Interview: Babu

1. : 2021-06-22
2. Time: 9: Am

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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? Babu  RQ2: What is your occupation? Manager  RQ3: In what capacity? Farmer Operations.  RQ4: How long have you been in this position? 6 years  RQ5: What is your highest qualification? Degree  RQ6: Gender: Male  RQ7: Age: 33 | | | |
| RQ8: Are you involved with Agriparks? | | Yes |  |
| RQ9: How are you involved? | |  | I’m operations manager at the Tshakhuma Barotta UIGC farms. The farms are designate as an Agri-hub. |
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| RQ10: How did you get involved? | |  | I’ am an employee, seconded by the UIGC which is partner with the community. |
| RQ11: What is the background of the Agriparks that requires them to support emerging black farmers? | |  | The Tshakhuma Barotta UIGC farms are as a result of a successful land restitution claim brought by the community. Most of the beneficiaries and members don’t have the require managerial knowledge and capacity and skill to commercially run the farm. Agripark support will give members access to state financial resource, research and development knowledge to run the venture competitively. |
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| RQ12: What policy changes influenced the establishment of Agriparks? | |  | Global and national competitiveness in the sector, the marginalisation of black farmer required state intervention. It is difficult to fathom how emerging black farmers can survive in a cutthroat sector without state support and supervision. |
| RQ13: What are the present functions of Agriparks? | |  | Over decades the agriculture operates as black and white, Agripark try to bridged that gap. Agripark tie together the various sector economy to maximise economic growth. |
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| RQ14: What are the priorities of the Agriparks? | |  | Agriparks build the necessary infrastructure for inclusive prosperity. Agripark prioritise the involvement of all sector at a local level to work together toward common goals. |
| RQ15: What are Agriparks perceived efficiencies in fulfilling their functions? | |  | Agriparks are perceived as a means to end, a catalyst of innovation with the agriculture sector. Pulling together of common resources at all levels of state and society, both financial and human, is deemed as critical for national transformation. |
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| RQ16: What do you believe are the main success of the Agriparks? | Basic access to land, water, infrastructure, facilities and extension officers. As serves units they respond to the immediate needs of the community. | | |
| RQ17: What are the challenges, if any, that you see concerning land ownership, agriculture, and poverty alleviation? | The current land redistribution for agriculture development programmes have collapsed. Agripark create an opportunity to systematically provide productive land to successful emerging black farmers. Land ownership provide opportunities for self-employment and poverty reduction. | | |
| RQ18: What processes are put in place to deal with the challenges? | I have been seconded to help support beneficiaries develop a business plan, mobilise resources and bring in whatever support is needed. . | | |
| RQ19: How are emerging black farmers identified and recruited to be part of the programs of the Agriparks? | The farmers here all beneficiaries of the restitution claim. | | |
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| RQ20: What are the main farming practices of emerging black farmers? | |  | We grow bananas, avocados and nuts. We use community labour and other equipment such as tractor and harvesters |
| RQ21: What legislative reform justified the emergence of the Agripark to provide support to emerging black farmers? | |  | National challenges of economic growth, high employment numbers and deepening poverty level all necessitate the development of emerging black farmers. |
| RQ22: Who decides on the type of support and services given to emerging black farmers? | |  | The plan was developed with the community and other private sector institution in the area. |
| RQ23: How are decisions communicated to emerging black farmers? | |  | The CPA plays an important part in decision making and the communication of the decision within the community. |
| RQ24: How do emerging black farmers participate in the decision-making on priorities of Agriparks? | |  | The CPA holds community meeting, here we have monthly planning meetings with detail progress reports. |
| RQ25: Are emerging black farmers given plans about the priorities of Agriparks? | |  | Yes, they are part of the process. |
| RQ26: Are women and youth benefitting from Agriparks? If so, how? | |  | The majority here is women and youth and they lead the various teams. |
| RQ27: What are the challenges of the Agriparks? How are these challenges dealt with? | |  | Resources, especially financial remain a major constraint for small-scale farmers. We have unsuccessfully approached commercial banks for loans. The reasons are not clear to us. |
| RQ28: What are the successes of the Agriparks? How is success determined? | |  | We have improved the production of both bananas and avocados which sell in Joburg and Pretoria markets. Community workers receive monthly wages, this has raised moral in the village. |
| 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? | |  | Provincial government to take a proactive role in identifying and supporting emerging black farmer. |
| RQ30: How did you hear about Covid-19? | |  | Radio and tv news |
| RQ31: How did Covid 19 affect you?  RQ32: How did you respond to government’s lockdown, did you benefit? | |  | I worked from home.  I did not benefit in any way. |

Notes: He tell me that student from the Tshakhuma agriculture college do their learnership programme at the farm. This is a useful for research and development reasons.