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INVOLVEMENT IN NON-FARM ACTIVITIES AND OCCURRENCE OF DOMESTIC CONFLICTS AMONG RURAL FARMERS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

As part of effort to promote rural dwellers' wellbeing, several studies had been conducted to examine the causes and resolution of domestic conflicts among farmers but less attention is paid to their involvement in non-farm activities as a strategy to mitigate domestic conflicts, particularly in Edo State, Nigeria. The study therefore assessed male and female rural farmers' involvement in non-farm activities in Edo State with a view to unveiling the effects on occurrence of domestic conflicts. Specifically, it analysed the benefits derived in non-farm activities as well as establishing relationship between their involvement in non-farm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts among male and female farmers. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 130 respondents (65 males and 65 females) in the same household using interview schedule. Data on socioeconomic characteristics, non-farm activities performed and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts were described with the use of mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentages while Pearsons' Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship that exists between benefits derived due to their involvement in non-farm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts. Results show that 63.1% and 66.2% of male and female were between the ages of 20 and 40 years while only 9.2% of male and 38.5% of female having no formal education. Non farm activities such as wood carving ($\bar{x}=2.94\pm 0.57$), building/construction ($\bar{x}=2.92\pm 0.48$) and Carpentry/ furniture works ($\bar{x}=2.83\pm 0.83$) were the major non-farm activities with high involvement among male while petty trading ($\bar{x}=2.99\pm 0.83$), hairdressing ($\bar{x}=3.24\pm 0.94$) and tailoring ($\bar{x}=2.73\pm 0.88$) recorded high involvement level among their female counterparts. Income generation ($\bar{x}=3.29\pm 0.64$) and creation of self employment ($\bar{x}=3.24\pm 0.27$) were among the benefits derived for their involvement. A negative and significant correlation existed between farmers' involvement in non-farm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts ($r=-0.51$; $p\leq 0.01$). It was concluded that involvement in non farm activities among rural farmers is central to resolving domestic conflicts. It is therefore, recommended that farmers in the rural areas should be encouraged to involve in non-farm activities by social and development workers as this will be a strategy in building peace within a community.

Keywords: Non-farm activities, domestic conflicts, rural farmers

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, agriculture has always been the mainstay of the rural economy because it attracts more than 70% of the populace (Idachaba, 2004, Omorogbe, Jelena and Fatima, 2014). However, despite this enormous contribution of agriculture to rural economy and its importance in the employment generation, rural areas have over the years experienced decline in capacity building and worsening poverty situation (Aigbokan, 2008). Thus, poverty has been on the increase since 1980, rising from 28.1% to 65.6% in 1996 (NBS, 2006). This went down to 54.4% in 2004, but increased to about 69% in 2010 and went as high as 72% in 2016 (NBS, 2016). Despite the numerous poverty-reduction interventions and strategies implemented and adopted in Nigeria, the incidence of poverty in rural areas still remains high (United Nation Development Programme UNDP, 2008). The reason might be attributed to the wrong strategies and approaches to rural poverty reduction which are usually centred on production of crops and livestock without consideration for a holistic

approach which embraces not only agriculture but also non-farm enterprises among farmers.

Rene (2010) reported that poverty was measured by the quality of life by the Action Economic Reforms (AER) in Philippine due to the complexity in the usual measurement of poverty. The Quality of Life Index, as developed by Action for Economic Reforms (AER), is a derivative of the UNDP's Capability Poverty Measure (CPM) that was proposed by Professor Amartya Sen and popularized by the Human Development Report. The CPM, however, has "remained mostly a conceptual scale, and very little progress has been made in operationalising it" (Boltvinik, 2003). The QLI, therefore, may be seen as an attempt to operationalise a pure capability-based measure, as conceptualized by Professor Sen. The index is considered a pure capability-based measure since all the component indicators in the composite index are based on *outcomes* and not simply the *means* to achieve such development goals. Income and other *means* indicators are excluded in the variable mix that generates the index. Thus, it was used to proxy poverty status among farmers for this study.



In an attempt to alleviate poverty in the developing countries of the world, efforts have been directed towards promoting rural well-being and this requires an integrated plan that goes beyond mere agricultural development (Barrett, Reardon and Webb, 2006). 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 (United Nation Development Programme, 2008). In 2016, National Bureau of Statistics reported that in Nigeria, about 64.2% of Nigerians are living below this poverty line and thus classified as extremely poor (NBS, 2015). In Nigeria, a key element for rural development efforts is that agriculture has been viewed as a basis for rural development, an approach which has neglected the contributions of other sectors most especially the non-farm activities in improving the quality of life of rural dwellers, and subsequently hindered the scope for a multi-sectoral and integrated approach to rural development programming (Awoyemi, 2011).

Non-farm activities in rural areas seem to offer a promising solution to poverty problems by creating local employment opportunities and generating new sources of income as it had been adjudged to have significant contributions to the growth of rural economies by reducing rural poverty (Lanjouw and Lanjouw 2001; De Janvry *et al.*, 2005; Démurger *et al.*, 2010). Involvement in non farm activities among farmers therefore could be a viable strategy to poverty reduction and consequently have some impact on domestic conflict. Although, Ikejiaku (2012) opined that there are disagreements about the specific interaction between poverty and conflict, but both impact negatively on development with a clear evidence that conflict impacts more on development than poverty. Similarly, Kruegar and Maleckova. (2004) remarked that violence is explainable by economic or non-economic factors, or their combinations rest on the character or type of violence. Moreso, Sambanis (2004) asserted that political violence and other crises are hampered by endogeneity and selections of key variables such as economic, political and other social related ones. UNICEF (2000) categorized violence against women into physical violence, sexual violence, coercion and control, economic control and material deprivation, the power and control wheel and general neglect. These indicators were adopted for the domestic violence for this study. Makama (2013) and Jephias (2013) posited that the patriarchy nature of most African countries had given rooms for gender based violence, resulting to gender inequality in access and control over productive resources.

There have been several studies between poverty and conflicts. However, most of these studies were done objectively without specifically

looking at domestic conflicts among farmers and their involvement in non-farm activities as a means of income diversification for better quality of life. For instance, scholars have used different terms: indirect (Goodhand and Atkinson, 2001), two way (Okafor, 2004) complex (Onyeiwu, 2004), or bifurcated (Sambanis, 2004) in Ikejiaku (2012) to explain the poverty-conflict relationship. This suggests that different views about poverty and conflict exists in the academic literatures but little or none is known of the relationship between domestic conflicts resulting from poverty and farmers involvement in non farm activities as a strategy to cushion the effects of domestic conflicts within the household. Hence, this study identified non-farm activities carried out by farmers on gender basis, examined the benefits derived from their involvement in non farm activities, analysed their quality of life (to proxy poverty status) and determined the influence of their quality of life on the frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts with a view to documenting relationship between their quality of life and domestic conflicts in Edo State.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Edo State, Nigeria. The State was created in 1991 from the defunct Bendel State which comprised many states in the current South-South and South-East. It has a total of eighteen (18) Local Government Areas and is divided into three Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) zones, namely: Edo South, Edo Central and Edo North. The State lies within the geographical coordinates of Longitudes $05^{\circ} 04'$ and $06^{\circ} 43'$ East of the Greenwich Meridian and Latitudes $05^{\circ} 44'$ and $07^{\circ} 34'$ North of the Equator. The State is characterized by a tropical climate that ranges from humid to sub-humid at different times of the year with rainy and dry seasons as the two distinct seasons. The average temperature fluctuates from a minimum of 24°C to a maximum of 33°C with mangrove, freshwater swamp and savannah as the three distinct vegetation types found in the state.

The State covered a total land area of about 19794 square kilometers and bounded in the north and northeast by Kogi State, west by Ondo State, in the south and southeast by Delta State with a population of about 3 million based on the 2006 Population Census figure. This consists of 1,640,461 males and 1,577,871 females. The state is made up of Edo, Esan, Owan and Akoko Edo as the prominent ethnic groups consisting of both Christianity dominating the South and part of Central Agricultural Zone and Islam dominating the Northern zone. The major occupations of Edo people outside the public sector employment are trading, farming (including livestock production),



fishing, metal and wood work, carving and other related artisanal endeavors.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was used as framework to select 130 respondents who are members of households- a husband and his wife for the study. First, purposive sampling technique was used to select Edo North and Edo Central ADP zones based on the level of rurality and intensity of farming. At the second stage, snowball sampling technique was used to select 3 rural communities in each of the two ADP zones sampled, to have a total of 6 communities. At the third and final stage, 22 respondents who are practising farmers (11 males and 11 females in 11 households) were purposively selected using snowball sampling from each of the six (6) communities under investigation. Thus, a total of 132 respondents comprising 66 males and 66 females were sampled for the study using interview schedule. However, only two of the interview schedule were not properly filled. Therefore, a total of 130 (65 households) were used for the study.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of involvement in Non-farm activities from a list of non-farm activities provided on a 4 point scale of highly involved (4), partly involved (3), less involved (2) and not involved (1). The weighted mean score was calculated thus: $1+2+3+4=10/4=2.5$. This was used as a criterion for judgement. A list of domestic violence (categorised into physical violence, sexual violence, coercion and control, economic control and material deprivation, the power and control wheel, and general neglect based on the UNICEF (2000)) was given for farmers to indicate the frequency of experiencing such on a 4 point scale of very regular (4), regular (3), occasionally (2) and never experienced (1). For instance under physical violence variables like being given permanent injuries by spouse, being slapped, and being pushed were used to operationalise it while raping, beaten because of sex, strangled because of sex were used to operationalised sexual violence. Also, quality of life was captured using a 3 point scale of high (3), moderate (2) and low (1) categorized under housing, health, education, infrastructures and incomes as indicators. Test and re-test was used to validate this instrument and a Correlation Coefficient of 0.72 was obtained using Ose Local Government in Ondo State due to its proximity to Edo State. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the relationship that exists between quality of life and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts among farmers while Linear Regression was used to analyse the influence of involvement in non-

farm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts among respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic characteristics

It was observed in Table 1 that the mean age of the farmers was 46.6 ± 14.7 years and 38.4 ± 6.5 years for male and female farmers, respectively with majority (63.1%) of male and (66.2%) of female falling within the age bracket of 20 and 40 years, respectively. The mean ages of male and female farmers presented above coupled with the fact that majority were found between the ages of 20 and 40 years indicate that they were young and still in their youthful ages as farmers. Youthfulness is characterized by innovation prones, risk taking, and being knowledge driven based on the assertions of Torimiro, Kolawole and Okorie (2007), Ekong (2003) and Angba (2003). This implies that farmers in the study area could still be regarded as youth. The Children and Youth-in-Agriculture Programme (CYIAP-Network, 2006) took cognizance of the circumstances of poverty, unemployment and deprivations that are prevalent in Nigeria to categorise youth as people within the age group of 19 and 40 years.

This shows that both male and female farmers could be very active in their farming activities and still have what it takes to involve in other non farm activities for better quality of life. In addition, majority (75.4%) of male and (86.2%) of female were married with Christianity 53.8% and 66.2% being the dominant religion among male and female farmers. Furthermore, about 32.3% of male and only 3.5% of females had post secondary education with about 39.5% of female and only 9.2% of male had no formal education. This could be due to the fact that in most rural communities in Nigeria, preference is given to male education compared to their female counterparts as opined by Akinbi and Akinbi (2015) that there is a gender differential between male and female education in Nigeria. Moreso, male had a slightly higher farm size of 4.2 ± 1.92 hectares as against 2.9 ± 0.92 hectares for the females. This findings further buttressed the earlier assertions of Adekola, Adereti, Koledoye, and Owombo. (2013) that gender differential existed between male and female farmers in land access in Ondo State. The higher farm size among males could be attributed to cultural issues associated with land holding in most rural communities across Nigeria as reported by Bioye, Abdul, and Joseph (2006) that the spiritual and political significance of land in Nigeria makes it easily accessible by the males.

**Table 1: Socioeconomic characteristics of farmers**

| Variable | Male | | Mean±Std. Dev | Female | | Mean±Std. Dev |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----|---------------|--------|------|---------------|
| | F | % | | F | % | |
| Age in years | < 20 yrs | 3 | 4.6 | 6 | 9.2 | 38.4±6.5 |
| | 20-40 yrs | 41 | 63.1 | 43 | 66.2 | |
| | 41-60 yrs | 15 | 23.1 | 13 | 20.0 | |
| | > 61 | 6 | 9.2 | 3 | 4.6 | |
| Marital status | Single | 12 | 18.5 | 6 | 9.2 | |
| | Married | 49 | 75.4 | 56 | 86.2 | |
| | Others | 4 | 6.1 | 3 | 4.6 | |
| Religion | Christianity | 35 | 53.8 | 43 | 66.2 | |
| | Islam | 23 | 35.4 | 19 | 29.2 | |
| | Others | 7 | 10.8 | 3 | 4.6 | |
| Education | Non-formal | 6 | 9.2 | 25 | 39.5 | |
| | Primary | 21 | 32.3 | 17 | 26.2 | |
| | Secondary | 17 | 26.2 | 20 | 30.8 | |
| | Post secondary | 21 | 32.3 | 3 | 3.5 | |
| Farm size in (Ha) | | | 4.2±1.92 | | | 2.9±0.92 |
| Farming experience (yrs) | | | 38±11.7 | | | 35±9.73 |

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Involvement in non-farm activities

Evidence in Table 2 show that wood carving ($\bar{x}=2.94\pm0.57$), agro-industrial work ($\bar{x}=2.26\pm0.80$), cab driving ($\bar{x}=2.73\pm0.91$), carpentry/furniture works ($\bar{x}=2.83\pm0.83$), and building/construction ($\bar{x}=2.92\pm0.48$) were the non-farm activities that recorded high level of involvement among the male farmers while trading ($\bar{x}=2.99\pm0.83$), food vending ($\bar{x}=2.57\pm0.41$), hairdressing/ barbing ($\bar{x}=3.24\pm0.94$) and dressmaking/fashion designing ($\bar{x}=2.73\pm0.88$) were those with high level of involvement among the female farmers. The findings show that farmers

were not involved in so many of the non farm activities, although, male involved in tedious non farm activities that requires a lot of energy such as wood carving, construction works and cab driving whereas women were found mainly in non farm activities that are less tedious. Such activities are hairdressing, food vending and trading. All these are gender specific works in Nigeria. The findings conform with the study of Madaki (2014) that reported high involvement of men in manufacturing and transportation works as compared to their female counterparts.

Table 2: Respondents distribution by their involvement in non farm activities

| Non-Farm activities | Male | | Female | |
|-------------------------------|-------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev | Mean | Std. Dev |
| Wood carving | 2.94* | 0.57 | 2.37 | 0.92 |
| Agro-industrial work | 2.68* | 0.80 | 2.09 | 0.26 |
| Trading | 2.14 | 0.69 | 2.99* | 0.83 |
| Cab driving | 2.73* | 0.91 | 1.33 | 0.43 |
| Quarrying | 2.28 | 0.83 | 2.05 | 0.77 |
| Food vending | 2.22 | 0.36 | 2.57* | 0.41 |
| Photography | 1.92 | 0.39 | 1.43 | 0.39 |
| Butchery | 1.58 | 0.99 | 1.44 | 0.35 |
| Carpentry/ furniture works | 2.83* | 0.83 | 1.40 | 0.92 |
| Hairdressing/ Barbing | 2.28 | 0.83 | 3.24* | 0.94 |
| Dressmaking/fashion Designing | 2.04 | 0.55 | 2.73* | 0.88 |
| Building/Construction | 2.92* | 0.48 | 1.54 | 0.62 |
| Bakery | 2.41 | 0.86 | 2.13 | 0.84 |
| Traditional Healing | 1.60 | 0.87 | 1.46 | 0.70 |
| Lotto work | 2.46 | 0.70 | 2.18 | 0.18 |
| Transport services | 1.68 | 0.88 | 1.73 | 0.14 |
| Teaching | 1.73 | 0.14 | 1.16 | 0.74 |
| Office Works | 2.16 | 0.74 | 0.83 | 0.19 |

Source: Field survey, 2016.

*Mean \geq 2.5 = High involvement

In contrast, Abdulai and CroleRees (2001) reported that non farm activities contributed significantly to

Benefits derived from non-farm activities

Results in Figure 1 show that income generation ($\bar{x}=3.29\pm0.64$), creation of self employment ($\bar{x}=3.24\pm0.27$), ability to acquire properties/items for better livelihood ($\bar{x}=2.55\pm0.92$), creating a healthy family ($\bar{x}=2.63\pm0.58$) and others ($\bar{x}=2.78\pm0.88$) were the identified benefits the respondents derived from their involvement in non-farm activities in the study area. These benefits are all related to living a better life as Zahra *et al.*(2016) submitted that women with better livelihood opportunities experience less violence during pregnancy and Rene (2010) unveiled that women who are engaged in economic activities may have little exposure to domestic violence. This becomes applicable to

income diversification among rural farmers in Southern Mali.

farmers who involve in non-farm activities alongside their normal farming engagement as this is expected to bring in addition income for better family living. Also, the number of man hours committed to non-farm activities after their normal farm operation could also reduce constant interaction and nagging that may result to domestic conflicts among couples in rural areas where basic amenities such as electricity, cinema houses and other relaxation centres are seriously lacking.

This can be used to proxy household poverty status. This is an indication that involvement in non farm activities among farmers could contribute to farmers quality of life and could technically prevent domestic conflicts within households.

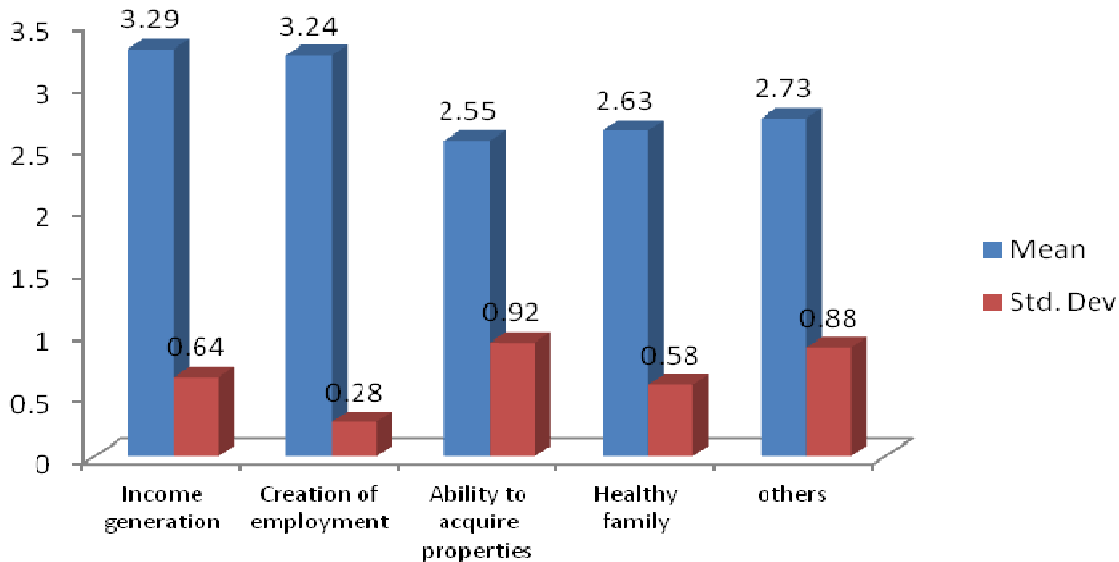


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by their benefits derived from their involvement in non-farm activities
Source: Field survey, 2016.

Frequency of occurrence of domestic violence among respondents

Evidence in Table 3 show that domestic violence such as physical violence ($\bar{x}=2.51\pm0.84$), coercion and control ($\bar{x}=3.79\pm0.03$), economic control and material deprivation ($\bar{x}=2.68\pm0.61$) and power and control wheel ($\bar{x}=3.57\pm0.15$) were those that frequently occurred in the study area. The frequent occurrence of these violence, most especially the physical and economic and power control among respondents maybe viewed from the patriarchy nature of most Nigerian communities. This assertion corroborated the findings of Makama

(2013) that the patriarchy structure of Nigeria contributed to the wide gender inequality that dominates every sphere of life of the rural people while, Jephias (2013) also observed that women faced unequal opportunities and control of resources in Zimbabwe due to the patriarchy system of operation. As long as men are in charge of power and decision making process in many rural households as reported by Ikejiaku (20120, domestic violence may not cease to exist especially, those resulting from the economic and welfare of members of rural households.

**Table 3: Respondents distribution based on the frequency of domestic violence experienced**

| Form of domestic violence | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|-------|----------|
| Physical violence | 2.51* | 0.84 |
| Sexual violence | 1.95 | 0.99 |
| Coercion and control | 3.79* | 0.03 |
| Economic control and material deprivation | 2.68* | 0.61 |
| The power and control wheel | 3.57* | 0.15 |
| Neglect | 2.15 | 0.57 |

Source: Field survey, 2016.

*Mean \geq 2.5 = High frequency of experience

Relationship between benefits derived from non-farm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts

Results in Table 4 show that benefit derived from nonfarm activities such as housing ($r = -0.32$; $p \leq 0.01$), health status ($r = -0.286$; $p \leq 0.01$), education status ($r = -0.199$; $p \leq 0.05$), and income ($r = -0.426$; $p \leq 0.01$) had inverse relationship with the frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts among farmers in the study area. Also, benefit derived from non-farm activities total score was obtained. It was observed that negative correlation

existed between benefit derived from non-farm activities by rural farmers ($r = -0.51$; $p \leq 0.01$) and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts. This implies that a farmer with a high benefit derived from non-farm activities experiences less domestic conflicts based on the findings of this study. This finding corroborates the report of Dalal and Lindqvist (2012) that women with low quality of life experience more domestic violence in India than those with low poverty status (high quality of life).

Table 4: Results of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation showing the significant relationship between benefits derived from involvement in nonfarm activities and frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts

| Benefits of nonfarm activities | Correlation Coeff (r) | P-value | Decision |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|----------|
| Housing | -0.322** | 0.01 | S |
| Health status | -0.286** | 0.01 | S |
| Education status | -0.199* | 0.05 | S |
| Infrastructures | -0.078 | 0.49 | NS |
| Income | -0.426** | 0.01 | S |
| Total benefits derived scores | -0.510** | 0.01 | S |

Source: Field survey, 2016.

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Influence of involvement in non-farm activities on frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts

Evidence in Table 5 reveals that involvement in non-farm activities ($t = -2.49$) has an inverse influence on the frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts among rural farmers at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that involvement in non-farm activities would bring about a reduction in the rate at which domestic conflicts occur within a rural household. This has been established based on the above findings that such a farmer will experience less domestic conflicts. Longman (2012) opined that in Iran, it was a policy for farmers to diversify into non-farm activities considering the limited capability of agricultural sector in the country. The findings therefore found that involvement in non-farm activities among

inhabitants of West Azarbaijan Province of Iran has been a sustainable means of living. However, Stanley and Naasegnibe (2012) reported that in Ghana, non-farm activities in the areas were seasonal with low return activities owing to certain socio-demographic factors influencing their involvement. With the sustainability of non-farm activities and the established influence it has on domestic conflicts according to the results of this finding, it would be a sustainable approach to solving most of the domestic conflicts among farmers in Edo State. Apart from the extra income it could generate, it will also engage the farmers, giving them self employment opportunity thereby having less time for domestic argument that could lead to violence especially between a husband and the wife.



Table 5: Linear Regression analysis showing the influence of farmers’ involvement in non-farm activities on the frequency of occurrence of domestic conflicts

| Model | Standardized Coefficients Beta | t-value | p-value |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|
| (Constant) | | 6.636** | 0.01 |
| Involvement in Non-farm | 2.09 | -2.487* | 0.028 |

Source: Field survey, 2016.

R= 0.52, R square = 0.2704

**Significant at 0.01 level of significance

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study established that farmers in Edo state engaged in non-farm activities that are gender specific with male involving in a more physical energy consuming activities such as construction works while females were engaged in less physical energy depended ones like trading and hairdressing. Although, very few of the non-farm activities recorded high involvement among them but their involvement had an influence of reducing the occurrence of domestic conflicts in the study area. Also, total benefit derived from involvement in non-farm activities was a strong correlate of occurrence of domestic conflicts among farmers. It is therefore concluded that encouraging farmers to involve in non-farm activities will not only give them extra income but also reduces the menace of domestic conflicts which has claimed the lives of many rural dwellers in Nigeria. The study recommends that social workers and extension practitioners should advocate the need for farmers to diversify their income through their involvement in non-farm activities. Also, the home economics aspect of agricultural extension should be re-initiated and encouraged by the extension stakeholders to organise and train farmers in the different non-farm activities such as tailoring and hairdressing for better quality of life with a view to reducing domestic conflicts in rural areas of Edo State, Nigeria.

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