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## **Low Supply of Commercial Farming Spinning out from African Students in Universities and Colleges.**

### **Introduction**

Agriculture has extensively been studied as a major source of revenue, poverty reduction, employment and growth in developing countries, yet, this sector underperforms in Africa, FAO, (2014). Research has proven that Africa and mostly sub-Saharan Africa, (SSA), which is supposed to be the “bread basket” of the world, because it is a continent where about 70% of the population resides in the rural areas and about 90% of this rural population relies on agriculture, as their major source of revenue, has resulted to food importation as it is unable to measure up with the fast growing population, World Bank, (2007). Women in Africa are very good at small scale commercial farming, but this is done on a subsistence level. Food security is still not guaranteed as Africa depends on rain for agriculture and cannot withstand, change in climate, (drought), Outbreaks of plant and animal diseases, and other severe dry weather condition. Although increase in agricultural activities is a prerequisite to development and growth to countries in Africa, but the expansion of output is crucial to increasing incomes and poverty reduction in rural areas. The economies of every country can no further compete exclusively on the endowment of natural resources, advantages of locations, and cheap labour, but on the innovative competence of acquiring, adjusting and implementing knowledge Rajalahti (2008).

Africa has embarked on university education on agro-business, science and technology, human resource capabilities and other intensive agricultural programs to promote agricultural productivity. It is expected that, those who are most likely to establish commercial agriculture in large scale are students from the department of agriculture in both colleges and Universities, but surprisingly, there is no research on agribusiness students starting these businesses upon graduation.

This research is looking at female agro-business students at the University of Buea Cameroon. It seeks to investigate their attitudes and capabilities towards setting up agro-business and to ask the following questions;

- a) What are their blockages?
- b) How are these women supported by their family?
- c) How are they supported by the government?
- d) What attracted them to study agro-business?

## **Approach/Methods**

It is a case study research carried out in Cameroon with University Agric university students and qualitative method were used for in-depth investigation. With a focus on female agribusiness students in Universities and colleges, investigating their attitudes and capabilities, towards setting up agribusinesses, their obstructions and how, where and who give them support. Semi structured and unstructured questions were used to go deep in the findings. The qualitative study was also intended to be an important exercise in its own right. Purposive sample to make sure that the right respondents to these questionnaires were chosen. A total of 20 agri-Business students who are currently into their undergraduate and post graduate studies, were interviewed. 10 Agric-business students who had graduated and are working in offices quite different from their profession. Analysis was done qualitative using quantitative data to bring out the themes.

## **Findings/Results**

It was found out that, there is too much of theory in the classroom with no good places for practical learning. Most of the students are certificate focused students who just need the grades. Some were driven by opportunities to agro-business department in universities/colleges not really for the love of the course. Some do not see agriculture as business. A lot of them have been seeing their parents doing farming for generations without formal training, therefore, they do not need a degree to grow food they attested. The government has no regulatory system nor could a good support (subsidies) system, none of them stand the risk involved in business and thus preferred to work with companies where there are some degree of certainty of payment. Some of them do not have the finance to expand further and perceive agro-business as a risk and dare not venture into as it has no credibility.

## **Value and Implications**

This research would benefit commercial farmers particularly if they could expand into products of high value, exploit the opportunity of cooperation and enter new markets and this will increase their farm produce, income, food guarantee for their families, boost employment and increase the economy of the nation. It would also broaden our understanding on why agro-business students in Africa, do not start-up agro-businesses after graduation, but prefer to work elsewhere. This research contributes to the literature on agro-business in Africa. It also shift the emphasis from non-agro-businesses to agro-businesses.