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## Family Farming and its Influence on Household Poverty: A Case Study of Northern Nigeria

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### Abstract

Food security and poverty alleviation have become issues of global concern and have continued to receive increasing attention in the recent time. Nigeria, with her huge endowed natural and human resources is not spared. Family farming, also known as “Gandu” system of farming is mostly practised by crop farmers with the view of pooling resources together within a family unit for domestic production. The study analysed the level of participation in family farming and its effect on poverty status of farmers in northern Nigeria. Primary data on household food consumption and expenditure patterns obtained from a sample of 396 farmers using structured questionnaire were utilised in the study. The Foster Greer and Thorbecke measures of poverty and regression model were used to analyse the data. The results showed a mean per capita expenditure of the farmers to be N 93279.84, while the poverty line calculated as 2/3 of mean per capita expenditure was found to be N 62186.50. The poverty profile of the households showed that 57.8% of the farmers fall below the poverty line while 42.2% of the farmers fall above the poverty line and thus categorised as non poor. Out of the poor farmers, (23.3%) are core poor while (34.4%) are moderately poor. The poverty headcount index was 58%, poverty gap index was 37% and poverty squared gap index was 24%. The result further showed a high and significant  $R^2$  value (0.72), a significant F-value (53.3) and a positive coefficient which is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), implying that poverty status was greatly influenced by farmers’ participation in family farming. Estimates of the logit regression model revealed that age of farmers, land size, farming experience, household size and extension contact were socio-economic variables that significantly influenced the farmers’ likelihood of participation in family farming at different levels of significance ( $p < 0.1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The study recommends measures to encourage participation in family farming as a means to improve livelihood of farmers, reduce poverty and enhance food security.

**Keywords:** Crop farmers, family farming, food security, poverty, regression