

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF CONSTRAINTS TO FARMERS' LABOUR GROUPS FORMATION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on factor analysis of constraints to farmers' labour group formation and productivity among Igala and Ebira ethnic groups of Kogi State, Nigeria. A total of 50 farmers' labour groups were randomly selected from the two ethnic groups, and from each of the labour groups selected, two farmers/members were randomly selected thereby giving a total of 100 respondents for the study. Structured interview schedule was administered to the selected respondents for data generation. Data collected was analysed using percentage, mean scores and factor analysis. Results showed that majority (91.0%) of members of farmers' labour groups were males with an average age of a little above 51 years. Dearth of farm labour (86.3%) and rural-urban migration (74.8%) were the major reasons for farmers' labour group formation. While migration of youth population ($M=2.74$; $SD=0.514$) and old age of members ($M=2.58$; $SD=0.623$) were the major constraints faced by farmers' labour groups from the two ethnic groups. It was therefore recommended that government and private institutions or individuals should aggressively pursue rural urbanization to stop the tide of rural-urban upsurge, and to make Nigerian-rurals habitable.

Keywords: Labour groups, rural-urban migration, smallholder farmers, Igala, Ebira, productivity.

Introduction

The bulk of the food consumed in most cities in Nigeria come from rural farmers who employ indigenous techniques and family labour for most of their farm operations. The adoption of family labour does not really bring about the much needed economies of scale in food production. Before the advent of civilization, the extended family system played significant roles in the lives of the people. Members of the extended family lived and worked together and reinforced each other against the difficulties they had to contend with, especially farm tasks. Rural people are mostly smallholder farmers whose farmlands are small and scattered. Smallholders make a contribution not only to agricultural productivity but also to overall economic growth, by providing labour, capital, food, foreign exchange, and a consumer good market (Biggs and Biggs, 2001).

Agriculture cannot play this dynamic and wealth-creating role (food production) without an enabling policy environment, adequate institutions, and sufficient, well-targeted public and private investment. The experience of recent decades has been disappointing in this regard in a number of countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs), where investment has declined, rural poverty remains widespread and a very large share of the labour force is engaged in low-return agricultural work. Cuts in health and education budgets and in other public services, as well as the dismantling of publicly funded agricultural extension services during the structural adjustment processes of the 1980s and 1990s, undermined the foundation for bottom-up development for a generation. The effects are being felt today with a large number of poorly educated rural youth with few skills and poor job prospects and a smallholder agriculture sector that cannot thrive due to lack of steady farm labour and support in terms of policy, infrastructure, inputs and investment. Clearly, to be successful, development of the rural sector must be part of a much larger process of social, economic and political development (ILO, 2005).

Increased income has led to the development of deep taste for western luxury goods in recent times. In consequence, the towns began to attract young men in their large numbers since it was in the cities that better social services and jobs were to be found. This drift of the rural population to the cities had begun with the resultant decline in rural farm labour force. Worthy of note too is the fact that, the Nigerian rural setting that provides the bulk of the food needs was neglected during the colonial era and has still not yet witnessed any major transformation in the post independence era (Raphael, 2002). According to Daramola in Raphael (2002), Nigeria's rural setting is made up of neglected rural majority who lack almost all the essential amenities such as health care, good access roads, electricity, modern markets, pipe-borne water among others. Apart from poor or lack of infrastructural facilities in the Nigerian rural sector, lack of credit and readily available farm labour constitute major factors constraining economies of scale in food production by rural farmers.

According to Ojetunji (2003), Sub-Saharan Africa can be described as a land-surplus rather than a labour-surplus case of development paradigm. The authour further states that, in spite of the absolute labour scarcity (compared to Asia) the level of labour productivity in African agriculture is generally low operating with simple (non-machinery) technologies under rain-fed production conditions. The characteristics of the rural areas in Nigeria coupled with the poor-resource base of rural farmers has led to the out-migration of rural people especially the young, energetic and educated men to urban areas where the so-called life-enhancement facilities abound. The implication therefore is that, farming activities are therefore left to the aged people who are not energetic enough to take food production to the level needed. According to Nwosu and Nwachukwu (2005), farms are left with old men and women whose productive capacity has greatly reduced with age as the young able bodied people have been attracted to the cities. Hence, the need for government to establish structures in the rural areas that will sufficiently attracts the young ones back to agriculture.

It is in view of the dearth of farm labour due to the exodus of young learned men to the urban centres that led to the initiation and formation of labour groups and/organizations by smallholder farmers in Nigeria's rural sector. A

group like farmers' labour group is an assemblage of two or more human beings with common identity who are bound together in a formal relationship, and whose members interact together to satisfy complementary needs (Francis. *et al*, 2000).

Farmers' labour group is the association of people who have voluntarily come together to achieve common objectives through the formation of a democratically controlled organization; making equitable contributions to the capital required and accepting a fair share of risks and benefits of the undertaking (World Bank, 1999; Ebony and Jimo, 2002). The need to form farm labour groups by rural farmers to provide the needed farm labour is seen as a sure way of ensuring mass food production. According to Odebode and Arimi (2008) the importance of farmers' labour groups or organizations in agricultural development of a nation cannot be overemphasized when considering the roles they play in agricultural production. Apart from the ready availability of farm labour, farmers voluntarily come together with the intent of pooling their resources together for the accomplishment of farm tasks. The broad objective of this paper is to ascertain factors militating against successful farmers' labour group formation and productivity in Kogi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study was designed to assess the socio-economic variables of smallholder farmers in Kogi State; identify reasons for farmers' labour group formation; and identify factors militating against farmers' labour group formation and productivity.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Kogi State, Nigeria. The area is located between latitudes $7^{\circ} 30''$ N and $6^{\circ} 42''$ E and longitudes $7^{\circ} 30''$ N and $6^{\circ} 40''$ E, and has a land area of 29,833sq/km, with a total population of about 3.3 million (National Population Commission NPC, 2006). The state is made up of four agricultural zones namely; Zone A: Aiyeotro Gbedde, Zone B: Anyigba, Zone C: Koton-Karfe and Zone D: Alloma. The State consists of three ethnic groups namely: Igala (found in the eastern part), Ebira (central) and Yoruba (located at the western part). Majority of the people are farmers growing both food and cash crops such as yam, cassava, maize, beans, cassava, among others and cocoa, citrus, cashew, oil palm etc. For the purpose of this study two ethnic groups (Igala and Ebira) were purposively selected for the study. The selection was due the presence of a number of

farmers' labour groups found in the regions. Thirty farmers' labour groups were randomly selected from Igala ethnic group while twenty farmers' labour groups were randomly selected from Ebira extract of the State, thereby making a total of fifty (50) farmers' labour groups for the study. And from each of the groups selected, two members were randomly selected making a total of 100 respondents for the study. Structured interview schedule (taking cognizance of the set objectives) was administered to the selected respondents for data collection. Data collected was analysed using frequency distribution, percentage, means and factor analysis. A loading value 0.40 and above were considered as having high loadings was used in naming the factors, and variables that loaded high in more than a factor were dropped. The mean score was derived from a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from very serious=3, serious=2, and not serious= 1 was used. The mean seriousness of a given factor was obtained by summing together $1+2+3= 6$. The sum (6) was then divided by 3 to get a mean of 2.0. Any mean score higher or equal to 2.0 was regarded as serious factor(s), while mean score less than 2.0 was regarded as not serious. The model is represented mathematically as:

$$X_s = \sum fn/N$$

Where X_s = Mean score

Σ = Summation

f = Frequency

n = Likert (nominal value)

N = Number of respondents

$X_s = 1+2+3/3 = 2.0$. The 2.0 is the cut-off mean score.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Sex

Majority (91.0%) of the farmers were males (Table 1). This implies that, male farmers dominate farmers' labour groups among the two ethnic groups. Opaluwa (2014) reported that 89.5% of farmers in Kogi State were males. This is also in tandem with Ekunwe, Orewa and Emokaro (2008) who report that male farmers dominate yam production in Edo and Kogi States.

Age

Table 1 also shows that majority (43.8%) of the members of farmers' labour groups among the Igala were within the age range of 42-51 years, as against (32.0%) among the Ebira within the age bracket of 52-61 years. The overall mean age of the farmers in both ethnic groups was 51.2 years. This portends that, majority of the farmers are fairly old and may not have the needed strength for mass food production individually. This could probably be the reason for the formation of labour groups to meet their farm labour needs.

Years spent in formal education

Majority (48.0%) of the farmers within Igala ethnic group had 7-12 years of formal education, while 43.8% of their Ebira counterparts spent same numbers of years to acquire formal education. While 28.2% of farmers in Ebira ethnic group had no formal education, only 14.0% of their counterparts in Igala ethnic group had no formal education. The overall mean number of years spent in formal education by both ethnic groups was 7.4 years. This implies that members of farmers' labour groups in both ethnic groups were fairly literate and can therefore read and write. Hormik (1999) asserts that, basic education whether obtained in school or out of school makes a lot of contributions to farm productivity, as better educated farmers are easier to deal with and have greater access to external agro-information sources and are prone to adopt farm innovations as quickly as possible. But Kanwar (1998) reports that education has unclear effect on

farm labour supply. The reason adduced is that educated members of the household normally tend to downgrade farm labour for white collar jobs.

Household size

Slightly over half (50.5%) of the farmers in Igala ethnic group and (56.0%) of Ebira ethnic group had household sizes between the range of 7-11 people, while 31.5% and 40.0% in Igala and Ebira ethnic groups had between 2-6 persons respectively. None of these farmers had more than 16 persons in their households. The overall mean household size for the two ethnic groups was eight persons. This implies that, members of farmers' labour groups in both Igala and Ebira ethnic groups have large household sizes. According to Villano and Fleming (2004), more adult members in a household translates to the availability of more labour for carrying out farming activities thus making the production process efficient. Onyemauwa, Odii, Omenyonu and Osugiri (2006) assert that larger household sizes reduce labour constraints thereby leading to increase in productivity and income of the farm household. In contrast, Orebiyi, Eze, Henri-Ukoha, Akubude, *et al.* (2011) contend that, despite the fact that large household size could be advantageous for farm families, it may be disadvantageous as more people means high demands for food, clothing, health, children's school fees among others. Thus, the need for labour groups in order to obviates this shortcoming.

Farm size

Table 1 equally revealed that majority (60.7% and 60.0%) of farmers from both ethnic groups (Igala and Ebira) had farm sizes of between 1-4 hectares respectively. While 34.8% of the farmers in Igala ethnic group and 40.0% of farmers in Ebira ethnic group had farm sizes of between 5-8 hectares, and the various mean farm sizes for the two ethnic groups were: Igala (4.1 ha.) and Ebira (3.8 ha.) respectively. The overall mean farm size for the two groups was 4 hectares. The implication of this finding is that members of farmers' labour groups in the two ethnic groups had fairly large farm size which is a pointer that they are willing to accept new farm practices for mass food production. Opaluwa (2014) reported that farmers in Kogi State have a mean farm size of 3.6 hectares. Ajayi and Okunlola (2006) also reported that, farmers with large farm holdings are more likely to invest in their farm

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enterprise than those with smaller holdings as the former have more gain if they do so.

Farming experience

According to Table 1, majority (51.7%) of farmers in Igala ethnic group had between 28-37 years of farming experience, as against 28.0% among Ebira ethnic group. The overall mean year for farming experience was 38 years. This implies that, farmers in both ethnic groups have long experiences in farming. According to Iwuchukwu, Agwu and Ajibo (2013), majority (36.5%) of farmers in Enugu State had between 21-30 years of farming experience. And long years of farming experience could serve as an advantage for increases in output in various farming and related activities when meaningfully deployed the authors further asserted. Long years of farm experience are vital because farm management skills of farmers improve with long experience in farm operations. This, according to (Idrisa, Ogunbameru and Madukwe, 2012) depicts good signal for adoption of improved technologies as experienced farmers tend to understand the importance of technologies in farming.

Extension visit

Results presented in Table 1 shows that, majority (43.8% and 52.0%) of members of both ethnic groups had no extension contact at all, though 28.6% and 28.0% of both ethnic groups had one number of extension contact respectively. While 24.2% of Igala farmers and 20.0% of Ebira farmers had 2 number of extension contacts respectively. The mean number of extension contact was about 1. This implies that extension contact in both ethnic groups is low. Okoro (2012) reports that, there was poor extension visit in south-east Nigeria. Poor extension visits could stem from poor funding of extension service and/or lack of qualified extension personnel (Egbule, 2013). According to Oni, Obi, Okorie and Jordan (2002), extension services help farmers to reinforce the message and enhance the accuracy of recommended implementations of technologies.

Estimated annual income

According to Table 1, greater proportion (62.9% and 72.0%) of farmers in Igala and Ebira ethnic groups had estimated annual income of between

₦ 80,000.00 - ₦ 180,000.00. Mean annual income for farmers in Igala land was ₦ 192,258.43, as against ₦ 152,840.00 of Ebira farmers. The overall mean annual income for both ethnic groups was ₦ 183,614.04. This finding implies that farmers in the two ethnic groups earn reasonable amount of money from their farming activities, though farmers of Igala extract earns more than their Ebira counterparts. This could translate into improvement in the socio-economic status of farmers. The higher the income level of farmers, the less they are disposed to fear of taking farm risks (in respect to adoption of new ideas) (Adejoh, 2014). Imarhiagbe (2014) reported that the mean annual income of rubber farmers in Edo and Delta States was ₦ 653,333.30. Nwalieji and Nenna (2013) also reports that the mean annual income of youth in agriculture in Anambra State was ₦ 175,017.17. This shows that farmers will have enough money to purchase farm inputs for greater productivity.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by socio-economic characteristics

Ethnic group					
Igala (n=60)	Ebira (n=40)	Overall (n=100)			
%	%	%	M	%	M
Characteristics					
Sex					
Male	91.0			92.0	92.2
Female	9.0			8.0	8.8
Age (Years)					
32- 41	11.2			51.2	20.0
13.2	51.2				51.5
42- 51		43.8		24.0	
39.5					
52 -61		31.5		32.0	
31.5					
62 -71		13.5		20.0	
14.9					
Above 70 years		00.0		4.0	
0.9					
Number of years spent in school					
0		14.0	7.6	28.2	6.5

20.2	7.4			
1-6		32.5		24.0
30.7				
7-12		48.0		43.8
44.7				
13-18		5.5		4.0
4.4				
Household size				
1-5		31.5	8	40.0
33.3	8			7
6-10		50.5		56.0
51.8				
11-15		18.0		4.0
14.9				
Above 15		00.0		00.0
00.0				
Farm size (Ha)				
1-4		60.7	4	60.0
60.5	4			3.8
5-8		34.8		40.0
36.0				
9-12		4.5		0.0
3.5				
Farming experience (Years)				
18-27		7.9	36.8	24.0
11.4	38			36.8
28-37		51.7		28.0
46.5				
38-47		29.2		28.0
28.9				
48-57		10.1		16.0
11.4				
58-67		1.1		4.0
1.8				
Extension visits				
None		43.8	0.8	52.0
				0.7

49.1	0.8				
Once		28.6		28.0	
28.1					
Twice		24.2		20.0	
20.2					
Trice		3.4		0.0	
2.6					
Estimated annual income (₦)					
80,000-180,000		62.9	192,258.43	72.0	152,840.00
64.9	183,614.04				
180,001-280,000		28.1		28.0	
28.1					
280,001-380,000		5.6		0.0	
4.4					
380,001-480,000		2.2		0.0	
1.7					
Above 480,000		1.1		0.0	
0.9					

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Reasons for farmers' labour group formation

Table 2 shows that dearth of farm labour (83.1% and 100%) was one of the major reasons for farmers' labour formation by both Igala and Ebira ethnic groups respectively. Other reasons given by both farmers in the two ethnic groups (Igala and Ebira) were rural-urban migration (74.6% and 68.0%), to assist one another in time of need (53.3% and 12.0% respectively), joint problem-solving (48.3% and 32.0%), among others. The overall result shows that dearth of farm labour (86.3%), and rural-urban migration (74.8%) was the major reasons for the formation of farmers' labour groups in the two ethnic groups. Ini, Ubong, Asa and Akpan (2002) assert that, the need to form farmers' labour groups is more apparent due to the steady decline/dearth of farm labour in most rural Nigeria. Rural-urban migration tends to deplete the agriculture labour force as it is the able-bodied young men who usually move (Ekong, 2010). With no commensurate substitution of capital in place of the displaced labour,

agricultural productivity tends to fall in the source region which is the rural area.

According to Adegeye and Dittoh in Chukwu and Achimugun (2010), governments in Nigeria have succeeded in creating dangerous dichotomy between the urban and rural areas due to development approaches that are urban-oriented. Hence, there exists a wide gap between these two points in the settlement continuum in terms of the level of economic development, quality of life, access to opportunities among others. These could probably be the pull factors that force younger farmers away from their rural abodes.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by reasons for farmers' labour formation

Reason *Ethnic group Igala(n=60) Ebira(n=40)	Overall (n=100)	
	%	%
Dearth of farm labour	83.1	100
Economies of scale	29.2	40.0
Rural-urban migration	76.4	68.0
Pooling of money for lending in circles	13.5	4.0
Access support from donor organizations	13.5	4.0
Assist one another in times of need	53.3	12.0
44.7		
Collective procurement of farm inputs	29.2	8.0
24.8		
Joint problem-solving	48.3	32.0
44.7		
Enhances farmers' prestige	4.5	4.0
Source: Field survey, 2015	* Multiple responses	

Constraints to farmers' labour group formation and productivity

Migration of youth population ($M= 2.71$ $SD=0.548$), high cost of farm labour ($M= 2.61$ $SD=0.588$), old age of some members and scarcity of farm labour ($M= 2.58$ $SD= 0.623$ and $M= 2.58$; $SD= 0.547$ respectively)

constituted major constraints to farmers' labour group activities in both Igala and Ebira ethnic groups. This implies that migration of able-bodied men and women to urban centers greatly have negative effects on farm labour supply as revealed by these findings, this will surely affect farm productivity as rural farmers may not have the needed fund to hire labour. Ekong (2010) asserts that migration from rural to urban greatly deplete agriculture labour force as able-bodied people are involved.

Other constraints to their effective formation and productivity (Table 2) perceived by the respondents from both ethnicities were problem of land ownership ($M= 2.37$ $SD= 0.707$), low level of education and low extension contacts ($M= 2.44$ $SD= 0.550$ and $M= 2.44$ $SD= 0.533$), high poverty level ($M= 2.26$ $SD=0.533$), and lack of government support ($M= 2.07$ $SD=0.704$) among others. The finding equally revealed that farmers' labour groups had little or no extension contact, this then shows that the farmers may not have access to some innovative practices that can better their agricultural operations. Iwuchukwu, Udoye and Onwubuya (2013) reported that, 77.5% of pineapple farmers in Enugu State had no contact with extension agents in 2011. This will translate to poor diffusion of innovation, and hence, poor yield. Farmers from both ethnic groups do not see some constraints such as exclusion from national labour laws ($M= 1.33$ $SD= 0.558$), lack of involvement in decision-making ($M= 1.85$ $SD= 0.586$), constant internal crisis ($M=1.05$ $SD= 0.292$), corruption/embezzlement ($M= 1.06$ $SD=0.277$) among a host of others as serious.

Table 2: Mean distribution of constraints to operation of farmers' labour groups (n=100)

Ethnic group Ebira(n=40) Constraint SD	(100)	Overall			Igala(n=60)		
		M	SD	M	SD	M	
Exclusion from national labour laws 0.558		1.34	0.583	1.29	0.464	1.33	
Lack of government support 0.704		1.99	0.699	2.38*	0.647	2.07*	
Lack of involvement in decision-making 0.586		1.87	0.548	1.79	0.721	1.85	
Constant internal crisis 0.294		1.07	0.330	1.00	0.000	1.05	
Poor health status of members 0.648		1.96	0.646	1.96	0.624	1.96	
Low extension contact 0.533		2.36*	0.528	2.75*	0.442	2.44*	
Old age of some members 0.623		2.49*	0.659	2.92*	0.282	2.58*	
Corruption(embezzlement of fund) 0.277		1.08	0.310	1.00	0.000	1.08	
Religious differences 0.262		1.07	0.294	1.00	0.000	1.05	
Migration of youth population 0.514		2.71*	0.548	2.88*	0.338	2.74*	
Pests and diseases 0.668		1.63	0.681	1.25	0.532	1.55	
Imposition of taxes by local authorities 0.615		1.43	0.638	1.20	0.500	1.38	
Bad weather conditions 0.545		1.49	0.567	1.12	0.332	1.41	
High poverty level of members 0.533		2.25*	0.528	2.32*	0.557	2.26*	
Poor state of infrastructure 0.603		2.20*	0.643	2.12*	0.440	2.18*	

Low productivity 0.670	1.66	0.706	1.48	0.510	1.62
Problem of land ownership 0.707	2.28*	0.723	2.68*	0.557	2.37*
Low prestige accorded farmers 0.745	1.74	0.747	1.20	0.577	1.62
Lack of commitment of some members 0.439	1.18	0.490	1.00	0.000	1.14
Lack of access to agro-information 0.709	2.08*	0.661	1.52	0.714	1.96
Poor storage facilities 0.634	2.04*	0.562	1.52	0.714	1.93
Scarcity of farm labour 0.547	2.56*	0.563	2.64*	0.490	2.58*
High cost of farm labour 0.588	2.56*	0.583	2.76*	0.436	2.61*
Scarcity of farm inputs 0.482	1.34	0.499	1.20	0.408	1.31
High cost of farm inputs 0.522	2.38*	0.533	2.36*	0.490	2.38*

Source: Field survey, 2015
***Major constraints**

Factor analysis of constraints to farmers' labour group formation and productivity

Table 3 shows the varimax rotated factor analysis of factors affecting farmers' labour groups in both Igala and Ebira ethnic groups. According to the table, four factors were delineated based on the item loadings as constraints to farmers' labour groups, these were: **farming environment factor; members' personality factor; membership exclusion factor; and government support factor.**

Specific factors that loaded high in factor one were migration of youth population (-0.478), pests and diseases (0.628), imposition of taxes by local authorities (0.661), bad weather conditions (0.474), low prestige accorded farmers (0.405), poor storage facilities (0.475) and high cost of farm labour (-0.499). Ekong (2010) asserts that, the out migration of the skilled and

educated from the rural areas deprived those areas of the human capital needed for productive purposes. Duru (2010) corroborated that, rural-urban migrants often consider the rural-urban imbalance of economic opportunities between the source and destination regions as the major pushing and pulling factor. A survey of senior secondary school students carried out by Ilenlo and Onemolease (2011) in Esan LGA of Edo State revealed that only 7.6% of the sampled students agreed to take a career in agriculture/farming, while majority (92.4%) opted out for non-farming jobs such as banking, civil service jobs among others. While factors that loaded high in factor two were constant internal crisis (0.761), corruption (0.878), religious differences (0.466) and lack of commitment by some members (0.558). Anonguku, Age, and Aduku-Dale (2010) report that, 58% of farmers in Makurdi local government area of Benue State agreed that communal crisis can disrupt social activities such as land preparation, weeding, harvesting among others. And factors that loaded high in factor three were exclusion from national labour laws (0.527), poor health status of farmers (0.638), high poverty level of members (0.499) and lack/limited access to agricultural information (0.590). ILO (2008) reported that, rural farmers fall outside the scope of national labour laws, in a number of cases they are excluded either fully or partially from relevant labour laws. Research focusing on agriculture has revealed the negative effect of ill-health especially on the welfare of agricultural households-which affect overall economic development. For instance, Asenso-Okyere, Chiang, Thangata and Andam (2011) report that the effects of ill-health on farm households include three broad impacts: absenteeism from farm work due to morbidity (and eventual death); diversion of family time to caring for the sick; and the loss of savings and assets in the course of dealing with disease and its consequences. Onuche, Opaluwa and Edoka (2014) also reported that 46.7% of rural households in Kogi State lost between 1 to 5 farming days on account of illness of a member on one extreme, while on the other extreme, 6.7% of them lost over 20 farming days due to illness of a member. While lack of government support (0.412), low extension contact (0.402), poor state of infrastructure (0.438), problem of land ownership (0.612) and high cost of farm inputs (0.538) were the factors that loaded high in factor four. Amalu (1998) opined that the nation's extension system is dysfunctional due to limited number of extension agents in some states for instance, there are as few as 4

to 8 extension staff per local government area hence giving an extension agent to farm family ratio of 1 to 4,000-10,000. And the effectiveness of this number of extension staff in most states is seriously limited by lack of transport and enough funds for paying transport allowances and other logistics.

Table 3: Varimax rotated factor analysis of constraints to farmers' labour groups formation and productivity (n=100)

Constraints	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Exclusion from national labour laws	-0.021	0.222	0.527	0.088
Lack of government supports	-0.008	-0.064	0.145	0.412
Lack of involvement in decision-making	0.111	0.040	0.332	0.341
Constant internal crisis	0.115	0.761	-0.075	-0.087
Low level of education	-0.399	-0.278	-0.189	0.054
Low extension contact	-0.252	-0.098	-0.274	0.402
Poor health status of members	0.034	-0.108	0.638	0.106
Old age of some members	-0.302	-0.353	-0.106	0.058
Corruption(embezzlement)	0.010	0.878	-0.010	0.147
Religious differences	-0.164	0.466	0.266	0.106
Migration of youth population	-0.478	-0.313	0.022	0.150
Pests and diseases	0.628	-0.036	-0.005	0.339
Imposition of taxes by local authorities	0.661	-0.212	-0.209	0.068
Bad weather conditions	0.474	-0.154	-0.001	0.116
High poverty level of members	0.214	0.077	-0.499	0.216
Poor state of infrastructure	0.162	0.012	0.040	0.438
Low productivity	0.421	0.411	-0.274	0.125
Problem of land ownership	-0.232	0.213	-0.348	0.612
Low prestige accorded farmers	0.405	0.098	0.255	0.377
Lack of commitment of some members	-0.036	0.558	0.081	-0.165

Lack/limited access to information	agro-	0.343	0.176	0.590	0.192
Poor storage facilities		0.475	0.006	0.293	0.088
Scarcity of farm labour		-0.279	-0.305	0.012	0.171
High cost of farm labour		-0.499	-0.254	0.113	0.260
Scarcity of farm inputs		0.286	0.122	0.178	-0.087
High cost of farm inputs		0.021	-0.148	0.049	0.538

Factor 1: Farming environment factor

Factor 2: Members' personality factor

Factor 3: Membership exclusion factor

Factor 4: Government support factor

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization (loading at 0.40 and above)

Bold type is used to highlight high factor loading.

Conclusion

Members of farm labour groups in respect to Igala and Ebira ethic groups were fairly old, with majority of them having primary education. The major reason adduced for forming labour groups was dearth of farm labour. While the major constraints they faced were migration of youth population, high cost of farm labour, old age of some members and problem of landownership.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

- Government and private institutions should intensify the processes of urbanizing rural areas as they serve as repository of labour force and food sources for the entire country at large by providing the necessary infrastructure. This will help check rural-urban migration of youth population and hence, reducing migration of rural labour force.
- Capacity building/training in the areas of formal education and awareness creation should be intensified to enable farmers appreciate and adopt the use of farm labour. Government and private partners can help in this direction by establishing adult literacy centres in rural areas so as to enable members of farmers' labour groups acquire the necessary skills and competence to carry out their traditional and enterprising roles effectively.
- The weak extension service should be strengthened by government and other private extension outfits by way of funding, training and provision of necessary logistics. This will enable farmers' labour groups have constant access to extension services and information for the improvement in their farm operations.

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