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Department:
Rural Development & Agrarian Reform
PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

Farmers' perception on economic viability of potato production: A case study of potato producer in Winnie Madikizela Mandela Local Municipality of the Eastern Cape

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. INTRODUCTION
2. STUDY AIM
3. STUDY AREA
4. METHODOLOGY
5. FINDINGS & RESULTS
6. DISCUSSION
7. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION
8. REFERENCES



1. INTRODUCTION

- Potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) are amongst the most traded cash crops in Winnie Madikizela Mandela Local Municipality (WMMLM) cultivated under dry land after maize.
- The economic viability of potato production is significantly influenced by farmers' perceptions on production yields, farm profitability, and food security for both producer and consumer (Hosseini *et al.* 2011).
- Within the pluralistic extension systems of WMMLM, DRDAR, ECRDA and Potato SA has played an important role in supporting potato farmers through field trials on the performance of various cultivars and market linkages, aimed at improving profitability and sustainability of potato production.

2. STUDY AIM

Aim:

To assess farmers perception on economic viability of potato production in WMMLM.

Objectives:

- To determine socio-economic characteristics of potato farmers in WMMLM
- To determine perceptions of farmers towards the challenges faced during production
- To assess the perceptions on economic viability of potato production

Hypothesis: The perception of farmers towards the economic viability of potato production is **projected** to be **strongly positive**.

3. STUDY AREA

- This case study was conducted in WMMLM under Alfred Nzo District Municipality
- The population size is approximately 350 000 people living in 62 479 households.
- It has an average rainfall of about 900 mm per annum with most of the rain received during summer.
- It is categorised by coastal weather condition featured by well drained , loamy textured soils that are rich in minerals, suitable for agricultural activities.



3. METHODOLOGY

- **Research Design:** This case study deployed quantitative research methodology and descriptive research design.
- **The sample** size of 72 potato producers was generated from a population of 350 Izambani Labantu Association members using an online sampling generator.
- A structured closed-ended **questionnaire** utilizing a Likert scale was used as the research instrument to collect data.

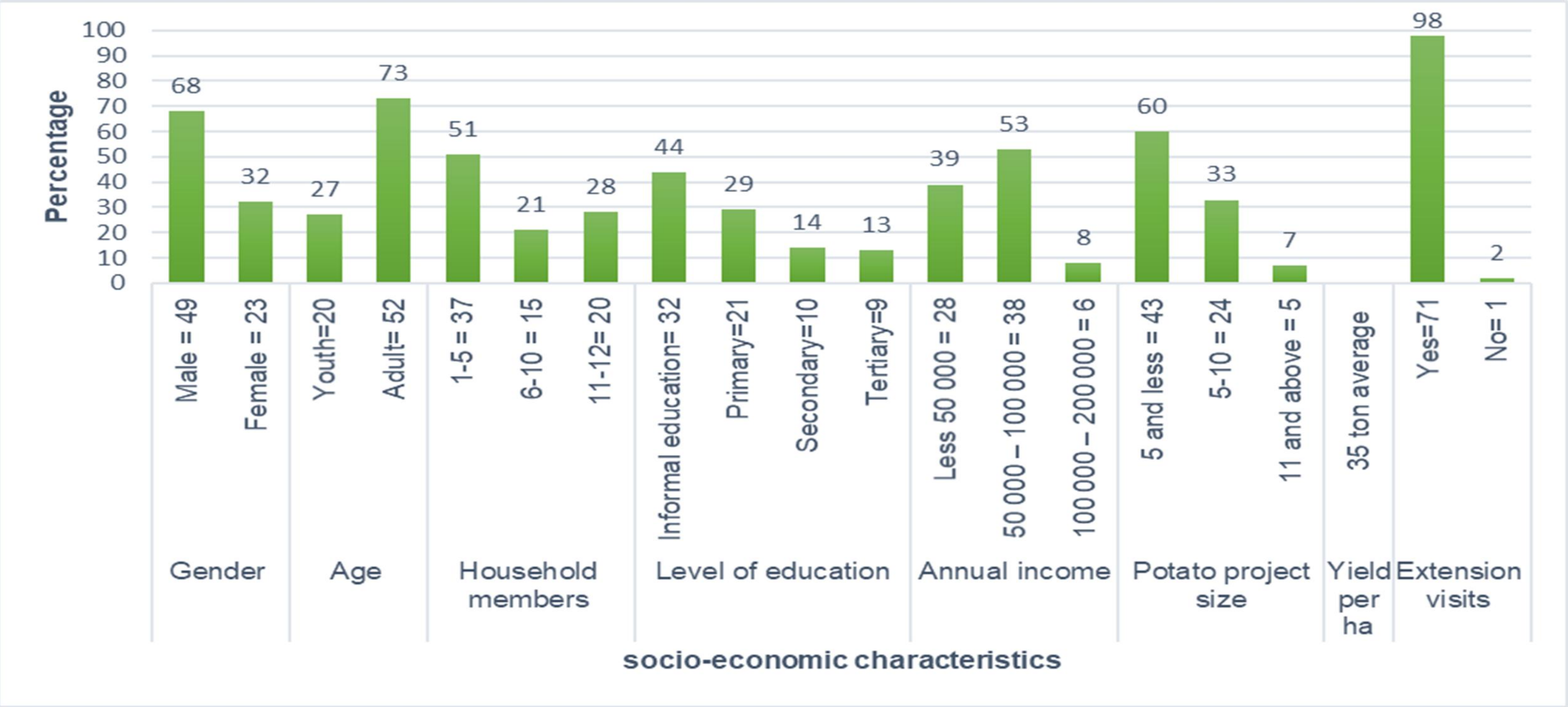
3. METHODOLOGY cont...

- For **data analysis**, the researchers used descriptive statistics, which was facilitated by Microsoft Excel.
- Data was collected from the 4th – 25th of April 2024.
- **Data presentation** of the results were presented in tables of means, frequencies, and percentages.



4. FINDINGS & RESULTS

Graph I: Distribution of demographics according to percentage and frequency



4. FINDINGS & RESULTS cont

Table 2: Distribution of potato farmers' perceptions regarding challenges related to economic viability

| Challenges | Strongly Agree (Frequency) | Strongly agree (%) | Strongly disagree (Frequency) | strongly disagree (%) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Lack of production inputs | 65 | 91 | 7 | 9 |
| Inadequate financial support | 70 | 97 | 2 | 3 |
| Market access | 25 | 35 | 47 | 65 |
| Infrastructural facilities | 10 | 14 | 62 | 86 |
| Access to extension services | 4 | 5 | 68 | 95 |
| Packaging | 37 | 51 | 35 | 49 |

4. FINDINGS & RESULTS cont

Table 3: Distribution of potatoes farmers perception of the economic viability

| | Strongly agree | Disagree | Neither agree or disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|----------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Improved production yields | 7 (10%) | 1 (1%) | 10 (14%) | 25 (35%) | 29 (40%) |
| Improved farm profitability, farm incomes | 4 (6%) | 3 (4%) | 6 (8%) | 29 (40) | 30 (42%) |
| Improved food security for producer and consumer | 5 (7%) | 11 (15%) | 10 (14) | 24 (33) | 22 (31%) |

- The survey shows that while respondents generally view potato farming positively for improving yields and profitability,
- There is skepticism about its effectiveness in enhancing food security, indicating a lack of understanding of its broader economic impact.



5. DISCUSSIONS

Socio-economic characteristics insights:

- Potato farmers are predominantly male, middle-aged, and have basic education levels.
- There is a need for training programs to improve skills and encourage the participation of younger and female farmers for long-term sustainability.

Perception of challenges:

- The results indicates that 97% of farmers find government financial support inadequate for potato production, while 91% face challenges in accessing production inputs, highlighting the need for improved resource access.

DISCUSSIONS cont....

- 35% of farmers perceive market access as less constraint, suggesting many have established routes or direct sales channels, indicating potential for further market development initiatives.

Perceptions on economic viability

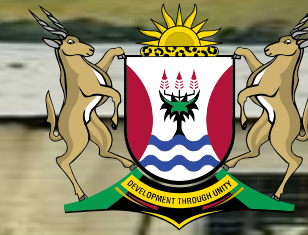
- The survey shows that while respondents generally view potato farming positively for improving yields and profitability,
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5. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

- **Enhancing government support:** by collaborating with relevant stakeholders, introduce comprehensive potato schemes that not only provide financial assistance but also enhance and sustain the viability of this commodity.
- **Improved market access:** Develop marketing initiatives and infrastructure to connect farmers with broader markets and secure better prices for their produce.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Implement targeted training programs to educate farmers on advanced agricultural practices, technology adoption, and sustainable farming methods.
- Potato farming in WMMLM is economically viable, but lack of financial support and inputs hinder its full potential. Collaborative efforts and targeted interventions can enhance production's economic impact.

5. REFERENCES

- Hosseini, S.J.F., Mohammadi, F. and Mirdamadi, S.M., 2011. Factors influencing the economic aspects of sustainable agriculture in Iran. Archives of Applied Science Research, 3(2), pp.503-512.
- Statistics SA. (2022). Census statistics for Winnie Madikizela Mandela Local Municipality. Available from: <https://census.statssa.gov.za/#/province/2/2>
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