

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Implementing Agricultural Vocational Training: Challenges and Implications for Food Security in Nigeria

Akindele, Oluwaleke Daniel

Lecturer, Department of General Studies, Federal College of Agriculture, Moor Plantation, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

Abstract:

Deploying agricultural extension programmes to combat food insecurity and poverty has always been top on the agenda of Nigerian government. The Vocational Training Scheme (VTP) is one of those anti-poverty intervention schemes. Since the VTP was introduced in the wake of the Global Food Crisis of 2008, conspicuously missing are empirical studies that have explored how it has fared. So this study investigates the extent to which the scheme has fulfilled its objectives. Principally, the study examines the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the scheme. Accrued knowledge is expected to be useful to policymakers and implementation agencies. Primary data was elicited through Key Informant and In-depth Interview (IDIs) from 30 trainees selected through snowball methods. Secondary data were retrieved from archival materials and government bulletins. Findings revealed that the scheme is riddled with disenchantments over low start-up capital, preferential treatments in the selection process, paltry funding, inadequate training and insufficient agricultural inputs, obsolete knowledge dissemination. The study concluded that there is a need for a revamping for effective service delivery. It recommends that the observed flaws in the scheme can be addressed by providing low interests credits; removal of all forms of opaqueness in the selection process; setting up of monitoring committee to ensure due diligence in implementation.

Keywords: Training, selection, funding, dissemination, disenchantments

1. Background to the Study

It is a widely acknowledged fact that any society's development is predicated on its capacity to achieve food security (Ehimore, 2009; Fasinmirin & Braga, 2009; Omobowale & Akinola, 2017). Against this backdrop, agricultural extension programmes have always been seen as central to charting that path to sustainable development (Ogboru, 2002; Nwankwo, 2010). Every Nigerian government from the immediate post-independence era to date have always supplemented agricultural development with its extension programmes as a means of improving food security; bucking rural-urban migration trends and creating job opportunities (Oke, 2004; Okunlola, Oludare & Akinwalere, 2011). Notwithstanding, Nigeria today is hobbled on multiple fronts with debilitating conditions ranging from rising unemployment rates and worsening food insecurity (National Bureau for Statistics, 2018) to widening inequality and detrimental effects of globalization (Akanle, Omotara & Busari, 2012; Onwubiko, 2013). To stem the tide, successive governments in numerous budget speeches and policy documents have never stopped regaling the already traumatized citizens of their commitments towards meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2063 Agenda (Mwangi, & Kariuki, 2015; Lawrence, 2012). The consensus remains that the government cannot be trusted given the disappointing outcomes so far.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Few years ago, the federal government introduced the Vocational Training Programme as an intervention initiative to retirees, unemployed graduates and interested Nigerians with farming bias. (ARCN, 2011). Selected research institutes and colleges of agriculture were chosen as the implementers. Central to the focus of the scheme is ensuring that successful trainees are furnished with relevant knowledge that will enhance productivity and improved their incomes. Another key goal of the scheme is that of contributing to solving not only unemployment but also ensuring that the country becomes self-reliant in food production (Fasoyiro & Taiwo, 2010; Iwuchukwu & Igbokwe, 2012).

Past works on agricultural schemes have identified challenges militating positive outcomes. Ozor, & Nwankwo (2008) and Ifenkwe (2012) identified project hijack by the local elites and dispensing schemes as political patronage as a major encumbrance. Ogidefa (2010) located it in paltry funding and diversion of agricultural inputs as complicit in the disappointing performance of the farming sector. Others like Obiyai, Ekpebu, & Ekubo (2011) laid the blame to non-consultation with critical stakeholders and rejection by host communities. There is a dearth of data on the state of the Vocational Training Programme. Against the background, the current study examines the perception of the scheme by the beneficiaries.

1.2. Literature Review

1.2.1. The Important Role of Agriculture in Nigeria's Development

Prior to the discovery of oil in Nigeria in 1956, agriculture used to be the in-thing in Nigeria. The various regions that made up the Nigerian state relied on farming as the main source of income and employment. The West relied on proceeds from cocoa while the North and the East depended on groundnuts and palm oil respectively. So right from flag independence in 1960, agriculture has always been central in the Nigerian economy. Today, despite the predominance of oil, agriculture is the largest employer of labour (Nnadi, Chikaire, Egwuonwu & Echetama, 2012). The sector is also the largest revenue earner after oil with an estimated 40 percent contribution to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product, GDP, (Kolawole, 2016). It also serves as a provider of industrial inputs. All these had been made possible because of the vast arable land that Mother Nature has endowed the country with. Nigeria has a landmass of 923, 728 sq.km with more than 70 percent left uncultivated (United Nations Development Programme. 2014). This humongous unfarmed landmass and rich soil have been one reason why critical observers have been worried why the country remains in her dire straits despite the bounty of nature in abundance (Ruma, 2009; Saraki, 2011 (Oyekale, Takeshima, |&Salau, 2012).

1.2.2. The Neglect of the Agricultural Sector and Its Consequences

The advent of oil rather than being a blessing to Nigeria has been a blighting curse (World Bank. 2014). It succeeded in relegating farming to the background. It is disturbing that despite the enormous potentials in agriculture, the sector was allowed to suffer untold neglect. Scholars have attributed the neglect of agriculture to the Oil Boom of the 1970s (Olajide, Akinlabi, & Tijani, 2012). Rather than save for the rainy days and invest for the future, the ruling elites squandered it on unproductive ventures. Today the country has come full cycle. Poverty levels are at an unprecedented level. According to Brookings Institution (2017), Nigeria is the unenviable global capital of extreme poverty. 91 million Nigerians according to the global institution are living in extreme poverty. Compounding this unpleasant situation is the state of food insecurity further aggravated by a ballooning population expected to peak at 250 million by the year 2050 (Braun, Husmann, &Virchow, 2016).

1.2.3. Agricultural Policies in Nigeria

Nigeria has never been in short supply of agricultural programmes and policies to implement. In fact, it will not be an exaggeration to say that successive governments are in competition to outdo one another (Ayo& Adeola 2011). Dating back to the early years of independence, the introduction of agricultural policies was intended to bring succour to the people; stem rural-urban migration; ensure food sufficiency and improve foreign exchange has reigned supreme (Akpan, 2012). Given the centrality of agriculture in those early years, agriculture enjoyed a pride of place. The 1960s ushered in the Farm Settlement scheme (fashioned after the Israeli Moshavim). It was a programme prevalent in the defunct Western region. The arrangement is intended to stimulate interests in farming devoid of distraction from the hustle and bustle of city life. The scheme was met with huge success in the areas it was implemented (Akinagbe, & Raji, 2010). Every attempt to reenact it ever since has been met with disappointing outcomes. This failure has been attributed to the pull factor to urban life and the lack of incentive (Akinola, Ene, & Baiyegunhi, 2013). The 1970s was a period that spelt doom for the upward trajectory of agriculture. The end of a bitter civil war in 1970 was to herald government interest in oil as the Nigerian government started taking a special interest in the oil sector (Afolabi, 2007). This began with the establishment of the Nigerian National Oil Company and Ministry of Petroleum in 1971 with Nigeria also joining the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Country (OPEC) in April of the same year. The two were later merged in 1977 which culminated in the formation of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). Although the Gowon administration of 1966-1975 established some Agric-oriented development banks and introduced agricultural programmes like National Agricultural Land Development Authority, NALDA, his actions ensured that oil took a centre stage in the commanding heights of the Nigerian economy. At the peak of the oil boom in 1975, the country was awash with what was called petrodollars given the unprecedented surge in global oil prices. Unfortunately, the country was not prepared for the boom so it went on a spending spree that was to hurt the economy in the decades succeeding the Oil Boom (Adesina, 2012). The end of the petrodollar in the late 1970s was to dramatically plunge the country into debt having mismanaged the year of prosperity (Adeyemi, 2013). To mitigate the effects, the Obasanjo military government had to take loans from the World Bank, cut public spending, introduce austerity measures and inaugurate Operation Feed the Nation (OFN). The extension concept was to ensure Nigerians retrace their steps back to the farm and guarantee food sufficiency. To ensure the success of the scheme, he promulgated the Land Use Decree of 1976 through a military fiat. The aim of the decree was to remove all the encumbrances occasioned by communal land ownership and make land available for commercial farming (Abo, 2009). The decree also effectively invested rights over land to the government. The Shagari administration continued on the path of implementing agricultural extension programmes. He dubbed it the Green Revolution. It was launched with considerable fanfare and was promoted as the panacea that will end food insufficiency in the country. Like the previous policies, it failed due to poor implementation and paucity of funding (Bachmann, nd). Rather than the country becoming a net exporter of food, Nigeria became a food importer. Things went on a downward spiral that Shagari's government had to introduce rationing to mitigate the effects of the crumbling economy (Chukwuemeka, 2009). Subsequent decades also saw the continued introduction of agricultural programmes ranging from the Better Life for Rural Women, Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) by the Babangida regime, Seven-Point Agenda by Y'aradua, Goodluck Jonathan's Transformation Agenda, to Obasanjo's National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS). It is instructive to note that all economic agenda pursued by past governments all have the agricultural components with no exception.

Even many of the continental agreements that the country is a signatory to, like the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) all have agriculture as a cornerstone (Ekpo, 2014; World Economic Forum, 2016). Thus, the pertinent questions remain that despite this vast array of agricultural policies, why has the country remained food-insecure and hunger-prone?

2. Methodology

The study area for this study is Ibadan in Oyo state, southwest Nigeria. Oyo state was created in 1976. It has 33 local governments with Ibadan having eleven. According to the 2006 census, it has a population of over 3 million people and still counting. There are various ethnic groups in the state but it is predominantly peopled by Yorub as. It has a rich agricultural heritage with her rural dwellers majorly farmers. It is home to many frontline tertiary institutions. For emphasis, it houses the oldest agricultural institution in the whole of West Africa and also the Premier University. This distinguishing feature has earned her the moniker of the Pacesetter state being where the first television station was first introduced. Ibadan was chosen because of access to the study participants. During the pilot study for this study, the researcher was constrained by administrative bottlenecks to important documents from other study sites. The premium was placed on ethical considerations in the interactions with the study participants. Voluntary participation, non-maleficence, right to withdraw at any stage and consent forms were issued up front. Permission was sought and gotten before interviews were taped. Data was transcribed manually and analysis was done deploying the Atlas.ti 8 to elicit themes. Content analysis and ethnographic summaries were also used to complement data analysis

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Warped Selection Process

Participants were of the unanimous view that the schemes were shoddily organized.

3.1.1. According to a Participant

While filling the intent form, I indicated my passion for fish farming and aquatic life. But when the names of successful applicants were pasted, I was drafted to bee-keeping. Given that I have been unemployed and relying on hand-outs from families and close associates, I had little choice than to go with the offer. At the end of the two weeks of training, we were given some kits as a startup with a meagre N5, 000. What does the government expect us to do with that paltry sum? My conclusion is that it is either government is not serious about helping the poor through the scheme or some officials manning the scheme are feeding fat on it. What will it cost the government to tell us in a transparent manner what trainees are entitled to? So apart from the opaque selection process, my other beef with the scheme is that we were treated as members of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps (IDI/Male/33years/Unemployed).

3.1.2. Another Participant Weighed In

My observation is that many have seen the scheme as an avenue to make quick cash. I saw some staff from neighbouring research institutes and colleges of agriculture. From the advert and jingles on the electronic media, the scheme was meant for specific categories of Nigerians. So why do we have serving staff in the scheme? I know this because the staff that brought the scheme to my attention is the staff of the college. This tells me there could be other staff ripping from a scheme meant for unemployed youths and retirees (IDI/Male/64years/Retiree/ Chicken farmer).

The implication of the above information from the participant suggests there is no thorough monitoring of the scheme by the supervisory agency. This has already defeated the objective of the scheme which was for unemployed people. This was replete in the renditions of other study participants. They all called for the weeding out of unqualified people so as to strengthen confidence in the scheme and meet targeted goals.

3.1.3. Another Participant Corroborated The Stance:

The process of selecting beneficiaries is opaque and less transparent. I suspect favouritism. In fact, my general assessment of the scheme is that it should be discontinued. I make that claim because nobody knows the criteria used for picking eventual trainees. I was number 10 on the list of applicants and my preference was chicken rearing. I have been a chicken farmer all my adult life. I got attracted to the scheme believing I will acquire new knowledge to enlarge my coast. Surprisingly, I was asked to go to snail rearing. I do not have issues with that. Rather I saw it as an opportunity to expand into other areas. I am bringing this up because I know of many people who dropped out of the scheme for lack of interest in the new offer. One would have expected that the organizers would respect the choices of the beneficiaries and train them in batches rather than imposing other areas of interest (IDI/Female / Chicken farmer/54years old).

3.2. Obsolete Knowledge Dissemination

Living in an ever-changing world demands that knowledge is up to date. This is more germane in a sector that is germane like the agricultural sector. Participants felt disillusioned by the perceived stale knowledge that has not helped the country's fight against food insecurity.

3.2.1. An Owner of Chains of Commercial Farms His Experience

Some of the facilitators are not even up-to-date on the latest trend and information in their chosen field. They are not receptive to learning too. The facilitators are so arrogant and they behave as if they are doing us a favour. They yell at

you once they do not have answers for questions asked. I came here to broaden my knowledge horizon; not to be inundated with stale or pre-Lugardian ideas that have not moved the country forward. I abandon the scheme after three days. The whole scheme is a charade. If that is the best institution can afford then poverty has come here to stay (KII/ Female/Fish Farmer/63years old).

3.2.2. Agreeing to the Above Characterization of the Scheme, a Piggery, and Chicken Farmer Submitted

There is something fundamentally wrong with the scheme. It is either the facilitators are compelled to participate or they are not well remunerated. Their teaching lacks passion. They also seem not to have the practical knowledge of the information they are dishing out. I wasted seven days of my life attending a mediocre training. (IDI/Male/49 years old)

3.3. Low Start-ups

Finance is important to agricultural development. The best of training is useless without the availability of funds according to participants:

Can you believe that after three weeks of haphazard training, the coordinator of the scheme in his address at the closing ceremony informed us we will be given five thousand naira and some kits? When I valued the kits, it was not up to eight thousand naira in the open market. If the government is genuinely sincere about ensuring that farming makes an impact, such ridiculous stipends should be reviewed upwards. Farming is capital-intensive. Given N5000 as a start-up is beyond galling. Did they even factor the financial burden of transporting oneself to the training sites? Although the organizers provide entertainments during the crash course that is just not enough. If I had known that was what the whole scheme was about, I would not have dissipated my energy and time applying for the scheme. It is worth it (IDI/Male/Bee-Keeping farmer/29 years old).

3.3.1. More Troubling Is the Observation Coming From another Participant

I borrowed money from friends to attend the three weeks of training. I expected that the scheme was going to add value and empower me. In retrospect, I regret attending the programme. It was chaotic. I had to sell every item given to me in order to pay my debt. So I left the training with nothing. They just wasted three weeks of my life. When policymakers are ready to wage the war against youth unemployment they know what to do. They are elected to solve the country's nagging problem. So it is not my business to advise them. Even if I give them advice, will they correct it? (Male/Corper/ Fish farmer/32 years old).

Some participants volunteered the information that they noticed the dispiriting trend of participants selling the kits given to them. This portends grave danger for a scheme intended to address food security and other disempowering problems.

3.3.2. This Participant Is Even More Trenchant in His Condemnation of the Scheme

My submission is that unproductive schemes like this Vocational Training programme should be scrapped without further delay if the government is not ready to fund it properly. No country sincere about stamping out poverty would provide such paltry sum as a start-up. People would just take the money and sell the inputs given to them (IDI/Female/Fish farmer/ 39 years-old).

3.3.3. Another Participant Shared a Similar Stance

This government is not ready to fight hunger. If this is what they wasted tax-payers money to advertise on both the print and electronic media, then, we are deceiving ourselves if we think food security will be achieved. Achieving food security requires proper funding and attention to details by all the policymakers. The Vocational Training Programme will go the way of past failed schemes (IDI/Male/ Teacher/36 years-old).

It is clear that disenchantment had set in over the implementation of the scheme despite the humongous amounts funneled into it. And that is a recipe for failure. Doubts over the sincerity and honesty of implementers have the capacity to defeat the good intentions of the government. When policies are deliberately sabotaged by implementers, the implications become apparent-invested resources would have gone down the drain and the problem of food insecurity and associated problems would remain unattended to. Getting the confidence and buy-in from the targeted audience is the starting point if interventions must succeed. The entire process must be made transparent. This must be a source of concern for all stakeholders across the divide. With more than half of the population wallowing in extreme poverty (Brooking Institution, 2017), it raises the red flag that Nigeria is sitting on a keg of gunpowder akin to the circumstances leading to the Arab Spring Revolution that swept through North Africa in 2011.

4. Conclusion/Implications

That agriculture holds the ace and would have to play a central role in the overall efforts to bring the economy of Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) and Nigeria out of its woes is not in contention by development scholars (Fadiji & Omokore, 2010). Both local and international Stakeholders have been harping on the need for the country to relentlessly pursue agriculture. To them, it is the last hope that will bring the country back from the current state of despair. It must be stressed that it is not as if the country is in short supply of ideas to chart the path to progress, it is, and however, the contention of development scholars that poor implementation of policies remains the persistent bane of the government.

It is either government is genuinely interested in tackling the issue of endemic poverty or be ready to face the dire consequences of an unstable polity. Findings from this study have shown that the scheme is plagued with similar problems that hobbled past intervention schemes. Policymakers appear to be lending credence to the fact that they are only interested in churning out schemes without concern for whether it is faithfully implemented or not. This lukewarm attitude is not helping matters. Participants of the scheme unleashed tales of woes ranging from favouritism, inadequate start-ups, obsolete knowledge dissemination, warped selection process.

It is the contention of this paper that these challenges are not entirely new because preponderant numbers of past works have alluded to these unacceptable realities. This paper calls on policymakers to as a matter of national urgency aggressively looked into these myriads of challenges. Other countries have long left Nigeria behind. It must be emphasized that it is a shame of epic proportion that a country that was once the leading light in the liberation struggle of other African countries today has become a laughing stock among the comity of nations. Unless some practical steps are taken to wean ourselves away from oil and importation of food, it is a matter of time before something has to give. We have seen the experience from other climes on how food shortages and youth unemployment has snowballed into a national crisis. A stitch in time saves nine.

4.1. Recommendations

- For a country in dire need of development, policymakers should as a matter of urgency rejig the scheme. There is a need for more transparency in the selection process. Deploying the scheme as an avenue to feather the nest of the organizers will be counterproductive in the long term. This is because nothing kills a scheme other than when participants are disenchanted with the process. Until those causes are removed, the scheme will not fly.
- There is a need for government to provide agricultural loans to trainees. The idea of training a horde of unemployed youths and giving them paltry sums as a start-up is a recipe for killing a worthy anti-poverty scheme.
- Areas of interests of intended applicants should be prioritized. Farming is essentially about passion. Resorting to 'anything goes' will continue to undermine the goals of the scheme. Training applicants in batches could be looked into.
- Another critical goal of any successful scheme is funding the logistics of intended participants.
- The Nigerian government must organise feedback systems that would ensure identified loopholes are plugged. The government cannot afford to be squandering lean resources on poorly executed intervention programmes. Monitoring the implementation of programmes will go a long way in bringing sanity to the sundry intervention schemes.

5. References

- i. Abdullahi, A. (2012). Comparative Economic Analysis of Rice Production by Adopters and Non-Adopters of Improved Varieties Among Farmers in Paiko Local Government Area of Niger State. *Nigerian Journal of Basic and Applied Science*. Volume 20(2):pp.146-151.
- ii. Abo, M.E. (2009). The Global Food Crisis. Causes, Palliative Measures and Solutions. *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of Agricultural Society of Nigeria, Abuja, Nigeria*. pp.430-435
- iii. Adesiji, G.B. (2002). Training Need of Extension Agents of Agricultural Development Programme of South-western states of Nigeria. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. The University of Ibadan.
- iv. Adesina, A. (2012). How Agriculture Will Transform Nigeria: We Will Feed the Nation, Create Jobs. *TELL*, Monday, 30 July. pp. 19-23
- v. Adeyemi, I. (2013). Revolution Needed in Agriculture. *Sunday Punch*, 26 May. pp. 67
- vi. Afolabi, A.B. 2007. Briefcase Farmers and Agricultural Development in Nigeria: 'Many Years after Independence, our Agricultural Sector is still crawling'. Lecture Delivered at the Ladoke Akintola University, Ogbomosho. *Nigerian Tribune*, Wednesday, 21 February,
- vii. Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria-ARCN. (2011). Implementation of the Adopted Villages and Agricultural Research Outreach Centres (AROCs) by the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) and Federal Colleges of Agriculture (FCAs). A Draft Document. July 2011.
- viii. Akanle, O., Omotara, A.F., and Busari, D.A. (2012). Cooperative Societies in the Development Discourse of Ibadan, South-western Nigeria. *The Nigerian Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*. Vol.12.2. pp. 48-65
- ix. Akinagbe, O.M. and Raji, A.R. (2010). Challenges of Farmer-Led Extension Approaches in Nigeria. *World Journal of Agricultural Sciences* 6(4):353-359. ISSN 1817-3047. IDOSI Publications, 2010.
- x. Akinola, M.O., Ene, O.M., and Baiyegunhi, L.J.S. (2013). The Adopted Village Project and Farm Income of Beneficiary Households in Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Stud Tribes Tribals*, 11(2):121-126. Kamlaraj 2013.
- xi. Akpan, N.S. (2012). Rural Development in Nigeria: A Review of Pre- and Post-independence Practice. *Journal of Sociological Research*. Vol.3, No.2. ISSN: 1948-5468.
- xii. Ayo, J.A. & Adeola, A.O. 2011. Food Insecurity at the Grassroots: A Challenge of College of Agricultural Sciences, Joseph Ayo Babalola University, A Nigerian Private University. *J. Agri Sci*, 2(2):137-143.
- xiii. Bachmann, U. (nd). Approaches in Rural Development on the Move- A Field Experience in Nigeria. *Rural Development News* 112007
- xiv. Braun, J.v., Husmann, C., and Virchow, D. (2016). Science and Agricultural Innovation in Africa. *ZEFnews* No. 33/2.

- xv. Brookings Institution (2017). The Start of a New Poverty Narrative. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/06/19/the-start-of-a-new-poverty-narrative/>
- xvi. Chukwuemeka, E.E.O. (2009). Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria: the Nexus. *Educational Research and Review*. Vol.4(9),pp.405-410. ISSN:1990-3839
- xvii. Ehimore, O.M. 2009. Pre-Colonial Nigerian Economy: Dynamic or Stagnant. Retrieved on 10th April 2019 from <http://www.articlebase.com/authors/o.m-ehimore/161024.htm>
- xviii. Elabanjo, O. (2015). 'Only Agric Can Reduce Poverty'. TELL, Monday, 23 February, pp. 29-31
- xix. Fadiji, T., & Omokore, D. (2010). Strategies for Solving World Food Crisis: Lessons, Constraints and Opportunities for Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Extension*, 14(1). Retrieved from <http://www.aessonigeria.org/ajm/index.php/jae/article/view/193>
- xx. Fasinmirin, J.T. & Braga, F. (2009). Agriculture for Sustainable Food, Energy and Industrial Development in the Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Nigeria. *African Journal of Food Science*. Volume 3. (13),pp.429-433.
- xxi. Fasoyiro, S.B. and Taiwo, K.A. (2012). Strategies for Increasing Food Production and Food Security in Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural & food information* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10496505.2012.715063>
- xxii. Food and Agriculture Organisation (2017). Rural Areas, Too Long Seen As Poverty Traps, Key to Economic Growth in Developing Countries. Retrieved from: www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/104209/icode
- xxiii. Ifenkwe, G.E. (2012). Agent-Related Factors Affecting the Performance of Agricultural Extension Staff in Abia State, Nigeria. *J Agri Sci*,3(1):35-48
- xxiv. Iwuchukwu, J.C. and Igbokwe, E.M. (2012). Lessons from Agricultural Policies and Programmes in Nigeria. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*. ISSN:2224-3259(Online). Vol. 5.
- xxv. Kolawole, S. (2016). Agriculture is Not the Magic Solution. *The Cable*, Sunday, 16 November. Retrieved: <https://www.thecable.ng/agriculture-not-magic-solution/amp>
- xxvi. Lawrence, B. (2012). This is Statistics Stupid. TELL, Monday, 17 December. pp.62
- xxvii. National Bureau of Statistics. (2018). Nigeria Poverty Profile 2017. Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics.
- xxviii. Nnadi, F.N., Chikaire, J., Egwuonwu, H.A. and Echetama, J.A. (2012). Rural Youth Empowerment: A Panacea to Rural Urban Drift. A Case Study of Ethiope-east Area of Delta State. *Science Journal of Sociology & Anthropology*. ISSN:2276-6359. Retrieved from: <http://www.sjpub.org/sjsa.html>
- xxix. Nwankwo, O.C. (2010). Impact of Agricultural Extension Services on Agricultural Development in the Rural Areas of Ikono Local Government Area, Nigeria: A Case Study of Ibiaku Community.
- xxx. Obiyai, K.K., Ekpebu, I.D. and Ekubo, N.A. (2011). Leadership Qualities of Extension Workers As Determinants of Innovations Adoption Behaviour of Farmers. *International Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*. 3(3): 97-102. ISSN: 2097-2107
- xxxi. Ogboru, I. (2002). Agricultural Development Policies in Nigeria: A Critique. *Jos Journal of Economics*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- xxxii. Ogidefa, I. (2010). Rural Development in Nigeria: Concept, Approaches, Challenges and Prospect
- xxxiii. Oke, J.B. (2004). Agriculture as a Veritable Tool for Sustainable National Development. *The Guardian*, Friday, 5 November,pp.24
- xxxiv. Okunlola, J.O., Oludare,A.O. and Akinwalere, B.O. (2011). Adoption of New Technologies by Farmers in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria. *Journal of Agricultural Technology*. Vol.7(6):1539-1548. Retrieved from: <http://www.ijat.aatsea.com>. ISSN:1686-9141
- xxxv. Omobowale, A.O. and Akinola, O.T. 2017. A Contextual Assessment of the FADAMA III Programme in Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*. Retrieved from: <http://doi.org/10.1080/20421338.2017.1352122>.
- xxxvi. Omotayo, A.M. 2010. The Nigerian Farmer and the Elusive Crown. Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. 30th Inaugural Lecture
- xxxvii. Onwubiko, E. (2013). Fish Farming As Panacea to Youth Unemployment. *Rise Networks*. Retrieved: <http://www.risenetworks.org/2018/04/09>
- xxxviii. Oyekale, A.S., Takeshima, H., Salau, S. (2012). The Formal Seed Sector and Gaps in the Demand for Hybrid Seeds in Nigeria. *Journal of Food, Agriculture & Environment* Vol.10(3&4):267-276. WFL Publisher. Retrieved from: www.world-food.net
- xxxix. Ozor, N. & Nwankwo, N. (2008). The Role of Local Leaders in Community Development Programmes in Ideato Local Government Area of Imo State: Implication for Extension Policy. *Journal of Agricultural Extension*. Vol.12(2).
- xl. Ruma, A. (2009). We are Taking Agriculture to the Next Level. TELL, Monday, 17 August. pp. 38-43
- xli. Saraki, A.B. (2011). Zimbabwean Farmers and Agricultural Innovation in Nigeria. Paper presented at Chatham House.
- xlii. United Nations Development Programme. 2014. Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience. Retrieved from: <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr14-report-en-1.pdf>
- xliii. Vanguard (2010). Agricultural Innovations Are Still Needed to Boost Food Production in Africa. July 22.
- xliv. World Bank. 2014. Nigeria Economic Report: Improved Economic Outlook in 2014, and Prospects for Continued Growth Look Good. Retrieved from: www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/publication/nigeria-economic-report-improved-economic-outlook-in-2014-and-prospect-for-continued-growth-look-good.
- xlvi. World Economic Forum (2016). Grow Africa: Partnering to Achieve African Agriculture Transformation.