

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN OGBA EGBEMA NDONI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined human capital development in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship in Ogba Egbema Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, it determined the human capital development status of agricultural entrepreneurs in the area; ascertained the effect of human capital development in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship; determined the sources of human capital development to agricultural entrepreneurs and analyzed the constraints to rural human capital development of agricultural entrepreneurs in the study area. Information was elicited using interview schedule from 120 respondents using random sampling technique. Descriptive statistical tools were used to analyze the data collected. The results revealed that majority (69.06%) of the respondents have received training on fish farming. A large percentage (88.50%) of the respondents indicated that human capital development has affected the personal development of rural people. Respondents had their source of information on human capital development from friends and relatives (94.80%). The major constraint to rural human capital development of agricultural entrepreneurs in the study area was poor access to training opportunities by the respondents (95.86%). The study recommends that there should be various policy formulations such as free training programmes for interested agricultural entrepreneurs, to increase access and functional source of agricultural human training programmers.

Key words: Human Capital, Development, Growth, Agricultural Entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION

Human capital is getting wider attention with increasing globalization and also the saturation of the job market due to the recent downturn in the various economies of the world. Developed and developing countries put emphases on a more human capital development towards accelerating the economic growth by devoting necessary time and efforts. Thus human capital development is one of the fundamental solutions to enter the international arena. Specifically, firms, agricultural sector must invest necessary resources in developing human capital which tend to have a great impact on performance and the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship. Rastogi (2002) stated that human capital is an important input for organizations especially for employees' continuous improvement mainly on knowledge, skills, and abilities. Thus, the definition of human capital is referred to as the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, no date).

In a knowledge economy, resources such as skills, expertise, and intellectual acumen are often more critical than other economic resources such as land

and labour and even capital, because it is difficult to measure its levels. Increase of productivity based entirely on reduction of workforce and lower wages, which has often been the case in transition countries, is not sustainable in the long term. Increase of human capital levels as a tool for increase of productivity cannot be overemphasized. Human capital determines farming and, in general, managerial skills of rural households. Workforce in agriculture may be divided in four major categories. They include: workforce currently employed in agriculture, self-employed or working on farms, workforce preparing to enter the workforce and workforce in transition from one agricultural job in farming or support services to another. According to Rivera (1998) the entire above named agricultural workforce is educated through a variety of educational systems, and they are: Formal agricultural education, science, and technology system of curricula provided by mainstream education institutions, Non-formal agricultural and extension education system of programs provided to farmers and rural audiences through knowledge-transfer services, In-service training and development system of programs provided by private organizations and public agencies for their employees, Mass-media/distance learning system that provides an independent and

continuous supply of information, such division of labour and educational systems in agriculture.

Entrepreneurship education is a purposeful intervention by an educator in the life of the learner to impact entrepreneurial qualities and skills to enable the learner to survive in the world of business (Ogundele *et al.*, 2012). Entrepreneurship education and training entail philosophy of self-reliance such as creating a new cultural and productive environment, promoting new sets of attitudes and culture for the attainment of future challenges (Arogundade, 2011). According to Ariyo, (2008), some of rural human capital development programmes available for agricultural entrepreneurs in Nigeria are: Farm settlement scheme (Early, 1960 in Ogundele *et al.*, 2012) which was initiated in old western Region; aimed at solving unemployment problem among primary school leavers. Policy instruments include agricultural extension cooperative societies, credit facilities. National Accelerated food production programme (NAFPP) in 1972, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) of 1976, River Basin-Development Authorities (RBDAs) in 1976, Agricultural Development projects (ADPS) in 1974, Green Revolution of 1980, Directorate of food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure in 1986. Others are School to land Programme, National Programme on Food Security (NPFS), Root and Tuber Expansion Programme (RTEP), Pre-Emptive management of Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD), Community - Based Natural Resources Management Programme (CBNRMP), National Fadama Development Programme (FADAMAIII); Green River Project (GRP) for NAOC; Seed Multiplication Center (SMC) Total Elf Petroleum ; N-power programme among others.

According to Chartered Institute of Human capital development of Nigeria (2013), the objectives and aims of human capital development are; advancement of human capital through its development for the attainment of individual and corporate goals; encouraging workplace learning, development, and skills acquisition thereby increasing productivity through capacity utilization of the human element in the workplace; encouraging and supporting research and its application in the area of human capital development; providing training and education for practitioners, organizations, government and other stakeholders in the area of human capital development; promoting uniformity by providing a standardized and harmonized platform for the regulation of human capital development practice in Nigeria; collaborating with other professional bodies in ensuring sanity and strict professionalism in the area of human capital development in Nigeria; entrenching professional excellence and setting the standards for best practices in learning and performance among human capital development practitioners in Nigeria; creating a platform that

enables members, both individual and corporate, to constantly acquire and share knowledge, sharpen their skills, broaden their horizon and enhance their performance towards greater value added services to their organizations etc

The Nigerian economy, historically, has depended significantly on oil revenues. However, in the recent years, the country has been trying to diversify away from dependence on oil by setting an ambitious goal. The country wants to increasingly globalize education through information and communication technology, and entrepreneurship. This was why the former President, Olusegun Obasanjo, mandated that all students in Nigerian tertiary institutions, regardless of their major, will need to study entrepreneurship. However, there are obstacles facing rapid human capital development such as rampant political and bureaucratic corruption together with the absence of social consensus on important macroeconomic policy issues, poor access to vocational and skills – development training for rural and urban youths involved in the informal economy, trade barriers that curtail capacity building and inhibit access to technical support; no doubt, one of the biggest challenges of any entrepreneur is access to capital. It is therefore imperative to examine how human capital development have helped in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship in Rivers state and Ogba Egbema Ndoni Local Government Area in particular. Specifically, the study was designed to:

- i. determine the human capital development status of agricultural entrepreneurs in the area;
- ii. ascertain the effect of human capital development in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship;
- iii. determine the sources of human capital development to agricultural entrepreneurs; and
- iv. analyze the constraints to rural human capital development of agricultural entrepreneurs in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State (ONELGA). It is one of the 23 local Government Areas in Rivers State. It was created out of the former Ahoada Local Government Ares on September 21, 1991, and among the 774 Local Government areas recognize by the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with its headquarters at Omoku mainland. Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local government Area (ONELGA) lies between latitude 5°- 5°, 25^N and longitude 60, 40-60, 50^E and is located at the extreme North-Western fringe of Rivers State. ONELGA has topography of flat plains netted in a web of rivers – the Niger, sombreiro (Nkisa), Orashi and their tributaries as well as dotted creeks – Idia, Utuah, Ndoni, Igburu, Osil, etc. ONELGA has 3 three major

ethnic groups namely, (Ogba, Egbema, and Ndoni). All the ethnic groups have their unique and peculiar self-sustaining cultures. The presence of good climate, vast arable land and vegetation, fertile soil, hospitality and peaceful disposition make the people predominantly farmers, fishermen and few traders while others engage in business, politics and white collar jobs to balance the economy.

The sample size consists of 96 respondents which were randomly selected from farmers in the clans of Ogba Egbema Ndoni Local Government Area. In order to ensure that the sample was unbiased, random sampling technique was used. The area is made up of three clans the Ogba, Egbema and Ndoni. Four communities each were randomly selected from the three clans to give a total of twelve communities: Obrikom, Obuburu, Obite and Omoku communities were selected from Ogba clan, Okwuizi, Mgbede, Aggah and Ali-ocha communities for Egbema clan, and Ogbe-ngeni, Agwe, Ugbaje, and Ase-Azaga for Ndoni clan. Data for this study was generated from primary source. The primary data was generated through questionnaire sent to agricultural entrepreneurs in ONELGA, Rivers State. The following descriptive statistical tools were used to analysis the data collected: simple percentage, pool

and means and Spearman Ranking Correlation (Rho) was used for the hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human Capital Development Status of Agricultural Entrepreneurs in the Area

Table 1 reveal that the pooled mean showed that majority (69.06%) of the respondent have received training o fish farming followed by respondents that received training in arable crop farming (cassava, yam, maize) (66.66%) while 53.36% of the respondents received training in poultry farming. Findings also revealed that from Ogba clan 24.18% had more training followed by Ndoni clan (21.63) and Egbema clan (17.15%). This implies that respondents trained more in arable crop production, fish farming, poultry farming and fertilizer application and less management. Okolo (2009) established that for businesses to grow, entrepreneurs must be taught marketing, management and basic financial skills in agricultural enterprise. According to Osuagwu (2006), rural entrepreneurship is the creation of a new business that introduces new goods/services, serves, creates, or utilizes a new market, or utilizes a new technology in a rural environment.

Table 1: Human capital development status of agricultural entrepreneurs in the area

Training status of Agricultural entrepreneur	Percentage			Pooled (n=96)
	Ogba (n=32)	Egbema (n=32)	Ndoni (n=32)	
1. Fish farming	66.7	66.7	73.8	69.06
2. Poultry	50.0	52.4	57.1	53.36
3. Piggery	19.0	-	40.5	19.83
4. Rabbit	11.9	-	4.80	5.56
5. Goat	28.6	64.3	31.0	41.30
6. Dairy farm	14.3	9.50	4.80	9.50
7. Livestock feed production	40.5	11.9	16.7	23.03
8. Herbs and flowers Horticulture	9.50	-	-	3.16
9. Mushroom farming	2.40	-	2.40	1.60
10. Soya beans processing	-	2.40	-	0.80
11. Cashew nut Processing	4.80	2.40	-	2.40
12. Apiculture (honey)	7.10	2.40	-	3.16
13. Soladrying of fruits	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40
14. Flour milling processing	2.40	2.40	4.80	3.20
15. Leasing of agricultural equipment	14.3	2.40	4.80	7.16
16. Spices production	7.10	4.80	16.7	6.33
17. Exports of agricultural produce	9.50	2.40	7.10	6.33
18. Trading of local agricultural produce	54.8	26.2	35.7	38.90
19. Local wine production	11.9	-	16.7	9.53
20. Furniture production	9.50	-	2.40	3.00
21. Arable crop farming (cassava, yam, maize) etc	57.1	66.7	76.2	66.66
22. Fertilizer application on crops	47.6	35.7	50.0	44.43
23. Planting crops on rows	57.1	11.9	50.0	39.66
24. Introduction of improved varieties or spices	33.3	14.3	61.9	36.50
25. Feed formulation with local products	42.9	9.50	40.5	30.96
Total percentage score	604.7	428.8	54	52.26
Percentage mean	24.18	17.15	21.63	20.89

Source: Field survey, 2017.

Multiple responses

Effect of Human Capital Development in the Growth of Agricultural Entrepreneurship

Table 2 shows that majority (88.50%) of the respondents from the pooled mean indicate that there was an effect of rural human capital development on personal development, with the information accessed from families and friends, farmers training etc. some of the respondent attest to have been developed personally while others responded that more human capital has helped to better the development of the area. The pooled mean of 73.96% each indicate increased productivity and safety in farming, respectively. Furthermore, rural human capital development enhanced the attitude of the respondent with the pooled mean of (64.60%). Meanwhile finding shows that the rural human capital development do not have much effect on the

following, Improved management of credit facility with the pooled mean of (28.13%), Introduction of loan sources (29.20%), value chain addition (35.43%) and improved storage management (39.56%). Findings further revealed that rural human capital development had more effect in Ogba clan with the mean of (68.30%), Ndoni clan (62.72%) and Egbema clan (36.47%). This finding suggest that even though the entrepreneur may be reporting an increase in sales and profits, and may seem to be registering growth, lack of training on financial, strategic management and marketing will mean that the agricultural enterprise will not grow from the first stage (existence) to other stages such as survival, success, take off and resource maturity and will hence remain micro or small stagnate enterprise (Caroline and James 2013).

Table 2: Effect of human capital development in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship

Effects of Human Capital Development	Percentage			Pooled (n=96)
	Ogba (n=32)	Egbema (n=32)	Ndoni (n=32)	
1. Improve knowledge of production	78.1	68.8	40.6	62.50
2. Improved managerial skill	78.1	40.6	65.6	61.43
3. Enhance attitude	68.8	28.1	96.9	64.60
4. Increased productivity	68.8	75.0	78.1	73.96
5. Better farm record keeping	71.9	46.9	53.1	57.30
6. Better income	65.6	12.5	75.0	51.03
7. Poverty alleviation	68.8	12.5	56.3	45.86
8. Introduction of loan Sources	46.9	9.40	31.3	29.20
9. Improved management of credit facilities	50.0	3.10	31.3	28.13
10. Personal development	90.6	96.9	78.1	88.50
11. Value chain addition	50.0	9.40	46.9	35.43
12. Improved storage management	65.6	3.10	50.0	39.56
13. Improved safety in farming	84.4	46.9	90.6	73.96
14 Improved knowledge on herbicide and pesticide application	68.8	57.5	84.40	70.23
Total percentage score	956.2	510.7	878.2	753.49
Percentage mean	68.30	36.47	62.72	53.82

Source: Field survey, 2017

Multiple responses

Sources of Human Capital Development to Agricultural Entrepreneurs

Table 3 determined the sources of rural human capital development to agricultural entrepreneurship and the findings revealed that 94.80% which represent majority of the respondents that had their source on human capital development from friends and relatives, 92.73% got there source on human capital development from fellow farmers while 61.46% from conferences and workshops. Average respondents (57.30%) had their source on human capital development from farmers training. Also, the study showed that only 7.30% of respondents received their source from world field day while 21.90% received theirs from field trips. This shows that there is little interest on getting human capital development from them, learning system that provides an independent and continuous supply of

information, such division of labour and educational systems in agriculture served to create framework of the process of creation of human capital in agricultural systems (Rivera and Alex, 2008). Ogba clan showed more interest in getting human capacity development with the percentage of (54.01%). This further revealed that Egbema and Ndoni showed little interest on getting human capitals from the sources listed below with 37.75% and 43.53%, respectively. Anyadike *et al* (2012) stated that the world today is a global village and since an intending entrepreneur must be conversant and in tune with events around and about him, education becomes a critical factor in preparing and empowering the entrepreneur with the qualities required of him. Unfortunately, the role of education in moulding young people to become change agents, particularly in rural areas, has been ignored.

Table 3: Sources of rural human capital development to agricultural entrepreneurs

Sources of Human Capital Development	Percentage			
	Ogba (n=32)	Egbema (n=32)	Ndoni (n=32)	Pooled (n=96)
1. Farmers Training	62.5	81.3	28.1	57.30
2. Result Demonstration	40.6	15.6	56.3	37.50
3. Method Demonstration	3.10	21.9	31.3	18.76
4. Field Trip	28.1	6.30	31.3	21.90
5. World Field Day	12.5	6.30	3.10	7.30
6. Conferences and workshop	65.6	68.8	50.0	61.46
7. Television	65.6	31.3	53.1	49.96
8. Radio	59.4	3.10	46.9	36.46
9. News paper	50.0	9.40	34.4	31.26
10. Extension of Rivers ADP	53.1	34.4	68.8	52.10
11. Green River Project of Agip Oil Company	59.4	56.3	3.10	39.60
12. Total Elf Agricultural Project	78.1	9.40	3.10	30.20
13. Fellow Farmers	84.4	93.8	100	92.73
14. Friends and Relatives	93.8	90.6	100	94.80
Total percentage score	756.2	528.5	609.55	94.87
Percentage mean	54.01	37.75	43.53	42.49

Source: field survey, 2017

Multiple responses

Constraints to Rural Human Capital Development of Agricultural Entrepreneurs

Table 4 identified the constraints of rural human capital development of agricultural entrepreneurs in ONELGA, which revealed that (95.86%) of the respondents agreed that poor access to training opportunities was a constraint to rural human capital development in ONELGA, this is as a result of lack of government policies in building training infrastructures to help in developing the rural human capital for agricultural entrepreneurs (Albert, Isife and Ifeanyi-Amos, 2014). Also, 94.80% of the respondent lamented the poor access to capital. Loans and grants will be promised but will never get to the agricultural entrepreneurs even when an individual decide to take loan from the bank, the high interest rate and collateral are not always comfortable with the farmers leading to stagnated growth in business (Ofuoku and Albert, 2014). Also, 90.60% of the respondent also noted rampant political and bureaucratic corruption as the constraints to rural

human capital development, here the politicians divert agricultural facilities to private use and in other way round when a policy is propounded within the tenure of the a political party after the expiration of the tenure when other party emerged the policy will be abandon causing catastrophe among the beneficiaries. Furthermore, 88.56% of the respondents said youth restiveness in the area was also a constraint to agricultural activities and to rural human capital development. The incessant killing and kidnapping by cult groups in the area greatly crippled the activities of agricultural entrepreneurs as many people are forced to relocate from the area causing a heavy constrain among the agricultural entrepreneurs in the study area (Albert et al, 2013). Meanwhile, the pooled mean of 48.96% indicate that the presences of electricity was felt in some of the study areas, because of the presence of some oil companies in Egbema and Ogba clans although, not regular as reported by some of the respondents in Ndoni clan.

Table 4: Constraints to rural human capital development of agricultural entrepreneurs

Constraints	Percentage			
	Ogba (n=32)	Egbema (n=32)	Ndoni (n=32)	Pooled (n=96)
1. Poor access to training opportunities	96.9	96.9	93.8	95.86
2. Rampant political and bureaucratic corruption	81.3	90.6	100	90.60
3. Absence of regulatory mechanism for effective training	87.5	18.8	100	68.70
4. Poor contact with extension services	87.5	78.10	87.5	84.36
5. Infrastructural deficits for farmers training	71.9	25.0	96.9	64.60
6. Absence of pro-active regulatory environment for training of farmers	78.10	68.8	93.8	80.23
7. Poor access to capital	96.9	87.50	100	94.80
8. Illiteracy of farmers	68.8	65.60	81.5	71.96
9. Poor electricity	59.4	50.00	37.5	48.96
10. High cost of electronics	65.6	40.6	87.5	64.56

11. Youth restiveness	93.8	71.9	100	88.56
Total percentage score	887.7	693.2	978.5	53.18
Percentage mean	80.70	63.01	88.95	77.56

Source: filed survey, 2017.

Multiple responses

On the issue of variations on the effects of human capital development in the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship among the three clans, the mean value of the various relationship indicates that clan A Ogba>clan C Ndoni>clan B Egbema with corresponding values of 23.57>21.86>12.43

respectively. It means that human capital development has greater effect on the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship in Ogba clan A than Ndoni Clan C and Clan C has greater effect than Egbema Clan B.

Table 5: Summary of Correlation On Rural Human Capital Development And The Growth Of Agricultural Entrepreneurship In ONELGA

Clan	Correlations	Ogba Clan A RHCDP	Egbema Clan B RHCDP	Ndoni Clan C RHCDP	Mean	Std. Deviation
CLAN RHCDP A	Correlation	1.000	.661	.982	12.8571	7.91160
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.010	.000		
CLAN RHCDP B	Correlation	.661	1.000	.695	5.4286	8.29934
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.	.006		
CLAN RHCDP C	Correlation	.982	.694	1.000	12.0714	7.27973
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.006	.		

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: field survey, 2017

Table 6:5 Summary of correlation on the effect of rural human capital development and the growth of agricultural entrepreneurship in ONELGA

Clan	Correlations	ONELGA CLAN A OGBA	ONELGA CLAN B EGBEMA	ONELGA CLAN C NDONI	Mean	Std. Deviation
ONELGA CLAN A	Correlation	1.000	.734	.663	23.5714	4.25557
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003	.010		
ONELGA CLAN B	Correlation	.734	1.000	.826	12.4286	11.81078
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.	.000		
ONELGA CLAN C	Correlation	.633	.826	1.000	21.8571	7.96007
	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.000	.		

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field survey, 2017.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were human capital development trainings for agricultural entrepreneurs in the study area with majority of the agricultural entrepreneurs concentrating in fish farming, arable crop production and poultry farming. These human capital development trainings have effect on the entrepreneurs and the communities in the study area. Human capital development on entrepreneurs has affected the personal development of entrepreneurs, increased productivity and safety in farming in the

area. The sources of rural human capital development to agricultural entrepreneurship were from friends and relatives, fellow farmers, conferences and workshops and from farmers training. However, human capital development was faced with some constraints. The constraints were poor access to training opportunities, poor access to capital, political and bureaucratic corruption and youth restiveness in the area. Base on the findings, the following recommendations were made: There should be various policy formulations to

responsive and functional source of agricultural training programmes that would help address the socio-economic needs of the rural society. More input training materials training facilities should be supplied to the farmers for the continuity and for the increase in the achievements recorded by the programmes Loans should be given to the farmers at affordable rate to expand and increase farm production. If more loans are given to the farmers at affordable rate it will enable them venture well into agricultural activities and maximize profit and youth restiveness should be discouraged and the youth should be empowered, encouraged to become agricultural entrepreneurs so as to boast growth in the agricultural sector.

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