ASSESSMENT OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN LIVESTOCK FARMERS IN KANO STATE

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the socio-economic characteristics of women livestock farmers in Kano State, Nigeria. The target population for the study comprised women farmers in livestock production in three local governments in Kano State namely; Kumbotso, Bunkure and Kura. It considered the socio- economic characteristics of women livestock farmers, type of livestock kept, herd size and yearly income. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 90 respondents for the study. Primary data were collected with the aid of well-structured questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed using frequency, percentages, pie-charts and bar-charts. The results obtained revealed that majority (52.44%) of the respondents fell within the age bracket of (19-34) years, 50.0% were married, while 59.76% had a household size of 1-10 individuals. From the results obtained, 37.80% of the women kept goats, 15.85% kept cattle while 2.44% kept camels. The results also revealed that majority of the respondents had a small herd size (5-10 animals) and their yearly income was low (₦51,000-100,00). This study therefore recommends that women farmers should come together to form cooperatives thereby combining their resources to support one another for growth and development of the livestock sector.
Keywords: Women livestock farmers, Socio-economic characteristics.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has great potential for production of both small and large ruminants (Cattle, Donkeys, Sheep and Goats) and this sector has provided employment opportunities for men, women and youth. Livestock production and management is not only practiced by men but women. 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, and inability to make decisions about purchasing or selling livestock frequently occur. The livestock sector is a dynamic sector and women participation is on the increase; hence, it is necessary to assist in their socio-economic empowerment (Birthal *et al*., 2012). This study was therefore designed to identify the socio-economic profile of women livestock farmers in Kano State and their production activities.

METHODOLOGY

Study Location

Kano State is located in the North-Western part of Nigeria. The State lies between latitude 120 37' North, 90 33' South and longitude 90 29' East and 70 43' West. It is bounded by Katsina State to the north-west, and Bauchi and Kaduna State to the south.

Data collection

Data was 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

Multi-stage sampling technique was used for this study. Two wards were randomly selected from each Local Government, followed by a random selection of 15 households from each selected ward, making a total of 90 respondents out of which only 82 questionnaires were retrieved.

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

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Table 1 shows the results obtained for the socio-economic characteristics of women livestock farmers. From the result, majority (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 giving care to their young than older women. This result concurs with those of Neha *et al*. (2021) and Devaki *et al*. (2015) where young and middle-aged women were found to have more energy in carrying out these activities.

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, most (52.44%) of the women 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
Age		
19-34	43	52.44
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
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
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. From the results of the study, women are more involved in small ruminant production. These results are in agreement with those of Birthal *et al*. (2012) and Neha *et al*. (2021) who stated that small ruminant livestock production is majorly in the domain of women.

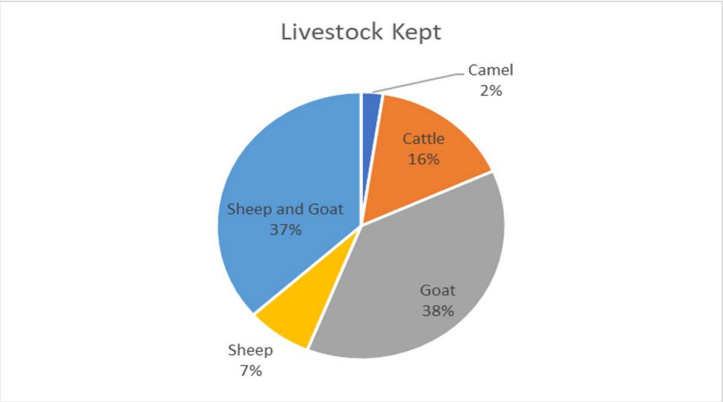


Figure 1: Types of Livestock Kept

Figure 2 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, while 34.15% had a herd size of 6-10, while 19.51% had a herd size of 11-15. However, 1.22% of the women had a herd size of 21-25. These results depict that women farmers with large herd size are very few. This may be due to their inability to access loans or financial support for livestock production.

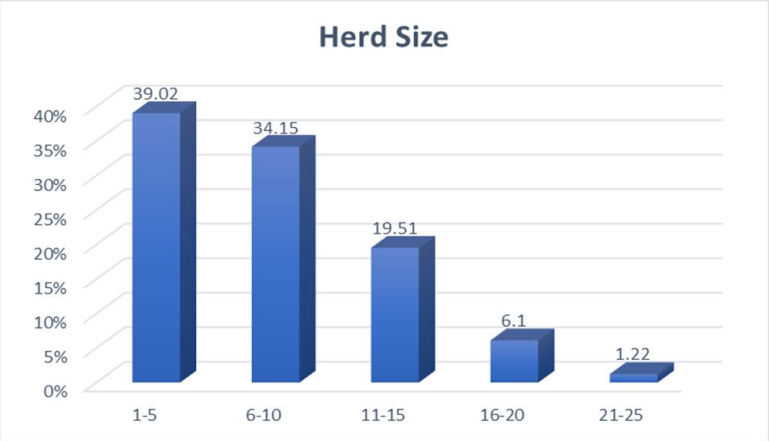


Figure 2: Herd Size of Livestock

The yearly income from sales of livestock is revealed in Table 2. From the table, most (48.78%) of the respondents obtained a yearly income of N51,000-100,000, (29.27%) had a yearly income of N101,000-150,000. This implies that the mean annual income is very low. This could be due to the fact that most of them keep livestock for family consumption and not for business. This result is in agreement with Sesay *et al*. (2022), who stated that most rural women obtain minimal wages 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
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

CONCLUSION

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. 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.

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