

Assessment Of The Training Needs Of Farmer Based Organizations In Ekiti State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Most of the farmers were encouraged to join Farmer Based Organizations (FBO) to benefit from development programmes. Despite that, it was discovered that their output has not increased appreciably. Since training is germane to boosting farmers output and income, the study is embarked upon to determine the training needs of FBOs in Ekiti state. A multi-stage sampling was used to select 140 respondents from 27 FBOs in the state. A structured interview schedule was used to collect data. Descriptive statistics, and Chi-Square were used to analyze the data. The result shows that all the FBOs needed training on credit access, leadership, Cooperation and cooperatives, farm resources management and climate change adaptation strategies. The most important training need to crop-based farmers' association was on market access. Others are the post-harvest management of crops, value addition, and processing techniques. There is a significant relationship between some socio-economic characteristics of the FBOs and their training needs. The educational statuses of the respondents have a positive correlation with their training needs, but the age and household sizes have a negative correlation with their training needs. The study recommends that the extension agents intensify efforts in organizing training programmes for FBOs on deficient areas to improve the output, income and the livelihood of farmers in Ekiti state

Key Words: Extension Agents, Farmer Based Organizations, Income, Output, Training needs.

INTRODUCTION

About 70% of Africa's poor live in the rural areas and are largely dependent on small-scale agricultural production (Panos Institute, 2001). Most of the people living in the rural areas are farmers. Agriculture in Nigeria is characterized by low capital investment, low productivity and low savings (Adebo, 2014). This makes a bulk of the population to live in abject poverty. In order to increase farmer's productivity and income as well as reduce the poverty level of the farmers, Sonaya (1993) advocated the focus on small-scale farmers. He believes that policies targeting small scale are likely to have far-reaching effects on poverty alleviation and boost food production. More also, in an attempt for the policies to have a positive impact on the small-scale farmer's development, there is the need to organize them into farmer's organizations. Organization of smallholder farmers is the key ingredient for small farmer development and is essential for the success of agricultural development (Rolling 1995).

A lot of positive impacts have been attributed to the functional role of farmer's organization in rural and agricultural development. For instance; (Garforth, 1993; Heinrich, 1993) noted that the adoption of technology is higher among farmer's organizations than individual farmers. Farmer's organizations enhance wider access to knowledge on improved farm practices, to advance the economic environment and livelihood of producers, their

families, and rural communities. These positive attributes are not being witnessed in Africa. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO 1988), agricultural development failure is due to the lack of effective beneficiary participation and weak local institutional support.

Despite the importance of farmer's organizations to agricultural development, it is imperative to note that farmers in sub-Sahara Africa in general and specifically in Nigeria have not tapped the advantages. This is because; they have failed to organize themselves into functional groups (Harrison, 1998). Similarly, Nigerians farmers organization have been reported to face a lot of constraints and limitations. The poor impacts of these organizations have been attributed to poor organizational capacity (Arokoyo, 1998). For farmer's organization to be involved in agricultural and rural development, they must be well organized and empowered to pool available resources, to achieve strength and countervailing power (Millie Biruma Abaru, Anthony Nyakuni and Gideon Shone (2006).

Organization or groups with attributes like technical skills, planning and managerial competence and analytical and reflective abilities in the people are an organization with capacity (Kaplan 1999). According to the Canadian International Development Agencies (IDRC), an organization with capacity is the one with the potential to accomplish its goals and satisfy its member's expectations. The United Development

Programme (UNDP) in Becter (2000) states that capacity development is an on-going process which aims to increase abilities of an individual or organization to perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve its objectives. A capacity building according to The Urban Capacity Building Network (UCBN) is much more than training and includes the following:

- Human resource development, the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills, and access to information, knowledge, and training that enables them to perform effectively.

- Organizational development, the elaboration of management structures, processes, and procedure, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).

- Institutional and legal framework development, making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions, and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities

A fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environment potentials and limit and of needs perceived by the people of the country concerned. Literature is replete with various capacities needed to be developed by Farmers Based Organization (FBO) to enhance competence and enable effective participation and inputs are being fervently sought for enhanced sustenance and refocusing of various stages of implementation, by the various government, NGOs and international bodies, like the UNDP. It's, therefore, become essential to identify gaps to be filled in the structure and operations of these farmers based organization, as a first step towards seeking to capacitate them for effective inputs into rural development programmes (Rocheleau, 2003) The IDRC asserts that capacity development can take place at the smaller level of individuals (capacity building) and project teams. The need to build the capacity of farmers according to (Adebo,

Objectives

The major objective of the study is to identify the capacity building needs of farmer's organization's members.

The specific objectives are to;

1. Ascertain the socio-economic characteristics of the members of farmer's

2015) stems from the fact that link between need and supply is weak. Capacity building is necessary to strengthen this link.

The Nigerian Agricultural system lacks good and realistic funding. Building the capacity of the farmer's organizations would enable them to identify various sources of funding that could harness to finance Agricultural production. Moreover, training institutions in Nigeria are isolated and are characterized with poor communication systems. Capacity building of farmer's organization would bring training institutions to the doorsteps of the ordinary farmers Many government agencies have developed national policies for rural development and designed frameworks to help rural communities become formally organized so that services could be channeled through such, as cooperatives and community groups among others, helping farmers to better access inputs, market and capacity building services.

The training of the FBOs is carried out by the Agricultural Development Agencies. It is easier to reach a large number of the farm populace with developmental programmes through the FBOs due to the large ratio of farmers to the extension agents. More also, training is a major component of the Agricultural extension agents in the state.

The main purpose of farmer's organization is to improve the social and economic standard of its members, increase their knowledge and skills. But in spite of the existence of farmers organization in the state, members of farmers organization are still faced with a lot of constraints and limitation such as lack of fund, lack of adequate knowledge in the establishment and functioning of farmers groups, inadequate training on various opportunities that are available, among others. This study, however, aims at solving the solving these research problem;

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of farmer's organization members?
2. What are the activities carried out by the farmer's organizations in Ekiti state?
3. Do the farmer's based organizations members receive any training? If yes, what are the areas of training received
4. What is the training need gaps to be filled up?

organizations.

2. To examine the various training/capacity building activities received by the farmer's organization

3. To determine the training needs of the farmers' organizations in Ekiti state

Hypothesis of the study

Ho: there is no significant relationship between the training needs of farmers' based organization and

their output.

1.0. Methodology

1.1. The Study Area

This study was carried out in Ekiti state, Nigeria. Ekiti State is one of the states in southwest Nigeria, carved out of the territory of old Ondo State. It has sixteen (16) Local Government Areas (LGAs). The state is located entirely in the tropics. It is mainly an upland zone, rising over 250m above sea level. It lies in an area underlain by metamorphic rock. The state lies between Latitudes 7° 15' and 8° 51' N of the Equator and Longitudes 4° 51' and 5° 45' E of the Greenwich meridian. It lies south of Kwara and Kogi states, East of Osun state and bounded by Ondo state in the East and in the South. It has a total land Area of 5887.890sq km. The state enjoys a tropical climate with two distinct seasons; raining season (April-October) and Dry season (November-March). The mean annual total rainfall in the south is about 1800mm while the mean total

annual rainfall in the northern part is hardly over 1600mm. The temperature throughout the year ranges between 21°C to 28°C with high humidity. The southwesterly wind and the northeast trade winds blow in the rainy and dry (Harmattan) seasons respectively. Tropical forest exists in the south while savannah occupies the northern peripheries. Agriculture is the main occupation and the major source of income for many people in the state. Agriculture provides income and employment for more than 75% of the population of Ekiti State.

Some of the agricultural products in Ekiti state are Cash crops such as Cocoa, Oil palm, Kolanut, Plantain, Bananas, Cashew, Citrus, and Timber; Arable/Food Crops such as Rice, Yam, Cassava, Maize, and Cowpea. They also rear animals like poultry, sheep, goats, and cattle

1.1. Sampling Procedure

The population of the study consists of all members of Farmer-Based Organizations Associated with apex development agencies in the state viz: the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and All Farmers Organization of Nigeria (AFAN) - the umbrella for all farmers who are identified by their commodity. The products are mainly crops and animals. Only poultry was chosen among the organizations that deal with animal products

A multi-stage sampling procedure was utilized for the study. The first stage involves the consultation with the All Farmers Organizations of Nigeria (AFAN) to collect the list of farmers' based organization in Ekiti State. There are Twenty-seven

(27) farmers' based organizations in the state. The second stage involves a random selection of thirteen (13) out of the 27 farmers' associations. The last stage entails a purposive selection of ten (10) farmers from each of the crop commodity Associations and twenty from poultry Association. Thus, a total of one hundred and forty (140) respondents were selected and utilized for the study (see Table 1). Primary and secondary data were used for this study. Primary data were collected through a farm field survey of the Farmer Based Organizations. Structured Interview Schedule was used to obtain relevant information for the study.

Table 1: The names of the farmer's Associations utilized for the study

S/N	NAMES	N
1.	Oil Palm Farmers Association	10
2.	All Farmers Association Of Nigeria	10
3.	Cocoa Farmers Association	10
4.	Maize Farmers Association	10
5.	Cocoyam Farmers Association	10
6.	Cassava Farmers Association	10
7.	Mushroom Farmers	10
8.	Cowpea Farmers Association	10
9.	Rice Farmers Association	10
10.	Yam Farmers' Association	10
11.	Vegetable Farmers' Association.	10
12.	Plantain Farmers Association	10
13.	Poultry Farmers Association	20
	Total	140

1.1. Data Analysis

Data generated were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were used to ascertain the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, examine the various capacity building activities carried out by farmers'

organization while a three-point Likert type scale was used to determine the training needs of the farmers' organizations and Chi-square was used to determine the Relationship between the training needs of farmers' based organization and their output.

2.0. Results and Discussions

2.1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of the respondents

Data in Table 2 shows that the age of the respondents ranges from 20-72years with a mean age of 45.5years. There are more males (65.7%) than females in the Farmer Based Organizations in Ekiti state. Most of the respondents (60.7%) were married; 13.6percent belonged to the single and separated marital statuses respectively. The mean household size of the respondents was 6.8 members. Farming was the primary occupation of the majority of the respondents. Also, Figure 1 revealed that most of the respondents (92.9%) were literates.

It shows that the farmers are relatively young and are expected to participate effectively in the activities of the farmer's organizations. Gareux (2003) stated that younger farmers tend to be more willing to participate in agricultural organizations and adopt technology than their older counterparts. The low percentage of female gender in farmer's organization might affect their access to opportunities embedded in farmer's organization. Such opportunities include access to credit facilities and market access. For instance, in Columbia, farmers' associations help link farmers with funded research centers, give farmers stronger influence on research and policy (Ajilore, 2014).Farmer organization has been identified as a key factor in enhancing farmers' access to markets (Hellin, 2015). The high percentage of married people is an indication of higher responsibilities and thus, their commitment to the activities of the Farmers Based Organizational programmes. The mean household size of 6.8 is an indication of large family sizes. It corroborates the findings of Falowo and Adebo (2014) and Adebo (2014) that affirmed the prominence of large household sizes among farmers in Southwest Nigeria and Kwara states respectively. The effects of which (according to the two studies) depicts the

diversion of a good proportion of the income of the household heads to meeting the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing and thus, enhances food insecurity. In essence, large household sizes are expected to influence their involvement in training programmes to boost their productivity and subsequently, meet the family needs. The dominance of farming as a primary occupation is expected since the study concentrates on FBOs in the state. The high literacy level of the respondents is expected to influence their participation in training programmes and adoption of Agricultural innovations

The farm size of the respondents ranges from 0.8-10 hectares, the majority of which cultivated less than 1.5 hectares of farmland while very few cultivated above six hectares of farmland (Figure2). In the poultry industry, half of the respondents (50%) have less than 300 birds while very few had above 500 birds (Figure 3). Despite the fact that most of the farmers (86.2%) have been farming for more than ten years (Figure 4), it doesn't translate to increased farm sizes. The study affirms that almost all the members of the farmer's organization utilized in the study in Ekiti state are small-scale farmers. This confirms Adebo et al (2015) assertion that most of the farmers in Ekiti state are small-scale farmers. Agricultural business according to Awotodunbo (2008), is carried out mainly by small-scale farmers in rural areas in Nigeria; and are responsible for the production of food that is consumed both in rural and urban communities; and raw materials needed by the industrial sector of the economy (Rahji, 2000). The farm experiences is expected to have positive effect on their productivity and perhaps their participation in training programmes organized for them

Table 2: Socioeconomic Characteristics of the respondents

Variable	frequency	percentage
Age		
≤ 30years	19	13.6
31-40years	18	12.9
41-50years	57	40.7
51-60years	37	26.4
>60years	9	6.4
Mean	45.52	
Sex		
Male	92	65.7
Female	48	34.3
Marital status		
Single	19	13.6
Married	85	60.7
Separated	19	13.6
Divorced	9	6.4
Widow/widower	7	5.0
Cohabiting	1	0.7
Household size		
2-5	46	32.9
6-9	93	66.4
>9	01	0.7
Mean	6.8	
SD	1.67	
Min	2	
Max	11	
Primary Occupation		
Farming	99	70.7
Trading	15	10.7
Artisan	10	7.1
Civil servants	16	11.5

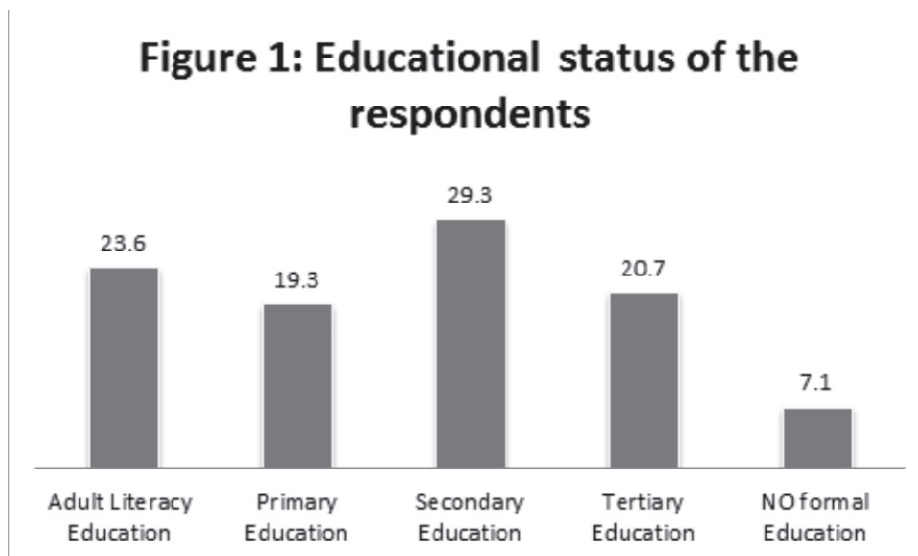


Figure 2: Farm size of the respondents

■ <1.5ha ■ 1.6-3 ha ■ 3.1-4.5ha ■ 4.5-6ha ■ >6ha

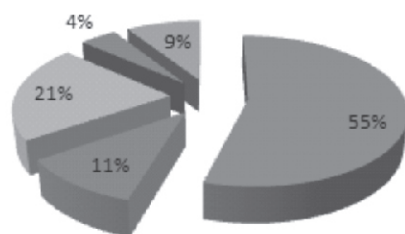


Figure 3: Number of Poultry birds reared

■ <300 birds ■ 301-500birds ■ >500 birds

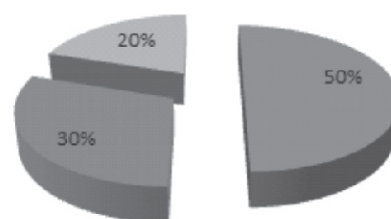
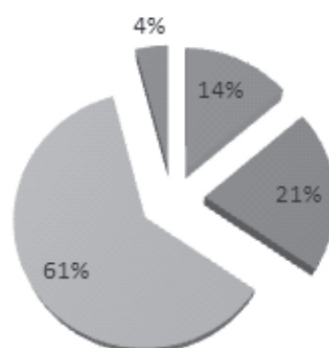


Figure 4: Farming Experience of the farmers

■ <10years ■ 11-20years ■ 21-30years ■ >30years



1.1. Types of Training Received by the Farmer Based Organizations The training received by the farmers was divided into four groups (Table 3). All the crops producing associations belonged to the first group, the mushroom associations formed the second group, and the poultry farmers' association formed the third group while all the respondents formed the fourth group under the general training programmes. The majority of the farmers' association received training mostly on crop production techniques, storage techniques, and disease control measures. All the members of mushroom Association received training on mushroom production techniques. Also, all the members of the poultry farmers' association received training on the poultry rearing methods and disease control measures respectively. However, none of them received training on

marketing strategies, vaccination methods, processing methods and value addition strategies. In terms of general training received by all the respondents, a majority of the respondents (57.14%), received training on access to credit facilities, 39.29% on climate change adaptation strategies and 28.57% on farm resources management strategies.

Table 3: Types of Training Received by the Farmer Based Organizations

Types Of Training Program Attended	Affirmation(yes/No)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Crop producers (n=110)			
Crop Production Techniques	Yes	85	60.71
	No	55	39.29
Post-Harvest Management	Yes	22	20.0
	No	88	80.0
Storage techniques	Yes	88	80.0
	No	22	20.0
Disease Control	Yes	85	60.71
	No	45	80.0
Value Addition	Yes	23	20.91
	No	87	79.09
Market Access Strategies	Yes	10	9.09
	No	110	90.91
Processing techniques	Yes	10	9.09
	No	110	90.91
Mushroom production techniques (N=10)	Yes	10	100.00
	No	0	0.00
Poultry farmers Association (N=20)			
Poultry Production Techniques	Yes	20	100.0
	No	0	0.0
Vaccination methods	Yes	0	0.00
	No	20	100.00
Marketing strategies	Yes	0	0.00
	No	20	100.00
Processing techniques	Yes	0	0.00
	No	20	100.0
Value addition	Yes	0	0.00
	No	20	100.0
Disease control	Yes	20	100.00
	No	0	0.00
General training (140)			
Farm resources management	Yes	40	28.57
	No	100	71.43
Training on Access To credit	Yes	80	57.14
	No	60	42.86
Leadership Training Program	Yes	4	2.86
	No	136	97.14

Training needs of the farmer based Associations
Data in Table 4 shows the training needs of the respondents. Out of the seven different training needs listed for crop producers, four were significant. While prioritizing the significant training needs, the most important of them was the training on market access, followed by post-harvest management of crops. Value addition and processing techniques occupied the third position respectively. All other types of training were not significant. It shows that the farmers' in crop producing associations did not require training on them, (Table 4). All the mushroom producers still required training on mushroom production, an indication of the necessity to master the process of raising mushroom. For poultry farmers, all the six pieces of training listed were significant to them.

While ranking, the most important training needed was in value addition and processing techniques. This was followed by training on vaccination methods and marketing strategies respectively. At the fifth position was training on disease control which occupied the sixth position.

Also, all the training need listed under general training was significant. However, the most important training needed was on leadership followed by cooperation and co-operatives. At the third position of needs was the training on access to credit facilities while the last training need was in farm resources management. It could be affirmed that all the farmers' association in Ekiti State requires training on leadership, cooperation, and cooperatives, access to credits and farm resources management.

Table 4: Training needs of the farmer based Associations

Type of training	Total Score	Weighted score	Ranking
Crop producers			
Crop Production Techniques	138	1.25	7 th
Post-Harvest Management	280	2.55	2 nd
Storage techniques	160	1.45	6 th
Disease Control	175	1.59	5 th
Value Addition	306	2.78	3 rd
Market Access Strategies	342	3.11	1 st
Processing techniques	280	2.55	3 rd
Mushroom production techniques (N=10)	25	2.5	
Poultry farmers Association (N=20)			
Poultry Production Techniques	50	2.5	5 th
Vaccination methods	55	2.75	3 rd
Marketing strategies	55	2.75	3 rd
Processing techniques	62	3.1	1 st
Value addition	62	3.1	1 st
Disease control	40	2.0	6 th
General training (140)			
Farm resources management	296	2.11	5 th
Training on Access To credit	300	2.14	4 th
Leadership Training Program	350	2.50	1 st
Training on Cooperation and Cooperatives	325	2.32	3 rd

Hypothesis Testing

Ho: there is no significant relationship between the training needs of farmers' based organization and their output.

The Chi-square result in table 5 shows that the chi-

square calculated (x²) 51.83 was greater than the tabulated 42.72. Hence we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis (HA). Thus, we conclude that there is a significant relationship between the training needs of the farmers' based organization and their output.

Table 5: Relationship between the training needs of farmers' based organization and their output.

	Calculated	Tabulated
Chi-Square	51.83	45.72
Degree of freedom	29	29
Significant level	0.025	0.025

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Summary

The study was carried out to determine the capacity building needs of farmers based organization in the state. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a total number of one hundred and forty (140) respondents from 27 farmers' based organization existing in the state. Data were collected with a structured interview schedule and analyzed using descriptive statistics, and a three-point Likert-type scale. The result of the findings shows that most of the members of farmer's organizations in Ekiti state were male, relatively young and married with the mean

household size was 6.8. Most of the respondents are literates producing crops and animals. They are small-scale farmers with several years of farming experiences

A majority of the crop based farmers' association received training mostly on crop production techniques, storage techniques, and disease control measures. The members of the mushroom farmers' association received training on mushroom production techniques while the poultry farmers were trained in poultry rearing techniques and disease control measures only. Training on access to credit and climate change adaptation strategies was common to all the

respondents

The most important training needs of crop farmers were on market access, post-harvest management techniques, Value addition, and processing techniques. All the mushroom producers still required training on mushroom production. For poultry farmers, required training on value addition and processing techniques, vaccination

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that:

- Most of the members of the Farmer-based organizations in Ekiti are young; belong to the male gender, mostly literate with long years of farming experiences. All of them are subsistence farmers
- All the farmer's associations members received limited training on their production

Recommendation

- There is the need to enhance the involvement of the female gender on the necessity to join farmer-based organizations
- More training programmes should be organized for farmer-based organizations by NGOs; Government based Organizations and private individuals to enhance their productivity
- Concerted efforts should be made in organizing training programmes for farmers associations on value addition, crop processing,

methods, marketing strategies and disease control all the farmers needed training on leadership, cooperation, and co-operatives, access to credit facilities and farm resources management. The study established a significant relationship between the training needs of the farmers' based organization and their output

- The most significant areas of the training needs of the farmers are value addition, crop processing, and market access
- The poultry farmers still require training in almost all aspects of poultry production
- There is significant relationship between the training needs of the farmers' based organization and their output

animal processing, and market access and climate change adaptation strategies

- Efforts should be made to intensify training programmes on poultry keeping, and mushroom management and value addition as well as marketing strategies to enhance protein intake in Ekiti state
- efforts should be made to train farmers in their various groups for increased productivity

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