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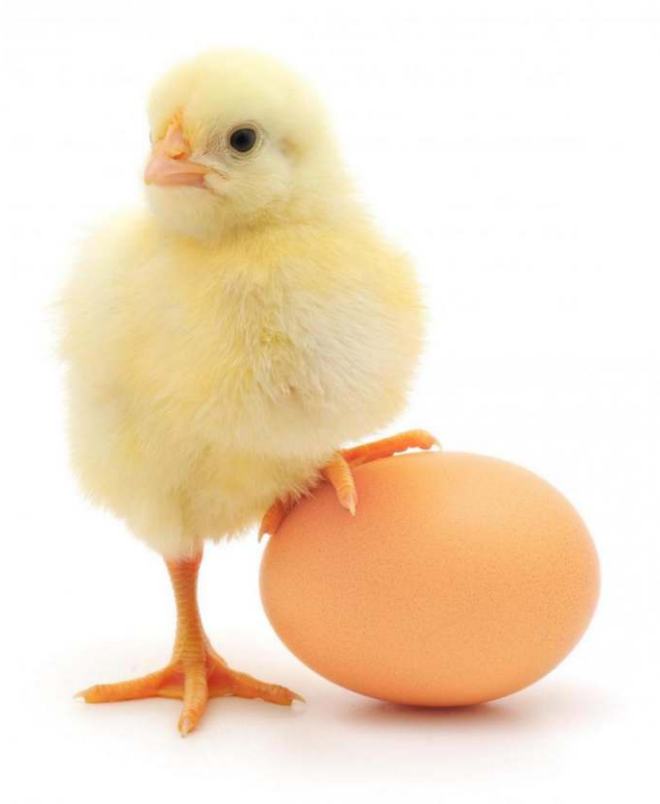

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Socio-Economic Status of Women in Rural Poultry Production in Selected Areas of Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examines the socio-economic status of women in rural poultry production in selected areas of Kwara State, Nigeria. This is based on the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between women's participation and their socio-economic status such as age, marital status, level of education and occupation. The study was conducted in selected villages in Kwara State. A total of one hundred and twenty (120) women involved in rural poultry production were interviewed using random sampling. Data collected from the study were subjected to chi-square analysis. It was discovered from this study that the ages of the women mainly ranges from 21 years to 50 years (57%-97%) across the villages. Most of the women are married (70%-100%). Many of the women have no formal education with the largest percentage at Share (63%). Majority of women involved in rural poultry production are traders (50%-73%). Most benefits enjoyed by the women through rural poultry production include income generation to buy other necessities (10%-70%), income generation for local savings (Ajo) (10%-70%), provision of meat for consumption (35%-95%), provision of meat to entertain special guests (55%-97%), provision of meat during festive seasons (55%-97%), source of gifts (50%-100%), provision of employment opportunity through the sales of egg and chicken (40% - 75%) and improvement of household diets through consumption of eggs and meats (30% - 95%). The results of the chi-square analysis showed that the variables (age, educational level, marital status and occupation) have no significant relationship with the level of participation of rural women in poultry production. From the result, it is recommended that rural poultry production should be supported and the women should be more enlightened on how to keep their birds more successfully.

Key words: Rural, Women, Poultry Production

INTRODUCTION

Poultry refers to all birds of economic value to man. The development of poultry has been described as the fastest means of bridging the protein deficiency gap prevailing in the country (Ikpi and Akinwumi, 1979). The importance of poultry as a source of ready cash and meat for human consumption is well recognized. Ford (1996) reported that poultry meat production proved generally profitable, representing 20% of total meat and meat product consumption, of which 17% was chicken. Atteh (1990) advocated that poultry production should be encouraged at all levels in order to build the gap of shortage in animal protein. Rural poultry production offers farmers the most accessible "savings accounts" and a source of high quality animal protein for their families, in addition to their socio-economic values as gifts to guests and sacrificial animals.

Poultry raising is a popular activity among rural women in most countries. In fact, women have been reported to be the predominant owners of rural poultry (Okitoi *et al*., 2007). Most women in the rural areas utilize indigenous types of domestic fowl in their practice of extensive system of poultry production (Horst, 1988; Kitalyi, 1998), where fowls range freely and scavenge in the backyard which requires only a minimal cash expenditure on feed. Housing may not be provided and where this is done, local materials are usually used for construction (Huchzermeyer, 1973; Atunbi and Sonaiya, 1994). Small-scale poultry production has several advantages such as serving as an enterprise for generating income controlled by women. Poultry is an affordable livestock for resource-poor households. The enterprise provides regular outputs using small inputs and the production can be undertaken by women in the household (Nielsen *et al*., 2003). Although rural poultry production does not generate any large income, it represents a known skill to most poor women and it can assist them in moving into a positive spiral of events that may lead them on to a path out of poverty (Jensen and Dolberg, 2003). This paper therefore aims at assessing the socio-economic status of women in rural poultry production in selected areas of Kwara State, Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in selected villages in Kwara State, Nigeria, which include Afon, Oke-oyi, Share and Bode Saadu. The selection was based on the availability of women involved in poultry production in these villages (Table 1).

The study engaged 30 women involved in rural poultry production randomly selected from each of the four villages, thus giving a sample size of 120 respondents (Table 1). The questionnaire was administered through

Table 1: Distribution of women involved in rural poultry production in selected areas of Kwara State

Local Govt. Area	Villages	Poultry available	No. of women interviewed
Asa	Afon	Chicken, Duck, Guinea fowl	30
Ilorin – East	Oke-Oyi	Chicken, Duck, Guinea fowl	30
Ifelodun	Share	Chicken, Duck, Guinea fowl	30
Moro	Bode Saadu	Chicken, Duck, Guinea fowl	30

Table 2: Age of rural women involved in poultry production

	Share		Oke-Oyi		Bode saadu		Afon	
Age (Year)	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
≤20 years	11	36.67	4	13.33	2	6.67	-	-
21-30 years	4	13.33	7	23.33	15	50.00	6	20.00
31-40 years	8	26.67	12	40.00	6	20.00	9	30.00
41-50 years	5	16.76	2	6.67	5	16.67	14	46.67
> 50 years	2	6.67	5	16.67	2	6.67	1	3.33

personal interview with the women. The data obtained were statistically analyzed using chi-square analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As shown in Table 2, it was discovered that majority of the rural women involved in poultry production fall between the age of 21 years and 50 years, ranging from 57% to 97% across the villages. The largest percentage of the women involved in poultry production at Share were 20 years and below (37%) while the largest percentage at Oke-Oyi has women that are between 31 and 40 years of age (40%). 50% of women involved in rural poultry production at Bode-Saadu were between 21 and 30 years of age while the largest percentage involved at Afon were between 41 and 50 years (46%). The implication of this is that all the age categories of women, both young and old, are actively involved in rural poultry production in these villages.

As observed in Table 3, majority of the respondents surveyed in this study are married while a smaller percentage of them are either single or divorced. 100% of the women engaged in rural poultry at Bode-Saadu and Afon are married while 70% and 80% of the women at Share and Oke-oyi respectively are married. This observation suggests that married women are actively involved in rural poultry production which they keep as sources of economic empowerment and security for 'better life'. These women are dominant in household animal production.

Table 4 shows that majority of the women in this study have no formal education, as represented by 16.67%, 56.67%, 46.67% and 63.33% at Share, Oke-Oyi, Bode Saadu and Afon respectively. Majority of the women who have formal education only have primary school education which is elementary (Table 4). This strictly reveals that women living in rural areas are relatively less educated. The implication is that it will be difficult for innovation of animal husbandry to diffuse in these local government areas.

As shown in Table 5, majority of the respondents are traders with Share recording 50% and Oke-Oyi, Bode saadu and Afon recording 73% each. This finding suggests that the women can easily dispose of their bird at anytime they want if the need arises.

The result of chi-square analysis shows that the variables (age, educational level and occupation) together have no significant relationship with the level of participation of women in rural poultry production.

Hypothesis 1: Age of the women and their level of participation in the poultry production

Age	NP	LP	MP	HP	Total
≤ 20	-	3	1	13	17
21-30	2	2	5	23	32
31-40	6	10	8	11	35
41-50	2	5	4	15	26
> 50	1	-	1	8	10
Total	11	20	19	70	120

NP means No participation (0); LP means Low participation (1-4) MP means Moderate participation (5-8); HP means High participation (9-12); DF means degree of freedom

Using the formula: (X^2)

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Reflection Region:

If $x^2_C > x^2_t$ reject H_0

If $x^2_t > x^2_c$ accept H_0

$x^2 = 17.452$

x^2_t, $\alpha = 0.05$, d.f (5-1) (4-1) = 12

$x^2_t = 5.226$

However, when degree of freedom is greater than 1 and any of the cells has less than five cases, a correction factor known as "Yates correction for continuity" is applied to the formula

$$\text{Therefore, } X^2 = \frac{\sum [(f_o - f_e) - 0.5)]^2}{f_e}$$

$$X^2_c = \frac{\sum [(120 - 116.77) - 0.5)]^2}{116.77} = 0.064$$

Table 3: Marital status of rural women involved in poultry production

	Share		Oke-Oyi		Bode saadu		Afon	
Marital status	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Single	8	26.67	2	6.67	-	-	-	-
Married	8	70.00	24	80.00	30	100.00	30	100.00
Widowed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Divorced	1	3.33	4	13.33	-	-	-	-

Table 4: Educational level of rural women involved in poultry production

	Share		Oke-Oyi		Bode saadu		Afon	
Education	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
No Formal	5	16.67	17	56.67	14	46.67	19	63.33
Primary	5	16.67	10	33.33	12	40.00	6	20.00
Islamic	2	6.67	-	-	-	-	-	-
Secondary	11	26.67	1	3.33	-	-	2	6.67
Diploma	2	6.67	1	3.33	-	-	2	6.67
Degree	-	-	-	-	1	3.33	-	-
Others	5	16.67	1	3.33	3	10.00	1	3.33

Table 5: Occupation of rural women involved in poultry production

	Share		Oke-Oyi		Bode saadu		Afon	
Occupation	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Farming	1	3.33	2	6.67	1	3.33	2	6.67
Fishing	2	6.67	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trading	15	50.00	22	73.33	22	73.33	22	73.33
Craft	1	3.33	3	10.00	3	10.00	-	-
Others	11	36.67	3	10.00	4	13.33	6	20.00

Since $x^2_t > x^2_c$, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and their level of participation in poultry production.

Hypothesis 2: Educational level of the women and their level of participation in the poultry production

Education	NP	LP	MP	HP	Total
No formal	4	6	9	36	55
Primary	1	6	8	18	33
Islamic	1	-	-	1	2
Secondary	1	4	2	8	15
Diploma	1	2	-	1	4
Degree	1	-	-	-	1
Others	1	3	1	5	10
Total	10	21	20	69	120

NP means No participation (0); LP means Low participation (1-4) MP means Moderate participation (5-8); HP means High participation (9-12); DF means degree of freedom

$x^2 = 25.704$ $\quad x^2_t, \alpha = 0.05,$
d.f = (7-1) (4-1) = 18 $\quad x^2_t = 9.390$

However, applying "Yates correction for continuity" to the formula,

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum[(f_o - f_e) - 0.5)]^2}{f_e}$$

$$X^2_c = \frac{\sum[(120 - 117.53) - 0.5)]^2}{117.53} = 0.032$$

Since $x^2_t > x^2_c$, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and their level of participation in poultry production.

Hypothesis 3: Occupation of the women and their level of participation in the poultry productions

Education	NP	LP	MP	HP	Total
Farming	1	-	2	3	6
Fishing	-	-	-	2	2
Trading	6	10	14	50	80
Craft	-	2	1	4	7
Others	4	8	2	11	25
Total	11	20	19	70	120

NP means No participation (0); LP means Low participation (1-4) MP means Moderate participation (5-8); HP means High participation (9-12); DF means degree of freedom

$x^2 = 10.885$ $\quad x^2_t, \alpha = 0.05,$
d.f = (5-1) (4-1) = 12 $\quad x^2_t = 5.22$

However, applying "Yates correction for continuity" to the formula

$$X^2_c = \frac{\sum[(f_o - f_e) - 0.5)]^2}{f_e}$$

$$X^2_c = \frac{\sum(120 - 117.53) - 0.5)^2}{117.53} = 0.033$$

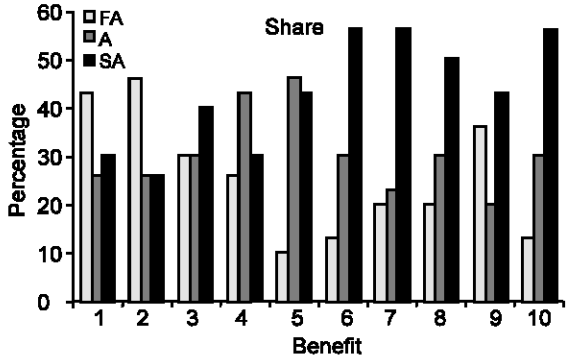

Fig 1: Benefits derived by the respondents at Share for getting involved in rural poultry production. FA = Fairly agreed; A = Agreed; SA = Strongly agreed; 1 = Sponsorship of children; 2 = Generating income for financing trade; 3 = Source of local savings (Ajo); 4 = Generating income to buy other necessities; 5 = Provision of meat for family consumption; 6 = Entertainment of special guests; 7 = Provision of meat for special ceremonies; 8 = Source of gifts; 9 = Provision of employment through sales of eggs and chicken; 10 = Improvement of family diet through egg consumption

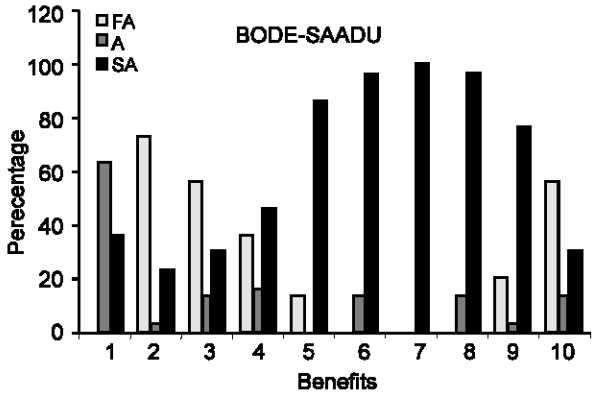

Fig 2: Benefits derived by the respondents at Bode-Saadu for getting involved in rural poultry production. FA = Fairly agreed; A = Agreed; SA = Strongly agreed; 1 = Sponsorship of children; 2 = Generating income for financing trade; 3 = Source of local savings (Ajo); 4 = Generating income to buy other necessities; 5 = Provision of meat for family consumption; 6 = Entertainment of special guests; 7 = Provision of meat for special ceremonies; 8 = Source of gifts; 9 = Provision of employment through sales of eggs and chicken; 10 = Improvement of family diet through egg consumption.

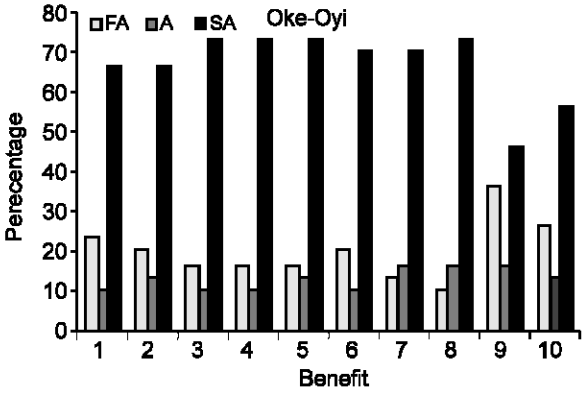

Fig 3: Benefits derived by the respondents at Oke-Oyi for getting involved in rural poultry production. FA = Fairly agreed; A = Agreed; SA = Strongly agreed; 1 = Sponsorship of children; 2 = Generating income for financing trade; 3 = Source of local savings (Ajo); 4 = Generating income to buy other necessities; 5 = Provision of meat for family consumption; 6 = Entertainment of special guests; 7 = Provision of meat for special ceremonies; 8 = Source of gifts; 9 = Provision of employment through sales of eggs and chicken; 10 = Improvement of family diet through egg consumption.

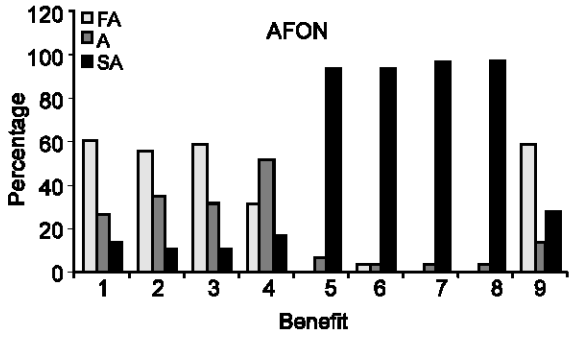

Fig 4: Benefits derived by the respondents at Afon for getting involved in rural poultry production. FA = Fairly agreed; A = Agreed; SA = Strongly agreed; 1 = Sponsorship of children; 2 = Generating income for financing trade; 3 = Source of local savings (Ajo); 4 = Generating income to buy other necessities; 5 = Provision of meat for family consumption; 6 = Entertainment of special guests; 7 = Provision of meat for special ceremonies; 8 = Source of gifts; 9 = Provision of employment through sales of eggs and chicken; 10 = Improvement of family diet through egg consumption.

Since $x^2_t > x^2_c$, H_0 is accepted. There is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and their level of participation in the poultry production.

Figures 1-4 show that majority of the rural women interviewed strongly agreed that poultry meat has improved their diet (95%), source of gift (96%), festivity (100%), entertainment of special guest (96%), income generation for savings (local saving Ajo)(75%) and income generation to buy other necessities (75%). Majority of the rural women fairly agreed that they generate income from poultry production to finance their children (70%) and their trade (75%). This is because the birds are not reared on a large scale and rural poultry is still at the subsistence level.

Conclusion: There is no doubt that rural poultry production will continue to play a dominant role in the supply of protein for diet. From the findings of this study, it is recommended that the rural women involved in poultry production should be more enlightened and adequately supported to enlarge their livestock enterprises.

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