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

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EGERTON UNIVERSITY, NJORO

NOVEMBER, 2016
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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RECOMMENDATIONS
This thesis has been submitted for examination with our recommendation as University supervisors.

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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.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASDS</td>
<td>Agricultural Sector Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
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