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INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AGRICULTURE AS A BUSINESS TO AUGMENT THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF SCHOOLS.

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ABSTRACT

Schools are facing serious financial challenges to fund their day to day functions and obligations. Most schools depend on school fees and levy payment from parents and guardians of their pupils. However this falls far too short of what is needed to effectively resource a school. The study examined the effectiveness of agriculture as a business to augment the financial resources of schools. The study looked at how agriculture is run in schools, whether schools produce agricultural products for sale and also the factors affecting schools in running agriculture as a business. It assessed the kind of support that is required by the schools in order to run Agriculture as a business. The researcher concentrated on three secondary schools out of the 28 schools that are doing Agriculture in Insiza District. This is because the researcher had limited time because of work commitments. The researcher focused on form 1-4 pupils who are doing Agriculture, Agriculture teachers, Heads of Departments and Heads of schools. The researcher used the interpretivist paradigm and a case study design. Purposive sampling and convenience sampling were used to achieve the set objectives. The researcher used purposive and convenience sampling to achieve the objectives. The sample size had a total of 42 participants out of a population of 890. Data was generated through the use of questionnaires and interviews. The qualitative data was analyzed according to responses.

Evidence from the study shows Agriculture in Insiza district schools is mainly run as an academic subject. Although a variety of vegetables and crops are grown in these schools, the land to grow these crops and vegetables is not fully exhausted. The amount of money obtained from agriculture is as low as below $200 per annum. This is a very little amount to augment financial resources of the school. Agriculture is also run as part of the practical’s department and hence no separate financial records for agriculture transactions are kept. The research study also revealed that the schools did not produce agriculture products for sale. Most of the agriculture products produced are due to projects being undertaken by pupils. Factors affecting the running of agriculture as a business in schools were found to be lack of funds, theft and destruction of vegetables and crops by animals. Schools need funding to run agriculture as a business.