



PRODUCTION NATURE AND CONSTRAINTS OF WOMEN LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the production nature and constraints of women livestock farmers in Kano State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 90 respondents for the study. The target population for the study comprised of women farmers in three local governments in Kano State namely; Kumbotso, Bunkure and Kura. Primary data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentages, pie-charts and bar-charts. The results obtained revealed that more than half (52.44%) of the respondents fell within the age bracket of (19-34) years. Many young and middle-aged women were involved in livestock production. About 50.0% were married, while 59.76% had a household size of (1-10), those with smaller households kept more livestock. From the results of the livestock raised, 37.80% of the women kept goats, 15.85% kept Cattle while 2.44% kept Camel. The results also revealed that the major constraint to production was the high cost of feed, which had the highest ranking. Women play a very important role in livestock production, their age, marital status and family size all influence the category of livestock reared and the herd size of livestock kept however, they encounter several challenges which limits livestock production. This study therefore recommends that women farmers should come together to form cooperatives so as to pool their resources to source for production inputs at affordable prices.

Keywords: Women, Livestock, Production, Constraints

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the livestock sector is a major contributor to the rural economy. Amongst rural farmers, livestock production has become extensively popular as an occupation. It helps meet both the nutritional and economic needs of this people. Nigeria has great potential for production of both large and small ruminants (Cattle, Donkey, Sheep and Goats) and this sector has provided employment opportunities for men, women and youth (Ibe *et al.*, 2022).

Livestock production provides a unique opportunity for the empowerment of rural women, who are more likely to access and control livestock and their products than other productive resources such as land and machinery (Galiè *et al.* 2015). Women are known to own and rear livestock although not in large numbers. They also play a significant role especially in production activities such as feeding, watering, milking, cleaning of animal shed, care of sick animals, fodder collection and waste management (Rahman 2004).

According to FAO (2020), women occupy a central place in subsistence agricultural production and are accountable for 80% of agricultural production. They are majorly involved in food production, processing, preparation and marketing. In many developing countries, women often face a range of obstacles to achieving their full potential, ranging from constricting cultural practices to biased laws and highly fragmented labour markets (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli, 2010). Despite these activities, women's contributions to food and agricultural production are still largely undervalued and many times unrecognised thus, issues such as lack of accessibility to capital and knowledge, ownership rights, inability to make decisions about purchasing or selling livestock etc frequently occur. The livestock sector is a dynamic sector and women participation is on the increase therefore, it is necessary to assist in their socio-economic empowerment (Birthal *et al.*, 2012). This research is therefore designed to identify the socio-economic profile of women livestock farmers in Kano state, examine the production practices carried out by female livestock farmers as well as identify the constraints to livestock production by women farmers.



METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

Kano State is located in the North-Western part of Nigeria. The State lies between latitude 12° 37' North, 9° 33' South and longitude 9° 29' East and 7° 43' West. It is bounded by Katsina State to the north-west, and Bauchi and Kaduna State to the south. There are two agro-ecological zones in Kano; Sudan and Northern Guinea Savannah. The Northern Guinea Savannah has an annual rainfall of 600-1,200mm while the Sudan Savannah has an annual range of 300-600mm. It has an annual average temperature of 26.3 °C. Many of the citizens of Kano State are farmers and livestock production play an important role in employment and income generation for the rural communities (Kano State Government, 2012).

Data Collection

Data were collected with the aid of well-structured questionnaires in Bunkure, Kura, and Kumbotso local government areas of Kano State Nigeria. The information collected included; socio-economic characteristics of female livestock farmers, production characteristics as well as the constraints to livestock production.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Multi-stage sampling technique was used for this study to select respondents from three Local governments (Kumbotso, Bunkure and Kura). The first stage, involved purposive selection of the local government areas with high concentration of women farmers. In the second stage, purposive sampling was used to select two wards from each local government followed by a random selection of 15 women farmers who were actively involved in livestock production from each ward, making a total of 90 respondents for the study.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, production practices and constraints to production.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of Women Farmers

Women farmers in Kano state play a significant role in the agricultural sector by enhancing livestock growth and development. Their socio-economic background has a major impact on their participation in livestock management.

Table 1 shows the results obtained for the socio-economic characteristics of women livestock farmers. From the result, more than half (52.44%) of the women were within the age bracket of 19-34 years, while 36.59% of the women were within the age bracket of (35-40) years. This implies that young and middle-aged women spend more time on the field grazing their livestock and give care to their young than older women. This result concurs with the findings of Neha *et al.*, 2021 and Devaki *et al.*, 2015 who reported that young and middle-aged women had more energy in carrying out these activities. The results of Table 1 also showed that half (50.0%) of the respondents were married, while 25.61% were single. This result is in line with the findings of Zahoor *et al.* 2013 and Zoia *et al.* 2021. It also revealed that those respondents with smaller household sizes (1-10) were more involved in livestock production (59.76%) followed by 37.80% with household size of (11-20). This result is in contradiction with Suresh *et al.* (2008) who reported that more family members could manage larger flocks. Respondents who had informal education were more engaged in livestock production (30.49%), followed by those who had secondary school education (24.39%). According to Neha *et al.* (2021) illiterate women spend more time on livestock and farm activities than literate ones. They also reported that there is a negative correlation between the level of education and time spent on farm activities by women. The results of Suresh *et al.*, 2008 and Neha *et al.*, 2021 stated that the literacy of farmers greatly influenced their level of adoption of improved livestock technology. Furthermore, more than half (52.44%) of the respondents had 1-10 years' experience in livestock production enterprise as they were involved in networking with other women. These women are more aware in aspects such as deworming, vaccination and animal shed management (Baig *et al.*, 2016).

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Women Livestock Farmers

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age			
19-34	43	52.44	26.5
35-40	30	36.59	
Above 50years	9	10.98	
Marital Status			
Divorced	11	13.41	
Married	41	50.00	
Single	21	25.61	
Widowed	9	10.98	
Household Size			
1-10	49	59.76	6
11-20	31	37.80	
21-30	2	2.44	
Educational Qualification			
Adult Education	14	17.07	
Informal Education	25	30.49	
Primary Education	11	13.41	
Secondary Education	20	24.39	
Tertiary Education	12	14.63	
Years of Experience in Livestock Production			
1-10	43	52.44	6
11-20	26	31.71	
Above 20 years	13	15.85	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Figure 1 describes the major types of livestock kept by women farmers in the study location. From the pie-chart, 38% of the women owned goats alone, similarly 37% reared both sheep and goats, while 16% raised cattle. However, only 2% of the respondents kept camels. These results are in agreement with BIRTHAL *et al.*, 2012 and NEHA *et al.*, 2021 who stated that small ruminant livestock production is majorly in the domain of women. Similarly, ZAHOR *et al.*, 2013, LUQMAN *et al.*, 2014, SHAHBAB *et al.*, 2020 and ZOIA *et al.*, 2021 reported that livestock possession by women is greatly increasing as such the sustainability of the livestock sector in the future may tilt towards the women folk.

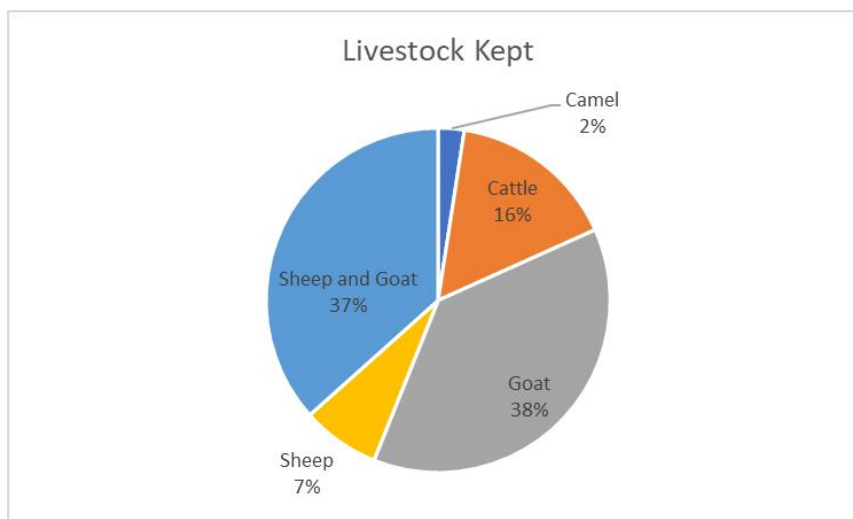


Figure 1: Types of Livestock Kept

The sources of capital for livestock production by women in the study location is revealed in figure 2. Majority (70%) of the women used their personal savings to purchase their foundation stock, while 13% obtained funds from their cooperatives. This implies that most of the women in the study location were disciplined enough to save money which they used to invest into livestock production. Also, some of them accepted to join cooperatives where they could obtain loans for livestock production. These findings are in agreement with Sesay *et al.* (2022) and Zoia *et al.* (2021) who reported that women had a good saving culture and were more willing to join cooperatives for their businesses.

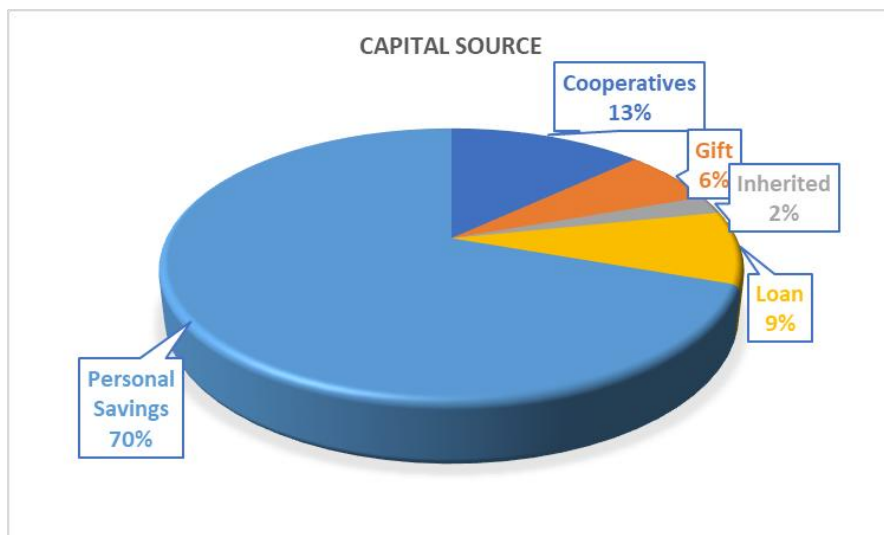


Figure 2: Source of Capital

Figure 3 shows the herd size owned by women livestock farmers in the study location. From the results, 39.02% of the respondents had a herd size of 1-5. This result depicts that women farmers with large herd size were very few. This may be due to their inability to access loans or financial support for livestock production. This result concurs with Biradar *et al.* (2013) who also reported small herd sizes amongst women in Western Maharashtra.

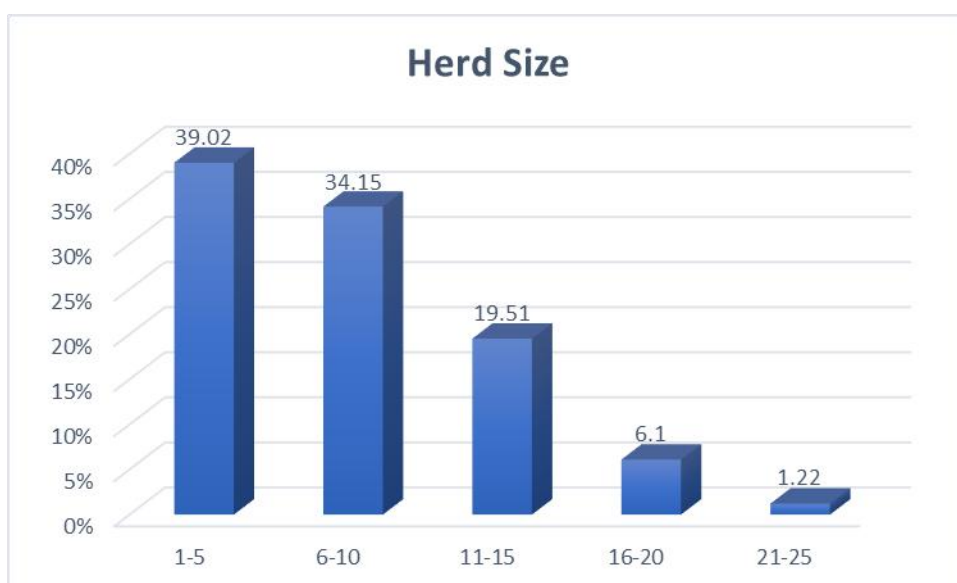


Figure 3: Herd Size of Livestock



The yearly income from sales of livestock is revealed in table 2. From the table, a significant proportion (48.78%) of the respondents obtained a yearly income of ₦51,000-100,000, (29.27%) had a yearly income of ₦101,000-150,000. Similarly, (14.63%) had ₦10,000 -50,000. While 3.66% and 3.66% of the women had ₦151,000-200,000 and ₦210,000-250,000 respectively as yearly income. From the findings of this result, it can be implied that the mean annual income is low, this may be due to the fact that most of the women do not engage in livestock production as a business but partly for family consumption. This result is in disagreement with Sesay *et al.* (2022), who stated that most rural women make their living through livestock farming.

Table 2: Yearly Income from Sales of Livestock

Income	Frequency	Percentage	
10,000-50,000	12	14.63	
51,000-100,000	40	48.78	75,000.00
101,000-150,000	24	29.27	
151,000-200,000	3	3.66	
201,000-250,000	3	3.66	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 3 reveals the constraints faced by women livestock farmers in the study area. From the table, high cost of feed in the study area was the major constraint (ranked 1), as 100% of the respondents agreed. The second and third ranked constraints were the expensive veterinary services/medication and need for training of women livestock farmers (91.5%) respectively, while the least (Seventh) constraint was livestock rustling. These constraints are similar to the reports of Naz *et al.*, 2018 and Zoia *et al.*, 2021, who reported that costly feed, veterinary services, inadequate training of women livestock farmers, all contributed to the poor production of the livestock industry.

Table 3: Constraints Encountered by Women in Livestock Production

Constraints	Very serious (%)	Serious (%)	Not serious (%)	WMS	Ranking
High cost of feed	100.0	-	-	3.0	1 st
Inadequate technical knowledge/training	91.5	6.1	2.4	2.89	3 rd
Expensive veterinary services and medications	91.5	7.3	1.2	2.90	2 nd
Poor financial assistance	89.0	9.8	1.2	2.88	4 th
Poor extension services	12.2	42.7	45.1	2.65	5 th
Poor market	-	48.8	51.2	2.59	6 th
Livestock rustling	-	43.9	56.1	2.49	7 th

Source: Field Survey 2024

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concluded that women play a significant role in livestock production, their socio-economic background also influence the category of livestock reared and the herd size of livestock kept. Women are faced with myriads of constraints which limits livestock production. It is therefore recommended that women farmers should be supported by providing access to loans and extension agents should give more attention to capacity building of women livestock farmers. Also, engagement of women extension workers will help in areas where there is religious restriction.

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