

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING FORMATION OF YOUTH
ATTITUDES TOWARDS FARMING IN KURESOI SUB-COUNTY, NAKURU
COUNTY, KENYA**

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of the Master of Arts Degree in Sociology (Community Development and Project
Management) of Egerton University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge it has not been presented for examination of any degree in any Institution or University.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear parents Gideon Mwangi Mutie and Alice Mbenge Mwangi for the strong foundation they laid for my education, their continuous encouragement, and moral support.

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I give glory and praise to God for pulling me through, giving me strength when I felt weary, good health and making the impossible for me possible.

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ABSTRACT

Farming has a huge potential in offering employment to the youth considering its wider labour absorptive capacity. Despite the recognition of employment creation, youth participation in working as a farmer is low due to their attitudes towards farming. The current study describes socio-economic factors that influence formation of youth attitudes in Kuresoi Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. A sample of 120 youths was selected randomly from registered youth groups. Data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions using an interview guide and a focus group discussion guide respectively. Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis involved use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software to generate frequencies and percentages which were presented, discussed and interpreted in line with the study objectives. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and used to provide in-depth explanations where quantitative data alone could not suffice. The study is guided by the social learning theory to explain formation of attitudes through social learning, and the structural functionalism theory to appreciate the role of social learning in the functioning of society. The study found that about 69% of youths in Kuresoi Sub-County do not practice farming and expressed disinterest in working as a farmer because they felt that farming is not a decent job, it is not honorable, it is low-income generating and it is not encouraged by their peers/friends and families. However, 31% of youths positively perceived farming and expressed interest in it. The study found that youth attitudes are formed through farming experiences, pressure to conform to peer aspirations away from farming career, lack of young role models in farming to inspire the youth and negative perception on farming held by the general community. In addition, limited access to farming resources contribute to low participation of youth in farming. The study concludes that: there exists both positive and negative youth attitudes towards farming and therefore, painting a homogenous picture of attitudes of the youth would be incorrect, that low participation of the youth in farming is mainly contributed to by widespread negative attitude, and that the social and economic environments which the youth have interacted with are responsible for the formation of youth attitudes. It is recommended that policy, social and economic interventions are necessary to raise the profile of farming for the society to positively perceive farming, accord it necessary approval as a worthwhile career and eventually transform youth attitudes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASDS	Agricultural Sector Development Strategy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GOK	Government of Kenya
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KNYP	Kenya National Youth Policy
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Program

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The youth comprise of 35% of Kenyan population (KNBS, 2010), with 61% of the youth population living in rural areas and 39% live in urban areas (Njonjo, 2010). Statistics on joblessness indicate that the magnitude of the problem is larger among the youth with 65% of the unemployed population being youth, and 75% of the youth population being unemployed (KNYP, 2006). This clearly indicates that unemployment in Kenya is a youth problem. With more than a third of the total Kenyan population being young, their energies need to be directed to productive activities for sustainable growth and development.

Youth are the future of food security. However, around the world, few young people see a future in agricultural production for employment. This means that most of the world's food is produced by ageing smallholder farmers who are less likely to adopt new technologies needed to sustainably increase agricultural productivity (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2014). Hence, with the growing world population and demand for food, the need to re-engage the youth in agriculture is urgent.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the Kenyan economy contributing 51 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product annually, and accounting for 65 per cent of Kenya's total exports. Agricultural production has a potential to provide for more than 70% employment to the rural population (Agricultural Sector Development Strategy, 2010-2020). It is therefore a viable solution to tackling youth unemployment witnessed in many parts of the country. Despite the recognition of employment creation within the sector, youth participation as farmers is low not only in Kenya but also in other African countries (Development report by the World Bank, cited in Strategy for Revitalization of Agriculture, 2010). A study conducted in Kenya by the Institute of Economic Affairs indicated that young people's desired occupation would be to work in the service industry (41%), enterprise (25%), social service (14%), industry (7%), and public service (6%). Only 5% want to work in agriculture (Institute of Economic Affairs, as cited in Njonjo, 2010).

Kuresoi Sub-county is within the high potential agricultural land in the Rift Valley of Kenya. However, the Sub-county Ministry of Agriculture (2012) estimated that only 15% of the

youth population was meaningfully engaged in farming to derive a livelihood. Similarly, the experience of the researcher while working for a Donor-funded youth programme in Kuresoi Sub-county showed low uptake of agricultural projects by the youth, exhibited by disposal of farm inputs distributed to them in form of start-up capital. This raises a question of what makes the youth shy from working in the farm. The Kenya National Youth Policy (2006) highlights work attitudes among the youths as one of the key issues affecting youth employment. Youth attitudes towards certain forms of work are recognized as affecting youth engagement with the labour market in the rest of Africa (Marito & Fares, 2008).

It is against this background that the current study sought to explore socio-economic factors that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming, so as to inform work orientation practices to generate a youthful work force that is employable in the farming sub-sector, as well as in many other sectors of the economy. Increased participation of youth in farming increases youth employment, adoption of technology and innovation for improved farm productivity.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Farming occupation in Kuresoi Sub-county is a viable solution to tackling youth unemployment given its wider labour absorptive capacity and the favorable climatic conditions for farming in the region. However, only a small proportion of the youth engage meaningfully in it. The participation of the youth in farming is influenced by their attitudes. Literature reviewed does not expose factors that contribute to formation of the youth attitudes. Therefore, the current study sought to explore factors that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Broad Objective

The broad objective of the current study is to identify socio-economic factors that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The current study is guided by specific objectives stated below;

- i. To describe the characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county

- ii. To explore community-based factors that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county
- iii. To assess the influence of economic factors in formation of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county

1.4 Study Questions

The current study is guided by the following study questions;

- i. What are the characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county?
- ii. What community-based factors influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county?
- iii. How do economic factors influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming in Kuresoi Sub-county?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The large population of the youth and their unique capabilities are assets for growth and development. The integration of youth in agricultural activities is an important factor toward agriculture sector development because of their innovativeness, physical energy and fast learning characteristics. Involvement of youth in farming activities can reduce the problem of ageing farmers and this call for securing the interest and participation of young people in the farm. The findings of the current study generate information on ways through which youth attitudes towards farming are formed. Based on the findings, interventions can be formulated towards transformation of youth attitudes to increase their interest in farming.

Employment is a social value that promotes personal and social advancement, prestige and self-fulfillment. A situation of unemployment is associated with failure and leads to frustration as the youth have aspirations in life. Youth attitudes towards farming contribute to their employment in the field as they view it as a low-value occupation that is suitable for the aged and less-educated people. Increased participation of the youth in farming can reduce youth unemployment. Therefore, findings of the study assist development practitioners concerned with youth unemployment to develop programs that would increase youth involvement in farming activities.

The ever increasing demand for food due to increasingly growing population creates an opportunity for the youth to actively engage in food production and earn income. The many opportunities in agricultural value chains and exposure to technology are suitable for the youth. Attitudes among the youth need to change to allow them to take up agricultural activities such as farming as commercially viable, so as to increase agricultural production and ensure food security is achieved. For if the youth are to become active members with a feeling of responsibility for the society they must be key investors in the economy. The current study findings are expected to create more understanding on the underlying factors in the formation of youth attitudes towards farming, for the society to provide the necessary input in shaping positive attitudes. The positive attitudes will contribute towards increasing youth participation in farming, increasing food production and ensuring food security.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The current study covers the geographical area of Kuresoi Sub-county whose description is provided under the study area section in chapter three. The study focuses on description of characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming, identification of community-based and economic factors that influence formation of youth attitudes in the study area.

Majority of respondents were not able to communicate effectively in English and therefore translation of enquiries into Kiswahili and local languages was done during data collection to enhance communication. The remote areas of the study area could not be accessible during rainy days due to poor road networks and therefore data collection in those areas was delayed until rains were minimal.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Access to land- refers to having the right to use land. A person can access land through purchase, inheritance, gift, rent or lease.

Attitude- refers to a feeling about a person, object, event or situation of life that derives from a particular mindset acquired through experience and learning. Attitudes are expressed through opinions and they determine behavior. An attitude can either be positive or negative (Newstrom & Davis, 2005).

Community-based factors- refer to aspects emanating from relations of people living in the same geographical area with the youth, and who are believed to share common norms, beliefs and values. These factors comprise of those based on the family, peers, role models and the general community

Economic factors- refer to aspects related to availability, access and utilization of productive resources and benefits that affect thoughts and feelings of the youth towards farming.

Farming- refers to the occupation of producing crops and keeping livestock (Oxford Dictionary).

Socio-economic factors- refer to aspects related to social and economic dimensions of the society that affect thoughts and feelings of the youth towards farming.

Sub-county- the study adopts the state definition of a sub-county found in the constitution as a decentralized unit of governance below the county level (GOK, 2010)

Youth- the current study adopts the state definition of youth in the Kenyan constitution as all individuals in the Republic who have attained the age of 18 years but have not attained the age of 35 (GOK, 2010).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains literature review, theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the current study. Literature is reviewed under thematic areas of; characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming, community influence in formation of youth attitudes, and economic factors in formation of youth attitudes towards farming. The theoretical framework presents the theories on which the study is grounded and the conceptual framework illustrates relationship between variables under study.

2.2 Characteristics of Youth Attitudes towards farming

Attitudes are formed when a person acquires knowledge and believes that an object or a situation has certain attributes whose value is evaluated as favorable or unfavorable. A mental picture of the object is therefore created and which guides a person's behavior (Singh, 2003). The knowledge or information that shapes attitudes is acquired from social contexts by learning through direct experience or from other people. Attitudes can either be positive or negative. When attitudes are negative, they are a symptom of underlying problems within the social context (Newstrom & Davis, 2005). Although Singh (2003), Newstrom and Davis (2005) provide a good understanding, their contributions are general and cannot be used to inform specific efforts to model attitudes since situations as well as attitudes vary in different contexts. The current study therefore goes further to explore characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming and practical ways through which the attitudes are formed.

Socialization inculcates essential elements of a community system and provides the basic stimulus for the formation of youth attitudes. For example, orientation into the world of work received from the people in the immediate environment such as the family, school, peers and friends provide young ones with the meaning they attach to work, and predispose them to think, feel and act in certain ways regarding various types of work (Johnson, Elder & Stern 2005). Although Johnson *et al.*, (2005) provides important insights on formation of work attitudes through work orientation, the literature does not expound on ways through which the work orientation is carried out in order to form either positive or negative attitudes. To deepen the understanding of work orientation and formation of attitudes, the current study

sought to identify and analyze social and economic factors that contribute to formation of youth attitudes with regard to farming.

A study conducted in Kenya by the Institute of Economic Affairs (cited in Njonjo, 2010), shows that majority of the young people did not want to work in the Agricultural sector but desired to work in other sectors. A similar observation is made by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (2013) that agriculture is viewed by the youth as the last option after all other opportunities have failed. However, Akpan (2010) shows that there are success stories of changing attitudes among young people on undertaking agriculture as a serious economic activity. The agriculture sector referred to by Njonjo, (2010), the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (2013) and Akpan (2010) is broad and includes various specific areas; production, processing, transportation and marketing. Youth interests in the different agricultural activities may vary and a general view of their involvement in the sector as a whole may be misleading. For example, Proctor and Lucchese (2012) show that in China, many young people are meaningfully involved in middle stream of agrifood value chains such as brokering and transportation of farm produce. In addition, Njonjo, (2010), the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (2013), Akpan (2010), Proctor and Lucchese (2012) do not account for formation of the youth attitudes. Hence, the current study focuses on farming which is at the production stage in the agriculture value chain and goes further to explore formation of youth attitudes towards farming.

Labor productivity largely depends on the skills of workers in that having the required skills enables workers to sufficiently perform their work. Therefore, provision of additional skills translates to enhanced efficiency of workers (Ruddar, 2003). Waldie (2004), Warhurst (2004) and Curry (2005) agree with Ruddar (2003) that labor productivity depends on human capacity which should be understood as a package of employable knowledge, skills and attitudes. The above literatures advice that is important to build the capacity of the youth to get employed and increase their labour productivity. The literature identifies investment in vocational training as a valuable strategy to increase youth capacity for employment. However, it would be difficult to draw a strategy to address practical issues of youth capacity without factual information on status; such as characteristics of youth attitudes towards various types of work, since enrollment in vocational training depends on attitudes towards the types of work whose skills are offered. In addition, for interventions to be more practical

and responsive, each vocation capacity issues should be understood differently. To contribute in addressing information gap with regard to farming occupation, the current study sought to provide information on characteristics of youth attitudes and ways through which the attitudes are formed. Based on the findings, interventions can be formulated to promote modeling of attitudes towards farming in more practical ways.

However, Deneulin (2009) disagrees with Ruddar (2003) and perceives a real mismatch between what the youth believe employers want; principally knowledge and skills, and what employers actually look for; employers want workers who have the right attitude to work in addition to having necessary skills, knowledge and experience. This implies that youth may not secure employment despite having the required skills and experience if they fail to have the right attitude to work. Although Deneulin (2009) recognizes a weakness in youth's ability to get employed in that lesser attention is given to attitude when compared to knowledge and skills, the literature does not show how the right attitude can be developed. Hence, the current study provides insights on how youth attitudes are formed with regard to farming, based on which the right attitude can be developed to match job requirements in the sub-sector.

The above literature does not expose characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming. Much of the efforts put by the above literature reviewed tend to focus on promoting knowledge, skills and experience and little is being done on attitude development. To open up opportunities for attitude development particularly in the farming career, the current study sought to unveil existing youth attitudes and analyze various ways through which attitudes are formed, so as to inform modeling of favorable attitude for employment. This is because skills training coupled with modeling of right attitude to engage in various types of work presented by the economy can significantly increase youth employment.

2.3 Community Influence in Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

Both the environment closer to the youth and the broader societal context has significant influence on attitude formation by the youth. This is because achievements of young people are influenced by a strong sense of community support and approval (Johnson, Elder & Stern 2005). This explains why according to the Centre for Learning on Sustainable Agriculture (2011), meaningful empowerment by the society to equip the youth with attitudes, values, ethics and resources to engage in farming would be the starting point. Although both Johnson

et al., (2005) and the Centre for Learning on Sustainable Agriculture (2011) provide important insight on the role of the community in modeling the youth, they do not show ways through which the social context influence formation of youth attitudes. The society cannot empower the youth to increase their employment without a clear understanding of relevant issues affecting them such as work attitudes they hold, and how they acquire the attitudes. To address this gap, the current study sought to provide a deeper understanding of youth attitudes towards farming, to inform the society on what kind of attitudes the youth have and how they have been acquired. Based on the findings, the society can identify weaknesses thereof in socialization of the youth, as well as best practices that can be promoted.

Family is the origin of social values and attitudes in all individuals. This is because major value orientation patterns are laid down mostly in childhood and are not subject to drastic alteration in later life (Binh, 2012). Grusec (2011) supports the important role of the family by stating that family socialization prepares children for secondary socialization experienced at school, by peers, at workplace and by media among other agents of socialization, and that the family socialization has a lasting influence since it is built on trust and friendship. While Binh (2012), Grusec (2011) and Kayongo (1991) appreciate the significant role of family socialization, the current study goes beyond to identify and analyze ways through which it influences formation of either positive or negative youth attitudes with regard to farming.

Youth is an integral part of farming but Chan and Elder (2001) observed that many parents did not want their children to take up farming. This insight is important in recognizing that the youth have the potential to contribute in farming and suggests that their parents might have influence on uptake of farming. However, Chan and Elder (2001) does not establish the extent to which youth are involved in farming, does not show the attitudes of the youth towards farming and does not establish how parents influence youth's uptake of farming. To address these gaps, the current study sought to reveal the level of youth involvement in farming, describe the characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming and further expose the influence of parental interaction with their youth in formation of attitudes towards farming.

Youth are greatly influenced by peers and are likely to change their plans because of the opinions of their friends; when the friends are influential by being supportive and

encouraging. Different peer groups have certain social norms and expectations which influence peers in career aspirations; simply being surrounded by others who are motivated and driven for the future encourage other youth to respond in a similar way. Youth share their aspirations and expectations with peers and friends and once they get approval, they want to make the aspirations come true (Johnson, Elder & Stern 2005). Given this general understanding of peer influence on youth behavior, the current study sought to deepen understanding on peer influence on youth attitudes towards farming as a career.

However, Leavy and Smith (2010) argue that the prospects of rural youth finding white collar employment in developing countries are limited due to the limited work opportunities created by the economy, when compared to the increasingly growing population of job-seekers. The literature continues to advise that youth need to explore work opportunities within the agriculture sector. Although having youth explore work opportunities in the agriculture sector is valid in addressing youth unemployment, Leavy and Smith (2010) do not account for low interest in the agriculture sector where many opportunities are unexploited, and portray agriculture as an option to be taken when other alternatives fail. The issue of attitudes towards agriculture is not addressed and is contributing to avoidance of the sector jobs by the youth. Hence, the current study sought to explore youth attitudes towards farming to establish their characteristics and how they influence uptake of farming, as well as expose factors that influence formation of the attitudes. Based on the findings, interventions can be made to motivate youth's interest in farming; for farming to be considered for employment it must be perceived as able to meet the aspirations of the youth given how it is portrayed and supported.

2.4 Economic Factors and Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

All societies inculcate in their children habits and attitudes towards economic growth and development of livelihoods. These habits and attitudes differ depending on what the society depended on for livelihood such as agriculture and hunting. It is therefore expected that children would easily adopt economic strategies of their parent society since they grew up in the same environment (Graham, 1989). Kimaro (2015) confirms this argument that in Tanzania youth who originated from farming families were found to have participated more in farming than those who originated from non-farmer families. However, Chan and Elder (2001) observed that there are farming societies where parents do not want their youth to

adopt farming. This implies that adoption of economic strategies by the young people is influenced by tradition as well as by their parents. How the society inculcates attitudes in their youth is not revealed by the literature. To address this gap, the current study sought to describe characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming and expose ways through which the society influences formation of the youth attitudes.

Full-time farming has been left to the ageing smallholder farmers who are less likely to adopt new technologies needed to sustainably increase food production (White, 2012). In addition, Leavy and Hossain (2014) explains that farming lacks modernization which makes it generate minimal returns. Agwu, Nwankwo and Anyanwu (2012) add that the subsistence nature of agricultural production in the rural areas make it a low-income venture. While Leavy and Hossain (2014) and Agwu *et al.*, (2012) provide an explanation to minimal returns from farming which is worth-understanding, they fail to recognize the potential of farming to generate adequate income, and do not show the state of youth capacity to reform farming. The current study therefore sought to explore attitude as a key capacity to drive necessary reforms; to provide further understanding on characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming and how the attitudes are formed. The findings provide important insights to develop favorable attitude towards farming which can increase youth participation in it.

Advocacy by World Bank (2013) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (2014) for transition from subsistence farming to commercialized farming strongly recommends that rural youth must be targeted as part of a long-term transition strategy. This is because the transition will require high level of flexibility and dynamism that the youth can adequately provide. The transition is real as Brooks, Amy, Goyal, and Zorya (2013) indicate that agriculture is changing to become more business-oriented and with it a revised set of skills and attitudes needed to address existing challenges facing the sector. Brooks *et al.*, (2013) calls for change of attitudes as a requirement to match emerging job opportunities in agriculture but does not provide any insights on how attitude change can be actualized. Therefore, the current study sought to go further to stimulate the process of attitude change by revealing characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming, and identifying social and economic factors that contribute to formation of youth attitudes. Based on the findings, practical interventions targeting to reform youth attitudes can be formulated while backed by facts.

Youth who are more energetic and productive have migrated to cities in large numbers in search of work opportunities and have become consumers rather than producers of food (Ommani, 2011). This is due to lack of information on the range of opportunities available in the agriculture sector as a result of ineffective career guidance (Afande 2015). To foster more effective career guidance, the Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler Limited (2013) advises that it is necessary to have additional professional career programmes geared to inspire the youth. Although Afande (2015) and the Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler Limited (2013) imply that career guidance for the youth is weak and less-inspiring, the literature fails to unveil details of how the career guidance is achieved. To address this gap, the current study goes further to provide a deeper understanding on how parental and peer career guidance influences the youth with regard to formation of their attitudes towards farming.

In addition to attitude change, access to information and effective career guidance requirements, Abdullah (2013) argues that accessibility of productive resources such as land, credit and other inputs should not be overlooked when dealing with issues of youth unemployment. However, Abdullah (2013) does not establish the status of youth accessibility of these resources and how it affects youth's involvement in farming. Therefore, the current study sought to establish the status of youth accessibility of land, financial credit as well as other farm inputs, and further analyze how these factors influence youth's interest in farming.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The current study is grounded on the social learning and the structural-functionalism theories. The social learning theory argues that learning occurs within a social context where people learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling. Children learn and internalize a wide range of roles which become part of their identities during role-play where they take up particular roles such as a father, a mother, a policeman or a doctor, and perform the duties of the role they take as they have learnt about it (Bandura, 1977).

As a result, a mental map of the many roles is constructed and attitudes are built towards the roles. As they grow up to the age at which they can seek employment, the attitudes inform decisions on what type of roles to take and those that they disregard. This means that one cannot fill a role happily and successfully without having been socialized to accept that role as worthwhile, satisfying and appropriate (Horton & Hunt, 1984). In the context of the

current study, youth develop attitudes towards farming by learning from the society in which they have grown, and the ways through which the learning is achieved are established by the study.

As much as the social learning theory accounts for the formation of youth attitudes, the role of social learning in enhancing social stability is not featured in the theory. The structural functionalism theory is therefore used to appreciate the role of the social learning process in fostering social values and promoting social stability. The structural functionalism theory advanced by Talcot Parsons (1930s) is based on the analogy between social systems and organic systems; societies and social groups of all kinds perceived as social systems, consisting of mutually dependent parts such as roles, processes, policies, institutions and organizations (Huck & Fankhauser, 1979). The character of these parts must be understood in terms of the function each performs in enabling the smooth running of society as a whole; if functioning of one part of the system is ineffective, the whole system is in jeopardy (Wallace & Wolf, 1991). Therefore, social learning ought to make the youth more employable and self-reliant by transferring appropriate work attitudes, so as to reduce cases of anti-social behavior among the youth that result from frustrations out of rampant unemployment.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework gives details of variables that are under study and their relationships. It basically groups the variables into independent, dependent and intervening variables (Kothari, 2004). In the current study, independent variables are the characteristics of youth attitudes, community-based and economic factors that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming, the dependent variable is the youth attitudes towards farming and the intervening variable is the Kenya national youth policy, Agricultural Sector Development Strategy and Vision 2030. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the relationships of the variables of the current study.

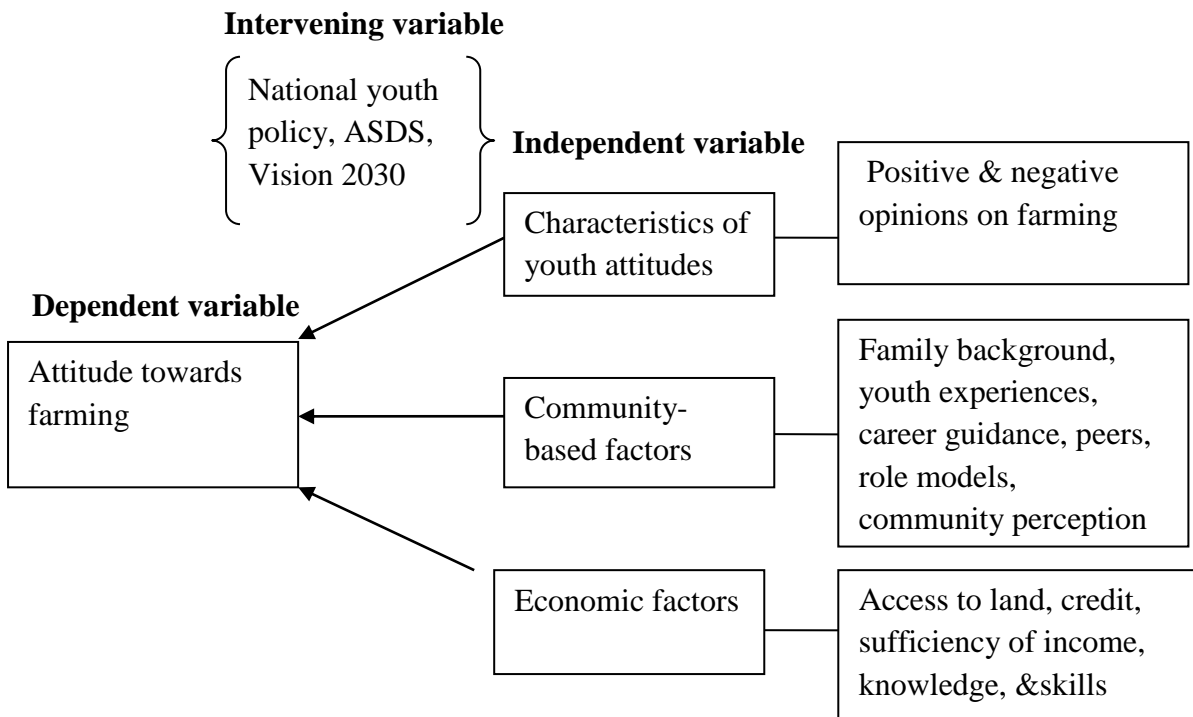


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Self

The current study reveals existence of both positive and negative attitudes among the youth where majority do not engage in farming because they do not like it. The current study shows that youth attitudes towards farming are formed by social interactions encountered by the youth within their families, peers and friends and their immediate community. In addition, significant proportion of the youth are not interested in farming due to limited access to farming resources such as land, credit and high cost of farm inputs. Other factors found to influence youth's disinterest in farming are poor government policies, institutions and procedures that do not provide for adequate youth-specific initiatives to increase access to agricultural inputs and markets, as well as enhance professional career guidance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents details of the study area, research design used, unit of analysis, sampling procedure applied, data collection and analysis. The data collection methods and tools applied were chosen on the basis of their suitability to the kind of data required to answer the study questions.

3.2 Study Area

Kuresoi Sub-county is found in Nakuru County (Kenya) as shown in the map in figure 3.1. It has a population of 241,103 people drawn from nearly all the ethnic communities found in Kenya (KNBS, 2010). Majority of the population depends on farming for livelihoods as the region is within the high potential agricultural land in the Rift Valley of Kenya. The major crops grown are potatoes, wheat, maize, peas and pyrethrum while livestock kept include cattle, sheep, rabbits and donkeys. Agricultural production is done for both subsistence and commercial purposes. The youth population is estimated to be 61,053 accounting for 24% of the Sub-county population (Department of youth affairs, Kuresoi Sub-county, 2012). Livelihood activities of the youths involve providing transport services, farming, casual labour, and petty trade along the roads and at the shopping centers.

Kuresoi Sub-county over time has been experiencing recurrent inter-ethnic conflicts and violence among other forms of crime, believed to be implemented by the youth who are easily manipulated through financial hand-outs which to them translate to income. The region being an agricultural land has not been able to productively engage its youth in farming activities and thus they suffer from unemployment in the context of labour-intensive agriculture. The current study explores youth attitudes towards farming to establish their characteristics and factors that lead to formation of those attitudes, so as to generate information that can help in motivating more youth to engage in farming and hence reduce unemployment in the study area.

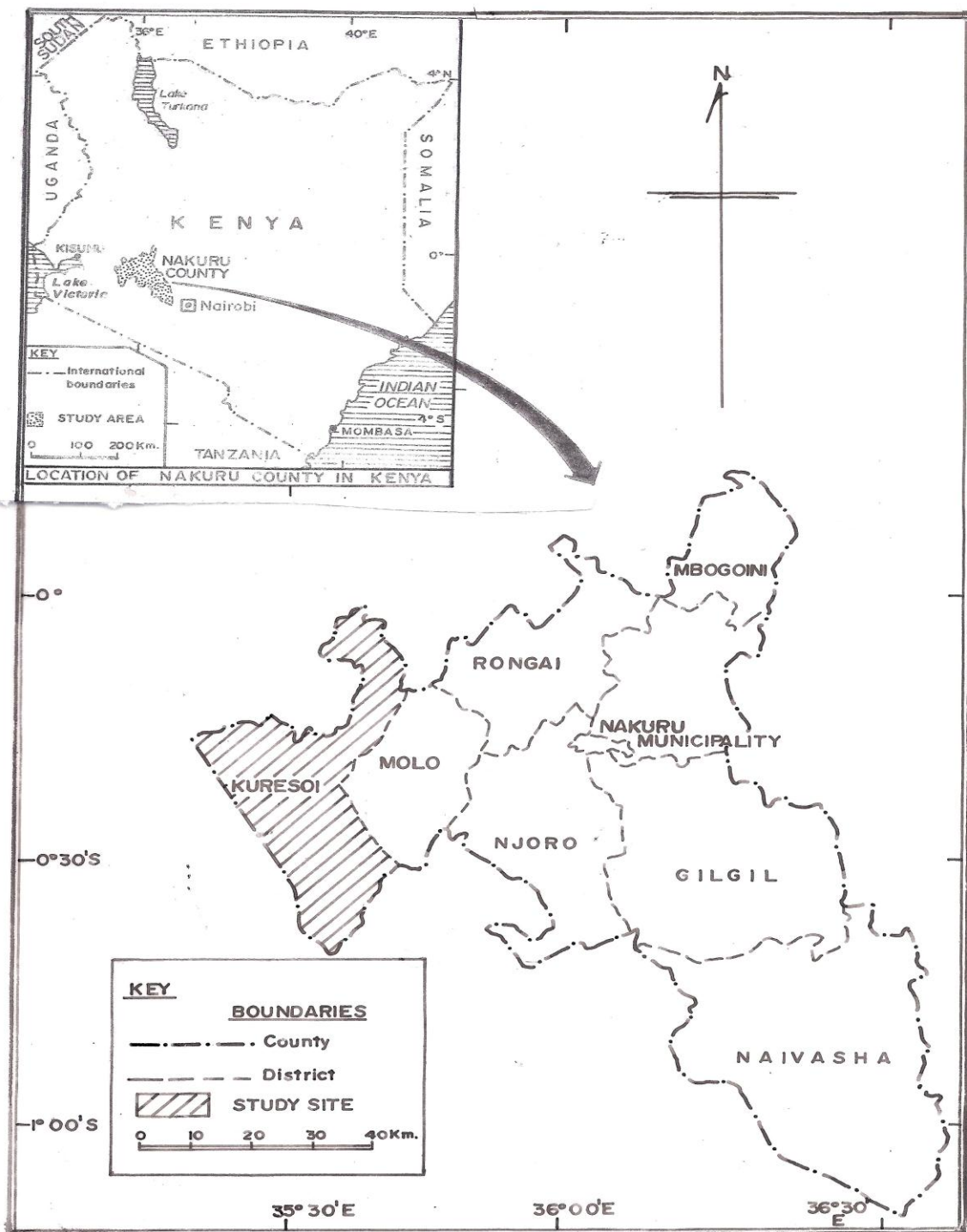


Figure 3.1: Map of Kuresoi Sub-county

Source: Department of Geography, Egerton University

3.3 Research Design

The study has used both quantitative and qualitative research designs as the data required to achieve the specific objectives is both qualitative and quantitative. A qualitative design produces unquantifiable data (inform of words) to describe an object or a situation while a quantitative design produces numerical data (Kothari, 2004). Qualitative design was used to generate in-depth data that was required to describe scenarios while quantitative design was necessary when numerical data was needful in answering study questions.

3.4 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis of the current study is the youth in Kuresoi Sub-county.

3.5 Population and Sampling Procedure

Kuresoi Sub-county has an estimated youth population of 61,053 (Department of Youth Affairs, Kuresoi Sub-county, 2012). According to Krueger (2000), a representative sample of between 30 to 300 cases is appropriate for in-depth descriptive analyses. Further, a smaller sample drawn from a homogeneous population is representative and random sampling is considered as the best technique of selecting a representative sample (Kothari, 2004). The current study engaged a sample of 120 youth who were obtained through random sampling from registered youth groups. A list of all the registered youth groups and their membership was obtained from the Sub-county Office of the Community Development Assistant, and eight youth groups were randomly selected (average membership of a youth group is 15). Morgan (1997) advises that three to five focus groups that are well chosen are appropriate to provide adequate data. The sampled youth were further selected randomly to form four focus groups comprising of nine participants in each group.

3.6 Data Collection

Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources which provided comprehensive information to answer the study questions. Primary data was collected from the field through interviews and guided focus group discussions. An interview schedule was used to collect personal data required in objective one, while a focus group discussion guide was used to collect in-depth data required in objectives two and three. The interview schedule contained Likert-type questions to obtain data on attitudes. Secondary data was obtained from the existing literature contained in textbooks, journals, reports and internet sources.

3.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze data for the specific objectives of the current study. This is due to the fact that some data were obtained in form of numbers and others were in form of descriptions (words). The results and discussions of the data analysis are presented in chapter four, and conclusion and recommendations drawn from the findings are presented in chapter five.

Quantitative analysis was largely used in specific objective one because the data required to meet the objective was quantitative in that it had to provide levels of occurrences. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software was used to analyze data by generating frequency distributions and percentage scores, which are presented, discussed and interpreted in line with the objective. However, where further explanations to the quantitative data were required, qualitative data obtained through focus group discussions were used.

Qualitative analysis was mostly used in specific objectives two and three because the objectives sought to provide in-depth description that cannot be sufficiently described quantitatively. Qualitative data which were obtained in form of words were analyzed by consolidating and coding in terms of thematic areas reflecting the factors influencing formation of youth attitudes towards farming, and were presented, discussed and interpreted in accordance with the thematic areas.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study ensured that respondents' privacy and confidentiality were observed by assuring confidentiality of the information provided and respondents were not required to mention their name. Psychological implications of the study were taken into account by ensuring that data collection tools and procedures avoided questions, expressions and/or actions that would cause emotional harm to the respondents. Respondents were provided with clear and sufficient background information about the study, and room for decision to participate or not to participate in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the findings of the current study presented according to the specific objectives followed by discussions of the findings. Firstly, background characteristics of respondents such as gender, age group and educational level are presented. For objective one, the findings and discussions describe characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming. For objective two and three, the study has identified, analyzed and presented community-based and economic factors respectively that influence formation of youth attitudes towards farming. The findings are presented in form of frequency distribution tables, graphs and percentage scores.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Gender of Respondents

The gender of respondents was recorded during interviews and the figure below shows the results.

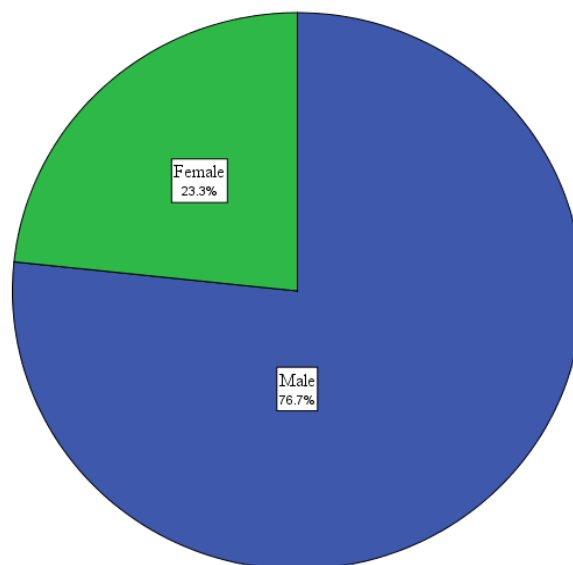


Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents

As shown in the figure above, majority of the youth sampled were males. The males consisted of 76.7% while the females made up 23.3% of the total respondents. The groups' membership from which the respondents were obtained had similar gender imbalance

because most female youth who were married preferred to join women groups and a few of the unmarried were willing to join youth groups. However, the views of both male and female youths were represented.

Age Categories of Respondents

During interviews respondents were asked to state their age in years and the ages reported were grouped and presented against the percentage of respondents under each age group as shown in the figure below.

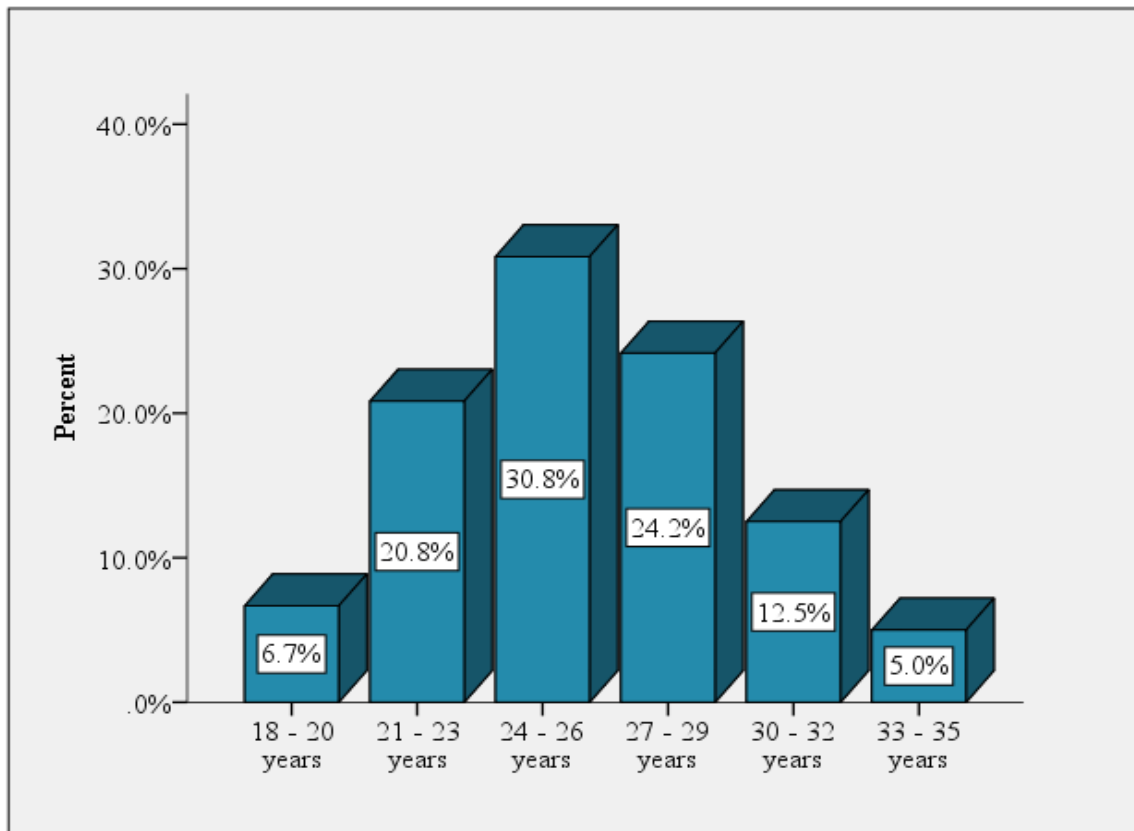


Figure 1.2: Age Categories of Respondents

As shown in the figure above, most of the respondents were between the ages of 24 and 26 years (30.8%) followed by those between the ages of 27 and 29 years (24.2%). Respondents between the ages of 21 and 23 years came in third at 20.8% followed by those between 30 and 32 years at 12.5%, then those between 18 and 20 years at 6.7% and last, those between 33 and 35 years at 5.0%. This shows that all the respondents were within the youth category and had good understanding of youth issues.

Level of Education of Respondents

Respondents were asked to state their highest level of formal education attained and the responses were as presented below.

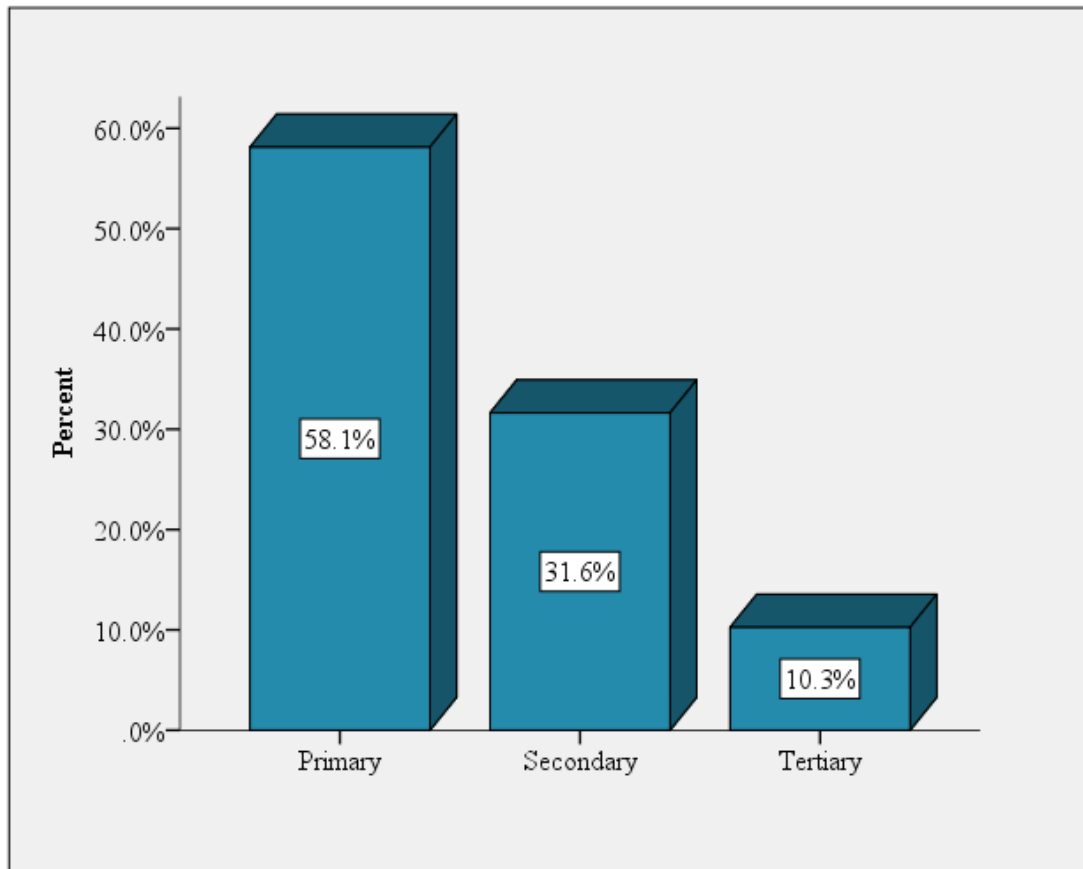


Figure 4.3: Highest Level of Education of Respondents

Majority of the youth (58.1%) had attained primary level of education. The ones who had attained secondary level of education were 31.6% while those with tertiary education were the minority at 10.3%. This implies that all the respondents had attained at least primary level education and therefore they were able to understand better the subject matter of the study.

4.2.2 Characteristics of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

This section tackles objective one of the study that focuses on describing the characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming. Questions on whether or not the youth are involved in farming, to what extent, how they feel about the farming occupation and what motivates or hinder their involvement in farming were asked.

Respondents were asked to state whether they practiced farming geared towards contribution to their economic wellbeing. This included engaging in farming at parents' farm, own farm or provision of waged labour. Their responses are shown in table one below.

Table 4.1:
Distribution of Respondents by Involvement in Farming

Age category		Are you practicing farming?	
		Yes	No
18 - 20 years	Frequency	0	8
	Percent	0.0%	100.0%
21 - 23 years	Frequency	4	21
	Percent	16.0%	84.0%
24 - 26 years	Frequency	7	30
	Percent	18.9%	81.1%
27 - 29 years	Frequency	8	21
	Percent	27.6%	72.4%
30 - 32 years	Frequency	12	3
	Percent	80.0%	20.0%
33 - 35 years	Frequency	6	0
	Percent	100.0%	0.0%
Total	Frequency	37	83
	Percent	30.8%	69.2%

As seen in Table 4.1 above, none of respondents in the age bracket of 18 to 20 years practiced farming while all respondents in the age bracket of 33 to 35 years practiced farming. For those in the age brackets between 21 and 23 years, 84.0% did not practice farming, for the age bracket 24 to 26 years, 81.1% did not practice farming, for the age bracket 27 to 29 years 72.4% did not practice farming while for the age bracket 30 to 32 years only 20% did not practice farming. Generally, majority of the youth (69.2%) did not practice farming. The findings show that the proportion of respondents practicing farming increases with age. From focus group discussions it emerged that youth who are not married and do not have

dependants to take care of are the ones who mostly exhibited lack of interest in farming because they depend on their parents for livelihood.

When asked to state the reasons for not practicing farming, their responses were as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2:
Distribution of Respondents by Reasons for Not Practicing Farming

	Yes		No	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Does lack of access to land for farming hinder you from practicing farming?	26	31.3	57	68.7
Does lack of access to farm inputs hinder you from practicing farming?	15	18.1	68	81.9
Does lack of access to adequate knowledge and farming skills hinder you from practicing farming?	1	1.2	82	98.8
Does lack of liking for farming hinder you from practicing farming?	82	98.8	1	1.2

Majority of the youth (98.8%) did not practice farming simply because they did not like it. Other hindering factors are lack of access to land for farming (31.3%), lack of access to farm inputs (18.1%) and a minority (1.2%) is hindered from farming by lack of adequate farming knowledge and skills. This shows that combination of factors makes the youth not to practice farming and the leading factor is their negative attitude towards farming. To further explore youth attitudes, opinions of respondents regarding farming were sought and the responses are as shown in table 4.3

Table 4.3:
 Respondents' Opinions Regarding Farming

	Agree		Disagree	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Farming is a decent job	15	12.5	105	87.5
Farming promotes poverty	69	57.5	51	42.5
Farming is not honorable	105	87.5	15	12.5
Farming is encouraged by my family	24	18.5	96	80.5
Farming is not fun	117	97.5	3	2.5
Farming is my choice of job	10	8.3	110	91.7
Farming is not encouraged by my friends	99	82.5	21	17.5

As shown in the table above, majority of the respondents (87.5%) disagreed that farming is a decent job while a significant number (57.5 %) felt that farming promotes poverty. When asked on the opinion that farming is encouraged by their families, 80.5% disagreed and 87.5% of the youths agreed to the opinion that farming is not honorable. However farming is not encouraged by the friends of the youths as 82.5% of the youths agreed to this point of view. Majority of the youths (97.5%) agreed that farming is not fun while 91.7% claimed that farming is not their choice of job. This shows that majority youth do not like farming because they feel that it is not a decent job, it promotes poverty, it is not honorable, and it is not encouraged by family and friends. The findings show prevalence of negative attitudes towards farming among the youth, and suggest that those attitudes have been formed through influence from their families, friends and the community in which they have grown.

Further, when respondents were asked to state whether they felt more productive and motivated when involved in farming, their responses were as shown in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4:

Did Respondents Feel More Productive and Motivated in Farming

Do you feel more productive and motivated when involved in farming?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	22.5
No	93	77.5
Total	120	100.0

Majority of the respondents (77.5%) indicated that they did not feel more productive and motivated when involved in farming. This shows lack of satisfaction with farming as an economic activity and explains the lack of liking for farming by majority of the youth.

However, findings show that 30.8% of youths practice farming and 22.5% of them felt more productive and motivated to work in the farm. This means that while negative attitudes are prevalent among youths, there are nevertheless young people who believe that farming is productive and are engaged in it. For those who practiced farming, the study found out the number of days in a week spent in farming activities so as to determine the level of involvement in farm work. Respondents were asked to state the highest number of days per week in which they are involved in farm work. The figure below shows their responses.

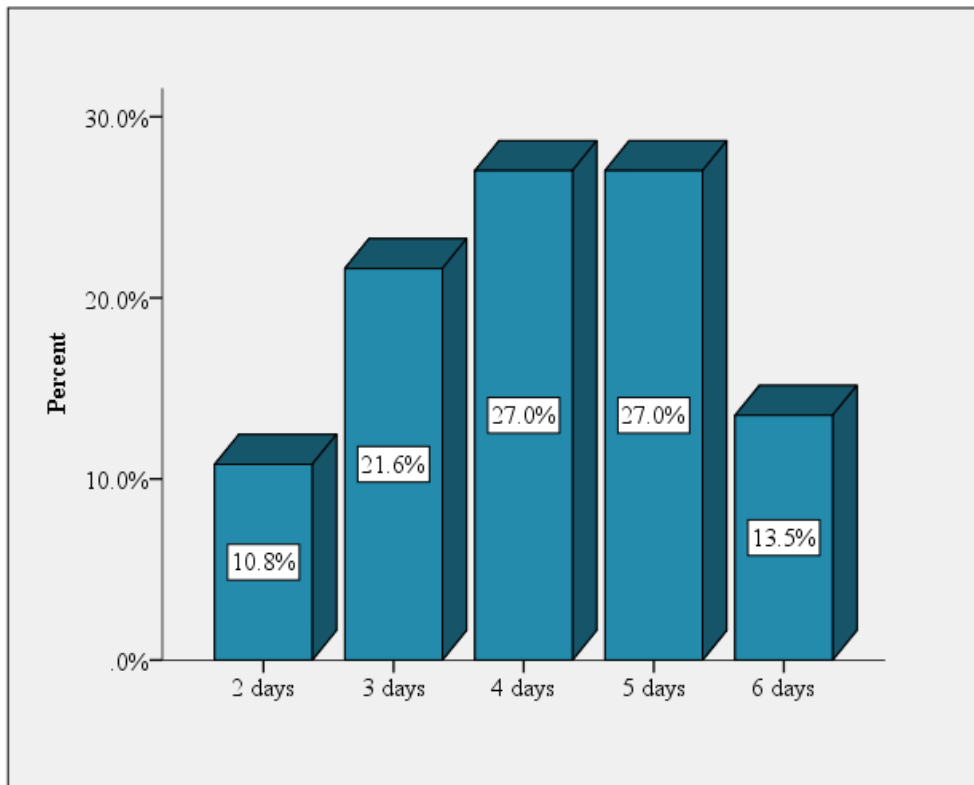


Figure 4.4: Number of Days Worked in the Farm in a Week

The findings show that 13.5% of respondents work in the farm for six days in a week, while majority (27%) work in the farm for four or five days every week, 21.6% work for three days and only 10.8% work for 2 days in a week. It means that of the 30.8% of the respondents who practice farming, only 13.5% are occupied in it on fulltime basis. This shows that involvement and contribution of the young people in farming is minimal, and yet they are consumers of farm produce.

Further interrogation was carried out to establish the motivation to engage in farming for the respondents who practice farming and the table below shows their responses.

Table 4.5:

Distribution of Respondents by Motivational Factors in Farming

Do the following factors motivate you to practice farming?	Yes		No	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Profits from sale of farm produce	14	37.8	23	62.2
Family support	37	100.0	0	0
Favorable conditions for farming	26	70.3	11	29.7
Encouraging friends	7	18.9	30	81.1
The community	9	24.3	28	75.7
Having knowledge and farming skills	6	16.2	31	83.8

All the respondents (100%) who are practicing farming are motivated by having family support. A significant proportion (70.3%) are motivated by favorable conditions for farming, 37.8% are motivated by profits from sale of farm produce, 18.9% and 24.3% are motivated by friends and the community respectively while only 16.2% are motivated by having farming knowledge and skills. This implies that the key motivational factors to engage in farming are family support and favorable farming conditions. Focus group discussions revealed that the youth who were married had to provide for their family needs such as food and income through farming while supported by their spouses and children. The findings show that the study area has favorable climate for farming which implies limited cases of crop failure as well as livestock diseases. Significantly, youths are not motivated by their friends and community, farm profits as well as having farming knowledge and skills.

However, focus group discussions established that farming has good profits if undertaken on large scale and on commercial basis. In view of focus group discussions, farming provides self-employment where an individual has freedom to work when compared to formal employment where there is a lot of manipulation by the employer. In addition, income from farming is fully under the control of the farmer while that from formal employment is entirely controlled by the employer. This shows that there are youth who positively perceive farming.

While findings of the current study demonstrate the youth as having both positive and negative attitudes towards farming, it is necessary to establish their career preferences if they

were given the opportunity to choose. When respondents were asked to state their preferred occupation, their responses were as shown in the figure below.

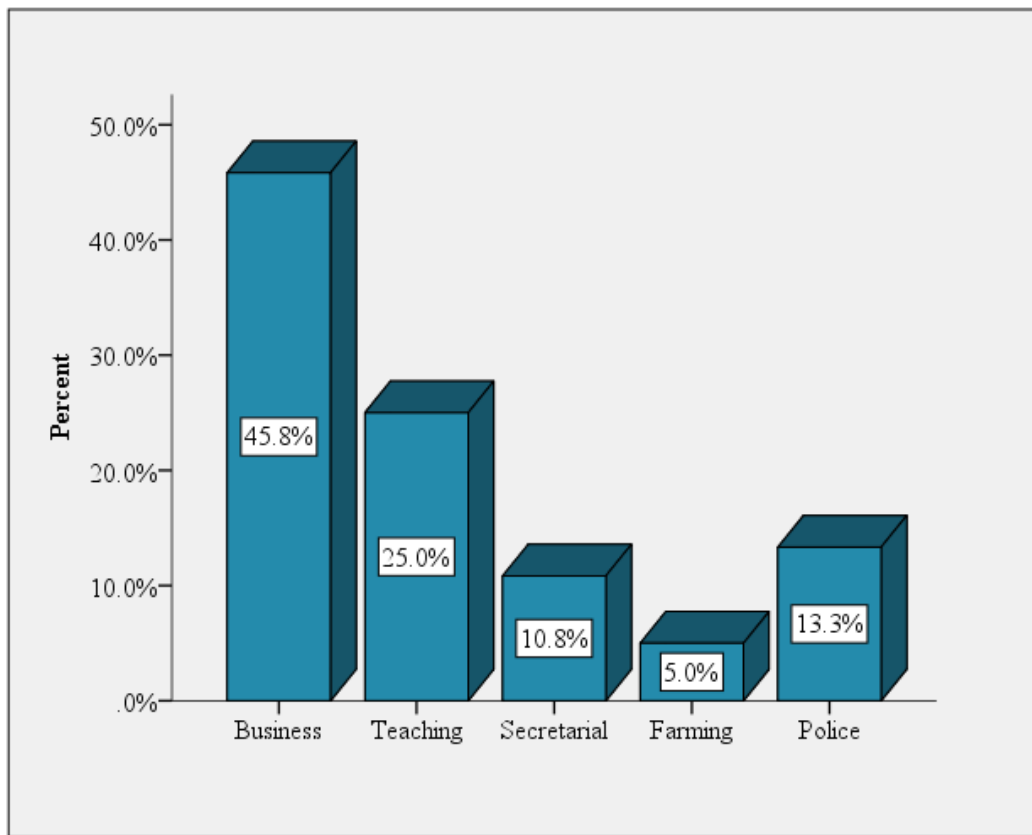


Figure 4.5: Respondents' Preferred Occupation

As shown in the figure above, farming is the least preferred occupation as only 5.0% of the respondents stated that given a chance they would take up farming. Majority would wish to take up business (45.8%), followed by teaching (25.0%), police (13.3%) and secretarial (10.8%) Further, respondents were asked to explain the choice of careers and the table below is a summary of their responses.

Table 4.6:
Reasons for Choice of Career

Career	Reasons for choosing career
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has high income Does not depend on weather conditions Is honorable Provides self-employment
Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commands respect from the community Teaching jobs are available Does not require higher academic qualification
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is respectable in the community Can travel to different parts of the country
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides food To follow family tradition Provides self-employment Does not require any academic qualifications

The business career which was highly ranked was reported to have high returns, is upheld by the community, has personal freedom to manipulate operations and it does not depend on weather conditions. The high returns opinion is unrealistic since a business may result to profits or losses depending on the circumstances and therefore the respondents assumed that a business always makes profits. This depicts an existing gap in career information among the youths and means that they may choose careers based on assumptions or invalid information.

Teaching which was ranked second was reported to be highly respected by the community, has available jobs due to availability of learners and schools, and does not require higher academic qualifications. Respondents failed to acknowledge that the academic qualifications of the teaching career vary with the levels of learning such that teaching at higher levels of learning require higher academic qualifications. In a similar way, respondents seemed to have limited career information. Police was ranked third with reasons that it is respectable in the

community, it involves travelling to different parts while serving at different work stations across the country, and that it is pleasant to serve people.

Farming that was least preferred was chosen because it provides food for the society, it is a tradition to farm, it provides self-employment and does not require any academic qualifications. It is quite misleading for the respondents to argue that farming is a tradition and that it does not require any academic qualifications. This point of view can explain the low returns from farming due to existence of subsistence and traditional farming as well as poor farming practices due to limited knowledge and skills. Otherwise, commercial farming is calculated, and requires acquisition and renewal of knowledge and skills.

Farming ties with business in terms of provision of self-employment, and with teaching in terms of academic requirements, but lacked the command of respect as with business, teaching and police. The findings show that command of respect which is observed in the top careers and lacks in farming is a major determinant in the choice of career. It emerged from focus group discussions that farming lacked community approval as a worthwhile career and the community socialized the youths away from it. In addition, youths depended on career guidance from parents, peers and community which is drawn from personal experiences and not informed by labour or goods market, and not delivered in a professional setup. This as well explains the lack of reliable career information shown by the respondents when stating the reasons for choice of career.

The current study establishes that painting a homogenous picture of attitudes of the rural youth towards farming is incorrect. The findings have shown existence of both positive and negative youth attitudes towards farming, with many youths holding negative attitudes towards farming and showing a disinterest in working as a farmer. However, the findings also reveal that a proportion of the youths expressed interest in farming. Further interrogation was carried out to identify factors that influence formation of these attitudes and the findings are presented below.

4.2.3 Community-Based Factors Influencing Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

Youths' Experience in Farming

The study found that youth have been involved in farming and have the experience of farming in a smallholder farming setup mostly done by use of hand hoe which makes it a very energy and time-consuming activity. Focus group discussions revealed experiences in which the youths with their parents had to work for long hours in the farm only for their parents to demonstrate to them that they had realized very little returns. In addition, their experience of watching their parents struggle with difficulties while cultivating potatoes (which is a commonly grown crop in the study area), and yet significantly parents were not able to provide school fees for them. Hence, they attributed the inability to continue with education for most of them to the poor returns their parents received from farming. It remained an unanswered question among the youth whether farming was really profitable. At times, they thought that farming was a tradition and not an income generating activity. This shows that majority youths' own experience in farming is negative and contributes to formation of the negative attitude towards farming among them.

Family Farming Background, Experience and Perception shared to the Youth

In order to establish whether the respondents' immediate families had a farming background and experience, respondents were asked to state the type of farming that their families were involved in and their responses are shown below.

Table 4.7:

Type of Farming in Which Respondents' Families are Involved

Type of farming	Frequency	Percent
None	4	3.3
Crop production	52	43.3
Both crop and livestock production	64	53.4
Total	120	100.0

Majority (53.4%) of the immediate families of the respondents were involved in both crop production and livestock rearing, 43.3% of the families were involved in crop production

while only 3.3% of the families were not involved in any type of farming. This shows that about 97% of the respondents' families had a farming background and experience. It is expected that youth families had experienced farming in both positive and negative ways through possible benefits from farming as well as farming challenges. Focus group discussions revealed that parents shared to their youths many challenges of farming including continuous low yields, demonstrated farm losses and encouraged them to be involved in off-farm activities. This explains why majority of respondents (80.5%) disagreed with the opinion that farming is encouraged by their family (see table 3). These findings show that parents' negative experiences in farming being retold to the youths have an effect on them; the experiences portray farming as a lesser-rewarding activity when compared to off-farm activities and it is often discouraged.

Further, the respondents were asked on how their parents perceived farming and the following were their responses.

Table 4.8:

Distribution of Respondents by Their Parents' Perception on Farming

How do your parents perceive farming?	Frequency	Percent
Farming promotes poverty	64	53.3
Farming has good profits	56	46.7
Total	120	100.0

The perception of most of the parents of the respondents (53.3%) was that farming promotes poverty and this concurs with 57.5% of the respondents on the same opinion as presented in table three. The study found that parents of the youth had continuously experienced low yields and consequently realized farm losses. Account of focus group discussions added that youth parents have been farming for many years but they didn't seem to get better-off in terms of income and welfare. These findings show that the challenge of low proceeds has created a negative perception on farming among most of the youth parents which has been transferred to the youth through socialization.

However, the study reveals that 46.7% of the respondents' parents believe that farming has good profits. Findings from focus group discussions emerged that there are parents who are good examples of farmers to their youths; they demonstrate how they earn a living from farming such as educating their children with income from farming. This shows that there are parents who positively perceive farming and demonstrate it to their young ones as a viable income-generating activity and a meaningful source of livelihood. Hence, there is influence of positive perception of successful farming parents to their young ones.

The study found that most of the experiences shared by youths' parents are farming challenges. It would be unrealistic to believe that there are no gains whatsoever from farming that could be told to the youth. Respondents indicated that their families engaged in farming for both consumption and commercial purposes as shown in the table below.

Table 4.9:

Purpose of Farming for Respondents' Families

	Frequency	Percent
Consumption	5	4.3
Both consumption and commercial	111	95.7

Majority of the respondents' families (95.7%) were undertaking farming for both consumption and commercial purposes while only 4.3% undertake farming for consumption only. This is an indication that there are commercial gains from farming despite the many challenges that are known to affect smallholder farming in Kenya today. The study found that the benefits realized from farming are not retold as much as the challenges and thus the image of farming portrayed to the youth is more negative. While those challenges are true, youths can bring new ideas and modern practices to help modernize farm activities if the necessary support and approval of parents is accorded to them.

Dependence of Youths on Parental Support for Livelihood

Focus group discussions established that youth who were not married depended on their parents for livelihood and were the ones who mostly exhibited no interest in farming. Being married is viewed as a sense of being responsible and to engage in farming is vital to cater for the food and other domestic needs of the family. These findings show that the circumstances

of not having dependants allowed younger youth to depend on their parents for provision and hence contributed to lack of interest and involvement in farming.

Parental Career Guidance

The study found that most of the respondents relied on career guidance from their parents who have faced similar challenges in their careers especially as farmers. Focus group discussions reveal that parents were not willing to see their youth take over farming from them and advised the youth to look for future which was not in farming. The reasons given to them by their parents to discourage farming are; that land for cultivation was diminishing due to ever growing population and urbanization which makes it difficult for the youth to access land in future and that farming has continuously produced low yields. These findings show that parental career guidance which is greatly informed by own experiences created interest in farming for some youths and disinterest among others. It was found that most of the advices on farming are based more on challenges than benefits.

Family Tradition of Farming

Focus group discussions revealed that farming is undertaken as a tradition and not necessarily a profit-making venture. This shows that whether or not there are benefits from farming, it is continued. Further, this is explained by circumstances where despite the experiences of low profitability from farming that were reported to have been shared by parents, farming was still continued. These findings show that farming as a tradition lacks a concrete and deliberate profitability focus and this makes the youth to feel less motivated to pursue it as a career.

Community Perception on Farming

Majority of respondents (87.5%) as shown in table three disagreed with the opinion that farming is honorable. Account of focus group discussions demonstrated scenarios where during community gatherings local leaders encouraged parents to educate their children, and the entire community to support whenever they were called upon so that their children do not remain in the village, for the available job in the village is farming. They added that those who had achieved formal employment outside agriculture and farming were highly recognized and respected in the community and were pointed out as role models for the youth. Further, it emerged that the community does not recognize and present a better

performing farmer or youth farmer, but appreciates other jobs like being a Lawyer, a Doctor or a Government official. These findings show that the community painted a negative picture of farming by according it a low social status while appreciating and upholding careers outside farming. This results to a strong public influence on the young generation to move out of farming. Hence majority of the young people disregard farming and prefer not to choose it, as they feel it does not command respect from the society in which they belong.

Influence of Youth Peers and Friends

When the youth are not at home, they are out with their peers and friends who also influence their way of thinking and decision-making. How is this achieved? When respondents were asked to state how their peers and friends perceived farming, their responses are shown in table below.

Table 4.10:

Distribution of Respondents by Perception of Their Peers and Friends on Farming

How do your friends and peers perceive farming?	Frequency	Percent
Farming is a decent job	3	2.5
Farming is stressful	117	97.5
Total	120	100.0

A significant proportion of friends and peers of the respondents (97.5%) think that farming is stressful while only 2.5% of these friends and peers think that farming is a decent job. Focus group discussions revealed that in peer gatherings and interactions youth express their aspirations and expectations with little or nothing to do with farming; they talk about what they would want to achieve in future such as owning a luxurious home, fast cars, the latest gadgets and mobile phones etc, and basically spending their life out of the village. Focus group discussions revealed that the biggest factor that youth peers and friends attributed to farming was the strenuous and monotonous lifestyle of a farmer, also characterized by low income. These findings show that farming remains a topic of no interest when youth friends and peers discuss career matters and on many occasions it is disregarded. This means that there is peer influence away from farming as a career through which youth aspirations and expectations can be achieved.

However, from focus group discussions it emerged that there are youths who believe that there is no job sector that has no challenges, that is easy to enter and to sustain. It was added that just like those other sectors, income from farming can achieve luxurious life if someone has increased commitment in farming. This shows that there is still positive peer influence towards farming which can be supported to transform attitudes of more young people.

Absence of Young Role Models in Farming in the Study Area

Focus group discussions established that it is difficult to get a successful youth farmer; the people whom the youth can look up to are older farmers who have invested in farming for a long time, have better access to farming resources such as they own large sizes of land and farm using tractors. These findings show that youths cannot easily emulate the existing role models who are older, experienced and have incomparable capacity in terms of access to productive resources.

**4.2.4 Influence of Economic Factors on Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming
Access to Land for Cultivation**

Respondents were asked to state their status in terms of access to land for their own farming and the responses were as shown in the table below.

Table 4.11:

Distribution of Respondents by Access to Land for Own Farming

Do you have access to land for your own farming?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	56	46.7
No	64	53.3
Total	120	100.0

Majority of the respondents (53.3%) indicated having no access to land for cultivation while a significant proportion (46.7%) reported having access to land. Focus group discussions revealed that although farming on small family land proved to be a good start, it was difficult for the youth to have any hopes of inheriting any piece of land, especially for those who were born in a large family that had a smaller piece of land to be shared. The youth who are interested in farming and could not access family land were reported to have limited or no finances to rent/lease land. This shows that access to land for farming by the youth influences

their interest and participation in farming. However, the proportion of youth who were practicing farming (30.8%) is smaller than that of those who had access to farming land. This means that there are youths who have access to land for cultivation but they do not practice farming. The mismatch can be attributed to dislike of farming as portrayed by majority respondents who did not practice farming.

As much as limited access to land by the youth was found to be a constraint, the study sought to find out whether youth could also get earnings from farming through provision of waged labour. When respondents were asked to state the farming activities in which they were involved, provision of waged labour was very low as shown in the table below.

Table 4.12:

Distribution of Respondents by Farming Activity in Which They are Involved

Which farming activity are you involved in?	Frequency	Percent
Farm labour supply for wages	8	6.7
Crop production	7	5.8
Horticulture	2	1.7
Crop and dairy production	2	1.7
Labour supply and crop production	14	11.7
Labour supply, crop and dairy production	4	3.2
Total	37	30.8

The findings show that only 6.7% of the respondents were involved in farm labour supply for wages. Although 11.7% of respondents were involved in combination of provision of farm labour and crop production, as well as a 3.2% of respondents involved in combination of farm labour supply, crop and dairy production, the proportion is still low when compared to the proportion of respondents(46.7%) who had no access to land for their own farming. Findings from focus group discussions explained that providing farm labour earned low wages at a rate of 200 Kenya Shillings per day and the work is heavy. Based on these wage rates, farming would not afford them to enjoy the pleasures of owning luxurious items such as beautiful homes, the latest gadgets and mobile phones like what their friends in white collar jobs had access to. These findings show that low wage rates for farm labour discouraged youth from supplying farm labour. However, in 2005 the cost of basic food and

non-food needs per month for one adult was established at Kshs. 1,562 for rural areas and Kshs. 2,913 for urban areas. The approximate value of the rural poverty line in 2012 was Kshs. 2,900 per month for rural areas and Kshs. 5,400 per month for urban areas (World Bank, 2013). The wage rate of Kshs. 200 per day will accumulate to Kshs. 5200 per month (when calculated for 26 working days in a month) which is quite reasonable based on the approximated value of rural poverty line.

Cost of Farm Inputs

Focus group discussions revealed that challenges of high cost of farm inputs and resultant low returns from sale of farm produce discouraged youths from farming. It was explained that cost of inputs is very high; inputs and land rent can cost more than 50,000 Kenya Shillings to cultivate one acre of land, and it is difficult for youths to mobilize this kind of money. These findings show that farm inputs are not easily affordable by the youth and this contributes to their disinterest in farming.

Sufficiency of Farming Income

When respondents were asked whether farming generated enough income to sustain life, their responses were as shown in the table below.

Table 4.13:

Distribution of Respondents by Opinion on Farming Income

Do you think farming generates enough income for sustaining life?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	5.8
No	113	94.2
Total	120	100.0

Majority of respondents (94.2%) felt that farming does not generate enough income for sustaining life. Only 5.8% thought otherwise. Account of focus group discussions explained that farming was unprofitable and unable to support the lifestyle of the youth when compared with jobs in other sectors such as service and industry. Focus group discussions further revealed that farming alone could not sustain a family, and that a farmer must have an alternative income source because the income from farming is always below family budget.

This shows that insufficiency of income that can be generated through farming contribute to youths' disinterest in farming.

Satisfaction with farming as a livelihood activity

Further, when respondents were asked whether they could take up farming as a major livelihood activity, their responses are as shown in the table below.

Table 4.14:

Distribution of Respondents by Their Take on Farming as a Livelihood Activity

Would you take farming for you as a major livelihood activity?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	29.2
No	85	70.8
Total	120	100.0

As seen in the table above majority of the respondents (70.8%) did not consider taking up farming as a major livelihood activity. Only 29.2% would take up farming. Focus group discussions exposed reasons for not choosing farming as that its proceeds are low, slow and sometimes delayed due to dependence on weather conditions, and thus could not easily meet immediate needs such as buying new clothes, airtime, spending with friends at local shopping centers among other needs. These findings show that the nature of farming that calls for patience to reap benefits as well as the level of livelihood that farming income can support does not match the aspirations and expectations of the youth. Hence, this influences youths' uptake of farming as a livelihood activity.

Access to Credit

Focus group discussions revealed that it is difficult for youths to obtain a loan since most of the lending institutions require collateral such as property or savings. It was explained that banks do not accept youth's request for credit because they say youth are unstable and they may not repay. This shows that banks and micro-finance institutions have negative perception about the youth as investors as they consider them a risky and unpredictable category to qualify for loaning. In addition, the loaning conditions which include collateral requirement render youth unqualified for the loans.

Focus group discussions further revealed that youth are aware of other loan products which are branded as youth-specific such as youth enterprise fund and Uwezo fund, but the youth felt that the conditions to access such loans are still unfavorable to their needs and interests. Such requirements were reported to include collateral and other strict conditions to be met for a youth group to qualify to get a loan from the youth fund. It was explained that youth enterprise fund has conditions that must be met and the loan awarded to a group is always not sufficient because youth are many. This shows that difficulties in accessing loans encountered by the youth limit their access to credit to support farming activities.

Sufficiency of Farming Knowledge and Skills

Focus group discussions revealed that repeated low farm production volumes and poor quality produce is as a result of poor farming knowledge, skills and practices adopted by youth parents and eventually transferred to them. Hence, youth parents continue to condemn farming and reinforcing negative perceptions of it among the youth. These findings show that inadequate farming knowledge and skills among youth parents (eventually transferred to the youth) contribute to poor farm production which consequently paints the image of farming as low-yielding and discouraging to the youth.

Further, the study established that limited access to farming information from the Government agricultural extension services is due to having few extension officers in the study area, who are not accessible to many farmers. However, it was found that Baraka Agricultural College (a vocational training centre) which offered a specialized farmers' training program was located in the study area. When respondents were asked to state whether they were willing to gain further farming knowledge and skills, their responses are as shown in the table below.

Table 4.15:

Distribution of Respondents by Willingness to Seek Further Knowledge and Skills

Are you willing to seek further knowledge and farming skills?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	20	16.7
No	100	83.3
Total	120	100.0

Surprisingly, only 16.7% of the respondents were willing to seek further knowledge and skills on farming. These findings confirm a widespread youth disinterest in farming since as much as they felt that the farming skills emulated from their parents were not sufficient, they were not willing to gain further knowledge and skills to help increase farm yields. This means that unless there are concerted efforts to change attitudes of the youths, agricultural output will continue diminishing since the young generation who are capable of bringing new ideas and skills are not interested in farming.

Policy and Institutional Implications on Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

Focus group discussions established that there is limited youth-specific policy and institutional incentives towards agriculture such as lack of youth-specific subsidized farm inputs, limited specialized financial products for the youth and lack of sector youth policy. However, the study found that youth are aware of the Government's provision of subsidized farm inputs such as fertilizers and seeds but they felt that the cost of subsidized inputs is still high for them to afford. The Kenya National Youth Policy (2006) emphasized on youth participation and empowerment through education and training, health, environment, arts and culture. This shows that in the national youth policy, agriculture is not accorded the necessary recognition as a potential employer of the youth.

The study found that the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (2010-2020) identify interventions that need to be implemented to fully develop the potential of the youths as well as prepare and engage them in the socioeconomic development of the country. Such interventions include; empowerment and capacity building to enhance participation of youths in productive activities, creation of employment opportunities,

provision of necessary support to the youth such as financial and market linkages as well as supporting initiatives that mould character, advance youth health and well-being. While the intention of these policies to promote the youth is clear, respondents felt that implementation of interventions is still low and slow given the large population of youth in need. For example, the Government youth enterprise fund was found to have been beneficial to the youth but is reportedly inadequate to reach the large youth population.

4.3 Discussions

4.3.1 Characteristics of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

The study found that majority youth do not practice farming because they hold a negative attitude towards it as expressed through opinions such as; farming is not a decent job, it promotes poverty, it is not honorable, it cannot provide sufficient income, it is not their choice of job, and it is not encouraged by their parents, friends and the general community. The findings are similar to those of the Institute of Economic Affairs (cited in Njonjo, 2010) that majority of young people do not want to work in the agriculture sector, but are more specific on farming and deeper in describing characteristics of youth attitudes. However, the study is challenging Graham (1989) and Kimaro (2015) that all societies inculcate in their children habits and attitudes that would make them easily adopt livelihood strategies of the parent society; the study found that majority youth are not practicing farming which is the main livelihood activity for the society in the study area, and most parents socialize their young ones away from it. Therefore, according to the current study, adoption of a livelihood option is largely dictated by perceived social and economic benefits.

The study found that negative attitude has a significant contribution to low youth participation in farming. The findings disagree with Ruddar (2003), Waldie and Warhurst (2004) that labour productivity depends largely on skills of workers; on the contrary the study found that labour productivity in farming (including acquisition of farming skills) is largely attitude-driven. It is not unreasonable for the youth to have negative attitudes towards farming given the many challenges affecting small-scale farming in Kenya today as indicated in the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS, 2010-2020). Such challenges include increased fragmentation of land and urbanization, low agricultural production and productivity, seasonal production of same products flooding the markets and attracting low prices and minimal adoption of modern production technology. The findings provide

important insights to actualize transformation of youth attitudes suggested by Brooks *et al.*, (2013) as a requirement for the youth to be able to capture emerging opportunities in the changing face of agriculture

The study found that majority youth are not satisfied with farming as an economic activity because they do not feel productive and motivated when engaged in it. They felt that farming is characterized by low-income (when compared to other occupations such as service), is an occupation for uneducated people who dwell in the village and for those who retire from urban jobs. Hence, the negative attributes regarding farming as found among the youth contribute to their low satisfaction with farming. The findings reveal attributes of the farming career which do not motivate the youth and provide a practical example of the argument of Singh (2003) that a certain attitude is formed when a person believes that an object or a situation has certain attributes which are either favorable or unfavorable to him/her. The findings concur with Newstrom and Davis (2005) that the key motivation of a worker is job satisfaction. However, the findings further reveal that job satisfaction with farming by the youth is determined by level of income and social status accorded to it.

The study found that 30.8% of the youth are engaged in farming which differs with the 15% proportion established by the Sub-County Ministry of agriculture in 2012. The findings provide supportive statistics to the findings of Akpan (2010) that there is gradual change of attitudes towards farming by the young people. Although there is increase in youth involvement in farming, the proportion of the youth engaged in farming is still low meaning that contribution of the young people in agricultural production is minimal, and yet they are consumers of farm produce. Hence, the findings signal a problem of overdependence of a growing population of consumers on diminishing production efforts left to older and traditional farmers.

The study found that for the youth who engage in farming, they are motivated by serving their obligation to provide for family needs with support from their families and favorable climatic conditions for farming in the region. When someone provides for their family there is a strong sense of responsibility and it becomes easier when family members are supportive to each other in serving various responsibilities. The favorable climatic conditions for farming imply limited cases of crop failure as well as rare cases of livestock diseases. This

translates to reduced risk of investment in farming that should make it more suitable for the youth.

On the other hand, the study found that significantly youth are not motivated by farm profits, their friends and the community. This is because the study found that their parents and immediate community have socialized them to understand the farming occupation as a low-income activity, and their peers and friends disregard it as well since they have a similar perception. The findings provide a practical example of the argument of Johnston *et al.*, (2005) that orientation to work predisposes someone to think, feel and act towards various types of work, and further imply that work orientation towards farming received from friends and the community of the youth is discouraging.

The study found that business was the most preferred career because it is perceived to have high returns, is upheld by the community, has personal freedom to manipulate operations and it does not depend on weather conditions. This means that if farming can be reformed to become more business-oriented then it can be attractive to the youth. Farming was least preferred because it does not command respect from the society, is perceived as a tradition that does not require any academic qualifications. The study found that command of respect is a major determinant in the choice of a career because it is observed in the most preferred careers; business, teaching and police respectively, and is reportedly lacking in farming. Farming lack community approval as a worthwhile career and hence the youth do not wish to be associated with it. The findings support Johnson *et al.*, (2005) that young people are strongly influenced by a sense of community approval and support, although the findings provide a deeper understanding on how community approval and support or lack of it affects youth participation in farming.

For the youth who do not prefer to take up farming, they may end up working in cities or taking up other jobs in rural areas. However, it is important to acknowledge that this may not be a viable option for all the youth; factors such as insufficient education and a scarce amount of jobs in towns may bring these youths back to the farm. The youth with their dynamism, flexibility and resilience have the potential to transform farming towards the desired state if their interest in it is increased.

The study found that there are both positive and negative youth attitudes towards farming and therefore painting a homogenous picture of attitudes would be incorrect. These attitudes have been formed through influence from youth parents, friends, peers and the general community through socialization with regard to careers. For example, findings show that the perception of the parents, friends, peers and the community of the youth is that farming is not a worthwhile occupation and similar perceptions have been acquired by the youth. The influence of these social factors as identified by the study is discussed below.

4.3.2 Community-Based Factors Influencing Formation of Youth Attitudes towards

Farming

The study found that youth own experiences in farming which involved long hours of cultivation by use of hand hoe portrayed farming as a strenuous activity they wished to avoid as they grew up. At instances, they appreciated having benefited from farm income and produce through school fees, food and clothes. However, the negative experiences seem to overshadow the positive due to the youth having been exposed to more of farming challenges such as low income than the benefits. This means that it is quite a heavy task to convince the youths that farming is a potential employer unless the face of farming is changed to become more appealing.

The study found that family farming background, experience and perception shared to the youth contribute to formation of their attitudes towards farming. The findings show that there exists a negative perception on farming among most of the parents of the youths which has been transferred to the youth through socialization; the parents' negative experiences in farming being retold to the youths portray farming as a lesser-rewarding activity when compared to off-farm activities. It would be unrealistic to believe that there are no gains whatsoever from farming that can be told to the youth. While farming challenges are true, youths can bring new ideas and practices to modernize farm activities if parents encourage them based on the fact that there is no occupation that is free from constraints. The findings build on Binh, (2012) that family socialization has a far-reaching effect by showing how socialization by youth parents forms attitudes towards farming, since it is built on trust and friendship. Therefore, given the far-reaching effect of family socialization, the findings of the current study can aid transformation of youth attitudes by parents at family level.

The study found that involvement in farming increased with age because circumstances of not having dependants allowed younger youth to depend on their parents for provision, and hence contributes to lack of interest and involvement in farming. Once the youth marry and establish their own families, the responsibility to provide for dependants push them to work at times without having to select any job.

The study found that parental career guidance which is greatly informed by own experiences created interest in farming for some youths and disinterest among others. Career advices given on farming are based more on challenges than benefits, and not necessarily informed by the labour market or demand for goods and services in the economy. This kind of career guidance can easily be misleading. For example, farming as a career is portrayed negatively and since everybody aspires to prosper in their career, youth are not interested in a career that cannot match their aspirations. Instead, parents could encourage the youth and support their innovativeness to develop opportunities out of the shortcomings of farming.

The study found that farming is undertaken as a tradition because it is continued irrespective of whether or not there are gains obtained from it. Therefore, it lacks a concrete and deliberate profitability focus which makes the youth to feel less motivated to pursue it as a career. The study established that youth are interested in business which is their most preferred occupation. This means that if farming does not exhibit characteristics of a business, they increasingly become disinterested in it. The findings on youth's preference for business imply their willingness to participate more in farming if it is undertaken as a business. Therefore, the findings provide factual information to support the World Bank (2013) and FAO (2014) advocacy for commercialization of agriculture. Further, the findings provide insights that can aid in transformation of youth attitudes so as to prepare the youth for the opportunities presented by commercialization of agriculture.

The study found that the community painted a negative picture of farming by according it a low social status while appreciating and upholding careers outside farming. As a result, there is a strong public influence on the young generation to move out of farming. This kind of influence is bound to make youths increasingly withdraw from farming if there are no efforts to encourage them to actively participate in changing the face of farming. The study shows that youth aspirations are not just about economic gains but social status is equally important

because low social status accorded to farming reduce its uptake by the youth. The youth possess the required energy, flexibility, innovation and resilience to change the face of farming if the community in which they belong provides the necessary support.

The study found that youth peers and friends contributed to formation of their attitudes since farming is a topic of no interest for discussion during peer interactions, and on many occasions it is disregarded. The image of farming as depicted by youth peers and friends does not reflect the current needs and lifestyle of the youth in the sense that, the perceived level of livelihood that farming income can support does not match youth aspirations of luxurious living. The aspirations of the youth are impressive to anyone even beyond the youth category. However, it is not within the understanding of the youth peers and friends that any work sector including farming can achieve that luxurious life only if an individual has the right attitude to pursue a career in any sector; for a positive attitude provides the drive through innovation to develop opportunities out of associated constraints. The attitude-driven approach to life can contribute to transformation of existing youth attitudes if inculcated in them by their peers and friends.

The study found that absence of young role models in farming in the study area resulted to lack of a learning opportunity for the youth that a role model can provide. The study found that youths cannot easily emulate the existing role models who are older, experienced and have incomparable capacity in terms of access to productive resources. The youth are more likely to see the potential of farming in the presence of young successful farmers. This is because young role models are best positioned to know how to reach out to their peers, what interests them, how they can best contribute and what additional support is required. However, the youth fail to recognize that the older successful farmers have accumulated resources over time and youths can equally start mobilizing resources. For this to be achieved, young people must develop a positive attitude towards farming that would sustain efforts to mobilize resources over time.

The study reveals that youth attitudes towards farming are formed through; youth own experience in farm work, influence of parents, friends, peers and the general community away from farming, and lack of young role models to emulate. While these are social factors,

there are economic factors as well which were found to play a role in formation of youth attitudes towards farming. The economic factors are discussed below.

4.3.3 Influence of Economic Factors in Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

The study found that access to land for farming by the youth influences their interest and participation in farming. Land can usually be accessible through inheritance of family land, purchase, rent or lease. The increasingly growing population in the study area has resulted in further subdivision of land into highly fragmented parcels that cannot suffice for everyone, and if land is available for purchase, rent or lease, the cost is high for the youth. It is also not easy for the youth to inherit family land because in many parts of Africa, youth have to wait for many years before inheriting their share if at all they will, since it is considered a taboo for young people to access family land while the parents are still alive (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2011). Hence, these difficulties faced by the youth in accessing land for farming discourage them from farming activities.

As much as limited access to land by the youth was found to be a constraint, provision of waged farm labour is an alternative to generating earnings for youths who fail to access their own land for cultivation. The study found that majority youth did not engage in provision of waged farm labour because they felt that the wage rate (Kshs. 200 per day) was low. The approximate value of the rural poverty line in 2012 was Kshs. 2,900 per month for rural areas and Kshs. 5,400 per month for urban areas (World Bank, 2013). The wage rate of Kshs. 200 per day will accumulate to Kshs. 5200 per month (when calculated for 26 working days in a month) which is quite reasonable based on the approximated value of rural poverty line. The study attributes limited participation of the youth in waged farm labour to their negative attitudes towards farming as established for majority of them.

The study found that high cost of farm inputs is not easily affordable by the youth despite input subsidy provided by the Government. One of the key sources of agricultural financing is obtaining credit from financial institutions to acquire farm inputs. In exploring this option, the study found that it is difficult for youths to obtain a loan since most of the lending institutions require collateral such as property or savings, and perceive the youth as volatile and unable to repay. Hence, the youth are rendered unqualified for loans. As a consequence,

they are left to access agricultural finance through informal sources such as families and friends, which is usually very limited.

The study found that banks and micro-finance institutions have negative perception about the youth as investors as they consider them a risky and unpredictable category to qualify for loaning. The youth are aware of other loan products which are branded as youth-specific such as youth enterprise fund and Uwezo fund, but the youth felt that the conditions to access such loans are still unfavorable to their needs and interests. It can be argued that getting access to a loan is much simpler now than it was in the past. The microfinance industry in Kenya has been increasingly growing, setting up loan schemes categorically for youths and women, and other loan products offered by several banks. While such financial initiatives have become more available now than before, these findings show that they still remain insufficient to accommodate the special interests of the rural youth. However, apart from credit, savings are important for the youth if the culture of saving can be promoted to help them build assets, plan for life events and respond to emergencies.

The study found that inadequate income generated through farming contribute to youths' disinterest in farming. The perceived low level of livelihood that farming income can support does not match the lifestyle, aspirations and expectations of the youth. Hence, youths' uptake of farming as a livelihood activity is low. Universally, everybody aspires to prosper in their life and therefore it is not unusual for the youth to disregard an occupation which they feel does not meet their career goals. The findings provide justification for change in focus of farming to become more business-oriented indicated by Brooks *et al.*, (2013), so that the emerging opportunities such as the increasing demand for food and use of modern technology can attract the youth back to farming.

The study found that inadequate farming knowledge and skills among youth parents (eventually transferred to the youth), contribute to poor farm production which consequently make farming to be low-yielding. In addition, limited information leads to unnecessary stiff competition when farmers produce large quantities of the same produce, resulting to oversupply of some produce (attracting low prices) and extreme scarcity of other commodities. Gaining additional farming knowledge and skills does not mean going back to school since non-formal education such as extension services can offer more specific

knowledge related to farming. However, the study found that agricultural extension services are limited due to the study area having few government extension staff. While limited farming knowledge and skills (as well as access to) is recognized by the youth as a challenge, the study found that majority of the youth are not willing to seek further knowledge and skills on farming. The study attributes the lack of willingness by the youth to pursue further knowledge and skills on farming to the negative attitude held by majority of the youth.

The study found that there is limited youth-specific policy and institutional incentives towards farming such as lack of a youth policy on agriculture/farming to promote youth-specific subsidized farm inputs and specialized financial products for the youth. The study found that cost of farm inputs is still high for the youth to practice farming despite the cost of some inputs being subsidized by the government. This explains the need for youth-specific policy framework that can provide specialized incentives for the youth. The national youth policy does not accord agriculture the necessary recognition as a potential employer of the youth because it is mainly focused on education and training, health, environment, arts and culture. Hence, there is a strong sense that the government has to play a key role in creating the right signals that agriculture is a valued sector. However, there are existing policies such as the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (2010-2020) whose intention captures youth empowerment but their implementation is slow to reach the large population of youth in need.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The current study sought to describe characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming, describe community-based factors and economic factors that influence formation of those attitudes. This chapter contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Characteristics of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

The current study found that only 30.8% of the respondents were practicing farming at the time of survey with the majority (69.2%) opting out of it. Of the respondents who did not practice farming, 98.8% expressed having a disinterest in working as a farmer. In terms of access to farming resources, 53.3% of the respondents had no access to land for farming. The study found that 87.5% of the respondents felt that farming was not a decent job, 57.5 % felt that farming promoted poverty, 87.5% felt that farming was not honorable, 91.7% felt that farming was not their choice of job, 77.5% responded that they did not feel more productive when involved in farming and that farming was not encouraged by the friends (82.5%) and families (80.5%) of the youths. Majority of respondents felt that farming cannot provide sufficient income for sustaining life (94%) and 70.8% expressed that they do not wish to take up farming as a livelihood option. It was also found that only 16.7% of the respondents were willing to further knowledge and skills on farming.

The study found that if given the opportunity to choose, majority of respondents would wish to take up business (45.8%), followed by teaching (25.0%), police (13.3%) and secretarial (10.8%). Only 5.0% of the respondents stated that they would take up farming. In focus group discussions, choices of career were determined by command of respect, level of returns, ability to offer self-employment, requirement of academic qualifications and availability of job opportunities. The command of respect from the society was found to be the cutting edge of the top ranked careers over farming.

However, while negative attitudes prevail, the study reveals that 22.5% of the respondents felt more productive and motivated to engage in farming and 13.5% had farming as their

fulltime job. This group is motivated by having support from their immediate family and a responsibility to meet domestic needs (food and income) of their families. According to this group, the success of farming is attributed to various favorable conditions; enough land, knowledge, good rains, adequate manpower and reliable market. They added that if these conditions are not met, farming cannot be a viable income generating activity.

5.2.2 Community-Based Factors Influencing Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

The study found that experience of working in the farm for long hours by the youth and watching their parents struggle with difficulties while cultivating, and yet low returns from the farm portrayed farming as a strenuous low-income activity. This remained an unanswered question in their minds whether farming was really profitable. At times, they thought that farming was a tradition and not an income generating activity. These experiences affected their mental picture about farming and as they grew up they wished to avoid the farming career.

It was found that parents' negative experience in farming being retold to the youth was having an effect on them; parents shared to them challenges of having continuously had low yields in their fields, they demonstrated the losses to their children and encouraged them to be involved in off-farm activities. In fact, 80.5% of respondents indicated that farming was not encouraged by their family.

It was found that dependence on parents for livelihood contributed to disinterest in farming for a section of the youth. It was established that the unmarried youth who had no dependants were the ones who mostly exhibited no interest in farming because they mostly depended on their parents for livelihood. Being married is viewed as a sense of being responsible and to engage in farming is vital in order to cater for the food and other domestic needs of the family.

The findings reveal a widespread community negative perception about farming demonstrated by a strong public influence on the young generation to move out of farming. Hence, majority of the young people disregarded farming and preferred not to choose it, as

they felt it did not command respect from the society in which they belong, and did not adequately compensate for its physical strenuousness on the body as the community put it.

Youth peers and friends in their gatherings and interactions they express their aspirations and expectations with little or nothing to do with farming. Instead, they talk about what they would want to achieve in future such as owning a luxurious home, fast cars, the latest gadgets and mobile phones etc, and basically spending their life out of the village. They believe that all these cannot be achieved with income from farming.

The findings show that it is difficult to get a successful youth farmer; a role model. The people whom the youth have been looking up to are older farmers who have invested in farming for longer time, and have better access to farming resources. They added that those farmers who are considered successful have also large sizes of land and have the ability to farm using modern technology such as tractors. These findings show that role modeling in farming according to the youth depended on the ability to access productive resources, which the youth reported having limited access to.

5.2.3 Influence of Economic Factors on Formation of Youth Attitudes towards Farming

Majority of the respondents (53.3%) indicated having no access to land for cultivation. However, with limited access to land it would be reasonable to have the youth provide labour for wages in other farms but only 6.7% of respondents worked as waged laborers. Limited access to other farm inputs due to high cost of purchase and resultant low returns from sales was also stated as a reason for not practicing farming.

Banks and micro-finance institutions were found to have negative attitude towards financing smallholder farming; they considered it a risky and unpredictable sector to qualify for loaning and therefore they chose to finance only large scale farming. In addition, the loaning conditions which include collateral requirement rendered youth unqualified for the loans. However, the respondents reported having been aware of availability of loan products which were branded as youth-specific such as the youth enterprise fund and Uwezo fund, but they felt that the conditions were still unfavorable to their needs and interests.

Knowledge and skills are part of farming resources required but only 16% of the respondents were willing to seek further knowledge and skills on farming. The low farm production

volumes and poor quality produce are attributed to poor farming practices adopted by their parents and eventually transferred to them. However, with the widespread youth disinterest in farming they are not willing to gain further knowledge and farming skills that could possibly challenge the poor practices of their parents and increase yields.

On the other hand, those who were interested in farming were motivated by having parents who had set good examples to them of farming as a viable livelihood option. In addition, favorable climatic conditions for farming in the region was stated as a motivational factor, since farmers did not experience serious crop failure or livestock mortality caused by drought and diseases.

The study found that there is limited youth-specific policy and institutional incentives towards farming such as lack of a youth policy on agriculture/farming to promote youth-specific subsidized farm inputs and specialized financial products for the youth. The study found that cost of farm inputs is still high for the youth to practice farming despite the cost of some inputs being subsidized by the government. This explains the need for youth-specific policy framework that can provide specialized incentives for the youth. While there are policy frameworks such as the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Agricultural sector development strategy (2010-2020) which are geared towards improving the livelihoods and wellbeing of the youths, their implementation and effectiveness is either missing or minimal in the study area.

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 Theoretical Conclusion

The current study is grounded on the social learning and the structural-functionalism theories. The social learning theory argues that learning occurs within a social context where people learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling. The current study confirms this theory by establishing that youths have formed attitudes towards farming by learning from the society about the challenges and benefits of farming. The study found that negative experiences of farming were told to the youths by their parents, peers, friends and the general community hence painting a negative picture of the occupation. In addition, parents and the community demonstrated to the youth that farming is a low income occupation which later in life they disregarded as worthless and inappropriate. There are nevertheless parents who positively perceived farming and encouraged their youth by demonstrating income generated from farming.

The structural functionalism theory is used to appreciate the role of the social learning process in fostering social values and promoting social stability. According to the theory, social learning ought to prepare the youths for employment in any sector of the economy since work and employment are social values; failure to which the contribution of the youth to the wellbeing of the society will be minimal. The current study has revealed that majority of the youths have expressed disinterest in farming as an occupation and therefore their contribution in food production is as well minimal. Their negative attitudes towards farming have been formed through social learning from the society in which they have grown. Youths are the most productive category of any society as it contains people in the prime of their lives physically and mentally. If their interest in farming is not motivated by the society, they are bound to continue suffering from unemployment and underemployment, while food production will be at risk.

5.3.2 Empirical Conclusion

The characteristics of youth attitudes show a wide spread low youth participation in farming resulting from negative attitude expressed through perceptions such as; farming it is not well-paying and it is not decent to match their youthful lifestyle. This is a strong message that there are risks to agricultural production and food supply as a whole if the sector is left in the hands of the ageing population of farmers. If the future of agriculture is to be upheld, the next generation of farmers needs to be pulled out from the young people. However, if the interests of the young people towards engaging in agricultural production are not promoted, they are bound to continue suffering from unemployment and underemployment, while agricultural production will be at jeopardy. Nevertheless, there are youths who expressed interest in farming. Therefore, painting a homogenous picture of attitudes of the rural youth towards farming would be incorrect.

Youth attitudes towards farming are formed out of their own experiences in farming, farming experiences retold by their parents, youth aspirations away from farming shared among peers, lack of young role models in farming to inspire the youth, negative community perception on farming and limitations in access to farming resources by the youth. The negative experiences of farming relate to the common challenges faced by farmers in Kenya and which the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy 2010-2020 is committed to address. However, unless the profile of farming is changed from traditional small-scale farming to business-oriented farming it may remain unattractive to the youth who expressed a strong preference in the business career.

Many youths do not have adequate productive resources and appropriate attitudes to succeed in farming, or even enter into viable commercial farming. The concept of agribusiness that is being promoted by the Government and other agencies may remain in paper as far as the rural youth are concerned, as long as access to productive resources by the youth continue to serve as a major hindrance to farming and agriculture in general. More so, the challenges associated with farming must be addressed if more parents, peers, friends, and the community of the youth would be expected to give approval and reinforce positive attitudes for the youths to venture into farming.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends the following;

- i. Characteristics of youth attitudes towards farming show that majority of the youth hold negative attitude and are not interested in farming. They feel that it does not generate sufficient income to match their aspirations and it is not a decent job. There is need for agricultural sector agencies to raise the profile of farming to change the mindset of the youth from traditional small scale farming to business-oriented and innovative, modern sector that can offer decent work attractive to youth.
- ii. Youth attitudes are formed out of community influence that includes family, peers and friends of the youth. The community and agricultural development agents need to promote, support and present successful youth farmers as role models so as to attract more youths into farming. This means that the farming communities have to positively perceive the occupation and strive to make it commercially-viable and attractive to the youth so as to transform their attitudes.
- iii. Formation of youth attitudes is also influenced by access to economic resources such as land, finance, knowledge and skills. Rehabilitation and subsequent distribution of government land, community land, reclaimed land to the landless youths for cultivation and integration of land conservation activities can increase access to land by the youth. Establishment of youth agricultural resource centers equipped with computers, TVs, Radios, and Telephones, books, newspapers and magazines can link youth to agricultural information, experts and role models through email and other networks.

Further Research

The current study reveals youth disinterest in farming as a career due to its traditional approach that is low-production and low-income. Use of technology is appealing to the youth and can increase farm production and improve marketing. Further research should focus on identification of opportunities and limitations in the use of agricultural technology by the youth, so as to inform interventions that can increase use of technology to make farming more attractive to the youth.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

1. Personal information:

(a) Gender: Male Female

(b) Age

(c) Level of education: Primary Secondary Tertiary

2. Are you practising farming? Yes No

i. If No, why? *Probe with;*

a) Don't have access to land for own farming

b) Don't have access to farm inputs (seeds, fertilizers, equipment)

c) Don't have adequate knowledge and farming skills

d) Don't like farming

ii. If yes, what motivates you? *Probe with;*

a) Profits from sale of farm produce

b) Family support

c) Favourable conditions for farming

d) Encouraging friends

e) Farming is encouraged in my community

f) I have adequate knowledge and farming skills

g) I have access to farming resources

3. In a normal week, what is the highest number of days do you work in the farm?

a) 1 day

b) 2 days

c) 3 days

d) 4 days

e) 5 days

f) 6 days

g) 7 days

h) None

4. In which farming activities are you involved in? *Probe with;*

a) Farm labour supply for wages

b) Crop production

- c) Dairy production
- d) Poultry production
- e) Horticulture
- f) Fish farming
- g) Rabbit keeping
- h) Pig rearing

5. Do you have access to land for your own farming? Yes No

6. What type of farming is your family involved in?

- a) Crop production
- b) Livestock rearing
- c) Both
- d) None

7. What is the purpose of farming for your family?

- a) Consumption
- b) Commercial
- c) Both

If it is for commercial purposes, do you directly benefit from the proceeds? Yes No

8. Would you take farming for you as a major livelihood activity? Yes No

9. What influences your decision to be involved or not to be involved in farming? *Probe with;*

- a) Family
- b) Friends/Peers
- c) Role models
- d) The Community
- e) Rewards from farming
- f) Working conditions in the farm
- g) Knowledge and farming skills

10. Do you think farming generates enough income for sustaining life? Yes No

11. Are you willing to seek further knowledge and skills on farming? Yes No

12. Do you feel more productive and motivated when involved in farming? Yes No

13. How does your family perceive farming?

a) Farming promotes poverty

b) Farming has good profits

14. How do your Friends and Peers perceive farming?

a) Farming is a decent job

b) Farming is stressful

15. Please indicate with a tick [] your opinion with regard to the following statements

a) Farming has good profits. Agree Disagree

b) Farming is a decent job. Agree Disagree

c) Farming promotes poverty. Agree Disagree

d) Farming is not honourable. Agree Disagree

e) Farming is encouraged by my family. Agree Disagree

f) Farming is not fun and is tiring. Agree Disagree

g) Farming is my choice of job. Agree Disagree

h) Farming is not encouraged by my friends. Agree Disagree

16. If you were given the opportunity to choose, which job will you go for;

a) Carpentry

b) Business

c) Teaching

d) Secretarial

e) Farming

f) Police

Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Part One: Explore community-based factors influencing youth attitudes towards farming

1. Family/parental influence
2. Influence of youth friends and peers
3. Influence of young role models in farming
4. Influence of community perception on farming

Part Two: Explore economic factors influencing youth attitudes towards farming

1. Discuss youths' access to farming resources
 - a) Land for cultivation
 - b) Inputs (seeds, fertilizers, equipment)
 - c) Knowledge and skills
 - d) Credit services
2. Do the youth feel more productive and motivated when involved in farming? Explain.
3. Does farming generate enough income for sustaining life? Explain
4. Discuss youths' considerations when making choices among the following careers
 - a) Business
 - b) Farming
 - c) Teaching
 - d) Police

Part Three: Discuss the influence of Government policies, institutions and procedures in development of youths' interest in farming?

- a) Kenya Vision 2030
- b) Department of Youth Affairs/Kenya National Youth Policy
- c) Youth Enterprise Development Fund/Uwezo Fund
- d) Agricultural Sector Development Strategy 2010-2020