

A Survey of Rural Dwellers' Opinion on Effects of Extension Education on Their Socio-Economic Development in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract: - Rural areas in developing nations, Nigeria, inclusive are characterized with series of socio-economic challenges which is also typical of the rural communities and areas in South-West, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was implored for the study. The study population comprised all the people living in the rural areas in South West Nigeria. The sample size of the study was Six hundred (600) subjects, selected through a snow-balling sampling technique. Data was collected, using the primary and secondary sources. For the primary data, self-developed questionnaire by the researchers, entitled, "Questionnaire on a Survey of Rural Area Dwellers' Opinion on Effects of Extension Education on their Socio-Economic Development in South-West, Nigeria", developed on Four Likert Rating Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD), while six sessions of Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) were used to obtain secondary data. The research instrument was validated by an expert in Test and Measurement of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State, while the reliability of the instrument was done through test retest method at two weeks interval. 0.69 coefficient reliability was obtained. The research questions were analysed, using the descriptive statistics (frequency counts, simple percentages and means), while inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation, PPMC) was used to analyse the research hypothesis. The qualitative data collected was collated and transcribed, qualitatively. Based on the results, conclusions were made that: Extension education could improve the welfare status and also equip people at the rural areas with the knowledge and skills for engaging in productive economic activities. Since ($r = 59^*$, $N = 600$, $P < .05$). Null hypothesis, therefore, rejected. Based on the conclusions some recommendations were made that government should intensify efforts on Extension education at the rural areas, people should be encouraged to avail themselves with the opportunities offered by the programme etc.

Keywords: Rural dwellers, Extension education, Opinion, Development

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Several extant literatures and reports on the patterns of living among the rural dwellers have revealed that their living standard is very appalling, poor and horrific, because of the neglect of the rural communities by the government. Explanation or definition on rural dwellers is a subject of

definitional pluralism. However, American Census Bureau explains rural areas as a group of people living in an area with a population of 2,500 people or less, while the report that emanated from Federal Statistics Office in Nigeria States that a rural area has a population of 20,000 or less. Ele (2006) defines rural area as opposite to the urban area.

Adewumi and Abiola (2017), noted that the rural areas in Nigeria is suffering from neglect in terms of provision of basic necessities that could enhance the quality of life and living. Adejumobi and Odumosun (1998) and Omole (2010), noted that the quality of life of the rural dwellers is affected grossly by lack of presence of infrastructures and social amenities, communication facilities and effective communication networks etc. The report of on rural dwellers population by the World Bank put it at 49.66% of the population of the country in 2018. Thus, indicates that almost half of Nigerians are rural dwellers.

The rural areas in Nigeria remain the life wire of the Nigeria's economy. According to Nyagba (2009), "the most crucial sector of the Nigerian residents are at the rural areas or communities as a result of the fact the major sources of earnings or capital in the country is deriving from the activities of the rural dwellers, who are predominantly, farmers. Most of the raw materials for industries in Nigeria are produced from the agricultural sectors, dominated majorly by the rural dwellers. According to Abah (2010) "the rural people have always been known to source their incomes from economic activities like; agriculture which constitutes the bedrock of Nigeria's economic developments. It is therefore dishearten that dwellers at rural communities in Nigeria are facing with several challenges which are cogs in the wheel of sustainable national development in Nigeria. Nwuka (2004), observed that rural people are deeply enmeshed in abject poverty. Abah (2010), noted that the rural people are deprived of quality housing and experiencing all sorts of political and social deprivation and alienation. Despite the Universal Basic Education; the rural people are still depriving this privilege. Most of the schools in the rural areas are ill equipped with the basic facilities and personnels Okoli and Onah (2002), that

education is a right of every child in Nigeria but reality is opposite for the children at the rural areas. Access to quality education has become a delusion to the children at the rural communities, coupled with lack of health facilities. No wonder, why there is high rate of maternal mortality in the rural areas in Nigeria. Rural dwellers are prone to deadly diseases and without functional modern health facilities, coupled with an acute shortage of well trained and certificated medical personnels.

The picture of socio-economic of rural dwellers portrayed above indicates that rural dwellers and communities are neglected by the government. However, it will amount to fallacy to say that efforts have not been made by Nigerian Governments, military and civilian alike to improve the socio-economic status of people in the rural areas. Several efforts, policies and programmes have been adopted towards improving the standard of living the rural people and development of rural people and development of rural communities. According to Samson and Augustine (2014), “various attempts have been made by successive administrations in Nigeria which are directed towards reducing poverty and development of rural areas”.

In this, contention some of the programmes are National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (1987); Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI, 1986); the Rural Finance Institution Building Programme (RUFFIN, 2016) etc. Observable, these programme as lofty as their goals have failed to acquire or yield the expected results. Rural areas and dwellers are still contending with poor quality of life and absence of development which is the true picture in the South-West rural areas in Nigeria which, comprises of Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun, Oyo, Osun and Lagos States. From some of the available reports and literature, the climatic conditions on South-West, Nigeria farmers’ farming activities, majorly cash and food crops production. Hence, a reasonable percentage or number of people or dwellers in the rural communities in the region relies heavily on these aspects of agricultural activities for survival and as sources for earning incomes. Although, in some rural areas of the state, predominantly, Ondo, Lagos Ogun being very close to the ocean in some rural areas; people are involving in fish farming activities, timbers and a host of others. These rural communities are still far lagging behind in terms of physical development and other indicators or determinants of sustainable living.

Several studies had hitherto been carried out on rural dwellers’ opinion in respects of their living conditions, quality of life and impact of developmental programmes at South-West, Nigeria. Observable, much has not been done on Extension education impact on the areas. Also, several of the researches were self-reported with little or not on empirical studies on rural areas in South-West, Nigeria in its entire ramification or entirely.

It is in the light of the above background information and plights of the rural dwellers that this study was conducted on a survey of rural dwellers’ opinion on effects of Extension Education on their socio-economic development in South West, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

From the existing reports, statistical information and literature, rural dwellers and areas are characterized with poor quality of life, poor living standard and neglect in terms in terms of socio-economic and physical development. It has also been stated and often reiterating by the academic and other stakeholders in rural areas matters that the rural communities in Nigeria are the major sources of foreign earnings and survivals of the nation, Nigeria.

It is therefore, beyond one’s imagination why the rate of development and standard of living in the rural areas which is also typical of South-West, region is still at a slow speed, despite efforts that have been made by the levels of government to achieve development of the areas. Much of these efforts have not produce the expected results and this have served as sources of research topics to the researchers and academic but with little focus on rural dwellers’ opinion on effects of Extension education on their socio-economic development in South-West, Nigeria. Thus, informed this research.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was a survey of rural dwellers’ opinion on effects of Extension education on their socio-economic development. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine, whether Extension education can improve the welfare status of people at the rural areas in South-West Nigeria; and
2. determine the influence of Extension education on acquisition of knowledge and skills for productive economic activities in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. Can Extension education improve the welfare status of people at the rural areas in South-West, Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of Extension education on equipped people at the rural areas with the knowledge and skills for productive economic activities in South-West, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

One research hypothesis was formulated to also guide the study.

H01: There is no significant relationship between Extension education and acquisition of knowledge

and skills by the people of the rural areas in South-West, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The results of the research are significant to the stakeholders in Extension education in the following ways;

1. The results of the research will establish justification on the importance of implementing Extension education for the rural areas to the government of six states in South-West, Nigeria.
2. The findings of the study will enable the public to understand the importance of Extension education to the rural dwellers in South West people alone Nigerians as well.
3. The findings of the study will provide a rationale for the people at the rural areas to avail themselves with the opportunities which the Extension education is offering.
4. The study will add to the extant literature on Extension education. This will be made available through the internet service.
5. The study will be a source of material for the researchers who will carry out study in this area in future etc.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Extension Education

Extension education initially started with the efforts to equip people at the rural areas which are predominantly the people who were engaging in farming activities, globally, Nigeria, inclusive. Gombe, Suandi, Ismail and Omar (2016), stated that Extension education programme is premised on the notion that the rural people needs to be consulted, informed and made to be participating in some activities that would improve or change their social-economic status. In this wise, Extension education is trusted on building the inherent potentials and capacities of the rural people for an improved living conditions. The targets of Extension education is transmission, creation and making people to acquire useful knowledge that would result with positive behavioural modification, improve in the quality of life and standard of living and acquisition of vibrant competencies and skills in the vocational activities of the people.

Erinsakin (2015), explained Extension education to be a component of non-formal system of education, specifically, planned and consciously implemented to the people at the rural areas for their diverse background information. From the above, it can be deduced that extension education is not only focused on equipping the farmers alone rather, other aspects of life, ranging from health; commercial activities community development, environmental protection etc.

Extension education is also a way of improving the living standard and status of the rural populace. Agropedia

(2010), explained Extension education as activities of rural development, such as;

1. Increasing efficiency on agricultural production
2. Increasing efficiency in marketing, distribution and utilization of agricultural outputs and inputs
3. Conservation, development and use of natural resources
4. Proper farm and home management
5. Better family living
6. Youths' development
7. Leadership development
8. Community and rural development
9. Improving public affairs for all round development.

Erinsakin (2016), stated that the Extension education will enable the rural people, who are mainly farmers to acquire knowledge that will enable to engage in productive farming activities for better incomes generations and provide them with information that would help them to adopt healthy lifestyles, thus, improves their living condition.

III. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was implored for the study. The study population comprised the rural dwellers in South West, Nigeria. The sample size was six hundred (600) subjects or respondents, selected through a snow-balling sampling technique. From each of the six states, ten (10) respondents were randomly selected from each community in ten (10) rural areas from each of the state. Thus, makes the total of respondents from the six states to be Six hundred (600). Data collection was done through primary and secondary sources. For the primary data, self-developed questionnaire, entitled, "Questionnaire on a Survey of Rural Dwellers' Opinion on Effects of Extension Education on their Socio-Economic Development in South West, Nigeria", developed on Four Likert Rating Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). It was complemented with the secondary data, through Focus Group Discussion (FGDs).

The instrument was validated by the expert at Test and Measurement at Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, while reliability of the research instrument was done through, test retest method at two weeks interval. 0.69 coefficient reliability was obtained. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts, simple percentages and means) was used to analyse the research questions, while inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation PPMC) was used to analyze the research hypothesis. The secondary data was transcribed and analyzed, qualitatively.

IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Research Question One: Can Extension education improve the welfare status of people at the rural areas in South West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Showing frequency counts, simple percentage and mean of can Extension education improve the welfare status of people at the rural areas in the South West, Nigeria?

S / N	I T E M S	S	D	A	S A	Mean	Remarks	
1	Will Extension education make you to acquire knowledge on good health practices	4 7%	0	6 10%	0 27%	1 6 0 3 4 0 57%	3 . 3 Accepted	
2	Extension education cannot make me to acquire knowledge on good health practice	4 74.1%	4 5	3 6.5%	8 9%	5 2 5 6 9.2%	1 . 5 Rejected	
3	Extension education will enhance my information on effective planning of family living	5 9%	4	4 8%	6 1.5%	9 0 4 1 0 68.3%	3 . 4 Accepted	
4	Without Extension education I cant plan my family living effectively	4 72%	3 0	7 12%	0 9.3%	5 6 5 4 9%	1 . 6 Rejected	
5	Will extension education enable me to cultivate a good social habit?	5 9%	4	3 6%	6 17%	1 0 2 3 9 8 66.5%	3 . 4 Accepted	
6	Despite extension education, my solid life will still remain stagnant	3 66.5%	9 9	9 16.5%	9 10.3%	6 2 4 0 7%	1 . 6 Rejected	
7	Extension education will enable me to develop awareness to gainful economic activities	8 13.3%	0	2 3.3%	0 12%	7 0 4 3 0 72%	3 . 4 Accepted	
8	Extension education has no effect on my economic activities	3 63.3%	8 0	1 20%	2 0 3 6.5%	9 0 6 1 10.1%	1 . 6 Rejected	
	T o t a l	1 , 8 8 2 39.2%		4 8 9 10.2%		6 3 1 13.3%	1 7 8 9 37.3%	2 . 5 Accepted

Table 1 presents the results on can Extension education improve the welfare status of people at the rural areas at South West, Nigeria? On item (1), 340 (57%) among the respondents strongly agreed, 340 (57%) agreed, 160 (27%) disagreed, while 40 (7%) strongly disagreed. On item (2), 56 (9.5%) strongly agreed, 52 (9%) agreed, 38 (6.2%) disagreed ,while 445 (74.1%), strongly disagreed.

On item (3), 410 (68.3%) strongly agreed, 90 (1.5%), agreed, 46 (8%) disagreed while 54 (9%) strongly disagreed. On item (4), 54 (9%), strongly agreed, 56 (9.3%) agreed, 70 (12%) disagreed while 430 (72%) strongly disagreed. On item (5), 398 (65.5%) strongly agreed, 102 (17%) agreed, 36 (6%) disagreed while 54 (9%) strongly disagreed. On item (6), 40 (7%) among the respondents responded strongly agreed, 62 (10.3%) agreed, 99 (16.5%) disagreed, while 399 (66.5%) strongly disagreed. On item (7), 430 (72%) strongly agreed, 70 (12%) agreed, 20 (3.3%) ,disagreed, while 80 (13.3%) strongly disagreed.

Finally, 61 (10.1%), strongly agreed, 39 (6.5%) agreed, 120 (20%), disagreed while, 380 (63.3%) ,strongly disagreed. Based on the result, since the average mean of four (x = 2.5) is not less than the average mean of rating scale of four (x ≅ 2.5) means that extension education could improve the welfare status of people of the rural areas of South West, Nigeria.

The result was corroborated by Agropedia (2010) that Extension education would enable the rural areas to achieve better family living, increasing efficiency in agriculture activities among others. The opinion was also corroborated by a discussant during the focus group discussion.

A male discussant had this to say that:

Extension education has made me to be conscious of effective better family living.

FGD – A male discussant at Erinje Community in Ondo State, Nigeria

Similarly, another discussant said that:

Through Extension education, I have been able to cultivate healthy living and also be adopting a healthy culture towards eating my habit

FGD – A male discussant at Ayetoro Community in Ekiti State, Nigeria

A discussant also stated that:

I thank government for bringing extension education to this community. People like me were know how take precaution against some diseases that –are deadly and adopt a healthy lifestyle.

FGD – A male discussant at Igbodigo Community in Ondo State, Nigeria

Research Question Two: What are the effects of Extension education on equipping people at the rural areas with the knowledge and skills for productive economic activities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Frequency counts, simple percentages and mean on what are the effects of Extension education on equipping people at the rural areas with knowledge and skills for productive economic activities in South West Nigeria.

S / N	I	T	E	M	S	S	D	D	A	S	A	Mean	Remarks					
9	.	Can extension education can make you to acquire skills to increase your capital or income earnings?	3	1	3	9	6	6	4	6	1	3	6	Accepted				
			52%		6.5%		11%		77.3%									
10	.	Extension education will not improve my income earning	2	1	0	9	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	3	Rejected			
			35%		15%		33.3%		17%									
11	.	Does it has influence on improving your vocational skills competence for gainful economic activities	2	0	2	8	1	2	7	4	2	5	3	6	Accepted			
			3.3%		5%		21.1%		71%									
12	.	I do have any vocational skills for gainful economic activities due to lack of knowledge of extension education	2	8	3	2	1	4	5	3	9	5	3	5	Accepted			
			4.7%		5.3%		24.1%		66%									
13	.	Through extension education, I have improved on my agricultural jobs	1	9	2	1	8	0	4	8	0	3	7	Accepted				
			3.2%		3.5%		13.3%		80%									
14	.	My improvement of agricultural activities have no connection with extension education	4	5	0	5	8	5	2	4	0	1	5	Rejected				
			75%		9.7%		8.7%		6.7%									
		T o t a l	7	5	8	2	6	8	6	7	0	1	9	0	4	3	0	Accepted
			21%		7.4%		19%		53%									

Table 2 shows the results on what are the effects of extension education on equipping people at the rural areas with the knowledge and skills for productive activities in the South West, Nigeria. On item (9), 464 (77.3%) among the respondents responded strongly agreed, 66 (11%) agreed, 39 (6.5%) disagreed, while, 31 (52%) strongly disagreed. On item (10), 100 (17%), strongly agreed, 200 (33.3%) agreed, 90 (15%) disagreed while 210 (35%) strongly agreed. On item (11), 425 (71%), maintained strongly agreed, 127 (21.1%) agreed, 28 (5%) disagreed, while 20 (3.3%) ,strongly disagreed.

On item (12), 395 (66%), strongly agreed, 145 (24.1%) agreed, 32 (5.3%) disagreed while 28 (4.7%) strongly disagree. On item (13), 480 (80%), strongly agreed, 80 (13.3%) agreed, 21 (3.5%) disagreed, while 19 (3.2%) strongly agreed. Finally on item (14), 40 (6.7%) strongly agreed, 52 (8.7%) agreed, 58 (9.7%) disagreed, while 450 (75%), strongly disagreed. The results indicated that Extension education could equip people at the rural areas of South West, Nigeria with knowledge and skills for productive economic activities. Since, the average mean of four (x = 2.5) is lesser than the average mean of rating scale of four (x = 3.0).

The result is in consonance with the opinion of some scholars Agropedia (1978) and Erinsakin (2020) that Extension education does not develop people at the rural area on agricultural practice rather, acquisition of competences, knowledge and skills on vocational activities that could increase the incomes of the rural people. The opinion expressed by the discussant also agrees with the submission.

A discussant stated that:

Extension education has improve my knowledge

agricultural practices, thus, enhances my incomes generating capacity.

FGD – A female discussant at Ogbese rural community in Ogun State, Nigeria

Another discussant responded that:

Extension education has enable me to acquire the relevant vocational skills which has been assisting me on the job.

FGD – A female discussant at Igboora, Oyo, State, Nigeria

Also, another discussant had this to say:

My occupation is fish farming, but through extension education given to people in the rural area where I am residing has helped me to improve on the fishing activities which has made me to be making more money than before

FDG – A male discussant at the Meje Community, Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relationship between Extension education and acquisition of knowledge and skills by the people at the rural areas for productive economic activities in South West, Nigeria

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) on there is no significant relationship between Extension education and acquisition of knowledge and skills by the people of the rural area for productive economic activities in South West, Nigeria.

V a r i a b l e s	M e a n	S t d . D e v .	N	R	P	R e m a r k
E x t e n s i o n E d u c a t i o n (E E)	14.5157	1 . 5 8 4 7	6 0 0	0 . 5 9 *	. 0 0 0	S i g .
Acquisition of knowledge and skills productive economic activities	16.0266	1 . 7 2 1 3	6 0 0	0 . 2 8 *		

*Significant at .05 level

Table 3 above shows that there is a positive existing relationship between Extension education and acquisition of knowledge and skills for productive economic activities by the people at the rural areas of South West, Nigeria ($r = 0.59^*$, $N = 600$, $P < .05$) for Extension education and ($r = .28^*$, $N = 600$, $P < .05$) for acquisition of knowledge and skills for the productive economic activities by the people in the rural areas of South West, Nigeria. Null hypothesis, therefore, rejected. This indicates that Extension education could make the people at the rural areas to acquire knowledge and skills that would make them to enable in productive economic activities in South West, Nigeria. The results agree with the submission of several scholars and discussant during the FGDs that, Extension education has made people to acquire skills that enhanced peoples’ economic activities.

A discussant specifically stated that:

I am better than before in my farming job through the skills of acquired through the extension education.

FGD – A female discussant at Ile Igbo, Osun State, Nigeria

Another female stated also that:

I can boldly say that the extension education which has been brought to the community where I am living now has enable people like myself to grow in cash crop farming (palm tree). My income is far better than before.

FGD – A male discussant at Legbogbo Community in Ondo State, Nigeria.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study Extension education could improve the welfare status and also equip people with the knowledge and skills that would made them to be engaging in productive economic activities at the rural areas of South West, Nigeria.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were therefore made due to the results of the study;

The stakeholders should intensify efforts on provision of Extension education at the rural areas. Since, the programme could positively influence the welfare status of the people at the rural areas or communities at the South West, Nigeria.

In addition, people at the rural areas in South West Nigeria should be encouraged to be participating in Extension education since the programme could equip them with the appropriate and relevant knowledge and skills for productive economic activities.

However, mass media devices should be implored as instructional delivery strategy to be used for the teaching of Extension education to the people in the rural areas of South West, Nigeria. This widens access to the programme.

Finally, Extension education should be a lifelong activity for the people at the rural area of South West, Nigeria. This will assist in updating and upgrading the people in the river with the recent practices in their vocations and other aspects of human endeavour.

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