

GENDER ROLES IN LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION: ASSESSMENT OF PASTORAL WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

In Nigeria, the pastoralist is a highly gender-differentiated society. Where existing, gender dynamics and power relations restrict women's abilities to exercise equal access to and control over financial and other productive resources. Using descriptive statistics to analyze data from 316 clustered Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria (ALDDN) project beneficiary communities, this study assesses gender roles, access and control among pastoralists in Kaduna State. Results showed that 62% of the respondents were female while 38% were male with mean age of 35.5, and average household size of 13. About 22% of the women pastoralists can read and write in Hausa against 19% of the male. The living standard of the respondents showed that majority of the respondents (44%) live in mud but iron roofed houses, and source water from stream. At least 52% of the female respondents belong to a cooperative, while 32% have savings, compared to 29% of male. Major household decisions are taken by men as indicated by 85% of the female respondents. About 68% of the cattle are owned by husbands only. Thus, it can be concluded that education, training, and promotion of digital credit, exposure to information media have the potential to increase women's empowerment. Therefore, effective initiatives undertaken by the concerned agencies in improving women's education, skill acquisition and access to information could enhance women's empowerment to achieve gender equality and development in the pastoral system.

Key words: women, pastoralist, household, access, male

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the Fulani pastoralists are a highly gender-differentiated society (Onyima, 2016). In this society, there is a high consciousness of the existing differences of being a male or female; where most communities were made up of male headed individual households (usually father, husband or a brother). He maintains control over the household and provide basic necessities and takes decisions on the disposal or purchase of cattle and transfer milking rights to women. In the event that a woman inherits cattle from a deceased father or is purchased by herself, a male relation is always in charge of the cattle.

Empowerment is the growth of poor people's assets and skills to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold responsible institutions that affect their lives. (Narayan, 2005). While Doss (2017) opined that the key to boosting overall agricultural output, well-being, and eliminating poverty is empowering women by making productive resources available to them. Although women play key roles in small holder pastoral households, information on gender roles in access and control over resources is lacking. This sometimes leads to poor responsive approach in proactively identifying, understanding and implementing projects or interventions that will help address gender gaps; that are aimed at overcoming historical gender biases in policies and interventions. This study was carried out to assess gender roles, access and control in pastoral households in Kaduna State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Kaduna State. The State lies between latitudes 9° N and 11° N of the equator and between longitudes 6° E and 8° E of the prime meridian, with an estimated population of about 9,798,258 in 2021, with an annual growth rate of 3.18% (National Population Commission, NPC, 2006). Three Local Governments Areas (LGAs) (Zaria, Sabon gari, and Makarfi) were purposefully selected for the study, based on the activities of the Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria (ALDDN) project in these areas. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Respondents were sampled from the list of farmers registered with ALDDN. The project estimates an outreach of 2678 beneficiaries. For a comprehensive coverage, the sample size was derived using RAOSOFT online sample size calculator with

confidence level set at 90% and margin of error set at 10%. Therefore 316 respondents were proportionately sampled from the 3 LGAs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic characteristics

Amid the 316 sampled respondents, about 62% of them were female with an average age of 33 years. While 38% were male with an average age of 38 years. This implies that majority of the farmers are middle aged and hence there is room for increased agricultural productivity. Similar results were obtained by Onah *et al.* (2020). This is contrary to previous widely reported data that the average age of the African farmer is 60 years (Council, 2014). On the other hand, 74% of the pastoralist are sedentary (Figure 1), with a mean number of adults, children and adult women in a household of 4, 7 and 2 respectively. This is indicative of a polygamous family system.

Level of formal education is visibly low among the pastoralists in the studied area (Figure 2), with only about 22% of the women pastoralists being able to read and write in Hausa against 19% of their male counterparts. There are however more children attending primary school (83%) in the studied areas (Figures 3). In their study, Dahiru *et al.* (2017) found that the fulani pastoralists have positive perception on education, but fear of the system as a threat to social capital influenced their low participation.

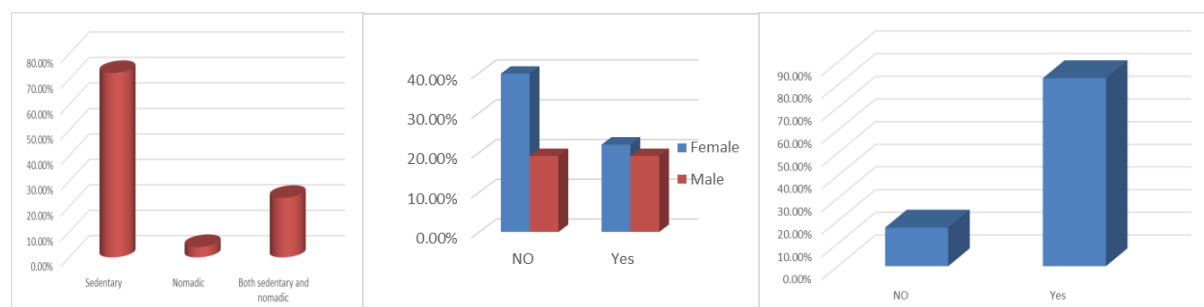


Figure 1: Type of settlement Figure 2: Respondent ability to read and write in Hausa Figure 3: If children in formal school



Living standard of the respondents

The result in figure 4 showed the housing condition of the respondents, majority (44%) live in mud but iron roofed houses. The result support earlier finding of the sedentary agriculture system of the fulanis in the study area. Although the Fulani try to leave outside the mainstream of modernization, there is an indication of a gradual process of modern housing. Notably there are about 24% of the

Figure 4: Housing condition of the respondents Figure 5: Source of water Plate 1: Ruga settlement respondents that are living in the traditional “ruga” settlement, where the houses are cone shaped, made from mud walls, thatched roofs and wooden or metal doors. Evidently in this case there were no sanitary conditions as bushes were used as toilets. The result agrees with the findings of Abolade *et al.* (2019). Access to water is restricted to streams (about 78%) (Figure 5).

Gender differences and access to social resources

About 52% of the female respondents belong to a cooperative and are registered with the Local Government Authority against 32% of the male counterpart (Figure 6). There are indications that these cooperatives are functioning, as 50% of the female cooperatives meet either weekly or fortnightly compared to only 26% of that of the men (Figure 14). There is therefore an indication that women are empowered in leadership and feel able to speak in public. However, despite this significant change in attitude among the pastoralist, the women are usually not permitted to interact with men during qualitative interview without the permission of their husbands. In terms of access to credit, a greater proportion of the cooperative remain outside the financial sector where about 97% had no access to formal credit in both cases (Figure 16). To further buttress their non-inclusion, the cooperatives have savings activities which are mostly informal (eg. Adashe, monthly contribution and social contribution).

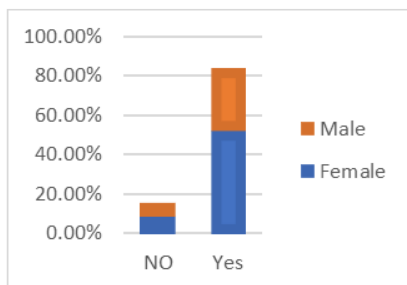


Figure 6: Cooperative membership

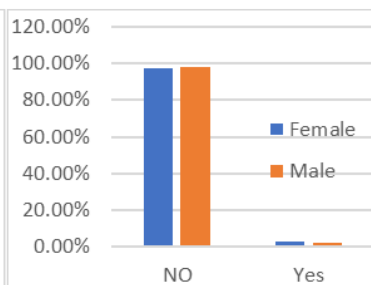


Figure 7: Access to credit

In Figure 8, about 39% of the female respondents have savings compared to 26% of the male respondents, usually at home (Figure 9). Studies have reported that generally, women's saving behaviour hold whether or not they have access to financial tools, but the methods of savings are less secure.

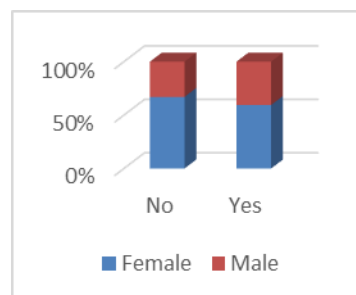


Figure 8: Ability to save

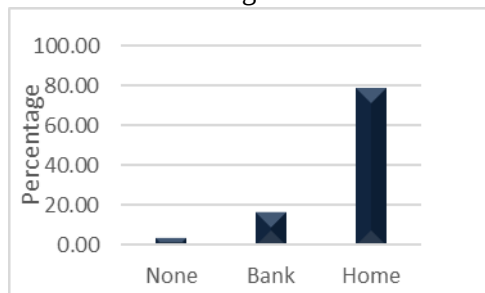


Figure 9: Savings domicile
Gender differences

and feeling of decision making in the household

In the mainstream of the households, ethno-cultural characteristics creates a sharp categorization of the household into sex and gender. Thus, women and girls carryout the daily domestic tasks of fetching water, cooking, caring for children and washing clothes (Plate 2). Once these tasks are accomplished, the women can work on their own account or go to town for visits (Plate 3). The male's access to the means of production determines the mobility pattern of the household. If he has access to a royal title, it determines the status of his wives and children. Major household decisions are taken by men as indicated by 85% of the female respondents (Figure 10): when it comes to borrowing and use of money, and this was further corroborated by all the male respondents.

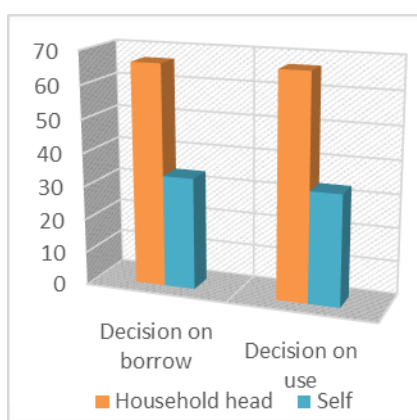


Figure 10: Household decision on borrowing/use Plate 3: woman fetching water Plate 4: Going to town Household food consumption is another aspect in which women are disempowered, as indicated by 88% of the women. Male household head makes the decision on milk consumption (corroborated by the male respondents). On the other hand, children consume the most milk, hence malnutrition was not visible among children and women during qualitative interview. On the average, the household consumes between 1-2 litres in a day, which does not vary in the dry or wet reason. The most prevalent method of milk storage are plastic containers, which are unrefrigerated. This indicated that technological advancement in the area is very low.

Gender differences and access to productive resources

At the household level, women do not have authority to own or sell cattle, and if for any reason a woman owns cattle (mostly through inheritance), ownership is transferred to male head of the household (Plate 5). The result in Figure 11, clearly demonstrated the dominance of males over females when it comes to assets ownership. The result thus revealed that about 68% of the cattle are owned by husbands only, while only 15% indicated that cattle ownership is for both husband and wife.

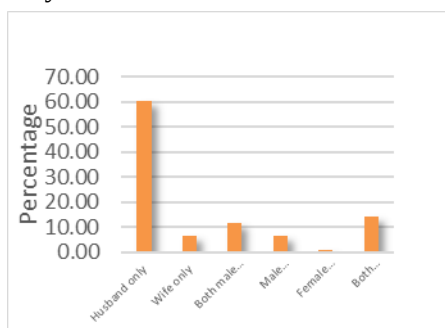


Figure 11: Asset (cattle) ownership Plate 5: Man watching over the herd

In the pastoral system of Kaduna State, it is rare for a woman to cultivate crops in the field due to restrictions imposed by cultural and religious norms. There is specialization only to the extent that growing vegetables is done predominantly by women during the rainy season, where women plant a small plot of vegetables which provides a supplement to household vegetable supplies. Important vegetables produced as backyard gardening include Cabbage, Spinach, Lettuce, Kenaf, Roselle, Moringa, Okra and Pumpkin. The production activity is strictly for household consumption since none of the women are involved in any form of petty trading or any form of business activity.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study delineated gender roles, access and control of resources in pastoral households. The results indicated that the respondents are sedentary pastoralist, polygamous and remained backwards in terms of formal education with a moderate standard of living. The pastoral women are empowered socially, but remain outside the formal economy; disempowered in household decision making and access to productive resources. This has demonstrated that coming from a livestock-producing community does not necessarily result in gainful engagement in livestock production. There is a clear empowerment gap between men and women in their household. Education, training and promotion of digital credit options

through use of formal financial institutions, exposure to information media have the potential to increase women's empowerment. Built on the result obtained from this study, there is a need for a revised and more effective nomadic education system to be developed. Effective initiatives undertaken by development agencies in improving women's education, skill acquisition training and access to information could enhance women's empowerment. However, this should be implemented strategically to prevent a backlash, which further deepen inequality.

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