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PREFACE

The aim of this study is to determine the role of RoadTransportation mode in Marketing of Agricultural Produce in Abakaliki LocalGovernment Area of Ebonyi State.

To enhance a quicker, clearer and more comprehensiveunderstanding of the impact of this study the work has been divided into fi8vechapter.

Chapter one deals with the nature and statement of theproblem, objectives and scope of the study. Also included in the same chapter is the statement of hypothesis,significance of the study and finally, a definition of concepts very unique tothe study.

Chapter two deal with a review of related literature whereother people's views and opinions on road transport and agriculture werehighlighted.

The third chapter treated the research methodology adoptedand such other areas as method of investigation, population and sample size andfinally, the limitations of the study.

Chapter four forms the main basis of the study as it treatedthe presentation and analysis of data collected for the purpose of the study.

Lastly, chapter five dealt with a summary of the findings,conclusion and recommendations.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The quest of achieve self sufficiency food production is one of the highest priority areas facing most of the world's today. It is also a problem that threatens to worsen rapidly in the years immediately ahead.

On the otherhand, problems relating to rural inaccessibility have continued to plague the world, and in particular, Nigeria Agriculture, it is on this basis that the government and transport policy maker should intensify efforts to improve the transportation system especially in road network system, their collective or individual efforts and endeavours should be directed towards fighting a war against hunger, and providing necessary transport facilities and services, and contribute to judicious investment decisions in related areas that can help assume the supply of additional food and its distribution to consumers.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ever since the beginning of time, agriculture and transportation have always co-existed inseparably. This is not only because the source of food and fibre and other economic product must be reasonably accessible and on being collected, be distributed to makers, parts and factories, but also that adequate transportation mode and efficient carrier service operations are a necessary condition for effecting an efficient physical distribution of agricultural products. Indeed, adequate and efficient transportation network is a cornerstone of the modern food marketing system. Transportation thus services as a means of moving goods, ideas and information geared towards increased productivity.

In Nigeria, roads constitute perhaps, the most important infrastructure in the structural transportation of her agriculture.

In Abakaliki, most of the roads traverse a territory of sharp contrasts in climate, soil and vegetation and this hinders agricultural progress in some rural areas, most of the roads which are of course essential for the prompt evacuation of produce from the farms to the market places are often times inaccessible all year round.

Most of these roads, especially feeder roads are unsurfaced, narrow, bad, poorly drained and winding and this prevents easy access to the hinter land where the majority of the farmers are located. Even in Abakaliki main town where such roads are in a fair condition, there is the problem caused by poor maintenance, lack of adequate executive capacity, lack of suitable materials, and management problem. The vicious combination of these factors is that costs are higher, marketing possibilities are uncertain and incentives to produce are low.

Besides, the inadequacy of road network services are inefficiently executed. Delay in transit, bad loading and offloading, and rough handling of goods characterize road transport resulting in great losses from damages,

spoilage and detonation of products.

Poor transportation also has the added effect of preventing farmers from specializing in the crops that offer them the best return. Where transport is inadequate, each farmer attempts to keep his family supplied with all their needs, and he therefore retains more food than he actually needs, and he therefore retains more food than he actually needs. This is because if he runs short, it will be difficult to tap other resources and this entails higher losses as a result of transportation this often poses a problem because urban dwellers will be faced with dearth of foodstuffs and other essential goods manufactured from agricultural materials. These problems that confront rural transportation in Nigeria, therefore, hinder its ability to improve the system of land use for agricultural production.

If agriculture is to respond to the growing demand, then it will be necessary to evolve a good progressive rural structure with rural roads to expedite and reduce the cost of flow of agricultural commodities, information and all sorts of rural service to enable it contribute meaningfully to general economic growth. This will help accommodate increased traffic flows in both directions, inputs moving from the urban areas to the farms and output in the opposite direction. The task involves very large additions to rural road mode and maintaining existing roads, the expansion of storage and processing facilities and a new institutional arrangement for managing and financing the total system this is of course, a no mean task indeed.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study will attempt to relate road transport to the economy as regards the role of a road transportation mode in marketing Agricultural product in Abakaliki L.G.A. Ebonyi State. The objectives include:

To determine the extent to which road transportation system has affected the marketing of Agricultural products.

To identify these factors that are directly have contributed to this.

To offer useful recommendations with a view to making the marketing of Agricultural products in Abakaliki L.G.A. Ebonyi State, more successful and effective.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Based upon the earlier stated objectives, this study will see to test three major hypotheses. These are:

That the nature of road mode system in Abakaliki affects the marketing of her agricultural products.

That inaccessibility reduces the incentive to produce.

That the cost of transport affects the price of the farm products. That is, that the price of agricultural products is a function of the transportation cost.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The increased interest in this study is due pointy to the gainful and developmental inputs agriculture can make to the economy and most importantly to the tremendous role of transportation infrastructure on regional economies. This is because transport and development, as well as Agriculture are usually regarded as closely related since each of them influences the fortunes and relative rate of growth of others.

The significance of the study is further highlighted considering that in Nigeria, the road is the only mode of transport by which all the states of federation are linked especially with regards to the movement and distribution of Agricultural products from various rural areas of production to the different urban areas of the states for consumption.

Finally, the study shall also serve as a stimulant or reference guide for further research in this area especially in this era of population explosion and impending food storage.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

In Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, most of the Agricultural Products (Yams, garri, cassava, rice, vegetables, tomatoes etc), are produced in the villages located in remote towns. Because of difference in ecological factors such as climate, soil texture, topography etc, some village produce more of one or several type of food and other Agricultural products than the others.

Taking cognizance of the fact that the study covers the entire Abakaliki local government area, as a result of dearth of time therefore, it would be time some and almost impossible to visit all the towns and villages in Abakaliki L.G.A. Ebonyi State.

Secondly, because the attendant cost involved if the whole towns and villages should be visited cannot be afforded by the researcher, coupled with the final year academic work, and recognizing that Abakaliki town is the greatest producer of the main staple food items (yam, garri, cassava, rice, groundnut, pepper) in the state, the study therefore will be restricted and limited to the aforesaid zone in investigating the role of road transportation mode in marketing Agricultural products in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Considering that the subject matter of the study is the role of road transport mode in the marketing of Agricultural products. Definition of term will be attempted.

However, such definitions are only made and to be understood within the contest of the study.

Agriculture may be defined as the Science, art, and business of farming, it involves all activities directed towards food production.

Marketing, on the other hand, is defined as the performance of all business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from the producer to the consumer it emphasizes the flow of products or service that have already been produced.

Agricultural marketing therefore, may be defined as the performance of all business activities involved in the flow of Agricultural products and services from the point of initial Agricultural production until they are in the hands of consumer's it involves the application of the knowledge of marketing to the formulation, implementation and control of activities which are directly or related to agriculture.

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