

# Impact of Agricultural Development Programs on Farmers' Productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State

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## Abstract

Over the years, agricultural development programs of different forms have been introduced to reduce poverty to some extent at the local level. But due to a number of factors, these programs seem to have failed to realize its aims in Nigeria, and the need to encourage the programs to work is sacrosanct. It is based this that this study is undertaken. The study examined the impact of agricultural development programs on farmers' productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. Specifically, it explore how policies and progrmmes packed can enhance small scale farmer's production and the capacity to alleviate rural poverty, and promote socio-economic development. The study has its method rooted in quantitative approach using close ended questionnaire. Simple random sampling technique was used to select study participants for the study. Data obtained were analyzed descriptively on percentage tables using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Findings of the study shows among others that; effect of government policy and decision on farmers were not given due recognition in decision making, though representatives of the farmers were adequately represented in decision making but yet do not have access to information on agricultural programmes which has impeded the farmers productivity in the study area. Based on these findings, the study recommends among others that; governments should make a new and expanded policy agenda for agricultural extension and communication for the local farmers, the governments will need to provide a national

policy agenda on food security and income generation of the rural poor.

**Key words:** Impact; Agriculture; Development; Farmer; Production

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian like other developing nations has faced a number of challenges over the years. One of such challenges is poverty. It is important to note that issue of poverty is even more prevalent within the nation's rural areas as it has been argued by many scholars that Nigeria is today bedevilled by catalogues of poverty which have become endemic in her rural areas where over seventy percent of her population including small scale farmers resides. In the same vein, "with farming as its main occupation, the use of primitive farm implements such as hoes, cutlasses and family labour has overshadowed any attempt at commercial production thereby making subsistence agriculture a prevailing circumstance" (Adelman, 2000, p.20).

Beyond the above challenges, access to productive farming inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, plough and credit facilities are some of the other major constraints of small-scale farmers of this classification. As a result of the aforementioned challenges amongst other things, farming as an occupation for the small-scale farmers is not yielding serious benefits in Nigerian rural areas. Hence, "food insecurity has remained a serious concern for the government and Nigerian populace. Nigeria has to spend a colossal sum of scarced foreign exchange

earnings annually, amounting to N1trn (one trillion naira)" (NBS-2012, UNDP-2012 cited in Aderibigbes, 2013, p.17) for food importation, thus derailing the nation's foreign exchange benefits and high cost of food that is not affordable by the majority households.

However, to alleviate the aforementioned problems, government have formulated and implemented several policies and programmes ranging from research institutes, initiating and facilitating access to credit facilities and farm inputs and farm mechanization programmes. Yet, these programmes have not yielded the desired improvement in the rate of productivity of the small-scale farmers. As noted by (Adeyemi, 2008), the rate of poverty in rural settlements in Nigeria where the small-scale farmers reside and earn their living from farming is put at 65.6%, indicating that the productivity, enhancement of their incomes and poverty level has not substantially improved.

It is important to reemphasize that these agricultural development programs were created to reduce poverty to some extent at the rural settings. These efforts do not often yielded results due to the fact that these efforts were brought about by the politicians with no plan for participation at the rural areas. Similarly, the programs were created. In all the programmes, both loans, contracts, and other benefits meant for the people at the local areas were taken by politicians at the detriment of the rural dwellers. This makes it seem that the ideas of the political leaders are against the idea of the peasants who formed the major population of the rural areas. Therefore, the inability of the local government to improve the condition of the rural dwellers has received public out-cry in recent times.

The need to overcome these challenges is sacrosanct. It is against this background that this study intends to investigate the impacts of agricultural programs on the small scale farmers using Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State as a case study.

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## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Agricultural Development Programs and Poverty Reduction

The term agricultural development has been defined by many scholars like Kolawole, and Omobitan, (2014, p.8), Kjell and Birgegard, (2007, p.3) and Iwayemi, (2012, p.7) amongst many others over the years. Most of the definitions looked at the meaning of the concept in the context of its purposes and functionalities. A simple term, it is an improvement in the local and traditional means of production so as to raise productivity in the agricultural sector of the economy in order to enhance income and standard of living of the local farmers. In other words, agricultural development is the creation of good environment for the small-holder farmer to produce efficiently. It can also be seen as a means of reducing

poverty, and promote rural transformation, employment opportunities, food security and national health profile of the citizenry. According to Iwayemi (2012, p.14) "Agricultural Development as a continuous and systematic attempt to utilize the agricultural resources of a nation in order to benefit agricultural workers and the general populace". He further held that "agricultural development is synonymous with rural transformation process that is structural change in an economy from subsistence agriculture to investment dominated agriculture". From the foregoing, it can be seen that the concept of agricultural development focused on the act of changing the wrong approaches of agricultural production to a modernized or mechanized system so as to boost large scale production in the agrarian sector.

However, it is important to acknowledge that improvement of the agricultural sector can contribute hugely to the transformation of Nigeria. But like Adawo noted thus, the sector has been confronted by a number of challenges; Adawo, (2011, p.17) states that the Nigeria agricultural sector is characterized with low farm incomes, low company level in meeting the food and cash crop needs and requirements of the country and primitive methods and techniques of production, resulting in low production output and high poverty incident among the rural agrarian populace.

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## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study include:

- i. Identify specific policies and programmes designed to enhance small scale farmer's productivity in Dekina LGA of Kogi state.
- ii. Evaluate how the agricultural policies and programmes have been implemented in Dekina LGA in Kogi state.
- iii. Find out the factors responsible for the failure of Agricultural development policies and programmes in Dekina LGA of Kogi state.
- iv. Suggest ways through which these (other) policies and programmes can succeed in Dekina LGA of Kogi state.

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## 4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the specific policies and programmes designed to enhance small scale farmer's productivity in Dekina LGA of Kogi state?
- ii. How have the agricultural policies and programmes been implemented in Dekina LGA in Kogi state?
- iii. What are the factors responsible for the failure of Agricultural development policies and programmes in Dekina LGA of Kogi state?
- iv. In what ways can Agricultural development policies and programmes succeed in Dekina LGA of Kogi state?

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Research Design

The design adopted for this work is the survey research design of the quantitative research methodology.

### 5.2 Method of Data Collection

Based on the chosen research design, combination of both primary and secondary data collection technique was adopted. Primary data was gathered using questions which were administered as questionnaire with the help of three (3) research assistants and collection of relevant materials from documents serve as source of secondary data.

### 5.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study was determined statistically using Roasoft online sample size determinate and Krejcie and Morgan (1970, p.19), table for finite population in determining the sample for the study. Based on this, four hundred copies of questionnaire were personally distributed to the respondents, out of which Three Hundred and ninety were retrieved from respondents giving a response rate of 98% from the total population as it is scientifically significant. This served as the basis for these presentation and analysis which were categorized into four sections for easy and better interpretation of data including cross tabulations.

#### 5.3.1 Section A: Socio Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Sex:** Table 1 indicates that, 60.8% of the respondents were male, 39.2% of the respondents were female. This shows that majority of the respondents were male.

**Age:** The result also indicates that, 18.2% of the respondents were within the group of 18-25, 26.9% were within the age range of 26-32, 33.6% of the respondents were within the age range of 33-39 years and 21.3 were within the age range of 40 years and above.

**Qualification:** as shown in table 1, 42.3% of the

#### 5.3.2 Section B: Government Agricultural Policy and Decision Making

Table 2

Percentage Distribution showing the Extent Farmers are included in Government Decision

Variables	Category N=390				
	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
Farmers are given due recognition in decision making	60 (15.4%)	70 (17.9%)	11 (18.2%)	177 (45.4%)	12 (3.1%)
Representative of the farmers are adequately represented in policy making.	0 (0%)	213 (54.6%)	82 (21.0%)	83 (21.3%)	12 (3.1%)
Farmers do not have access to information on agricultural programmes.	35 (9.0%)	189 (48.5%)	36 (9.2%)	130 (33.3%)	0 (0%)
Farmers are not consulted on issues affecting their interest.	0 (0%)	236 (60.5%)	12 (3.1%)	142 (36%)	0 (0%)
Farmers are not politically organized to meet the challenges of discrimination	12 (3.1%)	294 (75.4%)	12 (3.1%)	72 (18.5%)	0 (0%)
Due to geographical disperse of farmers; they are hardly organized with one voice.	118 (30.3%)	165 (42.3%)	0 (0%)	107 (27.4)	0 (0%)
Farmers possess the political capacity to challenge their exclusion	36 (9.2%)	34 (8.7%)	24 (6.2%)	284 (72.8%)	12 (3.1%)
Poor Enlightenment on agricultural information is an impediment to farmers productivity and poverty reduction	154 (39.5%)	188 (48.2%)	0 (0%)	48 (12.3%)	0 (0%)
The government accord priority to the implementation of agricultural policy and programmes.	12 (3.1%)	177 (45.4%)	83 (21.3%)	118 (30.3%)	0 (0%)
There is adequate mechanism to check and monitor implementation of agricultural policy and programmes.	0 (0%)	153 (39.2%)	36 (9.2%)	201 (51.5%)	0 (0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

respondents had O' level, 21.0% of the respondents had Diploma/OND/NCE, 33.6% of the respondents had degree and 3.1 had post graduate degree.

**Council ward:** Table 1 shows that 25.6% of the Respondents were from Anyigba ward, 23.8% were from Egume, 25.4% were from Iyale and 25.2% were from Abocho. .

**Hectares of Land:** The Table further reveals that majority of the respondents had 45.4% had 1-2 hectares of land, 30.3% were 3-4 hectares of land and 24.4% had 5 hectares and above.

**Annual Income per Farming Season:** 51.8% of the respondents earn 100,000-200,000 per farming season, 21.3% of the respondents earn 300,000-400,000 per farming season, 14.9% earns 500,000-600,000 and 12.1% earns 600,000 and above per farming season.

Table 1  
 Percentage Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (N=178)	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	237	60.8
	Female	153	39.2
Age (in years)	18-25 years	71	18.2
	26-32 years	105	26.9
	33-39 years	131	33.6
	40 and above	83	21.3
Qualification	O' level	165	42.3
	Diploma/OND/NCE	82	21.0
	Degree	131	33.6
	Post graduate	83	3.1
Council	Anyigba	100	25.6
	Egume	93	23.8
	Iyale	99	25.4
	Abocho	98	25.2
Hectares of land	1-2	177	45.4
	3-4	118	30.3
	5 and above	95	24.4
Annual income	100,000-200,000	202	51.8
	300,000-400,000	83	21.3
	500,000 above	58	14.9

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From Table 2 above, majority of the respondents disagreed that (45.4%) farmers are given due recognition in decision making. Majority agreed that (54.6%) representative of the farmers are adequately represented in policy making, 48.5% agreed that farmers do not have access to information on agricultural programmes. 60.6% agreed that farmers are not consulted on issues affecting their interest, 75.4% agreed that farmers are not politically organized to meet the challenges of

discrimination, 48.2% poor enlightenment on agricultural information is an impediment to farmers productivity and poverty reduction, 45.4% agreed that the government accord priority to the implementation of agricultural policy and programmes while 72.8% disagreed that farmers possess the political capacity to challenge their exclusion and 51.5 disagreed that there is adequate mechanism to check and monitor implementation of agricultural policy and programmes.

**Table 3**  
**Percentage Distribution showing the Extent Farmers have access to Farm Input**

Variables	Category N=390				
	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
Knowledge of the existence of agricultural development project in Kogi State (KSADP)	12 (3.1%)	295 (75.6%)	60 (15.4%)	23 (5.9%)	0 (0%)
The LGA ADPA distributes farm inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, pesticides and implements.	12 (3.1%)	249 (63.8%)	24 (6.2%)	93 (23.8%)	12 (3.1%)
Farmers receive the inputs in enough quantity and as at when due (during the farming season)	12 (3.1%)	23 (5.9%)	60 (15.4%)	271 (69.5%)	5 (24.0%)
The distributions are not diverted and hijacked by political interests	0 (0%)	82 (21.0)	35 (9.0)	226 (57.9%)	47 (12.1%)
Corruption is one of the major impediments in the distribution and accessibility to undisrupted farm inputs	274 (70.3%)	93 (23.8%)	23 (5.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
The existence of the state Agricultural Development Project (ADPS) and its functions has promoted small scale agricultural revival , farmers productivity and poverty reduction	95 (24.4%)	188 (48.2%)	59 (15.1%)	48 (12.3%)	0 (0%)
Access to credit facilities exist for farmers as at when required from lending financial institutions.	47 (12.1%)	71 (18.2%)	12 (3.1%)	236 (60.5%)	24 (6.2%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

From Table 3, 75.6% agreed that they are aware of the existence of agricultural development project in Kogi State (KSADP), 63.8 agreed that LGA ADPA distributes farm inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, pesticides and implements, 69.5% strongly disagree that farmers receive the inputs in enough quantity and as at when due (during the farming season), 57.9% strongly disagree that the distributions are not diverted and hijacked by political interests.

70.3% strongly agreed that Corruption is one of the major impediments in the distribution and accessibility to undisrupted farm inputs. 48.2% agreed that The existence of the state Agricultural Development Project (ADPS) and its functions has promoted small scale agricultural revival, farmers productivity and poverty reduction and 60.5% strongly disagreed that access to credit facilities exist for farmers as at when required from lending financial institutions.

### 5.3.3 Section C: Marketing and Distribution of Farm Produce

**Table 4**  
**Percentage Distribution showing the Extent Farmers are involved in their farm produce**

Variables	Category N=390				
	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
Farm produce are sold in the market	226 (57.9%)	164 (42.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Middle-men buy the produce at a cheap price from farmers	142 (36.4%)	189 (48.5%)	24 (6.2%)	35(9.0%)	0 (0%)
Farmers do not decide the price	24 (6.2%)	200 (51.3%)	60 (15.4%)	94 (24.1%)	12 (3.1%)
There is adequate storage facilities in rural areas	23 (5.9%)	84 (21.5%)	35 (9.0)	224 (57.9%)	24 (6.2%)
Government do not assist the farmers in disposing off their farm produce	84 (21.5%)	199 (51.0%)	107 (27.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
International competition is an impediment to the sale of domestic farm produce	48 (12.3%)	260 (66.7%)	24 (6.2%)	58 (14.9%)	0 (0%)
Farmers are not exploited by the middle-men and their agents.	35 (9.0%)	23 (5.9%)	23 (5.9%)	297 (76.2%)	12 (3.1%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 indicated that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that Farm produce are sold in the market with 57.6%, 48.5% agreed that middle-men buy the produce at a cheap price from farmers, 51.3% agreed

that farmers do not decide the price, 57.9% disagreed that there is adequate storage facilities in rural areas, 51.0% agreed that government do not assist the farmers in disposing off their farm produce, 57.9% disagreed

that there is adequate storage facilities in rural areas, 51.0% agreed that government do not assist the farmers in disposing off their farm produce, 66.7% agreed that

international competition is an impediment to the sale of domestic farm produce and 76.2% disagreed that farmers are not exploited by the middle-men and their agents.

### 5.3.4 Section D: Assessment of Small-Scale Farming as an Occupation

**Table 5**  
**Percentage Distribution showing how Farmers Access Farming as an Occupation, a Means of Livelihood and Poverty Reduction**

Variables	Category N=390				
	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
Farming is a lucrative occupation and is capable of mitigating poverty	213 (54.6%)	141 (36.2%)	0 (0%)	36 (9.2%)	0 (0%)
Government support and encouragement is vital for farmers to successfully exist in the occupation	165 (42.3%)	190 (48.7%)	23 (5.9%)	12 (3.1%)	0 (0%)
Class interest and class relations are major obstacles to the promotion of small scale farming	35 (9.0%)	271 (69.5%)	72 (18.5%)	12 (3.1%)	0 (0%)
Promotion of capitalist agriculture will throw the small scale farmers into farm labourer	47 (12.1%)	188 (48.2%)	95 (24.4%)	60 (15.4%)	0 (0%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 5 shows that 54.6% strongly agreed that farming is a lucrative occupation and is capable of mitigating poverty, 48.7%, 48.7% strongly disagreed that government support and encouragement is vital for farmers to successfully exist in the occupation, 69.5% agreed that class interest and class relations are major obstacles to the promotion of small scale farming and 48.2% agreed that Promotion of capitalist agriculture will throw the small scale farmers into farm labourer.

implements. The farmers affirmed that they do not receive inputs in enough quantity and as at when due (during the farming season) which is believed to be usually diverted and hijacked by political interest. Access to credit facilities is not available to farmers in Dekina, although they attested that the existence of the state Agricultural Development Project (ADPS) and its functions has promoted small scale agricultural revival, farmer's productivity and poverty reduction.

## 6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study examines the impact of agricultural development policies and programmes on farmer's productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. The findings shows that male is more engage in farming than females in Dekina Local government Area with majority having about 1-2 hectares of land and a annual incoming of 100,000-200,000 after each farming season. The study found out the effect of government policy and decision on farmers, farmers are not given due recognition in decision making. Although representatives of the farmers are adequately represented in decision making but yet do not have access to information on agricultural programmes which has impeded the farmers productivity and poverty reduction. Also, the findings shows that farmers are not are not usually consulted on issues concerning their interest and are not politically organized to meet the challenges of discrimination since they do not possess political capacity to challenge their exclusion from politics. Adequate mechanism to check and monitor implementation of agricultural policy and programmes are not put in place by the government.

The farm produce was often sold in the market and often bought at cheap price by the middle men from farmers although the farmers affirmed that they are not exploited by the middle men. Farmers do not decide the price of farm product and have limited storage facilities to store farm produce after harvest after each farming season. The farmers had to dispose their farm produce after each faming season without the help of the government since international competition is an impediment to the sale of domestic farm produce.

The shows the extent farmers have access to farm input. The farmers are well aware of the existence of agricultural development project in Kogi State (KSADP). They affirmed that KSADP distributes farm inputs such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, pesticides and

Farming is seen as a lucrative occupation that is capable of mitigating poverty. Agreed that government support and encouragement is vital for farmers to successfully exist in the occupation and class interest and class relations are major obstacles to the promotion of small scale farming. The farmers believed that the promotion of capitalist agriculture will throw the small scale farmers into farm labourer.

A pluralistic institutional framework would promote the advancement of "mixed economies, "whereby public and private sectors cooperate more closely. High rates of adoption of improved agricultural technologies occur when government organizations, NGOs, and private organizations form partnerships in extending agricultural technologies to farmers. A pluralistic institutional framework would mandate that programmes be planned, implemented and evaluated jointly by multispectral service providers on a location specific basis in cooperation with farmers.

## 7. CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the above findings, this study has a number of implications on the society. In other words, this study is of theory and practical significance. First and foremost, it will provide scholars and researchers alike the opportunity to access the extent of the state government's commitment to policy formulation and implementation on agricultural production and poverty reduction in Kogi State. For the small-scale farmers and the public in the state, the work would serve as an authoritative information kit to guide all and sundry about poverty reduction strategies of the state and how to access facilities if feasible. Equally, the research work will sensitize as well as publicise the activities and programmes of the state on agricultural revitalization and poverty reduction in rural areas for the small-scale farmers and suggest ways for enhancing increase in productivity and incomes of the farmers.

From the academic perspectives, the study will provide a renewed renaissance on knowledge building most especially on the "disappearance of such supportive values" that are now giving prominence to capitalist agriculture over small scale holder farmers in the state under study.

From the point of view of the government and policy makers, the study will equally provide them the opportunity to identify and reveal the challenges, failures and successes of previous agricultural policies and programmes on small scale agriculture while at the same time providing the needed guidance in the formulation of viable policies relevant to the political economy of the state and to the capacity of small-scale farmers to increase their productivity and income.

Finally, this research work will also serve as a veritable aid to future researchers who may still be interested in furthering researches on the impact of the government agricultural programmes on small scale farmers either in any of the local government areas in Kogi state or Nigeria as a whole.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study has to some extent examined the impact of agricultural programs on the farmers' productivity in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. Among other things, the work therefore concludes that farmers are not given due recognition in decision making and do not have access to information on agricultural programmes which has impeded the farmers productivity and poverty reduction. The farmers are well aware of the existence of agricultural development project in Kogi State (KSADP). However, the distribution of farm inputs by KSADP is limited, which is believed to be usually diverted and hijacked by political interest. Access to credit facilities is not available to farmers in Dekina, and has contributed

to low farmer's productivity and undermined poverty reduction. Farming is a lucrative occupation that is capable of mitigating poverty. Government support and encouragement is vital for farmers to successfully exist in the occupation and class interest and class relations are major obstacles to the promotion of small scale farming. The promotion of capitalist agriculture will throw the small scale farmers into farm labourer.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Three major recommendations are put forward for consideration by the federal, state and Dekina local governments. The first requires a strong, forward looking policy favouring agricultural extension and communication for agricultural and non-agricultural rural development with a focus on food security. The second proposes the establishment of a platform to promote dialogue and collaboration among all relevant sectors to favour extension/ communication activities for food security. And the third proposes public sector institutional change to enhance the new and expanded policy and strategy. Supporting these recommendations are numbers of suggestions as to their accomplishment.

### 10. Suggestions for Further Studies

It is said that solving one problem often gives rise to another problem. This investigation on the impact of agricultural development programs on small scale farmers' productivity Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State has gives rise to other problems . Hence, further research should be carried out in the following areas:

- i. The potential of agricultural policies implementation on national development
- ii. The prospects for the establishment of agricultural education institutes by the government should also be studied.
- iii. Factors that have hindered the effective implementation of agricultural development programs in Nigeria should be reviewed.
- iv. A replicate of this study should be carried out in the Local Governments in the State.

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