

ABSTRACT

Population Mobility and The Sustainability of Farming Households: The Rio Grande Valley, Jamaica

Amani Joseph Ishemo

The relationship between population mobility and farming activity is complex and has been the focus of numerous studies. This thesis seeks to examine this relationship from a micro perspective using the Rio Grande Valley, Jamaica as a case study. The findings reaffirm the view that migration exerts a contradictory influence on the sustainability of farming in both positive and negative ways. In addition, this study reveals that the relationship between population mobility and the viability of farming extends beyond the influence of external migration to include various forms of mobility. The micro-level approach enhances our understanding of the significance of the linkage between internal and external migration and, by extension, the complex relationship between population mobility and farming activities. A limited amount of land for cultivation, along with more expensive farming practices and overall dependency on cash for survival are the principal factors, which make externally derived capital an indispensable source of livelihood for the Rio Grande Valley farmers. Through migration, external capital has been a major source of income and, together with labour diversification, has helped to make farming resilient.

Keywords: Jamaica; Rio Grande Valley; Population Mobility; Sustainability; Farming Households.