

Impact of Farm Settlements' Facilities on Farm Patronage in Oyo State

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Abstract : The youths' prevalent negative attitude to farming is partly due to amenities and facilities found in the urban centers at the expense of the rural areas. Hence, there is the need to create a befitting and conducive farm environment to retain farm employees and attract the youth to farming. This can be achieved through the provision of services and amenities that will ensure a comfortable standard of living higher than that obtained by a person of equal status in other forms of employment in urban centers, thereby eliminating the psychological feeling of lowered self-esteem associated with farming. This study assessed farm settlements' facilities and patronage in Oyo State with a view to using the information to encourage sustainable agriculture in Nigeria. The study becomes necessary because of the dearth of information on the state of facilities in the farm settlements as it affects patronage of farm settlements for sustainable agriculture in the developing countries like Nigeria. The study utilized three purposely selected farm settlements- Ogbomoso, Fasola and Ilora out of the seven existing ones in Oyo State. One hundred percent (100%) of the 262 residential buildings in the three settlements were sampled, from where a household head from each of the buildings was randomly chosen. This translates to 262 household heads served with questionnaire out of which 47.7% of the questionnaires were recovered. Information obtained included respondents' residency categories, residents' status, residency years, housing types, types of holding and number of acres/holding. Others include the socio-economic attributes such as age, gender, income, educational status of respondents, assessment of existing facilities in the selected sites, the level of patronage of the farm settlements including perceived pull factors that can enhance farm settlements patronage. The study revealed that the residents were not satisfied with the adequacy and quality of all the facilities available in their settlements. Residents' satisfaction with infrastructural facilities cannot be statistically linked with location across the study area. Findings suggested that residents of Ogbomoso farm settlements were not enjoying adequate provision of water supply and road as much as those from Ilora and Fasola. Patronage of the farm settlements were largely driven by farming activities and sale of farm produce. The respondents agreed that provision of farm resort centers, standard recreational and tourism facilities, vacation employment opportunities for youths, functional internet and communication networks among others are likely to boost the level of patronage of the farm settlements. The study concluded that improvement of the facilities both in quality and quantity will encourage the youths in going back to farming. It then recommends that maintenance of existing facilities and provision of more facilities such as resort centers be ensured.

Keywords : encourage, farm settlements' facilities, Oyo state, patronage

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