
DERTERMINATION OF BENEFITS FROM AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS TO RURAL DWELLERS IN BENUE AND NASARAWA STATES, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to determine benefits from agricultural and rural development projects to rural dwellers in Benue and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. The population of the study encompassed of all rural dwellers who are beneficiaries of agricultural and rural development projects in Benue and Nasarawa States. It was found that there was heavy presence of agricultural and rural development projects in the study area like electrification (61.7 percent), rural roads (73 percent), both primary (93.7 percent) and secondary (83.5 percent) schools. However, there was low presence (22.5 percent) of pipe borne water in the study area. The respondents derived their benefits from increased agricultural output (77.5 percent), reduction in time and distance of attending to agricultural activities in the farms (77.8 percent) and increase in economic activities (81.6 percent). Result of test of hypothesis on difference between Benue and Nasarawa States in terms of benefits from agricultural and rural development projects revealed that Benue State had $\sum R_1=110.5$ while Nasarawa State had $\sum R_2=181.6$, the calculated $U= 32.5$ and critical value = 0 at 5% level of significance. Since $U \text{ cal. } (32.5) > 0$ (critical value), the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate accepted, implying that there was a significant difference between Benue State ($\sum R_1$) and Nasarawa State ($\sum R_2$) in terms of benefits derived from agricultural and rural development projects. It is therefore, recommended that both states should improve significantly in the provision of pipe borne water for the wellbeing of the rural dwellers, more farm inputs should be made available to the rural dwellers so as to increase their agricultural productivity for better welfare and improve generally in the provision of infrastructure so that there will be more benefit in terms of reduction of migration of youth to urban areas.

Keywords: *Agriculture, Benefits, Benue and Nasarawa States, Development Projects and Rural Dwellers.*

INTRODUCTION

True rural development means the development of human resource, thus unfolding and realizing great creative potentials(Age,2009). Rural development needs to be multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, multi-dimensional and integrated in nature(Anonguku,2014). According to Anonguku and Gyata (2017), in order to bring about a holistic rural development in Nigeria, it is necessary to first of all develop the agricultural sector. Nigerian government since independence in 1960 have placed emphasis on rural and agricultural development(Agama,2007). A lot of attention has been paid towards rural transformation with a view to empowering the rural people politically, socially and economically. According to Anonguku and Gyata (2017), several government development programmes and policies have been evolved over the years and were targeted at rural and agricultural development. These programmes according to Agbarevo and Obinne (2010) include; Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1976, Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) in 1978, National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) in 1970, Better Life for Rural Women in 1987, Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Projects (LEEMPS) in 1985, National Policy on Integrated Rural Development in 2001. With all these programmes and policies put in place, their full benefits to the rural people still remains in dispute. This could probably be responsible for mass exodus of young people from the rural areas to urban centres in Benue and Nasarawa States.

The study was basically aimed at determining benefits from agricultural and rural development projects to rural dwellers in Benue and Nasarawa States. The study hypothesized thus: there is no significant difference between Benue and Nasarawa States in terms of benefits from agricultural and rural development projects to rural dwellers.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Benue and Nasarawa States, Nigeria. The two states are found in the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Benue State lies on longitude $7^{\circ} 25' E$ to $10^{\circ} 8' E$ and latitude $6^{\circ} 25' N$ and $8^{\circ} 8' N$ of the equator. It has a population of 2,780, 359 people and total land area of 30,955 square kilometers. Administratively, the state is divided into twenty-three(23) local government areas with the headquarters at Makurdi (Anonguku et al.,2008, Benue State Government,2002,NPC, 2006)

Nasarawa State is located between latitudes 7° and 9° North of the equator and longitude 7° and 10° East. It is a multi-ethnic state with major ethnic groups like Alago, Eggon, Hausa-Fulani, Tiv, Mada, Ebira, Gbagyi, Bassa, Gwandara, Agatu among others(Nasarawa State,2001). The state has a population of 1.863 million people and a land area of 27,137km(NPC,2006). The population of the study area comprised all rural dwellers who are beneficiaries of the agricultural and rural development project activities in Benue and Nasarawa States. Three hundred and fifty(350) respondents were selected using a multi- stage process involving purposive and simple random sampling technics. However, only 316 were valued and used for analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis.

Table 1: SAMPLING PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY AREA

Zone	LGA	Communities	Sample Frame	Sample size (8%)
BENUE STATE				
A	Vandeikya Katsina Ala	Mbakato	182	15
		Mbaatar	216	17
		Mbatima	202	16
		Mbakpev	212	17
		Shamija	205	16
B	Makurdi Gboko	Gever	180	14
		Mbaiwan II	270	22
		Buzu	167	13
		Agbadaichuo	137	11
C	Oju Okpokwu	Eddi-Inyima	143	12
		Ohimini	246	20
		Gbegba	210	17
	SUB-TOTAL		2170	190
NASARAWA STATE				
SAZ	Lafia	Jatau Angwan	200	16
		Buzu	165	13
		Tudun Angas	162	14
		Marke	170	17
		Angwan Attah	210	10
CAZ	Nasarawa- Eggon	Awoga	120	10
		Gitata	144	12

Floristic Composition and Stand Structure of the Mangrove Forest in Cross River State, Nigeria

	Akwanga	Akwahuma	140	11
		Betti	127	10
WAZ	Keffi	Angwan Dariya	208	17
	Nasarawa	Wada	172	14
		Chiji	156	13
	SUB-TOTAL (a)		1974	160
	GRAND TOTAL			

The results in Table 2 reveal that 61.7 percent of the respondents stated that they have rural electrification in the study area. Nasarawa State had 85.1 percent rural electrification more than Benue State (43.4 percent), nearly 73 percent of the respondents had access to rural roads in the study area with Nasarawa State having 88.8 percent more than Benue State with 61.0 percent. There was heavy presence of both primary (93.7 percent) and secondary (83.5 percent) schools in the study area. With both states having very high percentages of both primary and secondary schools (89.0 & 73.6; 100 & 97.0). Rural markets accounted for 87.0 percent in the study area with Nasarawa State having more (96.3 percent) than Benue State (80.2 percent). This means development is possible in the study area with the provision of these facilities. This agrees with the submission of Walzer and Marvett (2002) that, development is a multi-dimensional process which is aimed at improving the well-being of the people. There was, however, low presence (22.5 percent) of pipe borne water in the entire study area. The rural pipe borne water situation was however better in Nasarawa State (41.8 percent) than Benue State (8.2 percent). This finding agrees with Sule (2006) that disparities in the provision of basic infrastructural facilities is responsible for underdevelopment.

The presence of these infrastructure can bring about development for better standard of living for the rural dwellers in the study area. This finding is in agreement with the submission of Sule (2006), that the provision of better infrastructural facilities is a standard in the development indices.

Table 2: EXISTING RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

	Benue State (n=182)		Nasarawa State (n=134)		Pooled (n=316)	
	Frequen cy	Perce nt	Frequen cy	Perce nt	Frequen cy	Perce nt
Existing projects	79	43.4	114	85.1	195	61.7
Rural Electrification						
Access rural Roads	111	61.0	119	88.8	230	72.8
Pipe borne Water	15	8.2	56	41.8	71	22.5
Markets	146	80.2	129	96.3	275	87.0
Hospital/clinics	141	77.5	129	96.3	270	85.4
Primary schools	162	89.0	134	100.0	296	93.7
Secondary School	134	73.6	130	97.0	264	83.5
Dams	16	8.8	47	35.1	63	19.9
Fish ponds	51	28.0	112	83.6	163	51.6
Feed mills	20	11.0	22	16.4	42	13.3
Farms	145	79.7	131	97.8	276	87.3

Source: Field Survey 2014

Table 3 results reveal that there was increase in agricultural output (77.5 percent in the study area, Nasarawa State experiencing more (89.6 percent) than Benue State with 68.7 percent. This is in conformity with the principle of rural development stated by Obinne 1999 and cited by Anonguku (2014), that increasing agricultural productivity is a key to progress in rural development. There was reduction in time and distance of attending to agricultural activities in the farms (77.8 percent) in the study area. With both states experiencing the same reduction, though, higher (91.8 percent in Nasarawa State than Benue State (67.6 percent). The study area equally experienced an increase in economic activities (81.6 percent), Nasarawa State having more (96.3 percent) than Benue State with 70.9 percent. There was however, relatively low benefit in the area of safe drinking water (54.7 percent) in the study area, with Benue

State having 36.3 percent less than Nasarawa State with 79.9 percent. Insufficient provision of safe drinking water can be responsible for underdevelopment of rural areas in the study area. This finding agrees with Ladele (2005), that lack of commitment to rural development is a serious setback, limiting the effectiveness of rural development.

TABLE 3: BENEFITS DERIVED FROM RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

	Benue State (n=182)		Nasarawa State (n=134)		Pooled (n=316)	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Increase in agricultural output	125	68.7	120	89.6	245	77.5
Out improvement	98	53.8	126	94.0	224	70.9
Farm inputs	64	35.2	118	88.1	182	57.6
accessibility						
Innovation availability	78	42.9	116	86.6	194	61.4
Reduction in time and distance	123	67.6	123	91.8	246	77.8
Reduction in time and health facilities	91	50.0	125	93.3	216	68.4
Access to antenatal and postnatal care	87	47.8	120	89.6	207	65.5
Safe water	66	36.3	107	79.9	173	54.7
Increase in economic activities	129	70.9	129	96.3	258	81.6
Reduction in youth migration	72	39.6	116	86.6	188	59.5
Increase in social activities	121	66.5	124	92.5	245	77.5
Receive training	74	40.7	116	86.6	190	60.1

Source: Field Survey 2014

Table 4 result of test of hypothesis of derivable benefits reveals that Benue State had $\sum R_1=110.5$ while Nasarawa State had $\sum R_2=181.6$. the calculated $U_1=32.5$ and the critical value =0 at 5% level of significance. Since $U_1 \text{ cal } (32.5) > 0$ (critical value), the null hypothesis was uprightly rejected and alternative accepted. By implication, there is a significant

difference between Benue State ($\sum R_1$) and Nasarawa State ($\sum R_2$) in terms of benefits derived from rural and agricultural development projects.

TABLE 4: MANN-WHITENEY ANALYSIS OF BENEFITS ACCRUED FROM RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Benefits	Benue State (n=182)		Nasarawa State (n=134)	
	Freq.	R ₁	Freq.	R ₂
Increase in agricultural output	125	19.5	120	14.5
Improvement in the quality of output	98	8.0	126	21.0
Accessibility of farm input	64	1.0	118	13.0
More available agricultural innovations to farmers	78	5.0	116	11.0
Reduction to time and distance to school	123	16.5	123	16.5
Reduction to time and distance to health facilities	91	7.0	125	19.5
Access to antenatal and postnatal care	87	6.0	120	14.5
Save drinking water	66	2.0	107	9.0
Increase in economic activities	129	22.5	129	22.5
Reduction in number of youths Migrating to urban areas	72	3.0	116	11.0
Increase in social events	121	16.0	124	18.0
Trained in different fields of endeavor	74	4.0	116	11.0
$N_1 = 12 \sum R_1 = 110.5 \quad N_2 = 12 \sum R_2 = 181.5 \quad U_1 = 32.5$				

Source: Field Survey 2014

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Rural dwellers in the study area really enjoyed tremendous benefits from the existing rural and agricultural development projects. It is, however, recommended thus:

- i. Both Benue and Nasarawa States should improve significantly in the provision of pipe borne water for the wellbeing of the rural dwellers.
- ii. More farm inputs should be made available to the rural dwellers so as to increase their agricultural productivity for better welfare.

- iii. Both states should improve generally in the provision of infrastructure so that there will be more benefit in terms of reduction in migration of youth to urban areas.
- iv. Benue State particularly, should do more in the provision of both agricultural and rural development projects so that the rural dwellers will derive more benefits from them for enhanced standard of living.

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