AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.12 (1), May-August, 2024 https://ajemates.org

PERCEPTION OF RICE FARMERS BENEFICIARIES ON THE IMPACT OF VALUE-CHAIN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ON THEIR LIVELIHOOD

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the perception of rice farmers beneficiaries on the impact of the value Chain Development Programme on their livelihood, literatures here reviewed on value-chain, value chain development programme in Nigeria and rice value chain. The area of the study was Anambra State and the population for the study included all the 240 beneficiary rice farmers of the VCDP. Data was obtained through structured questionnaire and interview and data analysis was done using the IBM statistical and service solution (SPSS) software. The service solution generally that the programme made are unprecedented impact on the rice farmers and empowered the farmers by increasing their level of investment amongst other.

Introduction

The aim of most agricultural development intervention programmes is to improve the material and social welfare of the people or beneficiaries. Therefore, it is mostly seen as an integrated approach designed to improving the environment and wellbeing of the people of the community (December, et al, 2020). The first step in the process of agricultural development is to abandon the view of agriculture in pre-modern or traditional societies as essential static. However, the problem of Agricultural development is not that oft transforming a static agricultural sector into a modem, dynamic or progressive: sector, but of accelerating theate of increase in agricultural and productivity consistent with the growth of other sectors of a modernizing economy. For the purpose of this work the Value Chain Development Programme which is one of the agricultural programmes introduced by the government of Nigeria to promote agricultural productivity, national economic development is considered.

Concept of Value Chain in Agricultural Production

Value chain comprises full range of activities and Services required to bring a particular product through the different phases of production and delivery., to the final consumers (International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) 2018) The term value chain also refers to the importance, that value is added to products across one link to the next one in the chain through the combination of knowledge and resources (Dubey Rajeev Swatentra, Abhishek and Nikhil, 2020; Ovidijus, 2013). Value chain is a business model that describes full range of activities needed in creating a product or service (Tardi and Brock. 2020). It is

a concept describing the full chain of a business's activities in the creation of a product ranging from the initial reception of materials all the way through its delivery to market, and everything in between (Chai, 2021).
From the organizational and institutional view, a value chain can be analyzed as the formal and informal arrangements that allows coordination and collaboration links across actors and at different points along the chain (IFAD, 2018).

United States Agency for International Development (2020) and Inter-American Development Bank (2013) described it as a full range af activities that are required to bring a product or service from its conception to its end use, including all the market channels available to all firms. A value chain in agriculture identifies the set of actors and activities that bring a basic agricultural product from production in the field to final consumption, where at each stage value is added to the product (Danish Refugee Council (DRC), 2020). It is a set of linked activities that work to add value to a product, and consists of actors and actions that can improve a product while linking commodity producers to processors and markets (Funmilola, Olawale and Nwadihi, 2018). It is an economic system around a particular commercial product with focus on value addition along sequence of activities of providing inputs, producing- transforming, marketing and consumption. A value chain focuses on the degree of coordination and collaboration between the value chain operators or actors and business model tor particular commercial product (FAO, 2014).

According to SANREM (2020), value chain can be a vertical linking or a network between various independent business organizations and can involve processing. packaging, storage, transport and distribution. It works better when the actors involved cooperate to produce higher-quality products and generate more income for all participants along the chain, as opposed to the simplest kinds of value chains, in which producers and buyers exchange only price information (Norton, 2014). It encompasses the flow of products, knowledge and information, finance, payments, and the social capital needed to organize the producers and communities. Example, for firms that produce goods and services, a value chain operation will comprise the steps that are involved in bringing a product from conception to distribution, and everything in between, such as procurement of raw materials, manufacturing, and marketing activities. Information needed in value chain is especially important to all value chain actors, and flows in two directions: markets inform producers of price, quantity and quality needs, product handling and technology options, while producers inform processors and markets about quantity of production, locations, and timing and production issues (Norton, 2014).

Agricultural value chain includes a wide range of activities such as development and dissemination of plant and animal genetic material, input distribution, farmer organization, farm production, post-harvest handling, processing, provision of technologies for production, grading facilities, cooling and packing technologies, post-harvest local processing, industrial processing, storage, transport, finance, and feedback from customers or markets (Norton, 2014). At the heart of the agricultural value chain concept, is the idea of actors connected along a chain producing and

delivering goods to consumers through a sequence of processes (Henriksen, Riisgaard, Ponte, Hartwich and Kormawa 2010). However "vertical" chain cannot function in isolation and an important aspect of the value approach is that it also considers “horizontal” impacts on the chain such as input supply, Finance provision, extension support and the general enabling environment. The approach t been found useful, particularly by donors, in that it has resulted in a consideration of a factors impacting on the ability of farmers to access markets profitably, leading to a range of chain interventions. It is used both for unbearding existing chains and for do identify market opportunities for small farmers (Wikipedia, 2021).

The value chain approach in agricultural development helps identify weak points in the chain and actions to add more value (Norton, 2014), The framework helps organizations identify and group their own business functions into primary and secondary activities (Chai, 2021). Value chain works best when operators cooperate to produce higher-quality products and generate more income for all participants along the chain, as opposed to the simplest kinds of value chain, in which producers and buyers exchange only price information. According to Rex (2013), the value chain approach considers the role of existing chain actors, supporting actors, and the policy environment. It allows the actors to look at current challenges ina value chain, as well as the opportunities for improving the efficiency of the value chain and the benefits for everyone involved. Sometimes, participating in a well-functioning value chain brings farmers hot higher incomes alone, but attract young people to farming or persuade them not to leave rural areas by offering better ways to earn money and as well, help the farmer learn new skills and adopt improved practices (Chapota, 2013).

Value Chain Development Programmne (VCDP) in Nigeria

According to International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2012), the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) is a six-vear agricultural development intervention programme initiated and implemented by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The programme was designed to improve both cassava and rice value chains for small-scale farmers in six selected states of the Federation Anambra, Benue, Ebonyi, Niger, Ogun and Taraba. The Value Chain Development Programme emerged from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) of between 2010 and 2015 periods (IFAD, 2012). The Development with Country Strategic Opportunities Programme which was established on the recommendations of the Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) was Carried out in 2008/2009 April, 2009 by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and International Fund for Agricultural Development. The Country Programme Evaluation (CPE) recommendations laid emphases on the future IFAD interventions on Agriculture, with emphasis on the enhancement of productivity and access to market (Fumilola, 2018).

The Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) is anchored on Nigeria governments vision for Agricultural Transformation through commodity value chain approach which was an

approach designed to tackle the challenges of smallholder farmers (Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), 2020). The goal of the programme is to reduce rural poverty, increase food security and accelerate economic growth on a sustainable basis by proffering solutions to limited access to productive assets and inputs, low productivity, limited opportunities for value addition, inadequate support services such as extension services, inability to access rural financial services, inadequate market and infrastructure (Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), 2020). According to Mgbenika and Mbah (2016), the primary target groups for the VCDP are the poor rural households engaged in cassava and rice value chains. This includes the 15,000 smallholder farmers cultivating up to five hectares of land devoted to cassava and rice, I,680 small-scale processors and 800 traders as direct beneficiaries with emphasis on women and youth; and 22,000 indirect beneficiaries, benefitting largely from the infrastructure improvements, amongst other things.

The Value Chain Development Prouramme is coordinated under the technical responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) and the State Ministries of Agriculture (MoAs) whilst implementation at the national level receives oversight and guidance from the Value Chain Steering Committee (VCSC), Federal Ministry of Agriculture Development (FMARD) as the lead implementing agency, delegates' the function and day-to-day implementation and coordination responsibilities to the National Programme management Unit (NPMU). In each of the selected states, the daily implementation of the programme is handled by the State Programme Management Unit, which ensures effective and efficient implementation of the programme activities at the state and Local Government Area level. The programmne which is domiciled in the Federal Ministry of Agricultures and Rural Development is implemented through the following components:

- Agricultural Market Development;
- Smallholder Productivity Enhancement: and
- Programme Management and Coordination.

Rice Value Chain in Nigeria

Rice is an important staple food in Nigeria and it is grown in all the States of the Federation and Federal Capital Territory though production varies from State to State and the prevalent types of rice production systems in Nigeria include rain-fed upland, rain-fed lowland, irrigated lowland, deep water floating and mangrove swamp (Chukwudebelu, Igwe and Madukasi, 2015), As a cereal grain, it is the most widely consumed staple food for a large part of the world's human population, especially in Asia (Awika, 2011) and it is one of the commodities with the third-highest worldwide production, after sugarcane and maize. According to Shrestha (2012), rice is more than just a food, as it plays a key role in food security, while at the same time South-East Asian nations have become the leading rice exporting countries, In most Countries, rice cultivation has become the major activity and sources of income for millions of households around the globe. According to Kadiri, Eze, Orebiyi, Lemchi, Ohajianya and Nwaiwu (2014), rice is an increasingly important crop in Nigeria and it is relatively easy to produce for sale and home consumption. In some areas,

there is a long tradition of rice growing but for many, it is considered a luxury food for special occasions only. In terms of comparative advantage, rice can be grown in flooded and not-flooded soils because it has both lowland and upland varieties that can adapt to different agro-climatic and soil conditions (Aja and Aja 2014).

According to Merem, Twumasi, Wesley, Isokpehi, shenge, et al (2017), rice in most of the African countries constitutes a bigger portion of the diet on a regular basis, Aside a handful of nations that enjoy self-sufficiency in rice cultivation, rice consumption surpasses its production and substantial amount of the crop are imported to sustain local demand at the expense of hard- earned foreign currency reserves. Rice is virtually cultivated in most of the agro-ecological zones of the country, as it constitutes one major cereal crop produced by an average Nigerian farmer. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2018), Nigeria is the continent's leading consumer of rice, one of the largest producers of rice in Africa and simultaneously one of the largest rice importers in the world.

According to Global Value Chain Initiative (GVCI) (2007) as cited in Ewuzie, Ifediora and Anctolh (2020), value chain is an arrangement that describes the linkages of participants and their value creating activities that enhance the movement of goods and services from production, processing, marketing to the end user. In agricultural parlance, the term "value chain" is used interchangeably with such terms as supply chain, market system, and agri-food chain, depending on what is being considered. Based on agri-food sector perspective, Drummond and Goodwin (2011), defined value chain as all activities and processes that occur between producers of food and ultimate consumers. According to Donovan, Franzel, Cunha, Gyau and Mithöfer (2015), donor agencies like USAID, FADAMA, and IFAD usage of value chain is in line with World Bank (2010) definition which describes value chain as full range of Value adding activities required to bring a product or service through different phases of Production including the procurement of raw materials and other input. The concept of value was introduced to improve productivity and profitability of the actors in the agricultural sector (Ewuzie, Ifediora and Anctoh. 2020). The notion of agricultural value chain underscores system approach to value added activities where the action of one component in a system affects every other component within the system

According to Ugwuonah (2017), the idea of the value chain is relatively new in agricultural sector it is however, resides at the core of high-impact and sustainable initiatives focused on improving productivity, competitiveness and growth of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Recently, most of the agricultural intervention programmes, initiated and implemented in agricultural sectors by both government and non-government agencies (donors) take the value chain approach. The value chain approach has shifted focus and emphasis away from agricultural production to consumer demand, marketing and the coordination of product flow from producer to consumer (Ewuzie, et al, 2020) The value chain concept acknowledges that production must be linked to demand and the critical role of organizing the flow from farmer to consumer opportunities must be taken into consideration. A value chain links the steps a

product takes from the producer to the consumer. It. therefore, includes research and development, input suppliers, production, processing, marketing and finance (Norton, 2014).

An agricultural value chain starts with the provision of farm inputs which include seed, fertilizer and other agro chemicals used in the cultivation of crops (Rex, 2013). All the inputs are provided by the agro input dealers to the farmer who uses them in the production of agricultural crops and livestock. Whereas, according to Ewuzie, et al, (2020), the production component entails the actual production activities which culminates in the usage of farm inputs in a way that it is prescribed by the agricultural technologies for a particular commodity to produce the required produce. Value chains are created for the better understanding of consumer needs to respond to these requirements in better and more strategic way. The trade components entails exchange and distribution activities that are carried on at the primary product level by marketing middlemen, Processing has to do with value addition activities which is concerned with the change in form of the produce. Besides these activities that are central to a value chain, the business environment and provision of allied services also affect the value chain and as such constitute part of the value chain. Activities of the various participants in the value chain are expected to increase the value that is added to the products and Shrestha (2012) further opined that participants' conduct along the chain determines the efficiency and return accruing to each participant.

Since the Value Chain Development Programme begin the government has invested a relatively huge sum of money into it. And it also worthy to find out if the set goals and aims of the programme are achieved which is the area of farmers capacity building, poverty eradication, food security and unemployment reduction.
This study rests on evaluating farmers' perception on the programme and the way it effected their livelihood.

Objectives of the Study
The objective of this study is to ascertain the impact of the value chain development programme on the livelihood of the rice farmers' beneficiaries.

The Area of Study: The study was conducted in Anambra State, Nigeria. Anmbra State is located in South-Eastern region of Nigeria. Anambra State is sub-divided into four Agricultural zones (AZs) namely: Anambra AZ, Awka AZ, Aguata AZ and Onitsha AZ which spread across the twenty-one local Government. **Population of the study:** The population of the study included all the 240, rice farmers that benefited from the value chain programme in Anambra State. **Method of data collection:** The data for the study where collected from both primary and secondary sources using a well-structured questionnaire and interview schedule. **Method of data Analysis:** The IBM statistical product and Service solution (SPSS) software was used to analyze the data collected.

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VOL.12 (1), May-August, 2024 https://ajemates.org

Table of Data Analysis

Beneficiaries' perception of the impact of VCDP on their livelihood

Socio-economic life variables of the respondents	beneficiaries' perception of the Impact of the VCDP		
	Before %	After%	χ2-value
Access to agro-input			
No access	35.6	09.4	14.883*
Little access	53.8	20.0	(0.01)
Full access	10.6	70.6	
Access to credit			
No access	48.1	08.1	25.431*
Little access	28.1	16.6	(0.00)
Full access	23.8	75.3	
Ease of marketing paddy rice			
Not easy	72.5	01.9	
33.983*			
Easy	08.1	16.6	(0.00)
Very easy			
Knowledge of rice production practices			
No knowledge	30.1	05.6	76.30*
Poor knowledge	23.6	10.7	(0.00)
Fair knowledge	21.7	23.1	
Adequate knowledge	24.6	60.6	
Attitude toward paddy rice production			
Positive	78.0	11.9	
20.584*			
Negative	11.3	26.2	(0.00)
Do not known	10.7	61.9	
Aspiration to invest more money into rice production			
No aspiration	02.7	02.5	15.519*
Weak/low aspiration	58.0	30.6	(0.02)
Strong aspiration	39.3	66.9	
Skill acquired during the implementation of VCDP			
No skill (0 score)	35.0	30.2	7.059
Poor skill (1-3 scores)	39.4	25.6	(0.07)
Fair skill (4-6 scores)	13.1	21.7	
Adequate skill (7-10 scores)	12.5	22.5	
Standard of living			
Do not know	27.9	11.2	
Very low	12.3	07.5	43.034*
Low	25.9	15.0	
Moderate	18.0	17.5	
High	10.7	27.5	
Very high	05.2	21.3	

Note: Figure in parenthesis = p-value; *= significant, p≤ 0.05.

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Beneficiaries' perception of the impact of the VCDP on their livelihood

The result reveals the difference in the socioeconomic life of the farmers before (2015) and after (2019) the VCDP intervention in Anambra State, Nigeria. The socio-economic variables considered includes: access to agro-input, access to credit, ease of marketing rice, knowledge of rice production practices, attitude toward paddy rice production, and aspiration for business, skill acquired during the implementation of VCDP and standard of living.

Access to agro-input

Data of the results in shows that there was a s significant change ($\chi 2 = 14.883$, $p \leq 0.05$) in the proportion of beneficiaries that had access to agro-inputs such as the fertilizer, herbicide, insecticide and improved rice varieties, before and after the commencement of the programme. As indicated in the result, 35.6%, 53.8 and 10.6% had no access, little access and full access to agro-inputs, respectively in 2015. Whereas in 2019. 9 48% had no access. 20.0% had little access while the majority (70.6%) of the beneficiaries had full access to agro-inputs in the study area. The results implies that there are significant changes in access to agro-inputs from no access to full access by the categories of paddy rice farmers. The findings further suggests that significant changes existed when compared the percentages of the farmers that had access to agro-inputs, before and after the commencement of the Value Chain Development Programme in the State. In conclusion, the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP) is said to have had a positive impact on the beneficiary rice farmers in terms of access to agro-inputs. The result of the study is in line with Babatunde et al., (2017) who reported that the benefits accrued from the program by the farmers were inputs such agro-chemicals, fertilizer, improved seeds.

Access to credit

The result reveals that there was a significant change (χ 2 =25.431, $p \leq 0.05$) in the categories of rice farmers that had access to credit, before (2015) and after (2019) the commencement of the Value Chain Development programme. According o he result, in 2015, a greater proportion 48,156) of the respondents had no access to credit facilities. 28.1% had little access while only 23.8% had full access to credit. Meanwhile in 2019. The majority (75.3%) of the beneficiaries had little access to credit, while 16.6% and 8.1% of the programme beneficiaries had little access and no access to credit, respectively. The implication of the results as revealed in the rice farmers experienced improvement in income. Hence, there is a significant increase success to credit by the categories of farmers. In addition, the implication is that the proportion Africa farmers that hand access to credit in 2019 is higher than that of the farmers that had access credit in 2015. In conclusion, the programmne had impact on the farmers in terms of access of credit. Access to credit is seen as a great enabler for producers' especially among small-scale farmers in enhancing the adoption of technologies and better production methods to improve output on farms (Elum and Obiajunwa, 2022). The results aligns with the findings of Dooember etal. (2020) who reported that increase in production output of beneficiaries may be attributed to access to credit and input from the project.

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Ease of marketing rice

The result indicated that there was a significant change (2 =33,983. P ≤0.05) in the categories of programme beneficiaries that had case of marketing paddy rice in the study area, before and after the commencement of the programme. The majority (72.5%) of the programme beneficiaries did not find it easy marketing their produce in 2015. Meanwhile in 2019, majority (81 59%) of the beneficiary farmers, found it very easy marketing their paddy rice produce. The result shows that the programime beneficiary had a significant change in ease of marketing their farm produce before and after the programme intervention. More so, the findings further shows that in 2015, very few (8.1% and 194%) of respondents had case and very ease marketing their produce while in 2019,019 and 16.6% of the rice farmers had no case and ease marketing rice produce. The result implies that the proportions in the ease of by the farmers before and after the programme intervention differs significantly.

Therefore, the programme had positive impact on the programme beneficiaries in terms of ease of marketing rice produce in the area. The result reflects the findings of Ogbonna et al., (2015), and Koyenika et al., (2014), who revealed that a reasonable percentage of women farmers reported receiving diverse advisory services, including advice on production, postharvest handling and marketing.

Knowledge of rice production practices

The study shows that there was significant change (χ2-76.309) between the knowledge of improved rice production technologies by the Programme beneficiaries, before and after the commencement of the programme in the study area. The implication of the finding is that there is significant change in the knowledge of improved rice production technologies by the farmers (rom no knowledge to adequate knowledge), In details s0.01%, 23.06%. 21.07% and 240 of the rice production practices in 2015. Whereas i in 2019, 05.6%, 10.7%, 23.1% and 60.6% of the rice farmers had no knowledge, poor knowledge. fair knowledge and adequate knowledge of the rice production practices. The implication is that the rice farmers gained more knowledge of the improved rice production practices in 2019 than in 2015, as a result of their participation in the project.

Attitude toward paddy rice production

`The data reveals beneficiary farmers' attitude toward rice production in the study area. The result revealed that there was a significant change (χ2=20.584, p≤0,05) in the proportion of the c rice farmers' attitude towards rice production, before and after the commencement of the Programme. The result implies that there is significant change in attitude of the farmers. The table revealed that in production. Furthermore, the results of the analysis as 2015, 78.0% of the farmers had a positive attitude toward paddy rice production, 11.3% had few (10.7%) do not know if they negative attitude toward paddy rice production in the area. This suggests that the proportion of rice farmers that had positive attitude toward rice production differs greatly from what was recorded in 2019. Hence, the programme had a significant impact on the programme beneficiaries in term of their attitude towards rice production.

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Aspiration to invest more money into rice production

The table revealed that there was a significant change ($\chi 2=15.519$, $p\leq 0.05$) in the proportion of the rice farmers that had aspiration to invest more money into paddy rice production, before and after the commencement of the programme. As shown in the result of the table of analysis, a greater proportion (58.0%) of the farmers had weak/low aspiration in invest more money into paddy rice production in 2015, whereas in 2019, the majority (66.9%) of the rice farmers had strong aspirations to invest more money into paddy rice production. This suggest that there is a significant change in the proportion of the categories of farmers from no aspiration in 2015 to strong aspiration to invest more money into paddy rice production in 2019. The result further revealed that in 2019, 02.5% had no aspiration while 30.6% had a weak/low aspiration to invest more money into paddy rice production. The result therefore suggest that the proportion of the farmers that had strong aspiration to invest more money into paddy rice production was not the same with that of 2015. The programme however made a significant impact on the rice farmers in terms of raising their aspiration to invest more money into paddy rice production.

Skill acquired during the implementation of the VCDP

It is evident from Table, that there is no significant change ($\chi 2 =7.059$) in the proportion of progamme beneficiaries that acquired skill during the programme in improved rice production technologies, before and after the intervention of the project. From the table, a majority (39.4%) of the rice farmers had poor skill in improved rice production technologies in 2015. Whereas in 2019, a greater proportion (22.5%) of the beneficiaries had adequate skill in improved paddy rice production technologies. This implies that there is no significant change in the proportion of the farmers that had adequate skills in improved rice production technologies. Table 4.3 also revealed 35.0% 13.1% and 12.5% had no skill, fair skill land adequate skill, respectively. While in 2019, 30.29%, 25.6% and 21.7% of the programme beneficiaries had no skill, poor skill and fair skill, respectively. This suggests that the programme beneficiaries acquired a relative low skill in improved paddy rice production technologies than in 2019. This could be attributed to the rice farmers' level of participation in the programme, hence the programme is said to have little or no positive impact on the programme beneficiaries on the acquisition of skills in paddy rice production technologies by the beneficiaries.

Respondents' standard of living

The study further revealed that there was a significant change ($\chi 2=43.034.P\leq 0.05$) in the proportion of the programme that had a significant impact in their standard of living, before and after the programme intervention. The result of the analysis further shows that in 2015, a greater proportion (27.8%) of the programme beneficiaries do not know whether they had any significant after the programme intervention The result of the analysis further show that in 2015, a greater proportion (27.96) of the programme beneficiaries do not know whether they had any significant impact of the progragramme on their standard of living, while 12.3% had very low standard of living. Meanwhile 259%. 18.09% 10.7%and 5.2% of the rice farmers recorded low, moderate, high and very high standard of living in 2015. Whereas

in 2019, 11.2% of the respondents do not know any impact of the programme on their standard of living. 07.5% had very low standard of living. 15.0% had low standard of living, while 17.5%, 27.5% and 21.3% of the beneficiaries had moderate, high and very high standard of living, respectively.

The result implies that there was significant changes in the standard of living of the rice farmers (from low to very high) after the progragramme intervention in 2019. The result further shows that there was significant changes in the programme beneficiaries' level of standard of living. After the commencement of the project. This implies that the farmers improved their standard Of living in 2019 than 2015. 1t is therefore concluded that the programme had positive impact on improved standard of living of the farmers. The result agrees with lsah (2021) who revealed that through farmers increase in yield, is expected to have improved standard of living.

Presentation of Findings

Findings on the beneficiaries' perception of the impact of the VCDP on their livelihood shows that there was a significant change ($\chi 2 = 14.883$, $p \leq 0.05$) in the proportion of beneficiaries that had access to agro-inputs such as fertilizer, herbicide, insecticide and improved rice varieties, before and after the commencement of the programme. The result further reveals that there was a significant change (χ 2 = 25.43 1, $p \leq 0.05$) in the categories of rice farmers that had access to credit, before and after the commencement of the programme. Also, the result shows that there was a significant change (χ 2-33.983, $p \leq 0.05$) in the categories of beneficiaries that had case of marketing rice in the study area, before and after the commencement of the programme. The majority (72.5%) of the programme beneficiaries did not find it easy marketing their produce in 2015. Meanwhile in 2019, majority (81.5%) of the rice farmers, found it very easy marketing their paddy rice produce. On the other hand, the result reveals that there was significant change 2-76.309) in the knowledge of the improved rice production technologies by the programme beneficiaries, before and after the commencement of the programme in the study area.

The result revealed that there was a significant change ($\chi 2=15.519$, $p \leq 0.05$) in the proportion of the rice farmers that had I aspiration to invest 1 more money into paddy rice production, before and after the commencement of the programme. As shown in the results, a greater proportion (58.0%) of the paddy rice farmers had weak/Mow aspiration to invest more money into the paddy rice production i in 2015, whereas in 2019, the majority (66.9%) of the beneficiaries had strong aspirations to invest more money into rice production in the study area. However, there was t significant change ($\chi 2=7.059$) in the proportion of the programme beneficiaries that au skılls during the programme in rice production technologies, before and after the intervention of the programme. From the results, the majority (39,4%) of the rice farmers had poor skill in improved rice production technologies in 2015. Whereas in 2019, a greater proportion (22.59%) of the beneficiaries had adequate skill in improved paddy rice production technologies. The result of the analysis further indicated that there was a significant change ($\chi 2=43.034$, $p \leq 0.05$) in the proportion of the programme beneficiaries that had a significant

impact in their standard of living, before and after the programme intervention.

Conclusion

The research study assessed the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP). On the paddy rice production in Anambra State. No doubt, the programme empowered the rice farmers, and made an unprecedented impact on their livelihood. The study revealed that the intervention recorded a significant impact in the areas of beneficiaries' access to agro-input, access to credit, ease of marketing paddy rice, knowledge of rice production practices, attitude toward rice production, aspiration for rice production enterprise and standard of living.

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