

THE PLACE OF NOMADIC FARMING AS A SOURCE OF IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper appraises the operation of nomadic farming using English language as a tool instead of Arabic language to achieve the great success in implementation of nomadic farming among the Fulani nomadic farmers. These farming is adopted by the people who are not permanent residence of an area and keep on moving along forest land hunting and have their food. Their main resources is from the forest or wild life. They rear ducks, goats, sheep and various cattle in herd, growing and take with them their cattle and crops from one place to another whenever they travel. Their movement is based on season (www.quora.com). Despite the fact that the state spend a lot money to improve agriculture, the response by these nomadic farmers is still low. The low nature of their production result from many factors that hinder their steady progress. Among them is religion which has reckoned with modern sphere of life. They mostly practice Muslim and have major interest in Arabic language than English language. Within them, they fear that they may be converted to Christianity if they adopt it. Since some of them have come to understand that the only way to contribute in the government of the state is to receive the knowledge to enable them fight for their basic rights, the state government should try to improve nomadic farming and their literacy level through introduction with Arabic teaching to the nomadic farmers.

Keywords: Nomadic Farming, security, Arabic and English Languages

Introduction

Nomadic farming is the farming adopted by people who are not residence of an area and who keep on moving. The nomadic farmer should gaining the knowledge, judgment and level of intellectual maturity geared towards human and national development in farming activities. The knowledge of Nomadic farming will aim at living in Unity and harmony and can be achieved through Extension agents using English language and Arabic as tools. This should be considered functional to promote a progressive and unity among

the nomads by making it relevant, practical and comprehensive to achieve the agricultural goals and objectives.

Nomadic farming try to develop individual farmers into a sound and effective citizen, integrate the nomads with community and provide equal access to opportunities for all citizens of the state at all level both within and outside formal farming system.

In Nigeria, there are many people with different cultural background among the Fulani. Some live a settled life in cities,

village and towns and other do not have fixed homes but move with their families, animals and crops in search of green pasture, water, food and grazing land for their animals. In Nigeria, this type of life has long been in practice by some Fulani cattle rearers. The movement made it possible for the nomadic farmers to engage in other economic activities such as hunting, gathering food and rearing their cattle (Lar 1989) and this group considered it as way of life while the settled Fulani considered it as an occupation. However, many Fulani consider cattle rearing as a major occupation but produce large percentage of the livestock for domestic consumption and supply of other animal produces which contribute a huge sum of money to the economic development of the state.

In spite of these contributions, many of the nomadic farmers were not exposed to functional agricultural due to their unsettled life making their contributions to Nigeria economy low compared to any other people of agricultural educational background.

With Nigerian policy , there is the need to provide opportunities with special arrangement and facilities to enable the nomadic farmers acquire formal agricultural knowledge like other farmers through adequate attention, ceaseless dedication, individual loyalty and commitment with good planning. The possibility of imparting new agricultural knowledge in modern nomadic farming through extension agents and teachers is possible. This is very important as this group of people feel reluctant to send their children to agricultural schools due to their regular movement and of their fear that their children would be converted to Christianity after completion. There

should be coordinate efforts to be made by the state government to make successful impact in imparting new knowledge in them especially their children of school age involved in cattle rearing after their parents.

NOMADIC FARMING IN NIGERIA

Through nomadic farming , the Nigerians centre stage which is social and economic development of the economic activities is very important. The farming serves as the spring board for social and economic change.

Nomadic farming should be the primary means of up grading the local economic condition of the rural nomadic farmers. Efforts should be made by the state government to provide agricultural knowledge on new or modern life of farming for the nomadic farmers in line with the national desire to bridge the gap between the privileged and under privileged ones and remove the high illiteracy among them. The state government can do this by introducing the nomadic agricultural colleges through agricultural educators or teachers in order to raise the living standard of the nomadic farmers and equally harness their potentials and bridge the gap of illiteracy between nomadic farmers and the rest of the society.

Nomadic farming group need the provision and other social amenities to justify their contributions to the national economy. According to Lar 1990, functional knowledge started with schools with permanent building, temporary structure or under shade of tree with or without furniture. The students were taught basic English simple mathematics, social studies and primary science. They run morning and afternoon shift where their nomadic

farmers children rotate between herding/pasturing and schooling. The main subjects taught were mainly vehicle for learning the capability of achieving the desired goal for nomadic farming programmes with result oriented as it covers the three domains of learning. Lar, (1989) stated that religion among the nomadic farming group must be reckoned within the modern field of life as the people's religions plays a vital role in their lives. This implies that it is essential to base the nomadic farming on their religion using Arabic and English language to aid the learning start from known to unknown.

ARABIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

Arabic language is the Islamic language of the nomadic farming group and was related from their common ancestors whose society was basically nomadic and pastoral in nature. They were basically involved in the rearing of camels and other livestock. They believed and received Islam and their Holy book in Islamic language instead of western language. The language became their means of communication. Whenever one speaks about English, Islam came to their mind. To become a good nomadic farmer extension agent, the knowledge of Arabic and English language are necessary. This is because the nomad in Nigeria is predominantly practicing Muslim without any interest in English learning. It is therefore necessary that the state government should introduce English as a medium of instruction in addition to Arabic in the curriculum of nomadic farming activities to motivate and make impetus and interest toward learning more of modern farming techniques. It should start from students where moral are high and tend to have higher achievement in their lives educational pursuits.

Arabic should therefore be allayed with western knowledge to remove their fear of being converted to Christianity. In line with Iro (n.d), nomadic knowledge is constrained by sectarian and casual issues and inject the nomadic school for the fear of their children be converted to Christianity with the experiences they had with white missionaries with their western mixed western knowledge to Nigeria.

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN EDUCATING NOMADIC FARMERS

1. English is one of the world wide spoken language in the wide world.
2. It is known as the language of both Muslims and Christians
3. It is needed for security purpose in every parts of the military intelligence and political sphere.
4. The great minds of Mediterranean throughout history are brought into lime light through English writing by all scholars.

TEACHER AND THE NOMADIC FARMERS

The teachers translate policies into practice. All teaching depended on effectiveness, capabilities and possibilities on the teacher and his qualities to devotion to duty, effectiveness, efficiency and competences. With these qualities, there will be successful implementation of nomadic farming in Nigeria.

The teachers with NCE Holders in Arabic and English are relevance and useful in teaching the nomads wherever they are. They must be Muslim or Christian according to their prophetic ideology. The teachers must be capable

of teaching some other subjects involved in the scheme and can stay, work and be part of their profession.

Although government has spent much money on nomadic farming programs but the educational attainment among the nomadic farmers are still low. The literacy of the nomads will be improved literary by removing the defective policies that harden the attainment. Also pronouncing for mobile school programmed suitable curricular development will equally solve the problems.

Although use of English language is difficult for some nomadic farmers and their children in agricultural schools, the best language for best communication network at these levels should be both Arabic and basic English languages which the nomadic farmers and their children are conversant with.

C O N C L U S I O N A N D S U G G E S T I O N S

In Nigeria, it is not easy and effective to implement nomadic farming . There are evidence that the nomadic farmers and their children do not socially imbibe western knowledge and thereby not improving their nomadic literacy level. The nomadic farmer have come to understand that the only way to contribute in the governance of their country is to receive western knowledge which will liberate them and their children to fight for their basic rights in the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should take adequate consideration on how the nomads should have the aspiration to participate in planning and executing the programme. The Arabic and English language are believed to be the essential ingredients in nomadic farming and should be included in the curriculum to remove the fear of western knowledge in the life of their children on nomadic farming. The

teachers will act as trainers and government ambassadors who emphasis on the importance of western knowledge on nomadic farming to them for political, social and religious point of view.

To have a successful nomadic farming, agricultural teachers or extension teachers with NCE in Arabic and English should be employed to take active part in nomadic programme”. Fulani language should be introduced in selected college of agriculture in Nigeria to produce teachers with Arabic and English language using their native language. In such schools, Muslim teachers should outnumber the Christian teachers whose objectives of western knowledge will be removed to avoid the nomads suspicious aims. Workshops and seminars be organized for the teachers to bear with the conditions or styles of the Muslim nomadic farmers. The teachers should be provided with mobility and special salary scale for movement with the nomadic farmers. This will help to motivate them to accept living and work as well as moving about with their trainees. Finally, monitoring the teachers performance and nomadic children achievement in programme should be enhanced by adequate planning and supervision. When the federal, state and local government implement the above recommendations appropriately, there will be boost in the production of both livestock and crops in the state through nomadic farming.

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