



Systematic Review of Inclusiveness of Rural Marginalised Groups into Global Value Chains: The Role of Agricultural Logistics Park in Lushoto, Tanzania

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v6i6.1340>

Abstract

This research paper presents a systematic review examining the inclusiveness of rural marginalised groups in Global Value Chains, with a specific focus on the role of Agricultural Logistics Parks (ALPs). In recent years, Global Value Chains have become increasingly important in driving economic growth and development, particularly in the agricultural sector. However, there are concerns regarding the equitable participation of rural marginalised groups, including small-scale farmers, women, and ethnic minorities, in these value chains. The objective of this systematic review is to analyze existing literature to determine the extent to which ALPs contribute to the inclusiveness of rural marginalised groups in Global Value Chains. ALPs are physical infrastructure and institutional arrangements that provide various services and support to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural value chains. This study aims to identify the mechanisms through which ALPs can foster inclusiveness, as well as the challenges and limitations that may hinder the participation of marginalised groups. The review employs a systematic approach, including the identification of key themes, synthesis of findings, and critical evaluation of the literature. The analysis will examine the role of ALPs in enhancing market access, reducing transaction costs, improving productivity, and promoting social inclusion for rural marginalised groups. Preliminary findings suggest that ALPs can positively impact the inclusiveness of rural marginalised groups in global value chains. They provide a platform for small-scale farmers to access markets, connect with buyers, and gain better bargaining power. However, challenges such as limited infrastructure, inadequate financial resources, and exclusionary policies still hinder the full participation of marginalised groups in ALPs. This research contributes to the existing literature by providing a systematic analysis of the role of ALPs in promoting inclusiveness in global value chains. The findings will inform policymakers, development practitioners, and stakeholders involved in rural development and agricultural value chain interventions. Additionally, the study identifies gaps in the current knowledge base and suggests areas for further research and policy intervention to ensure the equitable integration of rural marginalised groups into Global Value Chains.

Keywords: *Rural Marginalised Groups; Inclusive Global Value Chains; Agricultural Logistics Park; Lushoto*

1.0 Introduction

In most Least Developing Countries (LDCs), agriculture accounts for between 20-60% of GDP, and employs up to 65% of the labour force, providing livelihood for approximately 2.6 billion people globally (UNCTAD 2010). However, nearly 8 out of 10 of poor people are in rural areas in LDCs of which 85% are agriculturalist (World Bank Group, 2018; Dixon, *et al.*, 2001). In this scenario, whichever indicator is chosen, picture of continuing marginalisation of LDCs in world economy is derived from LDCs' share of world trade – which exceeded one percent in the 1970s – has successively fallen and is now barely 0.4% while share of trade in services is even smaller at 0.1% (De Vylder, *et al.*, 2007). Yet paradoxically, in LDCs poverty and deprivation are most prevalently found in worst forms whereby marginalised segments have limited inclusion into Global Value Chains (GVCs).

Despite relatively rapid economic growth through agriculture, majority of LDCs are off track on most of Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] (Fukuda-Parr and Greenstein, 2010). Agricultural GVCs are increasingly dominated by Multi Nations Corporations (MNCs) who found LDCs as their fertile ground. While LDCs welcomes MNCs with open arms and pro-business regulatory environment, interests of MNCs automatically diverge from the interests of LDCs to profit-maximisation. This dependence costs LDCs and rural marginalised groups (RMGs) dearly, enclosed into limited connections to GVCs, compounded with degradation of trade terms, non-agricultural opportunities, and hunger leading millions of desperate energetic population to leave rural areas on the hands of women, people with disabilities, scheduled tribes, and elderly or aged people.

Agricultural Logistics Park (ALP) offer various advantages in terms of improving agricultural productivity and generate inclusive growth (Kiminami and Kiminami, 2009; Brasier *et al.*, 2007). ALP exhibit many of the same advantages that general industrial clusters though exhibit other characteristics which make them unique in terms of cluster formation and their contribution to social and economic inclusion (Sheffi, 2013). In current literature, ALP is simply concentration of producers, agribusinesses and institutions engaged in same agricultural or agro-industrial subsector, and interconnect and build value networks when addressing common challenges in pursuing common opportunities. This study focus on clustering of postharvest agriculture, it mainly considers logistics as a backbone of GVCs on facilitating inclusion of RMGs. Process of marginalisation is not a one-way road but can be reversed; regions and people may in fact become 'de-marginalised' if they are able to compete successfully in new global system (Pelc and Koderman, 2018). Thus, specific interest of this study is to link economic inclusion of RMGs into GVCs and incidence of ALPs.

Although there is wealth of research and initiatives relating to clusters in general, remarkably little attention has been paid to clusters in agricultural sector (Salau, *et al.*, 2017). However, agriculture nowadays is reinventing itself as a new global business reshaped by globalisation towards ALP hence accelerating inclusive GVCs. On that fact, study is specifically concerned with effects of social inclusion of RMGs into GVCs moderated by ALPs. Literature on relation between social inclusion of RMGs and incidence of GVCs efficiency often neglects importance of ALP. Formation and development of ALPs is important competitive advantage of modern economy as referenced to China and other developed economy, by providing a real synergistic effect and basis of LDCs in globalisation.

Some scholars believe exclusion of RMGs into GVCs in LDCs arises from existence of cultural norms and behaviours, underdeveloped, poor education, and poverty (Hernández, *et al.*, 2014; UNCTAD 2011; Kamoche *et al.*, 2004). Other researchers believe that exclusion of RMGs into GVCs in LDCs is related to clash between dominancy of MNCs in agricultural GVCs and competitive capability of marginalised segments (Lianos, 2018; Lee, *et al.*, 2012). As such, dominancy of MNCs in agricultural GVCs is seen as unavoidable consequence of economic modernisation. However, it is clear that promotion or inducement of ALPs has various advantages relative to other approaches on inclusion of

RMGs into GVCs. Therefore, this study is aimed to link inclusion of RMGs into GVCs in LDCs when moderated by ALPs.

1.1 Research Objectives

This study intended to investigate the relevance of ALPs towards inclusive RMGs to GVCs in Tanzania. Based on above scenarios and responding to call for ALPs for enhancing inclusive RMGs to GVCs in Tanzania, the following specific objectives are formulated:

1. To identify effects of participation of rural marginalised groups in inclusive global value chains in Lushoto.
2. To examine effects of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Rural Marginalised Groups in Lushoto.
3. To determine effects of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Inclusive GVCs in Lushoto.
4. To assess mediating effect of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Rural Marginalised Groups and Inclusive GVCs in Lushoto.

2.0 Reviewed Literatures and Hypothesis Formulation

2.1 Determination of State of Rural Marginalised Groups on Inclusive GVCs

Rural marginalised groups often face significant challenges when it comes to participating in inclusive GVCs. Global Value Chains refer to the complex networks of production, distribution, and trade that involve multiple countries and are crucial for the global economy. While GVCs can offer opportunities for economic growth and development, they can also exacerbate inequalities, particularly for marginalised communities in rural areas.

Addressing the challenges faced by RMGs on inclusive GVCs requires a multi-faceted approach. This includes improving access to resources and technology, promoting inclusive policies and institutions, providing market information and knowledge, strengthening social networks and capacity building, and addressing social and cultural barriers. By addressing these issues, it is possible to create more inclusive GVCs that benefit all participants, including RMGs, and contribute to sustainable and equitable development.

Governments around the world have recognised the importance of promoting inclusive global value chains (GVCs) and addressing the challenges faced by RMGs. Inclusive GVCs refer to economic activities where all participants, including RMGs, have equal opportunities to participate, benefit, and contribute to the value chains. Governments have taken various initiatives to support and empower RMGs in this context. It's important to note that the specific initiatives may vary across countries and regions based on their socio-economic contexts and priorities. However, the overall goal remains to promote inclusive GVCs and empower RMGs by addressing their unique challenges and facilitating their integration into value chains.

The role of Governments around the world in promoting inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) has gained significant attention in recent years. GVCs, which encompass the interconnected activities of production and distribution across different countries, have the potential to contribute to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction. However, the extent to which GVCs generate inclusive and sustainable outcomes is heavily influenced by the quality and effectiveness of societal wellbeing.

While GVCs offer opportunities for countries to participate in global trade and benefit from international production networks, there are persistent challenges related to inclusivity to RMGs. Inclusive GVCs aim to ensure that the benefits of participation are widely distributed, allowing RMGs to

access economic opportunities and improve their livelihoods. Studies of Ros-Tonen, et al. (2019), Meagher (2019) also have shown societal marginalisation impact to Inclusive GVCs. However, the setting of studies is less likely found in Tanzania context. The current study further probes this link in the specific context of RMGs on Inclusive GVCs. Therefore, the proposition is posited as follows:

Proposition 1: Rural marginalised groups are negatively positioned on inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs).

2.2 Examine effects of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Rural Marginalised Groups

Agricultural Logistic Parks (ALPs) are specialised infrastructure facilities designed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural supply chains. These ALPs provide services such as cold storage, processing facilities, packaging, grading, and transportation, among others, to support the agricultural sector. While ALPs can bring numerous benefits to the overall agricultural industry, it is important to examine their effects on RMGs to ensure that they do not exacerbate existing inequalities (Mujeri & Mujeri, 2021; Mannava & Tran, 2020). This invites the need to focus on effects of ALPs on RMGs to assess whether these ALPs has improved livelihoods, increased incomes, and reduced disparities among RMGs. Thus, impact assessments can identify any unintended consequences and help policymakers and stakeholders make necessary adjustments to ensure equitable outcomes.

It can be noticed that ALPs can have significant effects to economic growth by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural supply chains. These ALPs provide infrastructure and services that streamline processes such as storage, processing, packaging, and transportation, reducing post-harvest losses and increasing the overall productivity of the agricultural sector. As a result, agricultural products can reach markets more efficiently, leading to increased trade, higher incomes for farmers, and job creation within and around the ALPs. This economic growth can have ripple effects throughout the broader society, improving living standards and stimulating other sectors of the economy (Roberts & Townsend, 2016; Agyapong, 2010).

It is clear that ALPs can promote social empowerment and inclusivity by providing opportunities for RMGs, including small-scale farmers, women, and youth, to participate in the agricultural value chain (Kaminski, *et al.*, 2020; Masamha, 2018). In this way ALPs can offer training and capacity-building programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of these groups, enabling them to engage in value addition activities and access higher-value markets (Feldman, *et al.*, 2016; Harvie & Charoenrat, (2015). Moreover, ALPs can facilitate the formation of cooperatives and support the collective action of farmers, strengthening their bargaining power and enabling them to have a greater voice in decision-making processes. In generally, while ALPs have the potential to enhance agricultural supplies chains and improve efficiency, it is important to consider their effects on RMGs. By adopting inclusive approaches, ensuring accessibility, promoting value addition, and empowering RMGs, ALPs can contribute to the upliftment and empowerment of these communities, fostering more equitable agricultural development.

Developing an understanding of how certain groups are marginalised is a necessary condition for rural inclusivity to successfully engage and assist them to engage in GVCs (Meagher & Lindell, 2013; Farrington & Mitchell, 2006). When stepping into an engagement and inclusivity process, it is important to recognize that RMGs may very well have preexisting relationships and prior experiences in GVCs (Shaw, et al., 2022; Florini & Pauli, 2018). There are several studies aiming to examine the association between ALPs and RMGs, including development strategies to determine the relationship between rurality and local development policy activities (Deweese, *et al.*, 2003), In-situ marginalisation and Social impact (Wang & Wu, 2019), and Marginalised countryside in a globalised city (Ye, *et al.*, 2019), which provide insights and references for exploring the relationship between ALPs and RMGs. While the engagement of ALPS to RMGs is emphasized to relate to upliftment and empowerment of RMGs, fostering more equitable agricultural development, it plays a critical role in improving value addition

activities and access higher-value markets. Relying on the above discussion, the following proposition is surfaced:

Proposition 2: Agricultural Logistic Parks will uplift Rural Marginalised Groups

2.3 Identification of effects of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Inclusive GVCs

Agricultural Logistic Parks (ALPs) can have several effects on inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) within the agricultural sector. Agricultural Logistic Parks can contribute to the inclusivity of GVCs in the agricultural sector by integrating small-scale farmers, reducing information asymmetry, providing access to finance and services, enabling value addition and differentiation, facilitating linkages with other value chain actors, and promoting gender inclusivity (Kaplinsky, 2015; Pietrobelli & Rabellotti, 2004). These effects can lead to a more equitable distribution of benefits along the value chain and enhance the participation of RMGs in GVCs.

In concrete observation, ALPs can facilitate linkages between small-scale farmers and other actors in the agricultural value chain, such as suppliers of inputs, agribusinesses, processors, distributors, and retailers. By providing a central hub for various value chain activities, ALPs create opportunities for collaboration and partnership between different stakeholders (Martinidis, *et al.*, 2021; Sadovska, *et al.*, 2020). This integration of actors can lead to knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and the development of business relationships that foster more inclusive GVCs. It can also be noted that, ALPs enable value addition activities such as processing, packaging, and branding, which can help small-scale farmers to differentiate their products in GVCs (Chengappa, 2018; Trienekens, 2011). By adding value to agricultural products, rural farmers can access higher-value markets and capture a greater share of the value chain, which can lead to increased incomes and better economic prospects for farmers, contributing to the inclusivity of GVCs by enabling them to move up the value chain.

While there are challenges, efforts are being made in several countries to overcome GVCs challenges but enabling environment is crucial for the development and operation of ALPs and the promotion of inclusive GVCs. Governments, development organizations, and private sector stakeholders are working together to establish ALPs, improve infrastructure, strengthen market linkages, provide technical support, and enhance financing opportunities. These initiatives aim to promote inclusive GVCs, empower RMGs, and create opportunities for sustainable economic development in the agricultural sector.

The enabling environment is crucial for the development and operation of ALPs and the promotion of inclusive GVCs. Governments need to develop supportive policies that address infrastructure gaps, facilitate financing mechanisms, and promote market linkages. Additionally, strong institutions are required to coordinate and oversee the development and functioning of ALPs, ensuring that they cater to the needs of small-scale farmers and promote inclusivity in GVCs. By adding value to their agricultural products, farmers can access higher-value markets and capture a greater share of the value chain.

If ALPs can lead to increased incomes and better economic prospects for small-scale farmers, contribute to inclusivity of GVCs thus enabling them to move up the value chain, it would drive economic growth, enhancing value addition, market integration, fostering rural development, facilitating technology transfer, promoting sustainability. Based on the above literature ALPs is a key predictor of Inclusive GVCs. The empirical research on ALPs to Inclusive GVCs in Tanzania would further elaborate this relation. From the aforementioned arguments on ALPs to Inclusive GVCs, the hypothesis can be proposed as:

Proposition 3: Agricultural Logistic Parks will foster inclusive GVCs

2.4 Mediating effect of Agricultural Logistic Parks on Rural Marginalised Groups and Inclusive GVCs

In pursuit of better economic performance, most countries are embarking to societal empowerment programs which are aimed at creating a link between business objectives and formulation of development capabilities. Intentions of programmes such as ALPs is to promote a range of activities amongst the marginalised, physically and socially backward, disadvantaged and economically deprived sections of the population towards attaining economic self-reliance.

Given that the extant literature primarily focused on the understanding of direct effects of RMGs on inclusive GVCs, there is a need to conduct further data analysis to test the mediating effect of ALPs, because RMGs negatively influenced by inclusive GVCs and such studies are less likely found in Tanzania context. Such a test was important as its results would support the necessity of including RMGs in a research model on the relationship between ALPs and socio economic empowerment outcomes. First, it was well established that socio economic empowerment was a function of RMGs, and RMGs may be affected by perceptions and psychological states and other factors such as physically and socially backward, disadvantageous and economically deprivations.

Thus, negative socio economic empowerment would translate into physically and socially backward, disadvantageous and economically deprivations by means of the rural marginalisations. Second, empirical findings on the direct effects of ALPs have been mixed and even controversial. For example, Ramirez, *et al.* (2018) found relationship between social networks, one of the critical components of ALPs, and inclusivity, whereas in Southern African Countries, ALPs as kind of industrial clusters negatively associated with agriculture value added due to high competitive pressures and contextual factors, such as level of discrimination, economic exclusion and institutional environment (Rosca, *et al.*, 2019; Humphrey & Schmitz, 2000). The mixed and controversial findings of some literatures indicated that an examination of possible mediating effects may extend our understanding of ALPs when integrated to RMGs, resolving the inconsistencies in the extant literature.

In Southern African Countries, ALPs as kind of industrial clusters negatively associated with agriculture value added due to high competitive pressures and contextual factors, such as level of discrimination, economic exclusion and institutional environment (Rosca, *et al.*, 2019; Rodríguez-Pose & Comptour, 2012). Nowadays business entities in developing countries, are under pressure to improve value addition and increase competitiveness. Business entities around the world are under pressure to improve productivity and increase competitiveness while several studies are emphasising the small scale producers to participate on industrial clusters as means of increasing value additions and competitiveness (Lund-Thomsen, *et al.*, 2005).

In developed world, the industrial districts economy and GVCs concepts are well integrated, whereas in developing countries these concepts is uncommonly integrated. From this view, the clusters in the form of ALPs and GVCs literatures reflect opposite premises, the former stems from the need to understand local dynamics and the consequences on competitiveness while the latter reflects an interest in explaining the ALPs in developing countries rarely had a direct presence in the GVCs (Di Maria, *et al.*, 2019). In a study of Brenton, *et al.* (2022) and Hioki & Ke (2016) it was noted that industrial clusters such as ALPs have positive effects on GVCs and thus it has mediation on the relationship between RMGs and inclusive GVCs.

Moreover, Pratt (2019), Said-Allsopp & Tallontire (2015) and Mitchell, *et al.* (2009) demonstrated that, engagement of groups and communities in industrial clusters can provide a path for RMGs overcome barriers and seize opportunities in inclusive GVCs. Additionally, studies of Jankowiak, (2021), Morris & Staritz (2019), and Ponte, *et al.* (2019) showed industrial clusters to increase inclusive GVCs, and various others find ALPs to be a key antecedent of RMGs. This inferred that, that ALPs on

RMGs and inclusive GVCs can be mediated by effort expended. Thus, we propose that the effect of RMGs on inclusive GVCs was indirect and mediated by ALPs.

Overall, the intervention of ALPs strengthens the relationship between RMGs and inclusive GVCs by providing them with market access, value addition opportunities, efficient logistics, knowledge, capacity building, and support services. However, it is important to ensure that ALPs are inclusive, responsive to the needs of RMGs, and supported by appropriate policies and institutional arrangements. This way, the intervention can effectively promote the integration of RMGs into GVCs and contribute to their socio-economic development. However, there are few empirical studies on the role of ALPs in empowering RMGs. While Nadvi & Barrientos (2004) and Jankowiak (2021) believe that the role of industrial clusters such as ALPs in socio economic empowerment to RMGs is a subject that remains to be developed. Based upon the theoretical framework discussed above, this study developed following proposition:

Proposition 4: Agricultural Logistic Parks have mediating effect to Rural Marginalised Groups and Inclusive GVCs

2.5 Research Gap

The effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) is an emerging research area that still has some gaps to be explored. While there is a growing body of literature on ALPs and their impact on agricultural value chains, the specific effects on RMGs and their inclusion in GVCs require further investigation. Numerous studies have been done in studying industrial clusters and GVCs in the context of developed world and concluded with different result due to various context and sample group. Generally, developed countries are highly engaged in inclusive GVCs as they are highly interacted with complex networks of production, distribution, and trade that involve multiple countries and are crucial for the global economy.

On the other hand, ALPs in inclusive GVCs is also an important area to be study for the investigation of rate of exclusivity of RMGs. Studies also shown ALPs have effect to socio economic empowerment to communities. However, the setting of such research is less likely found in Tanzania context. In addition, though Government of Tanzania has been insisting of industrial clusters for economic empowerment, yet, there is no specification which community group is specifically referred. The previous study also does not completely find an association between RMGs and inclusive GVCs with ALPs as mediator. Thus, this shown a research gap in between and calls for further study. As such, the present study has proposed to identify the influence of ALPs which plays as mediator towards inclusive GVCs among RMGs in Tanzania.

The mediating effect of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs is an interesting area of research. While there is some literature available on ALPs and their impact on agricultural value chains, there appears to be a research gap specifically addressing their role in promoting inclusivity and benefiting RMGs within GVCs. By addressing research gap, scholars can contribute to a better understanding of the effects of ALPs on RMGs and the promotion of inclusive GVCs. This knowledge can inform policy recommendations, interventions, and strategies to ensure that ALPs benefit all stakeholders, including those who are traditionally marginalised in agricultural value chains.

3.0 Methodology

This will be a cross-sectional analytical study whereby both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection will be used. Convenience sampling method will be used to select respondents, semi-

structured interviews focus group discussions (FGD) will be used in data collection. Quantitative data will be analysed through computer software for data analysis whereby multiple regression models will be applied to predict potentials of RMGs into GVCs in LDCs through ALP. On qualitative part, data will be analysed by content analysis.

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When conducting a systematic review on the effects of Agricultural Logistic Parks (ALPs) on RMGs and inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs), combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods will be employed. Data extraction will be developed in a standardised form to extract relevant information from the selected studies. This form should capture details such as study characteristics, sample characteristics, ALP and GVC contexts, outcomes examined, key findings, and any relevant qualitative or quantitative data.

Either, quality assessment and risk for biasness will be included. For qualitative studies, consideration criteria will include credibility, dependability, and transferability. For quantitative studies, assess factors such as study design, sample size, data collection methods, and statistical analysis will be considered and appropriate tools or checklists to guide the quality assessment process will also be applied.

Data will be analysed and synthesized from extracted data to identify patterns, themes, and relationships across the studies. Usually in qualitative studies, thematic analysis is applied to identify common themes, concepts, and explanations related to the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs. For quantitative analysis, a meta-analysis will be feasible, to quantitatively synthesize the findings and estimate effect sizes.

3.1 Proposed Study Area

Tanzania, like many countries, experiences regional disparities in economic development and infrastructure. Selecting Lushoto, which is located in the Tanga Region, allows for studying the inclusiveness of RMGs in a specific regional context. This regional perspective can help identify localised challenges, opportunities, and policy implications related to integrating RMGs into GVCs. Selecting Lushoto as the study area for research on the inclusiveness of RMGs into global value chains, focusing on the mediating effect of ALPs, can be justified based on different reasons.

Lushoto is a significant agricultural region in Tanzania, known for its diverse agricultural production, including crops such as coffee, tea, vegetables, and fruits. The area has a substantial population engaged in agricultural activities, making it relevant for studying the inclusion of RMGs in global value chains. The district is known for its fertile soil, favorable climate, and suitable topography for agriculture. This makes Lushoto an ideal location to study the inclusiveness of RMGs in global value chains, as agriculture is a key sector in their livelihoods.

Lushoto is home to various marginalised communities, including small-scale farmers, women, and ethnic minorities. These groups often face challenges in accessing markets, finance, and resources, limiting their participation in global value chains. By focusing on Lushoto, the research can shed light on the experiences, barriers, and opportunities for these RMGs in integrating into GVCs. The presence of small agricultural clusters or related infrastructure in Lushoto can play a minimal role in facilitating the

inclusion of RMGs. By examining the functioning and impact of Agricultural Logistics Parks in Lushoto, the research can explore how these parks mediate the integration of RMGs into global value chains.

By focusing on Lushoto, the research can generate region-specific insights and recommendations for policymakers and development practitioners. The findings can inform targeted interventions and policy measures aimed at enhancing the inclusiveness of RMGs in global value chains, particularly in the context of Agricultural Logistics Parks. Lushoto's significance as an agricultural region may result in the availability of relevant data on agricultural activities, value chains, and the functioning of Agricultural Logistics Parks. Access to such data can facilitate a more comprehensive analysis and strengthen the research findings.

In summary, selecting Lushoto as the study area provides a localized perspective on the exclusiveness of RMGs into global value chains, with a focus on the mediating effect of Agricultural Logistics Parks. The research findings can contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by RMGs in Lushoto and provide region-specific recommendations to promote their inclusion in global value chains.

4.0 Study Conclusion, Contribution and Study Limitations

4.1 Study Conclusion

In conclusion, the research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and GVCs provides valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of integrating RMGs into agricultural value chains. By exploring the mediating role of ALPs, this research sheds light on the mechanisms through which RMGs can enhance their participation, improve their livelihoods, and contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

The practical implications of this research highlight the importance of addressing barriers to market access, strengthening value chain integration, supporting capacity building, facilitating access to finance, promoting inclusive business models, addressing social and gender inequalities, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. These practical implications can guide policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders in designing and implementing interventions that empower RMGs and producers, enhance their competitiveness, and promote their inclusion within ALPs and GVCs.

However, further research is needed to deepen researcher understandings of this complex field. Long-term studies can assess the sustained impacts of ALPs on RMGs and the overall development outcomes resulting from their inclusion in GVCs. Comparative analyses across different contexts can identify contextual factors that contribute to successful inclusive outcomes. Exploring the perspectives of diverse stakeholders can lead to more effective strategies and interventions. Additionally, investigating the social and cultural dimensions and the role of technological innovation can provide insights into promoting inclusivity and leveraging digitalisation for agricultural development.

By addressing these areas for further study, researchers can contribute to evidence-based policies, practices, and interventions that foster inclusive and sustainable agricultural development. The research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs has the potential to drive positive change, empower RMGs, and create opportunities for their meaningful participation in the agricultural sector.

4.2 Theoretical Contributions

The research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) can make several theoretical contributions to the existing literature. The research will firstly contribute to

understanding of inclusive GVCs by examining how ALPs facilitate the participation of RMGs in these chains. It will shed light on the mechanisms through which ALPs create opportunities for RMGs and producers to engage in higher value-added activities, access markets, and benefit from GVC integration. Secondly, study will provide insights into the institutional arrangements and governance structures that enable or hinder the inclusion of RMGs in ALPs and GVCs. It will help identify the institutional factors that contribute to inclusive outcomes, such as supportive policies, access to finance, coordination mechanisms, and collaboration among different stakeholders.

Also, research will contribute to the theoretical understanding of social inclusion and empowerment by exploring how ALPs can enhance the agency and capabilities of RMGs. It will examine how ALPs contribute to income generation, livelihood improvement, and reduction of poverty among RMGs, thereby empowering them economically and socially. This study will provide insights into value chain upgrading processes and mechanisms through the lens of ALPs. It will explore how ALPs facilitate the upgrading of RMGs and producers from lower value-added activities to higher value-added segments of the value chain. This will help develop theoretical frameworks for understanding the dynamics of value chain upgrading and the role of ALPs in this process.

The research will contribute to the understanding of intersectionality and social differentiation by examining how different dimensions of marginalisation intersect and affect the inclusion of RMGs in ALPs and GVCs. It can explore the ways in which factors such as gender, ethnicity, geography, and socio-economic status intersect to shape the experiences and outcomes of RMGs within these contexts.

Again, study will shed light on power dynamics within ALPs and GVCs and their implications for social change. It can analyze the distribution of power among different actors, including RMGs, and investigate how power asymmetries shape the inclusion or exclusion of these groups. This will contribute to theoretical discussions on social change, collective action, and the redistribution of power within agricultural value chains. Overall, the research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs will advance theoretical understandings in the fields of value chain analysis, social inclusion, institutional theory, sustainable development, and power dynamics. By addressing these theoretical gaps, the research will provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars interested in promoting inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.

4.3 Practical Implications

The research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) can have several practical implications. The research will firstly, highlight strategies to improve the access of RMGs to markets through ALPs. It will identify measures to reduce barriers such as limited transportation infrastructure, inadequate storage facilities, and information asymmetry. In this way, practical implications may include improving logistics and transportation systems, establishing market information systems, and facilitating market linkages for marginalised farmers and producers.

Secondly, research will provide insights into how ALPs can facilitate the integration of RMGs into GVCs. Practical implications will involve developing mechanisms to connect RMGs and producers with downstream value chain actors, such as processors, exporters, and retailers. This will be achieved through the establishment of contractual arrangements, buyer-seller linkages, and business development services that support value chain integration. Thirdly, research will inform the design of capacity building programs and skill development initiatives tailored to the needs of RMGs. Practical implications may include training programs to enhance agricultural practices, improve post-harvest handling techniques, and upgrade production and processing skills. These capacity building efforts can empower RMGs to participate effectively in ALPs and GVCs, thereby improving their competitiveness.

Research will fourthly provide practical recommendations to enhance access to finance for RMGs involved in ALPs. This will involve identifying appropriate financial instruments and mechanisms, such as microcredit, agricultural loans, and innovative financing models, that cater to the specific needs and constraints of RMGs and producers. Facilitating access to finance will enable them to invest in productive assets, technology, and inputs, leading to improved productivity and profitability.

Research will practically shed light on inclusive business models that benefit both marginalised RMGs and value chain actors. Practical implications may involve encouraging partnerships between ALPs, private sector actors, and RMGs to establish mutually beneficial collaborations. Such partnerships can foster inclusive business models that prioritize fair trade, equitable profit-sharing and social responsibility, leading to shared value creation. Research will also inform interventions and policies that aim to address social and gender inequalities within ALPs and GVCs. Practical implications may include promoting women's economic empowerment, addressing discriminatory practices, and providing support to RMGs facing social exclusion. Creating an enabling environment that recognizes and values the contributions of RMGs will lead to more inclusive and equitable outcomes.

In another way, research will provide practical guidance on promoting sustainable agricultural practices within ALPs. Practical implications may involve integrating environmental considerations into ALPs design, encouraging the adoption of climate-smart agricultural techniques, and promoting sustainable resource management practices. By embedding sustainability principles into ALPs, it is possible to achieve environmentally friendly agricultural production while enhancing the resilience of RMGs. Overall, the research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs offers practical insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and stakeholders involved in agricultural development. By implementing the practical implications derived from this research, it is possible to foster inclusive economic growth, empower RMGs, and promote sustainable agricultural development within ALPs and GVCs.

4.4 Study Limitations

While research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive Global Value Chains (GVCs) is valuable, there are some limitations that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, findings of research conducted on specific ALPs and RMGs may not be easily generalisable to other contexts. ALPs vary in terms of their design, governance structures, and local conditions, which can significantly influence their impact on RMGs. Therefore, caution should be exercised when applying the findings of a particular study to different ALPs or regions.

In second instance, data availability and quality can pose challenges to research in this area. Data on ALPs and their effects on RMGs may be limited or difficult to access, especially in developing countries. Furthermore, data on the specific outcomes and impacts on RMGs within GVCs may be scarce. Researchers may need to rely on limited data sources or employ alternative data collection methods to address these challenges.

In third limitation, ALPs and GVCs are embedded in complex social, economic, and political systems. Power dynamics, social hierarchies, and unequal relationships among stakeholders can influence the inclusion of RMGs within ALPs and GVCs. These complexities may not be fully captured by quantitative research methods alone and may require complementary qualitative research approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play. Fourth limitation is viewed when conducting research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs requires significant time, resources, and coordination among various stakeholders. Research may face limitations in terms of budget, timeframes, and access to relevant data and respondents. These constraints can impact the scope and depth of the research and may limit the ability to capture the full range of effects and nuances in the inclusion of RMGs.

Acknowledging these limitations is important for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to have a nuanced understanding of the research findings and their applicability. Despite these limitations, research on the effects of ALPs on RMGs and inclusive GVCs remains a valuable area of inquiry that can inform evidence-based policies, interventions, and practices to promote inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.

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