

Youth participation in cotton agricultural marketing cooperatives for sustainable rural employment creation in Tanzania

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Abstract

Cooperative organizations have important in improving employment opportunity creation and other socio-economic development in many nations. The paper examined youth participation in cotton Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives Societies (AMCOS) for rural employment creation; where youth as the majority of the population were found to be not interested. Specifically, the paper had two objectives which were; to assess the perception of youth towards participating in AMCOS and to assess the available strategies by AMCOS on youth participation in agriculture. The cross sectional design was adopted, five primary AMCOS was surveyed where members of the AMCOS formed unit of analysis. The findings indicate that; on perception of youth towards AMCOS cotton business, youth engagement was found to be determined by the profit earned after cost of production. Cotton was perceived to be costly among youth as compared to profits earned. Also, youth were had bad perception on agriculture they are interested in other business. On the available strategies by AMCOS on youth participation in agriculture; the possibility to engage youth as members of the AMCOS was among the strategy that had higher. Also, youth engagement with their parents who are members was found to have impact in bringing youth on board hence employment creation can be feasible. The paper concludes that; Youth membership needs deliberate efforts by different interventions to make them attractive to cotton business that are payable. Also, more interactive strategies are still needed that are participative and that are integrated with youth preference which can make youth to be inclusive in agriculture for leveraging the level unemployment in the sector. The paper recommends; Primary AMCOS are required to develop tangible strategies that are integrated to youth preference. Local government loans on youth should target youth groups which are doing agriculture. Also, programs on youth participation and engagement on cooperative farming business will enhance the breath and worthiness for youth engagement hence creates youth employment widening.

Keywords: Youth participation; cotton AMCOS; Employment creation.

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