INTRODUCTION

The South African floriculture industry has been recognised as one of the industries with the potential to grow and contribute positively to the country's economy (Netnou-Nkoana and Eloff, 2012). This labour intensive sector which employs more than 17500 people, is argued to have the potential to become a major player on the global stage (Kaiser Associates, 2000).

This study will explore the circumstances under which participation in the global value chain facilitates skills development and economic growth in the horticultural sector in South Africa with specific reference to floriculture. This study will draw on the broad conceptual models of various experts on industrial policy, value chain upgrading, demand analysis, supply analysis, vocational education studies, and the evolution of economic school and their focus on institutions, including skills development institutions and how all this applies to horticulture. This will be done with particular interest in the interface between education and training institutions and firms.

MAIN AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to understand the conditions that facilitate skills development and economic growth within the horticultural sector value chain in South Africa.

FIELD OF THE RESEARCH

Primary - The study of 'Skills Development' and/or Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the horticultural sector

Secondary - Value Chain Analysis (a sub-discipline of industrial policy studies)

OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the study are presented in the order from the macro-mega level to local micro issues:

➢ To identify global best practice within the Horticultural Value Chain (HVC).
➢ To understand the ways in which the SA HVC can be upgraded and made more competitive globally.
➢ To understand what skills base is required to underpin upgrading and economic growth in the sector (Demand side analysis).
➢ To understand what factors hinder or facilitate upgrading of firms within the SA HVC.
➢ To understand the processes of upgrading that will lead to job creation potential for the small business sector in the horticultural industry.
➢ To understand the impact of Skills Development on the HVC in SA in the process of upgrading.
➢ To understand the contributions Education & Training, Research & Development and Skills Development make in order strengthen and upgrade the horticultural sector (Supply side).

STUDY APPROACH

➢ Theoretical Underpinning - Global Value Chain Theory, Globalization Theory, Cultural Historical Activity Theory, Situated Learning Theory, Economic Theory

➢ Research Method - Qualitative analysis

➢ Paradigm - Interpretivist perspective

➢ Subjectivist - Epistemological and Ontological Stance

➢ Knowledge Interests - Understanding

➢ Data Analysis Technique - Thematic Analysis

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A two-pronged methodological approach will be used:

➢ Phase 1: Desk Top Review (inform research questions i and ii)

➢ Phase 2: Qualitative Method (inform research questions iii – vii)

Michael Burawoy’s extended global ethnography approach to firm level research will be utilized.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

➢ The horticultural sector is relatively small and its role as a foreign currency earner is limited relative to strong sectors like wine and apples (Visser, De Visser and Dijkhoorn, 2012).

➢ It is further argued that there is great potential for the economic development of emerging famers, however, Visser, et al. (2012) claim that their current entrepreneurial skills and technical knowledge of producing horticultural products is limited.

➢ Although substantial human resource capacity is available locally, a shortage of skills in certain areas is likely to hinder the development of certain sectors.

➢ Hence, a coherent strategy is needed to address skill constraints that may prevent the expansion of the pertinent sectors or the introduction of new activities (Maia et al., 2011).

DESORED OUTCOMES

➢ To provide new knowledge that will highlight the importance of upgrading and skills development in the horticultural sector.

➢ This study will inform the sector on what the training needs are, where it is required, and who can provide it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


