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ISSUES IN HARNESSING LABOR-SAVING DEVICES FOR NIGERIAN RURAL WOMEN: EVIDENCE FROM KADUNA STATE

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Statement of Problem: Several studies have affirmed that women shoulder the bulk of drudgery-laden tasks in rural settings with physical, health and economic implications. Easing drudgery in these tasks will, in no small measure, enhance production efficiency, release time for other activities and contribute positively to the socio-economic and healthy well-being of rural women in Nigeria.

Aim: This study was carried out to investigate the level of awareness of Labor Saving Devices (LSDs), the actual use of LSDs, constraints limiting usage and relationship between socio-economic characteristics and preference for LSDs.

Methodology and Theoretical Orientation: The survey-based study incorporating multi stage sampling covered three Local Government Areas in Kaduna State, 228 respondents and 4 drudgery-laden tasks (2 on-farm and 2 off-farm) relating to maize production. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, 5-point Likert type scale and chi-square statistics.

Findings: The results showed that the mean age of the respondents was 34.6 years, while the average household size was 7.8 persons. Majority (91.7%) of the respondents knew about LSDs while only 48.3% used devices on a regular basis. Chi-square analysis of the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and preference for LSDs showed that age and household size were statistically significant ($P < 0.05$), while educational status and marital status were not. Constraints limiting the use of LSDs were identified to include cost and unavailability of devices.

Conclusion and Significance: The respondents awareness of LSDs as well as their preference for same is not in doubt. Interventions are suggested with a view to harnessing LSDs and increasing the productivity of the womenfolk.

Biography

Chuks Ezech is a Senior Lecturer, has been engaged in teaching, supervision and research for over three decades in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. He has published extensively in his chosen field of rural economy and development and is happily married with kids.

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