

Male and Female Participation in Selected Agricultural Development Programmes in Edo state

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Abstract

The study assessed the level of male and female equality in participating in agricultural development programmes in Edo state. Purposive sampling was used to select 135 respondents made up of both men (79) and women (56) from the intervention programmes present in the three selected LGAs. Data were collected from the respondents using questionnaire and interview schedule. The results show that the respondents had mean age of approximately 45 years; most of the respondents were married and had one form of formal education or the other. The male had grand participation mean of 2.94 and participation index of 0.74, while the female participants had grand participation mean of 3.52 and participation index of 0.88. It was concluded that female farmers in Edo State had a higher level of participation than their male counterparts.

Keywords: Gender participation in agricultural programmes, intervention programme in agricultural development,

Introduction

The African rural household is changing its orientation in response to liberalization policy. The gender pattern of farming is breaking down as women are increasingly growing food crops, doing task hitherto performed by men and making decisions on management of farms and household (Uzokwe and Ofuoku, 2006). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2003) estimates show that women represent a substantial share of the total agricultural labour force, as individual food producers or as agricultural

workers, and that around two-thirds of the female labour force in developing economies is engaged in agricultural work.

The term gender refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being man and woman (World Bank, 2009). Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex, opportunities, allocation of resources and benefits, or in access to services such as agricultural advice. It implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity among different groups of women and men (Marc and Mamusha, 2011).

Agricultural development is an integral part of national development. It is that aspect of development that is related to agrarian reforms and their contribution to the socio economic development of many countries (Yahaya, 2000). Over 70% of Nigerian population reside and earn their living in rural areas. Majority of these rural dwellers are actively involved in agriculture and agriculture related enterprises especially women, youths and children (Yahaya, 2000).

In most parts of Africa, women have traditionally been responsible for producing food for the family on land to which they gain access upon marriage but do not necessarily control. Their fundamental role is in securing food for the family and therefore their role in national food security must be stressed. While men have generally been responsible for bush clearing and land preparation (Opio, 2003).

Effort to ensure that women benefit from agricultural development interventions can be broadly classified into three types of approaches: a) Women only projects, b) Project targeted to both women and men but with some resources allocated specifically for women, and c) Projects in which gender issues are fully mainstreamed (World Bank, 2007). A review of the evidence by Pena, Webb and Haddad (1996) found that the third approach is the most likely to improve women's status in a sustainable way.

The involvement of both men and women in agricultural development intervention programmes spans through a wide spectrum. Their specific activities, their relative factor productivity, the problems encountered and benefits derived are poorly appraised and rarely articulated. The awareness of the need for gender sensitive programmes is gradually creeping in, as a result of the need for gender-disaggregated data to effectively plan agricultural development programmes. It is therefore necessary to assess the level of male and female participation in agricultural programmes in agriculture of Edo state in order to identify gaps if any.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to assess the level of equality between men and women in agricultural development programme in Edo state. The specific objectives were to:

- i. describe the socio economic characteristics of respondents;
- ii. identify the agricultural intervention programmes available to farmers in the study area;
- iii. compare the level of participation of male and female respondents in agricultural development programmes and;
- iv. examine the factors militating against participation in agricultural development programmes.

Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the level of participation of male and female farmers in agricultural development programmes.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Edo State. The state lies between longitude 5⁰ and 6⁰ 42" East and latitude 5⁰ 45 and 7⁰ 45" N. It is bounded by Kogi State in the North, Ondo State in the West and Delta State in the south. The state has a land mass of about 19,794km². The state is made of eighteen local government areas (LGAs). Edo State is divided into (3) three agricultural zones namely: Edo North, Edo Central and Edo South Agricultural Zones.

The study area is richly endowed with fertile agricultural land suitable for agricultural production. The main crops grown in the area are rubber, oil palm, yam, cassava, maize, rice, plantain, sugar cane, cashew, groundnut, soya beans, tomatoes, cotton and tobacco. There is also a significant animal

husbandry industry, with cows, goats, pigs, rabbits and sheep being the main products.

Purposive sampling method was used to select one LGA each, from the three agricultural zones where there has been an agricultural programme. The LGAs are: Etsako Central LGA in Edo North Agricultural Zone, Esan North East in Edo Central Agricultural Zone and Uhunmwode in Edo South agricultural zone. All the agricultural intervention programmes (both the ones that have been concluded and those on-going) were listed and categorized by gender. The programmes that involved the male and female were purposively selected from each LGA for the study. Proportional (10%) sampling was used to select respondents made up of both men (79) and women (56) from the intervention programmes from the three LGAs making a total of 135 respondents for the study.

Primary data were collected by the administration of questionnaire and interview schedule. The interview schedule sought information on socio-economic characteristic such as age, sex, educational background, factors militating against gender participation in agricultural programmes and so on. While secondary data were generated from the State Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Development Project (ADP).

Frequency distribution and means were used to address objectives one and two. Objective three was met with the use of mean derived from 4- point Likert-type scale (identification of need = 1, planning on the need achievement = 2, implementation = 3 and evaluation = 4). T-Test was used to test for difference in participation of male and female farmers in agricultural development programmes. While probit regression was used to test the relationship between the socio-economic characteristics and participation in agricultural development programmes.

The level of participation of gender was measured as participation in need identification = 1, Planning = 2, Implementation = 3, Evaluation = 4. A mean

score of 2.50 was used as cut off. Any agricultural intervention programme with a mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as having high participation. The participation levels and indices were computed as follows:

- a. mean participation score for each sub-programme - This was computed by dividing the total participation scores by the number of respondents.
- b. grand mean participation scores – This was calculated by adding all the mean participation scores and dividing the sum by the number of sub-programmes considered.
- c. participation index- This was done by dividing the grand mean participation by the 4 stages of participation process.

Factors militating against gender participation in agricultural development programmes were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale to elicit response ranging from “Strongly Agree =5”, “Agree =4”, “Uncertain = 3”, “Disagree =2”, and “Strongly disagree =1”. A mean score of 2.50 was used as cut off. Any factor with a mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as significant. The effect of the programmes on the social economic level of participants was measured as possession =2, non-possession=1, and participants were asked to indicate if possession was before or after the programme. A mean score of 1.5 was used as cut off. Any item with a mean score of 1.5 was regarded as valid.

Results and Discussion

Level of Participation in Agricultural Projects

Table 1 indicates that 39.24% of the male participated up to implementation stage (stage 3) of FADAMA III project, whereas only 8.93% of the females got to the same stage. A higher percentage (75%) of the female participants got to the stage 4 (evaluation) while 32.91% of the male participant got to stage 4. Without participation in evaluation, participation cannot be said to be complete. Ofuoku (2004) found that higher percentage of women participated fully in community development projects in Delta State Central Senatorial District than men.

The same trend was found in RTEP, NPFS and IFAD/FGN/NDDC/CBNRAPND projects. This is confirmed in Tables 2 and 3 which show that males put up medium level of participation ($\bar{x} = 2.94$), while the females had high level of participation ($\bar{x} = 3.53$). This same trend was observed in agricultural projects component of community development efforts of Community Development Committees in Delta Central Senatorial District by Ofuoku (2004). This goes to show that women are more serious in farming than men. Women are known to be more patient than men in their involvement in development projects. In this case, the females wanted to know if their condition after participation in the agricultural development projects have been enhanced than it was before their involvement in such agricultural development projects. Nto-rue, (1993) opined that women get deeply involved in development activities than their male counterparts. This implies that women are more consistent in their involvement in such projects than men, especially when the project is related to their livelihood. This is attributed to the fact that they are more easily convinced than men who are always critical with issues as they ask so many questions in their mind and are very inconsistent as a result of lack of patience. Evaluation stage is a very important stage in any development project as this is the stage where it is known whether the projects aim is achieved or not. Without the results that arise from this state, stakeholders will be blind and ignorant as to what step to take in order to see that such project succeeds.

Participation index of 0.74 men means 74% of the males were involved in the participation process of all the sub-programmes. The participation index of 0.88 by the females implies that 88% of them were involved in the participation process of the sub-programmes.

Table 1: Level of participation in agricultural development -programme

Projects/No. of stages	Male (n=79)	Female (n=56)
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Fadama III

Low (1 – 2programmes)	17(21.52)	7(12.50)
Medium (3 programmes)	13(39.24)	5(8.93)
High (4programmes)	26 (32.91)	26(46.43)

RTEP

1 – 2	8(10.13)	11(19.64)
3	45(56.96)	15(26.79)
All the 4	26 (32.91)	26(46.43)

NPFS

1 – 2	12(15.19)	3(5.36)
3	42(53.16)	41(73.21)
All the 4	24 (30.38)	31(55.36)

IFAD/FGN/NDDC/CBNRAPND

1 – 2	9(11.39)	20(35.71)
3	33(41.77)	10(17.86)
All the 4	23(29.11)	22(39.29)

Figures in parenthesis are percentages

Table 2: Level of participation of males in agricultural intervention programmes

Stages of development project						
Project	Need identification (1)	Planning on need (2)	Implementation (3)	Evaluation (4)	Score	Mean
FADAMA III	5(5)	12(24)	31(93)	26(104)	226	2.86
RTEP	3(3)	5(10)	45(135)	26(104)	252	3.19
NPFS	1(1)	11(22)	42(126)	24(96)	245	3.10
IFAD/FGN/ NDDC/ CBN RAPND	2(2)	7(14)	33(99)	23(92)	207	2.62
TOTAL						11.77

Grand participation = 2.94. participation index = 0.74

Table 3: Level of participation of females in agricultural intervention programmes

Stages of development project						
Project	Need identification (1)	Planning on need (2)	Implementation (3)	Evaluation (4)	Score	Mean
FADAMA III	2(2)	5(10)	15(15)	42(168)	195	3.48
RTEP	5(5)	6(12)	15(45)	26(104)	166	2.96
NPFS	3(3)	0(0)	41(123)	31(124)	278	4.46
IFAD/FGN/ NDDC/ CBN RAPND	8(8)	12(24)	10(30)	22(88)	150	2.68
TOTAL						14.08

Grand participation = 3.52. Participation index = 0.88

Factors Militating Against Gender Participation in Agricultural Development Programmes

Table 4 show that factors militating against gender participation in agricultural development programmes were; lack of basic infrastructure (\bar{x} =4.57), Lack of modern agricultural equipment (\bar{x} =4.36), Lack of land/ land tenure system (\bar{x} =3.78), Social and Psychological effect of being called a farmer (\bar{x} = =4.05),

Lack of credit facilities/ Subsidies (\bar{x} =4.42), Poor incentives/income (\bar{x} =4.38), Negligence of Men's/ women role in programme design (\bar{x} =4.10 and (\bar{x} =4.62) respectively and Unfavourable government policies (\bar{x} =4.19). The Table 5 also shows that all the factors were significant which implies that all the factors were serious factors militating against gender participation in Agricultural development programs.

Table 4: Factors militating against participation in agricultural development programmes

Factors	S.D	Mean
Lack of land/ land tenure system	0.887	3.78
Social and psychological effect of being called a farmer	0.746	4.05
Lack of credit facilities/ subsidies	0.496	4.42
Poor incentives/ income	0.597	4.38
Negligence of men's role in programme design	0.683	4.10
Negligence of women role in programme design	0.489	4.62
Unfavourable government policies.	0.868	4.19

Note: ≥ 2.50 =S (Significant)

Difference in the Level of Participation of Male and Female Farmers in Agricultural Development Programmes

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference in the level of participation in agricultural sub-programmes in Edo State, Nigeria, ($t = 5.9$; $p \leq 0.05$)

This is attributable to the fact that women are more involved in agricultural activities than men, especially farming activities related to arable crops production. Ofuoku (2011) suggests that Africa is regarded as a continent of female farming per excellence, particularly in the rural areas. Prakash (2003) avers that women produce about half of the food consumed in the world, particularly in Africa and the Caribbean. Uzokwe and Ofuoku (2006) found that women are more involved in arable farming in contemporary times than men.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The level of participation of women farmers was higher than that of men. Some of the constraints experienced were lack of land / land tenure system, social and psychological effect of being called a farmer, lack of credit /subsidies facilities, poor incentive/income and negligence of men's and women's role in programme design.

Women farmers should be educated through enlightenment by extension agents to participate continuously in agricultural development sub-programmes. Credit facilities such as micro-credit, through their cooperative groups should be provided by the state and federal governments for the rural dwellers, especially farmers. Both male and female farmers should be involved in agricultural development project process as agricultural services are irrelevant without the input of the beneficiaries.

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