. Inadequate finance may also affect post harvest handling and storage leading to losses quality and reduced yields. Farmers need access to affordable credits, insurance and other finacial services to help them invest in their farms and optimize yields. Also product yield is affected by lack of knowledge, 58% of respondants responded yes to lack of knowledge. Farmers need to have a good understanding of the factors that affect crop growth, such as moisture, temparature, soil quality and pest control to optimize their yields. Without sufficient knowledge of these factors, farmers may make poor decision that affect growth of crops and reduce yields. Lack of knwledge also affect post harvest handling and storage, leading to losses quality and reduction in yields. Adequate trainings, research and extension services can help farmers overcome their knowledge gaps and improve their yields.

4.3.3 Government plans and facilities

Figure 3:Gornment plans and facilities.

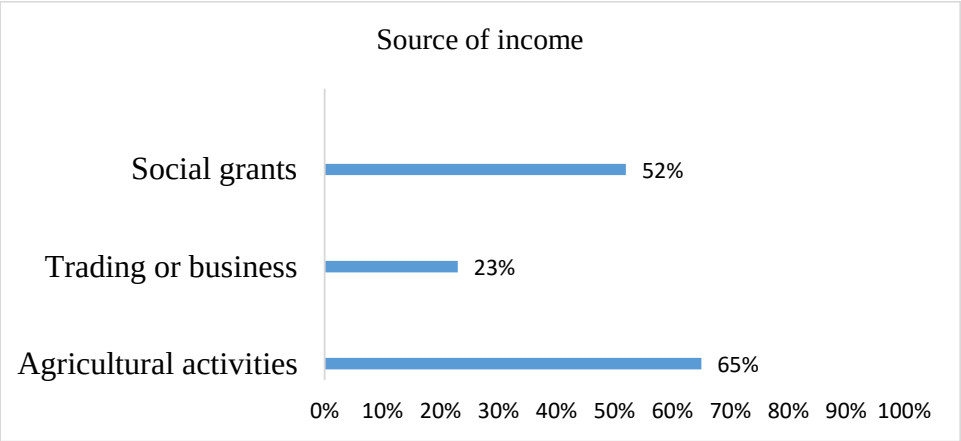


As per figure 3 above, 57% of the respondants are not aware of government pland and facilities in the KSD municipality and only 43% knows about government plans and facilities available. The relavance of this information is that, It is through efficient extension services to train and educate emerging farmers to improve their capacity to accessing relevant information as well as knowing how to utilize the information in their farming practices.

farmer participation within the formal economy in Uganda had a positive outcome with regards to improved household income levels

Fingure 4: Source of income

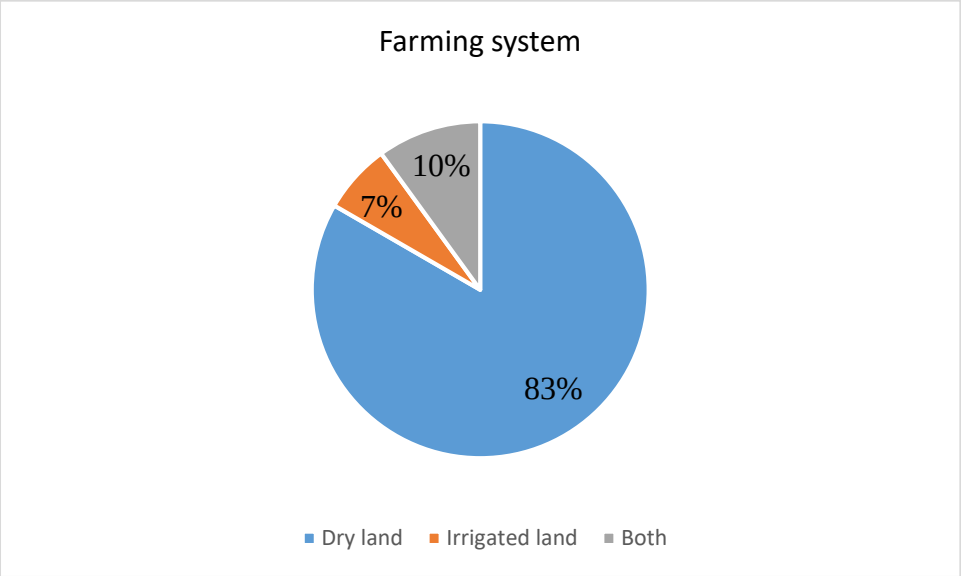
4.3.4 Source of income



The results presented in figure 4 shows that the majority of farmers low middle class. Sources of income were government pension or small bussinesses. A significant relationship was discovered between farmer income and potential to progress. The significance of farmer income regarding the potential to progress to commercialisation is that farmers who have higher income levels are more willing to progress than those with lower income levels. Farmers with lower income levels tend to be more subsistence-orientated and they avoid taking risks, whereas higher income farmers are exposed to more opportunities such as access to transport for their produce, ability to purchase quality inputs upon requirement, ability to access support services and access markets. Farmers with higher average income levels would find it easier to progress into commercial farming than those who had lower income levels. This is relevant to the study due to positive financial status contributes towards a sustainable commercial production system. This concurs with research by Akankwasah et al. (2012) where emerging farmer participation within the formal economy in Uganda had a positive outcome with regards to improved household income levels.

4.3.5 Farming system

Figure 4: Farming system



Dry land and irrigated land

A total of 83% of the farmers were not irrigating their farms, they had inadequate knowledge about irrigation equipment and were also not irrigating in their farms owing to lack of irrigation equipment. The farmers claimed that the irrigation equipment is expensive to buy and could not afford to buy it. Most of the farmers were using hosepipes and watering cans to water their crops. Only 7% have access and knowledge to irrigation equipment.

4.4.1 Land Availability

Table 4: Land availability

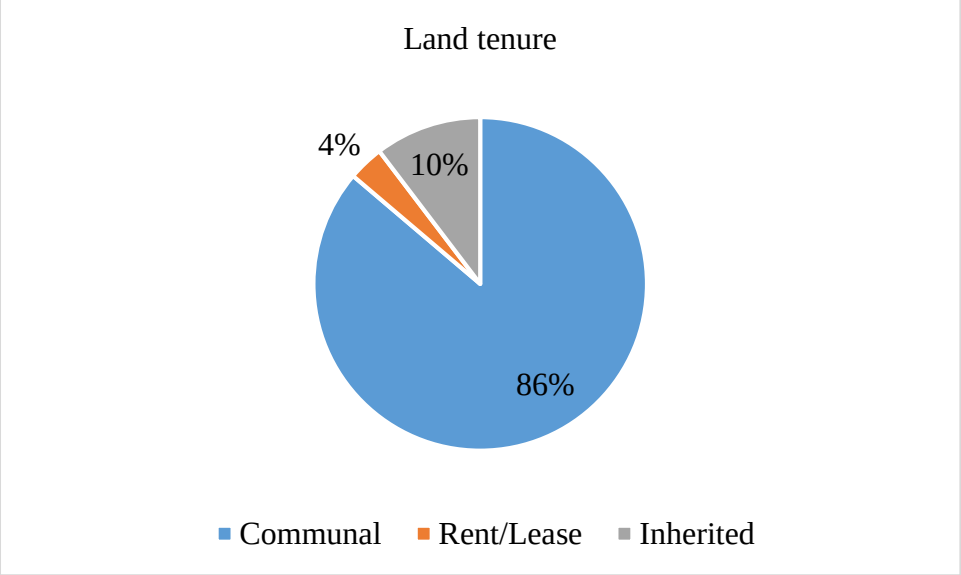
		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Less than 15ha	21	70
	15-20ha	5	17
	20-25ha	2	7
	More than 25ha	2	7
	Total	30	100

The availability of land by the farmers seems to be also a concern in market participation. It is important that farmers have enough land to produce if they are to participate in commercial agricultural markets. The study found that 70 % of the farmers are producing on land less than 15 hectares. Only 17%. of the farmers are producing on land more than 15 but less than 20 hectares. This demonstrates that insufficient land availability in South Africa is still a challenge that many emerging farmers. This has negative implications for sustainability and farm income,

especially for maize emerging farmers who depend on the availability of land for expansion of their production.

4.4.2 : Land tenure

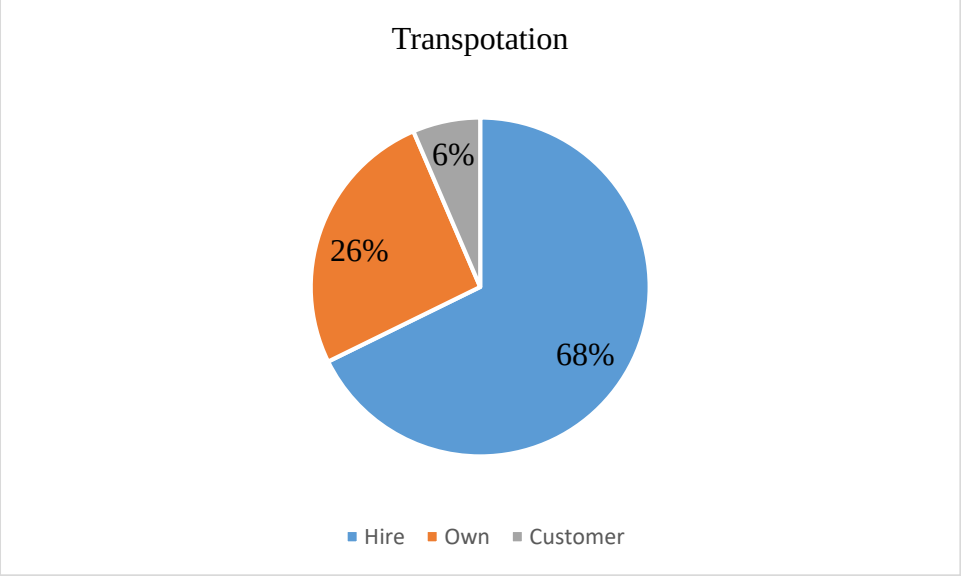
Figure 5: Land tenure



The results in indicated that, the majority (86%) of smallholder farmers in the study site were using the communal land to produce their maize.

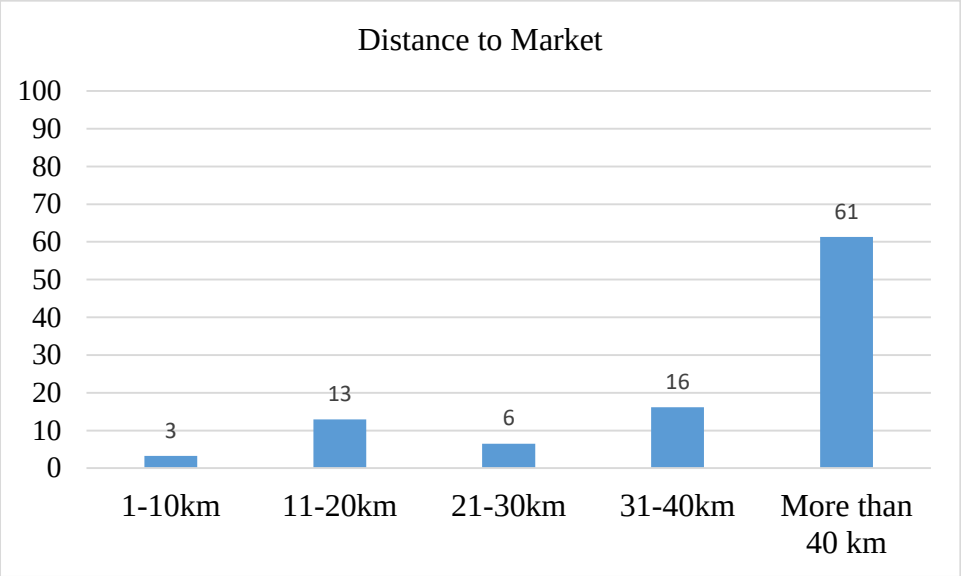
4.5.1 Transportation

Figure 6:transpotation



4.5.2 Distance to market

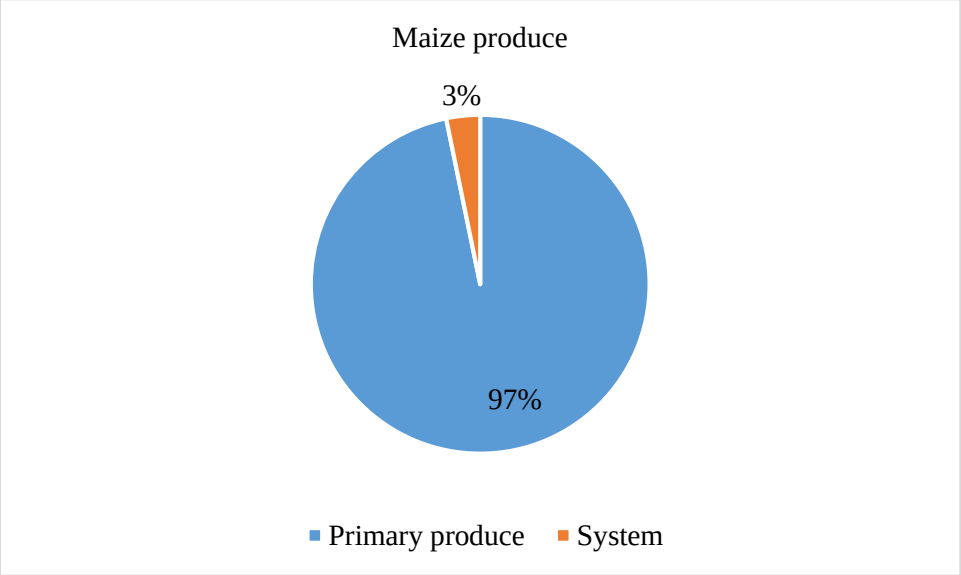
Figure 7: Distance to market



Transportation costs Amongst the marketing challenges the farmers face were high transportation costs, 68% of farmers hire transport to take their maize to the market and 61 % of respondants live 40km away from the market. Marketing transport is important as it links the farmers to the markets or consumers on time. The availability of one's own market transport influences the delivery time of produce to the markets, unlike the case of farmers who depend on hired transport or public transport to transport their produce. Transport availability determines the quality of the delivered produce. Unreliable transport can lead to the late delivery of produce. In the case of emerging farmers who lack storage facilities late delivery of produce can result in loss of produce quality and rendering the producer unreliable to the buyer. The majority of the farmers were spending more money on transportation per annum. Farmers that are close to the road and have access to transport are better integrated to the markets as compared to farmers that are not. The majority of the farmers' localities were situated far from public roads and were serviced by gravel roads which were not well maintained and impenetrable during rainy conditions.

4.5.3 Maize marketing/sales

Figure 8: Marketing



In figure 9 above, farmers were asked if they sell their maize produce. As shown by the results in figure 9 above, majority of the respondents were selling their maize produce and few of the respondents were not selling their maize produce. This means that, the main reason of farmers in to grow maize was to sell maize. This shows that farmers have access to markets.

4.5.4 Results related to market

Table 5: Informal and formal market

		Frequency	Percent
Prefared Market	Informal market	9	29,0
	Formal market	22	71,0
	Total	31	100,0
Who set the price	Farmer	19	61,3
	Middleman	1	3,2
	Retailer	7	22,6
	Farmer association	4	12,9
	Total	31	100,0
Market offtake	Yes	8	27,6
	No	21	72,4
	Total	29	100,0

Source: field survey (2023)

4.5.5 why farmres do not have market offtake agreements.

Table 6: Market offtakes

		Count	Column N %
Market prices set by retailers	No	17	89,5%
	Yes	2	10,5%
	Total	19	100,0%
Not meeting product demand	No	18	94,7%
	Yes	1	5,3%
	Total	19	100,0%
Small production area	No	14	73,7%
	Yes	5	26,3%
	Total	19	100,0%
No production during some seasons	No	8	42,1%
	Yes	11	57,9%
	Total	19	100,0%
Don't know	No	16	84,2%
	Yes	3	15,8%
	Total	19	100,0%

Results in table 6 above indicate that 71% of respondents prefars formal markets. This is the indication of willingness to progress to commercialisation and 61% respondants set their own price. Table 5 also indicate 72% of respondents do not have market offtake agreements, because 90% of the respondants indicated that this is because the price is set by retailers and 94% they do not meet the market demand because, while 58% indicated that there is no production during some seasons (Table 6). Emerging maize farmers do not enough information

on how the market works and also on how utilised their land effectively. Moreover extension officers have a duty to make sure that farmer are educated on such things.

4.6.1 Financial support

Table 7: Financial support

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Financial status	Below poverty line	2	7
	Lower middle class	27	90
	Upper middle class	1	3
	Total	30	100

As shown on table 8 above the majority of respondants are low middle class. A significant relationship was discovered between farmer income and potential to progress. The significance of farmer income regarding the potential to progress to commercialisation is that farmers who have higher income levels are more willing to progress than those with lower income levels. Farmers with lower income levels tend to be more subsistence-orientated and they avoid taking risks, whereas higher income farmers are exposed to more opportunities such as access to transport for their produce, ability to purchase quality inputs upon requirement, ability to access support services and access markets. Farmers with higher average income levels would find it easier to progress into commercial farming than those who had lower income levels.

4.6.2 financial support

Table 8:Finacial support received by farmers.

		Count	Column N %
Government banks	No	25	81%
	Yes	6	19%
	Total	31	100%
Private banks	No	26	84%
	Yes	5	16%
	Total	31	100%
Co-operative banks	No	27	87%
	Yes	4	13%
	Total	31	100%
None	No	10	32%
	Yes	21	68%
	Total	31	100%

The provision of support services remains one of the major important interventions in the agricultural sector for rural development, commercialisation, food security, poverty alleviation and income generation of emerging farmers. The commercialisation of emerging farmers cannot be achieved without appropriate farmer support services. With adequate access to farmer support services, emerging agriculture can contribute to an increased agricultural growth, rural development and have a positive impact on the farm income. When the respondents were asked about support services various answers were given. Most of the sampled farmers namely 81% claimed to not be receiving financial support services for their farming enterprises while 16% claimed to be receiving support service. Sixteeen percent of respondents receive financial support from private banks and 13% of respondents from co-operative banks.

4.7.1 Support received by farmers from extension officers/government

Table 9:Support received by farmers

		Count	Column N %
Financial Support	No	7	100%
	Yes	0	0%
	Total	7	100%
Input Support	No	1	14%
	Yes	6	86%
	Total	7	100%
Technical Support	No	1	14%
	Yes	6	86%
	Total	7	100%

Proving production and technical support to farmers is crucial for enhancing productivity, improving quality, ensuring food security, promoting sustainable practices, empowering farmers and increasing income.

4.7.2 Training of farmers

Table 10:Training of farmers

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Training farmers	Yes	1	11
	Sometimes	8	89
	Total	9	100
Total		10	
How often	Daily	1	10
	Weekly	1	10
	Monthly	8	80
	Total	10	100

The results in table indicate that farmers are not receiving enough training from the extension officers and that extension officers are not often visiting the farmers. Extension officers play a crucial role in providing farmers with training and guidance on best practices in agriculture. By not visiting and training farmers, there is a risk of low levels of adoption of these practices, leading to lower yields, increased pests and diseases, and soil degradation. Without regular visits from extension officers, farmers may miss out on new agricultural practices, technologies, and innovations. This can limit their ability to improve their productivity and adapt to changing conditions. Face-to-face interactions with extension officers allow for a direct and personalized transfer of knowledge to farmers. Not having this regular interaction can hinder the transfer of important information, skills, and practical knowledge that extension officers posses

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to determine the potential of KSD emerging maize farmers to progress into commercial farming for enhanced rural livelihoods. Socio-demographically, KSD emerging maize farmers are older in age, have low education levels, and depend on government financing systems (pensions, casual employment etc.) for sources of income. KSD emerging maize farmers possess the potential to progress into commercial farming given their level of experience, the willingness to progress into commercial farming and land availability, however their inability to access markets, poor infrastructure, low education, age of the farmers, limited access to relevant information and small herd size compromise this potential. Farmers closest to progressing into commercialisation predominantly had larger herd sizes and higher average income levels. It shows that there are farmers who currently can make the transition into commercialisation; however, limiting factors highlighted with the results prohibit farmer development in terms of the livelihood asset base. Maize is of great importance for KSD emerging maize farmers. Based on the study of factor hindering the ability of emerging famers, it can be concluded that KSD maize farmers possess the potential to progress into commercial farming; however, this potential is compromised by poor infrastructure conditions, lack of market knowledge and ability to access markets, limited exposure to information related to maize production, and land sizes. Progressing into commercialisation requires the total buy-in of the farmers themselves.

5.2. Recommendations

The farmers needed training in various production skills of which could boost their productivity and farm income. Skills such as training in the development of marketing strategies could help them access and secure marketing channels. Overcoming the challenges emerging farmers face can induce the farmers to move towards commercial agricultural systems. In order for emerging farmers to withstand both local and international competition, the South African government needs to consider support policies and regulation that are necessary to stimulate growth among emerging farmers. The State has a crucial role to play in increasing market participation of emerging farmers through encouraging group marketing, the upgrading of roads to enable smooth accessibility of farmers to output markets and the establishment of local point sales in farming rural areas.

In relation to policy recommendations, the study identified that the potential to commercialise existed; however, certain determinants compromised this potential. Access to relevant information means that farmers can be aware of production and market expectation at a commercial level. Such information could be market pricing, ways to increase current production levels in order to sustainably supply the market and exposure to health and nutrition related products. The study revealed that agricultural extension services are critical for the farming operations of emerging farmers. However, there are challenges such as inefficiency and unreliability of these services to farmers. This needs to be improved if KSD emerging farmers are to progress successfully into commercialisation. Existing programmes related to training and empowering farmers with the necessary skills need to be effectively implemented. When developing policies, farmer‘s knowledge and input has to be considered if such policies are to help smallholder farmer‘s progress to commercial maize farming.

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