

WOMEN FARMERS AND BROILER PRODUCTION IN JOS SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF PLATEAU STATE.

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to access the socio-economic characteristics of women broiler farmers and factors influencing their participation in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State. One hundred and twenty women were used as respondents. They were purposively selected. The study was conducted between August and October, 2024. Descriptive statistics and simple regression were used to analyze the data. Results obtained showed that Majority of the respondents are married with average age of 39 years and broiler production experience of 7 years. They mostly have primary and secondary education with a flock size of 130 broilers. They are also involved in other occupations like trading (25.0%) and civil service (19.2%). In addition, age, marital status, educational level, additional occupation and flock sizes have high influence ($p < 0.01$) on their involvement in broiler farming. Amongst the constraints identified amongst women are poor access to financial support (94.2%), pricing and market of broilers (90.8%), lack of training (81.7%) and pests and diseases (25.8%). The study recommends that younger women be encouraged to venture into broiler production, provided with opportunity to have access to financial support and regular training on modern broiler production.

Keywords: Women, Broiler Production, Jos, Socio-economic, Challenges

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is reported to be a major sector in the Nigerian economy. The industry provides food, feed, fuel, and employment thereby positively impacting the nation's GDP (Adeyonu *et al.*, 2021). According to a recent report, the four main agricultural sub-sectors employ over 65% of Nigerians (FAO, 2019; NBS, 2022). While it is arguably true that food production is not meeting the increasing population in Nigeria, the poultry sector is fast growing as it boasts of more numbers and types. This is because there is a high demand for poultry products (Okoh *et al.*, 2010). Women and men play different roles in farming and family (Kosshak *et al.*, 2020). There is clear indication that women play very significant roles that are however, ignored or underestimated (IFAD, 2007; Mufutau *et al.*, 2023). It has been reported that with increase in income of women, there is a positive improvement in the nutrition, health and education of children (Quisumbing *et al.*, 1995). Women have been neglected in decision making, education and access to land resources (Garba *et al.*, 2023). It is in the light of the foregoing, that this study was conducted to access the socio-economic characteristics of women farmers involved in broiler production, and factors that influence their involvement and the challenges they encounter.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Description of the study area

This is as described in Kosshak *et al.* (2020).

One hundred and twenty women broiler farmers were purposively selected for the study. They were found at day old chick collection centres within the Local Government Area. The survey was conducted between August and October, 2024 as this is the period with the highest demand for broilers in preparation for Christmas. Structured questionnaire developed in line with the objectives of the study was used to collect data from the respondents. The data were subsequently analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency count, percentage, means and simple regression to identify the factors influencing their participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. It shows that the age distribution is 25.8% and 44.2% for those within the age bracket of 21- 30 years and 41 – 50 years, respectively. The average age of the respondents is 39 years. This implies that majority of them are within their active and productive ages and will be able to perform the rigorous activities on a poultry farm. This result is consistent with those reported by Mufutau *et al.* (2023), who obtained an average age of 40 years. The marital status of the respondents shows that majority are married (76.7%) with an average household size of 1 - 5 (76.7%). This suggest that the women will be caring with good mothering ability; disposition required for managing broiler production. The educational level of the respondents shows that majority (59.2%) possess only primary and secondary education.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age of respondents			
< 20 years	6	5	
21 - 30 years	20	16.7	
31 - 40 years	31	25.8	38.91
41 - 50 years	53	44.2	
> 51 years	10	8.3	
Marital status			
Single	5	4.2	
Married	92	76.7	
Divorce	13	10.8	
Widow	10	8.3	
Educational level			
Non formal	34	28.3	
Primary	30	25	
Secondary	41	34.2	
Tertiary	15	12.5	
Occupation			
Farming	64	53.3	
Civil servant/farmer	23	19.2	
Trading/farming	30	25	
Others	3	2.5	
Household size			
1 - 5	92	76.7	
6 - 10	17	14.2	
11 - 15	7	5.8	4.42
16 - 20	4	3.3	
Flock size			
< 100	98	81.7	
101 - 500	14	11.7	
501 - 1000	5	4.2	130.8
> 1001	3	2.5	
Do you belong to women cooperative group?			
Yes	97	80.8	
No	23	19.2	

How long have you been involved in broiler farming?

< 1 year	4	3.3	
2 - 5 years	42	35	
6 - 10 years	46	38.3	7.18
11 - 15 years	28	23.3	

Have you participated in any broiler training?

Yes	20	16.7
No	100	83.3

This level of education is basic for reading and understanding of instructions for daily management of a poultry enterprise. Furthermore, majority (53.3%) of the respondents are farmers solely, albeit some combine farming with trading (25.0%) and as civil servants (19.2%). The result obtained similarly shows that the average flock size 130. This indicates that broiler production is at a very low scale. This finding supports the submission of Gudeta (2023) that most women farmers involved in poultry production are at a low to medium scale.

Table 2: Factors influencing women participation in broiler production

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t-value	Sig
Constant	0.694	0.196	3.533	0.001**
Age of respondents	0.242	0.076	3.167	0.002**
Marital status	0.375	0.133	2.821	0.006**
Educational level	0.205	0.091	2.244	0.027*
Occupation	0.246	0.096	2.564	0.012*
Household size	0.264	0.135	1.954	0.053
Flock size	-0.479	0.14	-3.417	0.001**
Do you belong to women cooperative group?	-0.13	0.08	-1.629	0.106

** Significant at 1% level of significance; * Significant at 5% level of significance, SE = Standard Error, F= 78.904, R²=0.850, Adj R= 0.840, N=120

In addition, the average years of being in the broiler business is seven. This suggests that the women have adequate experience with the business. This agrees with the findings of Garba *et al.* (2015) who also reported an average year of experience of seven. Also, majority of the women belong to a cooperative society and most have not attended any broiler production training. While the membership of cooperative society portends great benefit, the absence of training limits the capacity for greater and enhanced broiler productivity.

Table 3: Challenges Confronting Women broiler Farmers

Variable	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
Poor access to financial support	112 (94.2)	3 (2.5)	2 (1.7)	2 (1.7)	1 (0.8)	4.88
Inadequate extension services	12 (10.0)	22 (18.3)	1 (0.8)	56 (46.7)	29 (24.2)	2.43
Lack of training on broiler farming	98 (81.7)	15 (12.5)	1 (0.8)	6 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	4.71

Pests and diseases	31	23	13	25	28	3.03
	(25.8)	(19.2)	(10.8)	(20.8)	(23.3)	
Pricing and market of broilers	109	6	3	1	1	4.84
	(90.8)	(5.0)	(2.5)	(0.8)	(0.8)	

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, Percentage in parentheses

The results presented in Table 2 shows that some socio-economic factors influence the participation of women in broiler production. Age, marital status and flock size were found to highly ($p < 0.01$) influence women participation. Also, educational level and occupation significantly ($p < 0.05$) influenced their participation. These results support previous findings of Garba *et al.* (2015) and Mufutau *et al.* (2023) that these factors have a positive effect on women's participation in broiler production.

In Table 3, the factors identified by the women as challenges to broiler farming are displayed. The majority strongly agreed that poor access to financial support (94.2%) and pricing and market of broilers (90.8%) are the principal challenges. Others are lack of training (81.7%) and partly pests and diseases (25.8%). These factors have also been indicted as challenge to women participation in broiler production (Kosshak *et al.*, 2020; Adeyonu *et al.*, 2023; Gudeta, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The results of socio-economic characteristics of women broiler farmers are within the optimum ages for the enterprise. However, younger females need to be encouraged to venture into the business. This can be achieved with training and financial assistance.

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