

ABSTRACT

An Investigation of Factors Affecting Family Farm
Continuity in Trinidad and Tobago

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This study investigated the apparent lack of younger people entering farming. Three areas were investigated; the factors that affected the number of years that the family was on the farm, the factors that affected the number of youths in farming, and the relationship of ethnicity with some farming characteristics.

Data for the study were obtained from agricultural settlements, which were established during the Second World War.

An analytical framework giving conceptually the pattern of family farm continuity, and the number of youths farming, was developed. This provided the empirical procedures to test hypotheses related to family farm continuity, and the number of youths farming. These tests were carried out by the use of regression analyses. Chi-square tests were also carried out to determine the association of ethnicity with a number of variables.

An Empirical Model, based on empirical observations, was developed. The model suggested that the factors which were found to affect the number of years that the

farm family was on the War Plot were: age of the respondent, attitude to farming score, number of male children, ethnicity, marital status, farmer status, whether the farm was inherited, and the tenancy arrangement of the plot. Only two of these factors, 'attitude to farming score' and 'marital status', affected the number of youths farming. Other factors, more related to attitude to farming, were found to affect the number of youths farming.

The results revealed that ethnic differences in the observed data were significant for the following variables: age of respondent, marital status of respondent, percentage of working time spent in off-farm work, number of years farm family on the War Plot, original size of War Plot, original tenancy arrangement of the War Plot, current size of War Plot, and if respondents currently occupy agricultural plots other than the War Plots.

Hence this study contributed to the information on small farmers, which can help in more successful implementation of agricultural schemes, and could enable the Extension Service to increase its effectiveness.