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ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN YAM PRODUCTION IN IBARAPA LAND AREA OF OYO STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the assessment of women participation in yam production in Ibarapa land area of Oyo state. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 130 respondents for the study. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentages and mean to describe socio-economic characteristics of the respondents while inferential statistics such as Chi-square and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 52 years. It showed that majority (90.8%) of the respondents were literates while the average farm size was 6 hectares. Majority (95.0%) of the respondents opined that an unfavorable weather condition was a constraint to women participation in yam production in study area. Significant relationship existed between age ($r = 0.840$), household size ($r = 0.323$) and income ($r = 0.220$) at ≤ 0.05 significant level. It can be concluded from the findings that age, farm size and income have significant relationship with the women participation in yam production. Also Radio, Extension agents and Neighbors were sources of agricultural information to women in the study area. Information on weather condition should be made available to women farmers so as to plan rightly on when and how to cultivate yam adequately.

Key words: Assessment, Women participation, Yam production.

Introduction

Yam (*Dioscorea spp*) is an important tuber crop in Nigeria where it is produced as food and cash crop (Asumugha et al., 2009). Nigeria is the largest world producer of yam with annual production estimated at 26.587 million metric tons (FAO, 2000). Yam is regarded as a socio-cultural crop and is becoming expensive in urban areas as production has not kept pace with population growth leading to demand exceeding supply (Kushwaha and Polycarp, 2001). Women make a significant contribution to the food production and processing of foodstuff. They provide 60-80% of agricultural labor and are responsible for 80% of production (Rahman et al., 2014). Farm operations that required a lot of energy such as land clearing and land preparation are predominantly carried out by men while women predominantly carried out relatively lighter operation in the farm which include processing, harvesting and storage (Auduet et al., 2013). Women that are farmers are so many in Nigeria, but their contributions in farming of yam tuber production is lower than that of men, it is therefore not an effort in futility to access the participation of women in yam production in the study area. Therefore, the study was based on describing the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area, identifying the sources of agricultural information in yam production, identifying the yam cultivation practices carried by women in the study area and identifying the problems confronting women in yam cultivation in the study area.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Ibarapa land, Oyo State, Nigeria. Ibarapa consists of seven major towns: Ayete, Tapa, Igangan, Lalante, Igboora, Idere, Lalante and Eruwa. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select one hundred and thirty respondents for the study. Four major towns i.e Igboora, Ayete, Lanlate and Igangan were purposively selected because of the women involvement in yam cultivation in the areas. Yam farmers' association register was contacted in each town to identify women farmers. 10% of the women farmers were randomly chosen

from the register to give 30, 35, 30, 35 farmers from Igboora, Ayete, Lanlate and Igangan, respectively to give 130 respondents for the study. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentages to describe socio-economic characteristics of the respondents while inferential statistics such as Chi-square, Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used to test the stated hypothesis.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1 revealed that the mean age of respondents was 52 years. This implies that the women yam farmers in the study area were at their active age. According to FAO (1985), rural women are active participants in retail trade and marketing, particularly where trade is traditional and not highly commercialized. Majority (78.5%) were married while only one respondent was single. It shows that majority of the respondents were responsible and can be entrusted with position in the community. It was further revealed that only 9.2% of the respondents had no formal education. This implies that the farmers can easily adopt technologies on yam cultivation to improve their living standard. This is in line with Adeola (2013) that education is one of the factors that influence adoption of green manure. The mean income of the respondents was ₦50,158 per annum. This shows that the respondents were on small scale level of farming.

Distribution of respondents by sources of agricultural information

Table 2 showed that friends (97.7%), extension agents (90.8%), neighbours (89.2%) and radio (63.1%) were the sources of agriculture information in the study area. This implies that extension agents visited the farmers regularly and also the farmers related intimately with one another because friends as a source of agricultural information took the highest percentage. Radio was also found to be important as a source of information, this may be due to the low cost of radio and non-electricity required nature of the source. This could be due to their easy accessibility and non-literacy barrier (Kuponiya, 2000).

Distribution of respondents according to cultural operation practices

Table 3 showed that (94.4%) of the respondents agreed that cutting of yam set was a cultural practice involved in yam cultivation. Also staking of yam was chosen by (96.9%) of the respondents as a cultural practice. The Table further revealed that burning (78.5%) and fertilizer application (78.3%) were cultural practices involved in yam cultivation.

Constraints facing the women participation in yam production

Table 4 showed that (95.4%) of the respondents agreed that unfavorable weather was major problems confronting women cultivating yam and Also poor storage was chosen by 83.8% of the respondent as a problem. This is in line with Ewuim, Nzegwu and Anaso (1998) that arable crop farmers who could not afford to get their products to the market due to poor transportation and storage facilities were forced to sell them at very low prices to middle men, who eventually made more money than arable farmers. The Table further revealed that land tenure system (71.5%) and bad road network (96.1%) were problems confronting women in yam cultivation.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing relationship between the selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and woman participation

Table 5 revealed the relationship between selected socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents and woman participation. It revealed that there is a significant relationship between age ($r = 0.840$), household size ($r = 0.042$) and income ($r = 0.220$) at < 0.05 significant level. This implies that the respondents Age, Household Size and Income were important to their participation in yam production.

TABLE 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Their Socio-Economic Characteristics

Variable	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)	Mean
Age (years)			
30 -39	13	10.00	52
40 – 49	47	36.2	
50 – 59	51	39.2	
60 -69	19	14.6	
Religion			
Islam	66	50.8	6
Christianity	47	36.2	
Traditional	17	13.0	
Educational level			
No formal education	12	9.2	7
Primary education	41	31.5	
Secondary education	53	40.8	
Tertiary education	24	19.5	
Farm size (ha)			
1-4	36	27.7	6
5-8	92	70.8	
8-12	02	1.5	
Household size			
3-5	27	20.8	7
6-10	90	69.2	
11-15	13	10.2	
Farming experience (years)			
1-3	02	1.5	8
3-6	37	28.5	
7-10	59	45.4	
	27	20.8	
10-13			
13-15	04	3.0	
Income per annum (₦)			
10,000-50,000	27	20.8	₦50,000
50,000-100,000	50	38.5	
100,000-150,000	37	28.5	
200,000-250,000	16	12.3	

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on agricultural information in yam production

Sources of Agricultural Information	Frequency	Percentage
Friends	126	97.7
Extension agent	118	90.8
Neighbour	116	89.2
Radio	82	63.1
Television	76	58.1

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to cultural operation practices

Cultural practices	Frequency	Percentage
Trailing	114	87.7
Staking	114	96.9
Cutting of yam sett	126	94.6
Yamsett treatment	123	98.8
Planting of yam seed	118	89.2
Burning	116	88.5
Fertilizer application	115	78.5
Planting of flat land	102	73.1
Construction of ridges	95	56.2
Control of pest	73	54.6
Mulching	80	61.5
Irrigation	77	59.2
Land clearing	81	62.3

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by constraints faced by women yam farmers

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bad road network	125	96.1
Unfavorable weather	124	95.4
Poor marketing of yam	112	86.7
Poor storage system	109	83.3
Land tenure system	93	71.5

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table 5: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis showing relationship between woman participation in yam production

Variables	R-value	P-value	Decision
Age	0.840	0.003	S
Farm size	0.130	0.069	NS
House hold size	0.323	0.042	S
Farming experiences	0.003	0.975	NS
Income	0.220	0.005	S

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

The results revealed that the mean age of the respondents in the study area was 52.0 yrs. It showed that majority (90.8%) of the respondents were literate. It was also revealed that staking of yam sett (96.9%), cutting of yam sett (94.6%) burning (78.5%) and fertilizer application (71.3%) were cultural practices that women were involved, in yam cultivation. Majority (96.1%) of the respondents opined that bad road network, unfavorable weather condition (95.4%) were constraints to women participation in yam production in the study area. It can be concluded from the findings that age, farm size and income have significant relationship with the women participation in yam production. Radio, Extension agents and Neighbors were sources of agricultural information to women in the study area. Also, unfavourable weather condition was a major constraint to the participation of women in Yam production. It was therefore, recommended that Information on weather condition should be made available to women farmers so as to plan rightly on when and how to cultivate yam adequately.

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