Unique Challenges of the Poverty Dilemma in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa

X G Ngumbela
Centre for Transdisciplinary Studies
University of Fort Hare
South Africa
xolisile.ngumbela@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article examines the uncomfortable tensions caused by the poverty challenge, with specific reference to the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. Compared to other provinces, the Eastern Cape (EC) has the highest occurrence (95.4%) of poor, older persons who receive old age grants. Against the background stated above, the intention of the article is to investigate the strain of poverty on the daily lives and development trajectory on the people of the province. The guiding research question is 'What is an effective way of implementing an anti-poverty strategy to combat poverty through the Provincial Development Plan (PDP) and in particular, to promote food security in the Eastern Cape Province?' A mixed method approach is employed to explore and to describe the complexities at play in the challenges of food tensions in the province. The findings of this article suggest that the goal and vision of development management should be communicated clearly and consistently to all vulnerable individuals affected, especially to the rural communities, as they are the most influenced by it. The article further contributes to the scholarship of Public Administration and Management of resources surrounding the ongoing debate around the implementation of food security programmes, and the targeted food security interventions in South Africa regarding transformation, sound development and policy implementation. This article argues that with adequate policy execution of sustainable development interventions, we can improve on food insecurity/security and poverty reduction in the province.

Keywords: Poverty Dilemma, Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, Provincial Development Plan (PDP), Food insecurity/security, Transformation and Policy Implementation

LITERATURE REVIEW

Maputo and Malabo Declarations

The Maputo Declaration (launched in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2003) was a meaningful way of returning agriculture back into the centre of the African development agenda. The founding statement of the declaration was a clarion call for the implementation of the new Pan-African flagship programme for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme was mostly viewed as the vehicle to stimulate production and to bring food security to the fore amongst the population of the continent. Lately the Maputo Declaration has mostly been known for its commitment in allocating at least ten per cent of national budgetary resources to agriculture to achieve six per cent growth in the agriculture economy. NEPAD (2018) reported that in hindsight, CAADP implementation showed that many achievements (e.g. agriculture) of its partners have risen to the top of the African political agenda. This shows too, that agriculture is at the heart of Africa's political spectrum; forty countries signed a CAADP compact and two thirds of those have formulated either a National Agriculture Investment Plan or a National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan. Although there is much variation between countries, under the Maputo Declaration and more especially under the CAADP, Africa has shown some improvement. Growth has often not been equitable as constant food insecurity and poverty levels persist unabated due to a myriad of challenges facing the continent. Although the Maputo Declaration managed to place agriculture on the African agenda, it should be noted that investment from the corporate world and foreign governments has failed dismally to stimulate private investment in this area since the inception of the declaration. The CAADP (2013) ten-year implementation report of the Maputo Declaration shows that agriculture is needed to sustain growth in Africa. An obstacle further mentioned in the report, is that the agricultural sector cannot force ministries of finance to commit ten per cent of public funds to agriculture. It is fair to say that a conducive business environment needs to be in place for investment to take place, including attractive interest rates and favourable import and export regulations. However, these conditions cannot be created by the ministries of agriculture and neither can they be created for agriculture alone. Yet the recent statement from the African Union (AU) Assembly (2018) gave pleasing relief when it confirmed that agriculture and food security remained their focus. The AU further reiterated that it was widening its sphere beyond the sector in the hope of addressing the obstacles that continue to beset agricultural growth on the continent more effectively.

On accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods, the Maputo Declaration additionally reaffirms a more specific and clear range of commitments to agriculture. These infer among others, increased irrigation, mechanisation and curtailing post-harvest losses. It could seem that the Malabo Declaration is in complete contrast to the Maputo Declaration since it contains more commitments in areas such as infrastructure, natural resources, land tenure, trade and nutrition. All these areas are most important to agriculture (although they do not all fall within the ambit of the agriculture ministries in most countries on the continent). Hence, the Malabo Declaration is seen to cover a wider area than the Maputo Declaration – although similarly it continues to view CAADP as the main vehicle for implementation of its commitments. One is tempted to arrive at the conclusion that the Malabo Declaration is wider both in scope and in commitment than the Maputo Declaration and both can be specifically categorized; the Maputo Declaration was single-sectorial whilst the Malabo Declaration is seen as multi-sectorial, showing some commitment from most of the countries who signed the declaration. What is pleasing of these declarations is that they are founded on the premise that they will rely on participatory consultative processes and are signed by member states who have all agreed to be held accountable – with a rider that allows for a biennial review.

In articulation of the two declarations, the Malabo Declaration has managed to influence the vision for the years of 2020 and beyond, of many countries through their respective National Development Plans (mostly development plans of five-year duration). However, the agricultural sector is nearly always characterized by a plethora of policies, laws and legislation where, in most cases, signs of conflicting interest is evident. Yet, most important is to increase the scope and to get the relevant policies in place that promote food security and that push hunger boundaries further from the present-day African households.

Agenda 2063

According to the vision of Agenda 2063, the emphasis is to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa (representing a dynamic force in the international arena), driven and managed by its own citizens. Agenda 2063 identified eight ideals that are to serve as pillars for the continent soon, (those pertinent to this research are free of poverty, hunger and conflict), with strong and well-functioning regional institutions. According to Agenda 2063, the continent of Africa we want should be based on seven aspirations.

The seven African aspirations that reflect Africa's desire for shared prosperity and well-being, for unity and integration, free citizens and expanded horizons, where the full

potential of women and youth are realised, and with freedom from fear, disease and want are stated as the following:

1. **A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development**
    Africa is determined to eradicate poverty in one generation and build shared prosperity through social and economic transformation of the continent.

2. **An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance**
    Since 1963, the quest for African Unity has been inspired by the spirit of Pan Africanism, focusing on liberation, and political and economic independence. It is motivated by development based on self-reliance and self-determination of African people, with democratic and people-centred governance.

3. **An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the Rule of Law**
    Africa shall have a universal culture of good governance, democratic values, gender equality and respect for human rights, justice and the Rule of Law.

4. **A peaceful and secure Africa**
    - Mechanisms for peaceful prevention and resolution of conflicts will be functional at all levels. As a first step, dialogue-centred conflict prevention and resolution will be actively promoted in such a way that by 2020 all guns will be silent. A culture of peace and tolerance shall be nurtured in Africa's children and youth through peace education.

5. **An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics**
    Pan-Africanism and the common history, destiny, identity, heritage, respect for religious diversity and consciousness of African people and her diaspora will be entrenched.

6. **An Africa, whose development is people-driven, reliant on the potential of African people (especially women and youth) and caring for children.**
    All the citizens of Africa will be actively involved in decision-making in all aspects. Africa shall be an inclusive continent where no child, woman or man will be left behind or excluded on the basis of gender, political affiliation, religion, ethnic affiliation, locality, age or other factors.

7. **Africa, a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.**

Africa shall be a strong, united, resilient, peaceful and influential global player and partner, with a significant role in world affairs. We affirm the importance of African unity and solidarity in the face of continued external interference, including attempts to divide the continent, and undue pressures and sanctions on some countries.

A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development could lead instead of following. African leaders are talking of the continent being able to finance and manage its own growth and transformation without interference from foreign governments; these leaders are protectionist in approach when considering sound investments in their own backyard.

The reality is that despite some effort and achievement towards poverty reduction, and effort in maintaining food security at micro, national and macro levels, challenges remain as millions of people (particularly those living in developing countries), remain chronically undernourished. The food problem has deeper historical roots in developing countries than is appreciated.

Colonial agricultural policies were such that food production was not given priority at central government level. Although agriculture is not the only sector responsible for maintaining food security at all levels, it is the main economic sector, set at the heart of food security in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

The agricultural potential is immense, far exceeding present and future needs. Unfortunately, agricultural growth is lagging demographic growth in the SADC region, resulting in increased poverty and hunger. When formulating food security policies for the area, it is crucial to consider the two essential elements of food security: the availability of food and the ability to acquire it. Balancing both the supply and demand of the food security equation is important in overcoming food insecurity in Southern Africa.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

The food problem has historical roots in developing countries, deeper than is usually appreciated. Kalibwani, (2005) mentions that food production (as a capital investment), was not a priority in most African countries during the colonial era. Land, labour and other resources of the colonies were diverted away from production of food to the production of industrial raw materials. The infrastructural development that took place during this period (and for decades after independence), was mainly aimed at servicing production, transportation and marketing of industrial crops – such as cotton, tobacco, coffee and

cocoa (Kalibwani, 2005). In future, agricultural policies must contribute to national eco-nomic growth objectives; including, to reduce income inequalities and eliminate poverty through increased agricultural production, increased incomes for the poorest groups, creation of additional employment opportunities and improved household food security (SA, 1998, 2000 cited in Hendriks & Lyne, 2003).

In Africa, agriculture is the main economic sector and lies at the heart of the food security issue. As mentioned, the potential for agriculture in this region is enormous – and could sur-pass present and future needs, as articulated by SADC, (2013). Unfortunately, over the past twenty years, agricultural progress in the SADC region has been slow, with an estimated an-nual growth of one and a half per cent (SADC, 2013). Agricultural growth is lagging demo-graphic development, leading to increased poverty and hunger in the region (SADC, 2013). The reasons for this, mainly, are the increasing frequency of natural disasters, inadequate political support to the sector, lack of investment in the sector, the instability of the world market and an increasingly unfair trade environment faced by the African continent – due to the protectionist behaviour of European countries towards their own products and markets (SADC, 2013). Furthermore, for a long time, civil conflicts and struggles have prevented SADC member states from reaching their full agricultural output potential (SADC, 2013).

Agriculture can potentially contribute to growth in the form of food, provider of live-lihoods, market for producers of other goods and services, a source of raw materials (to downstream industries), an earner of foreign exchange and a producer of savings surplus – as maintained by Maxwell, (2001).

Food insecurity in Southern Africa became pronounced when the region experienced two major food crises over a period of more than ten years (1991–1992 and 2001–2003). After the first crisis (1991–1992), there was an expectation that new thinking about food security in the context of structural adjustment and market liberalisation (aimed at generating eco-nomic growth), would make the countries and their populations of the region less vulner-able to food crises in the future. The result was not as substantive as expected, as evidenced by the 2001–2003 crisis (FFSSA, 2004, cited in Kalibwani, 2005). There were two types of food insecurity in the region: *chronic* and *transitory*. According to Sadoulet and De Janvry (1995) and Valdes and Konandreas (1981, as cited by Nichola, 2006), *chronic* food insecu-rity refers to situations where, on average, food availability is below the required level, and where the root cause is poverty. The short-term decline in food supplies due to drought, fluctuations in income or unrealistic pricing is referred to as *transitory* food insecurity.

Devereux and Maxwell (2001) expound that the concept of food insecurity/security has evolved substantially since it was first introduced into the development discourse in the

1970s. They contend that the most significant aspect of this empirically and theoretically driven advancement is the awareness that: 'Food security is no longer seen simply as a failure of *agriculture* to produce sufficient food at the *national* level, but instead a failure of *livelihoods* to guarantee access to sufficient food at the *household* level*: pp1–12'*. This is in line with Sen's (1981) famous 'entitlements approach'. According to Abdalla (2007), food security policies in developing countries can be broken down into three main categories – the right pricing, optimal storage, and supply enhancement; further, he mentions that there are economic and political dimensions to all these policies. He comments that there were two interacting parts of the food security policy and research agendas in the SADC region – firstly, food availability through domestic production, storage and/or trade, and secondly, access to food through domestic production, the market or food transfers. There is considerable agreement amongst both scholars and policy-makers regarding long-range strategies to cope with the food problem. Abdalla (2007) maintains that such strategies can be grouped into three, main interrelated categories:

- *Population control* – required for economic assistance aimed at improving the social and economic conditions of the poor; increase motivation to have smaller families.
- *Economic growth* (counterpart of population control in the relationship between food, and mouths to feed) – a higher rate of economic development will reduce poverty and undernutrition, whereas, if present trends continue, poverty will affect an ever-increasing number of people.
- *Income distribution* – focusses on the reallocation of existing wealth is more difficult to implement. Agrarian reform is the most difficult measure due to the patterns of land ownership, which occurs in many developing countries.

Despite the challenges facing the African continent as mentioned above, some strides have been taken through a series of protocols and treaties (e.g. the Maputo Declaration of 2003, Agenda 2063, AU flagship projects and Continental Frameworks (for instance CAADP, Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the African Mining Vision (AMV)). At the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, and in an effort to rid Africa of hunger and poverty, African leaders (heads of state and government) committed to the continent's accelerated development and technological progress.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research is anchored on citizen-centred development as it has its key principles and the inversion of power away from the 'experts' who seek to 'save' communities, and

rather to the citizens themselves as designers and co-creators of their own future. To do this, we have to shift our perception of communities from one of poverty, scarcity and brokenness to that of abundance, resilience, gifts and possibilities. This is not an easy change to make and calls on us to construct a new paradigm based on the values of ownership, possibilities, authentic dissent, gifts and commitment. A community based on scarcity, dependence on systems, with citizens competing and living in isolation from one another, threatens democracy.

That is why consumerism threatens democracy. The consumer way: No matter what or how much we purchase, we will always end up wanting more; that is the foundation of consumer society. Consumerism is organised around scarcity and dependency by design and while these are inherent in a consumer economy, they do not serve democracy well. Democracy is a structure and a process built on a belief in self-governance, freedom and an engaged citizenry. Two sources of power are the purpose of our freedom in democracy – the expression of our gifts and their manifestation through association with our neighbours; without the use of these powers of freedom, democracy loses its purpose. The abundant community is therefore the purpose of democracy, and it allows us to be citizens once again – knowing that we have the power to define our own possibilities, decide what choices reside in our own hands and to choose our own future. We no longer require great leaders (not even a strong, 'developed' economy), only each other, coming together with our gifts in mind. We are, however, required to join an association, share our gifts, and become the principal producers of our future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher collected data through interviews and document analysis (e.g. annual reports of various department and provincial municipalities). To collect data from the respondents, the researcher used an interview guide; for further clarity, probing was used as a methodology to gain more detail of responses. As the questions were asked in both English and IsiXhosa, the respondents were given an opportunity to choose the language they preferred for communication. Consent forms with full details of the study were distributed to all the participants, and contact details were requested and collected – thus identifying those who agreed to participate. A meeting was arranged with those who had signed consent forms prior to the day of the interview, to build a rapport and to develop trust between them and the researcher. This meeting was followed by interviews conducted at their homes during the next day. Data collection is the process of selecting subjects and gathering data from those subjects (Burns and Grove, 1997:394). The process of data collection is of critical significance to the

success of a study, and without high quality, data collection techniques, the accuracy of the research conclusion could easily be challenged. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the researcher should be aware of the various data collection techniques (including their advantages and disadvantages) (Brink, 1999:148). A qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry – but not a specific set of questions that must be asked words or in an order. A qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes the general direction of the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent. Ideally, the respondent does most of the talking (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:289). This method of data collection enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the food insecurity/security situations and the tensions faced by the households a daily basis.

Study population

The population is a group of persons or objects that are of interest to the researcher or that meet the criteria that the researcher is interested in studying (Brink, 1999). In this study, the population consisted of eighty-six households of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

Sampling method and the sample

The sampling method used was purposive sampling. Burns and Grove, (2004) describe purposive sampling as sampling that is sometimes referred to as judgmental or selective that involves conscious selection by the researcher of certain participants, elements, events or incidents to include in the study. In this type of sampling, researchers select typical or atypical cases that are likely to provide them with rich information about the phenomenon of study. Brink (1999) simply states that a sample consists of a selected group of elements or units from a defined population. A purposive sample of twenty policy and programme managers participated in the study, and interviews were conducted until saturation was reached.

Data collection

Data collection is a process of selecting subjects and of gathering data from those subjects as mentioned by Burns and Grove, (1997). The process of data collection is of critical importance to the success of a study. Without high quality data collection techniques, the accuracy of the research conclusion is easily challenged. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the researcher should be aware of the various data

collection techniques, including their advantages and disadvantages Brink (1999). For this study, the researcher collected data through interviews. A qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry, but not a specific set of questions that must be asked words and in an order. A qualitative interview is essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes the general direction at the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent. Ideally, as mentioned by Babbie & Mouton (2001), the respondents do most of the talking. This method of data collection in the study enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of what it was like to work within the primary health care facilities in the Amathole District and the challenges that newly qualified nurses faced.

Measurement

In this study, the researcher collected data by means of an interview guide developed by the researcher and approved by the research Ethics Committee of the University of Fort Hare. The interview guide had one major question. The researcher also used probing questions to obtain more information or for clarity on the phenomenon.

Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained a list of poverty-stricken households from their Municipal Local Economic Development (LED) section to ascertain their wards. The Eastern Cape Province has six district municipalities and two Metropolitan Municipalities. Contact details were requested from Municipal Local Economic Development managers and consent forms with full details of the study were distributed to all the participants. Consent forms were collected and those who agreed to participate were identified. A meeting was arranged prior to the interview day with those who had signed the consent forms, to build a rapport and to develop trust with the researcher. This meeting was followed by interviews conducted at a community hall the following day. The researcher used an interview guide to collect data, as well as careful probing to gain more details of the responses by the respondents for further clarity. The questions were asked in English and in IsiXhosa and the respondents were given an opportunity to choose the language they preferred for communication.

Trustworthiness

Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that another approach to clarifying the concept of objectivity as it is manifested in qualitative research, is found under the highly influential

work of Lincoln and Guba (1985). They indicate that the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness. Polit & Beck (2004) suggest that the criteria for establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative data are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Because food insecurity/security and poverty fully involve human subjects, special precautions should be taken to ensure that the study adheres to sound ethical principles at all times; thus the researcher took several ethical considerations into account while conducting the study.

Before it was carried out, the ethics protocol of the study was approved by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (protocol research number HSS/1462/017D). The Eastern Cape departments of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Social Development, Ethics Committees of municipalities and managers at institutional level, were provided with an application letter requesting permission to carry out the study. Details of the study were fully explained, including, the nature of the study, the rights of the participants to anonymity, confidentiality and protection from harm. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point – and that their decision would have no influence on their treatment or employment. After this complete explanation, all the participants who had agreed to undertake in the study were given consent forms and requested to sign their consent. For the participants' ease of understanding and reference, the forms were in their local language (IsiXhosa).

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Characteristics and measures of poverty in the Eastern Cape Province

The overwhelming finding is that more than two and a half decades into democracy, the Eastern Cape Province remains trapped in structural poverty – as evident in all aspects of its demographic, health and socioeconomic profiles. Methods, measurements and statistics vary, but from the various studies and data sets, one can estimate that between twenty and sixty per cent of the population lives in poverty. The data shows that there has been significant improvement in poverty rates and in the Human Development

Index (HDI), in all districts. The HDI provides an indication of human development based on life expectancy, health, education and income of a country (or region). A ranking of one signal a high HDI, and zero signals a low HDI. From 2000–2001, the Eastern Cape saw an improvement of 0.13 HDI points while South Africa's HDI improved by 0.12 points. As expected, the urban, metropolitan municipalities of Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela Metro have the highest HDIs in the Eastern Cape of 0.70 and 0.71 respectively. While continuing to show lower HDIs, Alfred Nzo and OR Tambo districts display an improvement of forty-five and forty-three percentage points respectively, indicating that social assistance and public services have had a positive influence on households in the democratic period (from 1994). The Eastern Cape has an HDI of 0.64 like North West (0.63), KwaZulu-Natal (0.62) and Mpumalanga (0.64). Poverty rates have declined by between seven and twenty-four percentage points from 2000–2012 in the Eastern Cape districts. The main explanatory factor for reduction in poverty rates is the provision of social grants, which will be discussed in more detail below. However, 42.2% of the provincial population still lives in poverty, with the highest rates in the EC districts of Alfred Nzo (57.7%), OR Tambo (53.9%) and Joe Gqabi (49.8%). The lowest poverty rate is in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, at 28.3%. More in depth studies show that district municipalities vary considerably in terms of income and poverty. According to May and Nzimande's report on income, assets and poverty in the Eastern Cape, the Nelson Mandela and the Cacadu District municipalities have comparatively low incidence, depth and severity measures of poverty. The OR Tambo and Alfred Nzo districts have a high percentage of their population below the poverty line, and greater adversity, and depth and severity of poverty. The OR Tambo District is of concern given its population size and that this district accounts for thirty-two per cent of the poverty gap in the Eastern Cape, followed by the Amatole District, which accounts for twenty-six per cent. These two districts also have the highest levels of unemployment (May 2012).

Studies conducted by the Department of Social Development found that due to migration and disease, older women are mainly responsible for childcare; thus, there are high numbers of female-headed households and female, single parents. Spatial differentiation is further illustrated using Census 2011 data at ward level. Figure 1 (below) shows an index of socio-economic underdevelopment based on indicators for education, income and unemployment. The map shows that areas with a high score (dark) have low levels of socio-economic development, and areas with a low score (light), have higher levels of socio-economic development. The map shows that most of the former Bantustan areas have higher scores, while levels of development are higher in the western, central and urban areas of the province. The map clearly illustrates that the structural legacy of the homeland system remains and that areas such as the

Figure 1: Map showing Socio-Economic Index of the Province
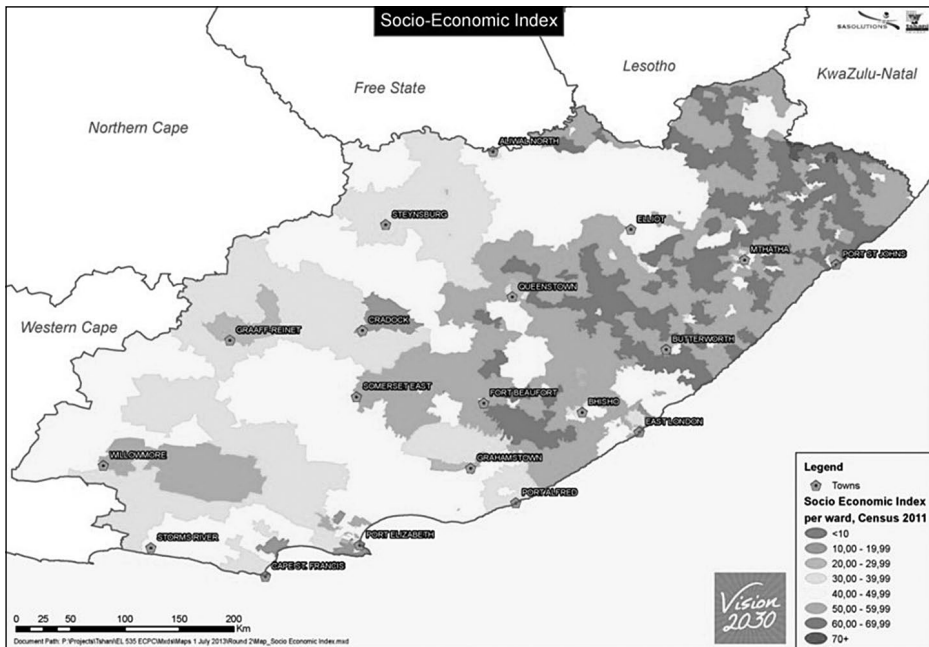
OR Tambo and Alfred Nzo districts should remain targets for social and economic intervention.

Social grants have contributed to the reduction in poverty; it can be argued that they are the most significant component of the government's anti-poverty strategy, and that they provide a safety net, targeting the elderly population, children and those who are disabled. Households often survive on old age grants or child support grants if there is no other income. In 2012 there were 2 655 831 social grant beneficiaries in the Eastern Cape, and of these, 1 837 801 received child support grants and 492 248 received old age grants. The Eastern Cape has the highest population percentage receiving social grants (40.5%), compared to a national average of 30.0%. While grants have a positive impact, there is a need to couple social assistance with access to basic services and to other public social services, and to job creation – for a sustained effect over time.

Other antipoverty measures include, economic interventions to expand opportunities for employment and self-employment community and public works programmes, provision of quality education, skills and health care, promotion of access to assets including social capital, and promoting social cohesion. These are addressed in the following sections of this report.

In the Eastern Cape, poverty eradication has always been central hence the 2004–2014 Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP). The Department of Social Development (DoSD) was charged with coordinating the provincial 'war on poverty' campaign from 2006 going forward. From 2007, a two-pronged approach of implementing short and medium- to long-term tasks was taken. Focus in the short term was on integrating and coordinating existing poverty eradication initiatives in eleven of the least-developed local municipalities in the EC, and the medium- to long-term goals were to work towards a family-based social service model. In 2012, the province adopted an Anti-Poverty Strategy, championed by the DoSD. This strategy is built on the experience of government and civil society for the past twenty years and aims to change how interventions are implemented. This will be done through combined implementation and through improved intervention targeting. Integration is important to avoid the waste of scarce resources and to ensure sustainability of interventions. The strategic goals of the strategy are: i) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger ii) Promote sustainable community livelihoods and self-reliant households and iii) Ensure well-targeted, combined implementation and service delivery by government and its social partners. Importantly, the strategy, and its implementation programme to date, emphasise that what is needed is the joint effort of all areas of government, NGOs, community and civil society organisations, trade unions, faith-based organisations. In terms of income, there is a wide spatial disparity with highest incomes in the two metropolitan areas (Buffalo City and Nelson Mandela), and the Cacadu District. The district of Alfred Nzo has the lowest average income, followed by the Amathole, Chris Hani and OR Tambo districts. Apart from Nelson Mandela Bay, all of the districts have a lower than national average annual income; this shows the marginality of the province in terms of income. An important feature is that internally, the province has lower inequality than the rest of South Africa. None of its districts have a higher than national Gini-coefficient for either 2001 or 2011 and inequality is highest within the metropolitan municipalities. Without the assistance of authorities, institutions of higher learning and the private sector, poverty eradication cannot be achieved.

The poverty alleviation strategies that have been presented above within the South African context appear to have good intentions; if they could be implemented effectively, the majority of the people in the country could be free from poverty. South Africa has ample strategies to help the people to eliminate poverty, and some of these even duplicate each other. The existence of these strategies is in harmony with Ferguson's (1990: 9) perspectives. He states that development planning and implementation constitutes a portion of the collaborative endeavours towards fighting poverty and to improving the standard of living of the population.

Yet, despite the existence of various intervention strategies, a great number of people in South Africa live in environments that continue to be dominated by poverty. This is because the development industry is controlled by unscrupulous people in authority, where motivation at work is driven by individual enrichment; this, at the expense of those in dire need and who are the intended beneficiaries of the strategy implementation. Media reports have presented many case examples of government officers who have been involved in instances of money laundering, corruption and other illegal activities. This is an unfortunate situation; the outcomes of such practises lead to lost opportunities for initiating or maintaining interventions that would have assisted in mitigating the challenge of poverty.

Mgaqelwa, (Daily Dispatch, 20 August 2015:1), reported a case example of the involvement of two local government officers in corruption activities in the OR Tambo District Municipality. Interestingly, the two officers were sisters, working in the same municipality; they were arrested by the South African Police after several months of investigation in connection with an amount of R4.6 million, which had disappeared from the municipality. The involvement of these kinds of officers in development work is unfortunate (Ferguson 1990: 11) as they do not assist in eradicating poverty; instead they reinforce a system that causes poverty. That is why the cause of poverty may not necessarily be attributed to the deficiency of resources in the country – instead, it is the symptom of powerlessness of underprivileged people – hence, as Brand et al. (2013) say, poverty is injustice.

There is an agreement amongst government departments and civil society organizations to ensure the development and implementation of structured initiatives, to eradicate poverty and its root causes. Across the globe, these bodies are involved in calls to address the root causes of poverty. In some regions, help is offered in the form of poverty intervention programmes. One cannot begin to address poverty without first understanding the root causes of poverty and people requirements – and then prioritizing those needs. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 340) define this activity as the evaluation of needs. This approach is concerned with assessing needs as the precondition for the effective implementation of programmes; thus, the effectiveness of poverty alleviation strategies should be accompanied by the assessment of the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

CONCLUSION

In comparison with other countries, South Africa is considered to be performing well in securing food for its population; however, the country still lacks the capacity to produce adequate staple food – or to import food where there is a need to do so – to fulfil the

basic nutritional needs of its people. Still, the concern is that while food security appears to exist at national level, it is inadequate at household level; this is especially true in rural areas (Du Toit, 2011). Consequently, this situation uncovers the fact that the distribution of food amongst members of the population in the country is unequal. The country remains characterised by a wide gap between rich and poor; those people that are more affluent, seem to have more than enough access to food security, while the poorer people live in conditions of food insecurity. Rose and Charlton (2001) support this view, as they argue that the nation has an adequate food supply that should enable it to feed the entire population,; yet, despite this, the country is dominated by cases of undernutrition within certain segments of its population.

South Africa is endeavouring to make progressive strides to mitigate the rising challenge of food insecurity; however, food security is dynamic in nature and such efforts are inhibited due to it being influenced by multiple factors. Altman, Hart and Jacobs (2009) assert that these multiple factors are not easily understood – and that they may have a negative impact on the country's ability to identify the relevant policies and programmes that could assist in making food accessible to individuals and households. A few examples of these multiple factors and the dynamic nature of food insecurity/security are mentioned below:

- The rising prices of food have a negative effect on food security; staple foods such as maize and wheat are vital to the poor people in South Africa (HSRC, 2007). Thus, the rise in these prices makes such foods inaccessible to them.
- The low production of staple foods (e.g. cereals) by different nations in the world makes food inaccessible (Du Toit, 2011).
- Issues of gender, such as women being prohibited from owning land and property result in women having less access to income and ultimately, this perpetuates food insecurity for them.
- Unemployment contributes to the continuation of food insecurity.
- Good performance in commercial agricultural production does not necessarily equate to accessibility of food. At times accessibility might be determined by factors such as what is transpiring in food markets, and the functioning of distribution systems (Altman et al., 2009). Such factors have an influence on the accessibility of food to households.
- Food security changes often, which brings challenges to accurately measuring it and to implementing policy interventions. The difficulty in understanding food security may be attributed to confusion regarding different trends at national and at household level – where the actual experience should be noted of who should be obtaining food (Altman et al., 2009).

These examples indicate that providing solutions to the food insecurity problem is not a straightforward process – due to the multiple factors that inhibit efforts to solve this challenge and the dynamic nature of food insecurity. In highlighting these points, this study is aimed at gaining a better understanding of the factors that influence availability of food security. The thesis statement of this study is that research which focusses on the factors influencing food security negatively in the Eastern Cape Province will suggest the most effective and appropriate intervention to solve the problem of food insecurity in the province.

REFERENCES

Ababio, E.P. & Meyer, D.F., 2012, 'Local Economic Development (LED): Building blocks, strategy and implementation for local government in South Africa', *Administratio Publica* 20(4), 6–27.

Babbie, E. & Mouton, J., 2001, *The practice of social research*, Oxford University Press Southern Africa, Cape Town.

Baiyegunhi, L.J.S. & Fraser, G.C.G., 2014, 'Poverty Incidence among smallholder in farmers in the Amathole', *Journal of Human Ecology* 46(3), 261–273.

Brink, H.I.1999: *Fundamentals of research methodology for health professionals*: Cape Town: Juta & Co, Ltd.

Brink, H. Van der Walt, C. and Van Rensburg, G. 2006: *Fundamentals of research methodology for health professionals* 2nd Edition, Pretoria: Juta

Burns, N. & Grove, K. 2004: *The Practice of Nursing Research*, 5th edition, Philadelphia: Elsevier Saunders.

Casley, D. & Kumas, K., 1984, Monitoring and evaluation public sector and rural development management, Macmillan, Rome.

Cernea, R.F., 2006, *The Great Latke-Hamantash Debate*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

Eastern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan, 2004–2014, viewed 27 August 2014, from http://www.ecdc.co.za/files/documents/110608162407.pdf.

Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC) and Quantec, 2016, *2015/2016 Annual Report*, viewed n.d., from https://www.ecsecc.org/document repository/information centre/annual-report_30560.pdf.

Emmanuel, A.A., 2012, 'Poverty alleviation strategies by non-profit organisations: Benefactors' experience in the riverine area of Ondo State, Nigeria', *International Journal of Developing Societies* 1(2), 43–52. https://doi.org/10.11634/ 21681783150486

Ferguson, J., 1994, 'Development and bureaucratic power in Lesotho', *The Ecologist* 24(5), 18–25.

Hall, K. & Chennels, M., 2011, *Children and poverty: A brief update*, Children's Institute, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

Howell, J. & Lind, J., 2008, 'Constitutional dialogue in Uganda', *Journal of African Law* 49(1), 1–23.

May, J., 1998, *Experience and perceptions of poverty in South Africa*, Final Report, Praxis Publishing, Durban.

Matenga, C.R., 2001, *Africa insight*, Issue 1, Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria.

Mavee, S.E.A. & Cloete, F., 2011, 'The role of civil society organisations in the policy-making process in Mozambique. Case study of the poverty reduction strategy paper,' *Administratio Publica* 20(4), 64–83.

Ngwane, A.K., Yada Valli, V.S.S. & Steffens, F.E., 2001a, 'Poverty in South Africa in 1995 – A totally fuzzy and relative approach', *Journal for Studies in Economics and Econometrics* 25(1), 77–87.

Ngwane, A.K., May, J., Jonah, C., Nguyen, N., Sulla, V., Khan, S. et al., 2001, *Poverty and inequality report for the presidency, 1998*, Government Printers, Pretoria.

Ntsebeza, L., 2006, *Democracy compromised: Chiefs and the politics of the land in South Africa*, HSRC Press, Pretoria.

Prestegard, L., 2005, 'Depoliticising poverty reduction? Civil society participation in the formulation of the Zambian PRSP', Cand. Polit thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Oslo.

Polit, D. F. & Beck, C. T.2004: Nursing, Principles and methods (7th edition) London: JP Lippincott.

Polit, D.F & Hungler, B.P.1995: Nursing, Principles and methods (5th edition) London: JP Lippincott.

Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), 2016, *Statistical Release P0301: Community Survey 2016,* Statistics South Africa, Pretoria.

Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), 2009, *Twenty-third edition of Statistics South Africa*, Statistics South Africa, Pretoria.

Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (SPII), 2007, *The measurement of poverty in South Africa project: Key issues*, Richmond, Johannesburg.

Van der Berg, S., 2010, *Poverty and education*, The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris, France.

Tafira, H.K., 2018, *Black Nationalist thought in South Africa: The persistence of an idea of liberation*, Springer.

Vingilis, E.R. and State, S.A. 2011, *Applied research and evaluation in community mental health services: An update of key research domains*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2019, *Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update,* United Nations Development Programme, New York, NY