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DECONSTRUCTING LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE POLITICAL FARMER IN MID-WESTERN UGANDA

Dr. David Mwesigwa

Senior lecturer

Discipline of Public Administration and Management

Faculty of management sciences

Lira university – Uganda

Abstract: **Extant provisions of Uganda's local economic development seek to promote a rural development strategy through diverse sector initiatives built in the structures of local governments as grassroots units. Since its recommendation, by the Joint Annual review of decentralisation in 2006 as well as the pilot initiatives conducted by Family Development Support Initiatives, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and Kasese District Local Government, local governments continue to be supportive of LED promotion activities. All indicators point to a not-so-pleasant situation occasioned by dearth pf progressive farmers except *political farmers*. The data collected by means of a self-administered questionnaire indicates that the *political farmer* has an upper hand over a majority in the country, which is one of the contributory factors to both inequities in the agricultural sector as well as frustrating the vision behind LED strategy. The puzzle, since the adoption of LED, is the failure of the government to beat inequity, which is structural in nature, in a way frustrates the political farmer from becoming successful due to resources they have access to rather than through diligence. While there are requisite policy provisions that mandate local governments to ascertain the active poor before selecting beneficiaries for direct interventions such youth livelihood programme, a number of local governments have failed to uphold transparency. Using a case study approach, this study argues that the failure of local governments to be transparent aggravates the prevailing LED crisis in Uganda. The study concludes that policy implementation where the political farmer prevails will relegate LED to an imaginary strategy of poverty reduction.**

Keywords: **Political farmer, Local Economic Development, farming.**

1. INTRODUCTION

A number of local governments in Uganda are witnessing a rise in the number of political farmers. This wave has been useful, to the government, as one of the essential strategies during countrywide political campaigns which are aimed to enhance prosperity using the agricultural sector. Thus far, the subject of political farmers and or political farming can be traced from the sporadic rise of young millions and billions who declare earning their fortune from successful agricultural enterprises such as dairy farms, coffee farms, fruit farms, poultry farms, to mention just a few. This is marked by spreading out of every urban area along with urban populations which are interspersed with infrastructures such as shopping malls, residential apartments, fuel stations, etc. Given that the spreading out was spotlighted in the country's liberalisation programme, the focus is not put to the evolving middle class instead it is put to seeking every potential form of investment in which citizens can participate. The Uganda investment policy seeks to reassure both local investors and

foreign investors to participate in economic opportunities which can, in the long run, produce a multiplier impact as well as raising the country's tax base. Even if the private sector is very thin, available studies suggest that a number of citizens in Uganda have started appreciating the contribution of the private sector as well as the quality of services (such as health services) provided by the sector (Waiswa et al 2015:2). Thus far, the role of the private sector is no longer an issue of debate as regards its significance but *sine quo non* with current and future global progress.

So far, the private sector is considered to be very necessary and so it needs to be enhanced so as to shelter every possible enterprise, in particular, in areas where the public sector lacks satisfactory capacity such as manufacturing, education, health and agriculture. Consequently, this study seeks to analyse a political farmer from the perspective of selected participants in Mid-Western Uganda. A survey is used to analyse those perceptions using a self-administered questionnaire. The study starts by examining the perceived meaning of a political farmer; it is maintained from the perception of participants that a political farmer and political farming is less helpful.

Background to farming in Uganda

The need to support agriculture, be they rural or urban, through more vibrant and hands-on methods has continued to attract much consensus in Africa in recent decades (Kanosvamhira, 2019:283). This is motivated by the view that agriculture supports livelihoods as well as ensuring sustainable food security for many households and communities on the continent (Olivier, 2019:17; Gomez et al 2019:58; Gwambene, 2018:2). The budding outcome of deliberations over the preceding decade at a number of world and regional symposia, as well as other conferences, evolves around mechanisms through which the world can feed current and growing human populations in the less-developing world such as Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (see Tian et al 2016:155; Saab, 2018:189; Reed & Ryan, 2019; Xu, 2019:269). This is central given the view that about 815 people face hunger and starvation, in what Webster and Zumbansen (2018:175) call chronic hunger. The conversation remains, for instance, in the Uganda executive, the Parliament and Local government councils regarding how households can raise the quantity of agricultural production as well as fostering incomes at the same level (Martiniello, 2015).

The subject of encouraging and stimulating agriculture is furthermore noticeable in key African summits of both nation-states as well as organisations as broad as East African Community (EAC), Southern Africa Development Cooperation (SADAC), Economic Cooperation for West-African States (ECOWAS) and without a doubt the African Union (AU) (see Rusere et al 2019; Sunano, 2019; Mchuru & Nhano, 2019). Global bodies amongst them the United Nations (UN) agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP) as well as Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have all gained interest in the issues that aim to promote agriculture as topmost priority of attaining sustainable development (Battersby, 2017:116; Rietkerk, 2016:790). Resolute international efforts concerning mechanisms geared at raising agriculture is projected to attract approximately US$...billion every year for support towards agriculture as well as a number of associated programmes in less-developing countries (LDCs) (Gwanbene, 2018:11).

Supporting agriculture and promoting sustainable development as well as consolidating ability of both countries and local communities to gain from globalisation has become significant challenges facing global populations and governments in the present era. As a result, nations are now focussing on sustainable education (Shulla et al 2020:1), the ability of urban communities to enjoy better lives (Horne et al 2020) or community-level technical inventions (Singh et al 2020:175). Also, the carbon disclosure index is estimated to raise the cost of rebuilding the world from the damage resulting from climate change to approximately US$1 trillion (Tang et al 2019:2). Regardless of the progress attained by a number of nations in enhancing agricultural production, farming in several LDCs is nonetheless still volatile and Ministries of agriculture remain too fragile to guarantee effective advance to agriculture. As a consequence, the notion of supporting Ministries of agriculture and adopting a participatory attitude to agriculture is perceived by a number of academics of sustainable development as essential mechanisms to stimulate socio-economic progress as well as to support a nation to manage associated global, national and local food crises (Brown et al 2018:287).

In this perspective, the significance of encouraging conversations as well as collaboration between the three sectors, namely the public, the private and non-state, by way of extension services, is attracting rising consensus (Knook et al 2018:310). Nonetheless, a number of African countries continue to face consequences from shrinking economies resulting from declining agricultural production (Olawuyi, 2019). As a result, it is essential, seeing the amount of international consensus that has been evolving over the last years of the current century, as well as the volume of funds invested towards supporting farming, to interrogate the previous questions concerning why and what kind of agriculture has failed

to move communities towards socio-economic progress (Fanelli, 2019). A number of regional bodies have resolved to support agriculture. Countries have decided to give priority to agriculture in their policies such as the United Nations framework convention on climate change (Nhano, 2018:281). Also, governments in the region have formulated and embraced a number of the world's best practices such as Cocoa pests and diseases control program in Ghana (Takyi et al 2019). These practices cover a variety of issues on enhancing food production and reducing regional hunger.

More so, governments in the East African community have established a number of semi-autonomous agencies, for example, Prosperity for all (which turned into Operation wealth creation) in Uganda (Mwesigwa, 2016:231). These progress demonstrate that the notion of agriculture being the basis of socio-economic development in EAC has gained regional recognition. The remaining challenge, nevertheless, is on how to convert established agendas from public affirmations into public practice (Muoni et al 2019:206). This challenge affects governments, the non-state sector and multilateral bodies in general. Nevertheless, the challenge put up by the 'how' problem is a tough one; the previous problems of 'what' and 'why' were cooler on the basis of the declining volume of agricultural production in Uganda which has resulted into widespread discussions. For example, a study by Bukenya et al (2013:169) found substantial space to increase output in the country by raising efficiency in production as well as sustaining it. The question however, is on a method of attaining progress in agriculture which necessitates watchful methods and their reception by a range of participants.

Trends and patterns of farming in Uganda

Agriculture is said to be the primary segment contributing approximately 24% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Uganda and employs about 60% of the youths (Jjuuko et al 2019: 238). A number of development scholars and practitioners reveal that arising from the impact that comes with the adoption of genetically modified organisms, agriculture is the bedrock of the country's foreign exchange providing both primary and secondary employment to approximately 80% of the residents (Kikulwe & Asindu, 2020:1). Nonetheless, save for the abundant impact, agriculture segment faced a number setbacks such as declining prices, political conflict, pests and diseases, which troubled the country between the 1980s and 1990s. To date, there is reasonable in a number of agricultural enterprises such as chicken production (Aryemo et al, 2019:739). At the moment, agricultural prices are very competitive, peace has been restored, and a number of pests and diseases have been contained through vigorous investment in agri-research and biotechnology. In addition, the government embarked on strategic interventions in form of direct financing through strategies such as National agricultural advisory services (NAADS), Prosperity-for-all (PFA) and Operation wealth creation (OWC) with the aim to deliver farmer-based technical support to the farmer as well as providing them with modern agro-inputs and gardening equipment/tools (Government of Uganda, 2001; Mwesigwa, 2016:231). Consequently, these interventions have stimulated rapid progress as well as broadening of the overall sector.

Likewise, particular effort has been put, by the government of Uganda, to collaboration in agricultural research in the areas of rearing heifers and upgrading the animal stock, prevention and control of livestock pests and diseases, production and preservation of fruit, production and export of flower, supervision of livestock and livestock farmers, regulation of the quality of agro-produce, as well as the production of wood. The aim of these efforts has been to encourage specialisation in agri-products. Agriculture includes crop husbandry and animal husbandry in which farmers grow crops and or rear animals on either small scale or large scale in form of both home consumption and sale to the market (Wordofa & Sassi, 2020:1). A number of households with small landholding tend to exercise small-scale agriculture in which either crop are grown or animals and birds are reared for household consumption. The animals include cattle, goats, sheep, rabbits and pigs; the birds include chicken, ducks, and geese; and the crops include grains and legumes. Small-scale agriculture is, in most cases, a cashless subsector and it is reliant on small landholding. A key characteristic of small-scale agriculture is that there is not specialisation as farmers engage in intercropping, mulching, apply organic manure and crop rotate on the small pieces of land but rarely do they make use of fertilizers (Spurk et al 2019).

Besides food crops, the cash-based agricultural sub-sector consists of crops that are meant for cash such as coffee, tobacco, tea and cotton. Since 2000, the volume of agricultural exports has grown as follows: coffee remained the major foreign exchange earner, contributing a proportional share of 18.8% to total export earnings in 2003, 19.0% in 2004 and 21.3% in 2005 (Uganda Bureau of statistics, 2018:65). By 2017, there was a rise in the bulk of coffee, tea and cotton produced. To be specific, tea production increased by 27% in 2017, coffee production experienced an increment of about 24.3% while cotton production increased to 31,800tonnes from 20,399 tonnes produced in 2016 hence approximately

66% growth. According to UBOS (2018:66), the contribution of fish caught from Lake Albert was 44% surpassing that of Lake Victoria which stood at 40% between 2015 and 2016. While Lake Albert is infested by the water hyacinth weed, overfishing and disobedience to sustainable fishing methods which affect production, fish is ranked second in terms of export earners in Uganda.

Agriculture is perceived to be essential for Uganda for a number of reasons: First, it offers the highest proportion of employment prospects. Second, a number of residents are engaged in agro-processing businesses and other activities associated with agriculture, which has facilitated poverty reduction. Third, it provides food for every resident in the country and beyond. Fourth, it is one of the reliable sources of energy in the form of charcoal and wood from trees. Fifth, it is a source of supplementary energy (bio-fuel) from agricultural products seeing that less than 25% of the rural population is connected to the electricity grid (Uganda Bureau of statistics, 2017). And sixth, agriculture has enhanced the economy of Uganda as a whole and so have the standards of living for the people. However, it should be emphasised that much of the benefits from the growing economy are resulting from and benefitting a smaller percentage of the country's total population. This study is timely as it brings to the fore one of the often neglected issues – political farmers who are portrayed by many as model farmers for Uganda. And the question as to whether the political has any significance to local economic development (LED) in Uganda, in particular, mid-western Uganda.

Political farmer as a concept

Political farmers have become a buzzword in the Ugandan conversation every time a government official preaches on the issue of commercial farming as a profitable business which everyone should get involved in. Yet, this talk is not new to the country seeing that since the early post-independence era, Ugandans have been made to recite the belief that farming as the backbone of their country's economy. The first post-independence government embarked on a vigorous programme, which was inherited from both the traditional government and the colonial administration, of promoting the growing of cash crops namely coffee, cotton, tea, and tobacco nationwide. Consequently, every homestead was compelled to show evidence of at least one of the above cash crop gardens and the duty of enforcing this requirement was entrusted to the sub-county chiefs and parish chiefs. These civil servants operated at the lowest level of government administration and would inspect every homestead to ensure compliance. Any perpetrator would be punished with imprisonment for months.

Later, several other agricultural enterprises joined the bandwagon of commercial farming including a range of domestic animals and birds. A number of rural-based farmers benefitted from the trend, in particular when farmers' cooperatives were introduced. These institutions became key in ensuring the members gained from their products until the government decided to adopt what is called privatisation policy. One of the principles which were re-echoed by the government is that cooperative cheated their members since those members had no accessed to the buyers. As a result, decided that every farmer should be left to meet with and sell their products to a buyer of their choice. This thinking sounded right under the popular notion of *ceteris paribus* when those conditions would remain constant forever. With time, the buyer became a greater beneficiary while the primary producers have remained vulnerable to exploitation by unsuspecting buyers given that there is price ceiling for any agri-produce save the market forces of demand and supply.

This condition gave birth to a non-traditional farmer who has abnormal resources to invest in the business without being affected by any factors arising from natural conditions or fluctuation in the market price. This farmer is known as the political farmer since their ultimate source of funds for investment is dictated by the political calendar and or conditions. This had presented a very unfair competition among farmers and a number of them no longer find it beneficial to remain in farming, which they say can be afforded by the political farmer and their associates.

The local economic development (LED) framework in Uganda

The government of Uganda committed itself to promote LED as exhibited through the formulation of the rural development strategy and its incorporation in various sector initiatives such as local government sector investment plan (LGSIP). As a consequence, the ministry of local government prioritised LED as a policy response in the LGSIP focusing on creating a conducive environment for investment to promote economic development in local areas and ensure that every household in the country has a minimum income that enables it to access basic needs. In Uganda, LED is perceived as:

a) An income generation-oriented approach that aims to – support income generation at the household level, lead to wealth creation and improved livelihoods, and help the active poor to develop based on the existing resources in their means.

b) A source of a social development approach that aims to stimulate wealth creation at the household, and build and enhance the economic capacity of a given area so as to improve its economic future.

c) A cooperation approach that aims to promote locality development and enhance partnerships between government, private sector and civil society sectors for better livelihoods.

d) An infrastructural approach that aims to provide the necessary environment for increased economic transactions.

Political farmer and LED

A non-traditional farmer who has abnormal resources to invest in the business without being affected by any factors arising from natural conditions or fluctuation in the market price is expected to subscribe to the LED practices. For example, development of business inventories and village record books aimed to create a database for potential economic activities; incorporation of economic infrastructure projects such as roads and market construction; multiplication and provision of improved varieties for crop and livestock; provision of business advisory services through traditional extension system; and development of public-private partnership strategies. The political farmer in Uganda cannot subscribe to any of the above practices seeing that their resources allow having access to private extension services as well as the market with ease.

The main focus of this paper is the view that Uganda faces a dearth of progressive farmers except “political farmers”. This view cannot be taken for granted now that agriculture is the backbone of Uganda’s economy. As a consequence, “political farmers” have an upper hand over majority in Uganda, which is one of the contributory factors to inequity in the agricultural sector in the country. There are indications that inequity is structural in nature, which is, the political farmers become successful due to resources they have access to rather than through diligence. This situation is a big challenge for the relevance of agricultural production, and thus, needs immediate attention. In light of this challenge, this paper investigates the characteristics of political farmers, their subdivisions, and their consequence to the agricultural sector in Uganda.

This study aims to examine the notion of political farmers by exploring five questions, namely: (a) who is the political farmer? (b) What are the characteristics of the political farmer? (c) What are the categories of the political farmer? (d) What are the perceived significances of the political farmer in mid-western Uganda? And, (e) what are the perceived consequences of the political farmer in mid-western Uganda? The article starts by reviewing various trends and or patterns of and challenges to agriculture in Uganda. It then presents a detailed account of the participants and or organisations in agricultural development. The greater sections concentrate on the key subject of a ‘political farmer’. The concentration is relevant to our understanding of agriculture and its promotion at both the national level and community level.

The key method adopted was a case study, which involves intensive description and holistic analysis of a single entity. The purpose of the selected case study was to study a single entity (Hoima municipality; however, the government of uganda has, since the beginning of the financial year 2020/2021 elevated Hoima Municipality to an oil city status. This development came after data had been collected) in depth so as to understand the larger case since not much research had been conducted about political farmers and or political farming. A sample of 124 respondents was selected and 94 were reached accounting for 74.6percent. Majority of the respondents (52%) were aged between 20 and 40 years, 34% were aged between 40 and 60 years; while 14% were more than 60 years. 48.2% of the respondents were female and 51.8% were male. As regards the level of education; 34.3% had attained primary education, 23.1% post-primary education, 24.4% secondary education and 18.2% tertiary and or university education. Respondents were selected from the municipality of Hoima in mid-western Uganda. Respondents were stratified according to the municipal ward, namely western ward, southern ward and northern ward. Majority of the respondents (54.7%) were private-employed, 16.1% were government employed, 8.6% were students at a tertiary institution, 12.8% were employed with non-governmental or community-based organisations and 7.8% were not employed.

The questionnaire was used as the basic tool for collecting much of the information because the target population was large and the data needed could be described in writing. Cronbach’s alpha was applied to establish internal consistency

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(inter-item reliability) and the overall result was 0.746. Following a day of training, two research assistants distributed and collected the questionnaires from respondents. The tool was constructed along with the different study objectives, namely; description of the political farmer, characteristics of the political farmer, categories of the political farmer, and values of the political farmer. A total of 104 questionnaires, representing 84.2%, were retrieved from the respondents.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section is presented along with the four study questions, namely: (a) who is the political farmer? (b) What are the characteristics of the political farmer? (c) What are the categories of the political farmer? And, (d what are the consequences of the political farmer to LED in mid-western Uganda?

Perceived description of the political farmer

The idea of the political farmer did not seem to be popular to the majority of the respondents in this study consequently, the study generated a number of descriptions regarding who they are or how they are understood to mean. The descriptions revolved around six perceptions, namely; one who is financed from state resources, one who enjoys free benefits from state resources, one who is supported by the state, one who benefits from long-term tax exemptions, one whose net income is not generated from farming, and one who is a model on grounds that they hold a public office.

Table 1: Respondents' perception of the political farmer (N=94)

Description: A farmer who…	Mean (μ)	Std. Dev
Is financed from state resources	4.57	0.587
Enjoys free benefit from state resources	3.73	1.118
Generally supported by the state	4.04	0.907
Benefits from long-term tax exemptions	4.22	1.093
Net income is not generated from farming	2.68	1.450
Is model provided s/he holds a public office	3.37	1.122
Overall average	**3.77**	**1.046**

Legend: *1.00-1.80 (very low), 1.81-2.60 (low), 2.61-3.40 (moderate), 3.41-4.20 (high), 4.20-5.00 (very high)*

The results revealed that respondents have a high perception of the political farmer, that the political farmer gains from greater resources from the state over and above other farmers who have to use their resources as well as shouldering the burden of poor returns on investment since even agricultural credit is limited to a few commercial banks and micro-finance institutions. Also, it was established that the political farmer is perceived to enjoy free benefit from state resources and that they are supported by the state in a number of ways including, but not limited to, bailouts in case of a serious disaster such as low harvest, diseases or pest infestation, and low prices. In addition, the political is perceived to benefit from long-term tax exemptions in particular when they are involved in commercial farming. For example, such farmers are involved in commercial fish farming, beef farming, tea farming, sugar farming, coffee farming and fruit farming. Besides, it was established that the net income of the political farmer is not generated from farming although they are alleged to be practising the business. For example, such income is expected to be generated from pseudo-public contracts where huge state resources are siphoned through government agencies. Nevertheless, respondents were divided on whether the political farmer has adequate capital to start pseudo-farming on their own without significant support henceforth the continued existence of the political farmer remains dependent on a particular regime.

Characteristics of the political farmer in mid-western Uganda

In seeking a general perception from the respondents concerning the characteristics of the political farmer, the means (μ) and standard deviations (Std. Dev) from responses on every statement were calculated as illustrated in table 2.

Table 2: showing descriptive statistics on the perceived characteristics of the political farmer in Hoima (N=94)

Characteristic: the political farmer…	*Mean (μ)*	*Std. Dev.*
Has abnormal funds to invest on the farm compared to ordinary farmers	3.64	0.962
Applies advanced methods of agricultural production	3.27	1.032
Engages in mass production from a single or few enterprises	3.46	1.121
Benefits from tax exemption for much of the agri-inputs	3.30	1.062
Can afford modern crop/animal/bird varieties	3.87	0.927
Has limited survival beyond the tenure of office	2.63	1.098

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Overall average	**3.36**	**1.034**

Legend: *1.00-1.80 (very low), 1.81-2.60 (low), 2.61-3.40 (moderate), 3.41-4.20 (high, 4.20-5.00 (very high)*

The results revealed that the political farmer is characterised by abnormal funds to invest on the farm compared to ordinary farmers and that farmer can benefit from the economies of scale in a short period. On the inverse, this notion discourages other farmers, in particular, the youths who struggle with high agri-input prices as nothing makes much for them. In addition, it was demonstrated that the political farmer applies advanced (and expensive) methods of agricultural production, for example, sprinkling irrigation, which cannot be afforded by ordinary farmers in the same bracket and the political farmer is praised as an example for other to learn from. Yet, whenever, the approaches applied by the political farmer are replicated by ordinary farmers (even if it is done rather better), the outcomes are often contrasting. Also, the results indicated that the political farmer engages in mass production from a single or few enterprises in what is termed agri-specialisation. Mass production facilitates the political farmer to gaining more knowledge and skills in a particular set of enterprises in the long run. The political farmer benefits from tax exemptions for much of the agri-inputs and can afford modern varieties; the combination of these duo-advantages renders the political more advantaged than ordinary farmers. There was greater unanimity that the political farmer lacks the ability to survive beyond the tenure of office since the supply of resources cannot extend beyond office-holding.

Analysis regarding to the perceived classification of the political farmer in mid-western Uganda generated the results summarised in table 3.

Table 3: Perceived classification of the political farmer in mid-western Uganda

Participant	Mean (μ)	Std. Dev.
Cabinet Ministers	4.13	1.056
Member of legislative assembly (Parliament)	3.81	1.208
Public officials serving in public agencies	4.13	1.101
Public officials serving ministries	4.31	1.074
Local government chairpersons	3.62	1.241
Members of local government council	4.47	0.858
Officials serving in Multinational corporations	3.90	1.366
High-ranking security officers	2.82	1.568
Overall average	**3.90**	**1.184**

Legend: *1.00-1.80 (very low), 1.81-2.60 (low), 2.61-3.40 (moderate), 3.41-4.20 (high, 4.20-5.00 (very high)*

The analysis revealed that two of the perceived classifications, namely; produced very high Public officials serving ministries (u=4.31, SD=1.074) and Members of the local government council (u=4.47, SD=0.858). Also, two aspects, viz. Cabinet Ministers (u=4.13, SD=1.056) and Public officials serving in public agencies (u=4.13, SD=1.101) provided high outcomes. The four perceived classifications demonstrate spaces where official corruption is widespread and where much effort can focus by whoever is fighting the vice. The results further show that none of the classifications produced below the moderate level since even the lowest classification (High-ranking security officers) produced not so disappointing results (i.e. u=2.82, SD=1.568). By inference, the overall average (u=3.90, SD=1.184) suggests that at every level, a public official is perceived to gain beyond the stipulated benefit. This attracts greater attention to how the Uganda public service loses resources otherwise meant to benefit the citizenry.

The consequences presented by the political farmer to LED

The consequences presented by the political farmer to the LED was examined using five aspects, namely the level of competition, encouraging local farmers, degree of sustainability, the stability of agri-prices, and encourages hard work. The results suggest that all variables under the study have a significant consequence for LED.

Table 4: Predictors of political farmers to LED

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardised coefficients	*p*-value
	B	*Std. error*	*Beta*	
(Constant)	2.717	0.296		0.000
Level of competition	0.130	0.056	0.147	0.017*

Encouraging local farmers	0.053	0.043	0.085	0.198
Degree of sustainability	0.085	0.038	0.151	0.020*
Stability Agri-price	0.023	0.036	0.041	0.505
Encourages hard work	0.028	0.038	0.052	0.439

N=96; significant at 0.05 level

The results reveal that the political farmer impacts on the level of competition (Beta=0.147, p=0.017*), can encourage farmers (Beta=0.0.085, p=0.198), has an impact on the degree of sustainability (Beta=0.151, p=0.020*), affects the stability of agri-prices (Beta=0.041, p=0.505) and encourages hard work (Beta=0.052, p=0.439). In every form, the results suggest that the political farmer affects the farming industry in several positive and negative ways. For example, agri-prices become unpredictable (something very negative) due to abnormal produce though this can stabilise in the long-run (something positive). And so is hard work, a number of farmers, in particular, the emerging are discouraged in the short-term though in the long-run they can appreciate that someone is doing something positive to the industry.

The results regarding the consequences of the political farmer to LED are in agreement with other studies across Africa, namely: Kenya where politicians owned large commercial farms and produced for both local and international markets; in South, Africa politicians cannot be compared with any other farmer in the country; in Nigeria, the picture is no different. Politicians control the national, state and local government budgets which they allocate to various programmes and projects at pleasure. The involvement of politicians in farming brings a different hype to the entire industry such as increased per capita agri-exports from the country as well as making available a variety of agri-produce for the domestic market.

3. CONCLUSIONS

This study has unveiled the particular dilemma which shows that the espousal of LED is tinted by a failure of local governments to beat inequity, which is structural in nature, so as to frustrate the continued flourishment of the political farmer from becoming successful albeit irregular means. While there are essential policy provisions that require local governments to determine the active poor before selecting beneficiaries for direct interventions such youth livelihood programme, a number of local governments have failed to uphold the principle. It is maintained that the failure of local governments to be transparent prompts the prevailing LED crisis in Uganda. It is concluded that policy implementation where the political farmer is appreciated will relegate LED to a hypothetical strategy of poverty reduction.

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