



**PEASANT FARMER CLASS, SOCIAL DYNAMICS AND THEIR LIVELIHOODS. CASE
STUDY OF ZIMBAWEAN PEASANTRY AFTER THE FAST TRACK LAND REFORM
PROGRAMME IN ZIMBABWE.**

A case study of Marondera District in Mashonaland East Province

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Disclaimer:

This document, presents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute

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May the Lord be with you all!

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Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GOZ	Government of Zimbabwe
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MLRR	Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlements
WDR	World Development Report
ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers Union

Abstract

Most economies in Africa depend on the trade of primary resources. This makes land to become one of the most important assets in the continent. In countries where the country has once been under colonial rule like Zimbabwe, land reform is usually imminent in a bid to redress land distribution imbalances created by colonial regime. Zimbabwe undertook land reform in phases since its independence in 1980 with the later phase being termed the Fast Track Land Reform phase of 2000. This study is aimed at studying peasant farmer class, social dynamics and their livelihoods in the context of Zimbabwe.

Case study approaches has been used together with the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Approaches and the Marxists Class Based theories in the collection and analysis of data. The study focussed on the middle class peasants and their influence on other peasants., explaining why there are differences amongst peasant farmer classes. It has been ascertained from the research findings that capital accumulation that builds into assets forms the basis of classification of peasants into different categories. Human capital, social capital, entrepreneurship ability to diversify are all factors that explain differences and why are some peasants better off than others. The research findings have also indicated that it's important to different classes of peasants with different welfare and wealth status for a capitalist mode of production to exist. The research concludes that the peasant model that promotes fast scaling up in peasant accumulation is that which mixes farm and non-farm income hence the government needs to promote entrepreneurship amongst peasants.

Relevance to Development Studies

Peasants constitute some of the poorest citizens in a country by virtue of their characteristics of subsisting on farming but without power to influence policies or outcomes in agriculture. Scaling up of production that enhances capital accumulation amongst peasants at a larger scale will have an impact on the aggregate economy due to the improvement of the welfare of the peasants. This calls for a need to understand social dynamics in the peasant community in a bid to find out the best models that can see increased accumulation. Interaction of different factors as networks, entrepreneurship, diversification all need to be understood and see how they affect the reproduction processes. This form of study forms the basis of empowering peasants for a successful reproduction and asset accumulation.

Key words

Asset accumulation – Livelihoods - Class -Entrepreneur

Chapter 1:

Land Reform and Study Overview

2.0 Introduction

The material base for most of African economies is mainly dependent on trade of primary resources from oil, minerals, agricultural and other natural resources (forestry, wildlife, and biodiversity exploitation) hence control of such resources and their markets is crucial (Moyo 2010: 3). Moyo further stress that “Power structures and politics are heavily influenced by the control of land, natural resources and mineral rents in such countries hence this control defines mainstream processes of capital accumulation, social reproduction and the revenue base” (2010:3). As a result, having no access to land in most of these African countries especially by the poor populations of such nations who in most cases comprise the largest part of the population makes it a necessity to have land reforms that may improve their situation. Access to land enables a beneficiary to work on the land and be in a position to earn a livelihood in a way that could not have been possible without land.

Land reforms that have a distributive role can have a key role in poverty alleviation and enhancing development (UNRISD 2009). This is possible if the “agrarian reform strategies are framed narrowly around the relative efficacy of the small or ‘subsistence’ farmer vis-à-vis the large, ‘commercial’ and ‘modernized’ farmer, in the leadership of agricultural transformation”, which is the common approach in African countries (Moyo 2010: 4). The land reform programme in Zimbabwe has been conducted since the country’s independence in 1980 with the state led willing buyer willing seller approach which later moved to market led neo liberal land purchases in the 1990s and then to the fast track distribution approach in 2000 (Moyo 2013:29). The later phase saw the distribution of land to the majority of the peasants leading to a new agrarian structure in which smallholder farmers are now occupying over 80% of the farming land (Scoones 2015: 191).

Bernstein and other Marxist scholars argue that, in a capitalist world, class relations are the most important determining factor in shaping up of all the social relations in any society, but also in play with other factors (Bernstein 2010). These relations are mixed and mingled with other social differences that include gender and discriminatory or exclusions on ethnic and racial lines including religious or caste relationships and also acknowledging that all ideologies and the economic power of capitalism come into play through the state (Bernstein 2010: 115-116). Class struggle results in confrontations and politics amongst different players according to their classes and this includes the agribusiness classes that serve farmers at local and national level, peasant farmers and different classes of laborers or proletariat (Bernstein 2010:117). Byres argued that for any transformation to take place in agriculture, class differentiation is primary to the process (2009: 34).

The aftermath of the Zimbabwean Fast Track Land Reform was not also spared by class formations amongst the peasant beneficiaries. The classes are a result of the social reproduction

processes which will see some accumulating and differentiate to become petty commodity. The differentiation process is not confined to these main classes only but also incorporates sub classes within the society and the intersection of the classes will also influence changes in livelihoods patterns in certain directions. On the same note livelihoods cannot be contextualized within confined boundaries but are understood as affected by local and a much wider factors implying that macro issues determine what is happening at micro levels (Scoones 2015: 79).

Despite this redistributive land reform exercise, majority of the peasants are still poor though it's 16 years after the redistribution. Amongst these peasants are some who are emerging as the "middle peasant farmer" and are managing to reproduce themselves both as capital and labor and also accumulating surplus for re-investment. The main question which stands is to ascertain on why such a difference exist between these classes of peasants though access to land was regarded to as a crucial step in capacitating every beneficiary to accumulate and have little differences amongst the peasants. Scoones (2015 :12) identified different classes of peasants emerging, hence need also to ascertain through this research how and why are there differences in these emerging classes and to see how the interaction of these classes are shaping peasant livelihoods.

1.1 Study Background

The land apportionment act of 1930 was put into effect so that the White minority who were approximately 5% of the total population could officially own land by dividing the land almost equally between them and Blacks who constituted 95% of the population. (Robert and Mitchell (1977). The Blacks continued to be pushed off the fertile lands to pave way for the White settler farmers who were coming in and escaping from second world war leading to an increase in the number of whites involved with farming from 4 673 in 1945 to 8 632 in 1960 (Zimbabwe embassy 2009 :3). "In the decade 1945-55 at least 100 000 Black people were forcibly moved into Reserves, some of which were located in the inhospitable and tsetse fly -ridden areas (Zimbabwe embassy: 3). Reserves which were termed Native areas were areas which were reserved for use and habitation by the Native Zimbabweans and were separate from White community reserves. This is where the communal areas for the Black Zimbabweans were established and peasants lived in the areas through to the country's independence in 1980. Statics from 1980 when the country got independence state that "the communal areas, inhabited by the bulk of the populace of 4.3 million people worked 16.4 million hectare of agricultural land, 75 percent of which was located in the drier agro- ecological regions where the soils are also poor" (Zimbabwe Embassy2009:4). Native reserves were not given much attention from the government in terms of support as extension services. "The government wanted to increase the carrying capacity of the reserves and reduce the financial outlay to those areas, but they did not want to create a competent and competitive farmer out of the peasants" (Kramer 1997: 171).

Extension services were offered but with too high a farmer extension ratio for the Blacks were not meant to prosper for the White settler farmers feared competition from Blacks (Kramer 1997: 168). This was also confirmed by Chigodora (1997:5) who also asserts that "before 1980, the country had two systems of agriculture: commercial, which was highly sophisticated and

mainly the domain of the white community, and peasant, which was largely neglected and totally black”. Production to Black Zimbabweans was reduced to subsistence level by 1930 and was shown by low volumes of trade witnessed in the Blacks community relative to the precolonial times (Zimbabwe Embassy 2009). The colonial government also used acts to force Black men out of their homes and look for employment. This includes some taxes like hut tax which every man was obliged to pay in cash not in kind, of which cash could only be obtained by waged labor in Settler farms, mines or towns (Maravanyika and Huijzenveld 2010: 25). This forced Blacks to source livelihoods out of peasantry by mainly diversifying and migrating to towns and White settlers’ farms in search of employment. The migrated people’s core responsibility was to acquire the necessary inputs as fertilizer and seed during the rainy season and send to their rural homes. Once inputs were available, the peasants had a social characteristic of helping each other in providing labor on reciprocal grounds. “The tradition of sharing among the peoples of pre-colonial Zimbabwe was one of the pillars of famine prevention strategies, there was a well-established barter trade system, in the form of either in-kind or exchange of food for labor” (Chigodora 1997:3). Sharing was one of the main characteristics of the Black community, for there were few classes amongst the peasants as a result of the suppressions from the colonial government which provided checks and balances to their accumulations.

The differences in classes between the White commercial farmers who held fertile lands in areas with good rainfall and Black peasants set a pace in terms of accumulation to this class and support from the government through organized trainings and access to flexible loans made them better farmers (Chigodora 1997). The subsistence peasant farmers had no access to loans and produced mainly for consumption. When the country got its independence in 1980, the new Black government embarked on policy reforms that ensure inclusivity to the black peasants. These include fair marketing policies, extension services to peasants as well as loans that had easy collateral and also direct input support schemes by the government (Chigodora 1997; Makamure, Jowa and Muzuva 2001). Both peasants and commercial farmers boosted their production that they managed to start venturing into export of a variety of crops. From 1980 the government’s “agricultural policy was directed to reducing inequality and to supporting smallholders, smallholders became the largest suppliers of maize and cotton to formal markets” (FAO 2001). The way the government was promoting smallholder farmers was regarded as one way of ensuring food security and self-sufficiency in the sector (FAO 2001). In the year 1986 the government also introduced policies and incentives that promoted production for exports and that made many commercial farmers to engage with export production for it was lucrative and highly supported. (FAO 2001) Land reform program was in phases where the third phase was unrolled in 2000 and was termed the fast track land reform phase and it also comprised illegal land occupations which were later legalized (Moyo 2011:495). The following models were introduced: “A1 (promoting small-scale family farms) and A2 (promoting medium and large scale capitalist farms)” (Moyo 2011: 497). The models are based on land sizes, i.e A1 model with an acreage of 6 and below, A2 model which has a hectareage more than 6 with some being sizes of up to 250 hectares.

In this set up all the peasant farmers fell in the A1 land ownership category. Different levels of accumulation have since been noticed as manifested by differing classes in the A1 section that is constituted mainly by peasants. Just like what a classic Marxist position asserts on the fact that peasants have to abandon their former ways of production in a capitalist state, and go through a social differentiation process that will see others becoming rich capitalist commercial farmers with some becoming rural workers (Ellis 1992:51). This scenario now exists within the Zimbabwean context. Different subclasses have also emerged in the resettlement areas with some classes having influences on others and also politics of the rural community (Scoones 2012).

1.2 The Study Problem

Land imbalances in the country had previously been seen as one of the main setbacks and threats to livelihoods security to majority of the Zimbabwean population who dwell in the rural areas and subsist on peasantry. The land redistribution was conducted with the majority of the poor peasants being amongst beneficiaries. The new agrarian setting now has a distribution of over 90% of farmers as smallholders who are now occupying over 80% of land (Scoones 2015: 191). The redistributed land had once been very productive under the ownership of white commercial farmers carrying out export oriented crop and livestock production that saw the nation being one of the leading food crops, flower and livestock products exporter in the region (FAO 2001; Moyo 2004). An advantage to the new land owners is that most of land had good irrigation infrastructure, developed water resources as dams, electricity within most of the farms and farm building that supported the previous enterprises as well as machinery as tractors and combine harvesters.

Besides easing pressure on land, the resettled peasant farmers also anticipated to experience surplus accumulation in social reproduction as petty commodity producers and start to show signs of moving towards being rich peasants and also be able to produce for the non-farming population. Small-scale agriculture was anticipated to be a “primary motor of growth and employment in ways that were prevented by the colonial inheritance” (Scoones et al 2012). After 16 years of land reform with peasants having been given land, majority are still poor. The majority of the peasants are failing to accumulate in order to be able to reproduce capital or assets for expansion and are trapped in a simple reproduction squeeze (Bernstein 2010: 104). This tallies with Bernstein’s assertion on some assumptions which say that, “farmers in the South are subsistence cultivators whose primary objective is to supply their food needs from their own farming” (2010:103).

This research seeks to find out why these peasants are so different with the majority failing to accumulate in a situation where researchers are noticing an emerging ‘peasant middle class’ within the same peasantry communities which is accumulating assets. A huge body of literature from researches exists in trying to find out why this is happening. The literature focuses mainly on macro factors and suggests remedy in aspects as tenure security, extension, market system and institutional reforms among other factors.

Research by Scoones 2015 outlined the emergence of different classes that includes a “middle peasant farmer” class. The class is either coming from accumulating from below or had connections and origin from town or non-farm income. Accumulation from below means that the peasants “generated assets and investments from farm production and other local economic activities” (Scoones 2015: 76). Those referred to as with origins and connections from town are “from the urban middle classes, business people and civil servants in particular, they are not the classic rural peasants of the populist pro-land reform imagination nor are they the elite cronies of the critics of land reform but they are a new entrepreneurial, well-connected group of actors” (Scoones 2015: 201). This middle class is constituted by former and current employees of the civil service and the private sector who are also having better human capital level relative to other peasants in the farms and have access to social capital which they use to increase their accumulation and may also take advantage of their positions in exploiting and dispossessing peasants. Although we have the emergence of this class of “middle peasant farmer described above with a lot of social capital, human capital, urban connections and diversified livelihoods through waged employment, there still is a number of classes who are failing to reproduce themselves as labor. This implies existence of different peasant classes in the same community. This project seeks to find out why are these peasant classes so different.

Scoones in his research of 2015 focused on the political reading of the situation in resettlement area, other researchers have researched on “the economic and livelihood characteristics of the new agrarian setting which has been discussed extensively elsewhere (see Moyo et al. 2009; Scoones et al. 2010; Cliffe et al. 2011; Matondi 2012)” (Scoones 2015: 191). This study will focus on why and how the emerging classes are different and their influence on livelihoods in the social reproduction processes. The scope of all other previous studies did not pay particular attention to potential in the emerging class of middle peasants’ potential in influencing the rural economy, so the differences in classes will be examined in light of the influence of this class to other classes. Focusing on such an area of study is key in comprehending “long term trajectories in agrarian change development” (Scoones 2015: 190).

1.3 Study Objective

The objective of this study is to analyze class dynamics of peasants’ differentiation after the fast track land reform programme, ascertaining on the factors explaining the differences between classes that are better off than others and the influence of classes on other peasant classes’ livelihoods. The project will look at how the emerging middle class peasant is influencing other peasant classes in aspects that define peasant livelihoods in the area

1.4 Main Question

The study seeks to study why peasants are different in accordance to their respective classes by focusing on factors explaining the success of other peasant classes and to determine how the peasants influence each other as a result and how this subsequently affects different livelihoods mixes.

1.4.1 Sub questions

1. What are the factors explaining why accumulation of some peasant classes is more than other classes?
2. What form of influence does the emerging peasant middle class have on the other classes?
3. What is the relationship between the pursued livelihoods mix, accumulation and the class of the peasant?

1.5 Contributions and perspectives

This study employed a political economy approach by looking at class structures in the social reproduction process of the peasant farmer. The study focused at peasant household as a unit within the society and the relationships between peasant classes that influence livelihoods mixes and strategies that will be followed. The study followed the life of the peasant after the Fast Track Land Reform Program and was examined in the light of the emerging classes on how their interactions shape the outcomes on their livelihoods. Some peasants have other means as part of their livelihoods in addition to farming, connections which may enhance their investments in farming, so this study focuses on such interactions and activities which are linked to farming and see how they affect peasants' political economy. Despite a huge body of literature that exists on peasant livelihoods and related issues in the context of Zimbabwe, there is no literature that pertains the emerging middle peasants except only their identification, hence a new knowledge body is expected to be contributed by this study.

1.6 Research methodology

This study is informed by three concepts namely Marxists class concept, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Approaches and Sells' three forms of power. These concepts work together explaining how classes influence each other in peasant social reproduction process and the resultant livelihood strategies the farmers would pursue. Sells' forms of power explain the type of influence the middle class peasants have on other classes.

1.6.1 Study Area

The research was conducted in Zimbabwe's Mashonaland East Province. The province falls in the Natural agro ecological Region II which is a high value crop production region. The following crops have been grown in the region before and after the land reform program has been conducted, flue-cured tobacco, maize, cotton, sugar beans and coffee. Sorghum, groundnuts, seed maize, barley and various horticultural crops are also grown.

Supplementary irrigation is done for winter wheat. Animal husbandry like poultry, cattle for dairy and meat, is also practiced in this region. Smallholder farmers occupy only 21% of the area in this productive region and rainfall averages in the range of 700 - 1 050 mm rainfall per year confined to summer (FAO 2000).

1.6.2 Sample selection

The methodology employed case selection strategies where Provinces are being the main case and within the case study will have cases of class differentiation, emerging middle peasants and livelihoods approaches. The selected province is a typical case with diversity hence a diverse case selection strategy was used in investigating the variables of concern. The diverse cases were the emerging middle class peasants and the cases of poor peasants. Semi structured interviews on the purposively selected peasant households in one of the districts within the province. The selection was based on the previous potential exhibited by production levels (value) before land reform and also availability of supporting infrastructure, where such factors point out to the fact that the area has a high potential in terms of productivity.

Case selection strategies for this research is more exploratory and concerned about mechanisms. and enable purposive sampling which makes the researcher be able to look for a sample with characteristics that suit well with the variables under investigation. The diverse case selection strategies under purposive sampling enables the researcher to have all proposed available classes of the people within the area of research represented of which would not be possible under random, quota, or snowball sampling. Also the fact that the research focusses on contemporary exploratory matters which are meant to generate a theory of confirm a hypothesis makes case selection strategy more suitable, ruling out other approaches as survey, experimental or archival approaches for there is no need for a control group or too much quantitative data.

1.6.3 Field Work

In depth interviews on 30 cases were conducted from 5 selected villages implying that 6 cases were from each village. Of these 30cases, 20 were middle class peasants and 10 were poor peasants. The researcher is quiet conversant with the local language and well versed with the culture of the area such that the interviews were easy to conduct. One assistant was also hired to help out with the recording of data on hard copies.

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of results was computer aided with the use of Microsoft Excel and SPSS for coding and presentation of data through graphs and cross tabulation and for the quantification of qualitative data.

1.7 Study Limitations

External validity of the research findings is too some extent jeopardized by the fact that the sample size is too small to be generalizable to the whole country. This may be attributed to limited time also. Peasants in some villages have a tendency to expect something in return (cash or material) if they are engaged in an interview which at times affect the quality of data obtained if interviewees learnt that the whole process is of academic grounds without imminent benefits. Some selected cases had respondents to the interviews who were not the actual household heads but are related to the household head. This to some extent compromised the quality of information obtained.

1.8 Organization of the study

The study is organized into sections, where the first chapter gives an introduction and overview of this study. The first chapter also outlines the methodology employed in the study. The second chapter reviews the key literature and gives the background of the study with chapter three explaining the theoretical framework and key concepts that influences the study. Chapter 4 and 5 gives a presentation of research findings and chapter 6 gives a conclusion of the study.

Chapter 2

Review of Key Literature

2.1 Introduction

This section is expected to give the context of peasantry before and after the land reform. The section is also expected to review the key literature on peasant differentiation and the subsequent class dynamics in the context of land reform.

2.2 Study Background

2.2.1 Livelihoods

Rural livelihoods in Africa 's Sub Saharan countries share some common characteristics in their diversity and also that the people are living in physical and economic conditions that are not stable. These conditions are so dynamic that they call for individuals that can also change their livelihoods in line with the new developments in order for them to survive (IDS 2003: 15). The livelihoods are not constructed in isolation but they are with a wider economic and national context which also influences the pace and direction of livelihoods construction (IDS 2003: 15).

In Zimbabwe there is a colonial legacy of opportunities in terms of livelihoods that are not equal across different regions and groups of people (IDS 2003: 18). The colonial system vision on economic growth shunned improvement or development of peasant livelihoods but focused more on commercial farmers and this worsened shortage of natural communal resources (Hill and Katerere 2002:256). The Zimbabwean peasant livelihoods was organized around farming and non-farm activities that were conducted both within and outside the community. The IDS bulletin highlighted some off peasantry land livelihoods activities as migratory formal employment within Zimbabwe or in the neighboring countries, trading, hunting and poaching (2003:19).

2.2.2 Land reform

Land reform is a process whereby arable land is being redistributed to intended groups or individuals from its previous owners who maybe rich farmers or land previously owned by the state in order to, "expand rural development, reducing poverty or returning land to its previous owners" (Beheener 2005). Bernstein (2010:98) asserted on the political nature of land reforms by outlining that reforms can take many forms including subdividing farms or estates to small farmers without compensating the losers or improving the tenure structure of

the already owned farms as well as “socialization of large scale commercial farms”. Land reform has got some socio economic impacts with the mention of bringing equity in land ownership and other economic benefits.

Land reform can also improve land use and productivity efficiency when a farm shifts from wage operated entity to a family labor operated where labor and supervision are cut, distribution of productive assets as land improves economic growth and reduces poverty (Deininger 1999:2). As in the case of many Sub Saharan countries reforms were meant mainly to address land imbalances created by colonialism as “Colonialism re-enforced preexisting pre-capitalist class relations in an effort to sustain surplus appropriation among dominant class forces” (Ellis 1996: 24). So most land reform programs in the Sub Saharan region including Zimbabwe were undertaken so that imbalances as having dominant classes will be addressed.

2.2.3 Background on Zimbabwean Land Reform

In the Zimbabwean context “Land reform was meant to redress historical settler-colonial land dispossession and the related racial and foreign domination, as well as the class-based agrarian inequalities which minority rule promoted” (Moyo 2013:29). Land policies and appropriation laws that were enacted in the colonial times created a system in land use that is divided into main categories of state and non-state which was regarded as freehold territories. The state land was the one where the peasants (indigenous people) were resettled and none of them had any rights or tenure ship and on the contrary White settlers had their land on a freehold basis with defined land tenure rights and deeds. The communal lands were small, unfertile and in agro ecological regions not suitable for good harvests whereas the Settlers were in regions of good potential at the same time well served by access to extension, loans and research support which enabled them to accumulate great wealth (Hill and Katerere 2002:255).

Table 1 Land Apportionment in Southern Rhodesia in 1930

CATEGORY	ACRES	% OF COUNTRY
European Areas	49,149, 174	51
Native Reserves	21,127,040	22
Unassigned Areas	17,793,300	18.5
Native Purchase Area	7, 464, 566	7.8
Forest Area	590,500	0.6
Undetermined Area	88,540	0.1
Total	96,213,120	100

Source: (Zimbabwe Embassy 2009)

This was further aggravated by the continuous coming in of Settlers who were fleeing from the political turmoil of World War 2 in the 1940s resulting in persistent displacement of the Native communities (Zimbabwe Embassy 2009).

The move left the Natives with little livelihoods options and were constrained to look for work in the Settler farms. The colonial government came up with laws targeting the native reserves that no indigenous Zimbabweans could undertake any enterprise forcing them to look for employment in the White Industries and Settler farmers as a way to provide cheap labor, but the available employment could hardly absorb more than 10% of the population leaving many dumped in the reserves (Bornajee 2013: 6).

On attaining its independence in 1980, the new Zimbabwean government started by local government reforms to lift the exclusivity of commercial farming areas from the natives in the communal areas and to free the natives from the bondage of being Settler laborers and capacitate them to be incorporated in the economic activities (Moyo 2013: 30). In the period 1980 -1985, the land reform exercise took off but was confined to conditions set in the Lancaster house conference of the willing buyer willing seller and the need to preserve white commercial farmers for at least ten years which saw only release of abandoned or least productive land from the Whites (Moyo 1990:243). The conditions were binding since the colonial mother was to finance the willing buyer willing seller land acquisitions for the process to be organized.

This system where the mother colony was to provide funding was on aid grounds not to pay for the losses and pains inflicted to the natives through colonialism so little funds were released to make the programme a success and that built a lot of pressure to the government to resettle the peasants, by 1999 about 70 000 of the targeted 166 000 peasant households had been resettled (Moyo 2013: 32-33) for land become more expensive to buy. In 1990 the government also instituted the IMF initiative of economic liberalization by having an economic structural adjustment programme that suspended subsidies of all kinds, liberalized trade and saw the importation of cheaper goods from abroad forcing local companies to scale down, close and retrench employees. This made life more difficult in both towns and the rural peasants suffered a double blow of subsidy removal and loss of remittances from retrenched town employees, some retrenched town employees went to rural areas and this increased communal lands resources pressure (Moyo 2013: 33-34). This pressed for an urgent need to address the land issue with war veterans initiating commercial farm invasions during the time of economic hardships, and authentication of the move was facilitated by the new colonial mother's government which announced that had no links with the previous governments' vow to finance the Land Reform in Zimbabwe(Moyo:34). This opened up for the radical invasions of the White farmer's area for the government was caught in the midst of honoring the Lancaster house agreements of the market based land reform but without funds and the need to resettle the agitating populace. Finally, the fast track land reform that was not government initiated kicked off in the year 2000.

Table 2 Trends in the Zimbabwean land redistribution 1980-2010

Land category	1980	2000	2010
	Area (Million Hectares)	Area (Million Hectares)	Area (Million Hectares)
Communal Areas	16.4	16.4	16.4
Old Resettlement	0.0	3.5	3.5
New resettlement A1	0.0	0.0	4.1
New Resettlement A2	0.0	0.0	3.5

Small Scale Commercial Farms	1.4	1.4	1.4
Large Scale Commercial Farms	15.5	11.7	3.4
State Farms	0.5	0.7	0.7
Urban land	0.2	0.3	0.3
Natural Parks Forest land	5.1	5.1	5.1
Unallocated Land	0.1	0.0	0.7

Source: derived from various government sources and compiled by the African Institute of Agrarian Studies * includes all large commercial farms, agro-industrial estate farms, church/trust farms, and conservatives.

2.2.4 Intersection of Race and class after the Fast Track land reform.

The fast track land invasions were undertaken with most participants of the activity having in mind an intention to mainly take land from the hands of the white minority and see it in the hands of the land deprived Black majority. That activity which was not officially approved by the government at its initial stages suggested a new regime of farmers exclusive to the native black Zimbabweans. “Intersectionality reveals how categories such as ethnicity, class and gender, are social locations that converge and interact to place individuals from specific groups in particularly disadvantaged situations” (Dance 2009: 180). To this date, there are still some farmers who are not Black who are still part of the farming community. In the past instances (Period from year 2000 -2003) the fast track land reform was meant for taking land from White farmers giving it to Black farmers but there after especially after the post 2010 era when the government was now conducting the program in more orderly manner, some White farmers also benefited. Moyo (2011: 502) reiterated that “Some former white farmers argue that they benefited less than they should have because of their colour or a failure by the state to recognize their ‘indigeneity’ to Zimbabwe with some parented by partners from black and White races also arguing the same”. Through this research it has also been learnt from the study region that there are some White farmers who are still farming on their original land they held since the pre- independence time. It is only that some who were multiple farm owners had to release some for redistribution Moyo (2011: 502) explained this issue when he said :

until 2007 there were about 725 remaining white farmers holding over one million hectares throughout the eight provinces (GoZ, MLRR statistics) has been missed by most critics. Many of the white farmers held relatively large landholdings in the drier southern provinces (Midlands, Matabeleland and Masvingo), as well as one high rainfall province (Mashonaland East). At the time, more than 12 percent of the remaining farms were over 2,000 hectares in size, amounting to a total of 1,044,723 hectares, while only 295 of the farms held were fewer than 500 hectares. Indeed, there are 400 white farmers still on the farms.

In addition to this, the research study area has some White farmers who are currently doing their farm business. These White farmers do not own the land but had recently been given the land by the government after the year 2010 on a contract basis which is more like renting from the government.

In terms of class, all White farmers who currently hold land in the country operate on commercial basis and belong to the class of rich farmers. They still have the highest number of farm workers per farm who reside right at the farm's compounds erected by the White farmers.

2.2.5 Peasant classes, accumulation and differentiation in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's land reform "from 2000 has resulted in a massive agrarian restructuring with huge economic, social and political consequences" (Scoones et al 2012:533). The land reform programme has brought about different agrarian classes. Agrarian relations in peasantry are defined by "self-employment of family labor" to produce food for the household and then sell surplus produce (Moyo 2002:61). From some research studies conducted within Zimbabwe from other parts of the country there were quite a number of land reform outcomes in terms of classes and differentiation issues. One of the research studies was looking at how the land reform programme has affected "dynamics of differentiation in Zimbabwe's countryside" (Scoones et al 2012).

The study was based in one of the Provinces and was conducted for a period of 10 years in order to be able to see the outcomes of the land reform programme as an ongoing process at that duration. Scoones et al as a point of entry to the study intimated that mix of resource poor people and land allocation of land marks the beginning of newness in livelihoods, trade and investments which will also yield different forms of differentiation within and amongst households and also at different locations (2012). The study focused in the specific locations of Masvingo province for the authors considered very important that each site had settlers who had own background different from others and different land invasion history so they focused on the classes formed and new relations that ensued the land occupations both socially and economically. Some of the questions raised and which the study was seeking to answer include," Can the new farmers generate not only subsistence livelihoods, but also surpluses to feed the nation and create broader wealth?" (Scoones et al: 505). The paper concluded that there is much differentiation between and within locations coming in with new livelihood strategies and class formations which are influenced by gender, age and ethnicity. New classes and subclasses were observed and of prime concern to this study was the emergency of the "middle farmer group" who are accumulating from below and some with support and connections from political leaders or patrons and also another class of those who are failing to eke a living out farming and are failing to reproduce themselves (Scoones et al 2012: 525). Of prime importance is to figure out the differences between those peasants who are mixing farm accumulation and non-farm accumulation of any kind and see the potential of agrarian transformation from small scale farming. One of the most recent research paper was authored by Ian Scoones in 2015 where he was looking at the new political settings as a resultant of accumulation and differentiation in the resettlement area.

Scoones emphasized that the paper was not going to “discuss the economic and livelihood characteristic of the new agrarian setting, as it has been discussed elsewhere, instead attempts a political reading of the new situation” (2015: 191). The focus of this study was subjected to the emerging new classes of middle income accumulators from different backgrounds (Scoones 2015:12) and they constitute 30 to 40% of the population from his study sample.

The paper concludes on the findings that the new rural political settings are driven by the emerging middle class peasants and emphasized on the process of differentiation and accumulation which was a result of a petty commodity production from a “laboring class” that is well connected and with origins from both rural and urban middle class and other non-farm formal employments (Scoones 2015:201). From this study the author pointed out that most of the studies conducted before 2015 outlined class and differentiation issues tracking outcomes of the land reform programme as a way to ascertain progress or retrogression from the programme.

In the pre land reform era accumulation has been taking place and differentiation but peasants were coming from almost the same background. The scope of the previous studies did not focus on the potential in this emerging group to influence rural livelihoods. This class of peasants that is well connected to other non-farm incomes is the one with members most likely to source income elsewhere and invest in farming, by so doing will increase their capacity to hire in labor from other peasants yielding a multiplier effect to the rural economy in terms of investments and livelihoods. Considering the village as the immediate source of livelihoods to other class of peasants, it is worth it to study the differentiation patterns of peasant communities focusing on the influence of the emerging middle class peasants.

2.3.0 Organization of marketing in the peasant farms

Market is “a place where people meet on and off at predetermined times to exchange goods by bargaining and is also an institutionalized system of organizing the economy by a more or less free interplay of supply, demand and price of goods” (Shanin 1990:110). Shanin (1990:111). further explained that markets form a crucial part of the peasant economy and also other non-economic social interactions for neighboring villages and mainly to connect with other advanced centers as urban area

The marketing system in peasantry section determines the direction and pace which peasants will differentiate. Regarding the whole marketing system as the organization that enhances the availability of inputs to peasants and enables them to dispose their surplus to obtain cash for accumulation and expansion it is incumbent upon this research to scan through the organization of the marketing system. In Zimbabwe marketing system is mainly dependent on government initiatives implemented through its responsible departments. The government extension system forms the basis through which peasant farmers get organized into groups to access variable items as farming inputs, information about agricultural programs, credit lines and product marketing information (Mlambo 2002:1). This has been the bases of the state oriented marketing system aimed at providing current marketing prices only (Poulton et al 2010: 719).

Smallholder farmers rely mainly on this state run market system and all other private marketing agencies serve only a limited number of people

and have specific crops and areas they operate in (Mlambo 2012:1), generally there is a confusion and pluralism in the approaches by these marketing information providers and is costing the farmers.

Lee(1984) as cited in Poulton et al proposed that “advice should cover new crops and market opportunities, plus forecasts of market trends and expected price movements, to assist farmers in their production planning, and in assisting coordination between farmers and traders / processors” (2010 721). This is the opportunity which has been identified by the middlemen who have self-imposed themselves to serve peasantry communities. The gap of providing information and facilitate movement of produce to where it is needed has been a void which has now in many cases been filled by middlemen especially in the marketing of high value horticultural crops in Zimbabwe. Middlemen are not in any case innocent mediators i.e. fair brokers between peasants and consumers but their social position usually turn against the peasants who in this equation are usually the weaker side in this function (Shanin 1990:114) making peasants the most exploited component. Bargaining power is usually a function of quite a number of factors that include availability of market options and being members of strong bargaining cooperatives which is a factor lacking amongst peasants for they operate on individual bases (Fisiy 2004: 303).

2.5.0 Rural entrepreneurship in agriculture

Entrepreneurship is “a force that mobilizes other resources to meet unmet market demand, the ability to create and build something from practically nothing”, “the process of creating value by pulling together a unique package of resources to exploit an opportunity” (Petrin 1994). Entrepreneurship is increasingly playing an appreciable role in speeding up rural development where it is regarded as a strategic tool by rural development practitioners (Petrin 1994). Petrin further explains that different players see different opportunities in entrepreneurship but the farmers’ take is that, entrepreneurship improves farm income and that all groups see it as a vehicle to improve living standards for the rural folks and also ensure health environment (1994).

In the social differentiation process, peasants who accumulate surpluses may think of augmenting their farm earnings through entrepreneurial endeavors by setting up other enterprises different from farming activities. So for one to undertake such an endeavor it involves decision making that allows someone to be a risk taker. In most cases the peasants who take up other enterprises fall into the middle peasant category with the potential to influence other classes.

Entrepreneurship involves “diversification into non-agricultural uses of available resources such as catering for tourists, blacksmithing, carpentry, spinning, etc. as well as diversification into activities other than those solely related to agricultural usage, for example, the use of resources other than land such as water, woodlands, buildings, available skills and local features, all fit into rural entrepreneurship” (Petrin 1994).

2.6.0 Theory of peasants

Lodhi and Kay (2009:3) defined a peasant as “an agricultural worker whose livelihood is based primarily on having access to land that is either owned or rented, and who uses principally their own labor and the labor of other family members to work that land”. But in some instances peasantry is more than this where peasants are involved in other non-farm income earning activities. If they accumulate surpluses, peasants tend to diversify and invest in other non-farm businesses.

Diversification by the farmers in Sub Sahara Africa is an intended calculated move to combat risks from climate related problems as drought and social problems as theft and fraud (Leenstra 2014: 222). In addition to protect themselves from risk, peasants also “extend consumption across cropping cycles, smallholder farmers thus manage a varied portfolio of on-farm and non-farm income-generating activities (Ellis in Leenstra 2014:222).

Wolf (1956b:1065) asserted that peasant “communities which form part of a complex society can thus be viewed no longer as self-contained and integrated systems in their own right but is more appropriate to view them as the local termini of a web of group relations which extend through intermediate levels from the level of the community to that of the nation and in the community itself, and these relationships may be wholly tangential to each other”. As a result of these relations the society is “heterogeneous, interpenetrating, interdigitating, and more complex and interconnecting “(Wolf 1988:753).

Farming is not only exclusive to the people who are not employed and having a rural background but involves employed professionals who have urban backgrounds. Leenstra also mentioned that “livelihood diversification is not only part of the reality of poor people in rural areas but also of better-off town or city dwellers with professional identities that may appear to be unrelated to farming” (2014: 223). These are the people who join the peasant community but with enough means to invest in farming as a way of diversifying and their levels of accumulation and operations tallies with the middle class peasant farmer. In Mozambique, “the new urban elite, usually senior government and army officials with good political connections, are obtaining land concessions” (Hanlon 2002:2). It is usually on weekends where such people could go and monitor farm activities hence or otherwise they rely on telephones to hear what will be on the ground whilst they will be engaged with their employments. Most of these farmers from the towns are often brighter, rich in human capital, eager to adopt new technologies relative to other peasants and prefer a commercial approach to farming (Hanlon 2002: 3). On the positive side, “the hope is that if they are supported, that they can increase production faster while serving as models for their neighbors” (ibid: 3). The modern “peasant mode of farming involves production and growth of as much value added as possible “and the peasant will keep on making more money by re-investing and augmenting self-managed resources (Van der Ploeg in McMichael 2013:146). These modern modes will promote widening of differences between investing peasants and non-investors

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

This project has been informed by Marxists' class based theory and the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Approach.

3.2 Peasant Class Dynamics

3.2.1 Commodification and petty commodity production

“It’s a process through which the elements of production are and social reproduction are produced for and obtained from, market exchange and subjected to its disciplines and compulsions” (Bernstein 2010:102). Bernstein (2010:102) argues that commodification does not necessarily mean that every part in the social function of reproduction will be commodified but implies “commodification of subsistence: that reproduction cannot take place outside commodity relations and the disciplines they impose”. Cáceres 1995 and Chonchol 1990 cited in Landin (2011:675-676) outlined that it is undisputed that peasant communities are moving towards commodification and are relinquishing themselves from communal arrangements as reciprocity but are now valuing asset accumulation and cash. This process of commodification enables peasants to deviate from communal ownership of their resources and enhances property enclosures to such resources as land which becomes the basis of variation amongst them in terms of organizing these resources for reproduction.

Variable items as labor, fertilizers and chemicals together with fixed items as land constitute the capital in peasant production. Each class has a certain level of capital different from another class in petty commodity production in terms of capitalist production (Bernstein 2010:103). The nature of such classes is that they are not evenly distributed amongst peasant households which is the “source of differentiation of petty commodity enterprises” (Bernstein 2010:103)

3.2.2 Peasant Differentiation

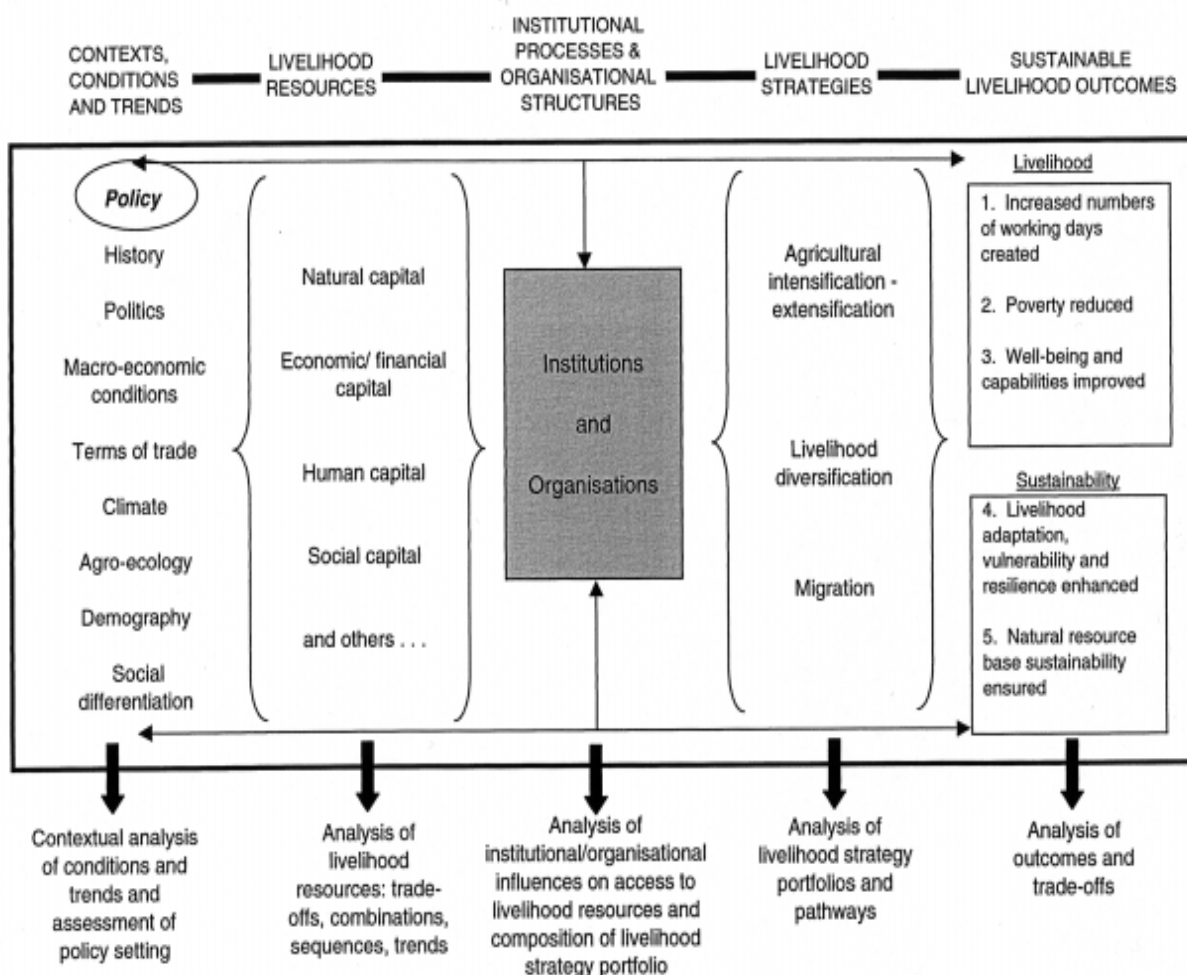
Differentiation in this context refers to the fact that “there is no single homogenous type of holding with respect to the way production activity is organized, which may be taken as a representative type” (Patnaik 1990: 195). The aggregated “economic contradictions” amongst the peasants is that which defines differentiation where a new form of rural dwellers are coming up with the disappearance of the primitive patriarchal communities (Lenin 1982: 132). Patnaik (1990:196) went on to stress further that peasants are classified considering how they exploit labor and ownership of means of production. Peasantry is not only differentiating but disappearing with the advent of new classes where capitalist economy will be in control (Lenin 1982, Knock 1998) and the new classes formed are “chiefly petty bourgeoisie and rural proletariat”. Bernstein (2010:104) further explained these classes basing on Lenin (1964a) peasant classification which resulted in rich, middle and poor peasant Bernstein(2010: 104) described those “struggling to reproduce themselves as capital or labor from own farming and subjected to simple reproduction squeeze as the poor peasants, those able to reproduce

themselves as capital on the same scale of labor and consumption as the middle peasants and those accumulating productive assets and reproducing themselves as capital on a larger scale, engaging in expanded reproduction as the rich peasants”. The rich peasant augments family labor by hiring in or entirely depends on hired labor whereas poor farmers find it difficult to reproduce themselves as labor or the essential working capital and at times are constrained to sacrifice their consumption habits in order to be able to acquire capital for reproduction (Bernstein 2010:104).

3.3.0 Livelihoods approach

The way in which different people in different places live is the entry point to livelihoods perspectives and livelihoods can be defined as “a combination of resources used and the activities undertaken in order to live” (Scoones 2009:172). Chambers and Conway in Scoones (2009: 175) defined a livelihood as something that “comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living and is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base. This research will look at how people live in the study area and how the peasants are strategizing and organizing their livelihoods.

Figure 1: Sustainable rural livelihoods: a framework for analysis



Source: Scoones 2015

Farmers are increasing their fortunes and prospects by looking outside the farming box where funds obtained from non-farm activities will foot other expenses as food and further investments (Bernstein 2010:106). These non-farm activities determine living standards of most peasants in the developing world with this “rural livelihood diversification connecting with tendencies to class differentiation which it might intensify or impede, according to circumstances” (Ellis in Bernstein 2010:106). From the framework of livelihoods this project shall not focus much on migration but will dwell on diversification and intensification / extensification. The livelihoods framework as Scoones outlines asks on “what combination of livelihood resources (different types of capital) result in the ability to follow what combination strategies from the list of agricultural intensification/ extensification, livelihood diversification and migration with what outcomes” (2015: 34).

Scoones stresses on livelihoods diversity that includes wage employment, small enterprises, farm labor and agriculture and that people usually combine these strategies into complex webs starting at individuals then households to villages emphasizing terms as “coping, adaptation, improvement, diversification and transformation” (Scoones 2009: 172). The term livelihood strategy means how a household alters its mix of activities all determined by assets and other circumstances. An individual’s strategy is shaped by the household strategy but at village level strategies are diverse and different. Household strategies are looked upon at household levels focusing on micro processes.

The Sustainable rural livelihoods framework incorporates five capitals of life which are deemed necessary in the accumulation of assets. Of these capitals this study shall focus more on human, social and natural capital. This does not imply that the other capitals are not important but are equally important but not main players in the scope of this study. This paper also argues that there is emergence of middle class peasant farmers who are rich in social capital and have the potential to influence the rural economy hence need to clearly define the social capital parameters of concern.

3.3.1 Social Capital

Social capital can be defined as the value derived from “networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and the networks have value for the people who are in them, and have, at least in some instances, demonstrable externalities, so that there are both public and private faces of social capital” (Patnam 2000:1). The public good avenue implies that an individual creates capital but the benefits are not direct but secondary (Putman in Newell et_al 2004: 46). Capital can also be a private good where “social capital is created by rational, purposeful individuals who build this capital to maximize their individual opportunities and to further personal projects” (Newell et_al 2004:46). There are also special dimensions of social capital which are “bonding and bridging”. Bonding “focuses on the collective relations between a defined group” (Coleman in Newell et_al 2004: 46). Bonding in this matter defines the level of cohesion between members of a group, their oneness that determines whether they can work together as one group or not in pursuit of a known goal. Bridging views “social capital as a resource inhering in a social network that can be appropriated by a focal actor based on relations with others in the network” (Burt in Newell et_al 2004:46). As the term suggests if someone provides a bridge it means will be a connection between two points which could have otherwise been not be able to have communication. These two dimensions will be considered in the light of informing this research study.

Social capital has a number of sections but for this research I shall examine it in the light of the six broad sections by (Woolcock et_al 2004:5): *Groups and Networks considers nature and extent of a household member’s participation in various types of organizations and informal networks and the range of contributions one receives from them.*

Trust and solidarity caters for trust towards neighbors, key service providers and strangers and how these perceptions have changed overtime

Collective action and cooperation looks at how household members have worked with others in their community on joint projects and or in response to a crisis and considers the consequences of violating community expectation regarding participation.

Information and Communication explores the way and means by which households receive information regarding market conditions and public service and the extent of their access to communication infrastructure

Social Cohesion and Inclusion identifies the nature and extend of various forms of differences and divisions, the mechanisms by which they are managed and which groups are excluded from key public services

Empowerment and political action explores household members' sense of happiness, personal efficacy and capacity to influence both local events and broad political outcomes.

In support of these categories, The World Development Report stipulates that “livelihood strategies rely on social networks for trust, social learning, and collective action” (2008: 84). According to World Development Report “membership in formal and informal organizations and in community or ethnic networks is a major asset of the rural poor, important for access to input and output markets, insurance, trust in transactions, and influence over political decisions (2008:89). Social networks also facilitate adoption of new technologies, enhances opportunities in non-farm activities through referrals and being a member of a recognized organization enhances peasant competitiveness and negotiating positions (WDR 2008:89).

3.3.2 Human Capital

Concerned about the quality of labor, education, skill and the health of the person in undertaking an activity.

3.4 Conjunction of the concepts

This theoretical framework is used to analyze and explain the main question of this study of why peasant classes are different. The Sustainable Rural Livelihoods approaches and the class based approach will augment each other in situating classes and the livelihoods they pursue. What is central to a Marxist perspective is class and the class' organization to the means of that class' livelihood whereas the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods approaches upfront assets for the organization of livelihoods hence both concepts zoom into the emerging livelihoods after the land reform programme but from different perspectives. Specifically, Marxist approach will look at class formation emerging after the fast track land reform programme whilst the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods approaches will look at a different point of inquiry. This will be the ability of a household to defend and construct livelihoods through combining different assets and labor units. This implies that some members of the household can be working on the farm whilst some will be engaged with non-farming activities. This will give an explanation on the difference of the emerging classes.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Presentation of Research Findings: Households Demography, Resource Endowments and Farm Labor Availability

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with households' demographic structure, resource endowments and how each household avails labor for farm activities. The first section deals with family labor that can be availed for farming activities and tabulates labor that is hired in to augment or replace family labor. The other section presents on the type of livestock owned by the farmers and also the type of farming implements they own. The research findings deal with the two main categories of farmers that are of concern to this study, that is category of the middle class and poor peasants.

4.2.0 The “Middle Class” Peasants

The middle peasant farmer has been described by Scoones et al (2012:506) as those who “have moved beyond simple reproduction into relatively sustained capitalist accumulation, employing and extracting surplus from wage labor and have diversified livelihoods drawing on rural and urban sources of income”.

Middle class peasant farmers in most cases mix farming with non-farm business especially when crop production attracts high costs and also hire in labor to cover up for labor hired out in off farm or to labor supplementation from outside during labor demand peak periods (Bernstein 2010: 107). These emerging “capitalist farmers” have investments that are ancillary to farming that include “crop trading and processing, rural retail trade and transport, advancing credit, renting out draft animals and tractors and selling irrigation water” (Bernstein 2010:107). This class of middle peasants also value investing in urban businesses and properties, invest in education and good marriages for their siblings and also make connections and alliances to officials in government, and in “political processes and influence more generally, that is engaging in diversification for accumulation” (Hart in Bernstein 2010: 107). This implies that this class of peasants has a certain level of influence in the rural economy as shown by business transactions they conduct with other classes.

This middle class is constituted by some who are regarded as peasant workers. Shanin (1990: 44) defined a peasant worker as someone who commutes to town where the peasant will be employed and gets wages but relies on the land to get food. In my research area the class of the middle peasants is being identified by characteristics that points to certain levels of accumulation that enables or promotes the peasant to diversify as well as the way in which a peasant organizes production activities. Key indicators used to classify peasants in the study area are summarized below.

Table 3 Below Showing Differences Amongst Poor, Middle and Rich Classes of Peasants

Indicators	Poor Peasants	Middle Class Peasants	Rich Peasants
Non Farm Employment (Formal employment e.g in town)	Not Employed	Majority still Employed or retired	
Organisation of labor for farm activities	Use family labor	Hire in labor	Hire in labor
Tillage Operations	Use Draft power	Most of them Hire Tractors/few Use own	Use Own Machinery
Diversification	Little or no Diversification	Diversify into non-farm activities as small businesses	Diversify into lucrative non-farm businesses as Buildings in towns (for renting out/ own businesses in towns as supermarket)
Source of Working capital	Own savings/ renting out part of farm land and paid by means of inputs as fertilizers/seed	Own Savings/Bank loans/Family remittances	Own Savings/Bank loans/Family remittances
Farm Mechanization Irrigation Equipment/Farm mahinery	Little / or no/ some with ploughs/ do small gardens manually irrigated for vegetables, mainly when it's not rainy season	Have irrigation with at least a small pump / capacity to hire machinery/have own machinery	State of the art and Contemporary Machinery
Renting of Land	They rent out land	Rent in land in addition to own but not on a very large scale but a maximum of 5 hectares (extra)	Rent in large acreage up to 20 hectares
Other Assets and Cattle	Small asset base with small herds of cattle	Own vehicle/s, other small businesses, medium herds of cattle up to 40	Modern Vehicles and, Own large herds of cattle up to one hundred

4.2.1 Households Labor Composition

This part presents on the amount of labor that is available in each household. It shows the capacity each household has if they are to devote all their available labor to farming activities.

Table 4: Household Demographic Characteristics (Family members) for middle class peasants (20 peasant households interviewed)

Family Labor (Age of 15 – 60 Years)	Frequency	Percentage of the sample
2-4	12	60%
5-7	8	40%
8-10	0	0
Total	20	100

Source: Survey Data July 2016

This section shows peasant household composition in terms of labor availability from the sample population. The age range which has been taken into account of is that of household members who can contribute towards labor. From the table above it is shown that 60% of the households have labor available that ranges between two and four members with 40 % having five to seven. This labor is that which is expected to contribute in all the different household livelihoods mixes which are farm and non-farm activities. Should there be some members who are part of the farm labor or employed elsewhere not at the farm, it means they will be from these members. Basing with the number of hectares each household has at their farms, which is six hectares each, the larger percentage of households is in the labor range of 2-4 members which suggests hiring in of labor if the household is to utilize all their land for successful farming since most of the farms are not highly mechanized.

4.2.2 Household Labor for Farm Activities (Middle Class Peasants)

This section gives findings with regard to how each household in the studied area organizes or sources its labor for farm activities.

Table 5: Household labor source for Farm activities (20 peasant households interviewed)

Family labor	Frequency	Percentage	Permanent hired Labor	Frequency	Percentage	Seasonal or Labor Demand Peak Periods Hired Labor	Frequency	Percent age
0	18	90%	0	6	30%	0	0	0
1-2	1	5%	1-4	8	40%	1-4	0	0
3-4	1	5%	5-9	4	20%	5-9	8	40%
5-7	0	0	10-14	2	10%	10-14	3	15%
7<	0	0	14<	0	0	14<	9	45%
Total	20	100%		20	100%		20	100%

Source: Survey Data July 2016

Table 4 shows how each family divides its labor between farm activities and other income earning activities. The middle class farmers are showing success in terms of agricultural production activities with some even renting pieces of land from those who cannot utilize all of it. A large majority (90%) of the households do not partake as labor for their farm activities. Its only 10% who partake as labor for their agricultural activities. All the middle class peasants from the sample population hire in labor but its only that the scale of hiring varies across households. There are some peasant households who do not have permanent hired labor but they just hire in as and when need arises. It is 30 % of the middle peasants who do not have permanent workers but they hire in labor. It is also 30 % of the households who have permanent workers whose number ranges from 5 to 14, with 40 % having between 1 and 4 permanent workers. The table also show that all the peasant households employ seasonal workers during peak demand periods for labor with 45% hiring in more than 14 and 45% hiring between 5 and 14 workers.

Most of these middle class peasants regard devoting their labor on farming activities as devoting it to activities that are lowly remunerating. Instead they would rather spend much of their time on non-farm activities that are better paying and then be able to hire in more people for their farm activities. One of the middle class peasants asserted that:

“I have my education so I would rather employ someone from within this locality who would spent the whole day working in my field whilst I will be in town at my workplace where I know that I will get higher returns for my labor, I would then employ say 5 people and I will give them less than half of what I get from my work place. I personally could have spent the whole day in the field but I cannot do work equivalent to five people’s work which means my labor has less value in the field but if I could work at my work place in town it will be like I do work for 5 people in my farm plus the other half of my town work remuneration which remains after paying for farm work. This will bring a multiplier effect because after harvests I will make more money and re invest in the farm in addition to the savings I make from my town work place and one day I will stop even working in town and concentrate on supervising farm work since I will be someone big financially”, (F.Chimambo, Ministry of Agriculture Employee, personal interview, August 2016).

Most of the middle peasants regard farming activities as highly paying relative to other forms of non-farm employment but appreciate the need to first have non-farm employment first which could enable one to raise capital needed to engage with farming activities.

4.3 Livestock Ownership

This section deals with livestock ownership in the study area. In addition to other benefits livestock in the rural area is another source of protein that is available at homes.

Table 6: Livestock Ownership by Middle Class Peasants (20 peasant households interviewed)

Range	Cattle Owned		Goats Owned		Chicken	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	6	30%	0	0	0	0
4-6	4	20%	5	25%	0	0
7-9	3	15%	9	45%	0	0
10-12	2	10%	2	10%	0	0
13-15	3	15%	1	5%	2	10%
16-18	1	5%	1	5%	1	5%
>19	0	0	2	10%	17	85%
Total	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Source: Survey data July 2016

The table above shows the summary of livestock ownership amongst the peasants. All the peasants in the sample had livestock that include cattle goats and chicken. From the study sample 50% have a herd of cattle that ranges from one to six with 15% in the range 7 to 9 whereas 25% are in the 10 to 15% category its only 5% who have 16 to 18 beasts. For goats 25% have 4 to 6 , with 45% having 7 to 9 whilst 15% have 10 to 15 goats. Its only 5 % who have 16 to 18 goats and 10% have more than 19 goats. Chicken is the only form of livestock that is found at most households in high numbers. The peasants also use the phrase “s/he doesn’t have even a single hen” as a community perception that one is poor (Personal Survey, August 2016). This implies that a person is not much expected to have either a goat or other livestock of high value if one doesn’t have chicken. Therefore 15% of peasants from the sample have 13 to 18 chickens with 85% having more than 19 chickens. Although most of the peasants indicated that they rely largely on tractors and related machinery for tillage operations, livestock as cattle and donkeys can also provide draft power or augment tillage operations in case hired machinery is too busy to afford serving all in need especially during preparations for the rain season.

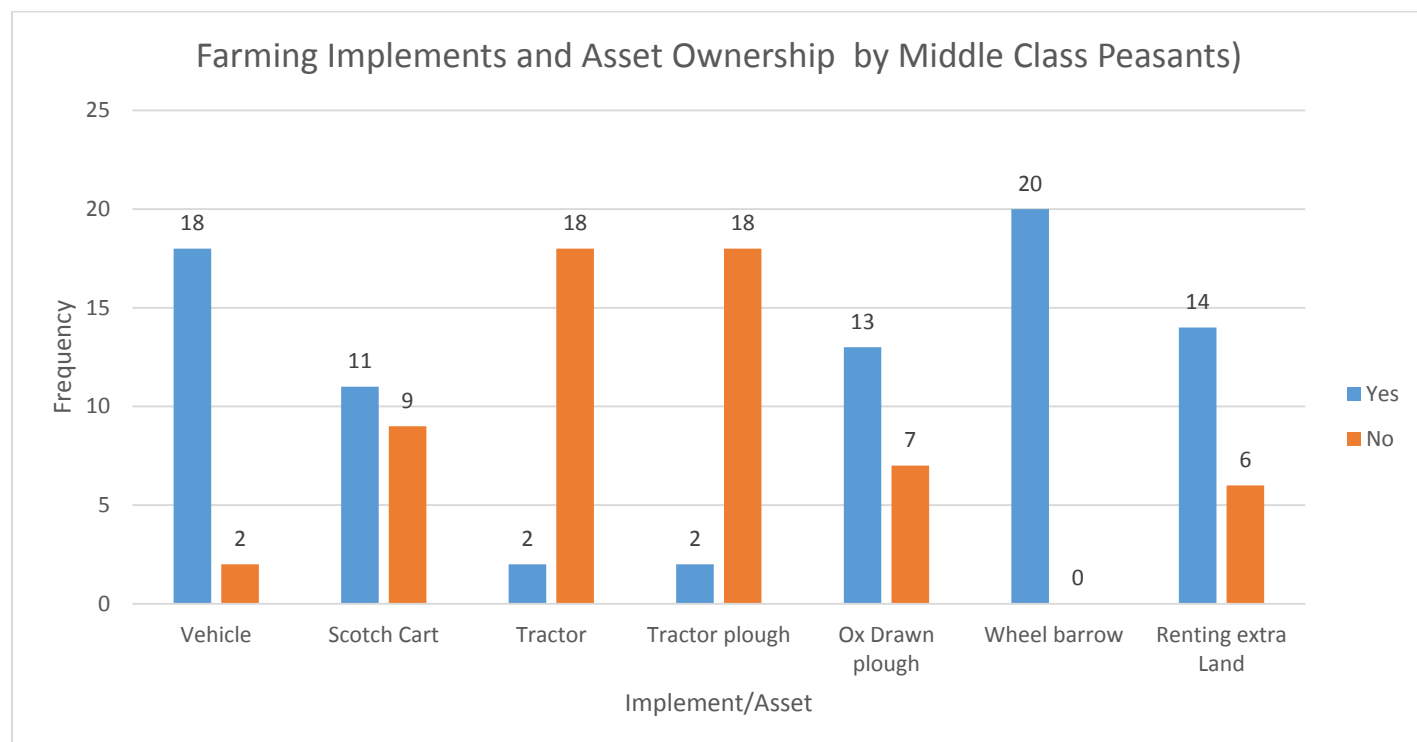
During interviews peasants have indicated that cattle are a store of value and a symbol of wealth. Cattle can easily be disposed if a farmer needs cash. If one fails to dispose cattle locally there are abattoirs which a farmer can sell to at any given time and cash is readily available from such abattoirs. It means then that if a farmer needs cash, he/she can just sell a certain number of beast/s and be able to meet the required expenses at hand. Livestock rearing is also not intensive that one can do it concurrently with crop production activities without feeling the burden of having livestock for they (cattle goats or donkeys) just graze without supplementary feeding. In case of a good harvest farmers if they accumulate surpluses tend to buy livestock especially cattle and goats which they would use to hedge themselves against bad crop production season to keep their operations afloat for any average cattle is valued at US \$500.00 and can be easily sold in the local abattoirs. The peasants also indicated that cattle have traditionally and is still used as part of dowry payment (payment for the bride) in marriages in the country.

Most of the peasants who are having high yields in crops are the very same people who are having large herds of cattle and goats. Their base being that they acquired these beasts in years of good harvests and then later on reproduced to become large herds whilst they are keeping on doing crop production.

4.4 Farming Implements and Asset Ownership

Asset ownership makes the basis of capital accumulation as it enhances farmer productivity. A farmer without assets will have to rely on hiring so that the farmer can also engage with production.

Figure 2: Below Showing: Asset and Farming Implements Ownership (20 peasant households interviewed)



Source: Survey data July 2016

The bar graph indicates that 90% of the peasants from the sample own vehicles. 55% have scotch carts and 10% have a tractor and a plough. It is also 70% of the peasant farmers who are renting land in addition to their six hectares allocated to them. Ox drawn ploughs are also owned by 65% of the peasants with all of them having a wheel barrow. All of these implements help the peasants in their day to day operations. These are the main implements which form the basis of essential elements that facilitate farm production in terms of machinery. Information from the survey confirmed that all the middle class peasants relied on tractors for tilling their land.

Despite that only 10% own tractors the rest of the peasants hire tractors from other farmers or other tillage service providers. A farmer can only resort to draft power if one is seriously financially constrained or if the available tractor service providers cannot deliver in the required time. Vehicles, scotch carts are all useful in transport provision and at times make owners obtain money from hiring them out to other farmers in need of transport. One of the farmers indicated that:

“We can still use an ox drawn plough but it’s something that is outdated, most of the crops need a good depth for you to have good yields which ox-drawn ploughs cannot attain. If you want to be rest assured of success a farmer needs to make use of machinery for they save time and ensure precision agriculture. I can hire out my ox drawn plough and beasts to those in need of them but I will hire a tractor. It’s cheaper for me to use a tractor plough for my maize, hire a disc and then a planter, I can do one hectare in two days on all those operations relative to the use of ox drawn plough and manual labor which will take more than a week and that will end up being expensive” (M. Hombarume, middle class peasant farmer, Personal Survey, July 2016).

Assets, farming implements and livestock are all indicators of one’s status in terms of wealth in the peasant community. If a peasant is capable of renting a piece of land in extra to what the farmer owns, it implies that the peasant has enough financial resources that can support extra acreage. So ox drawn plough is only sensible to (poor) family farms, which do not hire labour, but use their own labour. This way poor household can save on expenses. Middle farmers who have money to invest in tractors can subsequently get higher yields, and accumulate.

4.5 Diversity in the Rural Community

Aside from the middle class peasants in the rural sector, there are also other classes which fall in the category of being poor, and are the source of labor to the better off classes. The level of poorness varies across all poor peasants but they have common features amongst them. Of the ten interviewed class of poor peasants, 90% of the family labor take part in family agricultural activities and the very same labor is available for hiring out to other farmers if an opportunity arises. In terms of hiring out labor, poor peasants are hired by better off farmers mainly during the dry period for they will be lying idle mostly since all of them do not have irrigation equipment. This idleness is also extended to their pieces of land which they also rent out to other farmers. They rent out land because they don’t have the irrigation infrastructure to convey water to their own plots. It is 70% of the poor peasants who managed to secure someone who rents a piece of land from them. It is during the rainy season when poor farmers concentrate more on their own pieces of land so that they can produce their own food. These farmers also confirmed it a blessing to have someone who can rent a piece of land for their usual payment is in the form of inputs. One of the farmers confirmed this by saying:

“It’s a blessing to have someone knocking at your door in need of a piece of land to rent, not all of the poor peasants are that lucky. If I give out a hectare of land someone will give me fertilizers enough to do one hectare of maize (staple food crop) and the harvests will take me up to the next season.

Even if I am given less it is still good for me, where would I get them, I will not let such a person go even if he negotiates me down for he will be my savior. Can I eat soil when it is lying idle since I don't have the capacity to work on it? I don't have anywhere to get such inputs from, and I don't even know whether the government will give use inputs for close to an acre again this year” (Poor peasant, Personal Survey, August 2016).

In terms of hiring in of labor, poor peasants lack financial resources to pay for labor and to buy inputs hence they tend to grow crops on portions of land which they can work on with family labor. Payments on labor are not strictly cash but some poor farmers can negotiate for paying in kind. Chicken is a common form of payment for it is the type of livestock found at almost all households. In terms of assets and livestock ownership, 20% of the poor farmers own small herds of cattle with the largest herd being five, 45% own goats. Its only 10% without chicken or any other livestock. Of these poor peasants 20% own an ox drawn plough and a wheel barrow and none of them have a car, tractor or tractor drawn plough.

4.6 Conclusion

4.6.1 Peasants and their Rural Economy

Economic activities taking place in the rural economy has led to the differentiation of the farmers as in accordance to the Marxists perspective. The scenario is just like as Lenin noticed in the Russian peasantry set up where he asserts that “ The system of social economic relations amongst the peasantry(agriculture and village community) shows us the presence of all those contradictions which are inherent in every commodity economy and every order of capitalism : competition, the struggle for economic independence, grabbing of land(purchasable and rentable), the concentration of production in the hands of the minority, forcing the majority into the ranks of the proletariat , their exploitation by a minority through the medium of merchant's capital and the hiring of farm laborers” (1982:130). The Zimbabwean peasantry is as well differentiated in the same way where there are other peasants who are engaged in capitalist production and are keeping on either expanding or intensifying their own production while other peasants are not able to do so.

Marxists' description of classes is based on the capacity of peasants to reproduce themselves as labor or capital where the poor peasants are those failing to reproduce themselves as labor or capital and middle class as those peasants reproducing on the same scale as labor and the rich ones as those reproducing to the extent of accumulating surpluses (Bernstein 2010:104). In terms of making the rural economy thrive, it is those rich peasants who are providing employment to other peasants who are making them survive. It is not only employment they provide but also the possibility to rent out land which plays a pivotal role in the livelihoods of poor peasants by provision of inputs to poor peasants (as payment for rented land) which the poor peasants will use to produce their staple. Exploitation of other peasants happens in this community which pushes exploited peasants into the class of rural proletariat. The main form of employment availed by the rich peasants is the manual labor in crops fields which is pegged at an average of US\$3.00 per labor day, that is eighty hours long.

This amount is good enough to provide food only to the families of the poor peasants but will not be enough to help in the buying of inputs for crop enterprises. This will consequently urge the poor peasants to give out their land to the same rich peasants who in turn will give them inputs which they cannot afford to buy. This has remained a cycle for some time and can only be broken by some financial injections to the poor peasants or input handouts otherwise they will remain as rural workers with subsistence agriculture.

From a Sustainable Livelihoods Approach perspective, assets are of prime importance in defending livelihoods and peasants are classified according to the way they organize their way of living. Conway and Chambers cited in Scoones defined that “a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living (2015:6). Poor peasants and middle class peasants have their differences explained in this peasant community in terms of assets. It is only those farmers with assets who have a wide range of livelihood opportunities. The opportunities they have will enable them to earn more resources they can use in farm investments thereby maintaining or widening the gap between poor and middle peasants.

Scoones explained that the livelihoods approaches also look at the available capital to assess whether it will enable a peasant to intensify or extensify (2015:34). It has been noticed from the study area that it is only those farmers with the described assets (from livelihood definition in this section see below) who can extensify or intensify. When asked regarding the types of crops they grow and their acreages, there is evidence of extensification (expanding areas they farm) on the side of the rich peasants since they are renting land from other poor peasants. Some of those who are not renting land are intensifying where they are moving from acreages of low value crops to high value horticultural crops. The crops they are taking now are capital intensive and are also high yielding in terms of capital returns. These crops include potatoes, cabbages, onions, green pepper and tomatoes with an average gross margin of US\$ 12,000.00 as compared to other low value crops as maize, wheat, beans with an average gross margin of US\$1,500.00. Poor peasants are very much limited in the accumulation of assets for they are not accumulating surpluses which they can invest into assets for they have only low paid temporal jobs in agriculture, while middle and or rich peasants have higher paid non-agricultural jobs (e.g. urban).

4.6.2 Capitalism and Rural Economy

Assuming or not assuming a closed rural economy, engaging with capitalist mode of production revolves on the relationship between capital and labor. Bernstein asserts that “rural labor markets are a critical condition of petty commodity production” (2010: 106). This assertion by Bernstein implies that it is a necessary condition though not sufficient to have a source of waged labor for capitalism to take off. In the case of my study area, it has been ascertained that farmers who befall in the category of the poor are the source of waged labor to other better off farmers in this rural economy. The middle class and rich peasants are also in dire need of labor so that they can turn their capital into profits hence need to have poor classes who provide labor. There is a symbiotic relationship between the two groups of the fish and water type such that one cannot live without the other. In a bid to find out on the influence and the

relationship between or amongst different classes of peasants, there is need to ask oneself a question that leads to other subsequent questions.

The main question being that: Is it possible to have only middle class peasants in a capitalist political economy? If all peasant farmers become better off or rich farmers who will provide labor to make the capitalism function complete? “Poor or marginal farmers engage in survival activities to reproduce themselves primarily through the sale of their labor power” Bernstein 2010:106). Another subsequent question that follows after this statement would be that, who will employ the marginal farmer if there are no middle class or rich farmers with the capacity to employ poor farmer? Lenin also said that “If capital in our countryside were incapable of creating anything but bondage and usury, we could not, from data on production, establish differentiation of the peasantry, the formation of a rural bourgeoisie and a rural proletariat; the whole of the peasantry would represent a fairly even type of poverty stricken cultivators” (1982:136). It is almost impossible to have just one class of peasants with more or less the same level of assets/welfare in a capitalist mode of production

Chapter 5

Human, Social Capital and Livelihoods Mixes Pursued by Peasant Farmers.

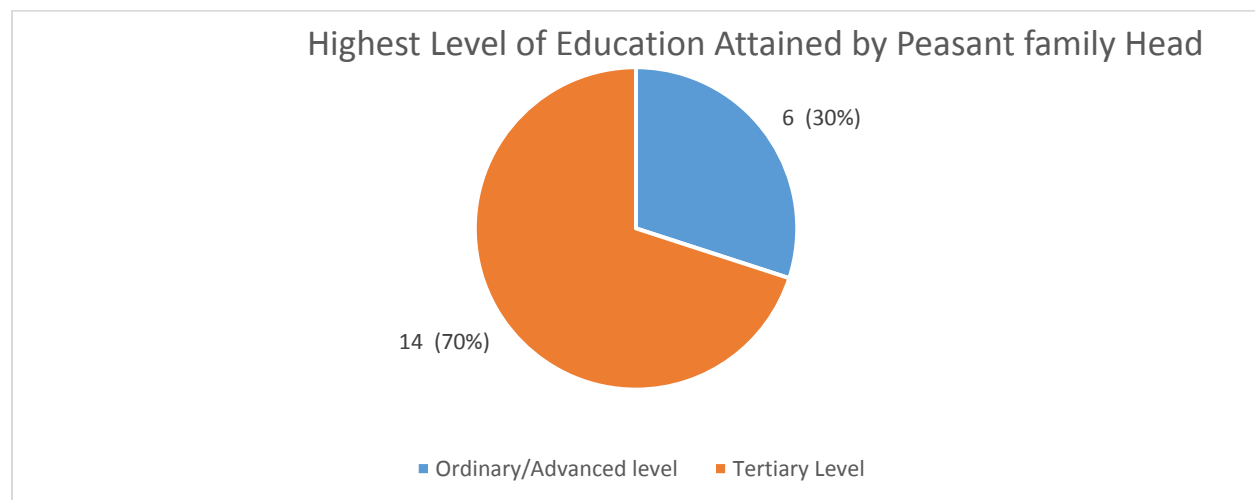
5.1 Introduction

This chapter with social and human capital amongst the peasants and livelihoods mixes they are pursuing. The chapter starts by presenting findings on human capital amongst the middle peasants household heads, how they value education for their siblings, by the type and quality of schooling they give to their children. The chapter also presents on the employment status of the rich peasants, livelihood strategies peasants are pursuing as well as the way in which they are diversifying.

5.2 Level of Education Attained by Household Heads

At each household, I had to ask who the household head is and in all the cases the father (except cases when the father is dead) was regarded to as the head. The level of education plays a crucial role as it determines opportunities available to the household head as well as capacitation and decision making.

Figure 3 below shows: Level of Education attained by household heads (middle class peasants for 20 households interviewed)



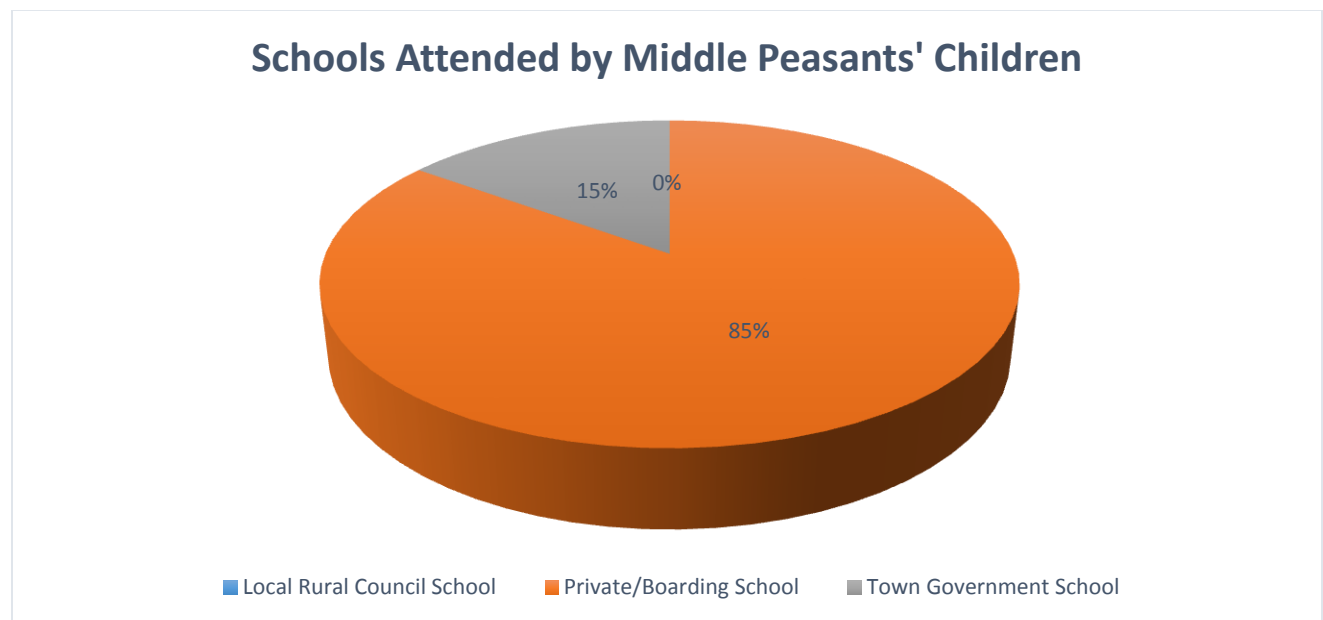
Source: Survey data July 2016

The figure above shows the highest level attained by household heads in the category of middle peasants. It is 70% of them who have reached tertiary level, implying that they hold either a certificate or diploma to advanced degrees in a specified area. Of them, 30% have attended school up to either ordinary or advanced level. It is possible to say that majority of household heads in the middle class peasants hold tertiary qualifications. This is suggesting already the likelihood that most of the peasants in this category are or have once been employed somewhere else as skilled labor.

There is more to the coincidence that where there is a household head with better levels of education, asset accumulation and level of farm production are also higher relative to those with low education level. The farmers also confirmed that people with higher levels of education usually secure better paying jobs which gives them exposure to large networks/social capital and makes them better decision makers as they are in touch with the competitive world relative to those with low education levels.

Of the 30% who have not gone beyond secondary level, 10% have been employed as assistants to qualified personnel and then later on got employed as semi-skilled labor based on the knowledge they obtained as practicing assistants to skilled personnel. The fields are construction and motor mechanics to be more specific. In contrast to middle/rich peasants, none of the interviewed poor peasants have gone beyond secondary school level (ordinary or advanced level).

Figure 4 :Schools attended by middle class peasants' children (20 peasant households interviewed)



Source: Survey Data July 2016

The pie chart above presents on the type of schools to which middle class peasants send their children. None of the middle peasants are sending their schools to the local rural council schools. Some (15%) are sending their children to town council /government schools with 85% sending children private or boarding schools. The farmers asserted that local rural council schools do not give good quality education to their children hence they sacrifice sending them to expensive private/ boarding schools or schools in towns. Making their children attend rural schools will give them a false start in life and this will jeopardize their education which will haunt them for

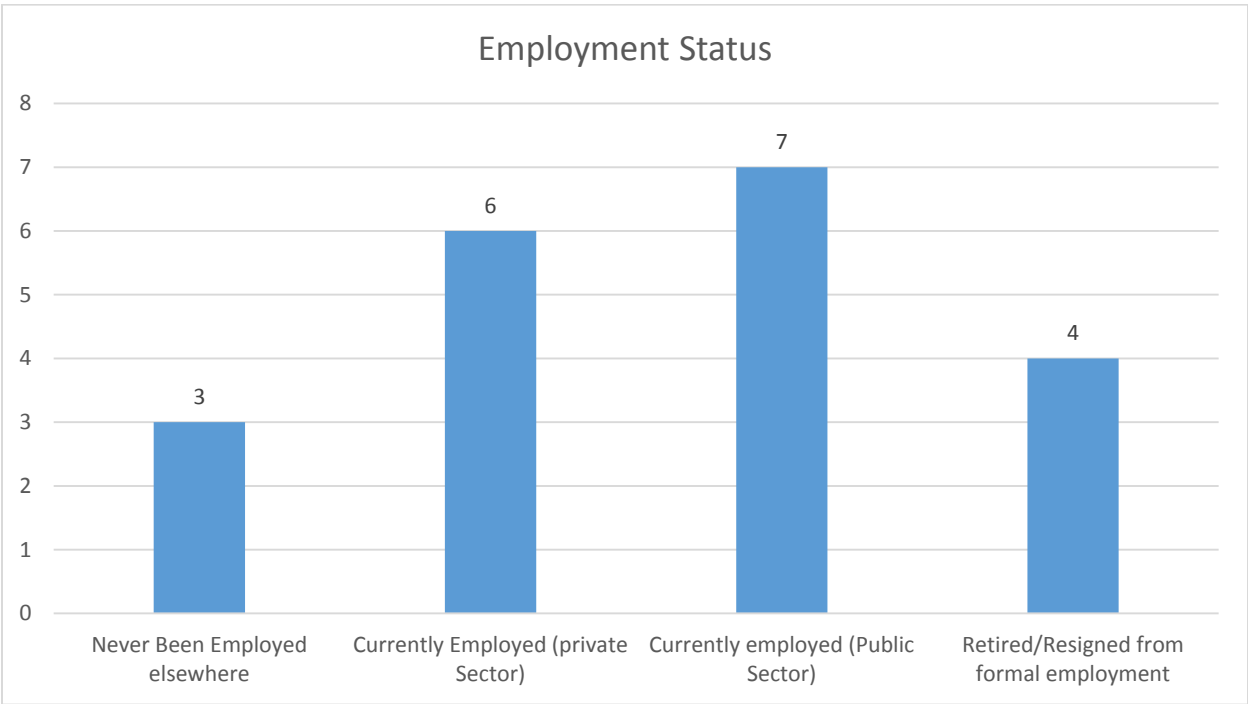
the rest of their lives. The average fees for a private or a boarding school which the middle peasants are sending their children ranges from US\$500.00 to \$1000.00 for a single term where there are three terms per annum. The local council rural schools have their fees ranging from US\$ 9.00 to \$30.00 per term.

All poor peasants send their children to local rural schools with most of them facing difficulties in paying the above stated school fees, with some parents in school fees arrears of up to two terms. Some of the poor peasants also confirmed working for the school in some of its projects as brick molding as a way of clearing school fees arrears for they are finding it difficult to secure cash to pay for school fees.

5.3 Household Head Employment Status/History

Another important parameter of concern is the employment status of household head since it tells the source of some of the capital used and enables certain capital accumulations.

Figure 5: Employment Status/History for the Middle Class Peasants (20 peasant households interviewed)



Source: Survey Data July 2016

The figure on this section gives findings pertaining to employment history or status of the middle class peasants. It is 15% who have never been employed, 30% currently employed in the private sector, 35% currently employed in the public sector whereas 20% are retired from formal employment. From these figures those who have never been employed are the ones who have been referred to as those who are accumulating from below.

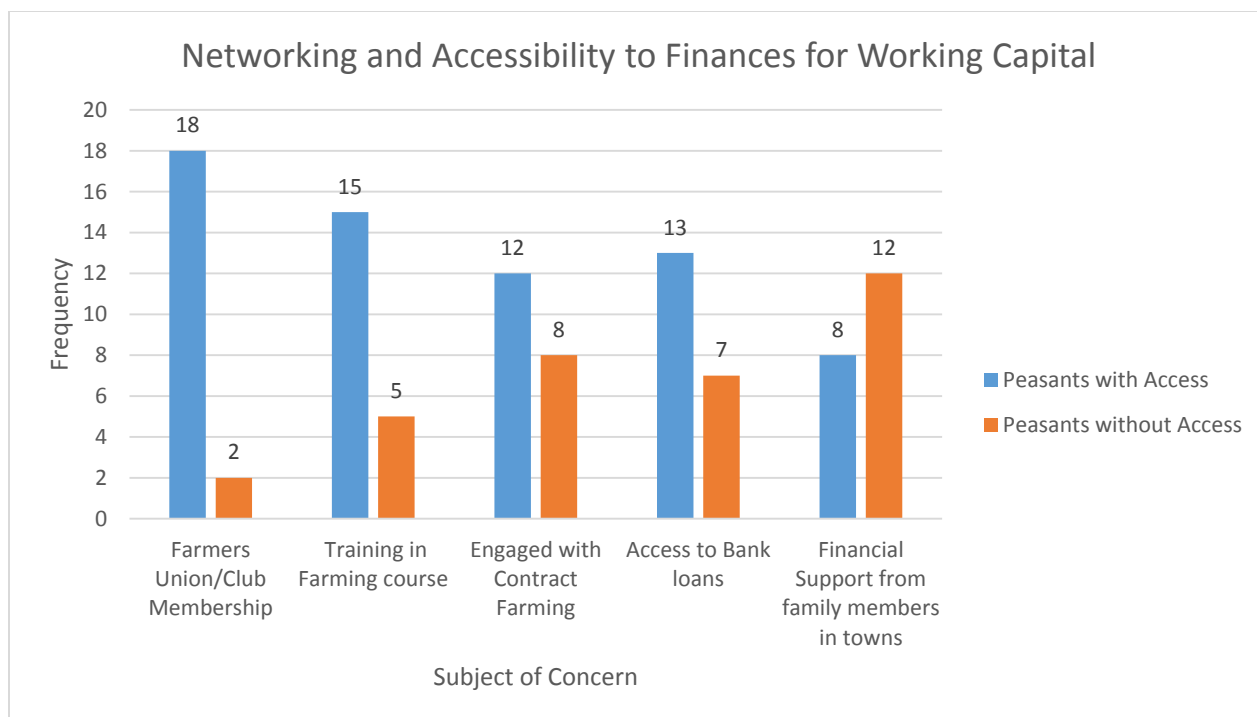
These farmers regarded farming as their main source of income. They pointed out that they grew up in peasant families, so they believed that it is only farming that can make them earn a living for it was their immediate qualification they have experience in. The farmers also confirmed that despite the fact that they have never been employed they at times engage with other non-farm income earning activities, small businesses or informal trade with an intention to step up their capital so that they could boost their farming. Some even got engaged with informal cross border trade with an intention of investing in farming at increased levels. They asserted that farming forms their financial backbone because all the money they might have invested elsewhere was obtained from farming in the good years, or was a result of selling livestock as cattle at once. Those who are currently employed are engaged with the private and public sectors. Those in the public sector are working in the parastatal or are civil servants (policemen, soldiers, nurse, agricultural extension workers) who are deployed in the rural areas. Retired peasants are from the civil service and parastatals as well.

With regard to poor peasants 70 % have been retrenched from their former workplaces though their forms of employment were lowly remunerated. Some are former farm workers who have been working for the White commercial farmers before the fast track land reform program. Some (30%) have never been employed before but were staying in their rural homes and managed to grab pieces of land during the land reform program. Most of them do not consider themselves as employed but are now the main source of labor employed by the rich peasants. They are free to be employed by any rich peasant farmer either on a short term or contract basis.

5.4 Networking

Networks which each peasant establishes also influences one's capital accumulation.

Figure 6: Middle Class Farmers Networking and Access to Finances for Working Capital



Source: Survey Data July 2016 (20 peasant households interviewed)

5.4.1 Club, Union or other informal groups membership

Middle class peasants consider it important to be affiliated with farmers' unions or clubs where 90% are members of such organizations. Most of the middle peasants consider it important belong to a social group whether it is formal or not. As for women, they have some informal church related clubs which meet once every week in the area and discuss women related issues that are in line with their families and development such women money lending clubs and women cooperatives that do small businesses. The largest percentage of church goers in the area are females with most man converging at beer drinking spots at least on weekend basis. At such places there are usual buddies and companions who regard beer drinking time as time they can discuss any issues from social to business issues. It is such a type of gatherings that are free of subscriptions to join which farmers use to share rumors, developments and informal evaluations. Some of the issues discussed at those groupings tend to materialize into useful things in the life of the farmers and in some cases act as tips for important programs.

In terms of formal and registered clubs, it is at such clubs where important farming information pertaining to inputs sources, contracts, loans are and markets is obtained. Trainings can also be obtained through these farmer organizations. Some input loan schemes are administered through such clubs as the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union(ZFU). Membership to unions as the ZFU makes farmers obtain discounts up to 15% on purchase of agricultural inputs from some of the input suppliers hardware.

A total of 75% of the middle class farmers have attended agricultural related courses(a fee is charged) with some working as qualified extension workers in the rural areas. Some unions have pamphlets and magazines they distribute to subscribed members which has useful information on service providers, contemporary technologies pertaining to farming and other relevant recent happenings as well as organizing trainings for their members.

With regard to social capital, (Woolcock et al 2004:5) talks about the importance of groups and networks as well as trust and solidarity. Membership of any grouping gives a basis for trust amongst group members which is a special social asset in the peasant communities. Peasant farmers tend to extend soft loans (no interests charged) to each other without any documentation, trusting that the borrower would return whatever items they would have borrowed basing on the goodwill of the community members. This trust is more or less equivalent to a collateral required if one is to acquire a loan from a bank. This is very important in the peasant communities as most of the peasants do not have collateral to obtain loans from a bank. In cases of emergency situations like illness, deaths, or other accidents, peasants of a particular grouping tend to show solidarity by helping a member in need by means of cash or kind. This implies a certain degree of cohesion amongst the group members.

Group or Union membership to some other forms of organizations have an aspect of excluding certain classes of peasants. For example, for one to be a member of ZFU has to make an annual subscription of USD 20 as a once off payment. This is something which a poor peasant cannot prioritize, such an amount of money is not very easy to raise for some who are even failing to pay for their children's fees which is also around the same amount.

5.4.2 Contract Farming in the Peasant Community

Some (60% of middle class peasants) are engaged with contract farming. They are contracted mainly with tobacco companies and some have signed up maize contracts with the government for the 2016/2017 cropping season which starts in October 2016. The 40% part who are not contracted anywhere lack interest. They prefer to source their own inputs and sell their produce at their own pace without the tight supervision by contractors who want to be sure that all contracted crops are managed to the required standards and guard against side marketing by contracted farmers. Some of course did not get the opportunity by not getting the information in time to sign up for the contract, or have defaulted from the previous contracts.

From the study area, it appears that the main setback for the peasants to produce to the levels they require is lack of sufficient working capital. They can on their own struggle to produce without external working capital support but in this way it takes time for them to accumulate enough revenue for expansion. Almost every farmer embraces the idea of being contracted on the basis of less or no hustle in securing funds for working capital. Contracted farmers have a market guarantee which if a farmer does good crop husbandry practices in the field is also expected/likely to generate a good gross margin. The most common contract farmers obtain is a tobacco growing contract.

All the past years, tobacco companies have been contracting farmers, giving them a full package consisting of extension services, inputs, a market guarantee and at times a cash advance to meet other operational costs. Looking at the gross margins budgets provided by tobacco contractors input cost are less than 10% of the expected gross income making it possible for farmers to have surpluses after inputs loan recovery by the contractor. *ceteris paribus*. This stance is supported by Reardon et al in McMichael(2009: 237) in the saying that “Agro-exporting has accelerated differentiation among smallholders, where those capable of meeting quality and delivery standards have benefited as local contract farming has expanded the foundation of supply chains for new corporate retailing operations”. This assertion tallies with what is transpiring in the peasant communities on the side of tobacco production. Tobacco production in Zimbabwe is driven by foreign markets and most of the contractors are foreign entrepreneurs.

5.4.3 Access to bank loans and Cash Remittances from Other Family Members

Bank loans are also an important source of financial boosting, where 65% of the middle class peasants have access to such loans. Peasants with such access are mainly those who are currently employed formally or those who can provide a collateral in form of title deeds for town properties. Any formally employed person can obtain a certain amount of money from the banks as a salary based loan paid through salary for a period of up to 5 years. As for the poor peasants who are not formally employed elsewhere, it implies that they cannot access loans on salary based grounds. These poor farmers also have no assets in towns which they can declare as a collateral to secure a bank loan. This implies that the only source of reachable inputs for their farming operations could only be through contract farming which is again not easy to secure to the poor farmers. Only 40% of the middle class peasants have access to remittances from family members not staying at the farms. This is mainly from own children who work in towns or abroad and are supporting their families in peasantry. Those without such support are still young families with little children or do not have close relatives who can support financially.

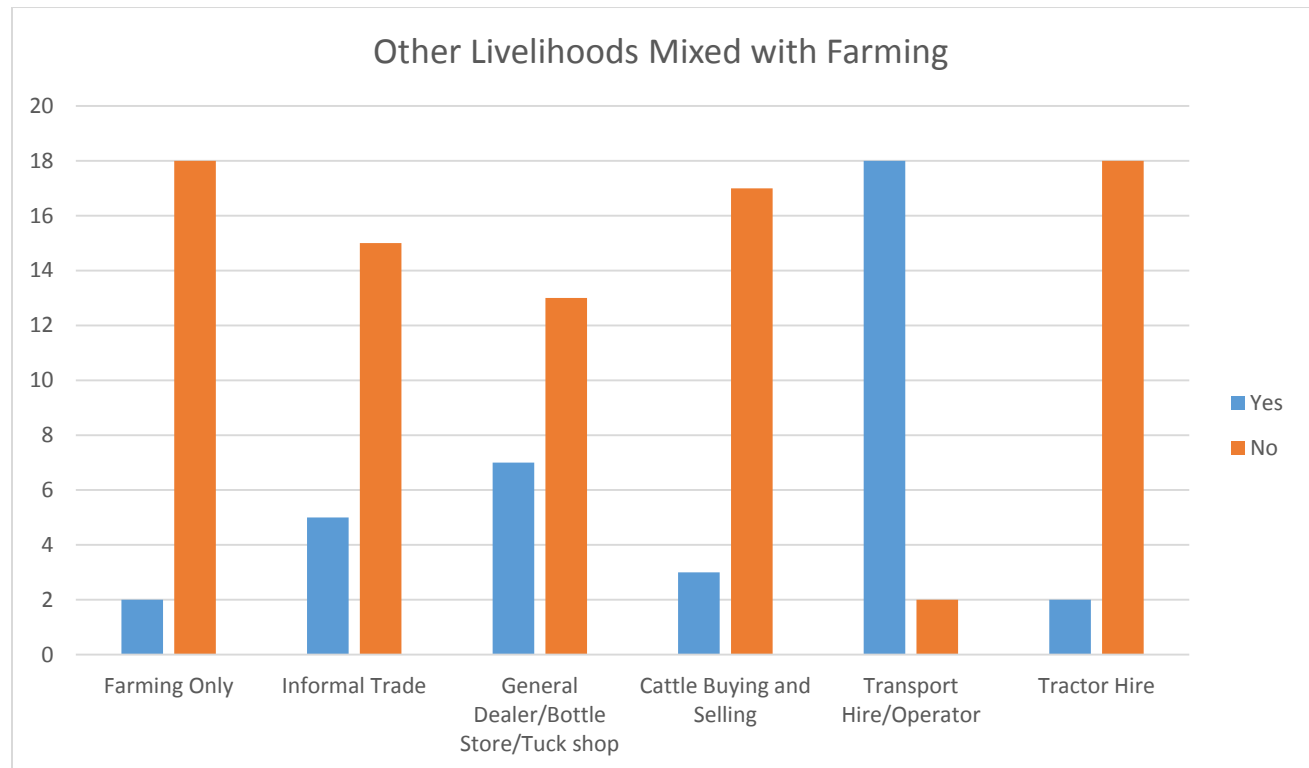
When asked on their perception (poor peasants) of having middle class peasants within their midst, 80% of them responded that they highly appreciate their presence and indicated that their lives will be more difficult without such middle income farmers. The poor peasants indicated that they benefit directly through employment provision and indirectly through getting ideas and some getting connections or recommendations to access useful resources for farming or other income earning opportunities. There is a tendency that rich peasants give out some of their old appliances or other useful material to those poor peasants who work for them but the items will still be in usable condition. In case of crisis like food shortages in poor peasant households, illness, school fees payments, poor peasants rely on rich peasants for cash advancement which they will pay up either through working for them or repay back as a soft loan without interest. Such services are highly appreciated by the poor peasants. Those few poor peasants who did not appreciate completely were complaining that some rich peasants exploit poor peasants by employing them on realizing their strandedness and then offer low payment rates.

Some rich peasants negotiate for paying later but at times do not pay them as agreed and all will be at the expense of the poor peasants.

5.5 Livelihoods Mixes

Middle class peasants diversify into other non-farm activities. This enhances their capacity to keep on accumulating more capital in the rural economy.

Figure 8: Livelihoods Mixed with Farming by Middle Class Peasants



Source: Survey Data July 2016 (data from interviewed 20 peasants)

From the figure above, there is a presentation of different livelihoods mixes which are being pursued together with farming by the middle peasants. There is a wide range of livelihoods activities which the farmers are involved in as shown in the figure above. Only 10% do farming only without any other extra non-farm activity.

For those peasants who are not involved in other non-farm activities, they just qualified to belong to the category of the middle peasants so are still in the process of capital accumulation so that the peasant can also diversify into other non-farm activities. Their main source of income is savings from farm proceeds. It is 20% part of the middle class peasants who are in informal trade. The informal part is due to the fact that their businesses are not in the category of paying taxes directly to the government.

Fifteen percent of them are into cattle buying and selling business and 10% have tractor and implements for hire with majority of them being involved with transport hire. Thirty-five percent also operate a bottle store, general dealer and or a tuck shop. Of these peasants 60% are involved in more than one form of diversification, for example one of them mixes cattle buying and selling with transport hire. Transport operation has a high number amongst the peasants for most of them bought the vehicles when they had good harvests and good prices.

There is little or no diversification amongst the poor peasants. Most of the non-farm business usually require huge capital injections to commence the businesses which is out of reach of many poor peasants. Most of the poor peasants do gardening on a very small scale, growing vegetables in manually irrigated gardens during off season (in addition to staple crop production) due to lack of irrigation infrastructure. Middle class peasants, unlike the poor peasants are employed as skilled labor and better paid on a monthly basis hence have a comparative advantage of being able to access salary based loans so have better opportunities to diversify into other businesses.

5.6 Conclusion

The research conducted has shown a number of differences amongst the middle class peasants and other peasants. All the peasants are land reform program beneficiaries who hold the same documentation, same sizes of land with most of them entering the farming field at the same time but were all starting from different standpoints. All the factors point out to the capacity of one to secure capital for investing in the agricultural sector. As Scoones highlighted on the importance of human capital, it has indicated that it's one of the primes which gives differences to peasants (2015: 39). Human capital is the one which made rich peasants be in a position to have jobs in towns that are better paying. This has also enabled them to have better exposure, connections and also strategic positions in the society which facilitated their expansion. There are some retired persons, on obtaining their pension funds looked for somewhere to invest their money, so some chose farming.

All these people have a strong human capital which is also manifested by their need to keep the legacy of sending their children to schools that delivers quality education though school fees are a higher than other schools. It is this asset which the middle class peasants have accumulated, or they have come into peasantry with (got from non-farm business), which has gained them position in the society to have influence over others.

The rural agricultural extensionists are the ones who get useful agricultural information first which they use at their discretion to release to the peasants of their choice first. On these grounds and also the capacity of middle peasants to give farm employment to the poor peasants, it implies that poor peasants keep themselves around the middle class for this worker-employer-informant symbiotic relationship.

The government usually entrusts its civil service to come up with beneficiaries of such programs. Even if they retire from their work positions, they are already rich in social capital and make use of connections they establish to further establish own private capital.

On the same note it has been noticed that most of the middle class peasants have urban origins, and are still connected to towns. They conduct some businesses in town, either through employment or through other formal businesses which they link with their farm activities. This is unlike poor peasants who just dwell in their areas and rely mainly on economic activities that take place in the rural areas

6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Peasant farmers have all been given same sizes of farming land but their backgrounds and resource endowments are influencing their capacity to differentiate into classes. The assumption that farmers if given land will accumulate capital at the same rate does not hold in the case of the study area where differences have been exhibited.

6.2 Differences amongst the farmers

Human capital had a part to play in determining whether a peasant will be in a position to have assets which are essential for farming operations. Poor peasants have backgrounds with low education levels which pushed them into low income earning jobs either as farm workers or general workers in town industries. Their earnings could sometimes not sustain their daily living and savings which can be invested in arising opportunities as land through land reform programs. In terms of social capital poor peasants have networks and connections with people who do not have influential positions. It is the middle class peasants who have direct link and connections to influential people due to the strategic positions they have as a result of their higher education level.

High human capital amongst middle class peasants had given them opportunities to work as middle level managers or supervisors who deal with use and management of organizational resources where they work or worked. That gave them experience and exposure to management and is most likely that they will apply those skills to their own farming enterprise relative to poor peasants who do not have such experience and were the once supervised in most of the cases. Networks, asset accumulation, surpluses, other non-farm activities that bring income in some of the cases was determined by human capital.

Entrepreneurship which makes middle class peasants have the capacity to venture into other non-farm income earning activities also contributed towards differentiation. Diversification is also key to the scaling up of peasants since there is a possibility, of investing income from non -farm businesses into farming and accumulate assets. Bebbington cited in Scoones (2015: 40) asserted that “Assets give people capability to be and to act, assets should not be understood only as things that allow survival, adaptation and poverty eradication but also basis of agents’ power to act and reproduce, challenge or change the rules that govern the control, use and transformation of resources” What is key in the community is for the peasants to have opportunities to gain the entrepreneurial skills. It seems that entrepreneurial skills are gained through the efforts of the peasants making it difficult for those who are resource constrained (poor farmers) to have such skills.

Research findings have revealed the differences between poor and middle class farmers and had shown that in a capitalist mode of production all peasants do not necessarily need to be of the same class in terms of welfare. For there is need for some peasants to provide labor and some to pay for the labor for the health of the capitalist model.

The middle class pursue a form of livelihood and diversification strategy that involves non-farm activities which makes them stand an opportunity to maintain or widen the gap between them and poor peasants. The model that is likely to bring a widespread scaling up in peasantry is that which mixes farm and non-farm activities, backed with entrepreneurial skills

Policy Recommendations

Policy environment should promote access by every peasant to social and human capital that enables peasants to stand better chances of capital accumulation. The governments should at least finance basic trainings in relevant areas as entrepreneurship and other modern farming technology to enhance skills of peasants in their respective classes.

Annex 1

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