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To cite the article: Muhammad Wakil, Aishatu Ahmed Sulum and Ismail Ibrahim (2018), assessment of women participation in vegetable production in Jere local government area of Borno state, *Journal of Agricultural and Rural Research*, 2(4): 96-102.

Link to this article:

<http://aiipub.com/journals/assessment-of-women-participation-in-vegetable-production-in-jere-local-government-area-of-borno-state-vol-2-iss-4-pp-96-102/>

Article QR



Journal QR



ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN VEGETABLE PRODUCTION IN JERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BORNO STATE

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ARTICLE INFO

Article Type: Research

Received: 07, Sep. 2018.

Accepted: 31, Dec. 2018.

Published: 31, Dec. 2018.

Keywords:

Women Participation, Vegetable, Jere, Ranking and Assessment.

ABSTRACT

The study is on the Assessment of Women Participation in Vegetable Production in Jere Local Government of Borno State, Nigeria. Sixty (60) women farmers were sampled through purposive random sampling procedure. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, means and ranking were used to analyze the data. The results on socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents revealed that majority (36.0%) of the respondents were within the age group of 20-40years. The respondents who were married was 48.0%, and on some dependents, the result shows that 53.0% of the respondents had 5-10 persons and only 16.7% had above ten numbers of dependents. The result also revealed that majority (43.4%) of the respondents attended Quranic education, 3.3% attended tertiary education while those with no formal education were only 3.3%. The larger proportion (43.3%) of the farmers in the study area had less than five years of farming experience, and only 15.0% had 16 years and above farming experience. The result on the farmers' occupation shows that majority (80.0%) of the respondents was farmers and only 3.3% were artisans. The result further revealed that larger proportion (43.3%) of the farmers were found to be operating on a small scale with a farm size of less than 1 hectare and only 3.3% had farm land of above 3 hectares. The result on women participation vegetable production indicates that 4 out of the six types of vegetable produced by them were categorized into a high level of participation. These are tomato (mean = 2.0), onion (mean = 1.8), cabbage (mean = 1.7) and sorrel (mean = 1.7). Therefore tomato, onion, cabbage and sorrel ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively while pepper and carrot ranked 5th and 6th respectively. The result on the constraint of vegetable production based on ranking was lack of modern storage method, inadequate capital and poor support from family and community with their ranking 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th respectively. It is concluded that women farmers highly participate in vegetable production and recommended that the community and private sector together with the government should join hand to open up the local government to the outside world by providing the necessary assistances to women farmers.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Women contribution to the economy, particularly in agriculture is high throughout Africa. Women play a critical but often under a recognized role in agriculture and are considered unpaid family labour. The food and agriculture organization (FAO) of the united nation estimates that if women had the

same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yield on their farms by 20-30 percent (FAO, 2011).

In rural Nigeria, women's contribution to agriculture-related activities are not as explicit, which is restricted in many ways to social norms. Besides, their role is undermined in agriculture due to constrained access to primary productive resources such as land ownership, extension and other services. Women's contribution to the creation of market value remains highly invisible because of their absence at the "market cleaned" where the value is realized.

However, some positive changes are taking place which regard to women's role in agriculture and their contribution beyond "labourers" to "farm managers" (Jaim and Hussain, 2011). The progress is attributed to improved education, empowerment of women by a non-governmental organization (NGOs) and migration of male members from agriculture to non-farm occupation (Jaim and Hussain, 2011).

In developing countries according to (Pervez *et al.* 2018) women make essential participation to the agricultural and rural economics. Their roles vary considerably between and within regions and are changing rapidly in many parts of the world, where economics and social forces are transforming the agricultural sector. Complex households are often managed by rural women as well as pursuing livelihood strategies. Activities that are not defined as economically achieved employment such as tending to animals, agricultural productions, food processing and preparation as well as such other activities like caring for family members are typical activities engaged by women. Leafy vegetables are an important feature of Nigeria's diet that a traditional meal without it is assumed to be incomplete. In developing countries, the consumption of vegetables is generally lower than the FAO recommendation of 75kg per year (206g per day per capita) (Badmus and Yekini, 2011). In Nigeria, vegetable production has been ongoing for decades, providing employment and income for the increasing population, especially during the long dry season. However, the output is mainly credited to Men and is often constrained by inadequate infrastructure, agronomic and socio-economic variables (Sabo and Zira, 2009). Jere local government area of Borno State has a suitable land for vegetable production. The vegetables produced in the area are the tomatoes, onions, pepper, lettuce, cabbage, carrot and many more. Women participation in vegetable production is unknown in the area and this study seeks to unravel more about the women's level of participation in vegetable production.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The objectives were to: Describe the socio-economic characteristics of the vegetable women farmers in the study area; Identify different types of vegetable crop grown by women in the study area and Examine constraints to vegetable production by women in the study area.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Area

The study area is Jere local government area, one of the twenty seven local government areas of Borno State. The local government area was carved out of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (M.M.C) in 1996 (BSOG, 2007). It lies between latitudes 11° 40' and 12° 05'N and longitudes 13° 05' and 12° 20' E with a projected population of 277, 913 persons in 2017 based on 2.8% population growth rate (National Population Census, 2006). It occupies a total landmass of 160 square kilometers. According to National Meteorological Council (2008), Jere Local government area shares boundaries with Mafa, Maiduguri metropolitan and Konduga local government areas to the east, north and south respectively. It has dry and hot seasons with minimum temperature ranging from 15°C – 20°C and maximum temperature ranging from 37°C-40°C. The annual rainfall in Jere ranges from 500mm to

700mm per annum and usually starts from May to October with low relative humidity and short wet season. Majority of the inhabitant are farmers, traders and civil servants. The major ethnic groups are Kanuri and Shuwa Arab. Others include Hausa, Bura and Fulani and many immigrants' settlers from within and outside Nigeria (BOSADP, 2008).

2.2 Sampling Techniques

The population used for this study was women vegetable farmers living in Jere local government area. The multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the samples. Three (3) wards were purposively selected out of the twelve (12) wards of the local government area; this is because vegetable crop is predominantly grown in the area. These include Zabbarmari, Gongulong and Dusuman wards. Twenty women farmers each were randomly selected from each ward making a total of 60 respondents.

2.3 Source of Data

The sources of data used for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was obtained with the aid of a structured questionnaire and personal interview. While the secondary source of information includes textbooks, journals and internet. Data were collected were on women socio-economic variables such as gender, farming experience, age, education level, household size, farm size and income level of the respondent; level of participation and constraints to their participation.

2.4 Analytical Techniques

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data for the study. The descriptive statistics used were frequency, percentage means and ranking. This was used to satisfy all the specific objectives.

2.4.1 Level of Participation

Level of participation was measured on 4 points rating scale of highly participate = 3, participate = 2, somewhat participate = 1 and not participate = 0. The cut-off means is 1.50. Any vegetable crop that has mean ≥ 1.5 is categorized as to have a high level of participation but those with a mean < 1.50 is categorized as to have a low level of participation.

3.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Socio – economic Characteristics of Women Vegetable Farmers

The age of a farmer affects the type of activities he can perform. For example, on family labour, middle age farmers spend much time in the farm and mostly embark on more strenuous farm operations than the older women and children. Table 1.1 revealed that majority of the women farmers (36.7%) falls within the age range of 20-40 Years while only 13.0% were above 60 Years of age.

This indicates that the women Farmers were at their active middle age of production. The result also indicated that 80.0% of the respondents were married, 10.0% were Single and 10.0% were widow with majority (53.3%) having family size of 5-10 persons, 30.0% had less than 5 persons while 16.7% had 11 – 15 persons. This implies that the larger the number dependent, the more will be the employment of labour and the greater the output.

The level of formal education attained by an individual goes a long way in determining his attitudes towards adoption of new technologies for improved production. Farmer's efficiency in using information on production techniques, increases with education and thus their productivity also increases (Amaza, 2000). Table 1.1 stated that the respondents with no formal education constitute 3.3%, 33.3% obtained primary education 16.7% obtained secondary education while those with Qur'anic education has the highest percentage of 43.4%. This result shows that majority of the women farmers have Quranic teaching. This implies that a high percentage of the farmers are literate at various level of education.

The analysis of respondents in table 1.1 showed that respondents below 5 years of farming experience constituted 43.3% those that spent 5 – 10 years constituted 25.0%, those with 11 – 15 years constituted 16.7% and 15.0% of the respondents had above 16 years of farming experience. The result reveals that majority of the farmers had less than 5 years of farming experience. This implies that the less experienced a farmer is the lower the output and vice-versa.

Table 1.1 Distribution of Respondent's According to Socio-Economics Characteristics

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (Year)		
< 20 years	18	30.0
20 – 40 years	22	36.0
41 – 60 years	12	21.0
Above 60 years	8	13.0
Marital status		
Single	6	10.0
Married	48	80.0
Divorced/separated/widow	6	10.0
Number of Dependent		
< 5 persons	18	30.0
5 – 10 persons	32	53.3
Above 10 persons	10	16.7
Level of Education		
Informal education	2	3.3
Primary Education	20	33.3
Secondary education	10	16.7
Tertiary education	2	3.3
Qur'anic education	26	43.4
Farming Experience		
< 5 years	26	43.3
5 – 10 years	15	25.0
11 – 15 years	10	16.7
16 years and above	9	15.0
Occupation		
Farming	48	80.0
Trading	10	16.7
Artisan	2	3.3
Farm Size		
< 1 hectares	26	43.3
1 – 2 hectares	24	40.1
2 – 3 hectares	8	13.3
Above 3 hectares	2	3.3

Source: Field survey, 2018

The table also stated that the majority of the respondents (80.0%) involved in farming as their occupation, 16.7% were traders while only 3.3% of the respondents were an artisan. This implies that even though most of the women famers do not spent many years planting vegetable, farming was their

principal activity.

The larger the productive farm size, the more the expected output. This could be reverse when resources are not efficiently utilized. It also helps to know the scale in which the farmers are operating. Table 1.1 further reveals that the larger proportion of the respondents (43.3%) had farm size of less than 1 hectare, 40.1% had farm size of between 1-2 hectares, 13.3% had farm size of between 2-3 hectares and only 3.3% had farm size of above 3 hectares. This is rather too small, and it's still of subsistence level and as such the farmers in the study area operate on a small scale.

3.2 Level of Participation in Vegetable Farming by Women Farmers

Table 4.2 shows the level of participation of women farmers in vegetable production in the study area. It revealed that 4 out of the six types of vegetable produced were categorized into a high level of participation. These are tomato (mean = 2.0), onion (mean = 1.8), cabbage (mean = 1.7) and sorrel (mean = 1.7).

Table 1.2 level of participation in vegetable farming by women farmers

Vegetable	Mean	Rank	Remark
Tomato	2.0	1	High
Onion	1.8	2	High
Cabbage	1.7	3	High
Sorrel/Spinach	1.7	4	High
Pepper	1.3	5	Low
Carrot	1.2	6	Low

Source: Field survey, 2018

Other vegetables in low category of participation are pepper and carrot with mean 1.3 and 1.2 respectively. Regarding ranking order, tomato, onion, cabbage and sorrel ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively while pepper and carrot ranked 5th and 6th respectively.

The finding of this study shows that the respondents participate actively in vegetable farming in the study area. This could have been seen as a result of its short term production period and it's suitability regarding irrigation as well as marketability.

3.3 Constraints of Vegetable Production

The constraint of vegetable production based on ranking were lack of modern storage method, inadequate capital and poor support from family and community with their ranking 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th respectively (table 1.3).

1.3 constraints of vegetable production

Problems	Frequency	Percentage*	Rank
Lack of modern storage method	34	56.7	1
Inadequate capital	34	56.7	1
Inadequate extension service	22	36.7	2
Inadequate land for farming	20	33.3	3
Poor marketing system	18	30.0	4
Low access to farm input	14	23.3	5
Poor support from family and community	6	10.0	6
Total	148	247.7	22

Source: Field survey, 2018

*multiple response exist, percentage is >100

This shows that the women farmers encountered problems such as lack of modern storage method,

inadequate capital, inadequate extension service, inadequate land for farming, poor marketing system, low access to farm input, poor support from family and community in vegetable production.

4.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that women farmers highly participate in vegetable production. The vegetable mostly produced were tomato, onion, cabbage, sorrel, pepper, carrot.

4.2 Recommendation

The finding indicated that the primary limiting factor affecting women farmers participation in vegetable production were lack of modern storage method, inadequate capital, inadequate extension service. Therefore, it is recommended that the community and private sector together with the government should join hand to open up the local government to the outside world by providing the necessary assistances to women farmers. The women farmers should also be encouraged to form cooperatives to enable them access loan, farm input as well as market access.

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