

Influence of Socio-economic Characteristics on the Food Security Status of Rural Households in Edo State, Nigeria¹

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ABSTRACT The present research study focused on the influence of socio-economic characteristics on the food security status of rural households in Edo State, Nigeria. Data used in the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Multistage sampling procedure which involved both purposive and random sampling techniques was used to select 360 respondents for the study. Logit probability regression model was employed to determine the significant variables influencing food security status in the study area. The result showed that 73.1 percent of the households were headed by males while 26.9 percent were by females. The mean age of household heads was 47.78 years, 76.6 percent of them were married, 41.4 percent of them had no formal education and 84.3 percent of them owned their own houses. The average household size was estimated to be seven. The result also showed that four variables in the logit model had significant effect on the food security status of the households. These were age of the household head, farming experience, household size and off-farm income. It was recommended that agricultural extension services across rural communities in Edo State should be revamped to ensure that rural farmers have access to such services. This will ensure that information dissemination as regards improved farming techniques and availability of improved farm input such as seeds, seedlings, fertilizers and others, gets to rural farmers easily.