

ASSESSMENT OF GROWTH ENHANCEMENT SUPPORT SCHEME: PARADIGM SHIFT FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND INCREASED FARM INCOME AMONG FARMERS' IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to assess the Growth Enhancement Support Scheme as a paradigm shift for poverty alleviation and increased farm income among farmers in Delta State, Nigeria. Primary and secondary sources of data were used for the study and they were respectively sourced from the respondents of the study (who numbered 377) and related literature. Multi – stage sampling technique was used to select the respondents from two senatorial zones (Delta north and central) of the State. The objectives and hypotheses of the study were respectively analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (t – test and Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)). Results showed that the average age, farm size, household size, farming experience and annual farm income were 49 years, 2ha. , 5 persons, 25 years and ₦277,000.85 respectively. Majority of them were males (70.6%), married (77.5%) and had formal education (89.7%). The respondents were mostly satisfied with the services provided by GESS, though showed constraints in late arrival of fertilizers and seeds, inability to activate PIN/poor network and non-receipt of PIN. Pearson Correlation analysis showed significant but weak relationship between farmers satisfaction and their farm size ($r = 0.204$), income ($r = 0.191$) and farming experience ($r = 0.109$). Results also showed that participation in GESS has impacted positively on the farmers income. Based on findings, the study recommends that that for late arrival of inputs, efforts should be intensified by the government and the input suppliers in planning and delivery inputs ahead of the planting season.

Keywords: Farm income, poverty alleviation, agricultural programmes, farm inputs, communication, productivity, services.