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FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION INPUTS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract. This study assessed the factors affecting women's access to agro-input resources on Oyo State, Nigeria. A total of 105 respondents were selected for the study. Primary data was collected with the use of questionnaire. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for the study. Results of analysis shows that most of the respondents had primary education (68.9%), 3 to 4 years of experience (66.7%) and commonly used inputs were improved seed (53.3%), organic fertilizer (52.4%) and herbicide/pesticide (47.6%). Main source of information was extension agent (98.1%). Most of the respondents had: free access to water for irrigation (93.3%) and agricultural extension services (74.3%), restricted access to improved seeds (94.3%), organic fertilizer (90.5%) and water pumping machine (56.2%) and no access to tubewell and washbore (70.5%). Main constraint to accessibility of inputs was lack of credit facilities (98.1%). The study concludes that the socio-economic factors affecting women's accessing to agricultural input resources were their age, religion and educational status. Hence the need for government agricultural policy and programmes aimed at distributing agricultural input in the study area that should strictly ensure that women of increased age, a particular religious affiliation and more educated ones should not be unnecessary favoured.

Keywords: women farmers, agro-input resources, constraints and accessibility

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, women play significant roles in the food production link of the agricultural value chain. According to World Bank (2003), women make up some 60 to 80 percent of the agricultural labor force and produce two thirds of the food crops in Nigeria. The significant contribution of women to food production was empirically confirmed in various micro-level studies in Nigeria (Ani, 2003). Unfortunately, the women's role in agricultural development has been traditionally underrated based on the argument that, rather than major contributors, they are beneficiaries of the development processes (Adisa and Okunade, 2005). According to Adeolu and Taiwo (2004), productive resources affected by unequal access based on gender include land, labor and capital at farm level. As noted by Kuye et al. (2008), women seek rights to use, control and own land which in turn implies rights to use other assets (e.g. loans, buildings, water and trees), just like their male counterparts. However, as shown by the studies, the deprivation is largely influenced by the socioeconomic characteristics of women farmers in Nigeria (Odurukwe et al., 2006; Okunade, 2007).

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The fact that women farmers are seriously disadvantaged in terms of equal access to agricultural productive resources is still an issue that need to be fully addressed in Nigeria. This is because the farmers' ability to employ improved technologies and make investments depends on their access to productive resources. Also, several studies conducted in Nigeria demonstrated the existence of a positive link between access to agricultural resources and agricultural productivity (Ugbajah, 2011). Awoyemi and Adekanye (2005) stated that the differences in access to agricultural resources between women and their male counterparts had significant influence on the women's productivity and the overall food production volumes in the country.

Similar studies in other Nigerian states indicated that women farmers in Kaduna state complained about the inaccessibility of farming inputs, credit facilities and extension workers. This constrained them from investing in agricultural production (Owolabi et al., 2011). In Borno state, the levels of women farmers' access to production resources, including fertilizers, agrochemicals, family and hired labor and land, were reported to be low (Ojo et al., 2012). In Edo state, Onemolease (2002) found that access to skills in using agrochemicals was low among women cassava farmers.

According to the existing empirical evidence of the women's contribution to the domestic food production, there is a need to identify the factors affecting women's access to agricultural productive resources in Oyo state, since apparently there is not enough literature to bridge this information gap. This is especially important as state authorities at all levels and non-governmental organizations intend to tackle the problem of food shortage in Nigeria. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine the factors affecting women's access to agricultural production inputs in Oyo state, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to: (1) describe the socioeconomic characteristics of women farmers; (2) identify the respondents' sources of information on improved agricultural production inputs; (3) examine the accessibility of agricultural production inputs used by women farmers; and (4) identify the constraints in accessing agricultural production inputs by women farmers. Furthermore, significant relationships between selected socioeconomic characteristics determining the women farmers' level of access to agricultural production inputs were tested with the use of chi-square analysis.

METHODOLOGY

Study area

The study was carried out in Ogbomosho, an agricultural zone located in the northern part of Oyo state, at the following geographic coordinates: 8.1°N, 3.29°E (Ogbomosho map, 1998). It is regarded as a derived savannah vegetation zone and a low rainforest area. The region's climate is characterized by a fairly high uniform temperature, moderate to heavy seasonal rainfall and high relative humidity. The Ogbomosho agricultural zone consists of five Local Government Areas (LGAs) namely: Ogbomosho North, Ogbomosho South, Ogo-Oluwa, Oriire and Surulere. The land area is about 3547.89 sq. km, and the neighboring areas are Irepodun LGA, Oyo LGA (on the western side), Ejigbo LGA, Osun state (on the southern side) and Asa LGA, Kwara State (on the eastern side).

Population and sampling procedure of the study

The population covered by this study consists of all rural women farmers in the area surveyed. A three-stage random sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. Firstly, Surulere, Ogo-Oluwa and Orire LGAs were purposively selected due to their rural nature. Secondly, of the 972 villages in the three selected LGAs, 10 villages were randomly selected, namely: Alagbede, Aduduka, Babaloke, Oke-ile, Yanko, Abogunde, Alagbon, Alayin, Akunko and Alawusa Isale. The third step was to randomly pick 12 rural women farmers in each of the selected village. Thus, a total of 105 respondents were identified for the study.

Data collection instrument

In this study, data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered from the field survey. A questionnaire was used to solicit information from the respondents on issues related to the objectives of this study. The questionnaire was validated by lecturers of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Ilorin. Secondary data, on the other hand, was collected from the relevant literature.

Data analytical tools

Of the 120 questionnaire administered, 15 questionnaires were rejected as incomplete. Thus, a total of 105

questionnaires were analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics tools, including frequency count, percentage and chi-square analytical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic characteristics of women farmers

According to the results presented in Table 1, the age of women farmers generally ranged from 20 to 39 years. This implies that women farmers in the area surveyed are young persons who are still likely to adopt and make full use of any innovative agricultural resources, if delivered to them.

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics of respondents **Tabela 1.** Cechy społeczno-ekonomiczne respondentek

The table also revealed that more than half (53.3%) of women farmers were Muslims. Also, most (89.5%) of the women farmers were married, which suggests they probably were heads of their households. This factor could be an incentive for these women to adopt innovation and employ agricultural resources to maximize profits and cater for their dependents. However, married women were found not to make decisions independently without their husbands' consent (Ani, 2003). In turn, women without men partners make more decisions regarding adoption and use of agricultural resources.

Furthermore, as shown by Table 1 data, most of the women farmers (68.6%) completed primary education while 1.9% completed tertiary education. People

Variables – Zmienne	Frequency Częstość	Percentage Odsetek
1	2	3
Age (years) – Wiek (lata)		
< 19	1	1.0
20–29	47	44.8
30–39	16	15.2
40–49	15	14.3
> 50	26	24.7
Religion – Religia		
Islam	56	53.3
Christianity – Chrześcijaństwo	48	45.7
Traditional – Religie tradycyjne	1	1.0
Marital status – Stan cywilny		
Single – Osoba samotna	11	10.5
Married – Mężatka	94	89.5
Educational status – Poziom wykształcenia		
No formal education - Brak formalnego wykształcenia	5	4.8
Adult education - Absolwentka szkoły dla dorosłych	9	8.5
Primary education – Wykształcenie podstawowe	72	68.6
Secondary education – Wykształcenie średnie	17	16.2
Tertiary education – Wykształcenie wyższe	2	1.9
Farming experience (years) – Doświadczenie w rolnictwie (lata)		
1–2	24	22.9
3–4	70	66.7
> 5	11	10.5

Table 1 cont. - Tabela 1 cd.

1	2	3
Land Ownership – Sposób wejścia w posiadanie gruntów		
Purchase – Zakup	13	12.3
Inherited by spouse - Majątek odziedziczony przez małżonka	74	70.5
Gift – Darowizna	11	10.5
Lease/Rent – Najem/dzierżawa	5	4.8
No response – Bark odpowiedzi	2	1.9
Improved agro-input commonly used – Powszechnie używane udoskonalone rolnicze zas	oby produkcyjne	
Improved seeds – Udoskonalony materiał siewny	56	53.3
Herbicides/pesticides – Herbicydy/pestycydy	50	47.6
Fertilizers – Nawozy	55	52.4
Tubewell – Studnia głębinowa	29	27.6
Storage facility – Magazyn	42	40.0
Water pumping machine – Pompa wody	34	32.4
Washbore – Odwierty wody	31	29.5

at primary education levels are expected to be able to read and write, and therefore the delivery of agricultural resources (as a part of extension services) that require farmers to read an instruction should not be challenging. However, Asfaw and Admassie (2004) noted that the level of education of individuals often determines the production level. The majority (66.7%) of women farmers were found to have 3-4 years of farming experience. This shows that women farmers in the area covered by this study are relatively new to the farming profession and may not have gathered enough input resources for their various agricultural enterprises. The majority (70.5%) of respondents were farming inherited land owned by their husbands. This suggests that women farmers will not be subject to any restrictions in their use of delivered innovative solutions on their various types of land in the area covered by this study. Similar findings were made by Akangbe et al. (2011) who noted that the agricultural resources commonly used by women farmers in Kwara State were improved seed varieties and inorganic fertilizers.

The agricultural production inputs mostly used by women farmers were as follows (in decreasing frequency order): improved seed (53.3%), fertilizers (52.4%), herbicides and pesticides (47.6%), storage facilities

(40.0%), water pumping machines (32.4%) and tube wells (27.4%). This demonstrates that improved seeds and inorganic fertilizers are greatly needed and are very likely to be fully used if delivered to the farmers.

Sources of information on improved agricultural production input

According to the results presented in Table 2, the major sources of information on improved agricultural inputs for women farmers were extension agents (98.1%) and family/friends (28.6%). This suggests that extension agents are not gender-biased. The above findings are not consistent with the FAO statement (2006) that women farmers are been marginalized by agricultural extension. Moreover, Opeyemi (2014) claims that women farmers in the north central part of Nigeria have greater access to extension agents/services.

Further results of the analysis presented in Table 2 reveal that most of the respondents (56.2% and 34.3%, respectively) purchase, or use previous harvests of, agricultural production inputs. This implies that women farmers in the area surveyed could be ready to pay for extension services. The delivery of extension resources could be more effective if driven by the demand generated by women farmers, thereby bringing about an increase in productivity.

Table 2. Sources of information on improved agro-inputs **Table 2.** Źródła informacji o udoskonalonych rolniczych zasobach produkcyjnych

Variables – Zmienne	Frequency Częstość	Percentage Odsetek
Sources of awareness on improved inputs – Źródła wiedzy o udoskonalonych zasobach produkcyjnych		
Extension agents – Przedstawiciele agencji ds. upowszechniania wiedzy	103	98.1
Friends/family – Znajomi/rodzina	30	28.6
Neighbour – Sąsiedzi	5	4.8
Radio – Rozgłośnie radiowe	1	1.0
Television – Programy telewizyjne	3	2.9
Newspaper – Czasopisma	1	1.0
Sources of acquiring improved inputs – Sposób pozyskiwania udoskonalonych zasobów produkcyjnych		
Purchase – Zakup	59	56.2
Loan – Kredyt	9	8.6
Previous harvest – Środki z wcześniejszych zbiorów	36	34.3
No response – Brak odpowiedzi	1	1.0
Sources of capital – Źródła kapitału		
Personal savings – Własne oszczędności	66	62.9
Relative – Krewni	21	20.0
Cooperatives – Spółdzielnie	8	7.6
Loan – Kredyt	9	8.9
No response – Brak odpowiedzi	1	1.0
Source of labour – Siła robocza		
Personal labour – Praca własna	41	39.0
Family labour – Praca członków rodziny	27	25.7
Hired labour – Praca najemna	37	35.2
Sources of water for irrigation – Źródła wody do nawadniania		
River/stream – Rzeka/strumień	65	61.9
Tubewell/washbores – Studnia głębinowa/odwiert wody	40	38.1

Saving on purchases (62.9%) and resources delivered by relatives (20.0%) proved to be the usual sources of capital for the purchase of agricultural input resources. Personal labor (39.0%) and hired labor (35.2%) were specified as farm labor resources. This shows that women in the area surveyed, just like their men counterparts,

are personally engaged in farming activities. According to Fabiyi et al. (2007), women were involved in all farming activities, from land clearing through to harvesting, processing and marketing of produce.

The results of data analysis, as illustrated in Table 3, show that the majority (70.5%) of women farmers had

Table 3. Level of access to agro-input used by women farmers **Tabela 3.** Poziom dostępu kobiet pracujących w rolnictwie do rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych

Agro-inputs services Rolnicze zasoby produkcyjne	No access Brak dostępu	Restricted access Dostęp ograniczony	Free access Dostęp swobodny	
Improved seeds Udoskonalony materiał siewny	5(4.8)	99(94.3)	1(1.0)	
Herbicides/pesticide Herbicydy/pestycydy	38(36.2)	66(62.9)	1(1.0)	
Fertilizers – Nawozy	7(6.7)	95(90.5)	3(2.9)	
Credit facilities Narzędzia kredytowe	49(46.7)	56(53.3)	0(0.0)	
Storage facilities Magazyny	46(43.8)	50(47.6)	9(8.6)	
Water for irrigation Woda do nawadniania	6(5.7)	1(1.0)	98(93.3)	
Water pumping machine Pompa wody	40(38.1)	59(56.2)	6(5.7)	
Tubewell Studnia głębinowa	74(70.5)	7(6.7)	24(29.9)	
Washbore Odwierty wody	74(70.5)	6(5.7)	25(23.8)	
Feeder road Droga dojazdowa	49(46.7)	32(30.5)	24(22.9)	
Market information Informacje o rynku	1(1.0)	29(27.6)	75(71.4)	
Extension services Usługi upowszechniania wiedzy	1(1.0)	26(24.8)	78(74.3)	

no access to tube well or washbore. Most of them were restricted in their access to improved seeds (94.3%), fertilizers (90.5%), herbicides and pesticides (62.9%), water pumping machines (56.2%) and credit facilities (53.3%). Most of the respondents indicated free access to water for irrigation (93.3%), extension services (74.3%) and market information (71.4%). These findings are similar to conclusions made by Opeyemi (2014) who claimed that a considerably high number of women farmers in north central Nigeria expressed their need for information on improved seeds.

Identified constraints in access to agricultural production inputs

Constraints faced by women farmers are further detailed in Table 4. Those experienced by the majority are as follows: lack of credit facilities (98.1%), insufficient technology improvements (95.2%), contact with extension agents (41.9%), and lack of pumping machines (31.4%). These results are similar to those obtained by Ayoade (2012) who concluded that the major challenge faced by women farmers in Osun State are the financial constraints in purchasing productive inputs. This study

Table 4. Constraints identified to access agro-input resources among women farmers

Table 4. Zidentyfikowane ograniczenia w dostępie kobiet pracujących w rolnictwie do rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych

Constraints identified Zidentyfikowane ograniczenia	Frequency Częstość	Percentage Odsetek
Lack of credit facilities Brak narzędzi kredytowych	103	98.1
Insufficient improved technology Niewystarczający stopień udoskonaleń technologicznych	100	95.2
Lack of storage facilities Brak magazynów	15	14.3
Contact with extension agents Kontakt z przedstawicielami agencji ds. upowszechniania wiedzy	44	41.9
Pest management problem Problem z ochroną przed szkodnikami	24	22.9
Lack of pumping machine Brak pompy wody	33	31.4
Lack spare parts Brak części zamiennych	37	35.2
Lack of market information Brak informacji o rynku	26	24.8

suggests that sufficient credit facilities are always the priority for all farmers because farming loans are among the essential factors required for agricultural production. If available, they allow the farmers to secure farming inputs such as farm equipments and hired labor (Odoh et al., 2009). Farming loans are widely recognized as one of the intermediary aspects between the adoption of farm technologies and increased rural farming incomes in Nigeria (Akpan et al., 2013; Omonona et al., 2008). Also, they are one of the fundamental ingredients of sustainable agricultural production. As such, their accessibility (and demand for) is among the prerequisites for attaining the national goal of reducing rural poverty and ensuring self-sufficiency of domestic food production (Akpan et al., 2013).

Testing the hypothesis

The chi-square (X^2) analysis of selected socioeconomic characteristics of women farmers and their levels of access to agricultural production inputs, as presented in Table 5, reveals that a significant positive relationship

exists between age, religion and education, on one side, and access to agricultural production inputs, on the other, at a significance level of p < 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted. The implication is that age, education level and religion of respondents will increase the chances of women farmers to access agricultural production inputs in the geographic area covered by this study. These findings support the earlier report by Ojo et al. (2012) who emphasized that the women's socioeconomic status is important in determining their ability to access agricultural production resources. This is also consistent with the conclusions drawn by Okwu and Umoru (2009) who found that significant relationships existed between the age and educational level of women farmers, on one side, and their ability to access agricultural information, on the other, at a significance level of 5%. Similarly, Komolafe et al. (2014) also found that age and education levels were determinant for the adoption of improved agricultural resources among women in Ekiti state.

Table 5. The chi-square (X^2) analysis of selected socio-economic characteristics of women farmers and their level of access to agro-input resources

Tabela 5. Analiza chi kwadrat (X^2) wybranych cech społeczno-ekonomicznych kobiet pracujących w rolnictwie oraz poziomu ich dostępu do rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych

Variables Zmienne	<i>Chi-</i> square value Wartość <i>chi</i> kwadrat	Df	<i>p</i> -value Wartość <i>p</i>	Decision Decyzja	Remark for null hypothesis Uwagi dotyczące hipotezy zerowej
Age Wiek	37.037	10	0.000	Significant Istotna	Rejected Odrzucona
Religion Wyznanie	9.509	4	0.050	Significant Istotna	Rejected Odrzucona
Education Wykształcenie	21.493	8	0.000	Significant Istotna	Rejected Odrzucona
Marital status Stan cywilny	0.773	2	0.627	Not Significant Nieistotna	Accepted Przyjęta

Furthermore, marital status of women farmers had no statistical influence on their access to agricultural production resources. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that married women farmers will not be provided with better opportunities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of this study is that the socioeconomic factors affecting the women's access to agricultural input resources were their age, religion and educational status. In addition, lack of credit facilities and insufficient technology improvements were the major constraints in accessing such resources. Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are made:

The government's agricultural policy and programs for the distribution of agricultural inputs in the geographic area covered by this study should strictly make sure that women of increased age, of a particular religious affiliation or of higher education levels are not unreasonably favored.

The mass literacy program is also essential in order for the less-educated women to learn the benefits of using improved technology.

Furthermore, there is a need for agricultural extension organizations and other related authorities to address the challenges of women farmers by providing

adequate credit facilities and improved technology solutions in the geographic area covered by this study.

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CZYNNIKI WPŁYWAJĄCE NA DOSTĘP KOBIET DO ROLNICZYCH ZASOBÓW PRODUKCYJNYCH W NIGERYJSKIM STANIE OYO

Streszczenie. Niniejsze opracowanie dotyczy czynników wpływających na dostęp kobiet do rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych w nigeryjskim stanie Oyo. Na potrzeby badania wybrano łącznie 105 respondentek, przy czym dane podstawowe zostały zebrane za pomocą kwestionariusza. W badaniu wykorzystano zarówno statystykę opisową, jak i metody wnioskowania statystycznego. Z przeprowadzonej analizy wynika, że większość respondentek miała wykształcenie podstawowe (68,9%) oraz od 3 do 4 lat doświadczenia (66,7%), a powszechnie wykorzystywanymi zasobami były udoskonalone materiały siewne (53,3%), nawozy organiczne (52,4%) oraz herbicydy/pestycydy (47,6%). Głównym źródłem informacji byli przedstawiciele agencji ds. upowszechniania wiedzy (98,1%). Większość respondentek deklarowała swobodny dostęp do wody w celu nawadniania (93,3%) i do usług upowszechniania wiedzy (74,3%), ograniczony dostęp do udoskonalonych materiałów siewnych (94,3%), nawozów organicznych (90,5%) i pompy wody (56,2%) oraz brak dostępu do studni głębinowych i odwiertów wody (70,5%). Główną barierą dostępu do zasobów produkcyjnych był brak narzędzi kredytowych (98,1%). We wnioskach z badania stwierdzono, że czynnikami społeczno-gospodarczymi wpływającymi na dostęp kobiet do rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych były wiek, wyznanie i poziom wykształcenia. Oznacza to, że istnieje zapotrzebowanie na rządowe strategie i programy rolne mające na celu dystrybuowanie rolniczych zasobów produkcyjnych w badanym regionie w taki sposób, aby kobiety w zaawansowanym wieku wyznające określoną religię i z wyższym poziomem wykształcenia nie były w nieuzasadniony sposób faworyzowane.

Słowa kluczowe: kobiety rolnicy, rolnicze zasoby produkcyjne, ograniczenia i dostępność

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