ASSESSMENT OF FARMER'S PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE.

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participation in agricultural cooperatives in Mokwa Local Government Area of'Niger sampling technique was u sed to select 120 respondents who were small scalefarmers. asing structured questionnaire complemented with interview scheduled. Both descriptive •ere used to analyze the data collected. The result ofthis study revealed that majority (82.5%) _z.-T •ukin the age range of 21 -- 55 years with a mean age of 39 years, while 82.6% of the education and above. More so, about 64.2% of the respondents attested to the societies in the study area. Logil regression analysis result showed that the value of

R^2 was 0.5758 implying that about 58% of the variation in the dependent variable is variables in the logit regression model. The age, gender, household size, educational experience were all significant at 1%, 5% and 10% respectively, and directly related 10 cooperatives in the study area. This implies that one unit increase in any ofthe variable in the level ofparticipation in an agricultural cooperative. Il was therefore recommended that enhance participation offarmers in agricultural cooperatives in orderfor them to benefit imprové on their agriculturalproduction.

cooperatives, effectiveness, factors, Constraints, Farmers participation.

s.xa•oes are legal, institutionalized and characterized by the values of sty-responsibility and democracy equality. to Enyeribe (2001), cooperative onsist of group of peoplc who join F<iocm functions which they cannot an help to provide some is people concerned, operating on a solution to their problems and does the motive of service and not for profit Cooperative is a voluntary organization in Fez:vle come together on basis of equality for of economics interest (Ugochukwu, s an autonomous association of women and men, voluntanly to meet their common economic, social needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and — xrx.xally controlled enterprise (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2012). According to International Labour Ckganization (2007), cooperative enterprise model exists in many sectors, including agriculture, consumer issues, marketing and financial services, and housing. More so, — xrar.es provide 100 million jobs worldwide and count more than I billion members. Agricultural cooperatives play A-octant role in supporting small agricultural producers z:rzinalized groups such as young people and women. As iz$lighted by Ikcpcfan (2004), the report of isanational Labour Organization (ILO) on the cut'tribution of cooperative societies to economic go•ath showed that the livelihood of nearly 3 billion people or half of the world population was made secure by cooperative enterprises based on the United Nation estimates of 1994 and that agricultural vegetables for the nationals market in Burkina-faso, responsible for 77% of cotton production and 90% of national milk production in Cote'd'ivoire and 70% of the cooperatives are the largest producers of fruits and wheat production surplus export in Uruguay. All over world cooperative movement has remained the vehicle developmental services to farmers. Generally, cooperat efforts tend to be directed towards namely agricultu cooperative society, Thrift and credit, multi-purpose, fish and marketing cooperative societies. Farmers all over world faces the challenges of accessing basic agricultu inputs individually, it becomes more severe with respect to developing countries especially African countr if they do not participate in agricultural cooperatives. posited by USAID (2005), the purpose of the Agricult Cooperatives in Ethiopia is to improve the efficiency agricultural markets through development and promotion modem, business-oriented agricultural cooperatives active input supply, output marketing, and extension Of credit. evaluation catTied out by the International Food Pol Research Institute (IFPRI) in 2010 in Eastern Afr revealed that increased participation in agricultu cooperatives had resulted in improved crop productivi production and incolne. It proved to be particula beneficial for women, female-headed households, peo with low literacy levels, and farmers with medium-siz landholdings. In Nigeria, Idrisa el al. (2007) posited that level of participation of individual member in the activit of cooperative societies to which such a member belor determines the level of awareness of such member about operauve society, Chereby concluding that members attain higher levels of education tend to participale more cooperative activities. It was against this backdrop that t

study was conceived to assess farmers' participation in agricultural cooperatives in Mokwa Local Government Area of Niger Slate, hence the following objectives which are to:

i. describe the socio- economic characteristic of the farmers in the study area.

ii. identify the types of agricultural cooperative in the study area iii. determine the effectiveness of agricultural cooperatives in the study area.

iv. determine the factors influencing the participation of farmer's in agricultural co-operatives in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The study area: This study was conducted in Mokwa Local Government Area of Niger State with latitude $3^{0}20^{1}$ East and longitude $1\,1^{0}3^{1}$ North ofthe equator. It is one of the twenty-five (25) LGAs ofNiger State and carved out of the present Lavun Local Government Area in September, 1991. There are four (4) districts in Mokwa LGA which are; Mokwa, Muwo, Kudu and Tako, and it covers a total land area of two hundred and twenty (220) square kilometers with a total population of about 126,045 (National Population Commission, 2006). The projected population as at 2014 using 3.2% growth rate was 162, 167. About 85 percent of the land is Arable. The Local Government is characterized by dry and wet seasons with annual rainfall ranging from 1 100 1600mrn and temperature ranging from 23^{0}C 29^{0}C. Agriculture is the major occupation of the people with about 85% of the population engaged in farming. The major food crops include: yam, beans, rice, millet, groundnut, maize and sugarcane, and raised animals like; cattle, goat, sheep and others. The people living in the study area are predominantly Nupes with some Gwaris and Hausas also present (Niger State Government, 2007).

Sampling procedures: Sample populations were basically small-scale farmers that are members of agricultural cooperative society in Mokwa. A multistage random sampling technique was emplöyed in selecting the respondent for this study. The first stage involvcd random selection of two (2) villages from each of the four (4) districts in Mokwa Local Government Area to give a total of eight (8) villages. Second stage was the random selection of six (6) villages out of the selected eight (8) villages using the list of registered cooperative societies in the study area and finally, the third stage was the random selection of twenty (20) farmers from each ofthe six (6) villages to give a total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents for this study. Data were collected with the aid of well structured questionnaires complimented by personal interview schedules. Both descriptive (frequency distribution, percentage and mean) and inferential statistic (logit regression model) were used as the tools for the analysis.

Logit Regression Analysis

Logit regression was used to determine factors influencing participation of respondents in agricultural cooperative societies. The general logit regression model is mathematically expressed as shown below:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \ldots\ldots \beta_7 X_7 + e$$

Where:-

Y = Participation of Respondents in agricultural cooperates (Yes = l , No = 0) Xi = Age in years

X2 = Gender (Male = 1, Female = 0)

X3 = Marital status (Married = I , Single = 0) X4 = Household size in number

X5 = Educational level in years ofschooling

X6 = Farming experience in years

Xi = Income in naira

RESULTSAND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The socio-economic variables examined were age, marital status, gender, educational level, farming experience and household size of the respondents. As revealed in Table l , majority (74.1%) of the respondents fall within the age range of 21 — 50 years implying that they are in their most productive age while 95.8% of the respondents were male. More so, majority (70%) of the respondents were married with only 4.2% of them divorced while 95.9% of the respondents had household size from I -- 10 with a mean household size of 7 persons. In terms of educational level of the respondents, 36.7%, 45.9% and 15.8% had tertiary, secondary and primary education respectively implying that the respondents were highly educated. This finding is in agreement with Idrisa el al. (2007) who stated that the higher the level of education, the more people participate in cooperative societies. Majority (76.8%) of the respondents had fanning experience between 6 — 15 years in the study area.

	Frequency	Percentages
	10	8.3
	6	5.0
	43	35.8
	40	33.3
	21	17.6
	1 15	95.8
	5	4.2
	84	70.0
	18	15.0
	13	10.8
	5	4.2
	44	36.7
	71	59.2
	4	3.3
	1	0.8
	2	1.6
	19	15.8
	55	45.9
	44	36.7
	3	2.5
	46	38.4
	46	38.4
	25	20.7
	120	100

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EX.7tRIESCE

Survey, 2013.

CeFtative and their Functions in the

functions perform by the cooperatives, 34.4% of respondents attested 'that the cooperatives function providing relevant market information, assistance rural development (21.7%), provision of ext services (19.5%), provision of agricultural (17.5%) and provision of credit facilities (7.5' implying that cooperatives as attested to by respondents discharge its primary responsibilities the study area.

pondents were aoe, fanning)ndents. As o) of the 7%, 45.9% — 50 years primary iuctive age espondents agreement More so, higher the arried with 9% of the 10 with a •ticipate in 6) of the cen 6 — 15

for this study were all members of cooperative society in one fom or the 2 revealed the various types of cc•perative they belong to in the study (56.7%) of the respondents belong to credit and marketing cooperative, 17.5% thrift and credit cooperative, 14.2% belongs processors cooperative and 11.7% belongs producers cooperative. More so, in terms of

tions es of a ricultural coo eratives and their functions in the stud area

CLOPERATIVE TYPES	Fre uenc	Percenta es
Producers Cooperatives	14	11.7
Processors Cooperatives	17	14.2
Credit and Marketing Cooperative	68	56.7
and Credit Cooperatives	21	17.5
FtACTIONS		
of Credit to Farmers	9	7.5
P•v.Äion ofAgricultural Inputs	21	17.5
of Extension Services	23	19.5

Assastance on Marketing Information	41	34.4
Assistance in Rural Development	26	21.7
T.t21	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

characteristics of the respondents

terms of

Effectiveness of agricultural cooperative shown in Table 3, majority (64.2%) of the resThe effectiveness of agricultural cooperative societies confirmed the effectiveness of the agricu2ua- is the quality of being able to carry out cooperative cooperative societies while 35.8% of the respondevelopment programmes that will be beneficial to stated that the agricultural cooperative were members of the cooperative in a given community. Aseffective in the study area.

Table 3. Effectiveness of agricultural cooperatives by the respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2013.

Factors influencing Participation of Respondentssignificant at 1% level of probability; age Xl and in Agricu ltural Cooperatives household size X4 were significant at 5%, while

Logit Regression model was used to determine the X6 was significant at 10%. Tbev farming experience factors influencing participation of respondents in were all directly related to the dependent variable agricultural cooperatives in the study area. The that one unit increase in any of the implying result of the logit regression is presented in Table 4. variable will result in an increase in tbe independent

The value of coefficient of detennination, R^2 was level of participation in the agricultural cooperative0.5758 with an adjusted R^2 0f0.4941 implying that Marital status X3 and income Xi were not about 58% of the variation in the dependent variable significant; therefore have no influence on

is explained by the independent variables in the logit in cooperative respondents' participation regression

model. Gender X2 and education X5 were

Table 4. Logit Regression of factor influencing participation in agricultural cooperative

Variables	Coefficients	Standard error
Age (Xi)	0.0533	0.0313
Gender (X2)	0.1762	0.0672
Marital status (X3)	O. 1508	0.6032
Household size (X4)	0.1732	0.0888
Education (X5)	0.1397	0.0558
Farming experience (XO	0.0566	0.0245
Income (X7)	0.29806	1.02779

= 0.5758, Adjusted R

Source: Field Survey, 2013

*** implies significant at 1%, ** implies significant at 5% and * implies significant at 10%.

CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence from the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is high participation of respondents in agricultural cooperative with majority attesting to the effectiveness of cooperatives in the study area. It effectively functions in providing the basic needs of rural farmers particularly in the study area. More so, socio-economic characteristics such as age, education, farming experience and others were found to influence the respondents' participation in agricultural cooperatives in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

i. Though, agricultural cooperative were found to be effective, there is need for government to set up administrative supervisory committee that will supervise the activities ofagricultural cooperatives for better service delivery.

ii. Income and marital status were found not to be significant in respect to participation in cooperative. Hence, there is need for financial institution responsible for provision of funds to assist rural farmers by providing flexible credit facilities through cooperatives that will enhance more participation.

iii. Provision of extension education by the extension agents to farmers on the need to participate in agricultural cooperative will go a long way in enhancing their benefits from agricultural cooperative.

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