



FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AKURE

Title :	<b>INCOME DIVERSIFICATION AND POVERTY STATUS AMONG RURAL FOOD CROP WOMEN FARMERS IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA</b>
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### **ABSTRACT**

It has been established that agriculture alone does not provide sufficient livelihood opportunities hence diversification into non-farm activities is seen as a coping mechanism. Level of non-farm income diversification, its effect on poverty status among women food crop farmers of farming households and factors that determine level of non-farm income diversification were therefore investigated in the study area.

A multi-stage sampling was employed in the selection of 180 respondents from the study area. Information on household socio-economic characteristics, types of non-farming activities that they engaged in and the amount of non-farm income realized were elicited with the aid of

structured questionnaire. The data obtained were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics, diversification index, Foster- Greer and Theobek (FGT) and Tobit regression analysis.

The result of the analysis revealed that the mean age of women farmers who diversified into non-farming activities was 46yrs. Majority were married (78.9%), some had no formal education (40.6%), most (98.3%) were fully engaged in agriculture. Majority of the respondents had household size between six and ten (6-10) and some 37.8 % of the respondents lived in their own personal houses. Many (67.2 %) of the respondents lived in houses made of bricks and the most commonly used toilet facility was the pit latrines. It was also found out that diversification by respondent occurred mainly during off farming-season period. The major income generating activities in the study area was trading. Farming households that earned less than the value of poverty line (₦95,348) were considered being poor, which was about 64.9% of the sampled rural food crop women farmers, while those that earned greater than or equal to the poverty line were considered to be non-poor which was 35.1%. Poverty incidence was highest among married women than the unmarried. The result of the tobit regression model revealed that four out of the eight variables (farming experience, farm size, membership of cooperatives and non-farm income) were statistically significant at 5% levels of probability. Majority of the respondents had no access to formal credit facilities and were not members of any social organization. The result of the poverty analysis indicated that larger percentage of farming households whose household heads did not diversify were living below the poverty line compared with farming households whose household head diversified. Therefore, rural women farmers need to be provided with educational programmes and accessibility to credit schemes which can facilitate the establishment of off-farm ventures among them. This could increase the off-farm activities that could generate more income for the rural women farmers thereby alleviate poverty among them and rural food crop women farmers should be advised and encouraged to form and or join co-operative societies so as to be better positioned to receive credit and evaluate business improvement and productivity information. This will also have a positive impact on poverty reduction effort among the women farming household.

