GOVERNMENTSKELETALFARMMECHANIZATIONPROGRAMMES:ASSESSMENTOFTHEIMPACTANDLEVELOFSATISFACTIONOFRURALFARMERSINNIGERIA

Paul Osu SIMEON, Hemen Emmanuel JIJINGI, D.I. ADAMU

Federal University Wukari, Department of Soil Science and Land Resources Management, P.M.B 1020, Wukari, Taraba State – Nigeria Postal Code; 67001, Phones: +2348062536780, +2348069451802, +2347030354920, Emails: posimeon@yahoo.com, hijijingihemen@live.com, yunusadanfulaniadamu@gmail.com

Corresponding author: posimeon@yahoo.com

Abstract

The farming population in the rural areas of Nigeria is in continuous decline due to ageing and the rural-urban migration of the youth in search of education and modernity for a presumably better life style. The governments at national, states and local government areas levels have ill-conceived and ill-operated many agricultural mechanization schemes/programmes extended only to arable crops production and complete exclusion of livestock production, though with the right intentions of mitigating the effects of the scare of drudgery associated with tillage, cereal grains threshing, etc and also for the expansion of production in agriculture. The scare of hard labour is not helped by absence of modern amenities in the rural areas. The "skeletal" appellation is due to the schemes' great limitation to very narrow aspect of farm mechanization and coincidentally, this study has been limited to South of Taraba State which lies within the Guinea Savannah geographical area of Nigeria. The method adopted is use of structured questionnaire administered by paid agricultural extension agents who were able to have good interactions with the farmers and governments' machinery service centres (Tractor Hire Units) operators/managers. Descriptive analysis was adopted for the discussion. The outcome reveals a negligible impact of less than 6 % admitted by only 4.6 % of the respondents; and great dissatisfaction among farmers, greed and incompetence among operators as well as bad technical quality plus inappropriate and incomplete machines and implements provided by the governments. This paper highlights points missed by government as well as the areas of abuses due to corrupt tendencies and usual Nigerian factor. The paper ends with call on the government to change the ways the programmes are pursued so as to improve on the situation in view of the food supply and climate change threats to humanity and its possessions.

Key words: skeletal, mechanization, satisfaction, farmers, rural and government

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a country of over two hundred and seventy four (274) tribal groups and over seven hundred (700) dialects are spoken. The major tribal groups and the administrative states are presented in figures 1 and 2 respectively.

In the administration of projects/programmes and recruitment of manpower, ethnicity/tribalism besides other negative vices play significant role, especially since the introduction of "Federal Character" or "Quota System" into the Nigerian legal framework and Constitution. As good as the real intentions are for loyalty of all the peoples of Nigeria, the abuse in failing to maintain standard and merit within the quota system or federal character seems to have galvanized failures and promoted backwardness rather than progress.

The attempt at mechanization is not an exception but a reflection of the negativities that have come to be associated with the implementation of the noble policy.

Without meticulous study, proper understanding and conscientious approach that provides for differentiated application of mechanization nationwide. failure will continue await to any attempt at mechanization in view of the factors that influence the possibility and extent of mechanization. These factors include the geography, education and technical skill level the for needed expertise, genetical engineering, development of other

fundamental inputs and sustainable management of the exposed soil, more so now, that climate change has created huge challenge for mankind, particularly to equatorial rain forest and the semi-arid/arid areas of Nigeria.



Fig. 1. Map of Nigeria showing the ethnic groups Source: [6]



Fig. 2.Map of Nigeria showing the administrative state. Source: [6]

Α very close study of the skeletal mechanization schemes/programmes of the governments shows that it extend only to arable crops production and the complete exclusion of livestock production, tree crops production and other aspects of agricultural production. Another skeletal nature of the skeletal programme is also very obvious in this regard. However. few farming entrepreneurs have been able to purchase small rice milling, maize shelling, grinding machines and several other types of machines with petrol engines for commercial service rendering.

The level of western education and technical expertise in Nigeria is as varied as its geography (including the tribal/ethnic within). This further nationalities explains why mechanization programmes/schemes ought to be designed and operated deeply differentially even within a State. The approach that makes it look like any machine can be used all over the northern part, or all over the southern part or all over the country is a grievous error. It is one of the reasons several machines bought and supplied to some areas have never been used for once and are packed in the open air under the intense sunshine and rainfall and are rotting away, despite the great agricultural potentials of Nigeria. Out of about 98 (ninety-eight) millions hectares of land, roughly Seventyfour (74) million hectares is arable, that is, Seventy-Six percent (76 %). But the agriculture is still rain fed and only about forty percent (40 %) of the available farmland is cultivated in over seventy percent (70 %) by rural farmers. How can machinery stock be left to rot away? It is un-economical, nondevelopmental, worrisome and heart-aching for conscientious professionals who are sidelined and helplessly watching greed and avarice being flagrantly displayed to the detriment of the socio-economic growth and development of the society. In average, the country Nigeria is blessed with large technical expertise in great proportion of areas of

human endeavors but the harmonization, coordination and control (that is, the proper leadership) that will sustainably maintain drive on the right path of growth and development has been lacking, is lacking and may continue to lack except there is a sharp turn around now.

According to [1] Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) started in March 1976 with the aim of campaigning to Nigerians to grow more food on any available land even in the urban centres. Though the campaign succeeded in raising awareness, the efforts of the government were, however, directed at the wrong people. Instead of concentrating on the rural farmers, the government paid more attention to urban dwellers. Investments on farm implements and other facilities were not adequately utilized because they were given to the wrong people.

The situation then is not different from what it is today and it has even become worse. Furthermore, [1] stated that the River Basin Development Authority (RBDA) was initially created to provide irrigation water especially in the North but grew from two (2) in 1973 to thirteen (13) in 1979 perhaps to satisfy the spirit of "Federal Character". The RBDA did not perform well. The authors of this paper would like to say the situation is very unfortunate in view of the known fact that irrigation installation is among the fundamental conditions for effective and economic mechanization in farming (economic engineering in agriculture).

National Centre for Agricultural The Mechanization (NCAM) near Ilorin in Kwara State was established by Decree No. 35 of general 1990 with the objective of accelerating mechanization in the agricultural sector of the economy in order to increase the quantity and quality of agricultural productivity in Nigeria, [1]. The present state of agricultural mechanization in Nigeria is, however, still far from increasing farm earning and productivity at any minimal level of satisfaction among the farmers. Large scale attempted mechanized farms have collapsed with ease few years after takeoff, usually less than five (5) years. Thus, the impact of the government programme/scheme has not been felt whether by large scale or local farming communities.

According to [7], in Europe, China, India, etc their methods of farming is more scientific, therefore more productive. In these countries, mechanization brought about growth in the use of agricultural chemicals (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and fertilizers) though along with their hazards. They also develop high yielding species that leads to intensive farming on land with sufficient rearing of cattle and poultry. They went further into genetic engineering method for hybridization and embarked on pests control by use of chemicals.

The Taraba State Government and Local Government Councils Tractor Hiring

Programmes and Units in the study area have long collapsed for reasons tied to corruption and flagrant display of development ignorance and selfness (that is, lack of statesmanship). This ugly situation exit in over 90 % of Nigeria, and it has been massive failure despite the colossal investments of local and foreign currencies. Hence the country's agriculture has remained largely subsistence, semi-subsistence and under-developed, while the country depends on massive food and agro-allied materials/products importation.

What we have been experiencing as a nation and witnessing as concerned professionals is un-economic engineering in agriculture and therefore wasted efforts and resources. The main objective of this paper is to add to awareness campaign and to draw the attention of government at all levels that the same thing cannot continue to be done with expectation of different results, and also to draw attention to the plight of the intended consumers (rural/local farmers) of the reckless skeletal services called "tractorisation", a term that has now been introduced into our lexicon in an attempt to justify the failures of rendering governments in skeletal mechanization services instead of pursuing real mechanization content.

[8] said it all when he stated "it is almost 40 years ago, 1973 that I was covering the assignment of the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, I was incharge of the Agricultural Research Councils, as well as the extension field Basin Development workers of River Authorities at the federal level and was relating closely with international Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), West African Rice Research Council, the FAO and was collaborating well with a host of donor countries for agricultural promotion, was contributing everybody his quota judiciously. I was in the middle of it. After this long period of time. I noticed that the hopes and wishes for agriculture being pronounced now are virtually similar to those expressed four decades ago. This means that there is no noticeable progress in the sector. Is the sector not accepting improvement or change? This time, we have

to have sense of purpose to accept dramatic change. Change is inevitable.

The most recent of the continued ugly experience of farmers and wasted efforts plus resources by the Federal Government of Nigeria was the programme of Mini-Mechanisation Service Station in all the 109 Senatorial Districts of Nigeria. This was introduced in year 2013/2014. Taraba South was one of the beneficiaries through the Consultancy Service Unit of the Federal University Wukari. As always, it was a colossal failure nationwide, despite the involvement of Bank, Manufacturers and Manufacturers' Representatives under the leadership or coordination of government officials. It was the shameless supply of incomplete parts of machines, engine power units and implements that were new in mixture of others that were poorly refurbished by whosoever and supplied as new products. This was worsened by poor storage in open field under rainfall and sunshine before distribution to the various Senatorial Districts that were able to have the custodians that could pay the stipulated counterpart fund in a rigorous process of unproductive lobbying of the government officials in charge. Over 80 % of the facilities are already scraps and never used at all as some Photos shall reveal.

Consequently, the local farmers have been given heart-ache rather than amelioration of the hardship in their works. The ill-state machinery and implements were also recklessly and greedily exploited by the managers and operators without regard to the socio-political and economic impact factors that necessitated the programme. It was naked greed, avarice and all forms of corruption, and thus, nothing other than anti-developmental vices for personal gains.

agricultural The system has remained characterized by semi-subsistence and subsistence, low inputs and low productivity, use of simple farm tools and ill-managed simple mechanical tillage aggregate (where available), shifting cultivation and bush fallowing, lack of conservation awareness, etc. [2] stated that "the Nigerian agriculture sector is an industry of perceptual toiling and indignity, plagued with drudgery, aged and 400

ageing farming population. These small holder farmers therefore remain impoverished, still depending on manual labour to carry out their various farming operations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The study area is Southern part of Taraba

State, also referred to as "Taraba South Senatorial District." Taraba State lies within the Guinea Savannah area of Nigeria. It is predominantly a farming based rural economy as well as state economy. Gentle sloping and flat arable land is abundant. The land is well drained by numerous big and small rivers that exist all seasons. High rain forest conditions exist in its south-eastern fringe in Ussa and Takum Local Government Areas. The Southern Taraba has a population of about six hundred and fifty-five thousand and six hundred and three (655, 603) according to [4] figures. The figures for the five (5) Local Government Areas are Wukari (238,283), Takum (134,576), Donga (133, 105), Ussa (90, 889) and Ibi (58,150).

The Taraba State Government and Local Government Councils Tractor Hiring Programmes and Units in the study area have long collapsed for reasons tied to corruption and flagrant display of development ignorance and selfness (that is, lack of statesmanship).



Fig. 3. Map of Nigeria showing the Population Source: [6]



Fig. 4. Vegetation Map of Nigeria Source: [6]



Fig. 7. Food Crops Map of Nigeria Source: [6]





Fig. 8. Rainfall Map of Nigeria Source: [6]

Fig. 6. Livestock Map of Nigeria Source: [6]

Source: [6]



Fig. 9.Temperature Map of Nigeria Source: [6]



Source: [6]



Fig. 11. Map of Nigeria showing Agro- industries Source: [6]



Fig.12. Map of Nigeria showing other industries Source: [6]

Fig. 13. Administrative Map of Taraba State.



Fig. 14. Network of Major River in Taraba state

Over 80 % of the population are engaged in farming and dependent on farming for livelihood, fully or partially, and all the farmers can be categorized as local farmers or rural farmers as the agricultural industries and other industries are yet to take off (see figure 11 and 12). The bulk of the farm produce are carted away at point of harvest by wholesale traders/buyers from the south-eastern Nigeria. The major food crops include yam, maize, cassava, guinea corn, millet, rice, soya beans, Takum and plantain (in Ussa Local Government Area), vegetables etc.

The geography of South of Taraba State favours an efficient mechanization of farming activities without or with just minimum effort on land leveling and land clearing in both wet and dry seasons. The underground water table is reasonably near surface at about nine

meters (9 m) and varies from location to location to about forty five meters (45 m) generally with cases of nearer and deeper levels. The soil is predominantly regosols and eutrophic laterite with sandstone appearing in the horizon from about one meter (1 m) depth and is loose/friable at the surface level. The sources for fresh water for irrigation are abundant. There are several long high volume rivers that never dry up in and out of the wet season (see figure 14). A very good and strong mechanized agriculture based economy can be built in Taraba State in general and Southern Taraba in particular if the resources can be well planned, harnessed and managed.

Despite these facts, the farming technique and method currently accessible to the generality of the farmers are bush fallowing and shifting cultivation involving use of simple farm tools, poor soil utilization practices, unprofessional applications of some quantities of chemicals herbicides, fungicides (fertilizer, and insecticides) without regard to compatibility with soil solution reaction (pH), lack of conservation agriculture consciousness, easy setting of farmland on fire at the end of rainy season, bush clearing by slashing and burning and constant re-heaping of topsoil with bighead short handle hoe to make heaps and ridges for planting. Agricultural industrial production is still lacking.

Methodology.

Well structured sixty (60) questions questionnaires were administered twelve (12) copies in five (5) farming communities in each of the five (5) Local Government Areas of the Senatorial District. Also, twenty (20) copies were administered in each of the Local Government Area headquarter towns, which are themselves farming communities. These are Wukari, Takum, Ussa, Donga and Ibi towns which also are the names of local government areas (see figure 13).

Trained agricultural extension agents were engaged for the purpose by the researchers and they were properly instructed on what to do, which of course, is part of their training for duties in their state employment. About four hundred (400) questionnaires were processed, result presentation is in tables and descriptive analysis is employed for the discussion of the socio-economic characteristics, the level of impact of government skeletal mechanization programmes and level of farmers satisfaction in the study area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The pictorial view of ill-state supplied and illexploited Taraba State Senatorial District Skeletal Mechanization Service Station si presented in Photos 1-6.



Photo 1. Recklessly explorted Disc Plough



Photo 2. New Tractor without the complete parts of the Cabin



Photo 3. Never Used trail parked in the open air rottening away



Photo 4. New improperly fittened supposed Disc Rigder



Photo 5. New Non-functional Power tileings resulting from supply of incomplete components and left under direct sunshine and rainfall

Photo 6. Heap of machineries parts (that could not be coupled) enclosed in ploythene wrapper

| Table | 1.Age | grouping | and | their | percentage | in | farming |
|--------|----------|------------|-------|--------|------------|----|---------|
| popula | ation fr | om the ave | erage | e resp | onse (%) | | |

| No. | Local Government Area | 15-24 Years | 24-45 Years | Above 45 Years |
|-----|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Wukari | 27 | 45 | 28 |
| 2 | Takum | 25 | 48 | 27 |
| 3 | Ussa | 27 | 49 | 22 |
| 4 | Donga | 21 | 50 | 29 |
| 5 | Ibi | 18 | 51 | 31 |
| | Average | 23.60 | 48.60 | 27.40 |

Table 2. Gender Participation in Farming PopulationExpressed, in Percentage (%)

| No. | Local | Government | Female | Male |
|-----|---------|------------|--------|------|
| | Area | | | |
| 1 | Wukari | | 30 | 70 |
| 2 | Takum | | 40 | 60 |
| 3 | Ussa | | 25 | 75 |
| 4 | Donga | | 20 | 80 |
| 5 | Ibi | | 30 | 70 |
| | Average | | 29 | 71 |

Table 3. Availability of Machines, in average response in Percentage (%)

| No. | Local Government Area | Not Available | Hardly Available | Available but not Reliable | Available |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Wukari | 93 | 05 | 02 | - |
| 2 | Takum | 94 | 04 | 02 | - |
| 3 | Ussa | 96 | 04 | - | - |
| 4 | Donga | 95 | 05 | - | |
| 5 | Ibi | 98 | 02 | - | |
| | Average (%) | 95.20 | 04.00 | 0.80 | |

The results as processed in the tables in average response in percentages (%) show clearly that, the farming activities are predominantly of male (71 %) in the age bracket of 22-45 years. Farming machinery is not available responded about 95 % of the farmers and available though not reliable was the response of about 0.80 % of the farmers. The accessibility of machine aggregate due to cost factor is very low as only about 0.60 %

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have access, 2.6 % responded hardly accessible and 96.80 % responded not accessible.

Table 4. Accessibility of Machine in Average Response in Percentage (%)

a.Cost factor

| No. | Local | Not | Hardly | Accessible |
|-----|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Government | Accessible | Accessible | |
| | Area | | | |
| 1. | Wukari | 95 | 03 | 2 |
| 2. | Takum | 96 | 03 | 1 |
| 3. | Ussa | 98 | 02 | - |
| 4. | Donga | 97 | 03 | - |
| 5. | Ibi | 98 | 02 | - |
| | Average (%) | 98.80 | 2.60 | 0.60 |

b. Factor of inadequacy of supply against demand

| No. | Local Government Area | Not Accessible | Hardly Accessible | Accessible |
|-----|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 6. | Wukari | 99 | 01 | - |
| 7. | Takum | 99 | 01 | - |
| 8. | Ussa | 100 | - | - |
| 9. | Donga | 99 | 01 | |
| 10. | Ibi | 100 | - | - |
| | Average (%) | 99.40 | 0.60 | - |

c. Cannot work without breaking down factor

| No. | Local Government Area | Hardly Available | Available but not Reliable |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Wukari | 98 | 02 |
| 2. | Takum | 99 | 01 |
| 3. | Ussa | 100 | - |
| 4. | Donga | 99 | 01 |
| 5. | Ibi | 100 | - |
| | Average (%) | 99.20 | 0.80 |

Table 5. Where simple machine aggregate is available, level of satisfaction with job for money; average response in percentage (%)

| No. | Local Government Area | Very poor quality (Unsatisfactory) | Average quality (fairly satisfactory) | Good quality (Satisfied) |
|-----|-----------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Wukari | 96 | 04 | - |
| 2. | Takum | 97 | 03 | - |
| 3. | Ussa | 97 | 03 | - |
| 4. | Donga | 98 | 02 | - |
| 5. | Ibi | 99 | 01 | - |
| | Average (%) | 97.40 | 02.60 | - |

Table 6. Bad quality work but satisfied that huge part of tillage drudgery is removed; average response in percentage (%)

| No. | Local Government Areas | Not satisfied | Fairly satisfied | Satisfied |
|-----|------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Wukari | 60 | 37 | 3 |
| 2. | Takum | 61 | 36 | 3 |
| 3. | Ussa | 68 | 30 | 2 |
| 4. | Donga | 63 | 35 | 2 |
| 5. | Ibi | 66 | 32 | 2 |
| | Average (%) | 63.60 | 34 | 02.40 |

Table 7. Impact of use of machine in your farming activities; Average response in percentage (%)

| No. | Local | None | Very | Low | Fair | Good |
|-----|----------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|
| | Governme | | low ≤ | 6-10 | 11- | ≥21 |
| | nt Areas | | 5 % | % | 20 % | % |
| 1. | Wukari | 93 | 05 | 02 | - | - |
| 2. | Takum | 94 | 04 | 02 | - | - |
| 3. | Ussa | 96 | 04 | - | - | - |
| 4. | Donga | 95 | 04 | - | - | - |
| 5. | Ibi | 98 | 02 | - | - | - |
| | Average (%) | 95.40 | 03.80 | 0.80 | - | - |

Table 8. Availability and Accessibility of fertilizer; average Response in Percentage (%)

| No. | Local Government Area | Not Available | Available not Accessible (Small Quantity + High Cost) | Available + Very Accessible (Cost Indifference) |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------------|---|---|
| 1. | Wukari | 10 | 82 | 08 |
| 2. | Takum | 10 | 85 | 05 |
| 3. | Ussa | 20 | 78 | 12 |
| 4. | Donga | 20 | 78 | 13 |
| 5. | Ibi | 20 | 77 | 03 |
| | Average (%) | 16 | 79.80 | 06.20 |

Table 9. Average response, in percentage (%), to yield of improved varieties used

| No. | Local Government Area | Did not use | Poor yield lower than local variety | Poor yield better than local variety | Good yield |
|-----|-----------------------------|----------------|--|---|---------------|
| 1. | Wukari | 78 | 05 | 12 | 05 |
| 2. | Takum | 82 | 04 | 09 | 05 |
| 3. | Ussa | 82 | 07 | 09 | 02 |
| 4. | Donga | 81 | 11 | 07 | 01 |
| 5. | Ibi | 85 | 09 | 05 | 01 |
| | Average (%) | 81.60 | 07.20 | 08.40 | 02.80 |

Table 10. Level of Satisfaction with present farming techniques and methods; average response in percentage (%)

| No | Local Government Area | Very unsatisfi ed wish to leave if there is option | Very unsatisfi ed but wish to stay on | Fairly satisfi ed | Satisfi ed |
|----|-----------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Wukari | 45 | 30 | 22 | 3 |
| 2. | Takum | 41 | 32 | 23 | 3 |
| 3. | Ussa | 47 | 35 | 18 | 4 |
| 4. | Donga | 44 | 35 | 17 | 4 |
| 5. | Ibi | 37 | 38 | 20 | 5 |
| | Average (%) | 42.80 | 34 | 20 | 03.80 |

The accessibility of machine aggregate due to the factor of inadequacy of supply against demand is also very low, about 0.60 % said machines are very hardly accessible as against 99.40 % who said aggregates are not accessible. And according to non-accessibility due to frequent breakdown of any available aggregate during operations, 99.20 % said the machines are hardly available, 0.80 % said that aggregate are available but not reliable.

Where simple mechanical aggregate is available for work, the very few farmers that are able to access them are not satisfied because of the poor quality of work done compared to the money paid. This is about 97.40 % while the remaining 2.60 % are only fairly satisfied. Table 6 shows the response to the factor of bad quality of work but satisfied because huge part of tillage drudgery is removed. About 63.60 % are not satisfied 34 %, fairly satisfied and only 2.40 % said they are satisfied. The reasons given are that they spend huge money and also have to still do much work to be able to have better planting field. On the impact of the use of machines in their farming activities, about 95.40 % responded that machine has not influenced or impacted their farming activities while 3.80 % admitted it has impacted less than 5 % and 0.80 % responded that they enjoyed low impact of 6 - 10 %..

Availability and use of fertilizers and other chemicals are essential requirements for meaningful mechanization. An average of 16 % of farmers in the study area responded that fertilizers are not available, 79.80 % said they are available but not accessible because of the short/small supply and high cost while 6.20 % said fertilizers are available and very accessible because they are indifferent to the cost at which the products are offered. Availability and use of improved variety of crops and species of animals is another requirement essential for meaningful mechanization. In table 9, the average response of 81.60 % do not use improved varieties/species, 7.20 % said they used improved varieties but got lower yield than the local varieties, 8.40 % said they got poor vield though better than the vield of local varieties while the remaining 2.80 % said the yields they got were good.

Table 10 presents the average response with level of satisfaction with the farming system (techniques and methods) currently available to them. About 42.80 % responded that they 406 are very unsatisfied and would wish to leave farming if they have options better that the difficulties city life offers illiterate migrants from rural areas, 34 % responded they are very unsatisfied but wish to remain on the farming because it is what they grew to learn in practice from their parents (ancestors), and difficult living in the cities for illiterate migrants from rural areas, 20 % said they are fairly satisfied because they have no alternative while a meager 3.80 % said they are satisfied.

Flowing from forestated, it is obvious that the colossal amount of money governments in Nigeria have spent on skeletal and very limited farm mechanization have neither been properly managed nor has it inspired people to as prideful/satisfying go into farming occupation in Nigeria. It is not surprising, therefore, that the population of the candidates seeking admission into agricultural study in tertiary institutions (colleges and universities) has continue to drop every year that passes that today, majority of persons admitted into agricultural study are spill over from other science courses; and it is also not surprising that the population of farmers is rapidly declining and ageing in the study area in Nigeria particular and in general. Governments must act to change the ways they have been approaching agricultural development programmes, if food and basic raw materials shortage crisis is not to catch up with the country much earlier than one can imagine.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows the South of Taraba State as an agriculturally rich environment where meaningful mechanization can be successfully implemented because of the favourable geographical conditions. The skeletal mechanization also referred to as "tractorisation" has wasted colossal resources of governments without impacting or having very low impact of less than 5% on the farming activities of vast majority of the rural farmers in Nigeria in general and the study area in particular. This has left the farming at subsistence or at best semi-subsistence which has not given the farmers labour, material and social satisfaction. This must not be allowed to continue. And in the words of former Nigerian Head of state (1976 – 79) and former present (1999 – 2007), Retired General Chief [5]: in "1999 most people grossly underestimated the extent of social, political and economic decay of the country. Nigeria has immense potential waiting to be unleashed and talents to be tapped. We all look forward to a better future and we all have a role to play in it. If everyone plays it well, Nigeria will surely be great and soon".

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