

# Off-Farm Income's Share and Farm Investment among Small-Scale Farmers in North-Central Nigeria: The Heckman's Selection Model Approach

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## Abstract

The study evaluated the probability of investing off-farm income's share of household income in farming among small-scale farmers in North-Central Nigeria. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 360 respondents. Primary data for the study were analysed using Heckman's two-stage selection model. The lambda of the model was 1.38

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*Index terms*— farm, heckman, income, income's share, investment, off-farm, small-scale farmers.

## 1 I. Introduction

The agricultural landscape in Nigeria is dominated by rural-based small-scale farmers. Inadequate finance and impeded access to farm credit facilities constitute the major constraint faced by these farmers. Hence, farmers resorted to off-farm work in order to generate fund for farm investment (Ogbanje, Chidebelu & Nweze, 2014a). Off-farm work refers to activities from which farmers earn income apart from their own farm. In Nigeria, off-farm work is broadly disaggregated into agricultural wage employment, nonagricultural wage employment, and self-employment ?? The off-farm sector is of importance to the rural economy because of its production linkages and employment effects, while the income it provided to rural households could represent a substantial and sometimes growing share of farm capital (Davis, 2003; Zeller, 2010). The income obtained off-farm doubles as risk minimisation and household income stabilisation strategies in both developed and developing countries (Babatunde, 2008; Blank, Erickson, Nehring & Hallahan, 2009; ??riggeman, 2011). Off-farm income also insures against agricultural production risk and market failure (Reardon, 1997; ??llis & Freeman, 2004). It follows that off-farm income's share is a measure of the extent of farm household reliance on off-farm income. Ogbanje (2014) found that off-farm income share of household income constituted 50.28% of household income of small-scale farmers in North-Central Nigeria.

Some researchers have indicated that the inadequacy of farm income and high prevalence of poverty have resulted in the inability of small-scale farmers to meaningfully invest in farm business (Lambert & Bayda, 2005; Kwon, Orazem & Otto, 2006). Others have contended that farmers' resort to sourcing credit from financial intermediaries has not brought the much anticipated farm capital relief (Musser, White & McKissick, 1977; Bagachawa, 2000; Obike, Ukoha & Nwajiuba, 2007). Furthermore, as the farmer allocates his endowed time among farm work, off-farm work, and leisure, off-farm work diverts critical productive resources from the farm sector. The resultant and emerging dual farm structure, which could affect food production, therefore, suggests that so many factors socioeconomic and farm financial characteristics could account for participation in off-farm work as well as the amount of off-farm income's share of household income invested in farming.

The study was designed to determine the effect of socioeconomic and farm financial characteristics of farmers on the probability of participation in off-farm work and amount of off-farm income's share of household income invested in farming. Studies on off-farm work are of great importance to agrarian nations and economies in transition. They are also necessitated by the imperativeness to forestall dual farm structure from impairing food production. In addition, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and stakeholders in rural finance could derive models from off-farm work studies that would guarantee adequate finance for sustainable

45 food production and rural development. Finally, findings from studies of this nature could enhance proper  
 46 management of resources accruing from off-farm work, and thus, enable smallscale farmers to take advantage of  
 47 the policy thrust on agribusiness and financial inclusion.

## 48 2 a) Theoretical formulation of Heckman’s two-stage selection 49 model

50 Limited dependent variables are common in social and health studies. The primary characteristics of such  
 51 variables are censoring and truncation (Vance, 2006). Truncation, which is an effect of data gathering rather  
 52 than data generation, occurs when sample data are drawn from a subset of a larger population of interest. Thus,  
 53 a truncated distribution is the part of a larger, untruncated distribution. Assuming that an income survey was  
 54 administered on a limited subset of a population (e.g. those whose incomes are above a certain threshold), the  
 55 dependent variable in the survey would be observed only for a portion of the whole distribution. The task of  
 56 modeling is to use that limited information-a truncated distribution-to infer the income distribution for the entire  
 57 population. Censoring occurs when all values in a certain range of a dependent variable are transformed to a  
 58 single value. Using the above example of population income, censoring differs from truncation in that the data  
 59 collection may include the entire population, but below the given threshold, incomes are coded as zero. Under  
 60 this condition, researchers may estimate a regression model for a larger population using both the censored and  
 61 the uncensored data (Cragg, 1971;Vance, 2006).

62 The central task of analysing limited dependent variables is to use the truncated distribution or censored  
 63 data to infer the untruncated or uncensored distribution for the entire population. In the context of regression  
 64 analysis, it is typically assumed that the dependent variable follows a normal distribution. The challenge, then,  
 65 is to develop moments (mean and variance) of the truncated or censored normal distribution. Theorems of such  
 66 moments exist. In these theorems, moments of truncated or censored normal distributions involve a key factor  
 67 called the inverse Mills ratio, or hazard function, which is commonly denoted as  $\lambda(x)$ .  
 68  $\lambda(x) = \frac{\phi(x)}{\Phi(x)}$  where  $\phi(x)$  is the standard normal density function and  $\Phi(x)$  is the standard normal cumulative distribution function.

69 The basic outcome equation is as follows:
$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_i + \epsilon_i$$

70 According to Harris, Blank, Erickson & Hallahan (2010), the investment decision could be viewed as a binary  
 71 one, i.e. to invest or not. This can be analysed using a dichotomous choice model. However, farmers are also  
 72 faced with the decision of how much to invest. According to Cragg (1971) and Smith (2002), two hurdles are  
 73 involved in the process of investment decisions, which can be determined separately or simultaneously. In order  
 74 to observe a positive level of investment, two separate hurdles must be passed.

75 These two significant decisions, according to Ahituv and Kimhi (2002), determined the growth of the farmer’s  
 76 earnings through his life-cycle paths in terms of both human and physical capital. At the macro level, the  
 77 decisions taken by many individual farmers were essential to the overall development of the agricultural sector  
 78 and the economy as a whole, resulting in major policy implications.

79 Available empirical findings about inter-temporal analysis of employment choice (Nakamura & Nakamura,  
 80 1985;Gould & Saupe, 1989;Weiss, 1997;Corsi & Findeis, 2000) agreed that individuals with previous offfarm  
 81 employment record were more likely to participate on the off-farm labour market than those who had not (and  
 82 vice versa).

## 83 3 II. Methodology

84 The study area was North-Central Nigeria. The region comprised six states, namely, Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa,  
 85 Plateau, Kwara and Niger, with a total land mass of 296,898 km<sup>2</sup> and total population of 20.36 million people.  
 86 The region is bounded in the north by Bauchi, Kaduna, Zamfara, and Kebbi States; in the south by Cross-River,  
 87 Ebonyi, Enugu, Edo, Ondo, Ekiti, Osun and Oyo States; in the east by Taraba State and Cameroon; and in  
 88 the west by the Republic of Benin. Situated between latitudes 6° 30’ N and 11° 0’ N and longitudes 7° 0’ E  
 89 and 10° 0’ E, the region has average annual rainfall that ranges from 1,500 mm to 1,800 mm, with average annual  
 90 temperature varying between 20° C and 35° C. North Central Nigeria has 6.6 million hectares of land under  
 91 cultivation, with rain-fed agriculture accounting for about 90 percent of the production systems (NBS, 2008).  
 92 Majority of the populace are in agriculture, with farm size ranging from 0.4 to 4.0 ha (FAO, 2002; NFRA, 2008).

93 The region features prominently in national agricultural production statistics. For instance, Benue and Kogi  
 94 States were among the states of the federation that cultivated over 200,000 ha of cassava in 2007, with over  
 95 two million metric tonnes of cassava output. For yam, Benue and Niger States cultivated over 200,000 ha and  
 96 harvested over two million metric tonnes. Niger State was among the states that cultivated over 300,000 ha of  
 97 maize and sorghum, with output of over 400,000 metric tonnes. Niger, Benue and Kwara States were among the  
 98 states that cultivated over 100,000 ha of rice with an output of over 200,000 metric tonnes. For legumes (cowpea,  
 99 soyabean, bambara nut, and sesame), Niger, Benue and Kogi States ranked among the highest producers in the  
 100 country (NFRA, 2008).

101 Multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. Using simple random sampling  
 102 in stage one, Benue, Kogi and Niger States were selected from the region. In stage two, simple random sampling  
 103 was used to select two agricultural zones from each state namely, zones A and C from Benue State, zones B and  
 104 D from Kogi State, and zones A and B from Niger State. In stage three, simple random sampling was used to

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105 select two local government areas (LGAs) from each agricultural zone. In Benue State, the LGAs were Ukum  
106 and Katsina-Ala from zone A, and Otukpo and Oju from zone C. In Kogi State, the LGAs were Dekina and  
107 Bassa from zone B, and Ofu and Olamaboro from zone D. In Niger State, the LGAs were Shirorro and Paikoro  
108 from zone A, and Gbako and Lavun from zone B. In stage four, three farming communities were randomly  
109 selected from each LGA. Finally, using stratified random sampling, 10 small-scale farmers (five participants and  
110 five non-participants in offfarm work) were selected from each farming community giving a total sample size of  
111 360 respondents.

112 Data for the study were obtained from primary source with the aid of pre-tested structured questionnaire,  
113 which was validated as recommended by ?erlinger (1973). Test-retest method and Pearson's product moment  
114 correlation coefficient were used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Heckman's two-stage selection  
115 model was used analyse the data for the study. Y 2 = amount of off-farm income's share of household income  
116 invested in farming (N), X 1 = age of farmer (years), X 2 = sex of household head (1 = male; 2 = female), X 3  
117 = education of farmer (number of years spent in formal educational institutions), X 4 = household size (number  
118 of people in a farm household), X 5 = farming experience (years), X 6 = total farm size (ha), X 7 = total crop  
119 revenue (N), X 8 = distance to market (km), X 9 = primary occupation (1 = farming; 0 otherwise), X 10 = land  
120 ownership (1 = own farm land; 0 otherwise), X 11 = government payment (N), X 12 = ratio of farm assets to  
121 household assets, X 13 = operating profit margin, X 14 = asset turnover ratio, X 15 = capital input (N), X 16  
122 = farm capital (N). ? = coefficient of explanatory variables.

## 123 4 III. Results and Discussion

### 124 5 a) Participation in Off-farm Work and Amount of Off-farm 125 Income's Share invested in Farming

126 The analysis of the probability of participation in off-farm work and the amount of off-farm income's share invested  
127 in farming is as presented in Table 1. The lambda of the model provided the proportion of total variability not  
128 explained, which was 1.38%. This meant that the variables in the model accounted for 98.62% of the variation  
129 in the amount of off-farm income's share of household income that was invested in farming. The chisquare of  
130 the model was statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Hence, socioeconomic and farm financial characteristics of  
131 farmers have significant effect on their participation in off-farm work and the amount of off-farm income's share  
132 of household income that was invested in farming.

133 In the first hurdle, age had no significant effect on the probability of participation. In the second model,  
134 however, age significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) reduced the amount of off-farm income's share as a percentage of household  
135 income invested in farming. A 10% increase in the age of farmers would result in 0.01% decrease in the amount  
136 of off-farm income's share invested in farming. As a farmer advanced in age, the intensity of off-farm work, as  
137 well as the associated income, reduced. More so, the tempo of farm activities and the level of total investment  
138 dropped. All these contributed to the reduction in total household income and the offfarm income's share that  
139 was reserved for farm investment. The results of the two models contradicted Harris et al. (2010) and El-Osta  
140 (2011) where age did not significantly affect off-farm work participation decision or the level of capital invested  
141 in farming.

142 In the first hurdle, farm size had no significant effect on the probability of participation but significantly ( $p <$   
143  $0.01$ ) reduced the amount of off-farm income's share that was invested in farming. The implication is that a 10%  
144 increase in farm size would result in 0.05% decrease in the amount of off-farm income's share invested in farming.  
145 The inverse relationship could be attributed to the fact that increasing farm size imposed restriction on off-farm  
146 work participation as well as the income from the sector. Although, Harris et al. (2010) showed empirically that  
147 larger farmers required larger capital expenditures, as the farm size of a household increased, off-farm work and  
148 off-farm income declined, thereby reducing the amount of off-farm income's share invested in farming.

149 In the second hurdle, government payment significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) reduced the amount of off-farm income's  
150 share invested in farming, implying that a 10% increase in government would result in 0.001% decrease in the  
151 amount of off-farm income's share invested in farming. Those who were in government service would pay relatively  
152 less attention to farming and, hence, reallocated their off-farm income's share to the non-farm sector. Thus, the  
153 more of government payment they received, the farther away they drifted from farming. In Harris et al. (2010),  
154 government payment did not significantly affect investment in the second hurdle.

155 In the first hurdle, operating profit margin significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) increased the probability of participating  
156 in off-farm work. This implied that a 10% increase in operating profit margin would increase the probability in  
157 off-farm work participation by 0.74%. This would have arisen from the prudent management of funds injected  
158 into farm enterprises. The benefit obtained in the previous period would have informed and sustained the resolve  
159 to participate in off-farm work in line with life-cycle hypothesis of Ahituv and Kimhi (2002). The result was  
160 consistent with Lagerkvist, Larsen & Olson (2006), suggesting the possibility of larger farm firm growth.

161 Capital input significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) reduced the probability of participating in off-farm work. The implication  
162 was that a 10% increase in capital would decrease the probability of off-farm work participation by 0.003%.  
163 For some farmers to participate in off-farm work, they obtained loan or diverted part of their credit for farm  
164 investment to off-farm sector. This loan, in rural areas, attracted high interest rate (Nweze, 1990). Again,

## 6 IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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165 off-farm businesses were more vulnerable to taxes from various authorities than farm businesses. Thus, capital  
166 input, which comprised interest paid on loan and taxes, could discourage and limit participation in off-farm work.

167 The ratio of farm asset to household asset significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) increased the share of off-farm income that  
168 was invested in farming. The implication was that a 10% increase in the ratio of farm asset to household asset  
169 would increase the investible off-farm income's share by 0.25%. Higher ratios shifted emphasis towards farm  
170 assets relative to household assets. More farm assets would require maintenance and, eventually, replacement at  
171 the end of the useful period. In either of these scenarios, off-farm share came handy.

172 Asset turnover ratio significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) increased the amount of off-farm income's share that was invested  
173 in farming. This implied that a 10% increase in asset turnover ratio would raise farm-investible off-farm income's  
174 share by 0.05%. In other words, for every one naira of asset held, a farm household generated annual off-farm  
175 income of N0.0048. Hence, the more a farm household converted the utilisation of its farm assets to income,  
176 the more it would invest its off-farm income's share in farming. According to Myyra, Pietola & Heikkila (2011),  
177 this ratio described the capital rotation speed in agriculture. Farm capital significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) decreased  
178 the amount of off-farm income's share invested in farming, implying that a 10% increase in farm capital would  
179 reduce farm-investible off-farm income's share by 0.0001%. This meant that farmers with low farm capital level  
180 would invest more of their off-farm income's share in farming so as to shore up their farm capital level. In line  
181 with Mundlak (1993) that capital constraints constituted major determinants of the rate of adoption of new  
182 technologies, the investment of off-farm income's share would then raise the level of acquisition and utilisation of  
183 relevant technologies.

184 Education significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) reduced the odds of participating in off-farm work. The implication was  
185 that a 10% increase in the number of years of formal education would increase the probability of off-farm work  
186 participation. In Nigeria, the elites either abhorred farming or substituted farm labour with capital. This  
187 increased their probability to participate in off-farm work. In the second model, education increased the amount  
188 of off-farm income's share ( $p < 0.05$ ) that was invested in farming. This implied that more number of years of  
189 formal education increased the amount of off-farm income's share that was allocated to farm investment. Higher  
190 level of education conferred on farmers increasing efficiency in farm management skills. This was in line with  
191 Harris et al. (2010) that highly educated farm operators used off-farm income to finance farm investment.

192 The first hurdle showed that household size significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) increased the probability of participating  
193 in off-farm. Hence, a 10% increase in household size would raise the probability of off-farm work participation by  
194 0.01%. Large household implied increased consumption expenditure profile. A rational head of large household  
195 would seek for additional sources of income or investment that would smoothen the path of consumption.  
196 Therefore, the need to participate in off-farm work heightened. This was in line with the push factor diversification  
197 of Reardon (1997) which induced households to manage income and consumption uncertainties via diversification.  
198 In the second model, however, household size had no significant effect on the amount of off-farm income's share  
199 invested in farming.

200 Land ownership significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) increased the odd of participating in off-farm work, implying that  
201 increase in land ownership by 10% would lead to increase in the probability of off-farm work participation by  
202 0.001%. Farmers who operated on own farmland could afford to intensify investment on the land and even  
203 exploit expansion effect as against those who held temporary farmland rights. Own farm land operators would  
204 normally be inclined to seek investment fund off-farm where credit constraint was prevalent. This finding was  
205 inconsistent with Jerome (2002) that more secure rights improved household's ability and readiness to increase  
206 investment, provided better access to credit, and reduced transaction cost associated with land transfers. Besley  
207 (1995) corroborated that more secure tenure to a plot of land increased the probability that individuals would  
208 undertake a wide range of investment on the land. This variable, however, did not have significant effect on the  
209 amount of off-farm income's share invested in farming.

210 Total crop revenue significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) increased the amount of off-farm income's share that was invested  
211 in farming. This meant that additional 10% of crop revenue would increase farm-investible off-farm income's  
212 share by 0.00004%. The more income a farm household generated from the farm sector, the more of its off-farm  
213 income's share it invested in farming. This is because the economic well-being of a farm is evaluated in terms of  
214 farm income. Myyra et al. (2011) noted that commercial farms were profitable if they produced annual income  
215 and accumulated expected value over time.

216 Primary occupation significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) increased the amount of off-farm income's share invested in  
217 farming. This meant that if additional 10% of farmers chose farming as primary occupation, farm-investible  
218 off-farm income's share would rise by 0.11%. This implied that farmers who derived their livelihood largely  
219 from farming reinvested more off-farm income's share in farming. This, according to Kwon et al. (2006), was in  
220 response to large fluctuations in farm income faced by farm households.

## 221 6 IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

222 Surrounding business and environmental factors affect shape the decision to seek farm capital relief from the  
223 off-farm sector. These factors also determine the proportion of off-farm income that could be transferred to farm  
224 investment. Thus, it is axiomatic that the small-scale farmer exercises some independent level of farm investment  
225 decision. Some inhibitive factors beyond his control are also in this ambient environment.

226 It was recommended that the government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development should

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227 consciously regulate the business environment in the rural areas in a way that farmers invest off-farm income in  
228 farming. Policy thrust should focus on reduction in interest and tax rates for small-scale farmers; deliberate  
229 transition to market-oriented agricultural production that would improve crop revenue; and ease of asset  
230 acquisition. These measures would strengthen production chain linkages and facilitate employment generation,  
231 thereby sustaining agribusiness development in Nigeria.

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Figure 1:

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<sup>2</sup>Off-Farm Income's Share and Farm Investment among Small-Scale Farmers in North-Central Nigeria: The Heckman's Selection Model Approach

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Independent variables		Coefficient	z	?? =>  ??
	Age (years)	0.0881	0.93	0.35
	Sex (1=male, 0 otherwise)	-0.5434	-0.56	0.578
	Education (years)	11.2431	2.06**	0.039
Decision	Household size	0.9972	2.19**	0.029
to	Farming experience (years)	-0.1406	-1.60	0.11
par-	Total farm size	-0.9168	-1.44	0.151
tici-				
pate				
in off-				
farm				
work	Total crop revenue (N)	0.0003	0.45	0.655
model	Distance to market (km)	-0.3432	-0.84	0.401
	Primary occupation (1=farming, 0 otherwise)	2.6734	1.48	0.14
	Land ownership (1=own farmland, 0 otherwise)	-284.1234	-13.00*	0.000
	Government payment (N)	0.00009	1.86	0.063

Figure 2: Table 1 :

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