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**2016 International Conference on Communication, Business
and Education (CBE 2016)**

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Edited by

Harry Zhang

Singapore Management and Sports Science Institute

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CBE 2016 Preface

Warmly welcome to 2016 International Conference on Communication, Business and Education (CBE 2016). CBE 2016 will be held on January 23-24, 2016 in Vancouver, Canada. CBE 2016 was co-sponsored by Singapore Management and Sports Science Institute (SMSSI) and Academic Conference Institute, USA. All accepted papers in the CBE 2016 conference proceedings will be published by Singapore Management and Sports Science Institute, Singapore.

CBE 2015 will be one of the most comprehensive conferences, which focuses on the various aspects of Communication, Business and Education. The aim of this conference is to bring together the researchers from academia and industry as well as practitioners to share ideas, problems and solutions relating to the multifaceted aspects of Communication, Business and Education. It is certainly that our conference provides a chance for academic and industry professionals to discuss recent progress in those areas of Teaching Research and Innovation: Business and Management; Communication and Logistics; Education and Culture, and so on.

CBE 2016 has received 145 paper submissions. All accepted papers have undergone a rigorous reviewing process, which are performed by the international conference committees. Each submission is peer reviewed by 3 PC members. The PC members consist of Professors, Doctors, and leading experts in CBE 2016 conference topics. The review process refers to the academic value, experiment procedure, method and results. What's more, the format and frequent expression as well as grammar may affect your paper. Thus, those factors should reflect and show in the paper. The paper is accepted or not, which depend on two members of PC. Both of the two PC passed the paper, this paper can be accepted. After the strict review finished and the recommendations from the members of the organization committee, 46 papers are finally accepted in the conference proceedings, representing 31.5% accepted rate.

We would like to thank all the members of the organizing committees of CBE 2016, for their hard and admirable work, which made this conference possible. Special thanks are extended to the support of general chairs and publication chairs. Finally thank all authors who come from different countries all over the world, for their great contributions on CBE 2016 proceedings.

Harry Zhang, Singapore Management and Sports Science Institute, Singapore

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The Extent of Disempowerment among Esan Women Farmers of Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract. The need to expand the capacities of rural woman farmers is not negotiable within the framework of human development as women hold the key to attaining global food security. However, dearth of data about rural women concerns persists in Nigeria. This paper therefore presents the experiences of rural women in their farming occupation with empirical data from Esan Women in Edo State, Nigeria. Their struggle for modern farming technologies and credit facilities are presented. A triangulation method of data collection was employed involving the use of the structured, in-depth interviews and the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. Result shows that there is a positive relationship between women empowerment and food production, but the presence of empowerment indicators was found to be inadequate. Specifically, the respondents were found to be grossly deficient in access to modern farming technologies and credit facilities. The paper concludes that Nigerian Development cannot be complete without rural women's empowerment. Recommendations are proffered accordingly.

1. Introduction

Development from time immemorial has been concerned about human life. However, the complexity associated with the definition of development has seemingly rendered it a huge task to accomplish. As such, different perceptions exist for different authors and actors. Its conceptualization has been emphasized on a nation's economic growth specifically increase in Gross Domestic Products. However, with increasing economic growth in many developing countries without a corresponding increase in the wellbeing of the citizens, human development has become popular. International development is now constituted by the field of human development, which adopts the capability approach in the study of human conditions [1]. It is on this basis that this paper examines the pathetic state of rural women farmers in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria.

2. Literature review

Efforts at empowering women have encountered setbacks both at theoretical and empirical levels due particularly to the seeming vagueness in the definition and analysis of the word 'empowerment'. Many scholars have asserted that because power relations operate at different levels, so does empowerment [2] [3]. However, there is a divergence on exactly how these levels are defined. The micro and macro levels are often adopted but less empirical attention is given to aggregations that

fall in the middle, especially at the community level where institutional and normative structures such as family systems, infrastructure, gender ideologies, customary law, etc. are most likely to affect women's empowerment. It is often precisely at these intermediary levels that normative changes occur and where programmatic or policy interventions frequently function [4]. This has resulted in the problematic associated with determining women's areas of need for intervention. One of such problems is the sparseness of data on women's ownership, control and management of land in Africa generally and Nigeria in particular. This inhibits the development of policies to tackle the existing and potential inequalities women encounter.

Literature is replete with the fact that closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains not just the agriculture sector but the larger society as a whole [5] [6]. Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN, buttresses this fact by revealing that if women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30 percent. As such, this could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5–4 per cent, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12–17 per cent [7]

The persistent hunger in Africa, especially Nigeria is one of the parameters that present the nation as a developing with a paradox. This stems from the fact that the country has the knowledge, the technology and the means to end hunger and food insecurity [8]. Available data reveals that about sixty five per cent of Nigerians are hungry [7]. Yet Nigeria is an agrarian country having about seventy-five percent of her population engaged in agricultural production [9].

3. Study area

The area the study was conducted is Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The area is rich in fertile soil for agricultural purposes and the women are mostly engaged in the occupation of farming. It is one of the eighteen local government areas that constitute Edo State. Women are the major producers of food crops in Edo State. The State contributes enormously to the food basket of Nigeria arising from its large expanse of fertile land. From the world record Nigeria holds as the largest producer of cassava in the international market, Edo state is the largest producer of cassava in the South-South of the nation and cassava is mainly produced by women [9]. Most Edo men are engaged in part time cash crop farming and non-farming fulltime occupation such as civil service jobs. Many youths have migrated to urban areas for greener pastures. Those present in the rural areas consider farming as a herculean task and so are employed in other jobs like craftsmanship, commercial motorcycle riding rather than farming or better still engage in farming on part time basis. As such the burden of food production is left in the hands of women. The need to empower them in this regard therefore becomes therefore non-negotiable.

4. Methods of the study

Data was collected with the use of a structured questionnaire to elicit responses from 457 women farmers in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also adopted in the data collection process.

5. Findings

5.1 Farming techniques

In the category of farming techniques, only 12 women (2.6%) out of 457 respondents were found to have applied them in their farming operations. Result showed that only one woman (0.2%) was aware of improved seedlings but she had never used it and she does not have it. In the same way, no respondent was found to have any knowledge of improved cassava cuttings. Knowledge and use of pesticides were found to be very low among the respondents. Result showed that only 32 women (7.0%) had knowledge of pesticides. Two women (0.4%) claimed to have pesticides. Furthermore, only 2 women (0.4%) reported to have used and still continue to use the chemicals, while only 1

person was found to have been trained to use the technique.

Fertilizer constituted the most commonly applied modern techniques recording a frequency of 219 and a percentage of 47.9. While it is possible that this is peculiar to the locations of study, the support of government in procurement and distribution of fertilizer could also be good reason for this. But further investigation revealed that the seemingly high level of knowledge of the technique was not equivalent to access and usage. Only 9 women, precisely 2.0 percent were reported to have fertilizers, while 17 women, only representing 3.7 percent had used the technique. Two women (0.4%) were found to have been trained to use fertilizers while only 15 women were reported to still be using it. Upon investigation on whether food production has increased since application of modern farming techniques, 16 respondents, out of the 17 women, who have both used pesticides and fertilizers, indicated an increase in food production at a less than double degree. The respondents however complained that though fertilizer application yields increase, it makes the produce to perish quickly, which discourages them from frequent use. Further investigation revealed that the main crops for which fertilizer was applied were pepper and tomatoes.

Increase in food production deriving from the use of farming technique was reported by 16 women out of the 17 respondents who have used the techniques. Less than double increase was reported by both users at 60% and 62.5% for equipment and techniques respectively. In the same vein, double increase was reported by 6.3 percent by those who employed the techniques. Finally, more than double increase was reported by 31.3 percent for the adoption of the techniques.

5.2 Bank credit for farming

The study revealed that the source of income from which they cultivated their farms derived from their self-help cooperatives. Such fund is accumulated by the women over a specified after they can withdraw, when the need arises. Accessibility to fund for farming was abysmally low in the studied locations. The proportion that have ever secure loan was 1.1 percent (5 women) out of a total of 457 women farmers. Findings showed that they obtained the loans from three financial institutions. Three of them were found to have received their loan from First Bank, the other two women obtained theirs from Uda community Bank and LAPO (Lift Above Poverty) respectively. Time of access to this loan was further probed by the researcher. Result showed that two of the women accessed the credit less than a year ago. One reported that her access to the credit was more than one year ago. The final two women were found to have received the loan for more than two years. With regard to who made the decision on how the loan was to be spent, four women (80%) reported that the decision was made themselves. But one respondent (20%) reported that the decision was made by her husband. This reflects the interference of husband's on their wives' income, which has found to be detrimental to the empowerment of women (Omorodion 2007; Swain and Wallentin 2008). Sixty percent of the respondents reported that there was increase in food production as a result of the bank loan. They all reported that the extent of increase was at a less than double degree.

Respondents who have not secured any bank loan were asked why they have not obtained any. Most of them, 192 out of 452 women (42.5%), reported that they were afraid of the consequences of the inability to repay. They emphasized that they do not want to be disposed of their assets by the bank as they have reports of some people who had such experiences. Next to this number was the category of those who mentioned that their inaccessibility to bank credit was as a result of their lack of contact to the banks. They, 158 women out of 452 women (35%) reported that credit was a luxury reserved for those who are influential and those who know how to get their way through. Bank demand for collateral was reported among 60 women (13.1%) as the restraint for their access to credit. The proportion of those who could not access credit facilities due to high interest rate constituted 4.4 percent having a frequency of 20 women. Furthermore, 11 women consisting of 2.4 percent reported that they were not aware of bank lending. This is why public enlightenment cannot be overemphasized.

6. Conclusion

The contributions of the African women farmers have to be duly acknowledged and boosted in the quest for African development. Findings of this study reveal that area of empowerment for rural women is such that relates to their access and ownership of agricultural productive inputs, including modern farming techniques and bank credit. However, these were found to be grossly absent and where available, the degree was negligible. It can also be seen in this study availability of some inputs stimulated increase in production among the women farmers.

7. Recommendations

There is need to urgent intervention for rural women farmers by enhancing their access to modern farm technologies to be backed up with massive enlightenment for the target audience. There is also need to empower the women farmers by establishing grassroot funds for farming beyond the existing microfinance banks.

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