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Kinship obligations, capital and forms of belonging among Africa's farming communities in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

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This study is an investigation of kinship influences on women smallholder farmers' practices in rural spaces. This study is an ongoing study conducted within a context where livelihoods are increasingly getting linked to the capitalist economy which has proved to be going through rapid transformations largely linked to the features of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4th IR). A study that focuses on kinship influences on women farming practices is essential when one looks into the resilience of customary forms or organisation within the current neoliberal setting where the dictates of the 4th IR are looming large. Instead of such forms of organisation being pushed to the periphery they have come to be at the core of defining socio-economic relationships. In this regard, the study will seek to establish forms of relationships that kinship assists to shape as women engage in their farming activities. This is especially with respect to how the kinship obligations act as an enabling or constraining form of agency within the whims of Victor Turners concept of Liminality. Whilst methodologically, the broader study is set to draw from in-depth interviews and observations this paper is a result of the initial phase which draws from empirical literature.

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