



Navigating vulnerabilities, building resilience and creating sustainable futures in the Afromontane area

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Mountain people are among the world's poorest and most disadvantaged. Harsh climatic and environmental conditions, remoteness and often difficult access hamper development in mountain regions. Mountain people frequently face political, social and economic marginalization and lack access to such basic services as health and education. Mountain communities live far from the centres of commerce and power, so they have little influence on the policies and decisions that affect their lives, and their voices often go unheard. Efforts to understand vulnerabilities in time and space prompts the need for a robust and consensual interrogation of prevailing vulnerability dimensions with a view to surging towards building resilient communities. It seems reasonable to expect that sustainable futures need to tap into the wealth of the collective as these futures depend on the individual contribution with a common vision.

The purpose of the study is to propose how the people of the Afromontane areas may navigate vulnerabilities, build resilience and create sustainable futures. The study is couched within the communitarian and collaborative paradigm. The communitarian and collaborative dimension of understanding the felt needs of montane communities and linkages requires a participatory, case study design from the perspective of emancipatory and interpretive paradigms. Interpretive paradigms are concerned with understanding people's situated meaning-making. This will be a primarily qualitative, participatory case study design. Qualitative research typically is used when the nature or complexity of the problem is ill-defined and in-depth analysis is required. Multiple methods are used in order to triangulate data and ensure credibility and trustworthiness.

Data generated will be analysed through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is defined as a cross-discipline approach that encompasses the analysis of text and talk in all disciplines of humanities and social sciences. The use of CDA is deemed appropriate since the aim is to understand meanings, understanding and interpretation and in the process make meaning. We will transcribe data which will be recorded for coding word for word. The use of CDA is also to help in analysing verbal exchanges (and cues people make) captured on video cameras during the process of generating data. It was deemed critical because when people engage in a discourse they use different texts that could be interpreted differently in different contexts. The use of CDA would therefore help us understand meaning in different contexts, for example at textual, social and discursive levels).

For more information: Refer to Dr Hlalele's profile listed under Researchers/Project leaders