



ISSN: 2319-9490

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF CASSAVA COTTAGE INDUSTRY PROJECT ON RURAL FARMERS IN NIGERIA (A CASE STUDY OF KOGI STATE)

<sup>1</sup>Oladunni, Olufemi Ajayi and <sup>2</sup>\*Femi-Oladunni, Opeyemi

<sup>1</sup>Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Agricultural Extension and Management, Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria

Received 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2018; Accepted 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2018; Published 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2018

#### ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of Cassava cottage industry on rural farmers in Nigeria using Kogi State as case study. Specifically, the study ascertained the socio economic characteristics of the beneficiaries, the welfare (food, clothing, housing, source of income and payment of children school fees from cassava processing) situation of the beneficiaries. One hundred and ten beneficiaries were randomly selected from the study area. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, focus group discussion guide (FGD) and key informant interview (KII) technique. Findings from FGD and KII revealed that out of nine processing industries created around Nigeria, most of them were not functional because of poor location, lack of group cohesion and there were reported cases of embezzlement of generated revenue that is meant for maintenance purposes. Data obtained were analyzed using regression. Findings revealed that majority (65.3%, 52.1%) of the beneficiaries were females and had secondary education respectively. Few (45%) of the beneficiaries were farmers of other agricultural commodity, majority (70.8%) of the beneficiaries were into garri production as a major source of income from cassava value chain. Findings also revealed that majority (61.9%) of the beneficiaries embark on cassava processing without training, few (47%) of the beneficiaries were exposed to quality assurance training, majority (71.0%, 83.9%, 83.9%, 87.0%) of the beneficiaries had good food situation, clothing situation, housing situation and paid their children school fees from income generated in cassava processing respectively. The study concluded that training of beneficiaries on basic maintenance or other important areas that help in project management and sustainability was not done before the projects were handed over to them. It was recommended that there is a need to involve beneficiaries in every stage of the project, from planning up to project evaluation.

**Key words:** Cassava, Rural Farmers, Welfare, Nigeria.

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**Citation:** Oladunni, Olufemi Ajayi and Femi-Oladunni, Opeyemi, 2018. "Impact Assessment of Cassava Cottage Industry Project on Rural Farmers in Nigeria (A Case Study of Kogi State)" *International Journal of Current Research in Life Sciences*, 7, (09), 2722-2724.

#### INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a country located in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with massive potentials in agriculture. Nigeria which is the most populous country in Africa has an arable land potential of 98.3 million. 72.2 million ha of the land are cultivable while 27.1 million are not cultivable. Agriculture is the predominant activity of the citizens in South Western and North Central Nigeria, (Adebayo and Olagunju, 2015). According to Odetola and Etumnu, (2013), 80% of Nigerian labour force is predominantly peasant practicing subsistence farmers. In the year 1960, agriculture dominated Nigeria's economy contributing 63.49 percent to Gross Domestic product in 1960 (CBN, 1980). The discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities in Nigeria in 1968 and the subsequent oil boom of the 1970s culminated in the displacement of agriculture as the driver of the nation's economy (NISER, 2013).

Within a decade up to 1981 however, agricultural output in Nigeria declined and Nigeria began to import major staple food such as rice, wheat, sugar, fish etc. to augment local supplies. Since then, Nigeria has been spending substantial amount of its foreign reserves on importation of staple foods, Nneka, (2017). According to Nnenna, (2011), agrarian farmers account for the greater part of the population in Nigeria. Governments of developing countries like Nigeria have a major responsibility of ensuring that there is adequate rural development in their various communities and local governments which would lead to effective and efficient agricultural systems that will not only supply food and animal protein but also foster the utilization of natural resources in a sustainable manner. Munyua (2000) opined that when rural farmers lack access to knowledge and information that would help them achieve maximum agricultural yield, they tend to migrate to urban areas in search of formal employment which will be seen to them as the only option of survival. With the provision of sustainable development project to aid farming activities in the rural areas, the problem of food shortage, unemployment and poor welfare of farmers will be solved.

\*Corresponding author: Femi-Oladunni, Opeyemi

Department of Agricultural Extension and Management, Federal College of Agriculture, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.

According to Adejumo, (2014) sustainable development is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising future generations to meet their own needs. The environment should be seen as an asset, a stock of available wealth but if the present generation spends this wealth without investment for the future then the world will run out of resources. If, however, we use this capital to research and develop new resources for the future, we can build machines that will substitute for the environmental resource (resource substitution). In Nigeria, cassava is important, not just as a food crop but as a major source of cash income for a large population, particularly farmers who cultivate the crop on farms that are often regarded as fallow. The crop also grows very well on marginal soils, replacing crops that require greater soil fertility (NISER 2013). In the country, agriculture has not really played the role of supplying adequate raw materials to the industrial sector. Over the years, enormous foreign exchange resources have been utilized for the importation of various raw materials for the manufacturing sector (Sanusi, 2012). This constituted a drain on the foreign exchange resources of the country. What is more worrisome is that a good proportion of these raw materials can be sourced from agricultural produce locally. All these factors has not only affected the foreign exchange resources of the country, it has also affected the welfare of cassava farmers. There has been some sustainable development project made available for agrarian farmers in Nigeria to enhance the productivity of cassava and also impact positively on the welfare of the farmers involved. Some of the projects have recorded success stories while some have not to great effect. Hence the reason for this assessment.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Ascertain the socio economic characteristics of the beneficiaries and
2. Check the impact of the project on the welfare (food, clothing, housing, source of income from processing cassava and payment of children school fees from processing cassava) situation of the beneficiaries.

### Research questions

The question this study seeks to answer in the evaluation of cassava cottage industries is:

- i. Does the cassava cottage industries function adequately; and can they generate deliverables that are in consonance with the overall objective of improved welfare of the beneficiaries?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

One hundred and ten beneficiaries were randomly selected from the study area. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, focus group discussion guide (FGD) and key informant interview (KII) technique. Data obtained were analyzed using regression.

### Findings from FGD and KII

Findings from FGD and KII revealed that out of nine processing industries created around the state, most of them

were not functional because of poor location, lack of group cohesion and there were reported cases of embezzlement of generated revenue that is meant for maintenance purposes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries which include; sex, Age, marital status, household size, level of education, source of income aside cassava processing and farming experience. Majority (65.3%, 52.1%) of the beneficiaries were males and had secondary education respectively. Few(45%, 43%) of the beneficiaries were involved in farming of other agricultural commodity and were below the age of 30 years respectively. Majority (61.3%, 66.7%) of the beneficiaries were married and had the household size in the range of 5-9 respectively while few (48%) of the beneficiaries had 0-5 years farming experience.

**Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of beneficiaries (N=110)**

Socio-economic Variable	Frequency (%)
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	72(65.3)
Female	38(34.7)
<b>Age</b>	
Below 30	47(43.0)
30-39	21(19.0)
40-49	17(15.0)
50-59	19(17.0)
Above 60	6(6.0)
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Single	41(37.3)
Married	67(61.3)
Divorced	0(0)
Widow	2(1.3)
<b>Household Size</b>	
Less than 4	21(18.7)
5-9	73(66.7)
10-15	13(12.0)
Above 15	3(2.7)
<b>Farming Experience</b>	
0-5 Years	53(48.0)
6-10 Years	21(18.7)
11-15 Years	10(9.3)
Above 15 Years	26(24.0)
<b>Level of Education</b>	
No Education	14(12.4)
Primary Education	34(31.3)
Secondary Education	57(52.1)
Tertiary Education	5(4.2)
<b>Source of Income Aside Cassava Processing</b>	
Soap Making	7(5.0)
Tailoring	3(3.0)
Petty Traders	47(44.0)
Hair dressing	3(3.0)
Farming of other commodities	50(45.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

### Training and Development

Table 2 revealed that majority (61.9%) of the beneficiaries embark on cassava processing without training and few (47%) of the beneficiaries that had opportunity to be trained were exposed to quality assurance training.

### Welfare Situation of the Beneficiaries

Table 3 shows the welfare situation of the beneficiaries which include food situation, clothing situation and housing situation. Findings revealed that majority(71.0%,83.9% and 83.9%) of the beneficiaries had good food, clothing and housing situation respectively, majority (87.0%) of the beneficiaries paid their

children school fees from income generated in cassava processing, majority (70.8%) of the beneficiaries were into garri production as a major source of income from cassava value chain.

**Table 2. Training Before Commencement of the Processing Cottage (N=110)**

Training and Development	Frequency (%)
<b>Training before commencement of the processing cottage</b>	
No	68(61.9)
Yes	42(38.1)
<b>Types of Training Undergone</b>	
Processing	41(37.0)
Quality Assurance	51(47.0)
Product Techniques	9(8.0)
Clealiness and Sanitation	9(8.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2016

**Table 3. Welfare Situation of the Beneficiaries (N=110)**

Food Situation	Frequency (%)
Good	22(71.0)
Excellent	9(29.0)
<b>Clothing Situation</b>	
Good	26(83.9)
Excellent	5(16.1)
<b>Housing Situation</b>	
Good	26(83.9)
Excellent	5(16.1)
<b>Source of income from cassava processing chain</b>	
Garri Production only	34(70.8)
Garri and Fufu production	13(27.1)
Fufu production only	1(2.1)
<b>Payment of Children School fees from processing cassava</b>	
No	6(13.0)
Yes	40(87.0)

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that training of beneficiaries on basic maintenance or other important areas that help in project management and sustainability was not done before the projects were handed over to them. Although the welfare situation of the beneficiaries improved but the success rate of the project would be more than the findings revealed from the field survey if the beneficiaries had been exposed to more training and which on the other hand would have increased food (Cassava) output.

**Recommendation:** It was recommended that there is a need to involve beneficiaries in every stage of the project, from need assessment, conceptualization, planning up to project evaluation.

**Acknowledgement:** The authors wish to appreciate Agricultural and rural management training institute (ARMTI) and Federal college of Agriculture, Akure (FECA) for the time allowed to carry out this research.

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