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PERFORMANCE OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A CASE OF CARITAS INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural production is a crucial driver of socio-economic development. Agricultural production improves household's income through the sale of farm produce and at the same time it improves household nutrition level as household can access a diverse variety of foods such as meat, milk, meat and eggs. This study examined the performance of poverty alleviation programmes and socio-economic development: a case of Caritas International in Homa Bay County within Kenya. The independent variable under study was crop development. The study was anchored by the empowerment theory and supported by the restricted opportunity theory. The study adopted the descriptive study design to describe the social and economic characteristics of the target population. The target population was 1,142 household heads out of which through stratified random sampling, 92 respondents were selected to be part of the study sample. Proportionate sampling was then employed to ensure that the three sub counties under study were proportionately represented in the sample. The data was collected through questionnaire. Data analysis was done through the use of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 29. Descriptive and inferential statistics were generated to help in summarizing data to aid in making meaningful conclusions and recommendations. Tables, charts and percentages were used to present the summarized data. The findings of this study reveal that crop development enhances household nutrition and on other hand surplus realized from production is a source of income which can be used for investment in education, descent housing and access to better healthcare services. This study recommends that the national and county governments should supplement the efforts already made by Caritas in alleviating poverty through crop development. There is need for providing more resources to the poor households, so that crop production can be done in a large scale to enable commercialization. There is need to conduct a study on how land fragmentation affects household's level of production in terms of technical efficiency of agriculture and the sustainability of food production system.

Key words: *Crop Development, Poverty Alleviation, Socio-economic development*

INTRODUCTION

Ebere (2022) in her study titled, "Assessment of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria", posits that for socio-economic development to be attained there is need to meet the various social development needs of people. The social development needs are derived from social development goals which mainly focuses on human deprivations like; Health Status since healthcare is critical in socio-economic development as it leads to higher living standard and increase productivity of labour; hunger and food insecurity as most countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa are experiencing climate change and as a result the effects have led to a decline in the production of staple foods such as maize, yam, cassava, sorghum, beans and millet and finally Safe water and sanitation as many countries are faced with the challenges such as poor access to adequate and safe drinking water, poor hygienic practices and lack of access to sanitation services.

Yousaf & Bhatti (2022), in their study "Impact of Technical and Vocational Education and Training on Poverty Alleviation through Skill Acquisition", asserts that vocational training leads to reduced poverty incidences as a result of the availability of more employment opportunities and earnings. This study reveals that enhanced vocational training has the potential to empower the youth in terms of imparting skills demanded in the job market, thereby leading to improved earnings. Vocational training creates more opportunities for the youth hence making them to earn better wages which significantly contributes to poverty alleviation. Ouma (2019), in his study "Effects of Non-financial and Capacity building services on the welfare of households: Evidence from Homabay Town Sub-County, Homabay County Kenya", asserts that capacity building strategies such as training services, seminars and interactive sessions have a positive and significant influence on the welfare of households. The findings from this study reveal that capacity building has the potential of enhancing the social infrastructure owned by an individual or a community hence empowering households to be self-reliant.

Radeny, Rao, Ogada, Recha and Solomon (2022) in their study "Impacts of climate-smart crop varieties and livestock breeds on the food security of smallholder farmers in Kenya", analyzed the influence of climate-smart agriculture technologies on household dietary diversity and food security in Kenya. The findings of this study revealed that the adoption of improved and resilient breeds of livestock like the Galla goats led to improved household dietary diversity by 38% and on the other hand reduced household food insufficiency by 90%. Tolerant livestock breeds have led to improved livestock production, leading to nutritional benefits from eggs, meat and milk. Households have enhanced opportunities to increase their income by selling the surplus from livestock production to purchase other farm products not produced on farms.

Mujeyi, Mudhara & Mutenje (2021), in their study "The impact of climate-smart agriculture on household welfare in smallholder integrated crop-livestock farming systems: evidence from Zimbabwe" attributes low crop production in most of the countries found in Sub-Saharan Africa to climate change. In order to increase agricultural productivity there is need to adopt climate smart technologies which can enable farmers to optimize agricultural production thereby withstanding the negative effects of climate change on crop production.

Radeny, Rao, Ogada & Solomon (2022) in their study "Impacts of climate-smart crop varieties and livestock breeds on food security of smallholder farmers in Kenya", analyzed the influence of climate smart agricultural technologies on household dietary diversity and food security in Kenya. The findings of this study revealed that the adoption of stress-tolerant varieties of crops such as sorghum and cowpea led to improved household dietary diversity score by 40% and reduced food insecurity by 75%. The study also revealed that the stress-tolerant crop varieties have the potential of minimizing crop failure and increasing crop yield, thereby increasing food availability to the households and improving dietary diversity. The farmers are also able to sell the surplus from crop production in order to earn extra income which can allow them to purchase crop products which are not produced on-farm.

The incidence of extreme poverty continues to rise in Kenya; this is the case despite the numerous efforts in recent years by the central government, county governments, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, corporate organizations and philanthropists in alleviating the incidence of extreme poverty (Nyamboga et al, 2014). According to Ambale (2018),48% percent of the population living areas within Homa Bay County are extremely poor against National Poverty Indicator which stands at 45%. In order to reduce the incidence of poverty, development agencies and national governments have implemented a number of strategies, which includes but not limited to education and skills development projects, microfinance projects, vocational training projects, provision of essential medical services and the improvement of water and sanitation facilities (Ahmad, Fatima & Tariq, 2023). Despite many development agencies and the government implementing various poverty alleviation programmes in Homa Bay and other parts of the country, the community living in this area is still lagging behind in socio-economic development (Ayoo, 2022).

Radeny et al (2022), Ouma (2019), Awuor et al (2021) and Mujeyi et al (2021) conducted studies on the influence of poverty alleviation programmes on poverty reduction; however, there is still lack of information on the degree of influence that such programmes have on socio-economic development. This study will seek to fill the knowledge gap that has been created by this shortage in empirical evidence. This knowledge gap, coupled with the slow progress in poverty alleviation (Muguchu, 2010 & Republic of Kenya, 2011) which has become a source of concern formed the basis for carrying out this study, Performance of Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Socio-Economic Development: A Case of Caritas International Programme in Homa Bay County, Kenya. This study sought to evaluate the effect of Poverty Alleviation Programmes on Socio-Economic Development focusing on Caritas International Programme in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The specific objective was to examine how crop development affects socio-economic development
This study will be of benefit to the National Government through provision of knowledge and insights on aspects of development that need strengthening in order to reduce citizens' vulnerability to incidences social exclusion and extreme poverty. The findings from this study will also provide insights on the gaps that should be addressed so as to promote socio-economic development of communities. The findings from this study will provide a foundation on which governments can formulate pro-poor policies, which are geared towards the improvement of assets and capabilities of the poor. The study will also help in designing policies that take care of needs, preferences and capabilities of the poor within the community. Researchers and academicians will

use findings from this study to fill the gaps in the literature on the topic under study and findings will be used as empirical literature in future studies by other researchers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

This research study was based on the Empowerment theory since in order for a community to be socio-economically developed, households should be empowered through the creation of opportunities that can enable them to improve their well-being. Such opportunities may include increased access to food, better healthcare services and access to training opportunities to acquire skills.

Empowerment Theory

This theory was put forward by Julian Rappaport in in 1981 and later on by Marc Zimmerman in the year 2000. They both believed that empowerment involves the process of giving individuals or groups who are marginalized the power or control over their lives. Empowerment employs the use of strength-based approach, where individuals are seen as competent and can act independently but they still need resources and opportunities within the environment to explore and utilize them. It involves giving people social structures and resources which enables them to take control of their lives (Rappaport, 1981). According to Zimmerman (2000), empowerment theory has both processes and outcomes. The processes are activities, structures and actions which enables a person or individuals to acquire skills and resources which can enable them to solve problems affecting them within the community. For instance, an individual may be facilitated to attend a training session where he/she develops skills which can help him/her improve the living conditions. The outcomes are the measurable attributes that can be seen in an individual after the implementation of an intervention (process) that was meant to empower. Some of the potential outcomes may be the use of the newly developed skill to earn income or increased accessibility to community resources e.g safe drinking water or improved healthcare services. This theory relates to this research study since poverty alleviation strategies includes processes whose outcomes normally creates opportunities for the poor to be empowered economically and enable them acquire skills and knowledge. The outcomes from programmes includes opportunities for self-employment and better investment hence improving the socio-economic well-being of poor households thus promoting sustainable development.

Restricted Opportunity Theory

The theory of restricted opportunity was first introduced by an economics named Bradley Schiller in the year 1972. Schiller posits that “the poor are poor because they do not have adequate access to good schools, jobs and income” (Schiller, 1972). This theory states that people remain poor because of circumstances and conditions that are beyond their control. These circumstances are caused by lack opportunities or lack of access to such opportunity whenever they exist (Schiller, 1972). The theory asserts that poor people are disadvantaged socially and do not have the capability to access economic opportunities available to them, which includes employment and therefore the well-being of poor people cannot be improved unless their economic opportunities are improved. Schiller explains that restricted opportunities exist where some people in the society cannot have access to the equal opportunities being enjoyed by others because of social class, race, religion,

status in the society or tribal affiliations. The central aspect of this theory is the assumption that opportunities in the society are not available to all in equal measures; and those people who do not have suitable and abundant access to socio-economic opportunities such as access to quality education, better healthcare services, better sanitation, safe drinking water, better nutrition and a safe community cannot avoid poverty (Nwakanma & Igbe, 2020). Schiller contends that people who lack access to socio-economic opportunities can only improve their underprivileged circumstances if their chances of developing economically is enhanced. Hence the theory is relevant to this study since poverty alleviation programmes have the capacity to create access to opportunities which can economic status of households through training of the youth to get employable skills, improving crop and livestock production to end hunger and building capacity of households to ensure that socio-economic development is sustainable to benefit the future generation.

Empirical Literature Review

Crop Development and Socio-Economic Development

Mango, Makato, Mapemba & Sopo (2018) in their study "The Role of Crop Diversification in Improving Household Food Security in Central Malawi" contends that within Sub-Saharan Africa, a higher percentage of countries depend on agriculture as a source of economic growth. The agricultural sector depends on rain-fed agricultural production which is being faced with a challenge of diminishing soil fertility. Malawi experiences what scientist call "Maize Poverty Trap", where famers produce maize without considering whether the land is suitable or not; and when there is an occurrence of drought, the production of maize normally fails leading to food insecurity. Empirical results from this study revealed that when crops are diversified, household food consumption is impacted positively. This study revealed that crop diversification is significant at 5% level. Through crop diversification the farmers had access to a diversity of diet, their level of income improved and their households had better nutrition security. The findings show that crop diversification is realistic tool that can be used to reduce household food insecurity through establishing agricultural production systems that can withstand the effects of climate change especially drought.

Mujeyi, Mudhara & Mutenje (2021), in their study "The impact of climate smart agriculture on household welfare in smallholder integrated crop-livestock farming systems: evidence from zimbabwe" attributes low crop production in most of the countries found in Sub-Saharan Africa to climate change. In order to increase agricultural productivity there is need of adopting climate smart technologies which can enable farmers to optimize agricultural production thereby withstanding the negative effects of climate change on crop production.

Adolwa, Mutegi, Muthamia, Gitonga, Njoroge & Nchanji (2023) in their study "Enhancing Sustainable Agri-Food Systems using Multi-Nutrient Fertilizers in Kenyan Smallholder Farming Systems" underscored that fact that, in most countries found in Sub-Saharan Africa, food insecurity is caused by rising rates of soil infertility and the use of farm inputs inappropriately. The research examined the relationship between the application of multi-nutrient fertilizers blends on yield response and profits made from farm proceeds. Empirical results from this study shows that the use of improved fertilizers significantly increased maze yield. This represented an increase

of 108% on maize yield compared to when ordinary fertilizers are used. The improved fertilizers blend led to an increase in profits from of crops; this was experienced in the production of potatoes where the ratio of Benefit to Cost stood at above 2. Therefore, the multi-nutrients have a positive impact on reducing food insecurity by increasing crop yield.

To protect smallholder farmers from the effects of drought, the African Agricultural Technology Foundation, introduced the drought tolerant maize hybrid known as DroughtTEGO in Kenya in 2018 (Marechera et al., 2019). A study by Marechera et al. (2019) titled "Impact of DroughtTEGO hybrid maize variety on agricultural productivity and poverty alleviation in Kenya." revealed that the smallholder farmers who adopted the hybrid maize improved their income significantly by 82% as compared to the farmers who failed to adopt the maize variety. The poverty headcount in households which failed to adopt the maize variety was found to be 1% higher than households which adopted the variety. The results showed that adoption of DroughtTEGO improved household poverty situation by a margin of 46 points.

Radeny, Rao, Ogada & Solomon (2022) in the study "Impacts of climate-smart crop varieties and livestock breeds on food security of smallholder farmers in Kenya", analyzed the influence of climate smart agricultural technologies on household dietary diversity and food security in Kenya. The findings of this study revealed that the adoption of stress-tolerant varieties of crops such as sorghum and cowpea led to improved household dietary diversity score by 40% and reduced food insecurity by 75%. The study also revealed that the stress-tolerant crop varieties have the potential of minimizing crop failure and increasing crop yield, thereby increasing food availability to the households and improving dietary diversity. The farmers are also able to sell the surplus from crop production in order to earn extra income which can allow them to purchase crop products which are not produced on-farm.

Socio-Economic Development

According to Niaz (2022) in his study "Socio-Economic development and sustainable development goals: a roadmap from vulnerability to sustainability through financial inclusion", development involves people having access to economic resources to improve their social status. The study shows that financial inclusions leads to improved and sustainable livelihood. This is because households that had access to finances had growth in per capita income. Consequently, such household had better housing conditions, the rate of enrolment in school increased, access to clean and safe water for drinking improved, ability to spend on medical services and cloths improved.

He & Collins (2021), in their study "Optimal dynamic electricity consumption function estimation; An institutional experimental evidence from Guangzhou, China", posits that socio-economic development is shown by improved infrastructure, better household assets, access to clean drinking water, sanitation and electricity. Rajbanshi et al (2015), in their study "Measuring microfinance: Assessing the conflict between practitioners and researchers with evidence from Nepal", revealed that improvement in come has the possibility of reducing poverty which in the long term leads to improvement in the quality of life.

Summary of Research Gaps

Table 1 Summary of research gaps

Author (s)	Year	Title of study	Methodology	Findings	Knowledge gap	Focus of this study
Radeny, Rao, Ogada, Recha and Solomon	2022	Impacts of climate-smart crop varieties and livestock breeds on the food security of smallholder farmers in Kenya	Quantitative methods, Cross-sectional survey	Stress-tolerant crop varieties have the potential of minimizing crop failure and increasing crop yield	The study failed to show how the farmers would continue production beyond the project. (Scope gap)	Sustainability of crop development projects.
Marechera et al.	(2019)	Impact of DroughtTEGO hybrid maize variety on agricultural productivity and poverty alleviation in Kenya.	Quantitative methods, Descriptive research design	Adoption of hybrid maize improved income significantly by 82%.	The study failed to show how the farmers would continue production beyond the project. (Scope gap)	Sustainability of crop development projects.

Operationalization of Variables

Table 2 : Operationalization of Variables

Crop development	- Variety of crops planted - Duration crops take to mature - Benefits of the crops within the household	Questionnaire	Nominal scale Ordinal scale	Descriptive statistics Inferential statistics

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2019) a conceptual framework refers to the precise description of analysis development, that's gives, a visual illustration of the variables being studied. The variables under study in this research are youth vocational training, capacity building, livestock development and crop development.

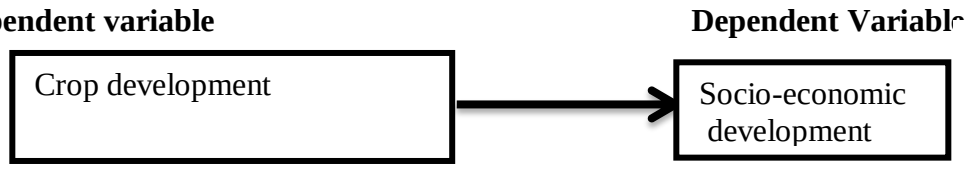

Figure 7: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study sought to evaluate the effect of Poverty Alleviation Programmes on Socio-Economic Development focusing on Caritas International Programme in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design to give a description of characteristics associated with variables being studied. The study employed quantitative techniques of data collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of results. The data was collected through questionnaire administration to household heads. The target population was 1,142 household heads, whose households have been involved in poverty alleviation programmes implemented by Caritas international between 2011 and 2021.

Table 3: Target Population
The table below show the target population for the study.

Category of Population Component	Target Population	Percentage
Household Heads	1,142	100
Total	**1,142**	**100**

Source: Caritas (2024)

Stratified random sampling was used in selecting a sample in order to give each household within the target population equal opportunity of being part of the sample. The sub-counties where programs are being implemented formed the strata from which sampling units were selected. To ensure that all sub-counties are represented proportionately, proportionate sampling was employed to arrive at the right number of households from each sub-county to be included in the sample. The Yamane formula of 1967 was used in determining the size of the sample as beA confidence level of 90% and P=0.1 were assumed where n was responses needed, N represented the size of the population while e represented the precision level needed.

The Yamane Formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:
n = number of responses
e = error limit (Level of p
N = Population size

A confidence level of 90% with the error limit at 10% led to;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + 1{,}142\,(0.1)^2}, \quad 42$$

n = 92

Therefore 92 responses were the minimum number of responses acceptable to satisfy the condition of a confidence level of 90% with the error limit at10%.

Table 4: Sample Size
The table below shows the calculated sample size for the study.

Category of Component	Population	Target Population	Sample Size
Household Heads		1,142	92
Total		**1,142**	**92**

Table 5: Summary for proportionate sampling
The table below show proportionate samples for each sub-county.

Sub-Counties	Population (Households) (n)	Proportion (p) (n/N)	Number to be sampled (n/N) * 92
Homa-Bay Town	491	0.43	40
Suba North	400	0.35	32
Ndhiwa	251	0.22	20
Total (N)	**1,142**	**1**	**92**

The researcher adopted a questionnaire as an instrument of collecting data which was tested through a pilot study on 12 respondents. The 12 respondents were excluded from the final study. The researcher employed the use of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.0 for data analysis in order to generate descriptive statistics and inferential statistics for the variables. Mean and standard deviation were used to generate descriptive statistics while regression analysis and correlation coefficient were used to generate inferential statistics.

The regression model of the research was as below;

$Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + E$

Y = Socio-Economic Development, β = Regression Coefficient, β_0 = Constant term (The point of intersection on the Y axis), E = Error Term, X_1 = Crop Development

This study used the regression analysis to ascertain the strength of independent variable as was outlined by r^2 and r adjusted to inform the findings and recommendations. From the Model, Y is the dependent variable while β_0 is the regression coefficient. The β (β_1) represents the slopes of the regression equation while the X (X_1) represents the independent variable. E represents the error term which captures all the important variables excluded from model because they are not observable in the set of data being analyzed. This model applied a confidence level of 95%. Data was presented using tables, charts and percentages to aid in easy comparison and communication.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability Test

The study employed the use of the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient to determine the consistency of the questionnaire in producing similar responses. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 to 1. The closer Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the consistency in test items producing similar results (Gliem, 2003). An Alpha coefficient of between 0.65 and higher is recommended and this study set a coefficient of 0.7 as the minimum threshold to determine reliability of the questionnaire (Saunders et al, 2015). The study items met the minimum threshold of 0.7 as shown below;

Table 6: Reliability Test
The table below shows the Cronbach's Alpha values.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Crop Development	0.862	4
Socio-Economic Development		3
	0.802	

Descriptive Statistics

Crop Development and its Influence on Community Livelihood

Most respondents, represented by 43%, Mean=4.23, Standard Deviation=.865, strongly agreed with the statement that the crop development project has improved crop production, 41% agreed with the statement, 10% were undecided, 4% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. These findings are supported by those of Adolwa et al (2023), which showed that crop development through the use of improved fertilizer increased maize yield. This represented an increase of 108% on maize yield compared to when ordinary fertilizers are used.

Most respondents, represented by 35%, Mean=3.54, Standard Deviation=1.326, agreed with the statement that the crop development project has enabled farmers to plant crop varieties that are drought resistant, 28% strongly agreed, 7% were undecided, 21% disagreed and 9% strongly

disagreed. These findings, are in agreement with those of Marechera et al (2019), which revealed that the farmers who adopted DroughtTEGO, a hybrid maize tolerant to drought improved income significantly by 82% compared to the farmers who failed to adopt the maize variety.

Most respondents, represented by 46%, Mean=3.76, Standard Deviation=1.139, agreed with the statement that the crop development project has enabled the farmers to produce for sale, 27% strongly agreed, 6% were undecided, 17% disagreed while 4% disagreed. The findings are supported by those of Mango et al (2018), which revealed that crop diversification leads to increased yield, hence surplus can sold thereby improving income of the household.

Majority of the respondents, represented by 44%, Mean=4.17, Standard deviation=.966, strongly agreed with the statement that the crop development project has improved farmers' income, 40% agreed with the statement, 6% were undecided, 8% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. These findings are in agreement with those of Adolwa et al (2023), which revealed that crop development through the use of improved fertilizer blend led to an increase in profits of crops, hence improved income for farmers.

Inferential Statistics

Correlation between Crop Development and Socio-Economic Development

The table below shows the correlation between crop development and socio-economic development.

Table 7: Correlation between Crop Development and Socio-Economic Development

		Crop Development	**Socio-Economic Development**
Crop Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.514**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	82	82
Socio-Economic Development	Pearson Correlation	.514**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	82	82

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

At a significance level of 0.01, the correlation between crop development and socio-economic development was determined at 0.514, implying a strong positive association of 51.4% between crop development and socio-economic development. The positive correlation implies that crop development normally improves the well-being of households since household's income and nutrition levels is improved. This leads to increased income for investment and food security within households.

ANOVA between Independent Variable and Dependent Variable

The table below shows the ANOVA statistics for the model.

Table 8: F-Test on ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.913	1	14.913	28.767	<.001[b]
	Residual	41.473	80	.518		
	Total	56.386	81			

a. Dependent Variable: Socio-Economic Development
b. Predictors: (Constant), Crop Development

In table 7 the ANOVA, was used to explain the overall significance of the model. Since p-value is less than 0.05, then crop development has a significant explanatory power on the level of socio-economic development (F=28.767; p-value < 0.05).

Model Summary

The table below shows the regression model summary.

Table 9: Regression Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.514[a]	.264	.255	.72000883486

a. Predictors: (Constant), Crop Development

In this model, the predicted variable is socio-economic development, while the predictor variable is crop development. The analysis established the coefficient of determination (R^2) at 0.264 with the standard error of the estimation being 0.72000883486. The implication is, 26.4% of variation in socio-economic development can be explained by the predictor variable, which is crop development. This means that 73.6% of variations in socio-economic development can be attributed to other factors apart from the independent variable under study.

Regression Coefficients

The table below shows the regression coefficients for the model.

Table 10: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.427	.438		3.261	.002
	Crop Development	.588	.110	.514	5.363	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Socio-Economic Development

The following model was used in this study for the following variable, namely crop development and socio-economic development.

$Y= \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + E$

Y represents Socio-Economic Development, β = Regression Coefficient, β_0 = Constant term (The point of Intersection on the Y axis), E = Error Term and X_1 = Crop Development.

$Y = 1.427 + (0.588X_1)$

This implies that, when the independent variable is excluded, socio-economic development would be 1.427. These findings reveal that a unit change in in crop development would lead to 0.588 change in socio-economic development. These findings also established that crop development as a positive significant influence socio-economic development since the p-value is less than 0.05. The findings of this study are supported by those of Mango, Makato, Mapemba & Sopo (2018) in their study "The Role of Crop Diversification in Improving Household Food Security in Central Malawi", which revealed that through crop diversification the farmers had access to a diversity of diet, their level of income improved and their households had better nutrition security.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion of the study

Empirical evidence from this study, has informed the conclusion that all the independent variable is statistically significant in predicting socio-economic development and hence has a positive association with socio-economic development. The empirical evidence from this study, has informed the conclusion that crop development and is statistically significant in enhancing household food security, nutrition level and level of earnings. With increased income, the capacity of households to invest in education, health and descent housing is enhanced. This lead to better living conditions within communities hence leading to socio-economic development.

Recommendations

The national and county governments should supplement the efforts already made by Caritas in alleviating poverty through crop and livestock development. This should be done in an attempt to increase coverage of poverty alleviation programmes so that more households can directly benefit and improve their well-being. The poor households have an opportunity to attain financial independence through crop development. However, this can only be done if crop production is

commercialized. There is need for providing more resources to enable the farmers to have the capacity to undertake crop production on a large scale to enable commercialization. The findings of this study clearly show that the independent variables are statistically significant in predicting socio-economic development. However, there is a need to conduct a study on how land fragmentation affects a household's level of production in terms of the technical efficiency of agriculture and the sustainability of food production system.

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PROFILE

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