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The effectiveness of Job Redundancy as a strategic option and its right implementation[1]

Joy, Munshi [2]

ABSTRACT

During the last few decades, there has been a significant rise in job redundancy around the world. MNEs have been applying redundancy as a cost-cutting and rejuvenating strategy besides using it for surviving and retaining their business during tough times. However, the practice has evidently failed to result in expected outcomes in many countries including Australia, the UK and in the USA. This study has examined the link between redundancy as a cost-cutting strategy, and its effectiveness as a cost-reduction, rejuvenation and business retention strategy of MNEs. In order to do so, the researcher has critically analysed the related literature, and then critically evaluated the practice from various business contexts. Notably, contrary to the beliefs and practices of MNEs, the research reveals that redundancy is not such an effective long-term strategy for a firm's survival and business retention, as it is thought. At the same time, the researcher has developed a model called 'Best Fit Redundancy Model' that can help MNEs to apply the strategy more effectively and responsibly, if redundancy is the only and ultimate strategic option for them.

KEYWORDS: Job Redundancy, Redundancy Model, MNE

Rise in Redundancy: An Overview

Job redundancy has become a common strategic preference of MNEs around the world for the last few decades (Awino, 2017). According to Doherty (2010), organisational structure, philosophy, focus and priorities of MNEs change frequently due to sudden and frequent changes in their external environment, and as a consequence, unplanned redundancy has become a central plank of their contingency plan in order to cope up with these unexpected

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changes. Moreover, redundancy is also implemented followed by technological advancement, which require MNEs to recruit technologically skilled manpower, which ultimately replaces existing staff members (Thompson and Martin, 2010).

While redundancy is frequently used as a 'Turn-around' or 'Recovery' Strategy, its expected outcomes have still remained ambiguous (Mellahi and Wilkinson, 2010). Again, as Newton (2011) opines, success of an MNE largely depends on its skilled and dedicated manpower, but impulsive redundancies greatly affect a firm's primary activities and push it to the risk of collapse due to skill-shortage (Smithers, 2010). It is, therefore, a burning question whether redundancy as a strategic choice is effective, appropriate and ethical for organizations to use as a survival or turn-around technique especially when the invaluable contribution of employees in the success of MNEs is considered. Nevertheless, there has been a significant rise in redundancies around the world (Mellahi and Wilkinson, 2010; p.2). Especially during or followed by recessions, redundancies in private sector have become a common phenomenon (Dibben, Klerck and Wood, 2011; p.284) leaving millions of people jobless. As a reports go, UK unemployment broke though 'the 2.5 million mark' by April 2010 as a consequence of the last recession (Wearden, 2010), while Australian employers has kept even higher and alarming rates of redundancies (Patty, 2016). And the impacts of such redundancies are severe. It often destroys the hard-earned competitive position of the firm (Guterman, 2009; p.3) and at the same time, forces the firm to concede considerable direct and indirect costs (Gandolfi, 2010). Therefore, redundancy as a strategy demands to analysed further to determine its effectiveness and impacts on MNEs.

Redundancy from the Academic Context

In human resource management literature, redundancy refers to the dismissal that is in general based on operational reasons, especially when commercial and economic aspects of the business are considered by the authority. It occurs if an employee is **dismissed not for performance or personal act, but purely because the role previously performed by the employee is no more needed by the employer**. Redundancy, therefore, particularly refers to the termination of a position, not a person (Stone, 2014; pp.145), while dismissals are the outcomes of disciplinary issues or of job performance (Fazey, 2010; pp.260). Redundancy –

especially compulsory redundancy – is considered to be the 'last resort' and the least acceptable face of downsizing (Redman and Wilkinson, 2017; p.396).

By definition, redundancy is 'one of the potentially fair reasons for dismissal' and is wholly or mainly attributed to the fact that the employer has ceased or intends to cease to carry on the business for which the employee in question was appointed or engaged, or to carry on the business at a particular location at which the employee was employed, or to diminish the requirements of the business, or the employee to carry our work of a particular kind (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010; pp.565).

While redundancy often comes as a part of strategic HR Planning of MNEs in order to address changes in external environment (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010; pp.566), firms often consider is as a 'recovery strategy', 'cost-reduction strategy', turnaround strategy', or strategy to rejuvenating mature business (Thompson and Martin, 2010; pp.603 – 611). It is a fact that today's business world is full of ups and downs – thereby quite neoteric in nature and to cope up with the ever-changing and uncertain world, redundancy occurs in order to enable the MNEs to succeed in abrasive business cycle with the right levels of recruitment. More importantly, companies announce redundancy as an integral part of their planned downsizing strategy as well (Bergstorm and Arman, 2016). Causes of redundancy, therefore, include Structural decline in a sector or industry, decrease in the level of economic activity affecting sales or income of the firm, technological changes taken places within the organization or across the sector, and reorganization or restructuring within the organization with a view to making more efficient use of workforce and equipment (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010).

In summary, while redundancy can occur as a result of organisational needs to streamline its operations, foreseen crisis, or even poor HR Planning (Foot and Hook, 2015), corporate restructuring and coping up with global scale of changes also cause redundancy (Pilbeam and Corbridge, 2010). According to Gandolfi and Hansson (2010), redundancy – often termed as 'reduction in force (RIF)' – is a measure applied to eliminate cost. Whatever the cause is, effective and befitting policies for the management of redundancy is very crucial for MNEs, because redundancy programmes not only produce considerable amount of conflict, but also generate ill-feeling and bad publicity for a business entity (Fazey, 2010).

Redundancy and Strategic Human Resource Planning

Redundancy as a strategic option and the strategic human resource planning of MNEs has a strong correlation. As Nyasha (2016) states, redundancy often occurs as part of a strategic human resource planning of MNEs with a view to achieving certain business goals. Firms use the tool as a business recovery and cost reduction strategy adapted to rejuvenate a mature business as well (Thompson and Martin, 2010, pp.603-611). It is to note that redundancy is not always a consequence of external changes in business environment, but MNEs deliberately use it as planned downsizing tool to minimize their cost and in some cases, to cope up with abrasive business cycle within the industry or marketplace, which is in other words simply a strategic tool of MNEs used in line with their corporate strategy (Lewis, 1993; p.3). With this end of view, redundancy seems to be used going beyond its definition and meaning, as it does not mean simply to cut workforce, but to abolish existing positions (Stone, 2014; pp.145). Unfortunately, redundancy is adapted by MNEs as a well-planned strategy to reducing cost and improving organizational performance (Naysha, 2016; Chan, 2013).

Why Redundancy Situations Occur

While downsizing through redundancy has become a common practice of organisations and thereby, gained ‘strategic legitimacy’ since 1980’s (Redman and Wilkinson, 2009; p.381), academic literature differs this view and states that redundancy may occur for four main reasons.

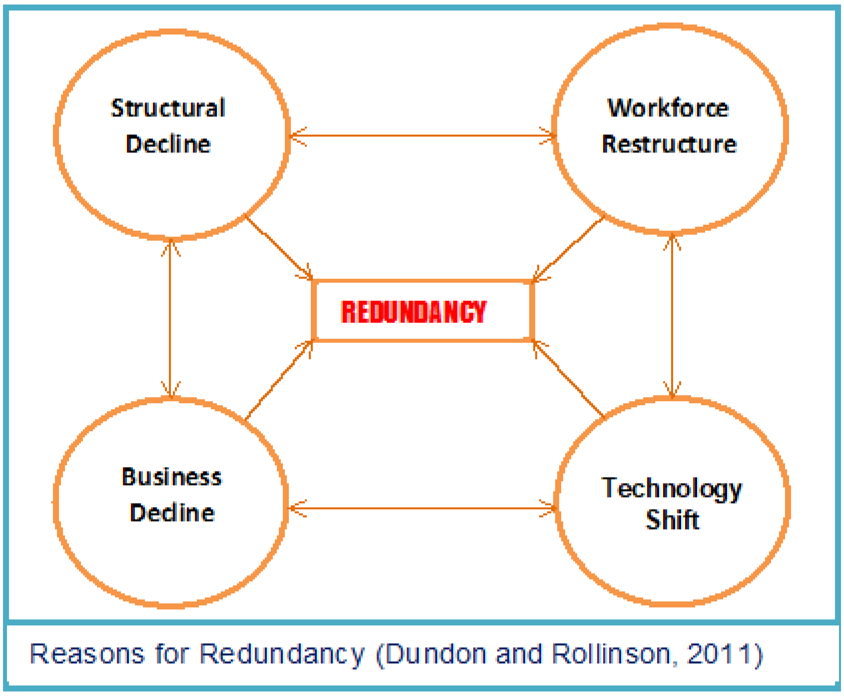

Fig1. Reasons for Redundancy (Dundon and Rollinson, 2011)

Structural decline refers to the situation when a business closes down its operations in a particular place, while workforce restructuring means reorganizing human resources of a firm in order to improve its performance and turn around in their business. Technological shift, on the other hand, refers to the situation where a firm adapts new technology and brings automation to its operations. Finally, business decline is when a business concedes a consistent loss or decrease in its sales and profits, and unable to maintain its overall financial strength. And as Sheehan (2015) states, "in cases of dismissal by reason of redundancy, it is imperative for the employer to prove that the redundancy is in fact a legitimate redundancy and that the decision to dismiss was fair in all circumstances. To prove the existence of a genuine redundancy situation an employer must demonstrate that the employee's job ceases to exist, and the employee is not replaced. This can arise for a number of reasons including rationalization, reorganisation, not enough work, the financial state of the business, business closures etc."

Redundancy as a Strategic Choice for MNEs

MNEs widely use redundancy as a cost-cutting and profit enhancing strategy, because the human capital expense of a business may represent up to 70% of their operational cost (Hyland, 2010; p.6). Therefore, redundancy on the face of it seems to be a very useful tool, although the term does not simply refer to cutting workforce (Stone, 2014). Nonetheless, the effects and aftereffects of this practice are often severe, because firms keep struggling followed by redundancy execution for maintaining their 'engagement and performance level' in the market (Organisational Response to the Financial Cricis, 2010). As Kalimo et. al. (2003) states, redundancy undoubtedly increases stress level of existing staff, and they feel insecure enough to be devoted to engagement, commitment and productivity. Nevertheless, MNEs are reducing workforce recklessly in the form of redundancy while the determination the success and impact of it has still remained inconclusive (Gandolfi, 2010).

Cost Reduction and Redundancy:

As stated before, redundancy is primarily applied by firms is to reduce their operational cost. Human resources is in fact extremely costly and sometimes requires up to 70% of the total operational cost of a business (Hyland, 2010). However, while redundancy by definition is not a cost-cutting tool by slashing workforce, it has been debated whether reduction in work force can effectively reduce operational cost of a business (Naysha, 2016). Accoring to Gandolfi (2010), "Empirical evidence suggests strongly that the planning and conduct of RIF-related activities have considerable consequences for the organization and its many stakeholders. Therefore, the adoption of any RIF-related activity is likely to produce considerable human consequences (Cascio, 2002). It is fair to say that organizations all over the world have underestimated the impact of RIF on the organizational culture (Cascio, 2003) and on the company's remaining workforce (Gandolfi, 2006). While firms generally anticipate immediate financial and non-financial outcomes (Sahdev, 2003), there is a substantial body of evidence suggesting that organizations have failed to adequately prepare for the human consequences following an RIF." Therefore, redundancy seems to be not 'fully recognised' a tool for cost reduction, especially its effects and aftereffects on existing workers and overall performance of the firm are considered.

Profitability and Redundancy

As a profit enhancing strategy, redundancy is often adapted by MNEs around the globe, although various research doubts its effectiveness all in all (Nyasha, 2016). Chalos and Chen (2002) reported that firms that downsize to focus their activity are likely to redirect the savings from downsizing unprofitable or unrelated lines of activities towards their core activities. However, Gandolfi (2010) states, "in the wake of the corporate mantras of 'profit maximization' and 'shareholder value', firms are continually trying to improve their overall efficiency, productivity, profitability, effectiveness, and competitiveness (Cravotta and Kleiner, 2001; Cascio, 2002). As a direct consequence, new management theories and concepts, sometimes cynically referred to as management fads, regularly emerge and are frequently, and at times desperately, adopted by companies trying to gain a competitive edge." Thus, rather than enhancing profitability, redundancy may lead the firm to a confused state that poses the risk of losing their competitive edge.

Redundancy and Firm's Performance

Redundancy can have serious effect on the performance of a business firm, mainly due to two main reasons. First, a sudden reduction in workforce breaks the value chain of the firm by reducing its competence to a great extent, and secondly, the survivors turn to be demoralized and lose their productivity (Gandolfi, 2010; Sutton, 2007). As porter (1990) describes, human resource management is only a supporting activity in the value chain of an MNE, where each staff is entrusted with a specific job, which redundancy jeopardizes to a great extent (Chan, 2013). Therefore, the practice needs to be thoroughly analyzed to determine whether it can enhance the performance of MNEs.

Undoubtedly, in today's volatile and uncertain world, the survival and success of any business entrant largely depend on its ability to cope with the fast moving external environments through restructuring, remodelling, and continual adjustments to the size and constitution of its systems and work-forces (Dibben, Klerck & Wood, 2011; Mellahi & Wilkinson, 2010; Gandolfi, 2010; Flower, 1993). Moreover, in order to maximize their efficiency, today's organisations opt to utilise their workforce through a primary focus upon redundancies

(ACAS, 2010; Dundon & Rollinson, 2009; Lewis, 1993). Nevertheless, while redundancy is an HR strategy adopted to boost up employee-efficiency (Foot & Hook, 2011), the strategy has so far failed to produce its expected outcomes (Gandolfi, 2010).

Redundancy and Fair HR Management

Unquestionably, there exists an ethical dilemma whether employers should weaken people's morale and productivity by making them jobless with a sudden decision, while the economic strength of the company has been developed with significant contribution of the current workforce. While Gandolfi (2010) opines that redundancy has so far as a downsizing means produced considerable direct and indirect costs and generated adverse human consequences (p.8), related literature and enterprise agreements reveal that there is a clear lack of transparency in redundancy execution especially in selection procedures (Enterprise agreements of NAB, Commonwealth Bank, Westpac and ANZ). Interestingly, some of these agreements do not even explain what redundancy is, let alone describe redundancy procedure.

Again, as strategic workforce planning suggests, effective work design by using cognitive, physical, bio-mechanical and physio-social components can engage employees more into their work, and consequently a firm can save or reduce the need for workforce (Foot and Hook, 2011), which might result in redundancy situation as well. Similarly, as the Safe Work Australia (2017) determines, creating a conductive workplace using HOW-WHT-WHY Model helps get maximum output from workers.

Fig.2. HOW-WHAT-WHY Model (Safe Work Australia, 2017)

As a firm's success largely depends on skilled, experienced and trustworthy workers, they need to retain their employees as long as practicable so that the business keeps receiving their exceptional services (Williams, D. K. and Scott, M. M 2012). Efficient strategic human resource planning along with effective training and standard compensation can help MNEs to retain their staff and thereby, eliminate redundancy situation, as stated by Chan (2013). Notably, the above theories do not refer redundancy as a cost cutting strategy, but encourage avoiding the situation for the sake of long-term organizational performance and competitive advantages. Yet, redundancy is frequently used as a cost-reduction and performance enhancing strategy by MNEs in Australia (**O'Carroll, 2009**) around the world (Harrington, 2016). In fact, redundancies are of then the first choice MNEs often turn to while needing to cut their cost (Makin, 2013). Notably, the strategy is often used to cut heads only in the form of a valid reason (Stern, 2012), although by definition redundancy is abolishing a position, not just terminating a person (Stone, 2014). Therefore, such redundancy is clearly falling in unfair dismissal (Fazey, 2010), and refers to unethical human resource practices.

The effectiveness of redundancy as a Strategy

Redundancy, therefore, is an ambiguous practice and has so far failed to produce its expected outcomes (Gandolfi, 2010). In many theories, it is considered as an effective survival strategy to cost-cutting, because human capital expenses, as mentioned earlier, often represents 70% of the operating cost (Hyland, 2010; p.6). However, various researches have proven that redundancy does not improve financial performance (Mellahi & Wilkinson, 2010; Cascio, 2005) and thereby, fails to cut cost due to considerable expenses going with compensations and other hidden expenses (Sands, 2009). It is also apparent that unplanned redundancy during downturns is a great threat to the value-chain of the organisation and thereby, poses dangers of closing down operations and poor customer service (Naysha, 2016).

As McGrath (2009) states, MNEs should beware of the hidden dependencies among different parts of firm's operations, and firing responsible people and replacing them with inexperienced ones – as redundancy does – looks good for a while but ultimately undermines 'fundamental value proposition' to firm's customers. Therefore, redundancy needs to be 'planned' – a part of corporate strategy – and should be implemented carefully, 'without drawing the blood' of the enterprise (Copeland, 2003). More alarmingly, companies that adopt unplanned redundancy as a cost cutting and efficiency enhancing strategy often fail to compete with the rivals, as it makes them 'lean', 'mean' and 'lame', and eventually, they lose their competitive advantage (Mellahi & Wilkinson, 2010; Gandolfi, 2010; Rigby, 2010; Guterman, 2009; Sutton, 2007). Thus, they ultimately fail to retain their business. Therefore, MNEs should not simply turn to redundancy for cost cutting or performance enhancing, as there are other choices for them worth considering first (Makin, 2013). Redundancy should rather be the last resort for MNEs to apply while downsizing (Redman and Wilkinson, 2009; p.385). However, such application again needs right preparation and arrangements, because the strategy can turn into a very costly one for MNEs (Dundon & Rollinson, 2011, p.257), when considered the severance pay (Lewis, 1993), and related compensations, especially if it turns out to be an 'unfair dismissal' and the employer is taken to the court for compensation (Sheffi, 2005).

Best Fit-redundancy Execution Model – A 3-Step Process:

MNEs, therefore, need to consider the long-term and short-terms effects and aftereffects of redundancy carefully before adopting it as a strategic option (Campbell-jamaison, et. al. 2007). Simultaneously, firms should strive to maintain the right policies, procedures and arrangements for redundancy announcement, selection and execution. In order to apply the strategy safely and get the best out of it, MNEs should follow the following three-step best-fit redundancy management model.

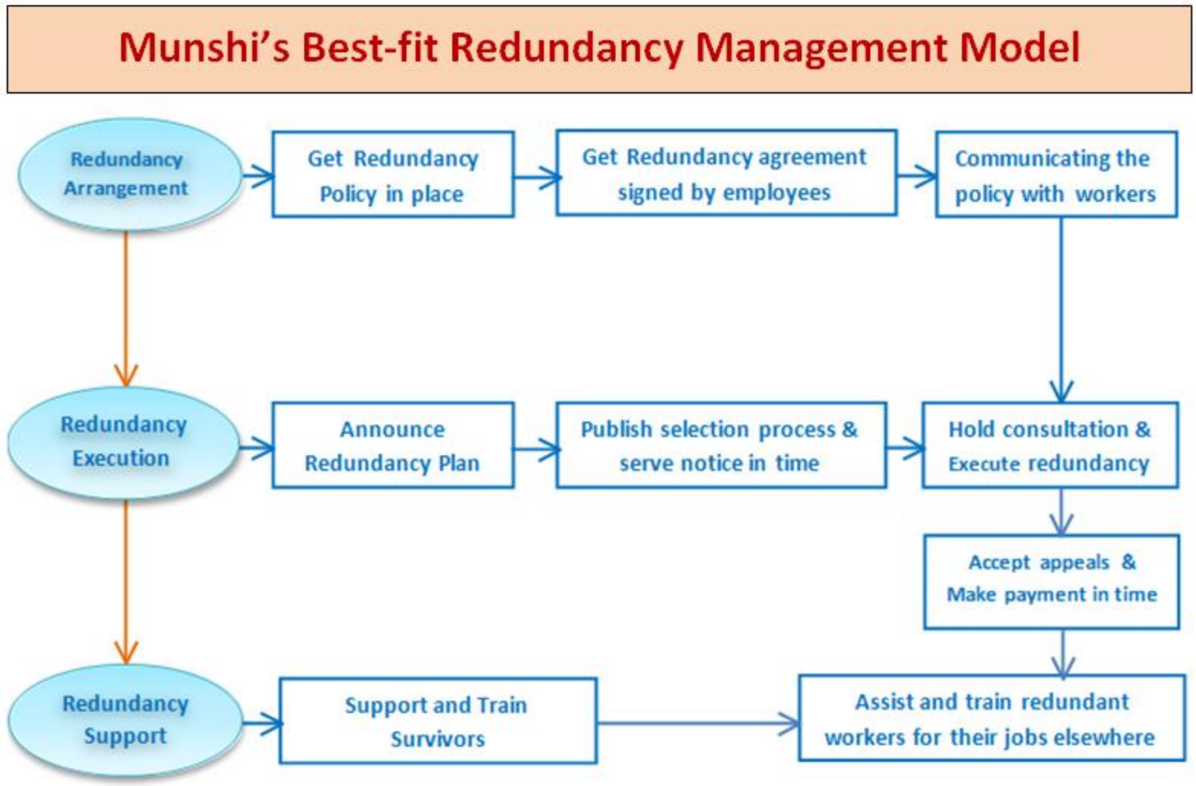

Fig.3. Best it refdundancy management model

Step One: Redundancy Arrangement

Every company in general should have a 'redundancy arrangement' in place and this should include a befitting redundancy policy, a redundancy agreement – an agreement confirming that redundancy situation may occur under certain external and/or internal conditions signed by every existing and new employee, and adequate circulation or communication of the policy so that employees become aware of it. More importantly, enterprise agreements should include the definition and reasons for redundancy occurrence. As evident from various enterprise agreements (), many MNEs have not even include the term ‘redundancy’ in their documents, let alone explain its reasons and procedures. Equally important for businesses to develop and communicate the selection and execution process of redundancy, which again need to be as fair and open as practicable.

Step Two: Execution

If any redundancy situation arises, it should then be handled according to the ‘selection’ and ‘redundancy execution’ procedures, which should comprise of announcing redundancy plan in detail, publishing selection method(s) and serving appropriate notice to employees on time. The employer will also need to hold consultation with the employees or representatives, and listen to their views on the announcement, and if necessary, take further measures to make the whole process clear and open. Only after that they should start executing redundancy humanely and responsibly.

Step Three: Redundancy Supports

In the third phase, the employer will provide ‘redundancy supports’ – both to the redundant employees and to the survivors. For redundant employees, appeals or grievances will be accepted cordially and settled as per the regulations. At the same time, severance pay or redundancy compensation payment will be made on time. On the other hand, survivors must be given proper support and required training so that they can handle the stress – on other word, overcome ‘survivor syndromes’, and perform their regular and additional duties accordingly.

Conclusion

While job redundancy is a widely popular a strategy among MNEs around the world, it is not a proven practice that can help enterprises effectively cut cost, retain business or sustain with their core competence in the long-run (Gandolfi, 2010). Contrary to the beliefs and practices of MNEs, the practice can even do more harm than good to businesses (Sutton, 2009), and may cause 'organ failure' for them (Mellahi & Wilkinson, 2010), due to its inconclusive impact around the globe (Gandolfi, 2010). Therefore, a cautious approach to its adaptation and execution is paramount to achieve its expected intended outcomes.

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The influence of Marketing on smallholder farmers food security and poverty alleviation in Sub Saharan Africa (Case of North West Region of Cameroon)[1]

Emmanuel Akotia Ekuful[2]

ABSTRACT

A number of Agricultural Economists have written and published articles relating to the marketing of Agricultural produce in Cameroon and most parts of the Sub Saharan Africa. Unfortunately the smallholder farmers' problems relating to quantity and quality, fair price, efficient and effective distribution management and communicating to the target market still remain a nut to crack. Most of them have nothing to live on when they become old. The basis of this study was to investigate how marketing can influence the smallholder farmers to participate in the formal markets in achieving food security and alleviate poverty. The study was conducted in four divisions of the North West Region of Cameroon. The methods used in obtaining the data were secondary, primary and qualitative research. The results showed that the smallholder farmers' outputs tend to be low in terms of quantitative and qualitative. They are therefore unable to compete at both the national and international markets. This is due to factors such as poor adoption of best agricultural practices, improper use of marketing strategies, mismanagement and embezzlement of funds of farmers by some channel members, and inadequate infrastructural development. This has rendered them poor thereby reducing their social security and status. This research has developed a marketing organization (model) at the micro level to link the small holder farmers to the National Social Insurance Fund. Contributions include, first, the small holder farmers will adopt the best agricultural practices so that their yield will be able to compete in the market for profits. Second, the marketing organisation by linking them to the National Social Insurance Fund will improve their social security and status.

KEYWORDS: Marketing, Food Security, Poverty Alleviation, Smallholder farmers, Marketing Organisation.

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Introduction

In every production set up where the business embraces the marketing concept, marketing activities starts before production. This continues during the production process until the final products reach consumers for some form of profits. There is a sizable literature with diverse models on Agric business and marketing concerning agricultural practices in Cameroon and the whole of the Sub Saharan Africa. These have been written by various authors to cater for the problems confronting the small holder farmers in Cameroon and the Sub Saharan Africa. Unfortunately these models including the cooperative movement have not been able to make the smallholder farmers in Cameroon attain food security and lift them out of poverty. One will expect smallholder farmers to be market focus so as to meet up with the needs of the consumers or customers. How can marketing and its related activities including the concept of market orientation be used to lift the smallholder farmers out of poverty? The concept of market orientation has been used widely in the manufacturing sector (for example food industry) to refer to the extent to which a producer use knowledge about the market (especially customer and prices), as a basis to make decisions on the three basic economic questions of what to produce, how to produce and how to market (Kohli et al 1990, and Jaworski et al 1993, 1996). Several studies have also demonstrated that the degree of a firm market orientation is a major determinant of competitive advantage (Fritz, 1996, Selnes et al 1996).

The Smallholder farmers face the problem of not being motivated enough to improve on their output, enjoy fair price, distribute their produce, have access to the market, enjoy social benefits, ensure food security and alleviate poverty. What hinders smallholder farmers from reaping some of the social benefits enjoyed by other workers in the country? The researcher had the objective of identifying how marketing can influence the optimum output of the smallholder farmers, make them gain some social benefits to ensure food security and alleviate poverty. How can smallholder farmers transform their activities into business using marketing? Food security is a situation when all people, at all times, have physical and economical access to sufficient, safe and nutrition food for healthy and active life (FAO1996). Africa has more countries with food security problems than any other continent (FAO1996).

Factors affecting the issue of food security include access to markets, poverty, health, food production, political stability and infrastructural development.

In Cameroon, the situation to achieve food security is compounded by the land tenure system, inaccessibility to credit by small holder farmers and competition from importation (Amor 2010). According to the same Report (Amor 2010) rice and flour products constitute about 20 percent in the diet of most homes across Cameroon and that over 85percent of the rice and 100 percent of wheat consumed in Cameroon are imported. This has led to changes in consumption pattern in urban areas especially, but also in rural areas at alarming rate. This change in consumption pattern is motivated by the competitiveness of these imported products with factors such as price, packaging, advertising, handling and market chain accessibility playing a very important role. On average farm size for the cultivation of food crops is not up to one hectare for many small holder farmers. This makes it difficult to feed the population throughout the year. At the beginning of the planting season in the month of March most small holder farmers run out of food. They barely manage on food such as rice, garri without proper soup or stew.

According to Dr NamangaNgongi (2010) a paper presented at the annual congress of the Cameroon Professional Society in the United State of America, agriculture is the main engine of Cameroons' economy, employing 70 percent of the work force, contributing 42 percent of gross domestic product and thirty percent of export revenue.

The United Nations fundamentally, states that poverty is the inability of getting choices and opportunities, violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in the society. The World Bank declares that poverty is pronounced deprivation in well being and comprises dimensions. It includes low incomes and in ability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity. Poverty also encompasses low level of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, lack of voice, insufficient capacity and opportunity to better one's life. The World Bank defined the new international poverty line as Rs 79.21 a day for 2005 (equivalent to Rs 63.37 a day in 1996 US price) but has recently been up dated to Rs 158.41 per day. According to 2010 data from the United Nations development programme an estimated 29.8 percent of Indians live below the national poverty line. Poverty alleviation is therefore any process that reduces income fluctuation between poor and non poor scenarios (Adongo et el 2006 AU12).

Cameroon by it geographical situation on the continent is endowed with good agricultural soil and climate. For this reason, if the situation is properly managed, the country will be able to realize the attainment of food security and alleviate poverty. She will be able to provide food support in the form of export to most countries in Central and West Africa without any food shortage in the country. Crops such as cocoa, coffee, palms are often called cash crops in Africa and have united systems for the marketing of the produce nationally and internationally. Small holder farmers engaged in food production such as rice, beans, cassava, maize, yams, groundnuts have never enjoyed the appellation cash crops for their produce. For this reason food crop farming is carried out mostly by the rural women who engage in arduous task for low return. This therefore aggravates the poverty situation of most small holder farmers in the North West Region. With this situation, food crop farming is not attractive to most of the youth. This is because they do not see wealthy personalities among the small holder farmers causing them to seek for alternative form of employment. This has contributed to the rapid youth exodus from the rural areas to the urban centers which in itself has many ills including prostitution, stealing, and internet fraudulent activities. In some cases they even travel out of the country for greener pastures in West or United States of America. Expansion of the farms of small holder farmers, transformation and modernization of their farming activities into Agric Business will depend on how well the problems mentioned above are resolved.

According to Amos Gyau (2013) current opinion in environmental sustainability, farmers do not have access to information on market issues therefore are not able to receive fair price for their produce**.** They only think of the market when they want to harvest. In actual facts marketing begins before production, by ensuring fertile land, good seeds and proper management of the farm and harvesting to the market. The UN Development (UNDP) 2003 Report on human Development in Cameroon said transportation and storage problems are some of the things Cameroon farmers most endure.

Conceptual frame work.

In the past decades, as in the rest of the world, many countries in the Sub Saharan Africa have experienced different level of restructuring of agric food markets (Weatherspoon et al, 2003) Most African countries were characterized by state controlled supply chains for agricultural and food commodities in the decades after independence from colonial power (Mawar et al, 2007). Government was heavily involved in agricultural marketing and food processing through the creation of marketing boards, parastatals, and government controlled cooperatives. State involvement in the production and marketing of staple food crops was most extreme in Eastern and South African countries, while in West Africa, marketing boards, parastatals, and companies intervened heavily in the supply chain of export crops but were less influential in grain markets (kheralla et al 2002). In many parts of sub Saharan Africa the system of state controlled governance in agricultural supply chains collapsed during economic reforms around the late 80’s and early 90’s. Privatisation and liberalisation removed the state control in agricultural commodity chains, provided competition and ensured efficiency. In most countries, the monopoly status of government marketing boards and parastatal processing units collapsed and private traders were allowed to participate in agricultural trade (Mawar 2007)

Most smallholder farmers indulge in selling their produce using the informal markets system. They prefer informal markets such as hawkers because they offer better bargains in terms of prices. In addition they are not stringent on quality as they take anything that is offered to them. There are also less transaction and bureaucracy costs incurred by farmers with their commodities (Louw et al, 2008).

The prospects of farmers who are able to access and remain in formal markets are a concern for investors. There is evidence that smallholder farmers who engage in new formal markets can gradually be crowed out by middle to large scale farmers who can out compete based on their economies of scale (Michelson et al 2010) Previous literature as we have dealt with concentrated mostly on large scale producers. These large scale producers are mostly engaged in cash crop farming. They ignore the food stuff sector. It could be noticed that the smallholder farmer engaged in food production has inadvertently been push to the background. This is the reason accounting for mostly old women in this sector.

The cooperative movements came to solve the problem of the smallholder farmers but unfortunate the greedy nature of the staff of the cooperative could not sustain the smallholder farmer food security and ensure that poverty is alleviated in most part of the country.

A cooperative is the classic form of farmer based organization. The cooperative movement has a long history based on a more formal arrangement for farmer groups linked to professional associations on second tier organizations. When working well the cooperative movement has helped improve the fortunes of millions of farmers. Cooperatives, through market linkage mechanisms such as certification schemes, have improved long term trading relations in specific value chains (Shaun et al 2014)

However, the cooperative movement has also suffered from major problems with corruption and inept management, particularly in situations where governments were instrumental in establishing the organizations. Many of these cooperatives were manipulated for political reasons, with cooperative funds being misdirected to support political campaigns at the expense of the farmers. Frustration with years of mismanagement often linked to poorly managed financial arrangements, led many farmers to abandon the cooperative movement and strike out as lone operators. Even if working alone reduced their market options, it shielded them from extortion and intimidation (Shaun et 2014)

It is therefore crucial to develop strategies that promote the inclusion of less privileged actors in order to create broader based opportunities for majority of small scale farmers (Kit et al 2006)

Smallholder farmers in the North West region

Smallholder farmers- This is defined by the food and agriculture organisation as those marginal and sub marginal farm households that own or/ and cultivate less than 2 hectares of land.

Smallholder farmers are central to the growth of agriculture in the sub-Saharan Africa. There are estimated 500million smallholder farmers in the world. In Asia and sub Saharan Africa smallholder farmers produce up to 80 percent of the food consumed and support up to two billion people (IFAD, 2010). Of the two thirds of sub- Saharan Africa’s population that resides in the rural areas, majority can be considered as smallholder farmers (Dixon et al

2004). As a group smallholder farmers are among the disadvantaged and vulnerable in the developing world. Half of the world's undernourished people, three quarters of Africa's malnourished children, and majority of the people living in absolute poverty can be found on small farms (IFPRI, 2007). Smallholder farmers have a key role to play not only in achieving food security but also in generating agricultural growth.

Farming is a major source of employment to the population of this region. According to Genesis T Yengoh (2012), over 80percent of the active population in Boyo division is involved in farming. Farms are generally small in size, approximately 0.5 to 2 hectares per family. The economy of this division relies heavily on agriculture, as there are relatively few alternative sources of employment. Notwithstanding the large population by agriculture, the sector still depends heavily on traditional practices of crop cultivation and farm management. The agriculture is therefore still characterised by limited mechanisation, low use of fertilizer inputs, high labour inputs, limited soil conservation strategies and general absence of enabling infrastructure for agricultural development. Farmers still rely heavily on the use of simple tools (hoes, cutlass, and spade) and techniques (manual weeding, hoeing and harvesting).

The concept of food security

Food security as a concept has undergone changes in the last thirty years to reflect changes in the policy thinking. The term first originated in the mid 1970's when the world food conference defined food security in terms of food supply – assuring the availability and the price stability of basic food stuffs at the international and national level (FAO 2006). The shift in the level of analysis from global and national to household and individual levels, have made the concept to become more complex. The1974 world food conference defined food security as 'availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food stuffs (United Nations, 1975).

According to the World Bank (1986), food security was defined as access all people at all times to enough food for active, healthy life. The committee on world food security defined it as physical and economic access to adequate food by all household members without undue risk of losing the access. The definition adopted by countries attending the world food summit of 1996 reconfirmed in 2002, accepts US Aid's concept which has three key elements namely food availability, food access and food utilization. However, a fourth concept is increasingly becoming accepted that is the risk that can disrupt anyone of the first three (Titus et al 2007).

The world food summit 1996, defines food security as, food security exists when all people at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet the dietary needs and food preferences for an active, healthy life (FAO, 1996). Food and Agriculture Organisation has defined food security not in terms of access to and availability of food but also in terms of resource distribution to produce food and purchasing power to buy food where it is produced.

The FAO committee on world food security, FAO council and FAO conference of 1983 defined as ultimate objective or goal: to ensure that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the basic food they need.

Methodology of research

In order to get information on these issues the research was actually conducted in four divisions. Three divisions which are rural and one urban division were selected at random. The selected divisions include Mezam, Boyo, Menchum and Ngo-Ketunjia. Mezam is an urban division but has fertile land. Ngo-Ketunjia though not urban equally has fertile land. Boyo and Menchum have many inaccessible farming areas which were investigated. North West Region was selected as a research area because the women who form the majority of the small holder farmers are hard working but unfortunately their outputs tend to be low with most rural areas having poor farm to market roads. Eight hundred and sixty eight farmers were randomly selected from the four divisions, specifically targeting mostly women who form majority of the small holder farmers. Though no proper statistics is available concerning the number of farmers in the North West Region to enable excellent sample size to be obtained, it is assumed that each household in the selected divisions was represented. The sample size 868 was among the four divisions as follows: Mezam (223), Boyo (194), Ngokentungia (202), Menchum (249).

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used as a research method strategy. Primary and secondary data were used to gather quantitative data. Primary data were collected through surveys. The survey was involved with the use of questionnaires which were developed and distributed to the farmers who responded to them. Secondary data was obtained from government and non-governmental organizations, library and the internet. Focus group discussions were equally used as a qualitative method of gathering data. This enabled the researcher and the farmers to share their experience on marketing of their produce. The demographic situation of the farmers was investigated.

Indicators influencing the marketing of smallholder farmer produce

In order to investigate how marketing influences the smallholder farmer food security and subsequent alleviation of poverty in Cameroon and Sub Saharan Africa the following indicators which signal their ability to compete in the national and international markets were considered. These indicators include

-The adoption of the best agricultural practices by the smallholder farmers. The researcher tried as much as possible to gather as much information on this issue since marketing starts before production and continue till the goods are in the hands of the consumer. Consumers must be supplied with products that satisfy them at a profit. Therefore the researcher started his research activities with the farmer from the farm where the farmer produces. In order to satisfy the market, the researcher investigates as to whether smallholder farmers produce both in quantity and quality to compete in the national and international markets. The researcher investigated to find out whether the farmers adopt the best agricultural practices. Do the farmers receive any assistance from the government? Are they aware of the government policy?

-The marketing strategies used by the smallholder farmers. To compete in the market will require proper marketing strategies. The researcher tried to find out from the farmers whether they consider the internal and external marketing environmental forces that might affect them either positively or negatively in marketing their produce. How do they communicate with the market? What appropriate marketing communication tools are used by them to effectively reach the market? How do the smallholder farmers get access to market information such as pricing, competitor activities to mention but a few? It was also necessary to identify the standandisation norms used by the farmers for their produce.

-The effectiveness of the distribution policy and management used by smallholder farmers. In order to effectively market their produce the smallholder farmers have to use the best distribution channels. This will enable their produce to arrive at the market at the right place and at the right time. How do these farmers actual access the national and the international markets. Which distribution channels are used by them? How do they manage the distribution of their produce?

Results

The outcome of the research showed that most of the smallholder farmers are female. Apart from Menchum division where most of the smallholder farmers are men, women form greater number of personnel in the smallholder farming business in the other three divisions indicated in Table1 below.

Table 1.

	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)
Boyo	44.4	56.6

Menchum	60.2	39.8
Mezam	27.9	72.1
Ngoketunjia	29.3	70.7

Across the four divisions, most of the smallholder farmers were those within the age group of 40-59. This group forms 40% with 18.7% of them being the age group of 60 and above. The remaining 31.3 are made of the youth below 40 years. It was noticed that most of them were first school leavers having 39.3%, secondary school leavers 27.8%, high school leavers 18.8%, first degree holders 2.2%, post graduate degree holders 1.6%. The surprise thing is that even agricultural Technicians forms 1.6% with others 8.6%

The results as to whether smallholder farmers adopt best agricultural practices to enable them produce competitive produce for the market is indicated in table 2

Table 2.

Variable	Frequency (YES) %	Frequency (NO) %
Membership of cooperative society	18.6	81.4
Availability of fertile land	65.4	34.6
Access to good roads	19.3	79.1 and 1.6 with no idea
Receiving advice and training	28.1	79.9
Having access to capital	18.5	81.5
Practicing dry season farming	73.7	26.3
Having access to irrigation machine	07.8	92.2

These were tested using the chi square to see their significance.

Across the four divisions it was noticed that a high percentage of the smallholder farmers are not engaged with any producer cooperative as indicated in table 2 above. There was a significant association between cooperative societies and whether or not smallholder farmers would become members X2(3) = 79.29, P <.001. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers not being members of cooperative societies were 4.38 times higher than those who were members across the four divisions. Most of the respondents have fertile land to cultivate in large quantities. It is only Boyo where the result was different. However, there was significant association between fertile land and whether or not smallholder farmers would produce in large quantities $X2(9)= 134.45$ $P < .001$. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholders having fertile land to cultivate in large quantities were 1.99 times higher than those who would not.

With respect to accessibility to market as far as good road is concerned, the results showed that accessibility to market by the smallholder farmers was negative across the four divisions. A few of the respondents indicated that they have no idea. There was a significant association between good road and whether or not smallholder farmers have access to the market $X2 (9) = 129.59$, $P < .001$. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers not having good roads to have access to markets were 4.19 times higher than those who had good roads and had access to market across the four divisions. A greater percentage of the smallholder farmers across the four divisions do not receive farm inputs from the Ministry of Agriculture. There was a significant association between the Ministry of Agriculture and whether or not smallholder farmers receive inputs $X2(3)=107.11$ $P < .001$. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of the smallholder farmers not having inputs from the Ministry of Agriculture were 3.37 times higher than those who had across the four divisions. Across the four divisions the results obtained shows that a high percentage of the smallholder farmers do not receive training and advise from the Ministry of Agriculture regularly as indicated in table 2. There was a significant association between the Ministry of Agriculture and whether or not smallholder farmers received training $X2(3)=155.39$ $P <.001$. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers not receiving training from the Ministry of Agriculture were 2.56 times higher than those who received training across the four divisions

The results in table 2 show that majority of the smallholder farmers across the four divisions practice dry season farming. There was a significant association between dry season farming and whether or smallholder farmers practice it $X2(3)= 161.64$, $P <.001$. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers practicing dry season farming were 2.81 higher than those who were not practicing dry season farming across the four divisions.

From table 2 above it could be noticed that a good number of the smallholder farmers do not have irrigation machines to enable them practice effective dry season farming. There was a significant association between irrigation machine and whether or not smallholder farmers have irrigation machines for pumping water on their farms X2(3)=41.18, P <.001. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmer not having irrigation machines were 11.91 times higher than those who had irrigation machines across the four divisions.

The results show that majority of the smallholder farmers obtain their seeds for planting from their reserved stock across the four divisions. There was a significant association between seed and whether or not smallholder farmers obtain their seeds from reliable source X2(9) =115.93 P <.001. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of the smallholder farmers source of seeds from their existing stock were 4.11 times higher than obtaining seeds from the Ministry of Agriculture and other sources across the four divisions.

In examining the marketing strategies used by the smallholder farmers the following results were obtained.

71.1 percent of the smallholder farmers sell their produce in the nearest markets and to the local buyers. This gives a significant chi square result across the four divisions. 86.6 percent of the smallholder farmers indicated that they make customers get to know of their produce through personal effort that is the use of word of mouth.

As regards the marketing strategies and distribution channel used by the smallholder farmers the following results below were obtained.

Table 3.

Variables	Frequency (YES) %	Frequency (NO) %	Frequency (No idea)
Positive results of media used	43.2	56.8	
Recovering cost to make profit	30.6	36.4	33.0%
Standardistion of produce	33.0	67	
Enough space for storage	26.7	73.3	
Producing more with the availability of markets	72.6	27.4	

The result in table 3 shows that the media used by most of the smallholder farmers to inform buyers do not make them have more customers. This gives a significant chi square result across the four divisions. In table 3, most of the farmers who responded indicated that they do not make profits while some indicated that they do not know whether they make profits. There was significant Chi square result across the four divisions. With the issue of standardization the result shows that the packaging methods used by most of the farmers do not give standardisation to their produce where ever they are found. There was a significant association between packaging and whether or smallholder farmer would standardised X2(3)=199.37,p <.001. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers not being able to standardized their produce as a result of the way they package their produce were 2.03 times higher than those who were able to standardized.

In order to conduct efficient and effective distribution, the smallholder farmers need adequate storage space unfortunately the results in table 3 shows that majority of the small holder farmers across the four divisions do not have adequate storage space for the storage of their produce. There was a significant association between produce and whether or not smallholder farmers have good and enough storage space X2(3) =155.73 P <.001. Based on the odd ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers not having good and enough storage space for produce were 2.74 times higher than those who had enough space for the storage of produce across the four divisions.

In table 3 the smallholder farmers' response shows that they are prepared to produce more if there are available markets. There was a significant association between markets availability and whether or not smallholder farmers can produce in large quantities throughout the year for the market X2(3)=144.11 P <.001. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of smallholder farmers being able to produce in large quantities with the availability of markets were 2.65 times higher than those who cannot produce in large quantities for the markets if there were available markets.

It was equally discovered that 72.6 percent of the smallholder farmers get their information about prices from the market with 73.7 percent of them indicating that their income for the last twelve months was less than 200,000 francs. These gave a significant chi square result across the four divisions. With the case of distribution 68.1 percent of them do the distribution through their personal efforts with 31.9 percent of them using the services of middle men and other marketing agencies to get their produce to the market.

Discussion

The results of the research showed that 58.7 percent of the smallholder farmers were female across three divisions with the exception of Menchum division where men were dominating. Farming has never been attractive to the youth and well educated people. The result shows that 58.7 percent of these farmers were within the age group of 40 and above years across the four divisions.

It was noted that 67.1 percent of these farmers were primary and secondary school leavers. Well educated people including specialists in Agricultural Science do not actively engage in farming. These are personalities who could do better in farming to turn things positively by engaging in commercial farming to bring about food security. This would have motivated the smallholder farmers who are not educated to be motivated and accept modern ways of farming. The more one is educated the more one will accepts concepts on modern agriculture thereby moving away from subsistence to commercialization. If farming is left in the hands of the less educated smallholder farmers it will be difficult for them to accept farming as a business and become entrepreneurs if no training, advice and other incentives are given to them. This is in line with Collier and Dercon that African smallholder farmers have not chosen to be entrepreneurs. The educated persons are interested in white colour jobs which they are sure of a salary at the end of the month. However, they should know that having your own business is better than working for someone whether an individual, company, corporate or the government. People should always think of retirement when working for someone else. Though as an entrepreneur you bear a lot of risk but if the business is properly managed the reward is enormous. There is therefore the need to make agriculture a business. This is challenging agricultural experts to engage in Agric Business so that it will motivate the youth to engage and invest in agriculture. The youth might not have seen a rich farmer so they are not encouraged to take that as a business.

The results showed that 81.4percent of smallholder farmers across the four divisions do not belong to any producer cooperatives. This is because of the experience they have had with them hence they try to shy away from them. This ties with Shaun et el comments enumerating series of problems suffered by the cooperatives including corruption and mismanagement.

Road and transport infrastructures have not been good in these divisions especially in Menchum division where all the respondents gave a negative response to road and transport infrastructures in the division. No Agric Business can function well without proper road infrastructures. Output must be moved to the market and where there is non-existence of good road it will be difficult to do that. The end result will be high holding costs. Most of the produce will be perished reducing the chance of the smallholder farmer attaining food security and alleviate poverty. This in accordance with Machethe's that South Africa lack appropriate road infrastructure resulting in high transaction costs. The case of Bachmann and Earles that transport infrastructure is one of the most constraints facing agricultural markets throughout the Sub Saharan Africa and finally Montshwe that majority of villages in rural areas are served by inadequate and poor maintained road network.

Insight and a Business (marketing) model at the micro level for food security and poverty alleviation.

This study has shown that smallholder farmers lack basic marketing principles and adequate support from the government. They will succeed to produce products that will satisfy the needs of the market at a profit if they adopt basic marketing principles and receive support adequate support from the government.

The insight will ensure that farmers adopt the best agricultural practices, develop proper marketing strategies and use the best distribution channels. On the other hand the model will ensure that smallholder farmers' social security and status are enhanced.

Insight for smallholder farmers

A number of issues were identified which hinders the smallholder farmers from achieving food security and alleviation of poverty. The insight will be discussed from that perspective

-Farmers are disgruntled with the cooperative movements because of the poor treatment given to them . Instead of catering for their wellbeing the managers and staff mismanage the activities of the movements to the detriments of the farmers. They equally embezzle funds meant for the payment of the farmers. The structure of cooperative movements will require dedicated, honest and people with integrity to manage them.

-To enable the smallholder farmer get access to the market from the remote part of the country, will require good feeder roads to the market. The study shows that most remote part of the research area are not accessible hindering farmers to market their produce at both the national and international levels.

-The Ministry of Agriculture should organize regular seminars for these famers to be abreast with the modern agricultural techniques and improve on their output. This will make it possible for them to earn profits through their marketing activities.

-The study shows that they have difficulties in obtaining funds to expand or improve on their activities. This could be catered for if the cooperative movements are well organized to assist these farmers through the financial institutions.

-The farmers love dry season farming. This is because the harvests from this season attract higher prices. Unfortunately irrigation machine is difficult to come by. Here again the cooperative movement could come to their aid.

-Most of their produce gets perished or they are forced to sell them at low price. This is because they do not have adequate storage facilities. They will need storage facilities or processing units to add value to their produce for better price.

Business (Marketing) Model to enhance smallholder farmers' social security and status

This model is proposed because the literature is incomplete. Therefore this model will fill the identified gaps.

Gap1 Agriculture as a Business and a New Business Model

During the execution of the qualitative research the farmers shared a lot of experience on how they market their produce through their personal efforts and sometimes through the cooperatives. They made mention of the difficulties they face when they become old and can no longer carry on their farming activities effectively. They become poor and lead a miserable life. They can only be assisted by their children or sometimes by relatives. The previous literature as it has been examined by other authors including, Shaun et 2014, T. Yengoh 2012, Mawar et al 2007, Weatherspoon et al 2003 have nothing concrete to resolve the smallholder farmers' social impairment in the society. To fill this gap the farmers need a new marketing organization (model) to work with them and make farming a business.

The marketing organization should have a model which should not only buy from the farmers but should engage personnel to work with the farmers from the farm to the point of purchase. This ensures that quality and quantity of food stuffs produced meet international standards thereby attracting skimming pricing. The farmers will as well be encouraged to buy shares from the company so that they can benefit dividend from the company in case of profit realisation. At this point the Author is only going to deal with the micro version of this new marketing model. This will be treated fully under gap two. It is a micro model because it concentrates only on how the marketing organization will make it possible for the smallholder farmers enjoy the provision of social benefits in the country. It does not show how it will assist small holder farmers to improve on their activities to increase profits.

Gap 2 Absence of Social Benefits to the smallholder farmers.

To cater for the social needs of the smallholder famers, the new business model will incorporate the National Social Insurance Fund into its strategic plans. This model was developed in consultation with the famers through motivational (qualitative) research. In 2014 the Prime Minister of Cameroon came up with a decree covering voluntary insured persons. The degree does go as Decree No 2014- 2377/PM of 13/08/14 laying down the terms and conditions for voluntary insured persons under the old age and using the pension, invalidity and death. This decree implies that any individual engage in any gainful activity is free to register with the National Social Insurance Fund so as to enjoy the benefits stipulated in this decree. This scheme has not been easy to implement. The National Social Insurance Fund has developed marketing strategies to educate people on the scheme but not succeeding. My discussions with the farmers shows that it will be difficult for individuals to engage with the National Social Insurance Fund. This is because payment of benefits at old age for workers going on retirement has never been easy. Some retirees die without receiving their benefits from the National Social Insurance Fund.

Most smallholder farmers do not have income when they get old. This is because they are not active to carry on their farming activities. There is nothing like pension, invalidity, death and maternity benefits for the smallholder farmer.

The new business model as illustrated below will be used to improve on the social security and status of the farmers..

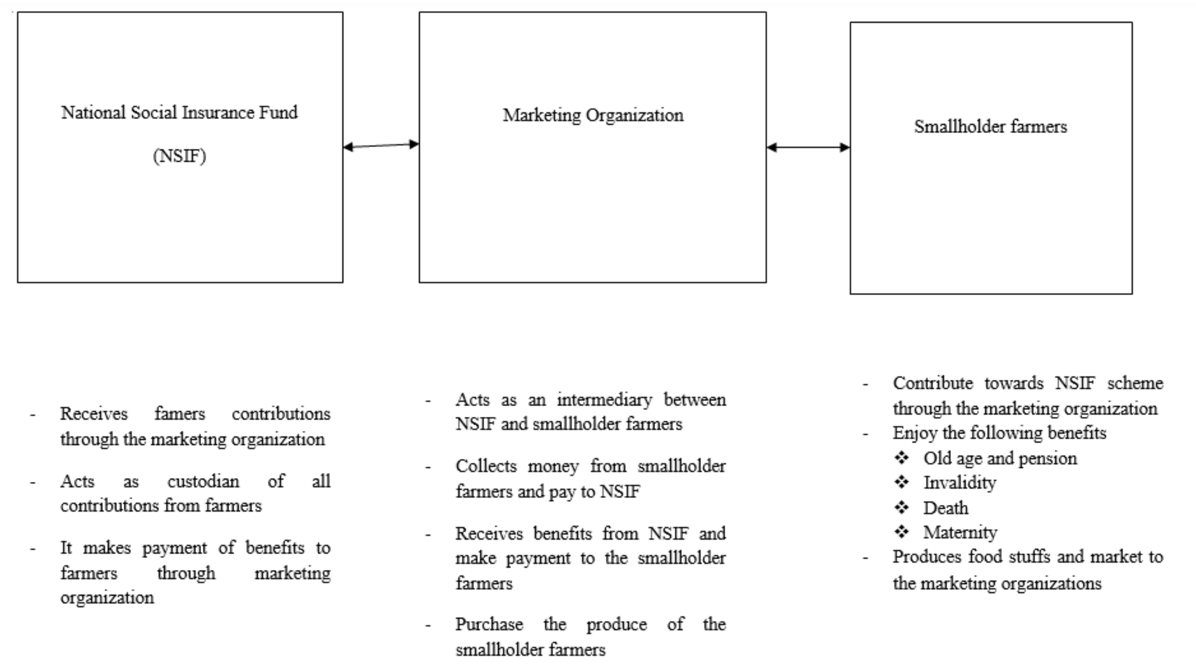

Fig 1: Smallholder Business(Marketing) Model at the Micro Level

Source: Field research

This model develops a strategic plan incorporating all farmers that register with the organization. The marketing organization will introduce the National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF) scheme to the smallholder farmers. The idea behind this is to motivate the farmers to work hard and increase their yields. Food security will be improved. Their produce will be purchased by the marketing organization. This will go a long way to increase their income and alleviate their poverty while in active service and at old age. Women could as well enjoy maternity benefits. This will enable them rest to take care for the new born baby. The marketing organization will not only buy from them but encourage them to take agriculture as a business like any other investment. In order to motivate them and encourage the youth to participate in farming, the marketing organization will appoint a full time worker to be in the personnel department to liaise with the National Social Insurance Funds on behalf of the famers. To clear the fear that they will not receive their benefits, the organization will assure them that the officer from the personnel department is responsible for the claiming of all their dues from the National Social Insurance Fund and pay to them. There will be no occasion that a smallholder farmer will move to any of the National Social Insurance Fund's office to follow up files concerning a financial claim. This will be the responsibility of the marketing organisation. The marketing organization will treat them as if they are its workers. They produce and sell to the marketing organization which process them and market them within the country and abroad. In case of poor harvest in a season or year the gap will be filled during the subsequent season or year when there is good harvest. There is no need for any farmer to fear of poor harvest. The organization will always ensure that harvest is always good. Whenever the farmers sell their produce the marketing organisation deducts the contribution from the farmers and pay to the scheme. Farmers who are able to contribute towards the scheme will benefit from the National Social Insurance Fund Scheme. Those who are able to contribute for 15 years will at the old age receive some money periodically from the National Social Insurance Fund. This will motivate most of the youth to embrace agriculture and become entrepreneurs. In order to succeed the marketing organizations have to arrange for seminar/workshops. This requires inviting the farmers, personalities from the National Social Insurance Fund and those of the state and local media to explain to the farmers the necessity of the National Social Insurance Fund. Therefore the marketing institution has the responsibility to assist the farmers to improve on their output to increase value in the market. This will enable the farmers to generate enough income to contribute towards the scheme. This is going to ensure that the Prime Ministerial decree of 2014 is implemented starting with smallholder farmers in the country.

Limitations

This study did not have accurate income of the smallholder farmers as well as statistics of the total population of smallholder farmers in the study area. It is therefore necessary for research to be conducted in these areas. The business model developed for the smallholder farmers is at the micro level. It is developed to cater for the social aspects of the smallholder farmers which was lacking in the literature. This study is not complete until a business model at the macro level is developed to cater for some of the problems faced by the smallholder farmers in Cameroon and the rest of the Sub Saharan Africa.

Contributions

The smallholder farmers

Farmers will see the need to adopt the best agricultural practices to improve their yield for better price.

There will be a new business model to cater for the social interest of the smallholder farmers. This will take the structures of a company where the smallholders can as well buy shares and earn dividends in case the company makes profits.

They will be motivated by incorporating them into the National Social Insurance Funds. The company will ensure that they adopt the best agricultural practices to increase output for higher income. This will make them achieve food security and alleviate poverty. They will be encouraged to contribute towards the National Social Insurance Fund scheme so as to cater for old age. This is an incentive which will attract the youth into agriculture and stop them from moving into the cities or abroad for greener pastures. Therefore agriculture will be embraced as a Business. This motivating factor will not materialize until this serious marketing organization is created to manage the farmers and the scheme. It is sad to notice that 73.7 percent of the smallholder farmers earn below 200000 francs a year from their proceeds.

The Government, Non Governmental Organisations and Marketing organizations

It will enlighten them on their policies towards the smallholder farmers in attaining food security and alleviate poverty. The Prime Ministerial degree of 2014 will be implemented through smallholder farmers. This will encourage other sectors to join the National Social Insurance FundScheme to reap all the necessary benefits attached to it.

The Community

The community will benefit from the improvement of the social amenities in their area. It will encourage the youth to stay in the community to occupy themselves with farming or other activities. This will attract civil servants including teachers, medical personnel, agricultural technicians to the community and serve.

Conclusion

The results of this research have shown that smallholder farmers have a lot of problems which needs to be solved by the government, agencies engaged in facilitating agriculture promotion and the smallholder farmers themselves. Effective marketing requires good roads to give access to the local, national and international markets. This will encourage the smallholder farmers to adopt the entrepreneurial spirit to go into large scale production for commercialization.

The government should embark on the construction of feeder roads to link these farmers who are found in the remote part of the country to have access to the markets. The smallholder farmers receive support from the government and the cooperative societies yet they still remain poor. This shows that the models used by both the government and the cooperative are not working since the farmers still have many unresolved problems. To solve this problem will require a special business model like the one mentioned earlier to fill the gaps. This will take the interest of the farmers as priority. Finally the results have shown that smallholder farmers can not practice effective marketing without adopting the best agricultural practice, the right marketing strategies and using the optimum distribution management. Since the end result of marketing is profit they will be able to make enough money to cater for their needs. Hence it can be concluded that marketing has an influence on the smallholder farmers' food security and poverty alleviation.

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Sport eFANgelism Demographics[1]

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ABSTRACT
Brand evangelism, an advanced form of marketing where consumers voluntarily advocate on behalf of the brand, can bring numerous benefits to a firm. It would be a new era to explore brand evangelism within the spectator sport context. This study concentrates on eFANgelism demographics based on gender, generation, number of children owned and education level.
KEYWORDS: EFangelism, Brand Evangelism, Sport Fanatism, Demographic Characteristics

1. Conceptual Background

Sports is full of passion, but the sports industry is also a business—one of the biggest ones. By 2017, the global sports market generated revenue of around 91 billion U.S. dollars (,https://www.statista.com/statistics/370560/worldwide-sports-market-revenue/) rising from 76 billion U.S. dollars (Fig.1). Plunkett Research (2016) reported the estimated size of the global sports industry - the market with an economic dimension, which offers products, services, places and ideas related to sport, fitness or leisure time to its consumers. - as 1.3 Trillion US$.

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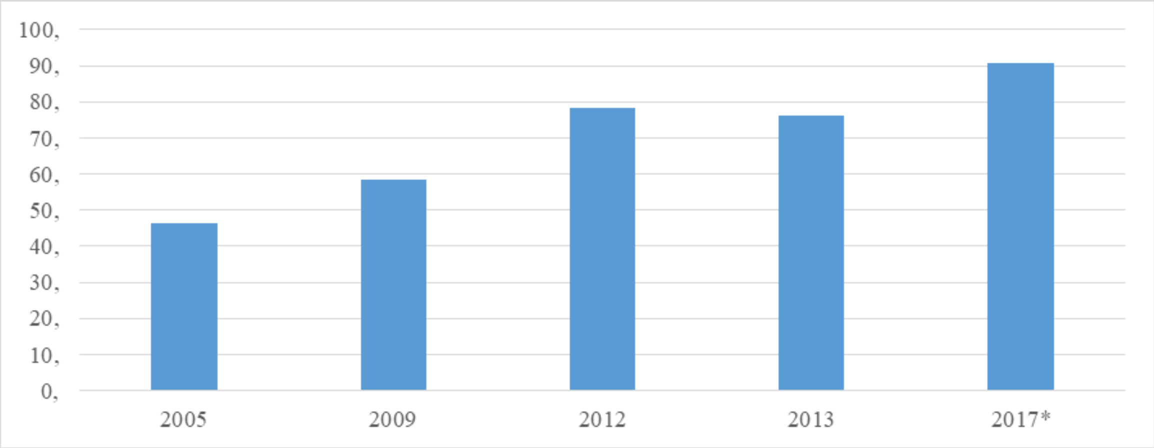

Fig.1. Global sports market - total revenue from 2005 to 2017 (in billion U.S. dollars)

Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/370560/worldwide-sports-market-revenue/

But not all sports disciplines are represented equally in these finances. Number one, worldwide, is—no surprise here—association football (soccer), with a 43% share of the global financial sports market. Football (American) is also on a distant second place, with 13%. Baseball (12%), Formula 1 (7%) and basketball (6%) are the only three sports also having an over 5% share in addition to the top two. They're followed by hockey (4%), tennis (also 4%) and golf with a 3% total market share in terms of finances (https://medium.com/sportyfi/how-big-is-the-sports-industry-630fba219331).

As of in all business firms rely on the frequent visiting and purchasing behavior of customers to maintain a long-term relationship (O'Connor, 2005). Sports teams realize several benefits through customer experience and team identification (Fullerton, 2007). Teams must establish personal commitment by providing audiences with optimal service and establishing a psychological connection between spectators and teams. Therefore, customer experience is critical to the future management of professional sports leagues (Klaus & Maklan, 2012, 2013; Meyer & Schwager, 2007).

Brand evangelism was defined by Matzler, Pichler, and Hemetsberger (2007) as the behavior of "spreading positive opinions and trying fervently to convince or persuade others to get engaged with the same brand". Numerous benefits are received by brands with evangelistic consumers, as these individuals promote the brand. Furthermore, brand evangelists provide a level of credibility to other potential customers as they are not a member of the organization they are praising, which can lead to the building of strong brand communities (Matzler et al., 2007).

A new term, “eFANgelism” has been created by Dwyer, Greenhalgh and LeCrom (2015) to define brand evangelism in sports.

2. Research

2.1. Research Question and Objectives

This study was guided by the following research question:
Does brand evangelism within the sport fans vary according to demographic factors?
The objective of this study is to understand if the eFANgelism scores of sport fans change according to gender, generation, marital status, number of children owned and education level. Because this is a quantitive research question, the formal hypotheses are as follows;
H_1: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to gender.
H_2: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to generation.
H_3: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to marital status.
H_4: There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to number of children owned.
H_5:There is a significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to education level.

2.2. Data Collection

An online survey was used for the final data collection. The survey was advertised by social media channels (Facebook and Twitter). The data were collected from 05 February to 30 March. The percentage of response rate was less than 10% with 205 completed responses .

Nominal scale was used for demographic variables and five-point Likert scale was adopted for eFANgelism.

To measure eFANgelism score, Sport eFANgelism Scale developed in English by Dwyer et al, (2015), which was adopted to Turkish by Yuksekbilgili (2017) was used. The Turkish version of the Sport eFANgelism Scale has 12 questions.

2.3. Descriptive statistics

The results showed the percentage of female was 47.30 percent and percentage of males was 52,7 per cent. Among the respondents, 32,7 per cent were born before year 1980, 67,3 per cent were born between year 1980-1999 and there was no born after year 1999. In terms of martial status, the percentage not-married was 41,8 per cent and married were 58,2 per cent. The percentage of respondents with no children was 63. 6 per cent, one child was 27.3 per cent, two children was 5,5 per cent, and three of more children was 3,6 per cent. In terms of education level, the percentage of primary school degree was 3,6 per cent, high school degree were 16,4, associate degree were 14,5, bachelor's degree were 27,3 and master's degree were 38,2.

2.4. Findings

The reliability coefficients of the Sport eFANgelism Scale were found as α=0.936.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of female and male sport fans. There was not a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for females (M=2,245192, SD=1,034877) and males (M=2,339799, SD=1,100966); t(548)= -1,035010, p = 0,301121. So H_1 is rejected.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of X generation sport fans and Y generation sport fans. There was a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for X generation (M=2,2452, SD=1,9213) and Y generation (M=2,3398, SD=2,4769); t(548)= -5,885, p = 0,000 (So H_2 is accepted. The eFANgelism score for Y generation is significantly higher than X generation sport fans ($\mu_{X\ Generation}$=2,2452; $\mu_{Y\ Generation}$=2,3398).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare eFANgelism scores of not-married sport fans and married sport fans. There was a significant difference in E-fangelism scores of not married sport fans (M=2,6377, SD=0,9328) and married sport fans (M=2,0488, SD=0,93328); t(548)= 6,607, p = 0,000. So H_3 is accepted. The eFANgelism score for not married sport fans are significantly higher than married sport fans ($\mu_{not\ married}$=2,6377; $\mu_{married}$=2,0488).

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the eFANgelism scores of the sport fans having no, one, two, three or more children. There was a significant change on eFANgelism score at the p<.05 level for the four conditions [F(3, 546) = 28,691, p = 0,000]. So H_4 is accepted. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for sport fans of no children (M = 2,5530, SD = 1,0164) was significantly different than sport fans having one children (M = 2.0278, SD = 1,0782). Also the mean score for sport fans having one children (M = 2.0278, SD = 1,0782) was significantly different than sport fans having two children (M = 1,423, SD = 0,5649). However, sport fans having two children (M = 1,423, SD = 0,5649) did not significantly differ from the sport fans having three or more children (M = 1,093, SD = 0.0961).

3. Results

3.1. Avenues for Future Research

While this study has identified relation of several demographic factors with eFANgelism, the writer acknowledge that many more factors that can affect the eFANgelism score exist and deserve further exploration. This research only focuses on eFANgelism demographics based on gender, generation, number of children owned and education level, which actually neglects sport type, income, occupation and religion. So, these factors can be a productive area for future investigation. Apart, the study is conducted in Turkey, at which 63,4 % of the population is following the main football league (Sportsnet Group, 2017). Adopting the eFANgelism scale to other languages and other locations would provide useful comparison data. Clearly, more research is needed on this area.

3.2. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand if the E-fangelism scores of sport fans change according to gender, generation, marital status, number of children owned and education level. The data obtained showed that there is no significant change in eFANgelism scores of the sport fans according to gender. Also the results indicate that there was a significant difference in eFANgelism scores of sport fans for X generation compared to Y generation; the eFANgelism score for Y generation is significantly higher than X generation sport fans. Also, the findings underline that the eFANgelism score for not married sport fans are significantly higher than married sport fans, as expected. This study is a modest contribution to the ongoing debates about children ownership and eFANgelism level relation; sport fans having one children were significantly different than sport fans having two children, sport fans having two children did not significantly differ from the sport fans having three or more children. ,
Due that there is no research on this field based on the demographics of sport eFANgelism, the author had no chance to compare the results.

3.3. Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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