



CONTRIBUTIONS OF RURAL NON-FARM ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES TO HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN LERE AREA, KADUNA STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

It is obvious that agricultural productivity is low in the developing countries and it often leads to low income which demands for diversifying economic activities as a strategy to meet numerous needs of the households. In the rural communities, most households engaged in non-farm activities in order to boost economic base. This study examined the contributions of non-farm activities to the employment generation and total income of rural households in Lere Local Government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study drew a sample of 382 rural households through a multi-stage sampling technique and the data obtained through questionnaire survey were analyzed using the descriptive statistics and analysis of means techniques. The results indicated that there was an increase of about (4.0%) in employment generation within the non-farm sector of the rural economy between 2007 and 2011. The household income from farm and non-farm was compared and it was discovered that (44.8 %) of the total income was associated with households that ventured into farming only and (55.2%) accounted for households that engaged in non-farm activities. The student t-test revealed that calculated value (3.88) and critical value (1.96) showing a significant difference at 0.05 alpha value between household incomes from farm and non-farm economic activities during the same period. On the basis of the findings, the study recommended that government should give more recognition to non-farm economic activities in rural areas by designing policies that will equip poor households with better skills, increased investment in infrastructure, and accessibility to financial resources.

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Keywords: Rural income nonfarm household activities.

Contribution/ Originality

This study essentially is one of the recent studies that investigates contribution of non-farm activities to rural household income.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In attempt to alleviate poverty in the developing countries of the world, efforts should be directed towards the promotion rural well-being and this requires an integrated plan that goes beyond mere agricultural development (Barret and Webb, 2001). The statistics show that as much as 1.4 billion people, out of 6.5 billion around the world in 2005 lived on less than US\$1.25 a day and were thus classified as extremely poor with over 850 million people going to bed without sufficient food (UNDP, 2008).

In Nigeria, the incidence of poverty has been on the increase, rising from 28.1% in 1980 to 44.0% in 1992, and 65.6% in 1996 (NBS, 2006). Despite poverty-reduction strategies adopted in Nigeria, the incidence of poverty in rural areas still remains high (UNDP, 2008). The reason might be attributed to the wrong approach to rural poverty reduction which is centred on production of crops and livestock without consideration for a holistic approach which embraces not only agriculture but also infrastructural facilities.

Although agriculture remains the main source of income and employment in rural areas of the developing countries, the non-farm sector is increasingly becoming important. At the start of the new millennium, 30-40% of rural full-time employment was attributed to non-farm economic activities in developing countries (Hagglade *et al.*, 2002). It is a universally accepted fact that agricultural sector is incapable of creating sufficient gainful employment opportunities amidst of increasing population in the developing countries. As a result, the impetus for achieving sustained rural economic development in rural areas has to pivot around expanding the base of non-farm activities. If such a comprehensive planning approach can be evolved, it could go a long way in reducing poverty, unemployment and out-migration in rural areas. The significance of the non-farm sector is even more pronounced in agriculturally backward and low productivity zones (Davis and Cristoiu, 2002).

Given the multitude of constraints faced by households and the heterogeneity of non-farm employment opportunities available to them, livelihood diversification strategies vary widely (Barrett and Reardon, 2001). This heterogeneity can make generalizations problematic and is a reason for lack of sufficient knowledge about non-farm rural economy.

Past studies (Awoyemi, 2004; Jonasson, 2005) had reported that the contribution of non-farm economic activities in rural economy cannot be neglected because it has grown substantially from 30% to 50% in the developing economies during the last two decades. In this respect, the behaviour of rural households towards diversifying their sources of income and employment in favour of non-agricultural activities could be considered as an important requirement for rural poverty reduction in this country. It is therefore imperative to examine the contribution of non-farm economic activities to household income and this is the focus of this present study.

1.1. An Over-View of Related Studies

There has been an increasing trend towards growth of village and rural industries, trade and transportation for providing alternative opportunities of employment as well as for meeting the rising need of the rural people (Berdegue *et al.*, 2001). An analysis of rural poverty should therefore encompass a broad view of the rural economy.

Nonfarm activities are generally divided into two broad groups of occupations: 'high-labour-productivity that leads to high-income activity and low- labour- productivity activities that serve only as residual source of income (Ellis and Freeman, 2004). The latter activities are common among the poor. But, such employment may be very important from a social welfare perspective. If agriculture employment is not an option for certain subgroups of rural population, then rural non-agricultural employment opportunities, even if they are not highly remunerative, can make a real difference, especially for those households that do not possess farmlands.

Smith (2000) has shown the greater importance of nonfarm occupations for the landless and those with land-size up to 0.5 acres in Bangladesh. Those among the latter who manage to participate in non-farm activities have low incidence of poverty than their counterparts in farm occupations. In short, the contribution of non-farm rural economy seems to be high in South Asian countries like Pakistan where unfavourable labour-land-ratio limits income earnings opportunities in agriculture. A dynamic labour-intensive agriculture combining with a modernizing non-agricultural sector can lead to a spread of employment and income, with resulting rapid growth, egalitarian distribution, elimination of rural under-employment and slowing of rural-urban migration (Gordon and Craig, 2001)

A wide range of rural household surveys (Haggblade *et al.*, 2007) showed that incomes from the non-farm economic activities account for about 35% of rural incomes in Africa and about 50% in Asia. The diverse economic activities in rural areas allow accumulation of capital investments in small scale enterprises. It also offers more income portfolios for rural households (Lay *et al.*, 2007). These features potentially lead to sustainable income growth, help to cope with shocks and smooth consumption as well as create income opportunities for women outside the unremunerated domestic work and male-dominated occupations. Smith and Zwick (2001) had rightly observed that healthy and growing non-farm economy can bring growth that is pro-poor as it creates income opportunities with a greater upward mobility than subsistence agriculture.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to examine the contributions of rural non-farm economic activities to household income in Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna State. However, the specific objectives are to:- (i). examine socio-demographic traits of the households (ii) assess level of employment generation arising from non-farm economic activities, (iii). assess the contribution of rural non-farm economic activities to household income in the study area

2.1. Null Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference between the income of households that engage in both farm and non-farm economic activities and income of household that engage in farming.

2.2. Methodology

2.2.1. Data Selection

The data required for this study were collected at the household level and consist of household composition; types of farm and non-farm economic activities; level of participation and

employment status of the sample population; household income; incidence of emigration; motivation for participation in non-farm activity; occupational mobility amongst the sample population; sources of funding for the non-farm activity; potentials and constraints of the non-farm economic activities.

2.2.2. Sources of Data

The study made use of primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. For the purpose of selection of sample households as the units of analysis, a listing of all households in the sampled villages, whether they are involved or not in non-farm activities were sourced from the local authorities. The primary data was complemented by materials from secondary sources such as archives, text books, journals, conference papers and relevant documented materials.

2.2.3. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The study employed a multi-stage sampling procedure. First, purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting a target of 382 rural households that engaged in various economic activities in the study area. This sample size is considered representative of the entire heads of household in the study area. Second, the study area is divided into four chiefdoms namely: Saminaka, Yarkasuwa, Lere and Piriga chiefdoms based on the existing traditional institutions. Third, four districts from each of the chiefdoms mostly noted for agricultural production and other non-farm activities were purposively selected. Fourth, in each of the districts selected, two communities were randomly selected and samples of 5% were taken from each community and ensure proportionate representativeness of the entire population. This process yielded a sample of 382 rural households spread across 32 communities in the 34 districts of the four chiefdoms in the study area.

2.2.4. Methods of Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data collected. The descriptive statistics such as mean, averages and frequency distribution were used to summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of both farm and non-farm households. In addition, student t-test and analysis of means techniques were employed to establish the difference between the income of households that partake in farming alone and incomes of households that engaged in both farm and non-farm economic activities.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Age-Group and Non-Farm Economic Activities

The study examined the age-group and their involvement in non-farm economic activities and the result is presented in Table 1. A glance at the age distribution of rural entrepreneurs across the rural non-farm sector, it is evident that about (29.1%) are within age-group of 0- 40 years old and further analysis showed that about (28.6%) are within age bracket of 41-50 years.

Table-1. Age-group and Non-farm Economic Activities

Age Group	Rural Non-farm Activity															
	Manufacturing		Trade & commerce		Construction		Transportation		Services		Forest Related		Others		Total	
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%
0-40	26	32.1	51	26.2	8	38.1	5	26.3	25	5.0	2	7.1	1	8.3	118	29.1
41-50	23	28.4	66	38.8	6	28.6	5	26.3	9	18.0	5	17.9	2	16.7	116	28.6
51-60	11	13.6	45	23.1	5	23.8	4	21.1	9	18.0	9	32.1	5	41.7	88	21.7
61-70	11	13.6	24	12.3	2	9.5	3	15.8	7	14.0	10	35.7	3	25.0	60	14.8
70+	10	12.3	9	4.6	-	-	2	10.5	-	-	2	7.1	1	8.3	24	5.9

Source: Authors

While the age-group of 51-60 accounted for (21.7%), age-group of 61-70 constituted about (14.8%). Perhaps the least group is the old age which constituted about (5.9%) of the sampled population. For the older entrepreneurs in manufacturing sector, the age-groups of 51-60 and 61-70 shared equal strength of (13.6%). Those that are above 70 years in manufacturing sector are about (12.3%) of the sample. The transportation sector shows an almost fair distribution among age-groups of 0-40 and 41-50 years pairing with (26.3%). In the service sector, the age-groups of 41-50 and 51-60 shared equal strength of (18.0%). It is glaring that older people above 70 years old are not found in the service sector. In forestry activities, the age-groups of 51-60 and 61-70 recorded higher rate of (32.1%) and (35.7%) of participation respectively.

3.2. Gender and Non-Farm Economic Activities

Table 4.2 presents gender participation in the non-farm sector. It is found that the manufacturing sector is made up of mostly men (76.7%) against (23.3%) that are females. In trade and commerce, the women seem to do better with (42.0%) than men (58.0%) that engaged in non-farm economic activities.

Table-2. Gender and participation in non-farm activities

Gender	Manufacturing		Trade & commerce		Construction		Transportation		Services		Forest Related		Others	
	Fre	%	Freq	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%
Male	69	76.7	67	58.0	21	100	17	89.5	33	66.0	16	57.1	7	58.3
Female	21	23.3	119	42.0	-	-	2	10.5	17	34.0	12	42.9	5	41.7

Source: Authors

Also, women were not found to engage in construction activities but men that dominated this sector with (100.0%) participation. The social structure of the area sees construction activities as strictly man's activity. Again, in the transportation sector it is men that dominated with (89.5%) while the women recorded (10.5%). In services women were found to record (34.0%) while men recorded (66.0%) that means men still dominate the sector. Women recorded their largest presence in activities related to the forest (42.9%), while men accounted for (57.1%).

3.3. Non-Farm Contribution to Employment

Over the years, the importance of non-farm employment has been gaining increasing attention in the rural areas of developing countries. There are varying degrees of contribution of non-farm sector for providing employment opportunities in each of the chiefdoms due to existing inequalities in the availability of infrastructural facilities. Table 3 shows the distribution of non-farm activities across the chiefdoms. It is clear that trade and commercial activities predominate in all the chiefdoms with Saminaka having more than half (52.8%) of the activities. This is strictly followed by Yarkasuwa (43.9%), Lere (43.3%) and Piriga (50.5%). This should be expected because of the market structures found to be more in those localities. In Saminaka, manufacturing activities accounted for (18.4%), Yarkasuwa (20.9%), Lere (19.5%) and Piriga (21.6%)

Table-3. Contribution of Non-farm Activity to Employment Generation.

Non-Farm Activity	Chiefdoms								Σ	%
	Saminaka		Yarkasuwa		Lere		Piriga			
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
Manufacturing	23	18.4	19	20.9	19	19.5	20	21.6	81	19.8
Trade & commerce	66	52.8	40	43.9	42	43.3	47	50.5	195	48.3
Construction	5	4.0	7	7.7	6	6.2	3	3.2	21	5.2
Transportation	6	4.8	4	4.4	7	7.2	2	2.2	19	4.7
Services	18	14.4	10	11.0	15	15.5	7	7.5	50	12.3
Forest related	4	3.2	7	7.7	6	6.2	11	11.8	28	6.7
Others	3	2.4	4	4.4	2	2.1	3	3.2	12	3.0

Source: Authors

This means that manufacturing takes after trade and commerce. Services also generate employment with Lere chiefdom recording the highest (15.5%), Saminaka (14.4%), Yarkasuwa (11.0%) and Piriga (7.5%). In the construction sector, Yarkasuwa recorded more participation in the sector with (7.7%), Lere (6.2%), Saminaka (4.0%) and Piriga (3.2%).

In the transportation sector, Lere had (7.2%), Saminaka (4.8%), Yarkasuwa (4.4%) and Piriga (2.2%). This might be attributed to the level of infrastructural development in those localities. In forest activities, Piriga had (11.8%), Yarkasuwa (7.7%), Lere (6.2%), and Saminaka (3.2%). On the aggregate, trade and commerce has generated more employment than other sectors.

3.4. Mean Income Distribution of Household by Farm and Non-Farm Activities

The result is presented in Table 4. It showed that all those that embrace other economic activities including farming activities do better in terms of higher income except in the year 2007 when the mean income of households was (49.0%) whereas the mean income of those households that engaged in farming and other economic activity was (51.0%) representing some (2.0%) higher for the same period. In 2008, the mean income of households that engaged in farming only dropped to (47.5%) but income of households that ventured into both farming and non-farm activities was increased to (52.5%). It shows that between 2007 and 2008 rural non-farm activities have increased household income by (3.5%). In 2009, those households that ventured into farming only had their mean income dropped to (41.8%). But for the households that went into other economic activities, the mean income further increased from (52.5%) to (58.2%) representing an increase of (5.7%).

This means that non-farm sector is playing an important role in income generation of the rural households. This is corroborated by the findings of (Ellis and Freeman, 2004) that non-farm economic activities are capable of reducing poverty in rural communities. In the year 2010, the mean income of those that engaged farm alone increased slightly from (41.8%) to (48.5%) in 2010 representing an increase of (6.7%) while income of those that ventured into farm and non-farm activities dropped from (58.2%) to (51.5%) representing some (6.7%). In 2011, the mean income of households that engaged farm alone dropped sharply to

Table-4. Mean Income Distribution of Households by Farm and Non-Farm Activities

Year	Type of income	Income (#)		Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
		Mean	%		
2007	Farm	3.50E5	51.0	3.91E5	27308.42
	Farm and non-farm	3.37E5	49.0	2.71E5	20481.55
2008	Farm	3.70E5	47.5	4.83E5	33690.37
	Farm and non-farm	4.09E5	52.5	3.87E5	29175.79
2009	Farm	3.16E5	41.8	3.07E5	21423.25
	Farm and non-farm	4.40E5	58.2	4.82E5	36353.88
2010	Farm	4.35E5	48.5	8.17E5	56925.86
	Farm and non-farm	4.62E5	51.5	3.47E5	26208.66
2011	Farm	3.30E5	36.9	2.87E5	20059.86
	Farm and non-farm	5.63E5	63.1	4.95E5	37383.79
2007-2011	Farm income	3.60E5	44.8	4.97E5	15494.38
	Farm and Non-farm	4.42E5	55.2	4.11E5	13871.77

Source: Authors

(36.9%) and those that diversified into non-farm activities increased substantially to (63.1%) of the total mean income for that year.

Considering the trend of income generation over the periods (2007-2011), while households that ventured into farming only had their income fluctuated, those that ventured into farming and other non-farm activities experienced a steady increase in their mean income over the same period.

4. ANALYSIS OF MEAN INCOME

Table 5 presents the calculated student's *t*-test results. In 2007, the mean annual income of households that ventured into farming only were compared with those of households that engage in both farming and non-farm economic activities, the calculated *t*-value (0.708) and the critical value (1.98) showed a significant difference at 0.05 probability level. In 2008, the calculated *t*-value (1.48) and the critical value (1.96) even though it was higher than 2007, the null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 significance level. However, the differences observed might be attributed to sampling error hence; there was no significant difference in the income of the two groups. But income differentials were higher in 2009 with *t*-value (2.747) and the critical value (1.96) indicating a significant difference in the income of the two groups of households.

Table-5. Calculated Values of t for Mean Incomes (2007-2011)

Year	t-test for Equality of Means						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
2007	.708	762	.479	21191.47617	29927.15685	80035.04194	37652.08960
2008	1.481	762	.139	59262.24862	40001.70654	1.37915E5	19390.16268
2009	2.747	762	.006	1.09881E5	39997.37638	1.88525E5	31237.11005
2010	2.094	762	.037	91655.01269	43767.81077	1.77712E5	5597.58782
2011	1.814	762	.070	1.28114E5	70624.78927	2.66978E5	10750.46879

Source: Authors

In 2010, the calculated value of t is (2.094) and the critical value of (1.96) thus, the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 significance level. In 2011, t value dropped to (1.84) and the critical value (1.96) the null hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 probability level. The differences in the mean annual incomes of the households in 2009 and 2010 were found to be statistically significant.

4.1. Policy Recommendations

There is absence of development plans in the past to assess the importance and contribution of various non-farm economic activities in the process of rural socio-economic transformation. Reardon *et al.* (2001) remarked that initiatives have not been undertaken to identify and assess the development potentials of different non-farm activities nor any suitable intervention and planning strategies have been initiated to harness opportunities available for developing certain non-farm economic activities in different locations in the study area in particular and in the country at large. The development possibilities of non-farm sector as expected would be largely determined by the process of initiating expansion in the road transport facilities and to a certain extent by the pattern of agricultural and industrial diversification (Awoyemi, 2004). In fact, improving accessibility in road transportation will positively contribute in widening the scope for marketing of goods and services by rural industrial enterprises. Provision of all-weather roads and essential infrastructural facilities would certainly promote the expansion of various non-farm activities to a greater level and also it would subsequently increase the commercial intercourse between the rural and their urban counterparts thus, strengthening the income levels of the rural households.

It would be more appropriate to introduce an integrated farm and non-farm sectors development planning approach together which should be holistic in nature.. In short, the concerned approach calls for identification of various potentially viable non-farm activities and development linkages that the identified non-farm activities are possessing with the diversification of different components of farm sector in different locations (He, 2000). Also, identify right approaches and under what manner to be initiated for systematically achieving the development of both sectors simultaneously along with planning for expansion of different activities. This would go along way for integrating farm and rural non-farm enterprise development.

The focus of initiating rural development programmes should be geared towards the expansion of self-employment opportunities rather than wage-paid-casual employment (Bright *et al.*, 2000).

The rural people should be encouraged towards the establishment of various non-farm economic activities which offer area of specific comparative advantages. The government in turn can embark upon enlightenment through awaking the rural people about the sustainability nature of different enterprises in particular areas, providing subsidized financial and technical assistance to meet the establishment costs in the production process. The existing patterns of rural non-farm participation suggest substantial entry barriers faced by the poor. Therefore, equipping rural poor households to move towards better remunerative rural non-farm economy should be a priority. Investment in infrastructure, access to financial resources, skill acquisition and capacity building as local engines of growth can help to create such favourable environment and should be taken into consideration when designing and formulating rural development policies.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Persistent increase in rural poverty, under-employment and exodus of labour has strengthened the importance of non-farm economic activities for rural households in recent times. At the aggregated level, the rural non-farm economy is playing important role both in terms of generated employment and boosting means of livelihoods as indicated in the study. Non-farm employment accounts for a large percentage of the total employment in the rural economy of most developing countries of the world.

Empirical analysis of the rural non-farm determinants revealed that the decision to participate may arise from insufficient land holdings, soil degradation, unattractive producers' price for agricultural products and lack of infrastructural facilities in the rural areas (Corral and Reardon, 2001). It largely constitutes a centrifugal force within the rural economy that can spur peasant people into diversification of economic base and means of livelihoods in order to meet challenges of rural poverty. The study revealed that both men and women of all ages participated in non-farm economic activities. It is a sector that should be accorded recognition and encouraged to flourish and it could go along way to remove the burden of over dependence on public jobs that are readily not available. By and large, the sector requires improvement in building the capacity of an individual to participate in non-farm economic activities such as educational attainment of the head of the household is a crucial factor that explains the choice between non-farm and farm activities, public and private organizations as well as accessibility to basic infrastructural facilities that can stimulate participation in non-farm employment and reduce heavy transaction costs caused by remoteness of rural areas and can negatively affect incomes from non-farm economic activities.

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