

Family Attachment to Coffee Farms, a Case of Coffee Farming in Kisii County, Kenya

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Abstract: Coffee farmers are elderly averaging 55 years of age and have a high attachment to coffee farms. Coffee is an important crop to the Kenyan economy as it is the fourth foreign exchange earner. The study was carried out to establish the extent of family attachment to farms and particularly coffee farms. Random sampling procedure was employed to obtain data using structured questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion on a sample of 227 from a target population of 900 coffee farmers in Kisii County. Research was analyzed at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Correlation with aid of Statistical Package for Social Science. The research findings showed that 62.1% considered important that farm stayed in family ownership, 70.1% considered farm stays farmed by the family, while 73.8% would wish to continue earning from coffee farms even when they will be old enough to carry out farming. Furthermore 45.4% of the respondents indicated unwillingness of retiring from active farming even at old age. The study found the mean age of farmers to be 57 years while mean acreage of farms being 1.67 acres. The research findings give information on the level of family attachment on coffee farms and how it may direct extension approach in pursuit of improved coffee production.

Keywords: Family, Coffee, farming and attachment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coffee is cultivated in over 80 countries mainly the equatorial Latin America, Southeast Asia, India and Africa (Murthy & Naidu, 2012). Coffee's energizing effect was first discovered in the northeast region of Ethiopia (Talbot, 2002) and its cultivation first took place in southern Arabia, while drinking occurred in the middle of 15th century in the Sufi shrines of Yemen (Sualeh, et al., 2013). Coffee is ranked the fourth foreign exchange earner in Kenya to tourism, tea and horticulture providing about 10% of the GDP (Republic of Kenya, 2010; Gathura 2013; Gemson, 2013). Coffee industry employs over 600,000 households; however, many farms are neglected or over utilized in terms of cropping and less fertilizer application with minimal agricultural practices (Karanja et al., 2002; Coffee Research Foundation, 2011). The average minimum age for coffee farmers in Kenya is 51 years (Theuri, 2012) with average coffee production of 2 Kg per tree down from the optimal average production of 10 Kg per tree of coffee (Coffee Research foundation, 2011). In Kisii County the average coffee production per tree is less than 1kg per tree (Coffee Board of Kenya, 2013). Coffee farms are neglected or abandoned especially farms whose original owner died or are old that they are unable to carry out coffee farming activities due to ownership wrangles or uncertainty (Deininger, 2003).

Farmers are attached to farms such that young people below 35 years have little access to the key resource in agricultural industry (Bogue, 2012). Farm attachment affects transfer of management control of coffee farms and its value chain in entirety. Involvement of the young farmers and women provides an incentive to expand the farm (Calus & Van, 2008; Agu, 2013) and taking charge of running coffee farm business (Republic of Kenya, 2010). Farming continuity must be planned in as systematic way to gain assurance of sustained productivity (Hallock & Hallock, 2012). Careful planning of

farm management choice enables those attached to every aspect of farming to responsibly act on stages of farming and increase productivity and income to the household (Adeola & Doppler, 2013).

There has been declining participation of family in farming yet Continuity in farming, is crucial in determining the industry structure and the number of people carrying out farming (Mishra et al., 2010; Hicks et al., 2012). Arrangement of continued farming affects farm performance, both in income and returns (Morris et al., 1997). The choice of a successor opens farm perspectives, which influence farm management (Lobley et al., 2010). Farms can differ from each other, because of different expectations and how to manage it (Mishra et al., 2010). According to Calus & Van (2008), the difference between farms is characterized by the Total Farm Assets (TFA) and crop management and is associated with attachment of the farm to the family.

In Kenya, farms are highly attached to the family and patrilineal such that whenever the husband dies, the wife holds the land in trust until the male children are mature enough to inherit the land (Wanyeki, 2003; Yamano et al., 2005; Hennessy & Rehman, 2007; Sifuna, 2009; Goetting, 2011; Clemens et al., 2011; Price, 2011). Although various factors affect crop production after the death of a working-age male head, land conflicts emanating from farm attachment might be a contributing factor to the reduction in coffee production (Deiningner, 2003; Yamano et al., 2005; Clemens et al., 2011; Yerkinbayeva & Bekturganov, 2013).

Farm attachment determines succession strategy hence influencing the cumulative number of farmers (Calus & Van, 2008; Mishra et al., 2010). Family farms are beyond profit-maximizing venture and the productive life of farm assets may extend well beyond that of current farm operators, and future value depends crucially on continuity (Gasson & Errington, 1993). According to Sharma et al. (2001) and Morris et al. (1997), well developed succession plans increase chances of a smooth and effective farm attachment. However, contrary to the significant concern on planning, business owners and managers rarely outline their future succession (Astrachan & Kolenko, 1994; Sharma et al. 2001). Most stakeholders in family businesses have different feeling toward succession planning according to their attachment to it (Lansberg, 1988). Psychological determinants to succession planning of farms may imply a letting go of power or retaining power within family all of which depends on family dynamics (Sharma et al., 2001; Cassidy & McGrath 2014).

Farm attachment is a key to continuity of farming (Comstock et al., 2010; Lewicka, 2010; Lewicka, 2011). Farm attachment is characteristic of different areas of livelihood both human and natural, and which has an interaction in one-way or the other (Hildenbrand & Hennon, 2005; Urquhart & Acott, 2013). Farmers' connection and level of attachment with their farms affect their livelihoods and may be physical (Stedman, 2003) or social (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). Land is more than a farm to grow crops they are locations with history, symbolic, and place of emotional satisfaction (Dominy, 2001; Gray, 1998; Hildenbrand & Hennon, 2005; Kuehne, 2013). Farm attachment is important due to the impact on how farmers view and ultimately organize their farms; family derives identity from farms they grow crops on (Burton, 2004). Farmers are attached to family farm even when they engage in agribusiness elsewhere or have sold the family farm (Cheshire 2013).

While many studies have focused on farm attachment little have been done on family attachment on coffee farms hence, the purpose of the study was to determine the extent of attachment of coffee farms by family members in Kisii County, Kenya.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research design:

This study employed a case study research design, which was a deliberate attempt to collect data from members of population in order to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A case study research design was used because the target population was too large to observe directly hence it was therefore useful because of the economy of research.

Area of study:

Kisii County is located in Nyanza region and borders Nyamira, Narok, Homa bay and Migori Counties. The County is inhabited by the Gusii community who are traditionally farmers (Omwoyo, 2008). The main crops produced are Maize, Bananas, Beans, Potatoes, Tea, Sugarcane, Coffee and Horticultural crops. The area is averagely 1,800 feet above sea

level, bimodal rainfall and characterized with undulating valleys and hills that are gentle and is one of the leading coffee growing areas in the country and in the Western Region of Kenya (Coffee Board of Kenya, 2013). The County has a population of 1.1 million people according to 2009 census report, in an area of 1,317 km² having a population density of 874.7 people per Km². The county has 9 constituencies namely; Bonchari, South Mugirango, Bomachoge Chache, Bobasi, Bomachoge Borabu, Nyaribari Masaba, Nyaribari Chache, Kitutu Chache North and Kitutu Chache South.

Target population:

The study targeted a targeted a total population of 900 farmers (Coffee Board of Kenya, 2013) and a sample size of 227 persons distributed within the target population among the small scale farmers who provided information on attachment of coffee farms by families and farmers characteristics. Millers were targeted to provide information on characteristics of farmers who deliver coffee for milling while the government officers were selected to provide general information on coffee farmers in Kisii County. The distribution of the sample included a total of 20 farmers affiliated to 9 randomly selected factories, which were chosen for participation in the research giving a total of 180 farmer respondents. The 9 selected factories were; Sieka factory of Kiononcha FCS, Nyakoe factory of Nyakoe FCS, Nyaguta factory of Nyaguta FCS, Nyosia factory of Nyosia FCS, Magena factory of Magena FCS, Borabu factory of Kenyeny FCS, Nyamarambe factory of Nyamarambe FCS, Kionyo factory of Nyambunde FCS and Gesebe factory of Kenyoro FCS.

Sampling design and procedure:

Random sampling procedure was followed to collect data from Kisii County farmers. The number of farm family's targeted and who are coffee farmers was estimated to be 900. The sample frame was obtained through consultation with stakeholders in the nine constituencies. A random sample was obtained from a list of chosen farm families from the chosen factories and in depth interviews conducted to 227 respondents who were coffee farmers. Sample data was drawn from Kisii County farmers at random in order to get clear and unbiased representation. The sample drawn was calculated using Fisher formula (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003)

Research instruments:

Both primary and secondary data was used in the research. The primary data was obtained from coffee farmers, millers and extension officers form ministry of Agriculture. Secondary data was obtained from coffee co-operative records. The data collection instruments used included questionnaires and in depth interview schedule administered to 227 respondents in order to get survey information, Questionnaires provided structured information, being administered without the presence of the researcher and was comparatively straight forward to analyze (Wilson & McLean, 1994). The questionnaire comprised both open and closed ended questions; it was modeled according to the objectives. Further the interview schedule in focus group was prepared for Farmers Cooperative Society management representatives, millers and government representatives the questions structured in the sheet tallied with the objectives of the study.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments:

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research result i.e. the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Questionnaires or interview schedules are valid when they actually measure the intended parameters. The need to test the content validity of the research instruments was hence inevitable. The feedback provided the opportunity to modify the items to ensure that they cover the variables investigated in the research.

The questionnaire was pre-tested by thirty selected coffee farmers in Nyamache Sub-county, Kisii County. This helped the researchers in obtaining various insights into problems that were not predictable prior to the study. It also helped in establishing the reliability and validity of research operations. Before going to the field, content validity of the instruments was achieved through circulating the research tool to experts in the field of research to evaluate the items contained in the instruments in order to determine their validity. This is in accordance with Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) that, content validity judgment is made better by a team of experts in the field of the research.

Reliability is the surety of consistency of research measurement or the degree to which the questionnaires as a measure of an instrument, measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subjects (Orodho,

2005). Data reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha with aid of SPSS program whose results was $\alpha=0.85$ and which provided assurance that there was precision with the data that was collected.

Data Collection Procedures:

The researcher developed data collection instruments and identified special Knowledge, experience and training required for data collections. In selection of enumerators, the researcher considered addressing cultural, ethnic, and other population characteristics that would have affected the data collection while ensuring that confidential data were protected. No confidential information was discussed with unauthorized persons; all copies of records test scores and other data were kept in a secure place for future retrieval and delivery to appropriate persons and place. During the data collection activities, the researcher did not keep any notes or documentation that contain identifying information due to confidentiality principal. Before collecting data, a Research Permit was sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. A letter was sent to the Coffee Co-operative Societies requesting to be allowed to collect data from their members.

Data analysis and presentation:

In this study, data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The objectives were analyzed descriptively and presented using frequency and percentages. For inferential statistics, Pearson Correlation was conducted to test the significance of the study at 95% confidence interval. Data coding, entry and analysis was done with aid of SPSS version 22 (2014) and Excel platform computer programme. The researcher coded the questions in excel and keyed in the results according to the codes assigned. Further careful reading was done through all the transcripts to get a sense of the whole while writing thoughts in the margin and identifying the major categories represented in the universe and underlining units of meaning related to the identified major categories. The researcher then identified relationships between major and subcategories. There is a link between categories and subcategories because the subcategories explain the categories in detail. The entered data was exported to SPSS program for analysis and generation of results, which were both descriptive and inferential by frequencies and Pearson Correlation respectively.

3. RESULTS

Return rate :

The questionnaires were administered to 227 respondents that included 207 farmers, 9 agricultural officers, 9 cooperative officers and 2 officers from the milling section. A total of 214 questionnaires were returned, this translates to 94.3 % return rate meaning the respondents were positive towards the study

Important that farm stays in family ownership and farmed by the family:

Results in Table 1 shows that, 62.1% of the respondents considered their farms to stay in family ownership while 15.9% were indifferent and 2.3% considered not important. This provides evidence that there is a strong attachment between family and farm. A total of 70.1% of the population consider important that the farm stays farmed by the family, 4.2% considered neither important nor unimportant while 3.3% consider not important. This gives an indication that the community has a strong attachment to the farmland and do not wish to let it move to other people who are not family members. A total of 22.4% could not give their opinion and this could also indicate a sign of sensitivity of the matter. The results agree with findings by Oxfam (2004); Bülow & Sorensen, (2007); Shari (2012) and Wachira (2008) on the family attachment on farms being high.

Table 1: Important that farm stays in family ownership

Importance	Farm stays in family ownership		Farm stays farmed by the family	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Not important	5	2.3	7	3.3
Neither unimportant/important	34	15.9	9	4.2
Important	133	62.1	150	70.1
No response	42	19.6	48	22.4
Total	214	100	214	100

Important that farm stays in the farmers' name:

On importance of farm staying in ones name, 32.7% considered important, while 34.6% considered neither important nor unimportant while 8.4% considered not important as shown in Table 2. This gives high percentages of farmers maintain farms in their names even at the time they are not be productive. This confirms findings by Daudelin (2005) and Anne (2009) on ways of reducing conflicts on land and reasoning why male children are considered better heirs than female.

Table 2: Important that farm is in farmers name

Importance	Frequency	Percent
Not important	18	8.4
Neither unimportant/important	74	34.6
Important	70	32.7
No response	52	24.3
Total	214	100

Concerns and fears about succession:

Results in Table 3 shows that a total of 21% had no fears of the succession plan while 10.7% had reservations of the succession of the farms. Most respondents indicated fearing their children will not continue farming coffee as they expected. This could be inferred as a key reason of why coffee farmers do not wish to release the farms to new generation despite their deteriorating energy as indicated by Too (2013) on fears of releasing land to his children.

Table 3: Farmer concerns about succession

Have concerns/ fear	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	10.7
No	45	21
No response	146	68.3
Total	214	100

How succession is envisaged:

Table 4 shows that a total of 20.1% of the population envisages succession as transfer by will, 15.9% envisages succession by formal partnership arrangement followed by full succession, 6.5% envisages lifetime transfer in future, 1.9% envisages part transfer followed by remainder later and 0.9% intend to give formal lease with an option to sell at a later stage. The results are in tandem with findings by Sottomayor (2011) on farmer attitudes towards farming and Andre & Platteau (1998) on how farmers need to be careful to stress on land by the rapid population growth.

Table 4: How farmer envisages succession

Succession envisaged	Frequency	Percent
Formal partnership arrangement followed by full succession	34	15.9
Formal lease with an option to sell at a later stage	2	0.9
Part transfer followed by remainder at later stage	4	1.9
Life time transfer in the future	14	6.5
Transfer in your will	43	20.1
No response	117	54.7
Total	214	100

Need to continue earning income from farm when you no longer farm yourself:

A large population (73.8%) indicated need to continue earning income from farming even after they retire from active farming, only 4.7% indicated lack of dependence of farming income upon retire while 7.0% were not certain. This could

be a reason of many farmers not succeeding their farms to younger ones. Large number of farmers of 45.4% do not wish to retire from active farming while 23.8% would wish to retire from active farming and 15.4% are not certain of whether to retire or not. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Continue earning from farming after retire and willing to retire.

Response	Continue earning income from farm when you no longer farm yourself		Willing to retire from active farming	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	158	73.8	51	23.8
No	10	4.7	97	45.4
Possibly	15	7	33	15.4
No response	31	14.5	33	15.4
Total	214	100	214	100

Encouraged children to take over Coffee farm:

High percentage of 59.8% have encouraged their children to take over farming while 22.4% have neither encouraged nor discouraged their children from farming. A total of 1.4% actively discouraged children from farming on basis that coffee farming is not profitable and this was confirmed from the Focus group discussion and article by Too (2013) and Sottomayor (2011) that children ought to be encouraged to carry on with farming. Results showing response on encouragement of children to take over farming is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Encouraged children to farm

Response	Frequency	Percent
Encourage	128	59.8
Neither	48	22.4
Actively discourage	3	1.4
No response	35	16.4
Total	214	100

Correlations statistics:

The study findings in table 7 a and 7 b showed that there was no significant correlation between encouraging children on coffee farming having fears any fears about it ($p=0.61$), farm remaining in family ownership ($p=0.46$), farming carried out by family member ($p=0.71$), farm stays in owners name ($p=0.15$) and farmer continue earning even at the age he is not participating in farming. The study findings also revealed that there existed significant correlation between encouraging children to carry out coffee farming and expectation of children to farm ($p=0.04$) and farmer wishing to retire from active farming when he is old ($p=0.04$).

Table 7 a: Correlations statistics

		Expectation of children to farm	Have fears with children farming	Farm remains in ownership	Farming carried by family
Encourage children to do farming	Pearson correlation	0.24	-0.08	-0.057	-0.03
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.04	0.61	0.46	0.71
	N	74	43	166	162

Table 7 b: Correlations statistics

		Farm stays in the owners name	Continue even when not able to farm	earning not able to farm	Wish to retire from active farming
Encourage children to do farming	Pearson correlation	0.12	0.02		0.16
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.15	0.84		0.04
	N	158	177		175

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions:

The study was carried to determine the extent of family attachment of coffee farms in Kisii County, Kenya. The study was conducted on coffee farmers and stakeholders and involved participation of 224 coffee farmers and 5 stakeholders. The data analysis was conducted through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The study established that Coffee farmers are elderly with an average age of 57 years, and have strong attachment to their farms ($p=0.04$). Extension therefore of new technologies should consider involvement of diverse family members to participate in coffee farming especially with fact that the 59.8% of farmers have encouraged their own children to do coffee farming

Recommendations:

There is need for farmers to encourage every family member to participate in coffee extension programmes to let them understand what is needed and encourage farming business sustainability. Agricultural Extension approaches should target different cohorts of the families to encourage continuity of coffee farming.

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