UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Role of Small-scale Sugarcane Farmers in Local Economic Development of the Darnall (KwaDukuza) Region

By

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DECLARATION

I **Nonkululeko Nthabiseng Mote** declare that

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ABSTRACT

The local economy of Darnall is dominated by the sugar industry. Sugarcane cultivation and sugar production are the largest employers in the area. The research explores the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farmers on the LED of the Darnall area. The study was inspired by the Gijima KZN investment into the rehabilitation of small-scale sugarcane farms, for the promotion of LED in Darnall. The research objectives and research questions, explore the role of role small-scale sugarcane farmers in the LED of Darnall; the sustainability and implementation challenges experienced by the small-scale sugarcane farmers that impact on LED and LED strategies. The study was qualitative in nature, with a constructivism as the underpinned research paradigm. The focus group discussions were the employed data collection method.

The research findings indicate that small-scale sugarcane contribute positively to the LED of Darnall, LED officials from local government agencies lack the knowledge and understanding on the subject of LED, local government does not have a uniquely adopted LED strategy but rather rely on the provincial and national's governments LED strategy. It could be concluded that small-scale sugarcane farmers have a positive contribution on the LED of the Darnall area in direct and indirect ways.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEF- Business Enabling Fund

DPLG- Department of Provincial and Local Government

GNI- Gross National Income

HSSREC- Human and Social Science Research Ethics Committee

IMP- Implementation

ISI- The International Statistical Institute

KZN- KwaZulu-Natal

LED- Local economic development

LCP- Local Competitive Fund

RV- Recoverable value

SA- South Africa

SALGA- The South African Local Government Association

SMME- Small MediumMicro Enterprise

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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The objective of local economic development (LED) as described by The World Bank, "Is to build up the economic capacity of a local area, to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all'' (The World Bank, 2011). The World Bank (2011) further states that the goal of LED can be achieved by working together of the various sectors; public, private and non-government partners in order to improve economic growth and better the living conditions of the people in that local area. There are many definitions of LED, but all cover these aspects, mainly 'working together', that is a collaboration of various sectors, by forming partnerships that can either directly or indirectly contribute towards creating an environment that is conducive to local economic growth. There are differences, however, in terms of which of the various sectors are ultimately responsible for LED. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) describes LED as partnerships between national and local governments with public sector and private sector as noted by Mahlawe and Cohen (2010). Notable differences are that unlike The World Bank, the emphasis is on government not nongovernmental or non-profit agencies. The ultimate goals of LED within a local region are generally understood to be; creating jobs, improving economic growth, which can be facilitated through job creation and increasing the economic activity of the community. The goals ought to lead to poverty alleviation and an improved quality of life for the people in that community.

The improvement of LED is not a task limited only to government, but contribution of other sectors such as public sector and private sector including non-profit organisations as well. Urban areas are more equipped with the resources required in the implementation of LED strategies, unlike in rural areas. Fundamental issues need to be

addressed in rural areas and key resources need to be in place prior to competitive economic engagement. Basic resources such as clean running water, proper sewage facilities and decent shelter are still lacking, and not to mention the essential resources required for economic activity such as the infrastructure of roads and information technology systems for communication are poor if not nonexistent. There are many approaches that may be used to assess how LED of a particular area has been impacted. The knowledge of LED alone is not enough in achieving poverty alleviation. Strategies and execution plans need to be in place to ensure that the goals are reachable, but ultimately it is the implementation of those plans that determine success. There are many complexities associated with the implementation of LED, and are dependent on that specific local area. Darnall is an area located near the north coast of KwaZulu-Natal, 82km away from the eThekwini, Durban city centre. Darnall forms part of the KwaDukuza local municipality, which forms part of the iLembe district municipality. Most of the unoccupied land in the KwaDukuza north coast region consists of sugarcane cultivation. There is one sugarcane mill in the Darnall area, which forms part of a larger sugar company, one of the biggest sugar producing companies in SA that consists of a total of 4 mills located in and near the KZN north coast region.

1.2 Background to the problem

The LED has been identified as a crucial component in the facilitation of job creation and improved economic growth, especially in rural areas. Thus, substantial funds have been contributed by government and nongovernmental organisations for the assistance of LED. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) in collaboration with the European Union initiated the Gijima program aimed at facilitating and improving job creation outside of the Durban city centre (Marias, 2010). One of the projects that were funded by the Gijima program was the *Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Sugarcane Farmers in the Darnall Area.* The project took place in Darnall several years ago, during the period of 2008. The objectives of the project were to “develop farms belonging to one hundred and forty-two small-scale farmers in the iLembe district municipality.” (Gijima KZN, 2014). The total investment was over five million rands and the grant beneficiaries were small-scale farmers from the Darnall Famers Association (DFA). The project aims were to

provide small-scale sugarcane farmers with adequate resources, as to enable the farmers to compete in the local sugar industry market, while promoting LED in the area. (Gijima KZN, 2014).

1.3 Problem statement

The intention of this study is to establish how small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute to the improvement or promotion of LED in the Darnall area and assess the extent at which the Gijima KZN investment has assisted. The effectiveness of the Gijima project investment will be deduced from the evaluation of the role of small-scale sugarcane farmers in the LED of Darnall and assessed against the state of the LED in Darnall as compared to the surrounding local areas within the iLembe district. The review of LED agency's strategy will provide an overview of LED and enable the identification of influencing factors on the LED strategy used for the Gijima project. LED is crucial in addressing challenges of unemployment and economic growth in rural areas. Thus, the identification of key learning points on the effectiveness of small-scale sugarcane farmers on the LED of the Darnall area and the identification of potential areas of improvement shall guide and facilitate future investment decisions in similar LED projects.

1.4 Objectives

The below are the research objectives of the study; to:

- Assess the role of small-scale farmers in the improvement and promotion of local economic development in the Darnall area.
- Understand the state of local economic development in the Darnall area as compared to the rest of the iLembe district municipality.
- Determine the outcomes of the investment project ‘Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnall Area’.
- Evaluate the LED strategies of the economic development agencies.

- Explore the challenges associated with small-scale farmers and economic development in the Darnall area.

1.5 Key research questions

The following research questions will be answered from the present study:

How do small-scale farmers improve and/ promote local economic development in the Darnall area?

How do the LED objectives and strategies for economic development agencies (DEDT KZN and Enterprise iLembe) compare?

How is the state of LED in the Darnall area?

Why is there a need for investment projects such as ‘Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnall Area’ to drive LED?

How are challenges associated with implementation and sustainability of the LED in the Darnall area perceived?

1.6 Significance

The significance of the study is that, LED is fundamental for economic growth and job creation in rural areas, a comprehensive study of how small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute to the LED of the Darnall area, shall assist in the promotion of more investment in the industry. The outcomes and key learning points of this study could be applied to other LED initiatives involving SMMEs (small, medium and micro enterprises), as small-scale farmers are representative of SMMEs. The study addresses the issues of implementation, sustainability and challenges experienced by the small-scale sugarcane farmers, the research outcomes and recommendations could be beneficial to the small-scale farmers and SMMEs in general. Due to the size of individual sugarcane contributions made by small-scale farmers as compared to commercial and medium scale farmers, most of the focus, improvements and support

from investors, the government and the sugarcane mill tend to favour the larger sugarcane contributors. The research into the contribution of small-scale farmers to the LED of the Darnall area could influence the perceptions of the role of small-scale farmers and SMMEs in LED.

1.7 Research methodology

The research design was qualitative in nature and the underpinned research paradigm was constructivism. The research methodology employed for data collection consisted of primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from focus group discussions with small-scalesugarcane farmers from the Darnall Farmers Association and LED officials. The purposeful sampling was the sampling method used.Secondary data was collected from municipal archives, LED journals, articles and other electronic and library sources for the critical review of literature. The trustworthiness of the research was evaluated using validity and reliability as forms of measurement. Ethical considerations were also taken into account, throughout the various stages of research.

1.8 Definitions of key concepts

The following section includes the definitions of key concepts mentioned in this study:

Local economic development

“Robust and inclusive local economies, exploiting localopportunities, real potential and competitive advantages, addressing local needsand contributing to national development objectives” (DPLG 2006 in Rogerson, 2011, p151)

“An ongoing process by which key stakeholders and institutions from all spheres of society, the public and private sector as well as civil society, work jointly to create a unique advantage for the locality and its firms, tackle market failures, remove bureaucratic obstacles for local businesses and strengthen the competitiveness of local firms.” (Ruecker and Trah, 2007, p15 in Rogerson, C and Rogerson J, 2010a).

LED partnerships

"Collaborations between municipalities, the private sector, and the civil society to commit to working together on a project or programme in order to pursue common goals and in which the different partners bring complementary resources, contribute to the design of the program, and share risks and benefits." (Stibbe 2008 in Rogerson, 2010b, p441- 442)

"Harness the power of different sectors to provide the opportunity to do local economic development better; & offer a mechanism to enable each partner to share its own specific competencies and capacities to achieve common and complementary goals more effectively" (Rogerson, 2010b, p443)

LED strategies

"LED strategies seek to embed economic activity in a territory andmake economic activity dependent on the specific economic conditions and comparativeadvantages of that place, they generate sustainable employment in enterprises morecapable of withstanding changes in the global economic environment." (Rodriguez- Pose, 2009 in Rogerson C and Rogerson J, 2010a)

"Strategic approach to the development of localeconomies and overcome challenges and failures in respect of instances wheremunicipalities themselves try to manage a litany of non-viable projects or start ups" (Rogerson, 2011)

1.9 Outline of chapters

The following section contains an outline and a brief description of the chapters contained in this study:

Chapter 1 consists of the introduction of the whole study, the background of the study, along with the problem statement, research objectives and research questions. Further included are the significance of the study,definitions of key concepts, outline of chapters to come and the conclusion of the chapter.

Chapter 2 consists of a critical review of literature relevant to this study, the assessment of the meaning of LED in a South African context, the role of government, Gijima KZN, and a need for LED partnerships. The review of literature furthermore encompasses the challenges and sustainability issues related to LED implementation.

Chapter 3 evaluates the research methodology of the study, the description of four common underpinned research paradigms is included with the justification for the choice of the constructivism paradigm. Quantitative and qualitative research methods are compared against each other and a justification for qualitative method is provided. Ethical considerations are discussed, includingissues surrounding informed consent, data collection and research participants.

Chapter 4 consists of the research findings and the five emergent themes. The main themes are the confusion of the research participants as to the contribution of the small-scale farmers on the LED of Darnall and the contradictory opinions on the effectiveness of the Gijima investment. The challenges and sustainability issues experienced by small-scale sugarcane farmers, LED partnerships and the description and background of a small-scale sugarcane farms completes the five emergent research themes.

Chapter 5 reviews and interprets the emergent research themes and consists of discussions on the role of small-scale sugarcane framers, debate on the Gijima invest, the need for the recognition of existing and new LED partnerships and the description and background of the small-scale sugarcane farmer.

Chapter 6 contains the conclusion of the entire research and the assessment of the achievement of research objectives, research shortcomings, research limitations and recommendations for future studies.

1.10 Conclusion

The recognition of LED as a means to eradicate poverty through job creation, asserts the importance of LED. The execution of LED however, happens on a local scale, thus this study explores the role of small-scale sugarcane farmers in the LED of the Darnall area. The Gijima KZN project is the basis of the study. The critical review of literature steered the direction of the study, as the foundation of influence upon which the

research questions, research objectives and research methodology. Chapter Two contains the critical review of literature relevant to the research.

CHAPTER TWO:

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

There are various definitions of the term local economic development, literature has been produced to understand and explore LED in the South African context. Pioneer literature has been produced by skilled researchers in the field of LED during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Pioneer researchers such as Nel, Rogerson and Meyer-Stamer have produced the fundamental research on which the field of study for SA LED is based(Mawson, 2001, Nel and Rogerson, 2007). Research in the study of LED has contributed to the change in thinking and execution of LED and has prompted constructive debate amongst the relevant stakeholders and has influenced government policy.

2.2 Local Economic Development

2.2.1 Meaning of LED: Background

There has been controversy surrounding the meaning of LED and the direction in which LED should take in the country. Rogerson (2010b) states the definition of LED has been a controversial issue in SA, clouded by misunderstanding and opposing views, while others believe that LED should facilitate competitive business others view LED as a means of driving social projects and initiatives. Inequality in the country has been the underlying source of the confusion surrounding the meaning of LED. The economies of the large city centres flourished during the apartheid period, while rural areas were riddled with poverty and lacked in basic resources such as clean running water and electricity. SA's past of apartheid has a direct influence on the country's

development and progress (Cash and Swatuk, 2011). The inequality gap needed to be addressed, and LED became a major part of the solution. Rogerson (2011) argues that the spread of the LED to localities outside of large municipal cities was initiated with the formation of the SA constitution, which prompted the formation of the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG).

The SA constitution recognises everyone as equal regardless of race and economic status, thus affording all citizens the rights to basic human needs, as captured in the Bill of Rights. When the concept of building and improving communities in areas outside of larger city centres was proposed, local government was challenged as to how to go about it. Rogerson (2010c) argues that LED practices in large metropolitan cities differed considerably from that of smaller areas, in that in larger cities the municipality aimed at creating an environment that supports local business and allows for business to thrive, whereas smaller areas were still focused on the facilitation of social projects. The differences resulted in two approaches to LED, Marais (2010) supports the argument that the LED strategies for a period of 1990s were vastly different, mainly community socially based, i.e. social projects and initiatives or city business based. This meant that the LED could either take the direction to drive social projects or promote the creation and growth of local business. Rogerson (2010c) further iterates that the few project initiatives implemented by government during the late 1990s and early 2000s were more of social work activities rather than establishing competitive local economies.

There has been great criticism of the social approach to LED, the social approach can be attributed to the LED funds that were provided by DPLG to the communities for various LED initiatives, such as formation of local community vegetable gardens. Marais (2010) agrees that the LED fund introduced focused on projects that favour the poor, the projects failed once the funds were exhausted, due to “poor design, the exclusion of local business expertise, dominated by the public sector, and inappropriate technical advice.” (Marais, 2010, p. 519)

The differences in the approach to LED stirred Rogerson to suggest that “One lesson of LED practice in the North [the developed first world countries] is about the need to build expert networks and sustainable knowledge platforms in order to support competitiveness and turn local endowments to regional and national competitive

advantage." (Rogerson,2010b, p. 490). Social projects proved to be ineffective at driving LED as they proved to be dependent on funds, and the promotion of sustainable business was favoured. But Rogerson (2010b) argues that despite a shift in LED approach from social projects to more competitive initiatives, small local governments still focus on social welfare projects. Local governments were tasked with driving LED and Rogerson (2010c) agrees that LED works best when the central government control is minimised and local economies are afforded the opportunity to grow and form larger economies, referring to this as the bottom up approach. However Rogerson (2010b) affirms that despite the differences in opinions as to the meaning of LED, there is a general consensus as to the expected outcomes of LED that is to alleviate poverty and increase job creation. Rural areas are the most affected by poverty and unemployment and Marais (2010) notes that the greatest need for LED is in the rural areas and the city outskirts and should be made a priority.

2.2.2 Rise in LED: South African context

The rise in LED may be attributed to the country's past; apartheid segregation laws meant that people were located forming communities according to racial groups. The results of apartheid were inequality. Marais (2010) notes that the SA economy was affected by globalisation due to apartheid resulting in the decentralisation of the country, the isolated economic developments were restricted to cities and large urban areas and directed mainly at the white race. The government focused on the development of what was then called 'white-only' communities located in and near the large city centres. The end of apartheid saw a new government and the SA constitution was introduced which identified all people regardless of race as being equal and had rights to basic resources such as food, shelter and education. The government had to address the issue of communities that lacked in the basic resources described in the constitution. Rogerson(2010c) agrees that despite the boom in LED in western countries; LED became even more prevalent in SA due to issues affecting economic growth such as poverty, lack of infrastructure and unemployment. There are however various ideas in literature as to what sparked an increase interest in LED, Marais (2010) argues that the increase in LED initiatives cannot be attributed to any factor that can be agreed upon, but then Marais (2010) contradicts the argument by stating that the effects

of apartheid resulted in communities planning for their own development, which can be attributed to the rise in LED.

The reason as to what caused the rise in LED may be disputed, however, what may not be disputed is the need for LED in addressing issues such as poverty and unemployment in the country. The need for LED became more of an issue of concern post 1994, Rogerson (2011) states that the DPLG launched the 1999 LED fund to assist the national government with poverty alleviation related matters. The fund was used to drive LED initiatives with the focus on rural areas; however Marais (2010) argues that there have been inconsistent LED achievements with success concentrated in larger cities and urban areas and lack of success in poor rural areas. The lack of success of the 1999 LED fund was attributed to numerous factors; one factor as sighted by Rogerson (2010b) refers to the period between 2000 and 2005 as a "missed opportunity" and faults the DPLG for the lack of direct authority. Rogerson (2011) argues that it was only after 2006 that DPLG released its first LED strategy outline. The suggestion is that the DPLG initiated LED without clear guidelines that linked with the social approach to LED as the direction needed for execution was not stated prior 2006. Despite the mistakes made by the DPLG they contributed significantly to the rise of LED in SA.

2.2.3 LED in South African context

SA is a country filled with great diversity, it boasts with a mixture of cultures, various ethnicities and diverse backgrounds. The country has been shaped by its past history of apartheid, and the legacy of apartheid still lingers on 20 years post democracy and freedom. Segregation laws meant that people were divided by race and categorised into levels of significance. Traces of the past are visible in the county's inequality, Findley and Ogbu (2011) mention that traditionally the economic activity of the country was focused on big cities, with little to no investment contributed to townships, rural areas and greater city outskirts. Maile (2014) states that in the country, there have been a progressive shift in the economic development growth, from city centred to locally based economies.

During the last decade a sharp increase in investments has been contributed to townships, with the additions of shopping malls and shopping centres located in almost

all of the country's major townships, such as the Maponya Mall in Soweto and the Bridge City Mall in Umlazi. Thus, producing job creation and boosting the economic activity of areas that were previously low economic contributors. The new government post 1994 slowly started to shift the focus from city centres to include city outskirts, townships and small urban areas. The government's goals were to provide its entire people with basic needs such as food, clean water and shelter, by implementing strategies to reduce and ultimately end poverty (Sinyolo*et al*, 2014). LED initiatives in small urban areas and rural areas began as a means to reach the government's goals, though the face of the LED has changed since then. However, the goals of the current government still closely resemble that of the then new government post 1994 and even till today LED is considered to be the instrument needed in poverty alleviation.

2.2.4 Role of government in LED

For successful implementation of LED initiatives, LED needs a driver. There are numerous arguments presented in the academic literature as to who should be responsible for facilitating LED. There are many stakeholders involved in the implementation of LED, Mahlawe and Cohen (2010) state that the role of LED implementation is the partnership of government both local and national, public sector and private sector. Though there is a general consensus that government has a role in LED, there seems to be disagreement and misunderstanding as to what that role should be. The confusion may be as of consequence of the past as Rogerson (2010b) explains that prior to change in government in 1994, LED strategies and planning was only focused and limited to selected large municipal cites.

The new government post 1994 had to take over LED planning to include communities and areas that were previously excluded and not planned for. The task of planning for LED fell on local governments, Rogerson (2011) agrees that LED policy development is the task of local government and sights that due tothe introduction of the then new government the policy development process has changed.The issue of LED needed to be undertaken by local governments and the DPLG introduced the LED fund in 1999.Rogerson (2010b) however states that the introduction of the LED fund sparked confusion amongst many municipal officials, as they were unfamiliar as to what LED was and what it encompassed; the results were supported by the study conducted by

Meyer-Stamer (2002). Nonetheless Rogerson(2010b) maintains that there is no clear understanding as to what is the role of local government in the facilitation of LED.

The confusion and lack of direction as how local governments needed to address issues of LED prompted debates as to the role of national government, Rogerson (2011) argues that national government should create policies that support the implementation of LED at local government level, thus equipping local governments with the knowledge and tools to drive LED. Rogerson(2010b) further iterates in another study that without proper LED guidelines for local government, local governments tend to operate using provisional and national guidelines which may not be suited or aligned with the needs of that local area. The value of structured guidelines cannot be stressed enough for LED to succeed, it needs to be implemented with the specific community in mind, the needs of the community need to be identified, relevant stakeholders must be engaged and participate.

The challenge of the national government is to create policies that take into account what is LED and what that means, how LED can be implemented and sustained, but importantly policies should not reflect a blanket approach to LED but must reflect a balance between generic factors and unique factors dependent upon the community's needs and available resources. Rogerson (2011) states the Municipality Guideline Act of 2000 noted the first legislation of integrated LED planning for local governments, however Rogerson (2010b) argues that national government intervention or assistance in executing LED planning was absent until 2006. The role of local government has not been firmly established and there are still debates surrounding the issue, government, public sector, nongovernmental organisations and literature all seem to have contradictory opinions. Rogerson (2010b) states that attempts by the DPLG in 2006 to give direction by introducing the "competitive advantage", provided some clarity as to the role of local government but also brought about confusion between the balance of competitive projects and social projects. This study disagrees; the introduction of the "competitive advantage" may have influenced the increase of competitive based LED but failed to deal with the role of local government in LED, and the confusion still remains.

Table 2.1: Comparison between Social Projects and Competitively based Projects

Social projects	**Competitively based projects**
Driven by social responsibility	Driven by profit generation
Fills a social need	Fills a gap in the market
Relies on continued external funding	Relies on profits and repeat business
Unsustainable once funding is discontinued	Sustainable past discontinued funding

2.2.5 Background to sugarcane cultivation in Darnall

Agriculture in SA (South Africa) contributes two point four percent of the country's GDP and an estimated ten percent of formal employment, according to The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery (DAFF). The DAFF (2013) notes that seventy percent of agricultural products are the raw materials used in the manufacturing sector and the contribution of the agricultural sector in the economy should not be measured by its GDP contribution in isolation. The agricultural sector is vital to the nation to ensure food security and facilitate job creation and poverty alleviation, the sector contributes significantly to the local economy, including the community of Darnall (Collier, 2012).

The DAFF (2013) states that employment within the agricultural sector benefits rural communities the most. However, the agricultural sector has been faced with numerous challenges and has been under immense criticism in the previous few years. Media reported wage disputes were farm employees reportedly undertook mass protest for the regulation of a set minimum wage for permanent and casual farm workers. Despite wage dispute challenges that confront the agricultural sector, Hussain and Khattak (2012) credit the sugar industry as the main source of economic activity in the cane producing rural areas. The sugar industry has been described as invaluable and

important, “The sugar industry is an important provider of jobs. Its role in this regard has been particularly valuable as it is a rurally based industry and so the jobs both in milling and growing are in the rural areas.” (Maloa, 2001, p.1).

The history of sugarcane cultivation in Darnall reported in this study was adapted from the history of the Natal Cane Growers Association (NCGA), from 1936 to 1996, covering a 60 year period, with limited focus on post 1990s. The NGCA mainly compromised of Indian people, which were sugarcane farm workers at the time and a small percentage of them were small-scale sugarcane growers. The term ‘grower’ is an industry term for ‘farmer’, for the purpose of this study, the terms are used interchangeably. By the mid 1990s the supply of sugarcane to the Darnall mill from the NCGA consisted of a number of 248 growers that held a total of 3309 registered hectares of land and were able to supply 54155 tons of cane delivered (Henning, 1996).

The face of sugarcane growing in the Darnall area has somewhat changed, though some elements have not significantly changed in the past two decades. In the past the sugarcane growers were represented by various associations typically comprising of members of the same race, however the new democracy saw the merger of the different associations to form what is now known as the Darnall Farmers Association (DFA). There are three categories of sugarcane growers within the DFA; commercial growers, those that are able to supply large tons of sugarcane at a time as they occupy more land, medium growers and small-scale growers. The majority of commercial farmers consist of white farmers and a minority of Indian farmers, whereas the majority of small-scale farmers are made up of a majority of Indian farmers and a minority of black farmers as of consequence of the nations inherited past. Farmers are dominantly males with very few females in the industry. There are partnerships formed between the sugar mills and sugarcane growers, independently supervised by the South African Sugar Association (SASA) to monitor fair implementation of the Recoverable Value (RV) pricing system. Maloa (2001) sights that RV is dependent on the nature of the crop, that is determined by the percentage of sucrose that can be extracted from particular sugarcane batch, at a particular time, as sucrose levels in sugarcane vary due to various conditions.

2.3 LED Partnerships

2.3.1 Integrated partnerships

Partnerships are invaluable for successful LED implementations, the foundation of thriving economies is interlinked partnerships forged amongst various stakeholders, according to Houghton (2011). Economies are built by governments working together with the private sector, and with public sector buy in and other relevant stakeholders. The role of LED is to build and grow economies on a local scale and partnerships are just as valuable on a local scale as they are on the provincial, national and global scale, if not more valuable. Rogerson (2010b) stresses that LED outcomes can be better achieved with the involvement of public and private sectors. Rogerson(2010c) further states that governments have the ability to creating environments that are conducive to do business by eliminating unnecessary, excessive regulations "red tape issues" and the private sector has the ability to create jobs. The argument by Rogerson seems too ideal and only well suited for city based economies, but mismatched for rural communities and city outskirts. In the rural community, government needs to do more than just remove red tape issues, fundamental resources are still lacking, and communities need to be educated on various ways they can contribute to their economies. Umboha *et al*. (2014) state that government policy has a direct impact on small-scale farming. The study is however in agreement with Rogerson (2010c) in that there is a need for integrated LED initiatives, involving diverse stakeholders.

The inconsistent opinions of local governments as to the direction of LED, affects the formation of suitable and sustainable partnerships. Rogerson (2010a) agrees that the reasons for the lack of private sector participation in assisting local government's drive LED is due to the differences in views, government is conflicted with social projects and the private sector is founded on profit generation. In spite of the slow reception from the private sector, other stakeholders such as nonprofits and nongovernmental organisations have taken the responsibility to facilitate LED, in several ways. Rogerson (2010b) notes that there have been numerous contributions made by the European Union and other stakeholders in the facilitation of LED training and LED driven projects, and further states that the success of such efforts cannot be confirmed yet, but should result in capable LED officers who are to engage private sector involvement in such initiatives. The nongovernmental organisations may serve as an indirect bridge

between government and the private sector, Rogerson(2010a) argues however, that in ensuring successful LED implementation, public sector and private sector must form collaborations. The argument by Rogerson is incomplete; all stakeholders need to form partnerships, more especially in rural and city outskirt communities.

2.3.2 Gijimaprogram: Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnallarea.

The partnerships of various stakeholders are imperative to the initiation, implementation and funding of LED projects. The KZN Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) in collaboration with the European Union, initiated the Gijima program aimed at the effective implementation of LED and the advancement of economic grown within the province (Marias, 2010 and Clasey and Nicholson, 2009). One of the projects that were funded by the Gijima program was the *Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnall Area.* The Darnall area is located in the iLembe district municipality, next to the EThekwini Municipality along the north coast. The sugarcane crop along the coastal areas of KwaZulu-Natal sustains numerous local municipalities. The value of crop cultivation is emphasised by Aliber and Hall (2012) as an important LED tool through the promotion of job creation in the country. Marais (2010) notes that Durban reportedly accounts for more than a third of the KZN province's overall economy, the KZN economy is therefore concentrated in Durban. The sugarcane crop is therefore essential in the economic development of local areas outside of the city centre, and therefore able to sustain the communities.

The Gijima program has various funding schemes, including the Business Enabling Fund (BEF), Local Competiveness Fund (LCF), Networking and Co-operation Funding and the Technical Assistance Provided by the Program Co-ordinating Unit (TAF), according to Gijima KZN (2015). The various funding schemes are designed to provide broad funding opportunities for LED initiatives, small to medium scale businesses and any other activities that promote LED. The Gijima project to rehabilitate the sugarcane for small-scale farmers was funded under the BEF, the purpose of the fund as stated by Gijima KZN (2015) is to assist governments, both local and provisional to achieve

government's role in LED, by creating environments in which businesses are able to prosper thus accomplishing LED objectives.

There is no debate that government has a role in LED, even though that role has not yet been fully agreed upon. The government department, DEDT in collaboration with the EU through the establishment of the Gijima projects has been able to promote LED, Olsson (2010) states that investment into local communities promotes LED. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of the Gijima project in the assistance small-scale farmers. Aliber and Hall (2012) suggest that the government's initiatives in supporting small-scale farmers have insignificant impact compared to the investment that is contributed by the government. The statement by Aliber and Hall needs clarity as double meanings can be drawn from the statement, as to suggest that the government needs to do more in its support of small-scale farmers or that the support rendered is of no impact. Regardless of the meaning of the statement, projects such as the Gijima project are indicative of the right direction taken by the government, though the effectiveness of such projects needs to be established. Marais (2010) argues that the Gijimaprogram is not competition driven and the approach adopted is more supply driven. Marais (2010) further attributes the lack of competitive based projects due to the donor based nature of the program and its projects. Gijima KZN (2015) however, recognised the need for competitive based projects, hence the LCF fund, which is designed to integrate small business with large private sector operations, by the identification and creation of partnerships. The Gijima project to assist small-scale farmers in Darnall area is not unique, Aliber and Hall (2012) state that the government has considerably increased its investment into the agricultural sector from the mid 1990s, and the support for small-scale farmers has been in the forefront of the government's initiatives.

2.4 LED implementation

2.4.1 Sustainability

The past two decades as seen a rise of the implementation of countless LED initiatives, projects, programs amongst others. The implementation of such LED initiatives has bought hopes of economic growth, hopes of jobs and hopes of economic freedom particularly for the people on the receiving end. The great downfall of many of these LED initiatives has been the issue of sustainability. Sustainability is a major factor need to ensure LED, just as import in business, for continued business growth, the business needs to be sustainable in order to survive. The argument is supported by Rogerson (2010c) in the statement that the outcome of the LED funds were small project that proved unsustainable without the continuous income of funds and as a result had to come to an end.

There are numerous factors that may be attributed to the lack of sustainability of LED projects which ultimately led to the failure of LED initiatives. Okecha (2011) notes that government politics get in the way of LED and service delivery. The aim of LED is to improve the economy of the local community. LED that is not sustainable or that does not lead to sustained economic growth is only effective but only for a short while. Rogerson (2010b) sites lack of qualified municipal staff as a threat to LED, as they are unable to produce effective LED strategies and plans, instead tend to focus on social projects with over stated outcomes and little impact on improving the local economy. Social projects have been in the forefront of the LED in the first decade post apartheid, and there has been a consensus amongst researchers as to the failure of the projects was partly due to sustainability. Sustainability however has not been a challenge only limited to, social LED projects, but an issue that still remains even with the competitive based LED initiatives and thus an imperative subject when addressing the implementation of LED.

2.4.2 Challenges

The challenges of LED are not only limited to sustainability, LED is broad and complex with a variety of dynamics that influences its success. Rogerson (2011) states

that the reason for both small areas and rural areas lack successful LED initiatives, is argued to be due to lack of local government support and funding for driving LED. This study disagrees with the statement by Rogerson on that despite government's support and funding, some LED projects still fail. The failure can be attributed to other reasons other than lack of government support and funding. Government may fund and support LED initiatives but without the proper skills required, the LED initiatives may fail, as noted by Rogerson(2010c) notes that LED is not taken seriously enough in SA, with local municipal LED officials lacking the necessary skills and knowledge to drive LED, especially in small and rural areas. Rogerson (2010c) further states that a career in LED is unattractive and therefore unable to attract a high calibre skill set and has limited career options.

The implementation of LED, especially in the rural communities where is it desperately needed, poses a greater degree of challenges. Lorentzen (2009) suggests global events pose a challenge to LED in the rural areas and potentially negatively impacts on the quality of life of the community, depending on the circumstances. The statement aims to suggest that globalisation may hinder the economic growth potential of rural areas. There are also positives to globalisation, the positives are that, but not limited to, open trade opportunities with countries all over the world, however the impact on rural areas is not direct. Onyebueke (2011)notes that local efforts to improve economic development need to be guided by global trends. The other positive is that through open investment opportunities, donors are able to invest in rural areas, which can improve the LED of that local community. Donors therefore have the ability to drive LED, Marais (2010) argues that LED approaches that are dictated by donors and government, rather than the market, lack sustainability and are more likely to fail. South Africa is faced with a great challenge of inequality, and breaching that inequality at least to the point that were all the citizens of the country have a decent quality of life is an even greater challenge. The importance and value of LED can never be stated enough, Rogerson(2010b) notes that LED initiatives are placed in the pile of low priority as they are not associated to carry any political weight, and can be seldom used to gain political support. The neglect and failure to consider the seriousness of the LED is the greatest challenge that threatens the implementation and success of LED initiatives.

2.6 Conclusion

There is little debate on the importance on LED; researchers agree that the LED is crucial for the economic development of local communities. The misunderstanding amongst various stakeholders on the direction that LED should take has resulted in a few failed LED initiatives, especially during the early years post 1994. Social projects regarded as LED resulted in unsustainable economic activity and lack of economic dependence by the local community. The face of the LED has since changed, local and provincial government entities along with relevant stakeholders have formed partnerships in the effort of improving LED. Investments schemes such as the Gijima KZN have been set up in the effort to achieve such goals. The Gijima KZN investment in small-scale sugarcane farmers was to achieve LED objectives; this research undertook a qualitative approach in the determination of whether the objectives were met. Chapter Three contains a comprehensive research methodology that applied to this study.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The qualitative research method was favoured for this study and this chapter aims to elucidate the logic behind the methodology adopted in the research, by the examination of some of the diverse research methods available. Research is an important instrument in the advancement of any subject, study, organisation and even country. In order for research to be credible the methodology employed needs to be clearly stated and transparent for review by other researchers. The foundations of the direction taken by the research need to be expanded upon, that any ambiguity is eliminated or minimised.

3.2 Research paradigms

The foundation of research is philosophical assumptions, which influence how research is approached. Philosophical assumptions are the knowledge and background that the researcher brings to the study, Creswell (2014) states in order to determine the type of research and suitable research methods, theses philosophical assumptions need to be expressed. Gringeri*et al.* (2013) argues that the researcher is responsible in informing the reader of any underpinned philosophical assumptions, due to the significant influence of the research and in order to evaluate such assumptions. Ontology described as the nature of reality and epistemology the nature of knowing ‘‘influence on the perceived relative importance of the aspects of reality’’ (Thomas, 2010 and Gringeri*et al.* 2013). The terms generally used to describe the philosophical assumptions of the researcher are; ‘worldview’ or ‘paradigms’ as noted by Creswell (2014). For the purpose of this study, ‘paradigms’ is the term that has been adopted. Lincoln *et al*(2011) noted that paradigms are the essential beliefs that guide social investigation.

There are many paradigms discussed in literature, but only four commonly found will be emphasised; postpositivist, constructivism, transformative and pragmatism. The paradigms are described as they help explain why a qualitative method was adopted.

3.2.1 Postpositivist

Postpositivist widely known as *scientific research* is the traditional form of research. Creswell (2014) states that the postpositivist paradigm is dominated by quantitative research design versus qualitative analysis, as supported by the paradigms philosophical assumptions. The philosophical assumptions were initially based on the 'determining' of 'true knowledge' from human experiences, that observation and experiments were adequate to attain such 'true knowledge' as noted by Thomas (2010). Creswell (2014) argues a shift from 'true knowledge' stating that humans behave and act in such ways that no absolute determinations may be drawn and results obtained from such observations and experiments cannot be said to be true knowledge. Creswell (2014) further states that to determine knowledge, certain variables must be taken into consideration and empirical observations, experiments and/ or measurements must be subsequently applied to deduce effects and outcomes. In such a way the nature of postspositivist is reductionist, as Creswell (2014) further explains that knowledge development starts with a theory, the theory is then reduced into small, measurable variables which leads to the formation of the hypothesis and research questions that can be tested, in order to verify the theory. Phillips and Burbules (2000) emphasised that since absolute knowledge may not be determined, researchers may not 'prove' or 'disprove' the hypothesis, but can only signify a 'failure to reject' the hypothesis, or 'reject' the hypothesis, respectively.

3.2.2 Constructivism

Constructivism paradigm also known as *social constructivism* and *interpretivism* is widely adopted in qualitative research design. Creswell (2014) states that constructivism philosophical assumptions are based on understanding; individuals attempting to make sense of the world around them and their surroundings. Humans by nature are both subjective and objective beings. Creswell (2014) further argues that

humans form subjective meanings of their experiences, “these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of the views rather than narrowing meaning into categories or ideas” (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). Lee (2012) supports the argument, referring to the humans various meanings as ‘multiple realities’, further explaining that despite living in the same world humans create their very own realities in their minds. Lee (2012) further supports Creswell in arguing that due to the nature of the self-created realities, they cannot be grouped or categorised but rather are to be considered as multiple. *Realities* and *meanings* referred to in the above mentioned discussion of constructivism, and any further discussion relating to constructivism, may be considered to hold similar meaning for the purpose of this research.

As of consequence of multiple realities Creswell (2014) places emphasis on the researcher to engage research participants in a manner that encourages interaction, discussion and sharing of views amongst the research participants. Drawn from Creswell (2014) statements is an almost sense that research participants may be more valuable to the study, than the actual research situation or subject. Creswell (2014) further explains that the researcher may gain a lot of valuable data by asking broad and open-ended questions to research participants; this creates an environment conducive for research participant’s realities to be expressed or interpreted. The researcher also holds their own realities “Researchers recognise their own backgrounds shape their interpretation, and they position themselves in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their personal, cultural, and historical experiences.” (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). Lee (2012) cautions that the multiple realities must be deduced in order to determine differing interpretations of one reality, that even though research participants may perceive the same situation differently due to different backgrounds, such factors need to be considered and stated in research. Creswell (2014) states that, rather than to impose a theory on the research subject it is the researcher’s responsibility to draw interpretations of the research participants multiple realities.

3.2.3 Transformative

Transformative paradigm as stated by Creswell (2014) is based on transformation issues that improve social justice, issues such as gender based violence and gay and lesbian rights. Creswell (2014) notes that the transformative paradigm is generally

qualitative in nature and research topics which use the transformative paradigm may include politics, human rights campaigns and environmental matters. Creswell (2014) distinguishes the transformative paradigm to the other paradigms, explaining the paradigm is not based on agreed upon literature, but instead a collection of literature that are not covered by the other paradigms, research based on the oppressed and marginalised. Creswell (2014) further explains that the philosophical assumptions upon which the research is based must be geared towards advocating for change. The change as Creswell (2014) notes may be in the form of providing the research participants a voice for them to express their issues and/or bringing about change in their daily lives, or research may bring about change in terms of influence; research being able to influence government legislation or political conduct. Creswell (2014) states the research issue is focused on a single particular issue, which is clearly indicated in the research.

3.2.4 Pragmatism

Pragmatism paradigm as stated by Creswell (2014) is a problem based rather than methodology based, and generally both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Creswell (2014) further states that rather research focus being which method is ideal to answer the research question, the focus of the research is on the research problem entirely. Creswell (2014) explains that this results in using multiple research methodologies to answer the research question, since various methods may be engaged when not limited by the choice of method. Creswell (2014) notes that the pragmatism paradigms generally apply to mixed method research approaches. Creswell (2014) further explains that the research, philosophical assumptions are not based on any one research method, but are a combination of both quantitative and qualitative assumptions.

3.2.5 Theories adopted in this study

The paradigm adopted in this study is constructivism, due to the nature of the research. The research seeks to understand the role of small-scale farmers in the LED of the Darnall area. The key question asked in this study is “How?” and not “What”, it is how small-scale farmers influence LED in Darnall as opposed to what is the role of small-

scale farmers influencing LED. The question of ‘how’, is explorative and seeks understanding, which is an essential fundamental principle in constructivism. Understanding of how, however, is not only limited to the constructivism paradigm, but can also be in other paradigms, transformative and pragmatism but to a lesser degree. Further evidence to support constructivism was therefore required. Creswell (2014) states that constructivism has multiple participant meaning. Essentially that means that the research question is answered from multiple sources and is a collaboration of different views on the same subject. This study does consist of multiple participant meaning as it considers the multiple views of the small-scale farmers and the views of LED officials. Despite small-scale farmers being one group, the views and meanings that they convey to the study are unique and individual. The backgrounds of the farmers are not the same, though they may have similarities, due to each farmer’s individual past and the exposure they each bring a unique set of ideas and opinion to the study, the same can be said for the LED officials.

Creswell (2014) further states that constructivism is theory generation. The question of how adopted in this study provides a platform for generating a theory on the answer provided, the research questions asked in this study are open ended and do not have definite answers unlike the postpositivist scientific paradigm. Open ended questions are not limiting and enable the research participants to elaborate, thus the researcher can be able to draw theories not definite conclusions on research findings. The above information supports the choice of constructivism research paradigm and aids to explain the selection of qualitative research design for this study.

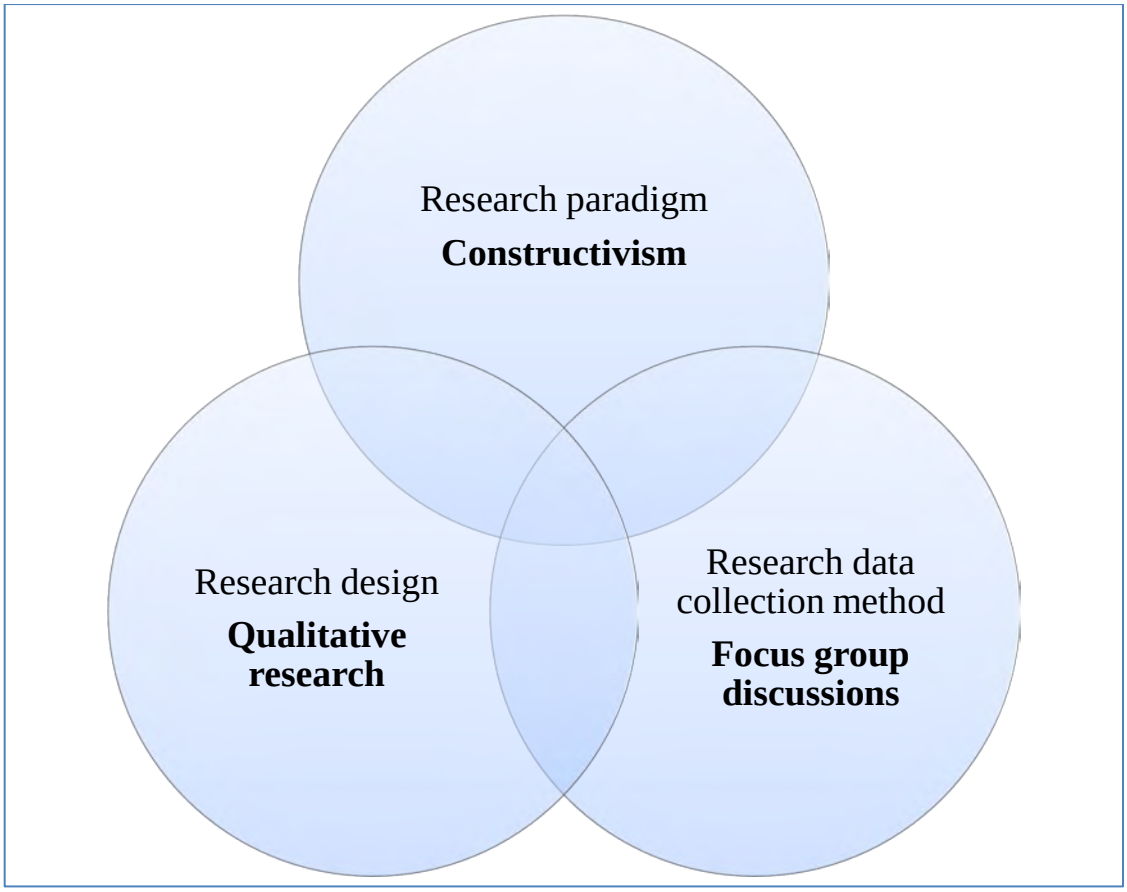

Figure 3.1: The research methodology spheres employed in this study

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 Quantitativedesigns

Quantitative research "can be defined as research that explains phenomena according to numerical data which are analysed by means of mathematically based methods, especially statistics." (Yilmaz, 2013, p.311). Creswell (2014) notes postspositivist paradigm forms the foundation of quantitative research and research design is both experimental and non-experimental designs. Creswell (2014) further states that the use of a hypothesis to investigate two or more variables (dependant and independent variables) in order to determine the relationship amongst the variables is distinctive of quantitative research. Yilmaz (2013) explains that quantitative research is based on an objective reality that assumes isolated and independent behaviour with the intention of creating universal laws. Yilmaz (2013) further explains that the researcher is considered

to be detached from the research subject/s and therefore does not influence research outcomes.

Yilmaz (2013) describes quantitative research methods as presumptuous; the methods are constructed with the assumptions that research participant's experiences will fit well within the method predetermined expectations. Yilmaz (2013) further explains that large sampling groups are common in quantitative method design in order to draw colorations and relationships from the collected volume of data. Trafimow (2014) notes that quantitative methodology is widely dominated by statistical analysis, statistics are able to draw generalisations from collecting data results, thus limiting the nature of questioning to mainly close-ended questions. Creswell (2014) states that the main advantage to quantitative methodology is reducing various research participants' experiences into set categories, determining the relationship of the results found and determining how the results fit in with the initial theory. The disadvantage, however as noted by Manasia andEmmel (2013) is that quantitative methods are unable to explain individual experiences that do not form part of the predetermined categories, it only works well with all in compassing theories. Trafimow (2014) states that due to the nature of quantitative research expression of research participants' emotions and their associated underlined meanings are unable to be captured, unless such emotions and meaning are predetermined and can be quantified. Yilmaz (2013) further explains that due to the emotional detachment of the researcher in quantitative studies, such emotions are not able to be identified.

3.3.2 Qualitative designs

Creswell (2014) states the origin of qualitative research to be from anthropology studies and other forms of social science. Yilmaz (2013) notes that qualitative research is underpinned by the various paradigms, making it difficult to be able to define, but based on various literature provides the definition as "An emergent, inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world." (Yilmaz, 2013, p.312). Creswell (2014) further states that humans create their own meaning to experiences, therefore the researcher cannot separate themselves from the research

subject/s, as the researchers own history can influence how they view and interact with research participants. Yilmaz (2013) further notes that due to the various paradigms that underpin qualitative research, the research design consists of various methodologies and research strategies.

Comparison between quantitative and qualitative research has been simplified as "Unlike quantitative studies which are concerned with outcomes, generalisation, prediction, and cause-effect relationships through deductive reasoning, qualitative studies are concerned with process, context, interpretation, meaning or understanding through inductive reasoning." (Yilmaz, 2013, p.313). Qualitative research methodology is more expressive and seeks to explore deeper meanings and views from research participants. Another comparison to quantitative research is that, qualitative research is more focused on feeling rather than actual facts. Trafimow (2014) notes that in order to gather data for qualitative analysis, the researcher needs to engage with research participants in the participants own natural setting and make observations accordingly, taking note of not only words spoken, but also actions, tone of voice and gestures. Yilmaz (2013) further notes that the researcher must be able to observe the perspective of which the research participants attach various meanings to their experiences. Yilmaz (2013) emphasis the need for open-ended questioning in qualitative research studies; open-ended questions allow for the research participants being able to express their interpretation of their experiences, without the limitation of confining their experiences into predetermined categories as found in quantitative research. ManasiaandEmmel (2013) note that the qualitative research sampling method is focused and limited to a specific group of research participants that share similar experiences and sampling cannot be randomised and results obtained can therefore not easily be generalised to others outside of the research group.

3.2.3 Rationale for a qualitative analysis

The research design adopted in this study is a qualitative analysis. Qualitative method of research is associated with social science research, unlike quantitative research that is ideal for scientific research. This study is of a social science nature, the answers related to how small-scale farmers influence LED are not scientifically deduced, but rather explored through the farmer's and LED officials' perceptions. Qualitative

methodology takes into consideration the research participant's perception. The underpinned paradigm for this study is constructivism (refer to section 3.2.5) which supports the selection of qualitative analysis. The type of qualitative inquiry used in this study was ethnography; the research study was conducted at the research participant's normal setting, observations were taken into consideration and emotional connotations were deduced. The observations noted included body language, tone of voice and facial expressions. The research acknowledges that the findings are not factual, but rather lead to theory generation instead of conclusive facts on the answers to the research questions. This study was compared against quantitative analysis and due to the nature quantitative analysis (refers to section 3.3.1), the nature of constructivism paradigm and the reasons mentioned above, the appropriate method of analysis and research design was qualitative research.

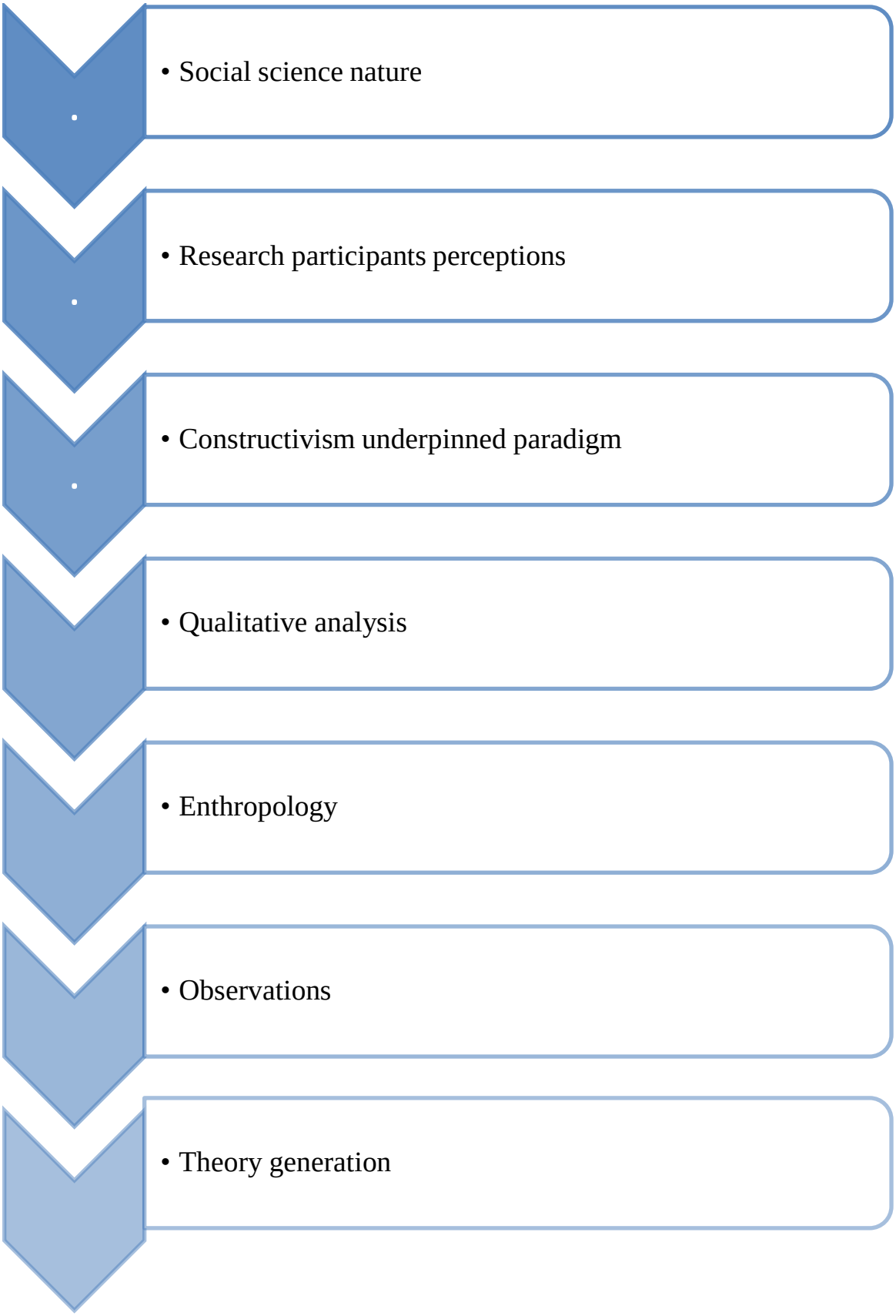

Figure 3.2: Illustration of the Qualitative Research Methodology Rational

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Sampling method

The research design adopted in this study is qualitative analysis, the underpinned paradigm is constructivism and the type of inquiry is anthropology. The sampling method employed was the purposeful sampling technique, due to the nature of the study and the limited number of potential research participants. Random sampling generally applies in quantitative analysis, were large number of research participants are required for the purpose of deducing colorations and statistical analysis of the obtained data. The bias that may be introduced by the use of purposeful sampling is reduced due to the qualitative nature of the study. The selection of research participants in order to fulfil the research objectives and answer the set out research questions were small-scale sugarcane farmers from Darnall that benefited from Gijima KZN LED funds and local and district municipality government LED officials from iLembe district municipality.

3.4.2 Focus group discussions

The choice of research methods employed for data collection was focus group discussions. A total of three focus group discussions were conducted, consisting of two groups of small-scale sugarcane farmers, five research participants per group and one group of 5 LED officials. The focus group discussions methodology had numerous advantages over the different types of methods available and was better suited for the type of research and the circumstances that the research was conducted under. The choice of the implementation of focus group discussion for small-scale farmers was motivated by a number of factors. At the initial stages of research, advice was given that small-scale farmers typically do not like to answer questions, especially in the form of a written questionnaire. The risk of formulating a written question and circulating would have likely resulted in delayed data collection, incomplete questionnaires and not all questionnaires returned. The other potential challenge with the questionnaire method was that not all the small-scale farmers are literate; illiteracy is a factor that cannot be overlooked when regarding choice of research method. Questionnaires are difficult research methods to employ unless the researcher is familiar with the research participants, as in colleagues from the researchers work place or the research

participants have an interest in completing the questionnaire, such as market research were participants comment on brands they are familiar with. The challenge of partially completed questionnaires and not all research participants returning the questionnaires may be of little consequence if the pool of research participants is large enough. In this study, however, the pool of research participants was focused and it was therefore imperative to employ a method that engages all the targeted research participants.

The other data collection methods of research that could have been employed in this research apart from questionnaires could have been individual interviews, telephone or physical. The method of telephonic interviews was dismissed due to the nature of the research. Similar to the questionnaire method, depending on the researcher's relationship to the research participants or the research participant's interest in the research, telephonic interviews may hinder the quality of research obtained. If the research participants have no obligation, perceived or reality to partake in the telephone interview, despite of an agreement to participate, the answers to the research questions may be short and abrupt. The nature of qualitative research includes open ended questions, short or abrupt answers to questions defeat the point of the research. Physical interviews were a possible option for both small-scale farmers and LED officials, however, due to logistics, it would have been impossible to conduct individual interviews within the suitable research time frame.

Focus group discussion method was ideal, as the DFA farmers have a monthly meeting, were all farmers gather including small-scale farmers. Due to the frequency of the meetings and the typical meeting duration individual interviews would have been a challenge. Focus group discussions enable interactive discussions and observations within the research participant's natural settings to be examined. More research information may be drawn through focus group discussions of this particular study than with any other considered qualitative method.

3.4.3 Construction of questions and Objectives

The chosen method for data collection was focus group discussions. Great consideration went into the selection and construction of the questions. Focus group discussions typically consist of five questions, structured in the general manner of

opening question, introductory question, transitional question, key question and final question. The objectives of the focus group discussions were to create an environment where research participants are able to contribute freely and honestly. In the typical fashion in which the questions are constructed, allows for ice breaking so the research participants may be comfortable to share with the researcher knowledge and information based on the research participants personal experiences. There were separate focus group discussion questions for small-scale farmers and LED officials, which were designed for that specific group of research participants. The questions were designed in line with the study's research questions and objectives. All the questions were relevant to the particular group of research participants, however the key questions were the same for all the focus group discussions. The key questions were manipulated from the study's research questions and considered to be the main research question.

3.4.4 Data collection procedure

The procedure followed during data collection was in line with the University's research guidelines. Upon the decision of the field of study and the identification of the potential research participants, several requests to partake in the study were sent to out to the various organisations, including the Darnall Farmers Association, Enterprise ILembe, Department of Economic Development and Tourism and the Darnall sugar mill. All the organisations agreed to partake in the study except for the Darnall sugar mill, and gatekeepers' letters were obtained from the participate organisations. Upon approval of the research study, individuals within the organisations were approached to partake in study in the form of written informed consent. Informed consent forms were circulated to the potential research participants. The total number of research participants involved in the study was fifteen, ten were of the Darnall small-scale sugarcane farmers and five consisted of LED officials. Convenient dates for the research participants were selected and the focus group discussions were conducted at the research participants' normal setting; the places normally used for meetings.

The typical procedure employed during all the focus group discussions consisted of, the researcher obtaining consent from the research participants to record the discussions, followed by the researcher introducing themselves and the topic. The focus group

discussion then follows the manor discussed in 3*.4.2. Focus group discussions*. After the collection of data, via a recording device and noted observations, the data was then transcribed and stored using mediums such a electronic storage, email and computer file and manual storage, printed, grouped, filed and in a secure storage for a period of five years.

3.4.5 Research evaluation: Trustworthiness of the study

3.4.5.1 Validity

The validity of this study was upheld during all stages of research, including the initial stages of research, the identification of research objectives, sampling of research participants, data collection and final stages of the research, presentation and interpretation of findings. Due to the nature of the research conducted, the sampling of the research participants was purposeful, in order to achieve research objectives, research participants had to consist of small-scale sugarcane farmers within the Darnall area, who had benefited from the Gijima project LCP fund. Other research participants consisted of LED officials, who were from the iLembe district municipality.The choice of purpose sampling over randomised sampling was appropriate for the fulfilment of the study's research objectives, and confirms this study's validity. The method of data collection, transcription of the data and presentation of the data in this study is reflective of the views and actions of the research participants. There was no stage in which the collected data were manipulated to reflect an outcome other than that which was conveyed by research participants.

The observations of the research participants were noted and formed part of the data collected. The interpretation of the observations such as tone of voice and body language was at the discretion of the researcher. This study acknowledges that the interpretation may be subject to individuals and individuals may perceive the same things differently, however, being a qualitative study, the researcher cannot be fully separate from the research, therefore differences in some interpretations does not interfere with the validity of the study. The views and perception that researcher brought to the study are noted and distinguished from that of the research participants.

Using the validity measure as described by Thomson (2011), the validity of this study was maintained throughout the various research stages.

3.4.5.2 Reliability honesty in qualitative study

The broad research question of the research was how small-scale sugarcane farmers influence or promote LED in the Darnall area. Purposeful sampling of small-scale sugarcane farmers from the Darnall area, and the Darnall local area district municipality LED officials achieves the research objectives. The choice of research participants in achieving the research objectives confirms this study reliability. The collection of research data was consistent for all the research participants; the data collection method of focus group discussions was employed. It is of the opinion of this study that any researcher may undertake a similar study, employing similar research methods and similar groups of research participants may reach similar findings, but only to extent at which qualitative analysis allows. The key word is similar results; reliability in qualitative analysis is not dependent on obtaining the same results upon repetition of a study due to the nature of social science, feelings changed. This study, however does maintain a high level of reliability in that given the researcher, research participants, research methods and other factors, the findings reached are consistent with the circumstances under which the research was conducted.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are fundamental to any research and should be considered at the initial stages of research. The University of KwaZulu-Natal has a Human and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) appointed by the University Senate to uphold ethical regulations enforced by the University rules and guidelines. “The essential purpose of HSSREC is to protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all human participants in non-biomedical, human participant research.” (HSSREC, 2014. p.1). The research conducted in this study has full compliance and approval from the HSSREC; ethical issues expressed are limited to those of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the HSSREC relevant to this study.

3.5.1 Protection of research participants

Research has the responsibility to protect its human participants and therefore an essential requirement before engaging in research data collection is ethical clearance approval. Ethical clearance approval is obtained by submission of a completed *Ethical Clearance Form* to the HSSREC for review. Ethical considerations covered in the application are stating which group of human participants would be engaged in the proposed research. All human research participants are important and valuable for research and should be protected, but other groups are more vulnerable than others. It is therefore a requirement to explicitly state when working with any vulnerable groups. Groups considered vulnerable by the HSSREC are "children, persons who are intellectually or mentally impaired, persons who have experienced traumatic or stressful life circumstances, persons who are HIV positive, persons highly dependent on medical care, persons in dependent or unequal relationships, persons in captivity, persons living in particularly vulnerable life circumstances." Unlike other groups outside of the vulnerable groups' category, extra and extreme precautions need to be taken when working with such groups; failure to take the necessary precautions may lead to harmful effects on the research participant, questions of integrity upon the research institution and even legal issues. The research participant groups covered in this research did not fall into any of the vulnerable groups' category.

3.5.2 Informed consent

The second major ethical issue after research participant group category is participant consent. It is unethical to conduct research and engage any research participant without obtaining signed consent. Research participants need to be consent to their involvement in the research; participants who are not of the legal age and cannot give consent require further ethical steps that need to be taken in order to obtain consent. Consent is obtained through an *Informed Consent Form*, clearly stated on the form must be the title of the research, research aims and objectives. Confidentiality and anonymity must be provided to research participants and expressed in the form, including methods of data collection, duration of the research study and how data records will be kept and

stored thereafter. The researcher must be able to articulate to the research participant what they seek to understand from the participant's involvement. When requesting consent it should be made explicit to the research participant that involvement in the study is completely voluntary and that participants are neither forced nor either obliged to participate, participation is at one's own free will. Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity is crucial for the protection of the research participants and was adhered to in this study. Consent is only obtained when the research participant signs the informed consent form, the researcher is also required to sign the relevant part of the form outlining research details and both the researcher and the participant are required to keep a copy of the form. All the above mentioned requirements of the informed consent form were adhered to and consent was approved from the research participants in this study.

3.5.3 Ethical considerations for data collection

Methods of data collection need to be taken into consideration when determining the protection of research participants. The researcher needs to clearly state intended methods of research for ethical consideration, as legal factors need to be considered. An issue such as access to research participant's confidential information without obtaining consent is not only unethical but also in some cases illegal. Consent prior to data collection must be obtained. Researchers need to adhere to a set of rules and regulations and therefore cannot conduct a study that cause any harm to the research participants. Harm is not limited to physical harm but also psychological harm, and therefore researchers are advised not to conduct research that is derogatory to its research participants. If any derogatory participation is required for research purposes such intentions should be made explicit and must be strongly argued for and detailed justification for such involvement must be explained and methods on how harmful effects will be minimised.

The main purpose for ethical consideration is to protect the research participants; therefore it is highly unlikely that derogatory means that compromise the honour of the research participants may be granted ethical clearance and approval obtained to conduct research, unless strongly warranted. Methods considered, to create harm to the research participant, are not only limited to, derogatory but include methods which may be

considered stressful or unpleasant by the participant. Methods of data collection of a derogatory, harmful, stressful and unpleasant nature were not used in this study. Data collection methods may require the use of deception, and if deception is to be used, it should be mentioned for ethical consideration and a detailed explanation and justification must be provided. Deception for a number of reasons, one being if the researcher feels that revelling the full purpose of the research study may lead to participants providing falsified or manipulated data, unintentionally or intentionally. No form of deception was employed in this study; the research was transparent and unambiguous.

3.6 Conclusion

The research design was qualitative and the underpinned paradigm was constructivism. The reason for the choice of qualitative methodology for this study was based on the constructivism research paradigm. The constructivism research paradigm was preferred over the other research paradigms due to the suitability for the study. The methodology employed for data collection was focus group discussions and the collection and storage of data was in accordance with eligible research standards. Ethical considerations were taken into account during the various stages of research. The ethical considerations included the protection of research participants, informed consent from the research participants and data collection methods. The research maintained integrity and evaluated the trustworthiness of the study. The research conducted was transparent and the research findings presented in this study are not in contravening to required research standards. Chapter Four contains the research findings presented under various themes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

There were various themes that emerged from the assessment of the data collected through the focus group discussions. The main theme that emerged from the research findings was based on the main research question that also encompasses the research topic, the theme was centered on the role of small-scale sugarcane farmers and how they contribute to the LED of the Darnall area. The second dominant theme found in the research findings dealt with the Gijima investment and the investment's effectiveness. The other emergent themes, from most dominant to the least included the challenges experienced by the small-scale sugarcane farmers, the need for partnerships to drive LED and the description of a small-scale farmer. The research findings presented in this study are representative of the views and opinions provided by the research participants. The research clearly distinguishes between the opinions of the researcher and those of the research participants and the comparisons or references drawn to literature are clearly stated.

4.2 Theme 1: Confusion as to how small-scale farmers contribute to LED

The research findings suggest that the research participant groups were unclear as to the contribution of the small-scale sugarcane farmers to the LED of Darnall. The focus group discussion conducted with the small-scale sugarcane farmers expressed varying opinions as to how the research participants view their contribution towards LED. Participant 2 stated "Majority of sugarcane supplied to Darnall mill is from small-scale

farmers, not large farmers." the statement was made to highlight the importance of small-scale farmers over commercial "large" farmers. The general sentiments of the research participants' contribution towards LED was based on the comparison with commercial farmers, research participant 4 added, "Small-scale farmers grow on the bundle, when the spiller has a problem, small-scale farmers carry the mill" and participant 8 stated that "Big role, one small-scale farmer not supporting [supplying] the mill, the others are. But if one large grower gets sick [experiences problems], mill suffers". Other research participants highlighted Darnall would not survive without small-scale farmers, participant 6 stated that "We are too many". The research findings from the small-scale sugarcane farmers as to their contribution to the LED in the Darnallarea though limited and in some instances vague, provided better understanding to the research questions than that provided by the LED officials group of research participants.

The focus group discussion conducted with LED officials produced interesting research findings. The research participants had different views as to the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farmers to the LED in Darnall. Research participant 12 stated "In terms of development [small-scale sugarcane farmers] do not improve it, because they grow and sell just for their own survival. We need to be making businesses that are sustainable." Research participant 11 had also stated in the discussions that "what I have realised in SMME's (Small to medium enterprises) as a whole, I will bundle all of them, including small-scale farmers…" and went at length explaining how small-scale vegetable gardening does not contribute to LED, in support of the point of "growing for survival" made by research participant 12. Deduced from the research participants with regards to the contribution made by small-scale farmers, the findings were incoherent and vague and left the researcher puzzled and questioning the understanding the research participants had on the subject of LED. Research participant 15 stated "In terms of Darnall, it is their area, it is their community, they need to buy into the project and they also need to (pause) yeah, they very much key." The majority of the statements made by the research participants could be equated to rambling, they went at length on vegetable gardening and the requirements needed by local supermarket retailers. The degree to which small-scale sugarcane farmers were compared to individual small-scale vegetable farmers, demonstrated the lack of appreciation of the varying levels of scale and economic contribution by the different types of farmers.

What was interesting about the research findings was not the amount of information gathered, or the lack thereof, but the agreement of the research findings to the literature.

4.2.1 Inadequate and inconsistent information about the LED strategy from LED agency officials

The opening question of the focus group discussion conducted with the LED officials required that the research participants outline the district municipality's LED strategy. In other words, that the participants may highlight the LED strategy under which governs their day to day work. The research findings indicated that either the research participants were unfamiliar with their LED strategy or do not fully understand the strategy. The information given was vague, lacked detail and at times did not make sense to the researcher. Researcher participant 11 stated that the "Strategy is to grow our economy first, and then by growing our economy will do farming within our district." the participant 11 then elaborated using a vegetable farm as an example. Other vague statements made by the research participants that were further elaborated with examples that the researcher deemed irrelevant to the question included, the statement made by participant 13 "Our strategy is to create a value chain within each municipality and we happen to have, four municipalities, and all four are actively involved in our strategy.", while research participants 14 stated "I'd say the strategy is basically to empower the small-scale farmers so they are able to compete commercially and as well as just to up skill them and empower them."

The research findings also indicated that there is no formal or well documented LED strategy that is outlined for local and district LED agencies, but however the agencies may be governed by a provincial or even national LED strategy. The lack of ability of the research participants in outlining an LED strategy was in agreement with the literature, Rogerson (2011) states that at local government level, LED officers and officials do not have a clear and detailed strategy that governs the day to day workings. The literature also indicates that, as stated by Marais (2010) that if a strategy is provided, it is not understood by the LED officers that are meant to assist in promoting LED within that local area, literature provides numerous examples as to the reasons why. Gathered from the research findings is that there seems to be an LED strategy, research participant 15 alluded to it, by the comment "we recently renewed it and it was

adopted last year 2013 and it still has all the four, but its added one more, that is the renewable energy sector. Reason being is that the premier actually classified iLembe district as a renewable energy zone, it was a strategic move for adding renewable energy." What can also be deduced from the research participant's comment is that, the LED strategy being referred to be that of the provincial government rather than a strategy specific to the local and district municipalities.

4.2.2 The state of LED for the Darnall area compared to the rest of the municipality

The focus group discussion that alluded to the state of the LED in the Darnall area as compared to the rest of the municipality was with the LED officials. The research findings indicate conflicting views and opinions. Other research participants view the Darnall area as an area of great economic development, while other research participants viewed the area as still requiring economic development. Some of the views from research participants that sited poor LED included the statement by participant 11 "Darnall area, the development there, especially in the sector, we focusing on which is agriculture, there is very much room for improvement, lots can be done." and statement by participant 12, "I don't know how to put it, it is behind compared to other municipalities, mostly because it is urbanised." The research participants further demonstrated the lack of knowledge as to what is LED, as they provided with contradictory statements.

The lack of understanding was not only evident in the research participants that viewed the Darnall area as of low LED but also in the camp that thought it was well developed, the supporting arguments for the sentiments were unclear and at times irrelevant to the question. Research participant 13 contradictory stated "In terms of LED in Darnall it is very advanced, because KwaDukuza generates a lot of economic activity compared to the rural areas. Yes, I think it is at an advantage." The expectation by the researcher was that a comparison of the Darnall area with regards to the rest of the local and district municipality would have been provided. Some of the research participants were able to provide comparisons, but the reasoning and choice of comparisons further demonstrated the lack of understanding of LED as would not to be expected from LED officials.

4.2.3 LED agency officials lack knowledge to make a valid assessment

The inability of the research participants to compare the state of the LED in Darnall to the rest of the municipality signifies towards a lack of knowledge to make a valid assessment as to the state of the LED in Darnall and the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farmers towards LED. The research findings point to suggest that the LED officers are unable to measure LED. The question of how small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute towards the LED of Darnall and how the outcome is measured was asked during the focus group discussions. The question consisted of two parts, the first part referred to the small-scale farmers' contribution to LED as already discussed (*refer to 4.2*) and the second part dealt with how the outcomes could be measured. None of the research participants attempted to answer to the second part of the question. When all of the data from the focus group discussion are taken into consideration, it was evident that the research participants lacked the fundamental knowledge on the subject of LED and would be incapable of providing a valid assessment of the subject.

4.2.4 Investment into small-scale farmers fails to extend into the community

The research findings from the focus group discussions imply that Gijima investment in small-scale sugarcane farms failed to extend LED to the community. The research participants were unable to provide information as to how the investment has impacted the community. Some of the research participants found the investment to have been unhelpful and unsuccessful; therefore, the lack of impact towards the community was incomprehensible. The research participants that found the investment to have been beneficial did not extend the benefit to the community. Research participant 1 stated "… therefore improved [my] family." Observed from the research participants was a lack of appreciation as to the extent at which the small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute towards the LED of the Darnall area.

4.3 Theme 2: Contradictory opinions on the effectiveness of the Gijima project investment

There seemed to be contradictory opinions amongst the first group of research participants (small-scale farmers) on the effectiveness of the Gijima project. The question sparked a debate amongst the first group of the research participants; most of the small-scale farmers shared their experience and opinions. The observation made was that the question ignited emotions as the small-scale farmers answered the question. The research findings identify two opposing views, the one considered the investment to rehabilitate the small-scale sugarcane farm as beneficial were as the other view found the investment unbeneficial.

4.3.1 The positive views on the rehabilitation of the sugarcane farms

The question was put to the research participants, as to how has the Gijima investment improved the quality of their life, family and the community. The investment was to rehabilitate the sugarcane farms, and the majority of the participants who found the investment beneficial seemed very appreciative. The participants explained that from the investment they were able to produce more sugarcane, which meant an increase in production and that resulted in an increase in income. Only research participant 1 who found the investment beneficial, extended the view of increased income to include improvement of the family, “improved money from crop therefore improved family”, but failed to elaborate. The investment was described as “stimulate” by research participant 7, a word that captures the essence of the description provided by the small-scale farmers who profited from the Gijima project investment.

4.3.2 The negative views of on the rehabilitation of the sugarcane farms

Not all the small-scale farmers found the investment from the Gijima project to have been beneficial. Strong emotions were observed from the research participants who deemed the investment as “did not improve” to help rehabilitate the farm. The research findings indicated that the farmers were not necessarily unhappy with the investment in their farm, but how the investment was carried out, as research participant 10 indicated

“Gijima was right, subcontractors were the problem.” The investment in the rehabilitation of the sugarcane farmers was carried out though a subcontractor, who carried out the work of rehabilitating the small-scale sugarcane farmers. The research participants expressed great disapproval for the use of a subcontractor and research participant 8 indicated that the subcontractor “Did not supply [them] with good seeds, after first assistance [the subcontractor] did not come back”. Research participant 2 added that the investment “did not improve my farm very much, given to one contractor, the contractor messed up then they had to redo but it was too late”. The emotions expressed by the research participants with negative views towards the investment, ranged from sadness, anger, deep regret and even sorrow. Research participant 8 captured the sentiments of dissatisfaction of the farmers with the statement “the project was not a success”.

4.3.3 LED agency officers unsure as to how to support investment projects

The research findings from the focus group discussions conducted with the LED officers and officials of the district municipality LED agency indicated that the research participants were unsure as to how the LED agency supports such investment projects. The findings of the research are in agreement with literature, in that local LED officers are often are unsure of the role they should take in driving LED (Rogerson, 2010b). Observed from the research participants was perplexity over the question asked, clarity was required and provided. Despite clarity been given to the question has to how the LED agency supports projects such as the Gijima project ***‘****Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnall Area’* the confusion remained. The research expectations were not that the research participants would be familiar with that specific project, but that due to capacity of the position held of LED officers and the general nature of the work environment, LED agency, the expectation was that the research participants would be able to give a general understanding of how the LED agency supports such projects. The emphasis on ‘such projects’ was made to the research participants to ease discomfort if the participants were unaware of the project. The issue of awareness was not the problem as research participant 11 stated “I am not aware, but at the same time, I am not surprised, Darnall is filled with sugarcane, and Darnall has

their own [sugarcane] mill, I think whatever decision taken by Gijima and KZN DEDT was sound."

The observation of the research participants was the inability to admit that there were unsure of the role LED agency but rather deflected questions by providing answers to what was not answered. The discussion took the direction of focusing on vegetable gardening, gathered from the research findings was that the research participants were currently involved in a project of providing vegetable to schools within the district municipality, as all the participants elaborated at length about the project. The research participants were at pains to highlight the vegetable gardening project, as research participant 14 stated "We are not into at the moment growing of sugarcane, but we are into assisting farmers, with growing of vegetables." Research participant 13 added "We support because we work closely with vegetable growers." Research participant 15 expressed how the LED agency supports LED in the statement "Our mandate is to drive LED as well as promote foreign investment opportunities, as well as inviting investors to come in, that is our mandate.", but was unable to elaborate on how that mandate is carried out, observed from the research participants was a lack of knowledge as to how LED initiatives can be supported.

4.4 Theme 3: Small-scale farmers experience an extensive range of challenges that hinder their contribution to LED

4.4.1 Unpreventable and preventable challenges that may be solved

The challenges experienced by the small-scale farmers range from those within their control and those outside of their control. The major unpreventable challenge identified by the research participants was the issue of drought. Drought conditions, which are adverse to sugarcane cultivation, were the most common challenged experienced by the research participants. Research participant 1 stated, "Weather conditions are dry, [resulting in] reduction of 40-50% yield." The drought was identified as causing a loss of income due to low crop yields. The other common challenges included, "rising fuel costs" and "labour problems", as identified by research participant 2 and 9 respectively.

The challenges within the research participants control to fix were issues of loss of sugarcane due to lack of adequate fencing and the price at which the sugarcane is sold to the mill.

4.4.2 Challenges of competitiveness and sustainability are linked

Sustainability was a point of concern for the small-scale farmers. Challenges associated with drought weather conditions, high labour costs and lack of government support were identified as threats to the sustainability of the small-scale sugarcane farms. The research participants highlighted that commercial and medium growers dominate the sugarcane cultivation industry. Due to the small production tonnages produced by small-scale farmers, the mill bundles up the sugarcane produce into one and then averages out the RV (recoverable value) value, rather than price it individually. Research participant 2 stated that “We want individual testing, [they] don’t care about small-scale, [the mill] don’t want to do individual, unfair market.” The research findings indicate a link between the sustainability challenges and the competitiveness of the small-scale farmers. Hussain and Khattak (2011) note that the income generated from sugarcane cultivation must exceed capital costs, cost to labour and the internal economies of the small-scale farmers in order to maintain sustainability. The sustainability challenges as identified impact on the income received, which ultimately affects the small-scale farmers' ability to compete within the market.

4.5 Theme 4: The need for partnerships in driving LED

The research findings indicate that there is confusion as to the role of partnerships in LED. The focus group discussions conducted with the small-scale farmers revealed that there no formal or recognised partnerships that the research participants consider. The research participants were unanimous in agreement that small-scale sugarcane farmers had no partnerships formed. Research participant 9 stated “No partnerships at all.” Observed were the sentiments of frustration when research participant 3 stated, “Not getting any help, hopefully this year will get.” The research findings from the LED

officers showed a certain level of appreciation for the need of partnerships in driving LED, as research participant 15 referred to “foreign investors”.

4.5.1 Confusion amongst LED officials and small farmers as to the role of partnerships in LED

The data collected from the focus group discussions revealed that there was little appreciation of the need for partnerships in LED. The focus group discussion conducted with the LED officials revealed that there was no clear LED strategy that governed the agency’s work. The question related to partnerships in LED put to the research participants as to how they supported LED initiatives, referring to a vegetable garden project participant 13 stated “We support by giving advice.” The focus group discussion conducted with the small-scale farmers revealed a lack of partnerships, but a desire and willingness to form partnerships. A few of the research participants alluded to no partnerships formed with government, participant 10 stated that “No partnerships, no assistance from government.” Research participant 5 also stated that “No government help [that I am] aware of.” The research findings suggest that the LED officials are unclear as to what is the agency’s role in partnerships formed for LED. While the small-scale sugarcane farmers seem to recognise government partnerships as of LED relevance, in spite of the partnerships formed with the Darnall sugar mill.

4.6 Theme 5: The description of a small-scale farmer

4.6.1 Small-scale sugarcane farmer definition is dependent on the amount of sugarcane produced and the land size

The small-scale sugarcane farmers seemed to have a common understanding of what the definition of a small-scale farmer is. The answers were short and typically present in a range format, research participant 2 expressed that “Certain amount of tonnage produced to be described as a small-scale farmer, less than 3000 tons are small-scale, greater than 3000 tons is medium scale and greater than 10000 tons is considered a commercial farmer”. All of the answers provided expressed in the amount of sugarcane tonnage produced seemed to be in agreement with the above quoted description. The

majority of the research participants, expressed their answers with regard to the size of the land the farmers own, expressed in hectors. Research participant 9 expressed that “I have a very small farm, 2 hectors maximum”.

4.6.2 Small-scale farmers are uncomfortable sharing their background

The research participants were answered to share their backgrounds; the question was unspecific and formed a second part of the opening question of the focus group discussions. The participants seemed uncomfortable to share their backgrounds. Only research participant 9 answered, providing a vague but sufficient answer, “I didn’t get an opportunity to run big farm, had small holding and age doesn’t allow to expand.” The other research participants seemed to ignore the question all together. The observations were facial expressions that could be interpreted as being offended on some of the participants, others seemed confused, the confusion was interpreted as thoughts of why the researcher required such information. None of the perceived concerns of the research participants were verbally communicated, but were based on the researcher’s observation and assumption.

4.7 Conclusion

Focus group discussions were the data collection method employed. There were five emergent themes from the research findings. The main theme was the role of small-scale sugarcane farmers in the LED of the Darnall area. The research findings indicated there was confusion as to how small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute to the LED, the confusion was deepened due to the lack of knowledge on the subject of LED and the lack of a definite LED strategy. The effectiveness of the Gijima project investment was the second dominate theme, followed by the challenges experienced by small-scale farmers, the need for partnerships in LED and the description of a small-scale farmer respectively. The following chapter includes the discussion and the interpretation of the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The research's main research question was 'How do small-scale farmers improve and/or promote local economic development in the Darnall area?' The data collected through focus group discussions were to answer the research questions and research objectives. The interpretation of the five emergent themes from the research findings are discussed, in the order of most dominant theme to the least dominant theme. The purpose of the discussion section serves to establish if the research objectives were met and that the research questions were answered. The research, discussion contains the interpretation of research findings and inferences drawn from literature; along with the researchers own opinions and view.

5.2 Theme 1: The role of small-scale farmers in the LED of the Darnall area

The interpretation of the research findings suggests that there is confusion as to how small-scale sugarcane farmers contributes to the LED of the Darnall area and how the LED is affected. Deduced from the findings is that the confusion comes more from the research participants lack of knowledge and understanding as to what is LED. The research findings also suggest that the research participants were aware of their contribution to the Darnall area, even though the contribution was typically expressed with regards to the contribution towards the Darnall mill, rather than a contribution towards LED. The research findings of the LED officials was in agreement with the literature, Rogerson (2011) states that municipal LED officials were confused as to

what is LED and what it entails. The statements made by the research participants demonstrated a lack of understanding and knowledge on the subject of LED. The statements provided by the research participants were incoherent and at times contradictory.

The LED officials were not only lacking in the knowledge of LED, but also on the subject of small-scale sugarcane farmers, as the research participants frequently made statements suggesting that small-scale sugarcane farmers were the same as small-scale vegetable farmers. The confusion between small-scale sugarcane farmers to small-scale vegetable farmers would be acceptable if done by LED officials from a different district municipality, however, for the iLembe district municipality sugarcane cultivation significantly dominates the agricultural sector and is a major economic contributor. In the Darnall area, sugarcane cultivation and sugar production are the main economic source and individual small-scale vegetable farmers occupy considerably less land than that of small-scale sugarcane farmers. The deficient knowledge of the LED officials in distinguishing between the two types of small-scale farmers, suggests a deep rooted lack of appreciation not only of LED but also of the economic dynamics of the district and local municipalities. The research findings further agree with the literature, as Rogerson (2010b) states that local municipalities tend to follow LED strategies provided by national and provincial government, instead of the creation of LED strategies suited for the individual municipality. The interpretation of the research findings indicates to the lack of an LED strategy, as would not be expected out of an LED agency.

The LED officials were in the process of facilitating a vegetable gardening project, deduced from the research findings was that the vegetable gardening project was what the research participants considered to be LED initiatives. The vegetable gardening project was explained as a feeding scheme for local schools, where locals were encouraged to grow vegetables and the LED agency would facilitate by providing seeds and other essential resources. The vegetables were used to feed children in local schools and any excess vegetables produced were then sold to the local supermarket retail store. The research participants went at length explaining the vegetable gardening project and at times compared it with small-scale sugarcane cultivation.

The idea of the use of the vegetable garden project to explain LED is in agreement with the literature, Marais (2010) notes that local municipal LED officials have traditionally regarded social projects as LED, rather than competitive based projects. The vegetable garden is a prime example of the confusion between social projects and competitive based projects. The vegetable garden project is a social project aimed at providing food to school children in the local schools and the Gijima investment project was a competitive based project aimed at rehabilitating the small-scale sugarcane farmers, so the local farmers could competitively supply sugarcane to the local mill. The differences between the two projects are that one has an economic market and a demand, while the other has a social need and a socially based demand. While the other is the promotion of business the other is the promotion of breaching the social gap. The literature is filled with examples of how social projects have been the approach to LED and Marais (2010) notes that social projects have been a hindrance to LED as social projects are unsustainable past allocated funding.

The research findings served to indicate that the contribution of small-scale farmers to the LED of the Darnall area was ambiguous amongst the research participants. The sugarcane cultivation supports and sustains the economy of the Darnall area. Based in Darnall is one of the mills from SA biggest sugar producers, the majority of the families within the community and in the surrounding areas have at least an average of one family member employed currently or previously within the local sugar industry. Sugarcane cultivation is the bloodline of the Darnall area's economy and small-scale farmers have a direct impact on that economy.

5.2.1 LED agency officials unable to assess the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farming to LED

The interpretation of the research findings indicates that the LED officials were unable to provide an assessment on the state of the LED in the Darnall area. The inability linked to a variety of reasons, including the lack of knowledge on the subject of LED, no available local LED strategy and no known applied system to measure LED. The research findings were in agreement with the literature, as stated by Rogerson(2010b) that local municipalities do not have a local LED strategy but rather adopt a national or provincial government’s LED strategy. The lack of a local LED strategy alone,

however would not prevent the LED officials in providing an assessment on the state of LED. The knowledge on the subject of LED along with the awareness of the municipality's economic development would be sufficient to make an assessment. Conversely, the LED officials' demonstrated deficiency in the LED training received with the assumption that LED training took place. The research findings further agree with literature as noted by Marais (2010) that local municipal officials often lack formal training and knowledge on the subject of LED. The deficiency on the subject of LED however, fails to entirely explain the inability to distinguish between the states of the LED of the Darnall area as compared to the rest of the district municipality. The research findings indicated insufficient knowledge on the subject of LED, contrary to the researcher's expectations of the level of knowledge that LED officials would encompass.

5.2.2 Small-scale farmers indirectly drive LED in the Darnall area

The research findings suggest that the Gijima investment into the small-scale sugarcane farms did not extend beyond the individual farmer's family, failing to extend to the local community. In spite of the research findings, observed by the researcher was that the investment enabled the small-scale sugarcane farmers to positively impact on the LED of the Darnall area. Prior to the investment, some of the small-scale sugarcane farms were unproductive. The aim of the Gijima project was to rehabilitate the farms, enabling the small-scale farms to competitively produce sugarcane and supply to the local mill. The research participant'sperceived reality was that the investment affected their immediate families and not the community at large, as their assessment of the impact was only limited to physical money obtained through the investment.Klikovac-Katanić and Kosanović (2013) notes that development in rural areas to a great degree is the function of agricultural development. The assessment of the impact of LED however, is not limited to physical money, but an economics study. In spite of the shortcomings that the Gijima investment had, it was able to contribute towards the improvement of economic activity of small-scale sugarcane growers who were previously inactive. Colombo *et al.* (2014)state that sugarcane cultivation supports a variety of industries and produces a wide range of products, such as bagasse that is used to power up the sugar mills. The small-scale sugarcane farmers supply sugarcane to the

Darnall mill, and sugarcane cultivation and sugar production are at the center of Darnall's economy. Small-scale sugarcane farmers therefore directly and indirectly drive the LED of the Darnall area.

5.3 Theme 2: Investment into small-scale sugarcane farms sparks debate on the promotion of LED in the Darnall area

The disagreement as to the effectiveness of the Gijima project '*Rehabilitation of Sugarcane for Small-scale Farmers in the Darnall Area'* sparked great debate. The reason for the debate was that some of the research participants found the investment to have been of great benefit and assistance while other research participants found it to have been of little to no use. Observed was the mixed emotions of the research participants, a mixture of emotions leaning towards two extremes. One extreme was that of gratitude, thankfulness and happiness, the other extreme was that of disapproval, anger and sadness. Not to say that the research participants necessarily showed all emotions on either extremes, or that the emotions observed were of an extreme nature. But 'extreme' with regards the emotions, is to highlight opposing views, which could be regarded as opposite views. The small-scale sugarcane farmers who regarded the investment from Gijima as helpful, the emotions observed were around the improvement of the sugarcane farm, mainly sugarcane yields. Increased production, leading to increased money obtained was the general view of the farmers with positive analysis of the Gijima investment. The other research participants considered the experience to have been one of disappointment.

The strategy of the Gijima project to provide the investment to the farmers through the use of a subcontractor was a great point of contention, as some of the research participants expressed sentiments of being taken advantage of by the subcontractor. This study does not fault the Gijima project for the use of a subcontractor, as investments into LED projects need a channel in which they can be made. The investment channel for that particular project was the subcontractor. The research findings indicate that the investment avenue was that, the money was to be given to the subcontractor, as stated by research participants 6 that "money did not arrive on hand". The subcontractor was then to undertake the work of rehabilitating the small-scale

sugarcane farms. The remainder of the allocated investment was given to the farmer for maintenance of the farm. The key LED drive of the Gijima project was that once the small-scale sugarcane farms had been rehabilitated the farms would be able to produce sugarcane, which would be provided to the local sugarcane mill, rendering those farms economically active.

The strategy adopted by the Gijima project was in line with academic literature as how to drive LED,Brown-Luthango (2011) notes that significant investment needs to be contributed for sustainable economic growth. The project was funded through the BEF, which helps to create an environment that promotes LED, the literature supports and promotes the idea of government and LED agencies taking the position of creating environments and opportunities that promote LED. The research findings, however cannot ignore the sentiments of the research participant that found the investment as "unsuccessful". The reason for those sentiments was that in some instances the subcontractor failed to rehabilitate the sugarcane farms, one research participant stated that after the original subcontractor had failed, the subcontractor was then changed and only after the change did the participant see improvement in their farm. Research participant 2 expressed the entire experience with the subcontractor as "had a hassle", which observed a general nodding of heads from the research participants that were dissatisfied with the investment.

The Gijima project was initiated around the period of the year 2008 and was carried out over a period of three years and has long since been completed. Observed from the focus group discussions with regards to emotional intensity, the research participants with negative emotions towards the project expressed higher emotional intensity than those with positive views. The reason for the varying emotional intensity can be deduced from a partial statement made by research participants 10 that "… still have to pay [back] Gijima, small at a time… Don't benefit anything, lost lots of sugarcane." Despite the project status being completed, the farmers still have to pay back in small amounts the investment money contributed into their farms. For that reason, for those farmers who felt that the investment did not assist in anyway and in a few instances made things worse, it is only understandable that despite the time lapse and the project long completed frustrations still remain, as payments need to be made back to Gijima project.

In spite of the good intentions of the Gijima project, the jury is still out as to whether the investment served to promote LED. In review against literature, the strategy used by Gijima project should have been able to promote and drive LED. Literature suggests that the LED can be measured with regards to job creation and improved quality of life, Rogerson and Rogerson (2010b) state that government's investment into local economies promotes economic development, andMatei andChiriță (2011)note that the agricultural sector in rural areas is the majority employer. The review of the Gijima project against such measures serves a challenge, but gathered from the research findings is that the view of how the research participants viewed the investment from the Gijima project is not enough to determine the LED contribution made from the investment.

5.4 Theme 3: The challenges faced by small-scale farmers inhibit their contribution to the LED of Darnall

The research findings indicate that a few of small-scale farmers recognised that their impact is in numbers, the references made indicated strength in numbers. The lack of appreciation by the research participants as to the contribution the small-scale sugarcane farmers have on the LED that does not discount the actual contribution. The sugarcane supplied to the Darnall mill comes from a large number of small-scale farmers. Sustainability challenges that the farmers experience on an individual and group scale, has far reaching consequences on the LED of the Darnall area. One of the challenges identified by the research participants was the issue of drought weather conditions, drought impacts the sugarcane crop yields, Greb (2011) states that 'trash' impurities on sugarcane affect the quality of the sugar produced and stem borers negatively impact small-scale farms (Asseff*et al*, 2010), which not only further impacts the income that farmers make, but also result in a decrease supply of sugarcane to the mill. The decrease of sugarcane supplied to the mill affects the amount of sugar produced, which affect the mills profit margins. Low mill profit margins increase the risk for the mill to be unable to sustain its employees. The loss of jobs has a direct negative effect on the LED, as job creation and improved quality of life are the measure of LED. The challenges faced by small-scale farmers can result in job losses and

decreased quality of life through various scenarios, both on an individual impact and group impact, both direct and indirect.

5.5 Theme 4: The need for the recognition of existing and new partnerships in the LED of Darnall

The assessment of the state of the LED in the Darnall area is a function of the partnerships formed in the area that improve and or promote LED in the area. The research participants indicated that there were no formed partnerships, the small-scale sugarcane farmers referred to no partnerships at all and no partnerships formed with government. The LED officials were unclear as to their role in LED partnerships. The research findings obtained were in contradiction with literature, Mahlawe and Cohen (2010) state that partnerships between government, private sector and public sector drive LED. The lack of recognised partnerships by the LED officials, who form the government sector, hinders potential LED in Darnall. That is not to say that there are no existing partnerships in the Darnall area that improve LED. In spite of the small-scale farmers' lack of recognition for the partnerships it has with the Darnall mill, that partnership enables the improvement and sustainability of the LED in the area. Sustainable LED requires a demand and a market. Without the Darnall sugar mill, there would be no need for the small-scale farmers sugarcane and no market for it. The sugarcane supply to the mill ensures the continued economic activity with drives LED.

5.6 Theme 5: Description of a small-scale farmer and the farmer's background

The question of defining and describing a small-scale farmer was posed to the research participants (small-scale farmers) as an ice-breaker question of the focus group discussion. The initial observation was a sense of reluctance and defensiveness with regards to answering the questions. There are seemed to be a general understanding of the definition of a small-scale farmer. The description of a small-scale farmer, as described by the farmers is centred on the number of sugarcane tonnage produced by the farmer, or the hectare of land occupied by the sugarcane growth.

The second part of the question was for the research participant to provide a brief background of themselves, aimed at creating an atmosphere of familiarity and sharing. All except one of the research participants opted not to give information with regards to the second part of the question, which stated ‘if you could share your background’. The general observation is that due the unintended personal nature of that part of the question, the farmers seemed uncomfortable to answer. The question as a whole was answered with short, vague and general answers, with emotions of defensiveness and a slight lack of comfort was observed. Research participant 9 stated that “Did not get an opportunity to run big farm, had small holding and age does not allow to expand. I have a very small farm, 2 hector maximum.” Out of the ten small-scale farmers that participated in the research, nine of them were Indians and one was black, there were all males except for one woman, the sample was representative of the composition of small-scale sugarcane farmers in Darnall. The background provided by the farmers, had they chose to share it, would have been able to provide a potential link to the history of sugarcane farming in the country, prior to 1994 and how it has impacted on the industry, Cash and Swatuk (2011) agree in that SA is influenced by its past apartheid history. The only potential clue to the argument is from the only answer provided is the “Did not get an opportunity to run a big farm” may be interpreted as due to apartheid, if that argument were to be correct then it would be in agreement with the literature.

5.6 Conclusion

The research findings from the focus group discussions indicates there is confusion as to the contribution made by the small-scale sugarcane farmers on the LED of Darnall. It is evident from the findings that the research participant’s lack of knowledge of the subject of LED affected the participant’s perceived reality. Taking into consideration the constructivism research paradigm and the theories generated from the study, the Gijima investment into the small-scale sugarcane farms assisted with the improvement of LED in the area, directly and indirectly. The lack of a suitable LED strategy of the LED agency contributed towards the LED official’s inability to provide a valid assessment on the state of LED in Darnall.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The investment by Gijima KZN stimulated the study. This study was an LED study that focused on the role of small-scale sugarcane farmers on the LED of the Darnall area. The local economy of Darnall is dominated by sugarcane cultivation and the small-scale sugarcane farmers are significant stakeholders in Darnall.The aim of the research study was to achieve research's objectives and answer the research questions.

6.2 Research problem assessment

The research problem was to establish the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farmers in the LED of the Darnall area. The problem was prompted by the knowledge of the Gijima KZN investment project; millions were invested into the rehabilitation of small-scale sugarcane farms in the Darnall, as part of an LED initiative. This study set to determine 'how' small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute to the LED. The research objectives and research questions included the assessment of the benefits of the Gijima KZN investment, LED implementation issues and LED sustainability and challenges. The research participants consisted of small-scale farmers from the Darnall area and LED officials from the local and district municipality. The selection of research participants was to enable the achievement of what research aimed to accomplish.

The introspection on the set research objectives, questions and the methodology employed, identifies research strengths and shortcomings in the research. With regards to the main research question of how small-scale farmers contribute to the LED, a broader group of research participants would have been an advantage. The ideal research participant groups consist of small-scale sugarcane farmers, LED officials from the district municipality and in addition to that representatives from the Darnall

mill, representatives from the Gijima KZN project officials and an independent LED specialist. The Darnall mill was approached to participate in the research, but declined, the Gijima KZN project officials initially agreed to be part of the study, but later could not be reached. The idea of the participation of an LED specialist was an afterthought in light of the research outcomes. The limited group of research participants also impacted on the research objectives and research questions that dealt with the comparison of LED strategies. Due to having only one group of LED officials, there was no other LED strategy that could be compared against that of iLembe district municipality, which hindered the accomplishment of the research objectives. The research question of the implementation of LED initiatives was adequately addressed in the critical review of literature, however, even though the research findings had elements of LED implementation included in the two emergent themes (Theme 1 and Theme 2), LEDimplementation was not an emergent theme in the research findings. The study was successful in the narrow focus of limiting the research to Darnall area.

6.3 Research outcomes and implications

The research outcomes were unexpected in spite of the majority of the outcomes being in agreement with the literature. What emerged from the research was that the research participants lacked knowledge and understanding on the subject of LED. The focus group discussion questions posed to the research participants were designed in such that suggests that the research participants to a certain degree understand the subject of LED. The focus group discussion questionnaire for the small-scale farmers only required a basic and general understanding of the term LED, whereas the focus group discussion question for the LED officials had an expectation that due to the nature of the research participants being LED officials; the expectation from the researcher was that the research participants had extensive knowledge on the subject. The researcher did not anticipate that the research participants had a lack of knowledge of the meaning and understanding of LED. The idea that research participants were unfamiliar with the term LED was taken for granted, especially with the small-scale farmers' group. If the lack of LED knowledge on the part of the small-scale farmers was not taken into consideration, the research outcomes would suggest that small-scale farmers have little to no contribution on the LED of the Darnall area and that the Gijima KZN investment

project had little benefits. It of the researcher's opinion that the research findings cannot be interpreted without factoring into account the lack of knowledge and understanding of the research participants of LED.

The lack of knowledge and understanding on the subject of LED by the LED officials was in agreement with the literature. The research outcome was unexpected to the researcher in spite of being in agreement with the literature. Reason being the extent at which the LED officials lacked in LED knowledge and understanding was beyond the researcher's expectations. Expressed in literature about local government LED officials is the lack of a local LED strategy, inadequate knowledge on the subject of LED, preference for social projects over competitive based projects and lack of relevant skills. The research outcomes were in agreement with literature on all the points mentioned, however the literature fails to enable deductions as to what extent.

The implication of the research outcomes is that small-scale farmers contribute to the LED of the Darnall area, through direct and indirect means. The small-scale farmers contribute to job creation and improved quality of life of the people of the community. The research, however, fails to establish to which extent the small-scale sugarcane farmers contribute the LED of Darnall. The research outcomes identified challenges that were in the small-scale sugarcane farmers control and challenges beyond their control. Sustainability of the small-scale sugarcane farms was also a major concern to the research participants.

6.4 Research conclusion

The research objectives and research questions have been partially achieved and answered. The major shortcomings of the research were that the contribution of small-scale sugarcane farmers to the LED of Darnall was largely based on the researcher’s interpretation of the research findings and the researcher’s views and opinions rather than based solely on the views and opinions of the research participants. The other shortcomings of the research were the limited selection of research participant groups and the use of focus group discussions as the only form of data collection. The research outcomes were in agreement with literature with the exception of the research findings

that do not take into consideration the research participants' lack of knowledge on the subject of LED.

6.5 Research limitations

The study of LED is a broad and complex study which requires time, that is years and adequate resources to complete, and cannot be tackled sufficiently within a period of one year. This study was therefore focused on the accumulation of an understanding on LED issues but with the focus limited to specific group; the small-scale sugarcane farmers and a particular area; Darnall, and how the small-scale sugarcane farmers' impact on the LED of Darnall. Even with the narrow approach to the study of LED, the study does have limitations. The study serves both as an advantage and limitation. The limitation is that even though the ultimate goal of research is that from a study extrapolations may be drawn in assessment of other LED initiatives in other communities, however this study in itself fails to explore such conclusions.

The other limitations are that in a LED assessment, the examination of partnerships formed is beneficial to the assessment. The small-scale farmers of the Darnall area have forged a few partnerships in the past, even though the issue of partnerships was address from a literature stand point; it was not done so adequately from the data collected from the research participants, to gauge a better more holistic perspective. The study was unable to include the Darnall mill, which is supplied by the small-scale sugarcane farmers, as the Darnall mill declined the invitation to participate. The other limitation was that there are numerous LED agencies, but only the Darnall district municipality's development agency was included for participation, but other perspectives on the topic of LED from other development agencies may have been beneficial to the study.

6.6 Recommendations based on research findings

The research recommendations based on the research findings are:

- Local government needs to adopt a local LED strategy unique to that local area.

- LED officials require extensive training on the subject of LED to assist with the improvement of the role of government in LED.

- Investment initiatives to promote LED require follow up assessments, which measure the impact of the investment.

- Basic LED awareness training for groups which contribute to the LED (such as small-scale sugarcane farmers) would be suitable in the assessment of the groups' contribution to LED.

- LED formed partnerships need to be clearly distinguished amongst the relevant stakeholders.

6.7 Recommendations for future research studies

The recommendations for future research studies are:

- An LED study of a different local area to Darnall and that has different economic dynamics.

- An LED study on the ability of local government to facilitate LED, focusing on LED strategies, LED training and the role of local government.

- An LED impact analysis study, comparing social projects and competitive based projects.

- In future LED studies, a broader selection of research participants would be beneficial to the study of LED, for any particular area and data collection methods be must be not limited to only one method.

- In future LED studies, important research terms, such as LED need to be explained to the research participants in order to eliminate the risk of obtaining research findings that are not representative of the views and opinions of the research participants.

There are numerous future studies that may be conducted from the outcomes of this study, not limited to the ones mentions above. In spite of the research's shortcomings, partially achieved research objectives and incomplete research answers, any research that inspires further and future research studies, that is research done right.

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