

PERCEPTION OF FARMERS TOWARDS RURAL CHILDREN'S FORMAL EDUCATION IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

Ayoade Adenike Rebecca*

*Department of Agricultural *Extension* and Rural Development, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, LAUTECH, Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria. arayoade@lautech.edu.ng

Abstract

The notion of education as a capital good is rooted in the concept of "human capital", which attaches a high premium to human skills as a factor of production in the development process. A corollary of this is that human skill or productivity is just as important an input in the process of development as finance and natural wealth. Because education plays a major important role in the creation and improvement of human capital, its relevance and importance to economic growth and development are now very well recognized in development planning. The study was carried out to determine the perception of farmers towards rural children's formal education in odo-otin local government area of Osun state. To achieve the main objective, the study identified the socio-economic characteristics of the farmers and identified the various agricultural activities carried out and the rural children's contribution to these agricultural activities. Also, the study investigated the constraints to agricultural production in the study area. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, likert- type scale and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Multistage sampling technique was used in the selection of 120 respondents in the study area. Results of findings show that 21.7% of the respondents fell within the ages of 60 – 69 years, 80% of the respondents were males and 64.2% of the respondents were married. Also, 61.7% of the respondents had 5 members in their household, Most (36.7%) of the respondents had no formal education and 85.3% of the respondents cultivated between 1 - 5 hectares of land. 50% sourced their finance through farming and 89.2% of the respondents obtained their major income through farming and 52.5% of the respondents had about 10 years of experience in farming. Also, 55.8% of the respondent carried out combined farming on the land, 32.6% earned between ₦21000 - ₦40000 as their monthly income. The major contributions of rural children to agricultural activities carried out were feeding of farm animals (WMS = 1.65) and weeding (1.50). A significant relationship was found between the Age, Marital status, House hold size, Level of education and perception of farmers towards their children's formal education. Based on the farmers' perception on their children's formal education, it was concluded that formal education will help their children to get ahead in life and that the knowledge gained from formal education can help in the adoption of new innovations and improved technologies on agricultural production thereby influencing the farmers' orientation positively and increasing agricultural productivity. Also the farmers were favorably and positively disposed towards their children's formal education. The most serious constraint to agricultural production in the study area is insufficient capital, and because of the advantages of formal education to agricultural productivity, the study therefore recommends that farmers should be encouraged further to allow their children enroll for formal education and government should provide loan for the registered farmers to boost agricultural production.

Keywords: Agricultural production, Perception, Farmers, Rural Children, Constraints