Interview: Thandiwe

1. : 2021-04-25
2. Time: 14:00

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| Hello, I am Zakes Hlatshwayo, I am a Ph.D. candidate doing an academic study on: Emerging black farmers’ practices and state support to them: a study of three government Agriparks in South Africa. This study will explore the practices of emerging black farmers and their successes and challenges in three selected areas where Agriparks exist. Thank you for your willingness to participate. We are interested to understand your role and experience. Information will be used only for academic and research purposes. You do not have to give your name if you don’t want to and can decline to answer any question. I appreciate your assistance and request you provide as much information as possible to help me understand your work.  The research study has been approved by the University of Pretoria’s Research Ethics Committee. Your privacy and confidentiality will be secured. No direct reference will be made to you, I will use a pseudonym, codes and categories to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damage. You are not required to use your name, do not write your name on any of the documents. The data will be kept for 15 years in a password protected format and used for University of Pretoria research only.  For the purpose of this research I will use semi-structured questions, with your permission I will record the interview and take notes. The interview will not be longer than 50 minutes. Hopefully, the information will help policymakers, practitioners, officials and managers to make informed decisions on such programmes in the future. | | | |
| RQ1: What is your name? Thandiwe  RQ2: What is your occupation? Researcher manager  RQ3: In what capacity? Policy research, rural development, land and agrarian reforms.  RQ4: How long have you been in this position? 9 years  RQ5: What is your highest qualification? Masters  RQ6: Gender: Female  RQ7: Age: 38 | | | |
| RQ8: Are you involved with Agriparks? | | Yes |  |
| RQ9: How are you involved? | |  | I do research and policy analysis of land issues, rural development and environment. |
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| RQ10: How did you get involved? | |  | I’m an employee I applied for the vacancy. |
| RQ11: What is the background of the Agriparks that requires them to support emerging black farmers? | |  | Since 1996 there has been several government policies aimed and redistribution of agriculture and development of farmers. The failures of previous state interventions necessitated a change in direction. |
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| RQ12: What policy changes influenced the establishment of Agriparks? | |  | Agriculture is important for the economic growth of the country, it creates several jobs through the value chain. |
| RQ13: What are the present functions of Agriparks? | |  | Agriparks are centres of change, development and transformation. It aims to merge the various streams by empowering black farmers. In bring together various actor and stakeholder in the sector. |
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| RQ14: What are the priorities of the Agriparks? | |  | The foster unity in the sector which is divided by race and class. Agripark promote corporation and coordination between the commercial and small-scale farmers, and it fosters mutual development. |
| RQ15: What are Agriparks perceived efficiencies in fulfilling their functions? | |  | As one stop centres government resources and efforts are targeted, thus become more efficient in terms of cost and effort. As such, learning and integration happens simultaneously. |
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| RQ16: What do you believe are the main success of the Agriparks? | It is the provision of an environment with the necessary infrastructure and facilities to support emerging black farmers. In a cost-effective way provides land water, seeds, fertilize and other services that are necessary. | | |
| RQ17: What are the challenges, if any, that you see concerning land ownership, agriculture, and poverty alleviation? | Funding is the main issues, we cannot provide all the envisaged support services, such as equipment and tool that are necessary. Institutional alignment within government department remains a challenge, we still operate in silos. The private sector remains outside of the structure and other institution are not providing the necessary loans. | | |
| RQ18: What processes are put in place to deal with the challenges? | We need funds and coerce the private sector to support our effort. We have universities and colleges giving support, interns come here to support farmers. | | |
| RQ19: How are emerging black farmers identified and recruited to be part of the programs of the Agriparks? | The farmers come through various farmer organisations, some are recruited through advertisements there are different ways. | | |
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| RQ20: What are the main farming practices of emerging black farmers? | |  | The focus is on high value crops that the farmers can produce and sell. This is a source of income and create jobs and potential for growth. |
| RQ21: What legislative reform justified the emergence of the Agripark to provide support to emerging black farmers? | |  | The growing disparities between black and white farmer are a concern. We need to deal with the issue of growing unemployment by creating jobs in the sector. |
| RQ22: Who decides on the type of support and services given to emerging black farmers? | |  | There are consultative meetings with relevant stakeholder at various levels. The idea is to get as much local inputs as possible. |
| RQ23: How are decisions communicated to emerging black farmers? | |  | The management and extension service are the main communicates of state decisions. |
| RQ24: How do emerging black farmers participate in the decision-making on priorities of Agriparks? | |  | In the various meeting that are held, as well as in workshop and training session farmers speak out. |
| RQ25: Are emerging black farmers given plans about the priorities of Agriparks? | |  | Plans are discussed in the same forums and venues. |
| RQ26: Are women and youth benefitting from Agriparks? If so, how? | |  | Women and youth are well represented. We make sure they are there majority in any given time. |
| RQ27: What are the challenges of the Agriparks? How are these challenges dealt with? | |  | We have challenges with farmers not showing up after being allotted land or do not plan are required. We have groups breaking up and causing tensions which affects progress. Extension officers intervene and mediate. |
| RQ28: What are the successes of the Agriparks? How is success determined? | |  | Farmers keep notebooks to monitor and track their seedlings and routine. Farmers do basic accounting practices, these are important to for their growth. At least farmers can plan and budget their resources more “scientifically”. |
| RQ29: What are your recommendations for the future of Agriparks and wider support to emerging black farmers? Are there any other issues that you suggest I should look into? | |  | It is important for Agripark to be industrialise and competitive, this will grow the economy and create employment opportunities. For this we need more investment from the state and private sector. |
| RQ30: How did you hear about Covid-19? | |  | We received a government memo. |
| RQ31: How did Covid 19 affect you?  RQ32: How did you respond to government’s lockdown, did you benefit? | |  | We are speaking via Zoom I’m working from home.  I’m home we meet via Zoom and communicate by phone and emails. I did not benefit from the relief grant. |

Notes: Zoom interview.