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Assessing Status and Barriers of Youth Participation in Agricultural Co-Operative Marketing: A Survey of Three Selected Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies in Kishapu, Tanzania

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Abstract:

Youth have desirable qualities that they can promote the sustainability of agriculture co-operatives but they are excluded in co-operative sector. Generally, the study aimed at assessing the issues which can motivate youth to participate in agricultural marketing co-operative societies in Kishapu, Tanzania. The research adopted exploratory research design and descriptive research design to investigate the phenomenon and employed sampling methods such as cluster, purposive and simple random. Data were collected using interview schedules, survey questionnaire, focus group discussion and checklist. The data were subjected to descriptive analysis to obtain the frequencies and percentages for easier interpretations. The results from descriptive analysis indicate that, exclusion of youth have been accentuated by lower age group where by youth with 18-21 age group were not members of AMCOS. Among the issues which have not motivated youth participation in AMCOS have been found to be traditions and customs in the community, poor AMCOS services, lack of special product for youth, availability of similar competitive organization and limited AMCOS' economic benefits to members. It is concluded that AMCOS are marginalizing youth participation because of lack of innovation and poor service design, improper bylaws and limited economic impacts to co-operative members. Therefore, this study recommends that AMCOS management and government should focus on diversification of AMCOS products, education and training, adopt new agricultural production technology and designing of the products that reflect the youth needs so as to improve youth participation in AMCOS.

Keywords: AMCOS, Kishapu, youth participation

1. Introduction

Youth participation in aspects of development has been an urgent concern in promoting social and economic development across the world. This is so, because, youth comprise larger proportional in the world's population. About 50% of the developing world population is covered by youth and children. There are 1.2 billion of youth in the world that range between 15 to 24-year olds, whereby one billion of them live in developing countries (UNO, 2010). This represents both challenge and an opportunity for development, and therefore, their participation in development is critical for development from local to international level.

In the realization of the role that youth can play in co-operative development, the International Co-operative Alliance General Assembly of 2005 through United Nations Organisation (UNO), insisted on the inclusion of youth in the co-operative movement by developing innovative strategies to provide much needed employment opportunities for the world youth as it was seen that youth were excluded in co-operative movement (UNO, 2005). This resulted into integration of the youth empowerment agenda through engagement with co-operative movements in the International Year of Co-operatives (IYC) in 2012. One among the three objectives of the IYC was to promote the formation and growth of co-operatives of which youth were encouraged to be members as one of a socio-economic empowerment strategy (Reeder, 2012). Under the IYC, the United Nations General Assembly envisaged that a co-operative is an appropriate model that has proven as world's fastest-growing business model in uplifting socio-economic development of the people including youth by the year 2025 (Reeder, 2012). In this regard, youth were expected to engage in business through which they can generate income.

According to UNO (2009), it is stated that youth are those who are aged between 15 and 24 years old, similarly, Tanzania government has adopted the UNO definition as stipulated above. However, for the rationale of this study, a youth person is defined as the one between 18-35 years so as to comply with the Co-operative Policy of 2002.

Youth at worldwide face many challenges including unemployment which results to lack of fixed assets like land and discrimination in decision making as the cause they are weak in economic position (UNO, 2013). Several studies (AC, 2009; MacGachieet al. 2003; O'Donoghueet al. 2003) indicate that despite the mentioned challenges, youth are active in

communities where they play a role in decision making and production. Therefore, the achievement of youth participation has enormous socio-economic implication.

In Africa as other parts of the world, youth are critical for development since young between 15 and 24 years of age make up more than 20% of the total population and the population under 30 years count for 70% of the region population (UNO, 2010). Nevertheless, still youth are not sufficiently included in co-operatives organizations. Youth participation in co-operative organization in Africa is poor whereby co-operatives tend to deal with youth in the highest age group starting from 30 years and above who are economically active. Exclusion of youth in co-operatives in African countries is accentuated for the lower age group; youth in co-operative as members constitute the 31-35 (40 %), 26-30 cohort (32 %), 21-25 (20 %) and 16-20 (8%), and few co-operatives have membership from pre-pubescent group (Okwanyet al., 2010).

Historically in the year 1950's to 1970's, Tanzania had highest record of agricultural co-operatives in Africa. Suddenly, they faced problems marked from 1980s to date due to government intervention and liberalization of agricultural marketing activities. This resulted into competitions with other marketing organizations (Bargawi, 2008). Despite the ups and down of co-operatives institutions, agricultural co-operatives are still essential in accommodating rural economy especially in agricultural activities. Currently, Tanzania rural economy is dominated by agriculture production of food and cash crops where most of youth are engaged in agriculture since they are energetic enough and comprise larger proportional; about 35.5% of Tanzanian populations are youth (NBS, 2013). Youth are informally employed in subsistence agriculture; however, the performance of subsistence agriculture is unfavorable due several factors including low productivity, overdependence on rain fed agriculture, low use of agricultural inputs and poor marketing systems like price and access to market places (FANRPAN, 2012). The co-operative business model can be the best way in accommodating youth farmers to overcome the unfavorable mentioned challenges in subsistence agriculture in Tanzania.

Youth membership in agricultural co-operatives is considerable to be low, despite the fact that about 65% of the Tanzania rural population ranges from 15 and 35 years old (FANPRAN, 2012). Given these statistics, one would have expected to have more youth as members in agricultural co-operatives than elders. Chamboet al. (2014) advocate that Agricultural co-operatives are believed to play a crucial role in decreasing youth unemployment challenge by providing services through vertical integration approach of doing business; and the modern agricultural co-operative can provide a scientific way of dealing with agriculture activities and source of youth employment (Chamboet al., 2014).

After independence, the government of Tanzania promoted co-operatives in all part of the country because co-operative was considered to support the economic, social and political transformation in the year 1961 to 2000 (URT, 2005). The co-operative development policy of 2002 emphasizes on increasing participation of marginalized groups including youth in co-operatives. Different programs such as Co-operative Reform Modernization Program (CRMP), National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) and Agricultural Sector Development Program (ASDP) have emphasized on community empowerment and participation in economic activities such as co-operatives in which men, women and youth could become members in order to solve socio-economic challenges; and this envisioned to ensure sustainability of the co-operative organizations.

However, despite the opportunities, national initiatives for community empowerment in co-operative economic development, the issue of youth participation in co-operative economic activities is still questionable as in case of AMCOS. Therefore, this study aimed at addressing this by assessing the issues relating to youth status and youth barriers regarding their participation in Tanzanian AMCOS.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

There is a poor youth participation in Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives (AMCOS) in Tanzania despite the available opportunities. For instance, about 65% of the Tanzania rural population are youth who ranges from 15 and 35 years old (FANPRAN, 2012); about 80% of Tanzania population depend on agricultural economic activity; moreover, other observation show that Tanzanian Government had invested a lot of efforts to promoting agricultural co-operation in different ways.

Regarding the available problem, the available literatures on AMCOS and youth participation had a narrow focus and did not cover the aspect of youth participation in AMCOS in terms of status and barriers, for instance they focused on the aspect of age (Okwanyet al. 2010), size of youth in AMCOS (Sumelius et al. (2013); and social-economic benefits of AMCOS (Hartley MacPherson et al., 2011, 2005). Other related studies which presented barriers of youth participation on AMCOS were western by nature (Areysh (2011) and Okwanyet al. 2010), not enough to be generalized to Tanzania context, in that case, Kishapu District Shinyanga. In that respect, the study aimed to assess issues which can demotivate Tanzanian youth to participate in AMCOS.

1.2. Research Objectives

1.2.1. General Objectives

The study aimed to assess issues regarding youth status and youth barriers toward their participation in selected AMCOS in Kishapu District.

1.2.2. Specific Objectives

- To examine the status of youth membership in the selected AMCOS
- To explore barriers which constrain the participation of youth in AMCOS.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptualization

2.1.1. Co-operative

There are many definitions established by different authors of what a co-operative is. The definitions of a co-operative vary depending the source, but most agree that co-operative is one that: a) provides service at cost; b) is democratically controlled by its member-patrons; and c) limits returns on equity capital (Ochieno, 2012). The owners of a co-operative are the same people who have access to the services it offers. Ochieno (2012), define co-operatives as voluntary closed organizations in which the decision-control and risk-bearing functions repose in the membership, and decision management reposes in the agent (board and manager) who represents the principal's interests. A co-operative is a special type of business firm owned and operated for mutual benefit by the users (member-patrons) (Ochieno, 2012). However, when defining co-operative, there are three most common characteristics found in most co-operative definitions, namely: a) co-operation is an economic activity; b) it is conducted for the need of its members; and c) it is owned and controlled by these members. Sumelius *et al.* (2013) views a co-operative as a private business organisation that is owned and controlled by the people who use its products, supplies or services. The ICA (2005), defines a co-operative as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise (ICA, 2005). Therefore, a co-operative is an organization formed by a group of people who meet voluntarily to fulfill mutual economic and social needs through running a democratically controlled enterprise such that the benefits achieved through cooperation are greater than the benefits achieved individually.

Therefore, the study adopted ICA-definition of a co-operative which is built on four major catch words; First, they are formed by groups of people, who have a specified need or problem; secondly, the organization is formed freely by members after contributing to its assets; thirdly, the organization formed is governed democratically in order to achieve desired objectives on equitable norms; and, fourthly, it is an independent enterprise promoted, owned and controlled by people to meet their needs.

For the purpose of this study, a reference is placed on Chaddad *et al.* (2010) argument that the first three principles specifying openness, democratic control, source of capital and management of capital are fundamental ones and have remained constant with the ICA principles. Modern co-operatives reward members with dividends, capital gains and voting rights in which youth could have an advantage of tackling their socio-economic challenges.

2.1.2. Agricultural Marketing Co-Operative (AMCOS)

Agricultural co-operative are unique types of private enterprises that embrace both the associative component as well as the business component for members, and are guided by the ICA values and principles of cooperation. The motives of inducing individual producers to join existing or to form new co-operatives can originate in both the economic-rational sphere and in the sociological psychological sphere (Krivokapic-Skoko, 2002).

In that case, the current study a line with the above definition that agricultural marketing co-operatives are associations of primary producers who have come together to achieve some common commercial objectives more successfully than they could do as individuals like marketing their produce, purchasing farm supplies, sharing expensive equipment or supplying services such as storage or transport (Ochieno, 2012). More generally, their goal is to enable rural people to improve their social and economic conditions by working together in ways that are more productive than working individually.

2.2. Theoretical Literature Review

2.2.1. Youth Empowerment Theory

Youth empowerment theory connects individual well-beings with the larger social and political environment, and suggests that people need opportunities to become active in community decision making in order to improve their lives, organisations, and communities. The theory of youth empowerment was developed by Zimmerman (2000) and modified by Ledford *et al.* (2013). The theory is broken into three components: individual empowerment, organisational empowerment, and community empowerment. Individual empowerment means youth developing skills to apply control and improve competence, as well as developing critical awareness to effectively collaborate for the betterment of organisations and communities. Organisational Empowerment are entities that provide, benefit from, the opportunity for youth to acquire the skills are needed so as to gain control over their lives, provide alternatives to service provision, as well as entities that develop and influence policy decisions. Community empowerment refer to an effort to improve the community, respond to threats to quality of life, and provide for citizen participation at the local, state, and national level (Ledford *et al.*, 2013).

In addition, the process empowering results to empowering level provides opportunities for youth to develop skills and become problem solvers and decision makers. The outcomes or the empowered level refer to the result of the empowerment process, including the consequences of attempts to gain control in the community and the effects of

interventions designed to empower participants (Ledford *et al.*, 2013). Youth empowerment is focusing on creating greater community change in its methods and reliance on the development of individual capacity. Therefore, organisations operate with a youth development framework by developing individuals within an unjust society and not changing the source of the problem (Ledford *et al.*, 2013).

Zimmerman (2000) summarizes the theory that empowerment theory connects individual well-being with the larger social and political environment, and suggests that people need opportunities to become active in community decision making in order to improve their lives, organisations, and communities. It is through this co-learning process with adults that youth can both become empowered and reap developmental benefits. Youth participants are encouraged to be active collaborators and sharing their views contributes to critical dialogue, furthering awareness about how politics, socioeconomic position, culture and history can be fundamental in shaping individual life experience and health outcomes. By being active collaborators, youth can increase developmental assets such as competence, self-efficacy and sense of control by developing a critical awareness and engaging with their environment (Ledford *et al.*, 2013). Youth can be empowered only if they participate effectively in community and other organisations' affairs which may provide opportunities for youth to learn important skills, and try different roles and responsibilities.

In conceptualizing youth empowerment theory in relation to this study, the theory is useful to the study problem because it tries to provide the ways on how youth can be empowered through participating in various organizations like co-operatives in respect to aspects such as decision making, critical views and assets ownership for social-economic development.

2.3. Empirical Literature Review

2.3.1. The Status of Youth Membership Participation in AMCOS

All co-operatives restrict their membership to only those people who have a certain interest or common bond. The common bond is the link that exists among members of a certain group. It may be a place, residence, workshop or common profession. It is vital to develop the mutual confidence with members if a co-operative must succeed. Membership in co-operatives is open to all persons who belong to the group regardless the race, religion, colour, belief or job-status (Taylor, 2010).

With regard to inclusion of youth in co-operative, study by Sumelius *et al.* (2013) which focused on co-operative as a tool for poverty reduction found that there were few youth members and the youngest member was 25 years old in the sampled co-operative but did not give out the reasons for low participation. Okwanyet *et al.* (2010) in the paper named Youth and co-operative in Africa, argues that co-operative have "a generation blend" view of the youth but also "one stroke" view of youth; youth are involved in their strict capacity as members, youth are to some extent involved in co-operative but this not because they are youth. Participation of youth in co-operatives with regard to their membership is not as high as their presentation in general population. Co-operative tend to deal with youth who are older and economically active. There is a need to understand that youth is a life phase but as well as a socially constructed relational concept that subordinates youth to adult (Okwanyet *et al.*, 2010).

Okwanyet *et al.* (2010) found that most of youth were not involved in co-operatives from lower ages. Exclusion of youth in co-operative was accentuated for the lower age cohorts; 31-35 years were 40%, between 26-30 years old were 32%, between 21-25 years old were 20%, and between 16-20 years old were 8%. In discussing the characteristics and profile of co-operative members in Africa, they indicate that majority of members were adult farmers and these findings based on SACCOS.

However, there is limited information about the status of youth membership on: the inclusion of youth who are in co-operative in decision making and their membership eligibility in selected AMCOS- Kishapu District in Shinyanga region-Tanzania.

2.3.2. Barriers Constraining Youth Participation in AMCOS

Reviewing the literature on barriers constraining youth participation in AMCOS, a researcher reviewed on factors which influencing youth participation in AMCOS. Researching the factors influencing members to participation in agricultural co-operatives, Arayesh (2011) documented that there is a significant relationship between variables like age, background membership in co-operatives, the members' farmland areas, annual income, socio-cultural features, economical features, educational extensional features, managerial factors, psychological features, political factors and communicational informational factors in influencing people to participate in agricultural co-operatives. However, Arayesh (2011) presented the general factors which lead people either to participate or not participating in AMCOS but not focused on youth participation.

Moreover, Spielman *et al.* (2008) who did their study in Ethiopia revealed that farmers did not join the co-operatives because, they did not know if the co-operatives could benefit them, some people were not being accepted into the co-operative while others preferred to wait and see if the co-operatives could benefit so that they could join, as they feared to invest in the co-operatives because they were not sure if they could get back their money. Addition to that they had issues of trust in the organization, they lacked awareness about the co-operatives, some reported not having land in the area where the co-operative was located, and lastly, some farmers re-ported that they did not have money to meet membership requirements.

Furthermore, researching on youth and co-operative in Africa, Okwanyet *al.* (2010) identified factors that constraints youth to participate in co-operative organisations. These factors include, legal and institutional barriers; youth have to be over 18 in most countries to access co-operative services. Also, constitutions of co-operatives along gender, professional lines (non-members cannot participate), lack of collateral and poor credit rating and stereotypes about youth. Among other factors linked to poor youth participation included, the lack of mentors and products not tailored to the needs of youth, lack of early training in financial and entrepreneurship skills, limited adaptation of products for youth and inappropriate technology, limited information on co-operative and lack of sensitization/information of youth about co-operatives; hence stereotypes about co-operatives as spaces for adult males. The study showed that youth fail to participate in co-operative organizations especially SACCOS due to the identified constraints.

Generally, the available literatures on AMCOS and youth participation had a narrow focus and did not cover the aspect of youth participation in AMCOS in terms of status and barriers, for instance they focused on the aspect of age (Okwanyet *al.* 2010), size of youth in AMCOS (Sumelius *et al.* (2013); and social-economic benefits of AMCOS (Hartley MacPherson *et al.*, 2011, 2005). Other related studies which presented barriers of youth participation on AMCOS were western by nature (Areysh, 2011; Okwanyet *al.* 2010), not enough to be generalized to Tanzania context, in that case, Kishapu District Shinyanga.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research design for this study was both exploratory and descriptive design. Exploratory design was preferred because of limited theoretical information available to guide the study. And descriptive was also preferred as it enables to correct a lot of information in descriptive questionnaires. Therefore, a researcher was interested to develop better understanding about the issues regarding youth status and their barriers for AMCOS participation.

3.2. Description of the Study Area

The study conducted at Kishapu District, Northern party of Tanzania from the following reasons: The region is among the area where cotton is grown and AMCOS are highly operating, for instance, the district has 31 registered Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Societies dealing with cotton cash crop (Kishapu DCO, 2015). Moreover, the selected three areas namely; Ikomagulilo AMCOS, Lubaga AMCOS and Igaga AMCOS compose a reasonable number of youth members enough for the study. Other selection criteria based on good performance of these AMCOS especially in the inclusion of youth, provision of services and accessibility of information compared to other AMCOS in the areas.

3.3. Population, Sample and Sampling Strategies

A population is a totality of objects under investigation from which the sample was drawn (Adam and Kamuzora, 2008). The populations of this study were youth from AMCOS, non-registered youth, AMCOS Board members and District co-operative officers. The totals of 75 samples were selected for the study. The distribution is shown in table 1 below. The study used cluster sampling, purposive sampling techniques and simple random sampling. Cluster sampling was employed for selection of the sample from AMCOS members basing on their age and more concentrations on the co-operative members aged 18-35 years old. The purposive sampling was used to select respondents from co-operative leaders and the co-operative officers so as to get rich information from experienced respondents. Simple random sampling was also used to avoid researcher bias in selecting both registered youth and non-youth-members that live in the same areas.

Name of respondents	Ikomagulilo AMCOS	Lubaga AMCOS	Igaga AMCOS	DCO/Non members	Total
Co-operative members	19	15	17	-	51
AMCOS Board members	5	4	5	-	14
Non- members (Youth)	-	-	-	9	9
District CoF-operative Office (DCO)	-	-	-	1	1
Total	24	19	22	10	75

Table 1: Population and Sample Size

3.4. Data and Collection Methods

3.4.1. Primary Methods

The researcher used both primary and secondary methods of data collection. For instance, questionnaires as one of the primary methods has been used to collect data from a total of 51 AMCOS registered youth. The nature of questionnaire designed was of alternative responses of yes and no, others were multiple choice response questions. Other question demanded an open response to correct information relating to why-questions. Interview was also used as a tool for primary data collection to collect data from 15 key informants (1 District Co-operative Officer (DCO) and 14 Ikomagulilo, Igaga and Lubaga AMCOS-Board Members). The method was chosen in order to ensure the balance of

information between the co-operative members and management. Moreover, the study employed focus group discussion as primary method of data collection in order to obtain information from 9 youth non- members in the research area. The method was relevancy especially in filling gaps of information which were not covered by other methods.

3.4.2. Secondary Methods

Documentary review was used as secondary source of collecting data. The researcher reviewed official as well as non-official documents so as to gather secondary data for the study. The documents reviewed were AMCOS by-laws especially in conditions for membership; members' register book, general meeting minute's documents and other AMCOS documents in general. Furthermore, a researcher reviewed various reports from the internet, books and journals which facilitated the acquisition of relevant data. Recoding notebook was used as a tool for data collection.

3.5. Definition and Measurements of Variables

Background variables were defined to mean respondents' background information which included the following: name of organization, duration of membership, sex (male or female), age, marital status, education background, and members' occupation status. Empirical variables were two in this study namely, status of youth membership and youth barriers to join AMCOS. Status of youth was defined to mean youth inclusion in the decision making, leadership position, and eligibility of youth members of cooperative. Youth barriers as one of the variables was defined by the following measurement indicators poor youth perceptions, norms and power relationship in the community, presences of other similar and competitive business and outdated model of cooperative business.

3.6. Data Analysis and Presentation Techniques

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze background variables and empirical variables so as to get information relating to percentages, frequencies and averages. In that case, Data were entered in the computer and analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19. Moreover, thematic analysis of qualitative data was also used from which data were coded and categorized into related themes then quantified for easy interpretations. After analysis data were presented in forms of tables from which percentages, frequencies and averages were presented for each theme/variable.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Demographic Description of Respondents

Firstly, descriptive analysis for three AMCOS namely: Ikomaguliilo AMCOS, Lubaga AMCOS, Igaga AMCOS were presented. For instance, Ikomaguliilo AMCOS had 56 members of whom men were 73% and women were 27%. About 37.5% of the AMCOS members have been found to be aging between 18 and 35 years old. The results from descriptive analysis also showed that Lubaga AMCOS had 50 members of whom men were 78% and women 22%. Of all these members, 38% have been found to be aged between 18-35 years old. Further, descriptive analysis showed that Igaga AMCOS had 55 members of whom men were 74% and women were 26%; however, 38% of the members were found with age between 18 and 35 years.

Secondly, descriptive results showed gender of the respondents as follows: majority of AMCOS' members were males who amounted to 88% and female respondents who have been found to be 12%. Male respondents have been found to be dominating in the selected AMCOS since they hold a larger proportion in the AMCOS membership. Most of women legal members have been also found either widows or had membership by registration number of their late husbands or the divorced one or a single separated family who had the mandate of being the head of families. In particular to the three surveyed AMCOS, the findings revealed that, women were discouraged to join AMCOS because Sukuma culture **does** not allow women to own land and properties, also family decision making in Sukuma land is dominated by head of family. The above reasons imply that the participation of either youth or elder women is affected by exclusion in decision making from their family level and asset ownership taboo in their community.

Thirdly, the findings from descriptive analysis revealed that different respondents with different age group participated in the study. For instance, there was 2% of the respondents aged between 18-22 years old, 10% aged between 23-27 years old, 28% of the respondents aged between 28-32 years old, 50% of the respondents aged between 33-37 years, 8% of the respondents aged between 38-42 years old, and, finally, there were 2% of the respondents aged between 43-47 years old. It can be noted that most of youth who are between 23-37 years preferred to participate in AMCOS compare to the lower age group between 18-22 years.

Fourthly, descriptive analysis revealed that 90% as majority respondents were married, 4% of the respondents were widow, 4% were divorced and 2% were single. This indicates that rural youth who are married are more likely to participate in AMCOS activities than unmarried ones. In relation to these findings, it has been found that marital status has an impact to youth membership participation since the unmarried youth seemed to be excluded from co-operatives because they are not qualified to be members of AMCOS as most of them are landless.

Fifth descriptive analysis showed the findings relating to occupation of respondents. The study found that 100% of AMCOS members were farmers of the cotton cash crop and other food crops like sunflowers, millet, sweet potatoes small green beans and rice.

Also, the study revealed that 3% of the respondents were public employees, 35% of the respondents were self-employed on their own businesses especially in animal keeping, small businesses (shops) and motorcycle transport

business. Moreover, 3% of the respondents were house wives, and 9% had other occupations like village chairperson and traditional leaders; this means that most of the active members of AMCOS are peasant farmers who mostly engage in production of cotton to a large extent and animal keeping.

4.2. *The Status of Youth Membership in AMCOS*

This section presents the findings in relation to the research objectives. It presents the status of youth membership in AMCOS. The objective was measured by exploring the eligibility of youth members in AMCOS and youth involvement in decision making.

4.2.1. Eligibility of Youth Members in AMCOS

Eligibility of youth as the members of the co-operative was defined to mean the one who are qualified to be legal members of co-operative after satisfying the co-operative appropriate conditions. In assessing the eligibility of youth as members in co-operatives, the study aimed to know if youth are qualified to be members in relation to the provisions in co-operative by-laws and their practical implementations. Respondents were asked if youth are qualified to be AMCOS members in relation to the bylaws (as organization internal environment) and external organization environments on the qualifications of active and dormant members.

The descriptive analysis showed that while 92% of respondents pointed out that youth are qualified members because they are allowed to join and use AMCOS services like other members, 8% of respondent said that youth are not qualified to be members of AMCOS. This is because of the customs and traditions in the community especially in asset ownership like land and crops, despite the fact that the by-laws allow them to join.

Either during an interview by Ikomagulilo, Lubaga and Igaga Board members and reviewing AMCOS bylaws and members' register book, it has been revealed that by-laws allow people with minimum of 18 years old to become a legal member of co-operative. The bylaws consent youth to join AMCOS, but out of three selected AMCOS, revealed that no any person aged between 18-20 years joined as a member.

Furthermore, through AMCOS bylaws found that, members were supposed to sell a minimum amount of cotton kilograms to AMCOS per season, in particular Ikomagulilo a minimum of 200 kgs of cotton and 500 kgs of cotton in both Lubaga and Igaga. These conditions had found to be a threat to youth membership participation especially youth between 18-20 years old; this is because of customs and traditions of Sukuma people. At this particular age group youth are not land owners, and therefore, they involve in agriculture through working in their family farms, but the produces belong to the head of families who sell the produces. Also, most of them are still unmarried who have no qualification to be allocated their own land and dependent on their family for their daily needs. They cannot afford to invest in their own project.

This implies that, an external environment where the prospective co-operative members come from may affect the eligibility of being a member of co-operative; for instance, it has been found that the selected AMCOS concur to the co-operative policy of 2002 and act of 2013 especially on the co-operative member age, but due to the fact that youth are not asset owner as per customary law, some of the provisions impair their membership eligibility. They are not capable to sell the stipulated minimum amount of cotton kilograms hence discouraged to join co-operative. Therefore, for these paradigms, the selected AMCOS contradict themselves on promoting youth to join their institution, they tend to deal with the people who are economically active, own and control assets like land as well agricultural outputs at the same time they are preaching for accepting youth with 18-year-old. These finding are in line with Okwanyet *al.* (2010) who revealed that co-operatives tend to deal with older people who are economically active and who have control over assets and who can participate effectively in co-operative activities.

4.2.2. Youth Inclusion in Decision Making

The researcher measured decision making of youth in AMCOS using their leadership position and youth perception regarding their leadership position. It has been found that youth inclusion in co-operative is very essential for venturing new ideas and creativity. Okwany (2012) study on the women and youth opportunity for transformative co-operatives concluded that youth inclusion in leadership position is good for co-operatives and good for youth transformative development.

4.2.3. Youth in Leadership Positions

It has been found that the selected AMCOS had governing boards in place. The composition of each board varied from one co-operative to another ranging from 5 to 6 members. The difference was due to the fact that the co-operative act 2013 and Co-operative Rule of 2004 prescribe that the minimum number of board member should be 5 and not more than 9 so as to influence proper decision as shown in Table 5;

Age Group	AMCOS name Ikomagulilo board Members	Lubaga board Members	Igaga board Members	Total
25-34	1	2	1	4
35-44	2	1	4	7
45-54	1	2	1	4
55-64	1	1	0	2
Total	5	6	6	17

Table 2: Composition of AMCOS Board Members in Relation to Their Age Group

Table 5 above revealed that Ikomagulilo AMCOS had one board member who aged between 25-34 years, moreover, he was 34 years old and the rest were above 35 years old. Lubaga AMCOS had two board members aged between 25-34 years old and out of these two, one found to be a chairperson who aged 31 years old, the other two aged 34 and 35 years old respectively, and the remaining were above 35 years old. Further findings showed that Igaga AMCOS had one board member who aged 26 years old, two board members have been found to be at the age of 33 and 35 years old respectively, and that the rest were above 35 years old.

This manifests that, the ideal minimum age of AMCOS' leaders range from 26 and mostly preferred age ranges from 30 years and above. Therefore, the analysis on the inclusion of youth in leadership position shows, youth group between 18-25 years old are excluded in leadership position than elder youth between 26-45 years. The reason behind is as follows: firstly, youth are few in co-operative that is why they are less represented in leadership positions; secondly youth cannot participate effectively in AMCOS activities because most of them have no land for production to meet AMCOS conditions; thirdly, youth are perceived as high risk, unreliable, immature especially for the unmarried youth aged 18 to 20 years old in implementing AMCOS objectives as observed through key informants interviews.

4.2.4. Perception of Youth in Leadership Position

The status of youth as leaders in co-operatives was also measured by the perception of the respondents on the youth leader's effectiveness across organizational roles. Respondents were asked if the elected youth leaders are really responsible in doing AMCOS activities especially in market searching and other AMCOS activities compared to elders as shown in Table 6;

Effectiveness of Youth Leaders	AMCOS Name							
	Ikomagulilo		Lubaga		Igaga		Total	
	(n=19)	%	(n=15)	%	(n=17)	%	(n=51)	%
Yes	13	68	15	100	11	64	39	76
No	4	21	0	0	3	18	7	14
Do not know	2	11	0	0	3	18	5	10

Table 3: Perception on Effectiveness of Youth Leaders in Organizational Roles

Table 6 indicates that 76% of the majority respondents agreed that youth leader is effective in performing the organisation activities, however 14% of the respondents disagreed that youth leaders are effective in performing organisation role. The remaining 5% did not know if youth leaders are effective in performing organisation activities, the reasons behind varied from one AMCOS to another as discussed below; In comparison to two selected AMCOS, Lubaga respondents who amounted to 100% manifested that youth leaders are active in performing AMCOS activities compared to elders because the AMCOS was chaired by a youth. However, it was found that Lubaga AMCOS had more markets for their produces like GakiInvestment Limited, Jambo Oil and Ginneries Limited, SHIRECU, Urafiki Oil Mills Limited and other individual buyers compared to the other two sampled AMCOS which have been found to hold a limited market.

Furthermore, about 21% of respondents from Ikomagulilo and 18% from Igaga disagreed that youth are active in performing AMCOS activities. They believed that performance of youth board members was influenced by elders as they cannot perform effectively without the presence of elders. Moreover, 11% of Ikomagulilo respondents and 18% of respondents from Igaga said that they did not know because youth performance cannot be directly assessed since the board works as a team with the inclusion of elders.

Through key informants' interviews with Lubaga board members alleged that:

"Youth have to be included in the board since a) they are the main producers of cotton b) are energetic enough to deal with AMCOS operational activities for example searching markets, sensitizing other people (other youth) to join their co-operative and other overall AMCOS activities performance c) youth are innovative since they have exposure on technological issues" Therefore, the analysis of the results in Table 6 above imply that the inclusion of youth in AMCOS leadership positions is very essential in AMCOS sustainability since they are active in performing AMCOS activities in their leadership positions. Youth are innovative and able to cope with the changes in technology compared to elder only if the co-operative members create the opportunities to do so.

Likewise, these findings are consistency to the study by Okwany (2012) who recommended that youth should be included in co-operatives since they possess qualities of enthusiasm, motivation, enterprise, risk-taking, flexibility, energy, resourcefulness and willingness to try new approaches. They are key force behind technological innovation; a crucial asset

for boosting the development of co-operative institutions. To conclude this section, the findings revealed that youth leaders are effective in performing the AMCOS compared to elders. Therefore, the inclusion of youth in co-operative management is important for the sustainability of AMCOS.

4.3. Barriers Constraining Youth Participation in AMCOS

A number of factors have been associated with youth membership participation in AMCOS. This section has analyzed a number of limiting factors associated with youth participation in AMCOS, both youth members and non-members were involved in identifying these factors. The study identified the reasons why youth do not join the existing AMCOS from youth co-operative members as shown in table 7;

Factors Constrain Youth Participation	Ikomagulilo	Lubaga	Igaga	Total
	(n=19) %	(n=15) %	(n=17) %	(n=51) %
Complicated membership conditions	5	0	0	2
Co-operative is an outdated model of doing business	68	67	53	63
Negative perception on co-operatives	90	95	94	94
Existence of other business groups provide same services like of co-operative	95	93	100	98
Customs and traditions	100	93	94	96

Table 4: Factors Constrain Youth Membership Participation in AMCOS

Table 7 reveals that about 100% Ikomagulilo respondents, 93% Lubaga respondents and 94% Igaga respondents believed customs and traditions in their community constrain youth membership participation in AMCOS. The reasons given by respondents have been found to be the same; that according to traditions, youth are not asset owners; Youth are not given opportunity to own land until they get married or purchasing their own land from individual efforts; but also they do not own crops. This indicates that custom and traditions is among the identified factors which have highest significant relationship with youth participation in agricultural co-operative associated with asset ownership relationship in the community. When someone has an ability to own assets like land for production is likely to have an opportunity to join and use AMCOS services and fulfilling the requirements of being active AMCOS member.

Table 7 above shows that about 95% of the respondents from Ikomagulilo, 93% of the respondents from Lubaga and 100% of the respondents from Igaga alleged that the existence of other business groups which buy crops at higher price compared to present AMCOS. Moreover, they provide the same services like co-operative in their community discouraged youth to join their AMCOS. These business groups included Gaki Investments Limited, Birchand Oil Mills Limited, Badugu Ginning, Igunga Cotton Limited, Jambo Oil and Ginneries Limited, Kahama Oil mills Ltd, Urafiki Oil Mills Limited and Chesano Cotton Ginning Limited. The implication of this is that, the presence of private organisations as competitor has an impact to youth participation in the community but agricultural co-operatives still have room and trust to their members. Definitely, people still believe co-operatives organisations are non-exploitative organisations and best tools for members' socio-economic wellbeing because of ownership structure underpinned by their values such as democratic membership control. Besides, the study has been found that negative perceptions of co-operative organization constrain youth membership participation. About 90% of respondents from Ikomagulilo revealed that, negative perception of co-operative organisation depresses youth membership participation because of delaying in payments which are not made in time. Furthermore, about 95% of respondents from Lubaga respondents pointed out that negative perception resulted from isolation of their co-operative done by the government; the government does not provide services or any incentive to co-operatives, and therefore they are not recognized by the government compared to the previous time. This indicates lack of autonomy and independence in co-operatives. Either, as shown in Table 7 above, about 94% respondents from Igagaarose negative perception on co-operative; was due to the delay of payment as Ikomagulilo AMCOS respondents reported.

Furthermore, it has been revealed, 68% of the respondents from Ikomagulilo, 67% of from Lubaga and 53% from Igaga alleged that, youth were disappointed to join their AMCOS due to the fact that, youth clustered co-operatives as an outdated model of doing business since co-operatives do not use technology in delivering their services for example access to production technology information to farmers (members) and use traditional farming methods. Furthermore, through focus group discussion with non-members, it has been found a number of factors which discourage them to join AMCOS including; the type of core services provided by AMCOS. The services were not reflecting the current situation especially on the cotton produce which was termed as an outdated crop due to climatic change. Also, products in AMCOS were not tailored to the needs of youth who were facing a lot of economic challenges similar to lack of assets like land. Poor performance of the co-operatives in their community as co-operatives were associated with many problems like low prices and delay in paying farmers has been also found to stall new members from joining. Other reasons were inefficiency of the management committee to promote their co-operative; also, the non-members did not clearly see the economic differences between youth who were in co-operative and those who were not engaging in co-operative activities. They had not realized the benefits of being in the co-operative; as a result, youth farmers were discouraged to join.

The above findings concurred to the findings by Spielmanet *al.* (2008) done in Ethiopia on limiting factors for farmer participation in AMCOS which revealed that farmers did not join the co-operatives because ; (i) they didn't know if the co-operatives could benefit them (ii) some people were not being accepted into the co-operative while (iii) others

preferred to wait and see if the co-operatives could benefit so that they could join (iv) feared to invest in the co-operatives because they were not sure if they could get back their money (v) they lacked awareness about the co-operatives (vi) some farmers were reported not having land in the area where the co-operative was located and lastly (vii) some farmers reported that they did not have money to meet membership requirements. To conclude this section co-operative organization, need to work for and involve youth as the three-lens youth participation theory articulates, so as to identify their need and challenges so that they could address what they want. The following section presents the co-operatives service which are successful in attracting youth as one among the strategies to work for or involve youth in Agricultural Marketing Co-operative.

5. Conclusion

The study assessed the status of youth membership in AMCOS and barriers for youth participation in AMCOS, specifically in Kishapu-Tanzania.

- The findings revealed that youth membership participation in AMCOS is still low based on the sampled AMCOS. Also, youth are eligible members of AMCOS in relation to AMCOS by laws; they are effective leaders in performing organization activities, but the customs and traditions especially on asset ownership in their community hamper their eligibility;
- In case of barriers constraining youth participation in AMCOS, the findings revealed that there is outdated model of doing business, negative perception on co-operatives, existing of business competitors which provide same services as well as existing of some hindering customs and traditions in their community restrain youth participation in AMCOS. Therefore, it can be concluded that agricultural marketing co-operatives are marginalizing youth membership participation because of lack of innovations and poor services design, failure of the existing co-operative to design proper bylaws in relation to the surrounding community, and limited economic impacts to co-operative members which in turn inhibit youth to join AMCOS.

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