

**ASSESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURE
EMPLOYMENT TO SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELFARE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ECOWAS AND SADC.**

UMEHRUO HONOUR CHINYERE

13AE014896

B.Sc Demography and Social Statistics, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State.

SEPTEMBER, 2021

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BY

UMEHRUO HONOUR CHINYERE

(13AE014896)

B.Sc Demography and Social Statistics, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State.

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE
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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY.**

SEPTEMBER 2021

ACCEPTANCE

This is to attest that this dissertation is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Sciences in Economics in the Department of Economics, College of Management and Social sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria.

Mr. John A. Philip
(Secretary, School of Postgraduate Studies)

.....

Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams
(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

.....

Signature and Date

DECLARATION

I, **UMEHRUO CHINYERE HONOUR (13AE014896)** declares that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Oluwarotimi A. Owolabi of the Department of Economics, College of Business and Social sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria. I attest that the dissertation has not been presented either wholly or partially for the award of any degree elsewhere. All sources of data and scholarly information used in this dissertation are duly acknowledged.

UMEHRUO CHINYERE, HONOUR

.....

Signature and Date

CERTIFICATION

We certify that this dissertation titled “**ASSESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURE EMPLOYMENT TO SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELFARE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ECOWAS AND SAD**” is an original research work carried out by **UMEH CHINYERE HONOUR (13AE014896.)** in the Department of Economics, College of Management and Social sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria under the supervision of Dr. Oluwarotimi A. Owolabi. We have examined and found this work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of Master of Science.


Dr. Oluwarotimi .A. Owolabi
(Supervisor)

.....
Signature and Date

Prof. Evans S. Osabuohien
(Head, Department of Economics)

.....
Signature and Date

Prof. Adebayo B. Aromolaran
(External Examiner)


.....
Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams
(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

.....
Signature and Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my heavenly father, the Almighty God, who has been my strength, provider, motivator, inspiration and helper throughout this project.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFDB	African Development Bank.
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of The Untied Nation
SADC	South African Development Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
HDI	Human Development Index
HSDI	Human Sustainable Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
ECCAS	The Economic Community of Central African States
EAC	East African Community
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISEW	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare
SSOCWF	Sustainable Socio-Economic Welfare
EMPAG	Employment in Agriculture
EMPIND	Employment in Industry
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
GFCF	Gross Fixed Capital Formation
POPDENS	Population Density
MILEXGDP	Military Expenditure as a Share of GDP
INFL	Inflation
RLAW	Rule of Law

ABSTRACT

Sub-Saharan Africa faces the challenge of low welfare regardless of the definition of welfare used, but it is the low level of sustainable socio-economic welfare that threatens sustainable development of Sub-Saharan Africa countries. Most of Africa's population reside in west and southern Africa and are residents of either Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) or Southern African Development Community (SADC) member countries. However, both ECOWAS and SADC reflect regional economic communities that are heterogeneous in terms of environmental, social and economic welfare indicators, The two regional economic communities are heterogeneous in terms of agriculture resources which as highlighted by literature provides the source of employment for the bulk of population in both regional economic communities as well as in Sub-Saharan Africa in general. Hence it is unclear the extent to which agriculture employment may promote sustainable socio-economic welfare, thus this study focuses on assessing the contribution of agricultural employment on sustainable socio-economic welfare: a comparative study between ECOWAS and SADC. The study employs fixed effect panel data regression, using country level data on ECOWAS and SADC sourced from the World Bank; World Development Indicators with a time span of 2010 to 2019. Sustainable Socio-economic welfare was measured in this study using a computed Human Sustainable Development Index (Index) derived from the UNDP computation of the Human Development Index. The findings of this study revealed that agriculture employment adversely and significantly affects sustainable socio-economic welfare in ECOWAS and SADC. In addition, the study found that, agriculture employment affects adversely alternative measures of welfare in both ECOWAS and SADC. Thus, having compared ECOWAS and SADC as concerns agriculture employment and sustainable socio-economic welfare, the study recommends amongst other recommendations, that attempts at promoting improved welfare in ECOWAS and SADC countries should necessarily focus on sustainable socioeconomic welfare as measured by HSDI rather than the narrower definitions of welfare as HDI or GDP per capita. Also, governments of ECOWAS and SADC member countries should put in place policies that will make agriculture employment both attractive as an employment and boost its productivity such as putting in place minimum standards for agriculture employers to engage employees so that agriculture employees are not exploited, and standards of crop outputs to be produced by farmers in order that agriculture employment translates to improved sustainable socio-economic welfare.

Keywords: Agriculture employment, Sustainable Socio-economic welfare, ECOWAS, SADC, Sub-Saharan Africa, Panel data fixed effects estimation