

An Assessment of Agricultural Marketing Information System among Farmers Associations in Kano State, Nigeria

Hassan Ibrahim¹, Zhou Jing,¹ Ibrahim Abdu², Mustapha Sanusi³ and Nafiu Bala Sanda⁴

¹M.Sc Agricultural Extension Students, College of Economics and Management, Shenyang Agricultural University, Lioaning, China. Email: hassanibrahim449@yahoo.com

²Department of Agriculture, Ministry for Local Government, Kano State, Nigeria.

³Department of Crop science, Federal University, Dutse, Jigawa State, Nigeria.

⁴Department of Crop Protection, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

This study was conducted based on primary data collected using a questionnaire. A total of 90 respondents among farmers associations were interviewed in Kano state of Nigeria. Therefore, double stage stratified and purposive simple random sampling technique was used to select 30 respondents in each of three (3) farmers associations, one from each of the three (3) agricultural zones of the state. The data were analyzed by SPSS using descriptive statistics. The result revealed that 67% of the farmers were 45years old and below and 79% were literate. Furthermore, 47% joined the association with an aim of contributing to community development while 46% joined for receiving an assistance for farming. Additionally, 57% and 60% required and received agricultural marketing information on production aspect respectively. 71% described extension agents as a source of information. Long distance from source and poor access to communication network was the major problems limiting access to agricultural marketing information

Keywords: Agricultural Marketing Information, Farmers Association, Kano, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Agriculture of Nigeria contribute about 41% of national GDP and providing employment to two-third of the labor force (Mohammad and Atte, 2006). Agriculture is the economic mainstay of majority of households in this country and is a significant sector to Nigeria's economy. However, small scale farmers are the main producers of 98% of food consumed in Nigeria with only exception of wheat (Ozowa, 1995). These farmers need support for improving livelihood and sustainable agricultural production. According to Tologbonse et al. (2008), small farmers' accessibility to agricultural innovation is often limited by unfavorable economic, socio-cultural and institutional condition. They have achieved some level of efficiency through deployment of their indigenous knowledge. If these farmers are provided with the right inputs, feasible technology and relevant information which are actually needed, they are capable of transforming traditional agriculture. Hence, initiatives for transformation can be effective when farming communities are being sensitized to marketing intelligence, prevailing prices of commodities and comparatives prices in the nearby markets, as well as extension activities undertaken by government, high yielding variety seeds, fertilizer, agricultural mechanization, culling information by internet or computer, upgrading of knowledge by

making gainful use of various sponsored program on T.V and radio, are some of the current issues which need to be paid undivided attention (Yadav and Singh, 2013).

It is affirmed that small holder farmers in rural areas lack adequate market information and contractual agreement (Jari and Fraser, 2013). Similarly, Olukosi et al. (2005) identified the need for agricultural marketing information as a major tool for farmers to make economic decision that will benefit them and enhance access to market. Accordingly, Chomber et al. (2002) stated that, marketing information is crucial to agricultural production in addition to labor, land and capital. Ferris and Robbins, (2004) in a studies on access of farmers to marketing information in east Africa found that, lack of accurate and relevant market information has been identified as a major obstacle in efforts to improve the agricultural sectors of African countries that yet very few of farmers have access to such information. It has long been recognized that the process of liberalizing agricultural markets in African countries would have to be accompanied by the provision of independent market information to all stakeholders in the commercial chain in order to avoid distortions in these markets. Small-scale farmers, in particular, need to be assured that they receive a fair market price for their surplus production and to be given the



Abstract

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necessary market signals to enable and or encourage them to produce the type and quality of goods required by consumers.

In Nigeria, agricultural market information to small scale farmers is provided by the ministry of agriculture through the field level extension workers and by the broadcasting media. A lot has to be done in the area, some of those in charge of market information are not well trained for the job and most of the innovations do not reach the farmers field. This is because the medium for information dissemination in use are not quite effective. One of the obvious constraints in the use of the broadcasting media in Nigeria is poor reception quality and the area covered. The message carried are not tailored to the information needs of rural population, even when the information is relevant, it is seldom aired at the proper time and so does not get to the targeted audience (Ozowa, 1995). Kano is the most populous state in Nigeria with a population of 9,383,682 and an area of 20,131km² of which 18,684km² are cultivable, 75% of the total population engaged in agriculture (Kano state, 2014). It has been observed that public agricultural extension systems often fail due to inadequate consultation of farmers about their information needs and poor understanding of their information search strategies (Babu et al. 2012). Additionally, specific information needs of the target audience (farmers) should be taken into consideration to meet their needs and aspiration (Elizabeth, 2007). No research on assessing market information of farmers in Kano state has been carried out. However, similar research was carried out in Benue state of Nigeria (Okwoche et al, 2010), and found that poor access to market information is one of major constraint of farmers. The overall objective of this study is to find out the agricultural marketing information system of farmers and determine factors that limit access to information. Specifically, the study intends to achieve the following;

Determine the socio-economic characteristics of farmers.

Determine reasons for joining farmers association.

Describe the type of agricultural marketing information farmers required, shared and its source.

Determine problems that limit access to agricultural marketing information.

2. Materials and methods

The research was conducted in Kano state, which consists of three agricultural zones under Kano Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA). A double stage stratified and purpose simple random sampling was used to select the respondents (Okwoche et al. 2010). Firstly, three

farmers associations were purposively selected namely, Chiromawa, Maitsidau and Wudilawa, one from each zone. Secondly, from each farmers association a sample of 30 farmers were randomly selected for data collection. Therefore, the total sample size for this study was 90 farmers. The data were collected during October-November, 2013. The primary data was collected through a well-structured interview schedule. The data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage.

3. Results and discussion

Age is an important factor; rational discussion making process depends on age. The younger a person is, the more rapidly will be his adoptability and responsiveness to any activity, particularly, in communication and understanding (Basant, 1988). The data in table 1 shows that, 67% of the respondents are within the age limit of 25-45. This age limit represents physically fit and matured people for agricultural production. On the other hand, 22% fell within the limit of 46-55 years old while 11% within 56& above old. Education is crucial to agricultural development. Education and communication moves hand in hand. Economic development and advancement in communication are positively correlated with education (Khan and Akram, 2012). The data analyzed in table 2 shows that, 79% of the responds were literate while 21% are illiterate. However, within the farmers group, Wudilawa has the highest literate farmers with 87%. Furthermore, the data revealed that, eight farmers out of 71 literate farmers attended educational level of degree and above.

The results shows that, 83% of the farmers were men while 17% were women. This is an indication that women in Nigeria are not fully involved in agricultural activities, despite their significant role in food production. Accordingly, Yusuf et al (2010), stated one area of major concern in Nigeria is the inadequate integration of women into the agricultural sector. Furthermore, the data also, revealed, 92% of the farmers were married while 8% are single. Based on occupation, 77% involved directly in farming while 18% and 5% combined civil service and trading with farming as occupation.

The data in Table 3 revealed that, 47%(on average) of farmers joined the associations with aim of contributing to the development of their community and 46% aimed to benefit from assistance for farming from government and nongovernmental organizations. On the other hand, 1% joined to earn respect.

Also table 3 shows, 43% of the respondents received assistance on training and 37% received assistance on inputs for farming. However, 11% received loan. However, despite, the importance of credit to farmers they still face some challenges in acquisition of loan (Ololade and Olagunju, 2013).

The result in table 4 indicates, 57% of farmers required information on production, 20% and 17% required information on processing and storage respectively. However, 6% required information on sales. This is similar to the findings of Wesseler and Brinkman(2002), that information needs of farmers are centered on production.

Table 4 shows that, 60% of farmers received information on production and 18% and 16% received information on processing and storage. While 6% received information on sales.

Also result in table 4 indicated 49% of farmers shared information among other farmers on

production while 23% and 18% shared information on storage and processing, while 10% shared information on sales.

The highest (71%) sources of information for farmers were from extension agents as shown in table 4, 15% was from media (radio), 8% from farmers associations, 4% from middlemen, and 2% from friends/family/Neighbors. This is in supportive to Ozowa (1995), that, Nigerian farmers rank extension highest in terms of providing credible information and advice.

Poor access to communication network was described by 35% of respondents as problem limiting access to agricultural marketing information, while 33% and 32% reported long distance from the source of information and inadequate extension agents as factor limiting access to information.

Table 1. Age-wise distribution of Farmers

Associations	Age										Total
	<25		26-35		36-45		46-55		≥56		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Chiromawa	0	0	7	23	15	50	6	20	2	7	30
Maitsidau	3	10	6	20	13	43	2	7	6	20	30
Wudilawa	0	0	11	37	5	17	12	40	2	7	30
Total	3	10	24	27	33	37	20	22	10	11	90

Table 2. Educational levels

Associations	Illiterate	Primary	Junior	Senior	Diploma	Total
Chiromawa	5	7	2	6	10	30
Maitsidau	10	11	1	2	6	30
Wudilawa	4	8	7	3	8	30
Total	19	26	10	11	24	90

Table 3. Distribution of Farmers According to Information on Farming Association

Variables	Purpose for Joining Association						Total
	Chiromawa		Maitsidau		Wudilawa		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Contribute to Develop of community	13	43	14	47	15	50	42
Receive assistance for farming	14	47	13	43	14	47	41
Social reason	2	7	1	3	0	0	3
To earn respect	1	3	0	0	0	0	1
Friends/family/neighbors have joined	0	0	1	3	0	0	1
Political reason	0	0	1	3	1	3	2
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100	90
	Assistance received						
Training	16	53	19	63	4	13	39
Inputs	11	37	1	3	21	70	33
Farm work			8	27			8
Loan	3	10	2	7	5	17	10
Total	30	100	30	100	30	100	90

Table 4. Distribution of Farmers According Agricultural Marketing Information

Variables	Agricultural Marketing Information						Total
	Chiromawa		Maitsidau		Wudilawa		
	Information Required						
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Production	13	43	20	67	18	60	
Storage	6	20	7	23	2	7	
Sales	6	20	0	0	0	0	
Processing	5	17	3	10	10	33	
Total	30		30		30		90
	Information Received						
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Production	15	50	18	60	21	70	
Storage	8	27	7	23			
Sales	5	17	0	0	0	0	
Processing	2	7	5	17	9	30	
Total	30		30		30		90
	Information Shared						
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Production	15	50	15	50	14	47	
Storage	7	23	10	33	4	13	
Sales	4	13	3	10	2	7	
Processing	4	13	2	7	10	33	
Total	30		30		30		90
	Sources of Information						
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Middlemen			4	13			
Extension agents	21	70	20	67	23	77	
Friends/Family/Neighbours	2	7					
Media(radio/TV)	2	7	4	13	7	23	
Farmers Association	5	16	2	7			
Total	30		30		30		90
	Problems Associated with Agricultural Marketing Information						
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Inadequate extension agents	7	23	21	70	1	3	
Long distance from source	11	37	7	23	12	40	
Poor access to communication	12	40	2	7	17	57	
Total	30		30		30		90

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Compared to the findings of Okwoche et al. (2010), which found that, 38% (majority) of farmers in Benue state had friends/ family/ neighbor as their source of information and middle men were described by majority (31%) of farmers as major factor that limit farmers access to information, however, this findings found that 71% of farmers had extension agents as source of information in Kano state and majority of farmers (31%) described poor access to communication network as factor that limit access to information. A nation can attain a state of food sufficiency with development of farmers. Farmers perform to optimal capacity, when well-equipped relative to their needs and aspirations. Therefore, agricultural marketing information needs of farmers is crucial to agricultural production, all information for farmers will be effective, when communicated based on the principles of demand-driven as this enhances effectiveness in production. Furthermore, there is need for effective and reliable agricultural information network. Finally, provision of well trained and adequate extension agents increases agricultural development and constraints facing farmers particularly, rural women should be further examined.

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