



DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RICE PRODUCERS OPERATING UNDER AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AGENDA SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN AGRICULTURAL ZONE 1 OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was on demographic characteristics of rice producers operating under agricultural transformation agenda support programme in agricultural zone 1 (ATASP-I) of Niger State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 165 of rice producers. Data were collected using structured questionnaire and interview scheduled; and analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, frequency and mean), Likert scale and Kendall's coefficient of concordance. The result revealed that 77.5% of the respondents were males while their mean age was 40 years. Also, 77.5% of the respondents were married; 36.3% had no formal education; and 67.2% had household size between 6-8 people. The result of participation of rice producers in ATASP-I revealed that training at the local level ranked 1st with mean value of 2.70, application of fertilizer ranked 2nd with mean value of 2.68, and planting activities ranked 3rd with mean value of 2.61. these findings is an indication of high participation of rice producers in those activities; also results further showed that ploughing activities and linkages with financial institution with mean value 1.20 and 1.10 has lower participation by rice producers in the study area. The major constraints encountered by the respondents were poor credit facilities ($\bar{X} = 4.13$) and high cost of equipment ($\bar{X} = 4.57$). It was recommended that provision of credit facilities should be made available to rice producers timely and speedily; and good extension services should be provided to rice farmers by ATASP-I in order to enhance their outputs and strengthen their capacity.

Keywords: Agenda, Demographic, Producers, Rice, Transformation.