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Full Length Research Paper

Factors Constraining Rural Youths Involvement in Cassava Production in Onu – Imo Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria.

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The study entitled factors constraining rural youths involvement in cassava production in Onu- Imo Area of Imo State was conducted to find out problems rural youth who engage in cassava production faced despite the fact that governments have put in place programmes to boost agricultural production. One hundred and twenty youth were randomly selected from a list of 1200 youths obtained from the youth leaders of the communities visited. Questionnaire was used to elicit information and the data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as percentages, mean, and frequency counts presented in tabular forms. Majority (60%) were in their prime age of 21-30 years. These engage in cassava production to make money, get out poverty, and ensure there is food all the time and because of the demand for cassava. They clear bushes, get involved in weeding, planting, harvesting, fertilizer application, and other activities. But they are not without problems in their activities. They face the problems of inadequate land for production, capital, storage facilities, working implements/equipments, pests and diseases attack, low returns, peoples perception of agriculture, and so on. These problems could be solved if facilities are provided, loans and credits given, training of farmers by extension agents and enabling law on land access to enterprising farmers.

Keywords: Cassava, poverty, food security, youth, agriculture.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a nation blessed with good climatic conditions that favour agricultural production. Agriculture is an important sector in the economic development and poverty alleviation drive of many countries. The importance of this

sector is more pronounced in the developing countries including Nigeria where it is the main thrust of national survival, employment, food and foreign exchange earning (Adebayo and Okuneye, 2005). The role agriculture has played in the industrial growth and development of most of the industrialized countries in the world can not be over emphasized (Adeyemi and Adekunmi, 2005). Youth-in-Agriculture programme has been described as a very

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important structure for land and agrarian reform which will go a long way towards promoting the interest of youth in the agricultural sector of the economy (Gwanya, 2008). Since agricultural development is the basic tool for economic development, there is the need for more emphasis to be placed on the role youth can play in agriculture. In Nigeria, agricultural production is still carried out using physical strength, which declines with age. This has therefore been observed as one of the major constraints to agricultural production in Nigeria (Okeowo *et al.*, 1999). Though youths have desirable qualities that can promote agriculture, most of them have strong apathy toward it (Jibowo, 1998; Adedoyin, 2005; Adewale *et al.*, 2005). This has resulted in mass unemployment and lack of sustainable livelihood activities among the youths (Breitenbach, 2006). This has further led most youths into cultism, prostitution and street begging, among others (Sodique, 2006). With fewer youths into agriculture, the long-term future of the agricultural sector is in question. The development of the agricultural sector of the Nigerian economy therefore depends on the young people, more especially the rural youths. This is because a larger population of youths represents the link between the present and the future as well as a reservoir of labour (Okeowo *et al.*, 1999). The successive regimes at the Federal Government level have introduced various agricultural development schemes with the aim of encouraging the youth and boosting food production and farmers' income through provision of agricultural infrastructure, inputs and effective extension work (Jibowo, 2005). The state and local governments also introduced some agricultural programmes aimed at boosting food production and youths' participation.

Governments in Nigeria have come up with programmes to stimulate youth's interest in agricultural production and processing since the late 1980s. In 1986, the federal government established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) to provide vocational training to the youth, and in 1987, the Better Life Programme was created to empower women, especially female youths in the rural areas through skills acquisition and healthcare training (Akpan, 2010). In addition, The Peoples Bank and Community Banks were established in 1989 and 1990 respectively, to provide credit facilities to low income earners embarking on agricultural production and other micro enterprises, with special consideration to youth engaged in agricultural production (Akpan, 2010). In 1992, the Fadama program was initiated to enhance food self sufficiency, reduce poverty, and create opportunities for employment for youths in the rural areas. In 2008, the Akwa Ibom state government initiated an integrated farming scheme for recently graduated agricultural students, and set up a micro credit scheme for youths engaged in agricultural production and processing. Other state governments also initiated graduate and school-leaver's agricultural loan schemes in an attempt to

encouraged youth involvement in agricultural production, empower those engaged in agricultural activities, and combat youth unemployment (Akpan, 2010). Despite these incentives and the expanding markets for primary and secondary agricultural commodities, the involvement of the youth in agricultural activities has steadily declined in recent years (Adekunle *et al.*, 2009) inspite of the high current youth unemployment rate and abundance of agricultural jobs available.

The youth on the other hand, constitute the most important sector in any society. They serve as channels for the transmission of culture and the perpetuation of recognizable identity (Akinbode, 1991; Ekong, 2003). They also provide the manpower for the socio-economic development of the society. In the rural sector, youth provide opportunities for generating the farming entrepreneurs and other rural professions. In addition, rural youth enjoy certain life experiences, which can be considered advantageous. These include a greater frequency of interaction with family, and hence less emotional problems. They also enjoy earlier and greater involvement in work roles, and have opportunity of becoming economically independent earlier than their urban counterparts (Akinbode, 1991; Eremie, 2002). Furthermore, the rural youth's contribute to family labour, they also constitute a moving force in the development of their communities.

Arokoyo (1992) and Ekong (2003), noted that the youth who have the energy to take up agricultural production do not believe or have the knowledge that agricultural production can really be a profitable venture. Thus, there arises the urgent need to really teach them to know the importance and prospects in farming and take to it, thereby increasing the farming population. Moreso, the youth need to appreciate the role of agriculture, stay back in the villages where there are abundant resources and make use of what they have in productive activities. This will really support the extension workers, who are already short in number compared to the farmers that have to be reached (Eremie, 2002).

The current challenges in development are so demanding that only the participation of people who are energetic, creative, innovative, productive and committed who could bring development should all be mobilized. (Arokoyo, 1992; Mgbada, 2000; Solanke, 2004). These attributes which are critical to growth and development are substantially discernable in the youth. Thus, they constitute the major resource base for any country that wants to embark on any meaningful agricultural and rural development.

Problem Statement

Increased production of staple food crops, such as cassava, cannot be achieved by the use of traditional

production practices alone. It requires more efficient production technologies to cope with the demand for cassava products both for consumption and non-consumption (Adeolu, 1990). According to Nweke *et al.* (2002), eighty percent of Nigerians in the rural areas eat a cassava meal at least once a day; hence it plays a major role in the country's food security. The high consumption of cassava in the country led to an increase in the demand for this crop both for food and industrial uses, which exceeded the supply (Odigboh, 1985). Further more, cassava production is labour intensive; this is worsened by scarcity and high cost of hired labour especially when there is need to expand cassava production beyond subsistence level.

In order to reverse this trend, government and agricultural research institutes have demonstrated that increasing food needs of the country can be met by introducing improved crop production practices to farmers (PNADP, 1997). Cassava, the most widely grown root crop and staple food of most Nigerians has featured predominantly among the improved crop varieties that have been disseminated to farmers (PNADP, 1997).

Cassava has for a long time been a versatile staple food crop for the people of Onu-Imo Local Government Area of Imo State. It is well adapted to the traditional farming systems of the area. Small-scale farmers, majority of whom are rural youth, play a major role in cassava production in Onu-Imo Local Government Area. A number of recommended practices such as timely planting, fertilizer application, timely weeding, herbicide application and planting of stems inclined on ridges which will produce tuberous roots in the same direction to make harvesting easier have been introduced in an attempt to increase yield per hectare of cassava production (IAR&T, 2005).

Youth have been noted to play a vital role in agricultural production especially in developing countries Nigeria inclusive, where their contribution is paramount. Study has shown that children and youth contribute significantly in agricultural activities (Ugwoke *et al.*, 2005). Fashina and Okunola (2004), report that all 120 respondents sampled in their study on impact of agricultural programme on food production in Ondo State were youth and were fully involved in agricultural production activities.

However, because of Western education that our youth are acquiring everyday, there has been a depletion of this youthful labour force in agriculture. There is mass rural urban migration of young people who mostly have no vocational or technical skills looking for scarce white collar jobs (NEEDS, 2004). This migration leads to increased level of the unemployment in urban areas, social ills and vices among others. In Nigeria, data on rural youth participation in agriculture are scarce and in particular on food crops production in the study area (Ekong, 2003). The few studies available on food crops production have focused mainly on the parents of the youth while the youth who constitute a large proportion of the production force are neglected (Ekong, 2003).

The foregoing therefore, makes it imperative to carry out a study to assess the factors influencing rural youth adoption of cassava recommended production practices in the study area. A survey by National Manpower Board in 1990 shows a glooming picture on the unemployment figure in the country. About 5.7 million graduates are said to be unemployed, while the figure has been predicted to hit 15 million by the end of 2005 (Oladaja *et al.*, 2005). Unless appropriate opportunities and empowerment including an enabling environment, are provided for youth in their domain, the expectation of a sustained farming population will continue to be a mirage.

The broad objective of this study is to assess the factors influencing rural youth adoption of cassava recommended practices in Onu – Imo Local Government Area of Imo State. The specific objectives are to:-

- 1 describe the socio-economic characteristics and institutional variables available for rural youth involved in cassava production activities;
- 2 examine the level of involvement of rural youth in cassava production activities;
- 3 examine the reasons given by the rural youth for their involvement in cassava production activities, and
- 4 identify the major constraints to youth roles in cassava production activities

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in four communities in Onu-Imo Local Government Area of Imo State. Onu-Imo is one of the 27 Local Government Areas of Imo State. Onu-Imo is in Okigwe Agricultural Zone in Imo State Agricultural Development Project (ADP). Onu-Imo was chosen for this study because it is an agricultural area with high number of youth in agricultural and rural development activities. The projected population figure for Onu - Imo using an annual growth rate of 2.5% is thus, 57,227 in 2012. The Local Government Area (LGA) has two dominant seasons – rainy and dry seasons. Rain falls between April and October while the dry season starts from November to early March. The Igbo forms the major ethnic group. Christianity and Traditional African Religions are beliefs professed by the people. Onu-Imo falls within the tropical rain forests zone dense forest (FGN, 2004). Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of the Local Government basically due to the rich arable land suitable for the growth of a wider range of tropical crops. Food crops grown in the area include yam, cassava and maize. The cash crops grown are oil palm and cocoa. The people also keep animals like goats, pigs and poultry. Four communities were randomly selected from the study area. The communities were Okwe, Okwelle, Umuna and Umuduru-egbeaguru. The reasons for the selection were based on observed degree of rurality and the presence of many rural youth who are engaged in

cassava production activities. A village was chosen from each selected community. A list of 1200 rural youths was obtained from Imo State Agricultural Development Programme (IADP) and ten percent of the total number of youths were randomly selected given a total sample size of 120 youths from all the villages. The study made use of both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected by administering questionnaires to the selected rural youths. The data collected were on personal characteristics of the respondents such as age, family size, marital status, years of formal education, sex, farm size, farming experience, extension contact, leadership status, credit received, and membership of cooperative societies. Secondary data sources were also utilized to provide background information and other necessary information to achieve some aspects of the study. Such secondary data sources include – journals, proceedings, textbooks, annual reports of FAO, NAERLS and International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Descriptive statistics such as ranking, tables, percentages, frequency distribution and range were used to achieve objectives 1,2,3 and 4 of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic and Institutional Variables

The ages of the respondents were studied in order to find out the age group mostly involved in cassava production activities. The result in Table 1 reveals that 9.17 percent of the respondents were less than 20 years, while 43.33 percent and 33.33 percent were between 21 – 25 years and 26 – 30 years, respectively. However, 14.17 percent of the respondents were more than 30 years. The findings reveal that majority of the youths were at the productive age where their energies could be harnessed and utilized for productive venture in agriculture especially cassava production. Thus, it could be concluded that the youth in Onu-Imo Local Government Area were full of life and vigour and can contribute their efforts; physically, mentally and otherwise to boost cassava production in Imo State. Similarly, their relatively young age may make them receptive to new innovations unlike of the older ones who usually expect the maintenance of status quo. The study reveals that 81.67 percent of the respondents were male, while 18.33 percent were female. According to Adewale *et al.* (2005), gender is no barrier to active involvement in cassava production activities. However, Oladeji *et al.* (2003), observed that it is generally believed that males are often more energetic and could readily be available for energy demanding jobs like cassava farming. The low percentage of the female youth participating in cassava production could be attributed to the fact that females in the study area usually involved in several other activities

outside farming like food vending, hair dressing, tailoring and petty trading.

The finding reveals that 50.83 percent of the respondents were single while 49.17 percent were married. Since most of the respondents were single, they could have more time to learn new skills as well as save enough money for cassava production. Since a high percentage of the youth were single and young, they had latent energy in them to go into cassava production without distraction from family members. Table 1 shows that 5 percent of the respondents had no formal education, while 52.50 percent, 38.33 percent and 4.17 percent had primary, secondary and higher education, respectively. The implication of education in agricultural production according to Arnon (1987), is that education is an important socio-economic variable and a form of human capital for agricultural development. Similarly, Ogunbameru (2001) noted that education will likely enhance the adoption of modern farm technologies by youth and thereby sustaining a virile farming population. Ojuekaiye (2001), posits that education is an important socio-economic factor that influences farmers decision because of its influence on farmer's awareness, perception, reception and the adoption of innovation that can bring about increase in production. Since a high percentage of the youth were educated, their education is expected to enhance adoption of recommended cassava production practices in the study area. The size of the farm cultivated is a function of population pressure, family size and financial background of the farmers. One major characteristic of small-scale farmers is fragmented land holding. The results show that 63.33 percent of the respondents farmed on less than one hectare while 33.33 percent and 3.34 percent farmed on between 1- 2 hectares and more than two hectares, respectively. Going by Ojuekaiye (2001), classification of farm size of 0.1 hectare to 5.9 hectares as small farms, it then implies that all the respondents were small-scale farmers. This will not allow for meaningful investment and returns to scale on food security. Ojuekaiye (2001), defined household size as the number of people eating from on pot. It implies that the consumption unit is also the production unit. Family composition is an important variable in agricultural production because:

1. the available work force is obtained from it; and
 2. the size of farm-land is sometimes related to it.
- Responses on this variable indicate that 48.33 percent of the respondents had less than 4 people in their family, 45 percent had 4 – 7 people while 7 percent had more than 7 people in their families. That the respondents had low household size is understandable because they are youth and since they have latent energy, cassava production will increase and food security is assured.

Experience is gained with age. Considering the major occupation of the respondents which is farming, the length

Table 1. Respondents Socio-economic and Institutional Variables

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age in years		
≤20	11	9.17
21 – 25	52	43.33
26 – 30	40	33.33
>30	17	14.17
Sex		
Male	98	81.67
Female	22	18.33
Marital status		
Single	61	50.83
Married	59	49.17
Educational status		
No formal education	6	5.00
Primary education	63	52.50
Secondary education	46	38.33
Higher education	5	4.17
Farm size(ha)		
<1	76	63.33
1 – 2	40	33.33
> 2	4	3.34
Household size		
<4	58	48.33
4 - 7	54	45.00
>7	8	6.67
Farming experience(years)		
≤ 10	80	66.67
11 – 25	25	20.83
> 25	15	12.50
Leadership status		
Member	20	16.67
Non-member	100	83.33
Credit		
Access to credit	17	14.17
Non-access to credit	103	85.83
Cooperative societies		
Member	23	19.17
Non-member	97	80.83
Extension contact		
No contact	8	6.67
1 – 2	104	86.66
> 2	8	6.67
Total	120	100

of time in farming can be linked with the age of the farmers. As the age increases among the farmers, their years of experience also increase. Table1 shows that 66.67 percent of the respondents had been in cassava farming for less

than 10 years, 20.83 percent and 12.50 percent had been in cassava farming for between 11 – 25 years and more than 25 years respectively. With the above farming experience of the respondents, it is expected that the

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by their Involvement in Cassava Production Activities

S/N	Farm activities	Percentage*	Rank
1	Bush clearing	72.50	1 st
2	Harvesting	70.00	2 nd
3	Planting	69.20	3 rd
4	Land preparation	62.50	4 th
5	Marketing	60.83	5 th
6	Fertilizer application	43.33	6 th
7	Weeding	37.50	7 th
8	Chemical application	20.83	8 th

*Multiple responses

respondents will be able to make sound decisions as regards resource allocation and management of their cassava farms. One area where youth contribute greatly is in the area of leadership and politics. Youth have been noted to be less conservative in their nature. This gives credence to their being more receptive to change. According to Adesope (1999), if a vacuum has been noticed, it is almost likely that the youth will speak out and call the attention of the appropriate authorities. For instance, youth leaders go sourcing for credit facilities as well as farm inputs like fertilizers, cassava stem, chemicals and tractor hiring services. Also, youth leaders mobilize their members to draw the attention of the various government authorities as well as non-governmental authorities to attend to their needs. Data collected revealed that 16.67 percent of the respondents had leadership positions while 83.33 percent of them did not hold leadership positions. This is in order because leaders are usually few while followers are always in the majority. With the current democratic dispensation, youth leaders are not only seen but also heard because the various political associations usually have a youth wing. The more the youth are involved in politics the better for agricultural development which will ensure food security. Capital is an important factor of production. Youth are known to be at disadvantage in getting free and direct access to many sources of credit unlike their parents. Findings indicate that 14.17 percent of the respondents had access to credit for cassava production and majority (85.83 percent) did not have access to credit facilities. Writing on credit, FAO (1997), noted that credit should be considered a human right, a basis which allows men and women to face life. Credit is a very strong important factor that is needed to acquire or develop farm enterprise (Ekong, 2003). Its availability could determine the extent of production capacity. Cooperative groups are organized for the promotion of special interest or meet certain needs that cannot be achieved by the individual efforts. They contribute to the dissemination of new ideas, practices and

products as well as in sourcing for loan and farm input. Findings revealed that 19.17 percent of the respondents were members of cooperative society, while 80.83 percent of the respondents did not belong to any cooperative society. This agrees with the earlier findings why majority of the respondents did not have access to credit facilities. This also could determine the extent of production capacity. Agricultural extension service constitutes a driving force for any agricultural development. The relationship between agricultural extension agent and the farmer is an important determinant in improving yield of cassava as well as in ensuring food security. The result of the findings revealed that 86.66 percent of the respondents had contact with extension agents between one to two times a month. Seven percent had contact more than two times, while 6.67 percent did not have contact with the extension agents in the growing season prior to the time the study was conducted. There is need for more visits of extension.

The Rural Youth Level of Involvement in Cassava Production Activities

Cassava production involves the performance of several tasks. The result in Table 2 shows that the youth in the study area participated in most farming operations especially bush clearing (72.50 percent), harvesting (70.00 percent), planting (69.20 percent), land preparation (62.50 percent). Others include marketing (60.83 percent), fertilizer application (43.33 percent), weeding (37.50 percent) and chemical application (20.83 percent).

The findings tend to agree with the findings of Adesope (1999), Jibowo and Sotomi (1996) and Roy (2003), who reported active involvement of the youth in agricultural activities the youth who are an embodiment of zeal, strength, innovativeness should be encouraged as they perform their role in nation building as well as in sustaining the food security of our dear country in particular and the

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents According to the Reasons given for their Involvement in Cassava Production

S/N	Variable	Percentage	Rank
1	Food security	68.33	1 st
2	Profit/income	63.33	2 nd
3	Poverty reduction	60.00	3 rd
4	Credit acquisition opportunities	56.67	4 th
5	Cheap planting materials (stems)	54.17	5 th
6	Drought resistant	48.33	6 th
7	Employment opportunities	45.00	7 th
8	Demand for cassava	42.50	8 th
9	Grown on any type of soil	31.67	9 th

world at large and more importantly encouraging agricultural development. The implication of the above findings is that what the youth need is the right incentive to improve their level of productivity, since the zeal and energy to participate are there.

Reasons Given by the Rural Youth for their Involvement in Cassava Production Activities

Cassava, often referred to as “poor man’s crop”, is the fourth most important staple food in the tropics and plays a major role in alleviating the African food crisis (Hahn, 1997). From the results of the data (Table 3), the respondents revealed that the major reason for going into cassava production is food security (68.33 percent), profit (income) (63.33 percent), poverty reduction (60.00 percent) and credit acquisition (56.67 percent). Others include cheap planting stems (54.17 percent), drought resistant (48.33 percent) and employment (45.00 percent). Also, high demand for cassava (42.50 percent) and cassava can grow on any type of soil 31.67 percent. The above findings agree with Nweke *et al.* (2002), who noted that eighty percent of Nigerians in the rural areas eat a cassava meal at least once a day; hence it plays a major role in the country’s food security. Similarly, Odigboh (1985) noted that the high consumption of cassava in the country led to an increase in the demand for this crop both for food and for industrial uses, which exceeded the supply. Cassava is important, not only as a food crop but also as a major source of income. As a source of income, cassava generates cash income for the largest number of household in comparison with other staples, contributing positively to poverty alleviation (Ajayi and Onuche, 2005).

Major Constraints to Youth’s Participation in Cassava Production

The major constraints to the youth effective participation in cassava production were investigated. The major constraints reported by the respondents (Table 4) were low capital outlay, farmers not given respect, and inadequate land. These rank first (66.6 percent respectively). Other problems were poor infrastructure (53.33 percent), energy sapping (33.3 percent), non lucrative nature of agriculture in the study area (37.5), and no agricultural insurance (50 percent). These problems can be a serious barrier to cassava production outputs because all the respondents were small-scale farmers with majority (85.83 percent) not having access to credit facilities. Labour intensive (51.67 percent), lack of modern processing equipment and lack of improved technologies (45.00 percent) and (41.67 percent), respectively. Poor yield leads to the problem of unrewarding nature of agriculture as depicted by poor returns to investment with 44.2 percent. These hamper expansion because of its discouraging effect on the farmers. Transportation of produce (36.67 percent), while pests and diseases with 29.2 percent are all constraints to cassava production in the study area. Transportation is a major problem in the rural area as a result of the poor state of feeder roads especially during the raining season. Because of the bulky nature of cassava tubers and stems, transportation poses a challenge and the unfavourable market situations make cassava produce disposal a difficult task.

In supporting the above findings, Adekunle et al.(2009) said there are economic, social and environmental factors reducing rural youth involvement in agricultural production in Nigeria . Economic factors include inadequate credit

Table 4. Constraints to Youths' Participation in Cassava Production

Constraints	Percentage
Low capital outlay	66.6
Labour intensive	51.7
Inadequate Land	66.6
Inadequate modern processing equipment	
High cost of improved technologies	45.0
Transportation (bulkiness)	41.7
Pests and diseases	36.7
Poor returns to investment	29.2
No agricultural insurance	44.2
People's perception of agriculture	50.0
Non-lucrative-ness of agriculture	58.3
Its energy sapping	37.5
Farmers not respected	33.3
Poor storage facilities	66.6
	53.3

facilities, low farming profit margins, and a lack of agricultural insurance, initial capital and production inputs. Social factors include public perception about farming and parental influence to move out of agriculture. Environmental issues include inadequate land, continuous poor harvests and soil degradation. These findings are largely in agreement with the results obtained from the interviews conducted with selected youth leaders. The results further reveal that economic based constraints seem to be the most important factor.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that majority (that is 60 percent) of the respondents were in their active age (21 – 25 years). The implication is that the respondents were young, strong, active and very energetic and were very likely to ensure adequate food security for their families and Nigeria in general. The respondents were mostly small-scale farmers with fragmented holdings. About 95 percent of the respondents had formal education. The implication is that it will hasten the adoption of farm technologies. Only 14.17 percent of the respondents had access to credit and 19.17 percent were members of co-operative societies. Some of the socio-economic and institutional attributes of the respondents were found to have negative effects, which were implicitly not conducive for increased output. These included fragmented holdings and low credit. Data show that 72.50 percent of the respondents participated in bush clearing. Other roles included planting, weeding, fertilizer application, chemical application, land preparation as well as harvesting and marketing. All these roles require a lot of

energy which are abundant in the rural youth. It was discovered that 40 percent of the respondents adopted planting of healthy stem cut at midpoint, 45 percent adopted planting time while 65 percent adopted plant spacing. Sixty-nine percent adopted planting on ridges at an angle while 49 percent and 73 percent adopted weeding time and fertilizer application, respectively. It was discovered that 68.33 percent of the respondents indicated food security as reason for involvement in cassava production. Other factors included profit/income, poverty reduction, credit acquisition, cheap planting materials (stems), and drought resistant. Others included employment, demand for cassava and growth on any type of soil. It was discovered that 56.67 percent of the respondents indicated low capital outlay as a major constraints. Others included labour intensive, land acquisition as well as lack of modern processing equipment, lack of improved technologies, transportation, pests and diseases. Because the rural youth lack basic collateral, finance becomes a major constraint in cassava production.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proffered to encourage youth's succession in agriculture and enhancing cassava production output in the study area:

- i. Low capital outlay was identified. To solve this problem, credit should be made available to young cassava farmers. The rural banking scheme as well as other micro-credit agencies should be encouraged to

accommodate the young cassava farmers (youth). Also savings mobilization should be encouraged among the rural youth.

ii. Findings indicate that all the respondents were small-holder farmers with fragmented farmland. It is suggested that government should pay attention on land consolidation programme in view of the fragmented holdings. This will ensure maximum benefits of mechanization of recommended cassava is need for redistribution of land. The excess land should be redistributed to the less privileged rural young farmers.

iii. There are limited extension contacts in the study area. It is therefore recommended that the extension agents should be motivated to improve their work in terms of more coverage in the studied area.

iv. There was problem of labour because the respondents were youth and have small sized family. Government should encourage the youth by establishing tractor hiring services at a subsidized rate.

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