

Evaluation of constraints to Youths' Participation in Agricultural Intervention Income Generating Activities in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Despite its importance, inadequacy of funds for purchase of inputs, minimal markets linkages and intra-group conflict of interest accounted for the most worrisome bottleneck to youth participation in Agricultural intervention. The study therefore evaluated the constraints to youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study specifically described the socio-economic characteristics of youths; determined the participation level of youth participating in Agricultural intervention income generating activities and examine constraints militating against youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities.

A multistage sampling technique was adopted to select one hundred and eighty eight (188) youth farmers for the study. A structured questionnaire was employed to obtain primary data from respondents. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyze the relationship between the constraints to the youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities.

The mean age of the respondents from Ondo State was 34 years. It was also revealed that majority of the respondents from Ondo State (70.2%) were male. Majority of the respondents from Ondo State (70.2%) were married. Over 90.0% of the respondents from the state had formal education. The result of the Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis revealed that problem of group formation ($r = -0.437^*$), problem of meeting to contributing funds ($r = -0.197^*$), inadequate land access to practice most of recommended technologies ($r = -0.280^*$), poor asset acquisition ($r = -0.232^*$), poor access to advisory services ($r = -0.282^*$), inadequate access to inputs support by the participants ($r = -0.355^*$), inadequate access to capital supports/grants ($r = -0.101^*$), inadequate capital building and training ($r = -0.099^*$), inadequate gender sensitivity ($r = -0.307^*$), poor coordination of participants ($r = -0.283^*$), communal factors e.g. farmers/Fulani conflict, land dispute, resources allocation conflicts ($r = -0.133^*$) and lack of interest etc. ($r = -0.133^*$) were significantly related with level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that several factors had significantly constrained level of youth's participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area.

The study therefore recommends that the problem of group formation should be adequately addressed by grouping like-minded people together to prevent future conflicts to fulfil the objectives of the programme. Also, there should be prompt release of fund by the programme coordinators to youth coordinator for speedy implementation of projects to facilitate youth participation in the programme to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country. Likewise,

there should be adequate access to inputs support by the participants to avoid delay in the implementation of the projects.

Keywords: Agriculture, Constraints, Participation and Youths

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural intervention is a community driven development project. The project is basically agricultural based that aims at increasing the income of users through Community Associations and Users Group in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. As a community-driven intervention, projects are initiated by communities, though with supervision from the State and National Office. One of the key features of the project is to empower the communities to collectively decide on how resources are allocated and managed for their livelihood activities and to participate in the design and execution of their sub-projects. It employs community demand-driven approach which emphasised and promotes beneficiaries' participation and ownership of subprojects from initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation the developmental projects (Innih and Dimelu, 2013). Development effort at local or grassroots level is worsened when targets of such programmes are either left worse off than before or the project measures were not relevant to the needs and aspirations of the people. This situation calls for people-oriented programme, where intervention is designed to improve existing circumstances of the people; and it should begin and end with target of change, such approaches which encourage self-reliance among communities and reduce dependence on external interventions by involving people in rural livelihood improvement programme right from needs assessment, prioritizing needs, identifying solutions, adequate planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of the programmes remained imperative (Mohammed, cited in Muhammad; *et al.*, 2011).

Therefore, the need to evaluate and validate this claim became necessary and this necessitated this study. Meanwhile, the existing literatures and empirical evidence (Adegbite; Oloruntoba, Adubi; Oyekunle, and Sobanke, 2008; Innich and Dimelu, 2013; Muhammad, Umar, Abubakar and Abdullahi, 2011; Alabi, Ogbonna, Hawal and Awoyinka, 2014; Ike, 2012; Bature, Sanni and Adebayo, 2013), showed that a lot of studies have been conducted on the development projects on the promotion of beneficiaries (FUGs) livelihood; poverty eradication and economic development in Nigeria. Ovharhe and Gbigbi (2006) investigated and reported their findings as low participation of youth in agricultural project such as Agricultural intervention and the determinants of youth empowerment by Agricultural intervention such as low education status, poor capital base, diversion of input, and inefficient raining session. This study therefore intends to evaluate constraints to youth participation in income generating activities by Agricultural intervention in order to motivate their active participation in the agricultural project. This indeed provides the basis for this research. To this end, this research will attempt to provide answers to the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. what are the socio-economic characteristics of youths in the study area?
2. what is the participation level of youth participating in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area?
3. what are the constraints militating against youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine constraints to youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in Ondo State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. describe the socio-economic characteristics of youths in the study area,
2. determine the participation level of youth participating in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area,
3. identify the constraints militating against youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area?

Hypothesis of the study

The hypothesis was written in a null form:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the constraints militating against youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ondo State in southwestern geographical zone of Nigeria. The population of the study comprise both male and female youths participating in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in Ondo state in south-western geographical zone of Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 188 respondents from Ondo State. Data collection from the respondents was mainly through structured questionnaire. Information contained in the structured questionnaire were based on the objectives of the study. The sex of the respondents was measured as male (1) and female (2), age of the respondent was measured in years and marital status was measured as single (1), married (2), separated (3) and widowed (4). The educational level was measured as no formal education (0), primary school education (1), secondary school education (2), and tertiary education (3). Moreover, level of youths' participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities was measured on a four-point scale of: Always (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1) Never (0) using the mean score and the standard deviation, i.e. ($\bar{x} \pm 1SD$), the level of which was categorized into high, moderate, and low. Moreover, the constraints to the youth participations' in Agricultural intervention income generating activities was measured by asking the respondents to indicate their constraints on three-point rating scale of severe constraint (3), mild constraints (2), and no constraint (1). The mean score was computed, and this was utilized to classify the constraints encountered into high, mild, and low impacts.

Data were analyzed using both descriptive (frequency count, percentage, weighted mean score and mean) and inferential (PPMC Analysis) statistics using SPSS version 22.

DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The distribution of the respondents based on their sex was presented in Table 1. Based on the distribution, in Ondo state, 70.2% of the respondents were male while the 29.8% were female. The high participation of male in Agricultural intervention programme may be related to drudgery involved in the activities which often forces many female farmers out of them. This finding collaborates with Chikezie *et al.* (2012) in their study titled "factors influencing rural youth adoption of cassava recommended production practices" where over 60% of their

respondents were male. They observed that it is generally believed that males are often more energetic and could readily be available for energy demanding jobs like farming. Similarly, Dagba *et al.* (2016) assessed factors influencing Agricultural intervention user Groups perceived value of forest resources in Benue State where majority of the respondents (83.5%) were male.

Table 3.1 showed the distribution of respondents by age. It was revealed that in Ondo state, 54.8% of the respondents were between 24-29 years, 44.1% of the respondents were between 30-35 years while 1.1% of the respondents were between 18-23 years. This finding agreed with Ja'afar-Furo *et al.* (2013) evaluated the income status of Agricultural intervention beneficiaries in Adamawa state in which most of their respondents were between age group of 18 to 39 years in both sexes. Similarly, Dagba *et al.* (2016) which assessed factors influencing Agricultural intervention user Groups perceived value of forest resources in Benue State in which most of their respondents had a mean age of 44 ± 8.154 .

It was revealed that in Ondo state, 70.2% of the respondents were married, 20.7% were single, 3.7% were widowed, 4.3% were separated. The finding therefore indicated that majority of the respondents were married which is an a priori expectation of most rural households. They are usually married with number of children which often participate in their livelihood activities and form their immediate labour force. The finding agreed with Nwaobiala *et al.* (2014) in the work titled "assessment of levels of participation among farmers in IFAD/FGN/NDDC/Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme in Abia and Cross River States were studied and assessed in 2012" where the 75.0% of the respondents were married.

In Ondo state, 64.4% of the respondents had tertiary education, 31.4% had secondary education/technical certificate, 3.7% had primary school education while 0.5% of the respondents had no formal education. It must be mentioned that majority of the respondents had formal education. Having adequate education is usually an avenue to understand things which will be useful in the pursuit of livelihood activities and other areas of life. The level of education will go a long way in the understanding of adoption of any innovation including Agricultural intervention programme. This agrees with the findings of the study conducted by Muhammad-Lawal *et al.* (2009) which showed that a greater percentage of the programme participants (93.64%) had some form of formal education. Similarly, Dagba *et al.* (2016) found out that most of their respondents had formal education. This outcome will help improve rice production and invariably the income level.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Socio-Economic Characteristics

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Male	132	70.2	
Female	56	29.8	
Age range (years)			
18-23	2	1.1	33.50
24-29	103	54.8	
30-35	83	44.1	
Marital Status			
Single	39	20.7	
Married	132	70.2	

Widowed	7	3.7
Divorced	2	1.1
Separated	8	4.3
Educational Status		
No formal education	1	0.5
Primary education	7	3.7
Secondary education/Technical certificate	59	31.4
Tertiary education	121	64.4

Level of youth participation in income generating activities

Tables 2a, b and c present the distribution of respondents by level of youth participation in income generating activities. In Ondo State (Table 2a, b and c), most of the respondents participated more in cash crops (WMS = 0.98) as on-farm income generating activities, most of them participated more in fish feed mill and machineries for feed production (WMS = 0.27) as agro-processing/value-addition process income generating activities while tailoring (WMS = 0.23) was the major activity among off-farm income generating activities they participated in.

From the findings, it was revealed that youth witnessed increased in income after participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities. Similarly, Bature, Sanni and Adebayo (2013) conducted a study on the analysis of impact of national development projects on beneficiaries income and wealth in FCT, Nigeria and their result revealed that the value of productive assets of beneficiaries increases from N81,240.97 before Agricultural intervention to N84,9577.5 after Agricultural interventions and conversely, there was a decrease in the net farm income of beneficiaries from N198261.5 to N170180.4 during Agricultural intervention. The reduction in income despite the acquisition of productive assets could be due to limitations encountered by the FUGS.

Table 2a: Distribution of respondents by level of participation in On-farm income generating activities (Ondo State)

Income generating activities	Level of participation				WMS	Rank
	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
1 Cereals production	8(4.3)	5(2.7)	0(0.0)	175(93.1)	0.18	5 th
2 Tuber crops production	20(10.6)	8(4.3)	0(0.0)	160(85.1)	0.40	3 rd
3 Root vegetables	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	6 th
4 Leafy vegetables	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	6 th

5	Cash crops	48(25.5)	20(10.6)	0(0.0)	120(63.8)	0.98	1 st
6	Beekeeping	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	6 th
7	Aquaculture	11(5.9)	6(3.2)	0(0.0)	171(91.0)	0.24	4 th
8	Livestock production	44(23.4)	8(4.3)	0(0.0)	136(72.3)	0.79	2 nd

WMS = Weighted Mean Score

Table 2b: Distribution of respondents by level of participation in agro-processing/value-addition process income generating activities (Ondo State)

SN	Income generating activities	Level of participation				WMS	Rank
		Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
1	Fish feed mill and machineries for feed production	16(8.5)	1(0.5)	0(0.0)	171(91.0)	0.27	1 st
2	Cassava processing shed and necessary equipment for processing	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	4 th
3	Oil palm processing	10(5.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	178(94.7)	0.16	3 rd

shed and equipment							
4	Maize hurling shed and hurling machine	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	4 th
5	Piggery shed and pigs for pork production	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	4 th
6	Rice processing shed with rice milling machine	11(5.9)	2(1.1)	0(0.0)	175(93.1)	0.20	2 nd
7	Bee keeping equipment and materials for honey production	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	4 th
8	Poultry equipment for egg production	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	4 th

WMS = Weighted Mean Score

Table 2c: Distribution of respondents by level of participation in off-farm income generating activities (Ondo State)

Income generating Activities	Level of Participation				WMS	Rank
	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never		
Hair dressing/barbing	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	3 rd
Tie and dye	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	3 rd
Shoe making	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	3 rd
Tailoring	0(0.0)	22(11.7)	0(0.0)	166(88.3)	0.23	1 st
Soap making	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	188(100.0)	0.00	3 rd

Fish smoking	0(0.0)	17(9.0)	0(0.0)	171(91.0)	0.18	2 nd
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WMS = Weighted Mean Score

Categorization of respondents by their participation in income generating activities

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by categorization of extent of participation in on farm activities. Result in the table revealed that about 69.7 percent of the respondents from Ondo State participated in on-farm activities on high scale, 25.0 percent participated on medium scale while 5.3 percent participated in on-farm activities on low scale. InOndo State, the extent of participation in on-farm activities is still on moderate level which implies that more effort is still needed to encourage full participation in on-farm activities among youth in the state.

Table 3also shows the distribution of respondents by categorization of extent of participation in on farm activities. Result in the table revealed that about 78.7 percent participated in agro-processing/value addition processes activities on low scale, 19.7 percent of the respondents from Ondo State participated in agro-processing/value addition processes activities on high scale while only 1.6 percent participated on medium scale. The extent of participation in agro-processing/value addition processes activities is still on low level which implies that more effort is still needed to encourage full participation in agro-processing/value addition processes among youth especially in Ondo State.

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by categorization of extent of participation in off-farm activities. Result in the table revealed that about 79.3 percent participated in off-farm activities on low scale while 20.7 percent of the respondents from Ondo State participated in off-farm activities on high scale. The extent of participation in on-farm activities is still on moderate level which implies that more effort is still needed to encourage full participation in on-farm activities among youth.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by their participation in on farm activities

Category	On farm activities	Agro-processing/value addition processes	Off-farm activities
High	131(69.7)	37(19.7)	39(20.7)
Moderate	47(25.0)	3(1.6)	0(0.0)
Low	10(5.3)	148(78.7)	149(79.3)
Total	188(100.0)	188(100.0)	188 (100.0)
Mean	3.34	0.62	0.41

Standard deviation	1.84	1.206	0.813
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Constraints to the youth participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area

Table 4a, presented the distribution of sampled youths by constraints to their participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities in the study area. Based on result in the table 4.18a, the identified constraints by youths from Ondo State included communal factors e.g. farmers/Fulani conflict, land dispute, resources allocation conflicts (WMS = 1.71), inadequate capital building and training (WMS = 0.91), inadequate access to capital supports/grants (WMS = 0.79), lack of interest (WMS = 0.77), inadequate access to inputs support by the participants (WMS = 0.70), poor asset acquisition (WMS = 0.68), inadequate gender sensitivity (WMS = 0.65), poor access to advisory services (WMS = 0.62), inadequate land access to practice most of recommended technologies (WMS = 0.59), poor coordination of participants (WMS = 0.52), problem of meeting to contributing funds (WMS = 0.39) and problem of group formation (WMS = 0.15).

In line with this finding, Ovharhe and Gbigbi (2016) identified the major constraints militating against the youth participation in Agricultural intervention which include poor capital base ($\bar{x} = 3.34$), inefficient training session ($\bar{x} = 3.30$), poor project finance ($\bar{x} = 3.29$) and poor communication ideas in farming technology ($\bar{x} = 3.26$). Similarly, Ja'afar-Furo *et al.* (2013) evaluated the income status of Agricultural intervention beneficiaries in Adamawa state and identified constraints such as inadequacy of funds for purchase of inputs, minimal markets linkages and intra-group conflict of interest accounted for the most worrisome among the FUGs.

Table 4a: Distribution of sampled youths by constraints experienced in their participation in income generating activities in the study area (Ondo State)

Constraints	SC	MC	NC	WMS	Rank
Problem of group formation	0(0.0)	28(14.9)	160(85.1)	0.15	12 th
Problem of meeting to contributing funds	0(0.0)	73(38.8)	165(61.2)	0.39	11 th
Inadequate land access to practice most of recommended technologies	5(2.7)	101(53.7)	82(43.6)	0.59	9 th

Poor asset acquisition	0(0.0)	128(68.1)	60(31.9)	0.68	6 th
Poor access to advisory services	0(0.0)	117(62.2)	71(37.8)	0.62	8 th
Inadequate access to inputs support by the participants	0(0.0)	131(69.7)	57(30.3)	0.70	5 th
Inadequate access to capital supports/grants	0(0.0)	149(79.3)	39(20.7)	0.79	3 rd
Inadequate capital building and training	0(0.0)	172(91.5)	16(8.5)	0.91	2 nd
Inadequate gender sensitivity	0(0.0)	122(64.9)	66(35.1)	0.65	7 th
Poor coordination of participants	0(0.0)	116(61.7)	72(38.3)	0.52	10 th
Communal factors e.g., farmers/Fulani conflict, land dispute, resources allocation conflicts	120(63.9)	63(33.5)	5(2.7)	1.71	1 st
Lack of interest etc.	18(90.6)	109(58.0)	61(32.4)	0.77	4 th

SC = Severe constraint; MC = Mild constraint; NC = Not constraint
WMS = Weighted Mean Score

Categorization of sampled youths by the severity of constraints to their participation in income generating activities

Table 3.4b presented the distribution of sampled youths by the extent of constraints to the youth participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities. In Ondo State in the Table 3.4b, 76.6 percent of the youths claimed that they witnessed the constraints on moderate scale, 18.6 percent of the youths affirmed that the constraints were witnessed on low scale. It was therefore observed that the mean of the extent of constraints to the youth participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities was high in Ondo State.

Table 3.4b: Categorization of severity of constraints to the youth participation income generating activities

Categorization	Frequency	Percentage
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High	9	4.8
Medium	144	76.6
Low	35	18.6
Total	188	100.0

Ondo: Mean = 8.58; S.D = 2.927 (Maximum = 11.507; Minimum = 5.653)

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the constraints militating against youths’ participation in Agricultural intervention income generating and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities

Table 3.5 shows the summary of Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis of the relationship between constraints to the youths’ participation in Agricultural intervention income generating and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities. It was revealed that problem of group formation ($r = -0.437^*$), problem of meeting to contributing funds ($r = -0.197^*$), inadequate land access to practice most of recommended technologies ($r = -0.280^*$), poor asset acquisition ($r = -0.232^*$), poor access to advisory services ($r = -0.282^*$), inadequate access to inputs support by the participants ($r = -0.355^*$), inadequate access to capital supports/grants ($r = -0.101^*$), inadequate capital building and training ($r = -0.099^*$), inadequate gender sensitivity ($r = -0.307^*$), poor coordination of participants ($r = -0.283^*$), communal factors e.g. farmers/Fulani conflict, land dispute, resources allocation conflicts($r = -0.133^*$) and lack of interest etc. ($r = -0.133^*$) were significantly related with level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities. The relationship was negative which implies that decrease in any of the constraints will bring about an equivalent increase in the level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities. The present finding was like that of Ovharhe and Gbigbi (2016) which claimed that some constraints militating against the youth participation in Agricultural intervention were inversely related to level of participation in Agricultural intervention empowerment activities toward youth development.

Table 5: Summary of correlation analysis of the relationship between constraints to the youths’ participation in Agricultural intervention income generating and level of participation in Agricultural intervention income generating activities (n = 188)

Constraints	Correlation coefficient (r-value)	p-value	Remarks
Problem of group formation	-0.437*	0.000	S
Problem of meeting to contributing funds	-0.197*	0.000	S

Inadequate land access to practice most of recommended technologies	-0.280*	0.000	S
Poor asset acquisition	-0.232*	0.000	S
Poor access to advisory services	-0.282*	0.000	S
Inadequate access to inputs support by the participants	-0.355*	0.000	S
Inadequate access to capital supports/grants	-0.101*	0.070	S
Inadequate capital building and training	-0.099*	0.075	S
Inadequate gender sensitivity	-0.307*	0.000	S
Poor coordination of participants	-0.283*	0.000	S
Communal factors e.g., farmers/Fulani conflict, land dispute, resources allocation conflicts	-0.133*	0.016	S
Lack of interest etc.	-0.136*	0.014	S

S = Significant; NS = Not Significant
***= significant at 5% level of significance**

CONCLUSSION AND RECOMMENDATONS

Based on the findings, it was concluded that several factors had significantly constrained youth’s participation in income generating activities in the study area. The study therefore recommends thatthe problem of group formation should be adequately addressed by grouping like-minded people together to prevent future conflicts to fulfil the objectives of the programme. There should be prompt release of fund by the programme coordinators to youth coordinator for speedy implementation of projects to facilitate youth participation in the programme to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country. Also, there should be adequate access to inputs support by the participants to avoid delay in the implementation of the

The study recommends that:

1. The problem of group formation should be adequately addressed by grouping like-minded people together to prevent future conflicts to fulfil the objectives of the programme.
2. There should be prompt release of fund by the programme coordinators to youth coordinator for speedy implementation of projects to facilitate youth participation in the programme to reduce the rate of unemployment in the country.

3. There should be adequate access to inputs support by the participants to avoid delay in the implementation of the projects.

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