



Analysis of Women Labour Utilization in Crop Production and Processing in Ibarapa East Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The role women play in agriculture and the rural society is fundamental to agricultural and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, this study analysed women labour utilization in crop production and processing in Ibarapa East Local Government area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Agriculture is the major occupation of people of Ibarapa east local government area. The population of the study comprised women that engage in crop farming and processing of crops. Multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting 90 respondents. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The result revealed that little above average (52.20%) of the respondents were married with the mean age of approximately 46 years. It was discovered that majority (81.12%) of respondents were literates. Majority (55.56%) of the women in the study area engaged in farming as their primary education with the average farming years of experience of 11 years. It was also revealed that few of the respondents 5.56% engaged in land preparation which ranked 11th with WMS of 0.06. All women (100.00%) engaged in crop processing and majority of the women (91.11%) engaged in transportation. All of the respondents (100%) strongly agreed that discrimination against women is one of challenges women faced for engaging in agricultural activities which ranked 1st with WMS 5.0. Majority (85.56%) agreed that lack of government commitment is one of the challenges women faced which ranked 2nd with 4.59. Less than average of the respondents 47% agreed that low wages is one of the challenges women faced which ranked 5th with WMS of 4.32. It was recommended that good policies that protect and encourage more involvement of women in crop production should be put in place by government because woman labours were utilized in all aspect of crop production and processing

Keywords: Women, Labour, Utilization and production

Introduction

Agriculture has been the main source of human survival and economic growth since the ages past Mazulie (2010). Agriculture accounts for about 2.9 percent of National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Mazulie, 2010). It accounts for employment of Nigerians (men and women). The discovery of oil sector changed the phase of people interest and participation in agriculture and thus decline in food out-put. FAO (2009) noted that abled youths/men, left the bulk of farming activities for women in search of supposed lucrative oil jobs in the city. Mazulie (2010) ranked Nigeria among the mostly richly endowed nation of the world in term of natural resources and human resources to manage her agricultural resources, but the discovery of oil left, the bulk of agricultural work in the hands of women.

Rural women often manage complex households and pursue multiple livelihood strategies. They constitute a significant proportion of the labour on their family farms - whether producing for household consumption or for enterprise or both (United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2005). Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural or other rural enterprises, collecting fuel and water, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes. They also, work in permanent and temporary employments and work along a rural-urban continuum and cross-border context, with increasing numbers of rural women migrating for daily, seasonal, or permanent works in urban areas (Hill, 2011). Although, rural women work long hours but many of their activities are not defined as "economically active employment" in



national accounts but add to the well-being of their households (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2011).

Therefore, the involvement of women in agricultural activities cannot be underestimated as they play vital roles in food production chain and food security. The role women play in agriculture and the rural society is fundamental to agricultural and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa. The Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA, 1993) reported that women in Africa make up more than one-third of the farming work force. In another report by Fresco (2008) rural women accounted for 70% of agricultural workers, 80% of food producers, and 60%-90% of them engaged in marketing and food processing. Also, 4- 10% agricultural workers in the world were also reported to be women (United Nations, 2001). In Nigeria, women produce 60-80 % of the agricultural food in the country (Ogunbameru and Pandey, 1992; Buckland and Haleegoah, 2006). According to Ironkwe and Ekwe (1998) more than 60% of the agricultural production is carried out by women in the Nigerian traditional setting. Mijindadi (1993) estimated that women are responsible for 70% of actual farm work and constitute up to 60% of the farming population in Nigeria. This report was supported by Yahaya (2002) who observed that 76% of women from Oyo and Bauchi states were actively involved in farming activities or were engaged in their husbands' farms.

Problem statement

Unfortunately, despite the stated roles of women in agriculture and rural development, more than two-third of the world poorest who relied solely on agriculture and related activities are women (Madeley, 2008). In spite of the contributions of women to household welfare, agricultural productivity and economic growth, they continue to be marginalized and undervalued in many agricultural and economic policies while men's contributions remain central, often the sole focus of attention.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to analyse women labour utilization in crop production and

processing in Ibarapa East Local Government area of Oyo State while the specific objectives are to: describe the socio-economic characteristic of women involvement in crop production in the study area, itemize the activities women engaged in agriculture in the study area and identify the challenges faced by women in agriculture in the study area.

Methodology

Study Area

The study was carried out in Ibarapa East Local Government area. Ibarapa East Local Government is made up of Eruwa and Lanlate. Ibarapa East is a Local Government Area in Oyo State, Nigeria. The Local Government is made up of the Latitude 7 36 29° N and Longitude 3 29 31 E. It has an area of 838km² and a population of 118,226 at the 2006 census. Agriculture is the major occupation of people of Ibarapa East with several crops such as yam, maize, oil palm, and melon cultivated in the area.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of women that engaged in crop farming and processing of crops.

Sampling procedure and sampling size

Multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting the respondents.

Stage1: purposive selection of 5 wards. 3 wards were selected in Eruwa and 2 wards in Lanlate. Stage 2: involved randomly selection of 18 rural households from each of selected wards to give (5 x 18) 90 respondents

Instrument for Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data was collected with the aid of structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics such as frequency table, mean, standard deviation and percentage was used.

Result and Discussion

Distribution of respondents by socio – economic characteristics

Age: Table 1 showed that 15.56% of the respondents in the study area were between the ages of 21-30 years, 14.44% of them



were between the age ranges of 31-40 years, 24.22% were between 41-50 years of age and the remaining 45.56% are above 51 years of age. The mean age was approximately 46 years. This implies that they were in their active ages. This is in contrary with the work of Jibowo *et al.*, 2005, who felt like the youths have apathy for the agriculture.

Marital Status: It was revealed by table1 that 15.56% of the respondents in the study area were single, 52.2% were married, 17.78% were widowed, and the remaining 14.44% were separated. This showed that majority of women who engaged in agricultural activities were married.

Religion: Table 1 showed that 44.4% of the respondents were Christians, 44.4% were Muslims, while the remaining 11.11% were traditional worshippers. This showed that three major religious practices in Nigeria were present in the study area.

Education Background: Table 1 showed that 18.89% had no formal education, 20.00% had secondary leaving school certificate, 15.56% had primary school leaving certificate, while the remaining 45.56% were graduate of Tertiary

institutions. This showed that majority of respondents were literate.

Household Size: Table 1 showed that 4.44% of the respondents have 1-3 household size, 54.4% have 4-6 household size, while the remaining 41.1% have above 6 household size. The mean household size was 6 persons.

Main Occupation: Table 1 also showed that 55.6% of the respondents have farming as their primary occupation, 14.44% were Artisans, 14.44% were civil servants while the remaining 15.56% were traders. This implied that majority of the respondents engaged primarily in farming than any other occupation.

Type of Farming: Table 1 revealed that 38.4% of the respondents practiced mono-cropping, 10% practiced Crop rotation while the remaining 55.7% practiced mixed cropping. This showed that majority of the respondents practiced mixed cropping.

Years of Experience: Table 1 showed that 48.89% of the respondents had 6-10 years farming experience, 11.10% had 1-5 year farming experience while the remaining 40.0% had 10 years and above farming experience with the mean of 11years.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by socio – economic characteristics (N=90)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age (years)			
21 – 30	14	15.56	45.5
31 – 40	13	14.44	
41 – 50	22	24.44	
51 and Above	41	45.56	
Marital Status			
Single	14	15.56	
Married	47	52.22	
Widowed	16	17.78	
Separated	13	14.44	
Religion			
Christianity	40	44.44	
Islam	40	44.44	
Traditional	10	11.11	
Educational Level			
No formal education	17	18.88	
Primary	14	15.56	
Secondary	18	20.00	
Tertiary	41	45.56	
Household size			
1-3	4	4.44	5.89
4-6	49	54.44	
Above 6	37	41.11	
Main Occupation			
Farming	50	55.56	
Artisan	13	14.44	



Civil servant	13	14.44	
Trading	14	15.56	
Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Type of farming			
Mono-cropping	30	38.38	
Crop rotation	9	10.00	
Mixed cropping	51	55.67	
Years of Experience			
1-5 years	10	11.11	
6-10 years	44	48.89	11.22
Above 10 years	35	40.00	

Source: Field survey, 2023

Farming activities in which women provide labour

Table 2 revealed the activities of women labour on farm operations and off-farm activities. All women (100%) engaged in crop processing which ranked 1st with weighted mean score of 1.0 which indicates that they were into processing of harvested goods as their top labour activities. Majority of women (91.11%) engaged in transportation which ranked 2nd (WMS = 0.91). Most of the respondents (85.56%) engaged in storage and transplanting ranked 3rd with WMS of 0.85 each. Majority of the respondents (81.10%) engaged in marketing which was ranked 4th with WMS of 0.81, majority of the respondents (77.78%) engaged in harvesting ranked 5th as their chosen labour activities in the study

area with WMS of 0.78. Also, planting ranked 6th with WMS of 0.66, Nursery management ranked 7th with WMS of 0.64. Chemical application ranked 8th with WMS of 0.48. Also less than average of the respondents (46.67%) engaged in weeding which ranked 9th with WMS of 0.47. About 28% of the respondents engaged in supplying or tilling of crops with the WMS of 0.29 while only 5.56% were engaged in land preparation which was ranked 11th with the WMS of 0.0556.

This indicated that few of the respondents 5.56% engaged in land preparation which ranked 11th with WMS of 0.06. All women (100.00%) engaged in crop processing and majority of the women (91.11%) engaged in transportation.

Table 2: Farming activities in which women provide labour

Activities	Response	WMS	Standard deviation	Rank
Processing	90 (100.00)	1.0000	0.000	1 st
Transportation	82 (91.11)	0.9111	0.2862	2 nd
Transplanting	77 (85.56)	0.8556	0.3535	3 rd
Storage	77 (85.56)	0.8556	0.3535	3 rd
Marketing	73 (81.11)	0.8111	0.3936	4 th
Harvesting	70 (77.78)	0.7778	0.4180	5 th
Planting	59 (65.56)	0.6556	0.4778	6 th
Nursery management	58 (64.44)	0.6444	0.4813	7 th
Chemical application	43 (47.78)	0.4778	0.5023	8 th
Weeding	42 (46.67)	0.4667	0.5017	9 th
Supply/Tilling	26(28.89)	0.2889	0.4558	10 th
Land preparation	5 (5.56)	0.0556	0.2303	11 th

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Note: Values in parentheses are percentages

Challenges facing women for engaging in Agricultural activities

Table 3 showed the challenges women for engaging in agricultural activities. All of the respondents (100%) strongly agreed that discrimination against women is one of challenges women faced for engaging in agricultural activities which ranked 1st with

WMS 5.0. Majority (85.56%) agreed that lack of government commitment is another challenge women faced which ranked 2nd with 4.59. Insufficient capital was ranked 3rd with WMS of 4.68. Low productivity ranked 4th with WMS of 4.59. Less than average of the respondents 47% agreed that low wages is one of the



challenges women faced which ranked 5th with WMS of 4.32. Time ranked 6th with WMS of 3.28. Easily get tired was the least

of the challenges facing women which ranked 7th with WMS of 3.39

Table 3: Challenges facing women for engaging in Agricultural activities

Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	WMS	Rank
Discrimination against women	90(100.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	5.00	1 st
Insufficient Government Commitment	77 (85.56)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	13(14.44)	4.59	2 nd
Insufficient of capital	61(67.78)	29(32.22)	0(0.00)	0 (0.00)	0(0.00)	4.68	3 rd
Low productivity	53 (58.89)	37(41.11)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	4.59	4 th
Low wages	47 (52.22)	30(33.33)	8(8.89)	0(0.00)	5 (5.56)	4.32	5 th
Insufficient of time	29 (32..22)	4 (4.44)	20 (22.22)	0(0.00)	37(41.11)	3.28	6 th
Easily get tired	25 (27.78)	12(13.33)	26(28.89)	0(0.00)	27(30.00)	3.39	7 th

Source: Field survey, 2023

Note: values in parentheses are percentages.

Conclusion and recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: about half (52.20%) of the respondents were married with the mean age of approximately 46 years. Majority (81.12%) of respondents were literates. Majority of the women in the study area engaged in farming as their primary occupation with the average farming years of 11years. Few of the respondents 5.56% engaged in land preparation which ranked 11th with WMS of 0.06. All women (100.00%) engaged in crop processing and majority of the women (91.11%) engaged in transportation. All of the respondents (100%) strongly agreed that discrimination against women is one of challenges women faced for engaging in agricultural activities which ranked 1st with WMS 5.0. Majority (85.56%) agreed that insufficient government commitment is challenges women faced which ranked 2nd with 4.59. Less than average of the respondents 47% agreed that low wages is one of is the challenges women faced which ranked 5th with WMS of 4.32.

It was recommended that good policies that protect and encourage more involvement of women in crop production should be put in place by government.

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