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Full Length Research Paper

Socio- economic conditions of peasant farmers: the case of agricultural technologies' sustainability in southwest Nigeria

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Abstract

Agricultural productivity and total annual food and fibre production in Nigeria are pitifully poor much below expectation. This study examined socio-economic conditions of peasant farmers and the consequences on agricultural technologies in Southwest, Nigeria. Structured interview schedules as well as in-depth study devices were used to collect data, which were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics. The study revealed, though both categories of farmers had most demographic characteristics in common, sustained users were older and had larger farm size. The study further revealed that there were significant positive correlations between age and adoption pattern ($r = 0.16$), age and soybean adoption level ($r = 0.15$), age and cassava adoption level ($r = 0.14$), organizational membership and extension contact ($r = 0.21$), factors affecting sustained use of maize and cassava technologies ($r = 0.09$) while a negative significant correlation exists between factors affecting sustained use of maize technology and extension contact ($r = -0.15$). There were also significant positive correlations between attitude of farmers towards improved technologies and factors affecting the sustained use of maize technologies ($r = 0.44$). However, policy makers and rural development workers should be conscious of the fact that sustained users are older and therefore are likely to be more conservative to changes. It should be noted that younger people are moving away from agriculture and that both categories of farmers require constant contact with the extension services if their current condition is to be improved substantially.

Key words: Technologies, farmers, food production, extension, adoption

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