

# Intentions of Young Farmers Club (YFC) Members to Pursue Career Preparation in Agriculture: The Case of Uganda

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## Abstract

*The decline of youth engagement in agriculture worldwide amidst an increasing global population remains a big challenge to ensuring food security for future generations. This phenomenon is worsened by the shortage of professional female agriculturists, though they comprise about 60% to 80% of the traditional workforce in the agriculture sector of most developing countries (Beintema & Di Marcantonio, 2009). This descriptive study had 102 participants who were members of Young Farmers Clubs (YFCs) from two secondary schools in eastern Uganda. The study's purpose was to determine the perceptions of members of YFCs on their intent to pursue agriculture-related career preparation after graduating from secondary school, including indications of familial support for preparatory experiences. The findings indicate that a large majority (95.1%) of the students was likely or highly likely to continue with their education at the post-secondary level. A high percentage (70.6%) was likely or highly likely to pursue agriculture-related career preparation; however, significant differences existed between the sexes. Female club members were less certain than their male peers about pursuing higher education involving the study of agriculture. Additional research should be conducted on how to attract more females to study agriculture at the tertiary level, especially in developing countries.*

Keywords: agricultural clubs; career preparation; females; post-secondary education

Students engage in many activities outside the formal school curriculum which may contribute positively to their future endeavors, including career choices (Massoni, 2011). Lunenburg (2010) stated that “*extra[-]curricular, co-curricular activities, and non-classroom activities*” (p. 1) are labels for the experiences students may engage in outside the formal school curricula and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably. These activities may include sports and clubs such as chess, debate, drama, journalism, and 4-H among many others. Such activities provide students with opportunities to put into practice what has been taught by providing the valuable experience of applying and integrating knowledge outside of the formal classroom (Lunenburg, 2010; Massoni, 2011).

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During their early years, learners acquire a number of experiences which impact their personal self-efficacy and related attitudes toward certain careers (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 2001). Donald Super asserted in his Life-Career Rainbow that from the ages of 15 to 24 years students are at the *exploratory stage* during which they develop skills and make tentative choices about careers based on related experiences (Leung, 2008; Super, 1980). It is important to note, however, that some learners become aware of their career interests as early as age 14 (Sastre & Mullet, 1992). Whitehead (1929) posited that “valuable intellectual development . . . mostly takes place between the ages of sixteen and thirty” (p. 1). This age group comprises the *youth* in most countries. According to Annan, Blattman, and Horton (2006), although the age range for youth varies from country to country, the United Nations classifies youth as young people from 15 to 24 years of age.

Even though youth comprise a majority of the population in most developing countries (Kruijssen, 2009), very few are interested in pursuing careers related to agriculture (Boleman & Burrell, 2003; Mukembo, Edwards, Ramsey, & Henneberry, 2014), and yet their participation is critical to ensure food security for present and future generations. This situation is more distressing in regard to females who comprise a majority (60% to 80%) of the agricultural workforce in most developing countries (Beintema & Di Marcantonio, 2009). However, only about 25% of females are enrolled in agriculture-related career preparation (Kruijssen, 2009), resulting in a shortage of professional female agriculturists.

The deficit of youth interest and engagement in agriculture-related careers can be partly attributed to inadequate career guidance about and awareness of the many career opportunities available in agriculture (Kruijssen, 2009). Kruijssen (2009) asserted that one of the ways youth can be attracted to agriculture is through formal and informal networking with peers, including forums that promote agricultural knowledge, skills, and projects such as agricultural organizations in schools. Youth organizations provide opportunities for students to learn how to interact with others, improve academic performance, develop leadership skills, and also serve as forums in which students learn about and explore careers (Alfeld et al., 2007; Mukembo et al., 2014).

Practical experience in the real world, involving the use of acquired knowledge, leads to an increased understanding of both the subject matter and its applicability to solve the challenges encountered in everyday life (Chiasson, 2008). According to Wardlow and Osborne (2010), learners ought to be taught useful skills applicable to real-life situations, which they are likely to encounter later in life, e.g., through learning experiences that include problem solving. Similarly, Booker T. Washington asserted that education should equip learners with skills to overcome future challenges, and this could be achieved by engaging learners in practical problem solving experiences to attain the necessary skills (Gordon, 2008). As learners mature, they learn from these experiences and construct new meanings from the many situations encountered during their lives. According to Dewey (1951), however, not all experiences are equally educative; and no two individuals are likely to have the exact same experiences (Callison, 2001). But how much does participation in agriculture-related organizations such as Young Farmers Clubs (YFCs) influence students' aspirations toward agriculture as a career? To address the question, this study sought to assess the intentions of members of YFCs to continue their education, including the prospect of members pursuing agriculture-related career preparation at the post-secondary level.

The human capital theory (HCT) undergirded this study. “[H]uman capital [HC] refers to [all] the acquired skills, knowledge, and abilities of human beings” (Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991, p. 3) acquired through deliberate investment in education and training to realize their full productive potential (Hartog & Van den Brick, 2007; Hornbeck & Salamon, 1991; McFadyen, 2006). Further, conjoining the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1987, 1991) with factors influencing career choice (Hackett & Betz, 1981; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2002; Tang, Pan, & Newmeyer, 2008) augments our comprehension of the relationship between HCT and career choice. HCT comprises all knowledge and skills acquired by individuals through both

formal and informal education, including on-the-job-training resulting from deliberate investments made by society and individuals, which generates returns to both (Nafukho, Hairston, & Brooks, 2004). HCT postulates education and training as a basis for personal and societal development, which benefits a country's economy *writ large* (Becker, 1993, 1994; Ben-Porath, 1967; Mincer, 1981; Olanyiyan & Okemakinde, 2008; Schultz, 1972; Van der Merwe, 2010; Zula & Chermack, 2007). To that end, because HCT is rooted in education and training, including an individual's potential and experiences, a synergistic relationship exists between HC investment through education and individuals' career choices. Key traits that make up the HC acquired by an individual, i.e., the person's accumulated skills, knowledge, abilities, and experiences, influence career choice (Margolis, Plug, Simonnet, & Vilhuber, 2004); see Figure 1.

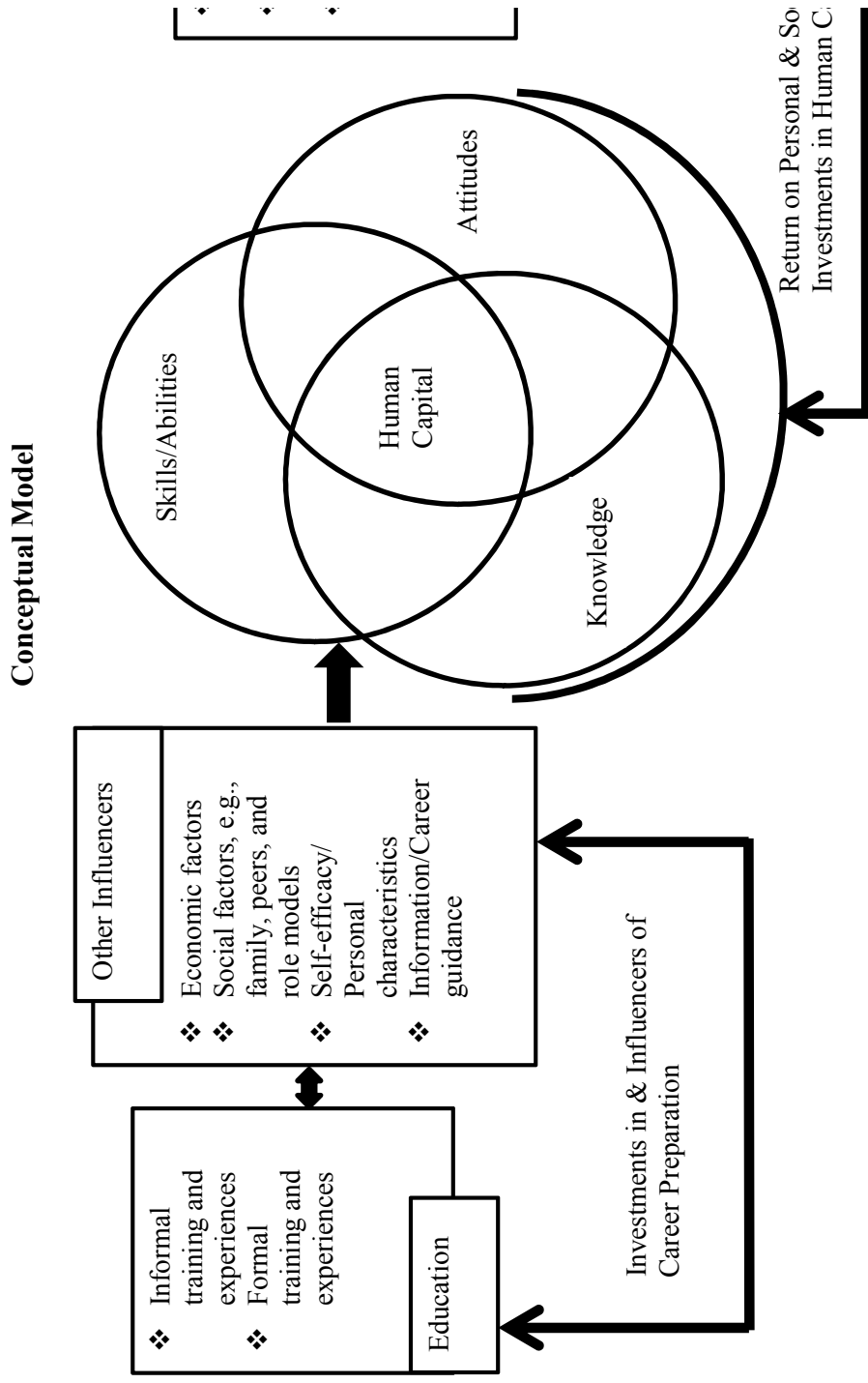


Figure 1. The relationship between education, career choice, human capital theory, and return on investment. Adapted with views of young farmers clubs members on their clubs' activities, their career interests, and their intentions to pursue agricultural preparation at the post-secondary level: An embedded case study of two secondary schools in eastern Uganda," by Mukembo thesis, p. 61

### Purpose and Objectives of the Study

This descriptive study's purpose was to determine the perceptions of members of YFCs on their intent to pursue agriculture-related career preparation after graduating from secondary school, including indications of familial support for preparatory experiences. The study also sought to describe associations between selected characteristics of the YFC members and their sex. Five objectives guided the study: (a) describe the level of parental support for students' participation in YFCs; (b) determine the percentage of YFC members who had family members with careers in agriculture; (c) describe the level of intent of YFC members to continue their education at the post-secondary level; (d) describe the level of intent of YFC members to pursue agriculture-related career preparation at the post-secondary level; and (e) describe associations between YFC members' sex and other selected personal variables.

### Research Design and Methods

The investigation used a single case (embedded) study design (Yin, 2009). Such a design can assist in focusing a case study inquiry, and the subunits may offer important opportunities for more in-depth analysis (Yin, 2009). In addition, the inquiry employed cross-sectional survey methodology and was purposeful (Creswell, 2012; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). One-hundred and two members (49% male; 51% female) of YFCs in two secondary boarding schools in eastern Uganda were surveyed. These were the only schools found to have active YFCs in eastern Uganda at the time of the study during February of 2013.

Yin (2009) stated that a case study's findings should not be generalized to other samples but may be generalized to theoretical propositions. The real business of a case study is particularization *not* generalization (Stake, 1995). Moreover, Stake (1995) maintained that "[w]e take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it is, what it does" (p. 8).

The study's survey questionnaire was developed by the researchers and a panel of experts from the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications, and Leadership at Oklahoma State University, which included three faculty members. The panelists and three agriculture teachers in Uganda reviewed the questionnaire for content and face validity; thereafter, the researchers made slight revisions. A field test determined the target population was capable of completing the questionnaire (Creswell, 2012; Gay et al., 2009). After the field test, a few minor adjustments were made to the final instrument to improve its readability (Creswell, 2012).

The questionnaire's items measured students' attitudes and intentions using categorical and ordinal scales (Gay et al., 2009). Attitude scales "measure what an individual believes, perceives, or feels about self, others, activities, institutions, or situations" (Gay et al., 2009, p. 150). Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. In regard to the instrument's ordinal scales, frequencies and percentages were calculated. Because no mean scores or other tests of central tendency were calculated, Cronbach's alpha and other tests of internal consistency were not appropriate. Cramer's *V* was used to determine the strength of associations between selected variables. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 was used to analyze the data. The lead researcher coded and hand-entered the students' responses into an SPSS data file. Because this study was intended to describe the specific case of the two schools studied, generalizability of the findings may be limited.

## Findings and Results

### Objective #1: Describe the level of parental support for students' participation in YFCs

Nearly three-fourths of the students (74.5%) indicated their parents were either *very supportive* (40.2%) or *supportive* (34.3%) of their participation in the YFCs (see Table 1). About one-sixth (17.6%) of the students were not certain, i.e., *neutral* about their parents' support, and only 7.9% reported their parents were either *not very supportive* or *not supportive at all* of their participation in the clubs (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Levels of Parental Support for Students' Participation in Young Farmers Clubs*

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Very supportive	41	40.2
Supportive	35	34.3
Neutral	18	17.6
Not very supportive	6	5.9
Not supportive at all	2	2.0

### Objective #2: Determine the percentage of YFC members who had family members with careers in agriculture

A majority of students (70.6%) indicated either one (50.0%) or both parents (20.6%) had an agricultural career, and 29.4% reported neither of their parents had a career related to agriculture (see Table 2). Nearly six-in-ten (59.8%) responded that a sibling or another relative had a career related to agriculture and about four-in-ten (40.2%) said they did not (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Percentage of Young Farmers Club Members Who had Family Members with Careers in Agriculture*

	<i>f</i>	%
Parents with an agricultural career		
Both	21	20.6
One	51	50.0
Neither	30	29.4
Sibling or another relative with an agricultural career		
Yes	61	59.8
No	41	40.2

**Objective #3: Describe the level of intent of YFC members to continue their education at the post-secondary level**

More than three-fourths (77.5%) of the members of the YFCs reported they were *highly likely* to continue their education at the post-secondary level and 17.6% indicated *likely* to continue; no participant reported he or she was *not likely at all* to pursue additional education (see Table 3). However, 2.0% of the participants were *undecided* about the likelihood of continuing their education at the post-secondary level, and 2.9% reported they were *unlikely* (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Intentions of Young Farmers Club Members to Continue Their Education at the Post-secondary Level*

	<i>f</i>	%
Highly likely	79	77.5
Likely	18	17.6
Not sure/Undecided	2	2.0
Unlikely	3	2.9
Not likely at all	0	0.0

**Objective #4: Determine the level of intent of YFC members to pursue agriculture-related career preparation at the post-secondary level**

A large number of club members (70.6%) reported they were either *highly likely* or *likely* to pursue agriculture-related career preparation at the post-secondary level (see Table 4). More than one-in-five (22.5%) of the members were *undecided* about whether they intended to pursue career preparation related to agriculture (see Table 4). Almost 7% were either *unlikely* or *not likely at all* to pursue agriculture-related career preparation at the post-secondary level (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Intentions of YFC Members to Pursue Agriculture-related Career Preparation at the Post-secondary Level*

	<i>f</i>	%
Highly likely	35	34.3
Likely	37	36.3
Not sure/Undecided	23	22.5
Unlikely	6	5.9
Not likely at all	1	1.0

**Objective #5: Describe associations between YFC members' sex and other selected personal variables**

A student's sex was significantly associated ( $p < .05$ ) with personal interest as a reason for joining the YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .357$ , sig. = .013); see Table 5. More females than males *strongly agreed* personal interest was a reason that influenced them to join their YFC. Forty-nine of the females either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* compared to only 39 of the males who either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* (see Table 5). This association demonstrated females were more strongly motivated to join their YFC because of personal interests than male members.



Table 5

Association of Student's Sex and Personal Interest as a Reason for Joining Young Farmers Clubs

Sex	Personal interest					Total	Cramer's $V^*$ Sig.
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree		
Male	2	2	6	18	21	49	
Female	0	2	0	13	36	51	
Total	2	4	6	31	57	100	.357 .013

Note. \*Cramer's  $V$  ranges in value from -1 to +1. Values near 0 indicate a very weak relationship, and values near 1 indicate a very strong relationship. Cramer's  $V = .10$  (small effect size); Cramer's  $V = .30$  (medium effect size); Cramer's  $V = .50$  (large effect size) (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 1997).

A student's sex was also significantly associated ( $p < .05$ ) with gaining life skills as a reason for joining the YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .490$ , sig. = .000); see Table 6. More than twice as many females than males *strongly agreed* gaining life skills was a reason that influenced them to join their YFC; 42 of the females *strongly agreed* compared to only 17 of the male club members (see Table 6). This association demonstrated that significantly more females joined their YFC for the purpose of gaining life skills than did males.

In addition, a significant association ( $p < .05$ ) was found between a student's sex and studying an agricultural field at the post-secondary level (Cramer's  $V = .370$ , sig. = .007); see Table 7. Male club members indicated they were more *likely* or *highly likely* and less *undecided* than females to study an agricultural field at the post-secondary level (see Table 7). One-half of the males responded being *highly likely* but only about one-fifth of the female club members indicated the same response (see Table 7).

Table 6

Association of Student's Sex and Gaining Life Skills as a Reason for Joining Young Farmers Clubs

<u>Sex</u>	<u>To gain life skills</u>					<u>Total</u>	<u>Cramer's <math>V^*</math> Sig.</u>
	<u>Strongly disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neutral/ Undecided</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly agree</u>		
Male	6	3	5	18	17	49	
Female	0	2	1	7	42	52	
Total	6	5	6	25	59	101	<u>.490</u> .000

Note. \*Cramer's  $V$  ranges in value from -1 to +1. Values near 0 indicate a very weak relationship, and values near 1 indicate a very strong relationship. Cramer's  $V = .10$  (small effect size); Cramer's  $V = .30$  (medium effect size); Cramer's  $V = .50$  (large effect size) (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 1997).

Table 7

Association of Student's Sex and Likelihood of the Young Farmers Club Member Studying an Agricultural Field at the Post-secondary Level

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Likelihood of studying an agricultural field at the post-secondary level</u>					<u>Total</u>	<u>Cramer's <math>V^*</math> Sig.</u>
	<u>Highly likely</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Not sure/ Undecided</u>	<u>Unlikely</u>	<u>Not likely at all</u>		
Male	25	15	6	3	1	50	
Female	10	22	17	3	0	52	
Total	35	37	23	6	1	102	<u>.370</u> .007

Note. \*Cramer's  $V$  ranges in value from -1 to +1. Values near 0 indicate a very weak relationship, and values near 1 indicate a very strong relationship. Cramer's  $V = .10$  (small effect size); Cramer's  $V = .30$  (medium effect size); Cramer's  $V = .50$  (large effect size) (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 1997).

An analysis of the strength of relationships between YFC members' sex and other selected personal variables using Cramer's  $V$  revealed no significant associations ( $p < .05$ ). All members regardless of sex *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that the need to improve their academic performance was one of the reasons they joined YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .183$ , sig. = .502). The association between

student's sex and socializing or making friends as a reason for joining the YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .269$ , sig. = .132) indicated students' responses were somewhat uniformly distributed across the categories of agreement regardless of sex. The relationship between student's sex and study trips/agricultural shows as a reason for joining YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .186$ , sig. = .499) indicated roughly equal distribution across the categories of agreement, although the female club members *agreed* more. Most of the students *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, irrespective of their sex, that they joined YFCs because membership aligned with their career aspirations (Cramer's  $V = .274$ , sig. = .105). Almost all of the students, irrespective of sex, reported they were *highly likely* or *likely* to continue with their education at the post-secondary level (Cramer's  $V = .219$ , sig. = .181). Finally, most students, regardless of sex, indicated their parents were *very supportive* or *supportive* of their participation in the YFCs (Cramer's  $V = .177$ , sig. = .527).

### Conclusions and Implications

A majority of students irrespective of sex indicated their parents were supportive of them participating in the YFCs. This may imply the students' parents valued the activities of the clubs and saw them as avenues that could provide opportunities for the personal growth and development of their children whether male or female. Most of the respondents (70.6%; see Table 2), however, had one or both parents who worked in agriculture-related careers, and almost six-in-ten had other relatives with careers related to agriculture (see Table 2). The findings that a majority of students' parents and other relatives had careers related to agriculture may explain why most students viewed their parents as supportive of involvement in the YFCs.

A high number of students (77.5%; see Table 3) in YFCs were *highly likely* to continue with their education at the post-secondary level, and more than two-thirds (70.6%) were either *highly likely* or *likely* to pursue agriculture-related career preparation (see Table 4). Participation in a student organization may have provided students with opportunities to explore various careers (Alfeld et al., 2007), including opportunities in agriculture. Male club members, however, indicated they were more *highly likely* and less *undecided* than the female members to study an agricultural field at the post-secondary level (see Table 7). This implied that female club members were not as interested as the male club members in pursuing careers involving agriculture. The finding provides support for a previous study by Kruijssen (2009) who reported that only about 25% of the total enrollments of students in agriculture-related career preparation in Sub-Saharan African countries were female. Similarly, Beintema (2006) concluded that only about 20% of the agricultural researchers in the developing world were female. In addition, Kanté (2010) and Kanté, Edwards, and Blackwell (2013) described an acute shortage of female agricultural extension workers in Sub-Saharan Africa.

No significant associations ( $p < .05$ ) were found between a club member's sex and academic performance, interest in socializing or making friends, participation in study trips or agricultural shows, or club membership aligning with career aspirations as reasons for joining the YFCs. All members irrespective of their sexes *agreed* or *strongly agreed* these were reasons that influenced their decisions to join the YFCs. Members, therefore, viewed clubs as affiliations that contributed positively to their academic performance, socialization, and achievement of career aspirations. These findings are congruent with what several researchers (Adebo, 2009; Alfeld et al., 2007; Lunenburg, 2010; Massoni, 2011; Mukembo, 2013) have reported about the role of intra-, co-, and extra-curricular activities, including student organizations such as clubs, supporting academic achievement as well as personal growth and development. To this end, experiences acquired by the students through club participation may influence career choice and contribute to their human capital development, thereby representing a return on the investments made by society and the individuals themselves (see Figure 1).

A significant association ( $p < .05$ ) was found between a student's sex and personal interest and gaining life skills as reasons for joining the YFCs. Although both sexes *agreed* or *strongly*

*agreed* these were reasons that attracted them to join YFCs, more females than males *strongly agreed* (see Table 5 & 6). For these students, the clubs were viewed as important contexts in which their interests could be explored and life skills gained, especially in the case of females.

### Discussion

A large number of participants in this study indicated one or both of their parents had a career related to agriculture, and they had a sibling or another relative employed in agriculture. In addition, many of the students indicated they were either *likely* or *highly likely* to pursue career preparation related to agriculture. This left the researchers speculating whether the students were under any social pressure from their parents and other relatives. In other words, were they influenced by a *subjective norm* (Ajzen, 1987, 1991; Ajzen & Madden, 1986; see Figure 1, *Other Influencers*) to pursue careers similar to those of their family members? Or rather, could it have been that the students viewed their parents and relatives as career role models (Kerka, 2000; Kracke, 2002) and were inspired to pursue careers similar to theirs?

The finding that personal interest was more of a major factor influencing females to join their YFC than it was the males aroused the researchers' curiosity to discover if the females were more *passionate* about their club. Further, more female club members *strongly agreed* that they joined their YFC to gain life skills, such as leadership and communication skills. Could it be that the females' YFC provided them more opportunities to acquire life skills than did the males' club? Other studies may be warranted to answer these questions.

### Recommendations for Practice and Additional Research

The Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda should formulate policies that encourage teachers, club patrons (advisors), and other educators to use club activities, whether intra-, co-, or extra-curricular, as a way to enhance instructional objectives. Club activities should be used to supplement the formal teaching and learning process, especially in regard to the practical application of content and theories that resonate with students' career awareness and preparation. The provision of meaningful learning activities and related experiences may enable students to comprehend better the principles and concepts taught in their classrooms by engaging in practical, hands-on application of such through club activities (Barber & Eccles, 1999; Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Johnston, 1952; Ramsey & Edwards, 2004; Shumow, 2003). In addition, the practical experiences stand to increase the vocational knowledge and skills of the students, bring about a better quality of human capital, and result in higher returns on related investments, which would contribute to the economic development of Uganda (see Figure 1). Mincer (1981) and Psacharopoulos (1985) asserted that the returns on education as an investment were higher in developing countries than in developed countries. Mincer (1981) attributed this condition to the shortage of human capital in many developing countries and that scarcity being larger than in developed nations.

Patrons (advisors) of YFCs should cooperate to provide valuable, career-themed experiences for their clubs' members. This could be achieved by sponsoring inter-school competitions where students showcase the knowledge and skills they acquired through their clubs' activities. These activities may include but would not be limited to speaking contests, debates, writing and reporting on issues pertaining to agricultural trends/policies in Uganda and elsewhere in the world, as well as crops, livestock, and poultry evaluation competitions. Agricultural professions should be invited to assist in planning, delivering, and assessing the events. These kinds of formal and informal interactions as well as networking with peers from different schools and adult professionals would promote awareness and interest among the students (Kruijssen, 2009), which may encourage more students to consider agriculture as a career choice. By doing this, the link between the activities and career preparedness should be stressed to the club members who

participate. Such experiences may increase student involvement and interest in agriculture and agriculture-related careers, thus attracting more youth to the sector and thereby increasing its human capital (Mukembo et al., 2014; see Figure 1).

The colleges and universities involved in the training of human capital for teaching agriculture in the secondary schools of Uganda should emphasize club management and student advising, including career guidance, as part of their preparation programs. This would increase the likelihood that club advisors are well-prepared to handle the challenges of establishing and managing student clubs in the schools where they teach, as well as advising students about careers. In addition, in-service training for teachers in secondary schools should be provided to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage student organizations and to offer career guidance.

Agriculture teachers should form a professional association to enhance the coordination and management of the YFCs, to support resource sharing, as well as to increase the likelihood of their professional networking and development in Uganda. This may enhance their ability to advocate for favorable policies and resource support from various stakeholders, including the Government of Uganda. Such an organization could also give the club advisors a unified voice to lobby for support and recognition of YFCs in regard to their potential for contributing to the modernization of Uganda's agriculture sector (Diaz, 2004; National Agricultural Advisory Services, 2011). Further, it could be an avenue for educating stakeholders on the importance of engaging youth in productive experiences at an early age to increase the likelihood of their contributing to national development by providing human capital for the future of Uganda's agriculture sector (see Figure 1).

Because females traditionally serve as primary caregivers in their homes and communities, their career preparation and resulting career trajectories may be less linear than many males (Domenico & Jones, 2006; Heins, Hendricks, Martindale, 1982; Welsh, 1983). Therefore, longitudinal studies of students, especially females who were members of YFCs or other student organizations, should be conducted to determine the impact of their participation on the careers they chose to pursue. This would help in understanding better the influence of student participation in school organizations such as YFCs on their members' career choices.

Attracting more females to careers in agriculture requiring post-secondary education is an issue of concern in many developing countries (Beintema, 2006) and perhaps most acutely in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kanté, 2010; Kanté et al., 2013). Females in this study were less certain than males about their likelihood of pursuing agriculture-related career preparation after graduation from secondary school (see Table 7). Why was that the case? Additional studies are warranted to explore this difference between the sexes. The need also exists for more research on how to increase the number of females pursuing agriculture as a career in developing countries. This could bring about better returns on investment in human capital and improve food security in these nations. To this end, Kathleen Lay of ONE, an international non-governmental organization fighting extreme hunger and preventable diseases in the poorest countries, posited that “[i]nvesting in women's economic empowerment is a high-yield investment, with multiplier effects on productivity, efficiency and inclusive growth for the [African] continent” (as cited in Ben-Ari, 2014, para. 17). Further, other researchers (Psacharopoulos, 1985; Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004) asserted that, overall, educated females bring about more economic returns to their communities than males. A qualitative study involving professional female agriculturists may shed light on how best to attract more females to agricultural careers in Uganda and other developing countries.

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