



Original Research Article

Socio Economic Determinant Factors to Youths Participation in Broilers Production in Imo State of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Socio economic determinant factors to youth participation in broiler production in Imo state, Nigeria were studied. Descriptive statistics and Logit regression models were used to address the objectives of the study. One hundred youths were selected for the study using multi stage random sampling technique. Data were collection from the respondents through secondary and primary sources. The results of the socioeconomic characteristics show that most (58%) of the youth were of less than 30 years and single. The determinant factors to youth participation in broiler production were awareness of the programe, age of the youth, years of the farming experience and farm size. The constraints to youth participation in broiler production were lack of access to credit facility, parental restriction, poor access to extension services, poor access to modern inputs, low prices of agricultural produce and high cost of feeds and vaccines. There is need to enhance farmers' access to production inputs such as drugs, vaccines, land and credits. More so, the wide gap between the extension services – farmer's ratio should be narrowed.

Keyword: Socio economic, Determinant Factors, Youth Participation, Broilers production.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the Sub Saharan African countries of which agriculture was the backbone of her economy before the oil boom of 1970s. For instance, agriculture was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy in 1960 with peasant agricultural production for export providing the stimulus to Nigeria's overall economic growth. Also, agriculture provided employment to over 75% of the population, accounted for over 70% of total food consumption, provided raw materials for industry, export earnings to finance imports and foreign exchange (Reynolds, 1966).

Nigeria agriculture is the major source of food and accounts for about 35% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 37% of merchandised export, 75% of the rural household income and 70% of employment (Tanko and Opara, 2010). In Nigeria, farming is largely subsistence, characterized by use of crude implements and also labour demanding. However, with increasing population of over 150 million which is tantamount to decrease in cultivable arable land, ageing of the farming population and poor yield of agricultural produce, all culminating in widespread poverty in the country (Nwaru, 2006). The need to incorporate the hands of our able-bodied

youths into agriculture in order to circumvent the possible crisis associated with food insecurity as globally witnessed in recent times.

Youths have by their population and natural endowment could undoubtedly help to propel agricultural development as evidenced in many developed nations of Britain, Germany and United States of America (Bonana-Wab 2002). Youth is a state or time of being young, a transaction between childhood and adulthood, characterized by intelligence and hope attributes that enable them to improve their knowledge and capacities for development (Nwachukwu, 2008). In related study, (Asiabaka, 2002,) described this group to be motivational, innovative, and adoptive and could withstand stress and strain associated with farming.). Generally, youth as a social group is more often defined in terms of age. For this reason, the spectrum of youth has been variously defined as ranging the ages of 10 or 11 year (as in some traditional societies in Africa) to as high as 35 years in some countries like South Africa and Tanzania. In an attempts to „standardize“ the concept of youth, international organizations such as the United Nation and the Common Wealth of Nation defined youth as encompassing those between the 15 to 29 age group. The Population Reference Bureau (PRB) regards youth as those in the 10 to 24 years age group. The African Youth Charter promulgated in 2006 by the African Union considers that youth are people in the age range of 15 to 35 years of age. Finally the Nigeria’s National Youth Development Policy encapsulates the youth as comprising of all young persons of age 18 to 35 years. In Nigeria, the tendency to extend the category of youth to 35 years and beyond seems to be a reflection of the emerging phenomenon of the prolonged period of youth dependency on the hosts as noted by Abdullah (1998). There is need to engage youth who are avowed as the engines of national growth and development but for decades have been manipulated and used by the adult sections of the society in

many developing countries as an object of use and dump (Elchli, 2009,). In effect this group (youth) are disillusioned and engulfed with frustration, which could manifest in varied forms, including; unfulfilled needs, feeling of lack of sense of self-worth; inferiority complex and brain drain, which results in crime and other social vices (Adegboye, *et al.*, 2006).In Africa, 200 million people living in Africa are between the ages of 15 to 24, constituting over 20% of the African population; 70% of the African youths reside in rural areas and accounted for 65% of labour in agriculture. Young people make up 36% of the working population and accounted for 60% of the total unemployed (FAO, 2006).This population of the youths could be an assets for the continent’s development, if properly harnessed to solve the perennial food crisis of Africa (Oladrosu, 2010)

However, in recognition of the roles of youth in agricultural development and the threats of not keeping this fragile group tiring, most governments in developing countries embrace among others agricultural programme as the bulwark for job creation for jobless youth in order to advance their conditions of living (Elchi, 2009) . This in turn will provide the food we need via increased production, and ensures farming is passed from one generation to the next. The youth participation in agriculture will drastically reduce the criminal and illegal activities youths may indulge as result of lack of gainful employment (Nwachukwu, 2008). In Nigeria, successive governments both in the state and federal have d developed many agricultural based programs, aimed at either empowering, employment or both of youths. These programmes include; Agricultural Entrepreneurship Scheme of the National Directorate for Employment (NDE) (1986), school to land programme by River states, mobilization for Agriculture and Industries by Anambra state and school based food basket programme by Imo state (Alawode, 2009).

The school based food basket programme by Imo state embraces the culture of training youth to do certain work among them is broiler production in order to be self-reliant after graduation (Oladrosu, 2010). Broiler supplies more than 25% of protein needs of Nigerians and employ people, particularly retirees and jobless youths who could have been seen to be unproductive by the society (World bank, 2006). The enterprise is endeared to the farmers through possession of attributes such as having high feed conversion rate and easily marketed at different stages of growth (Ume, 2009). Nevertheless, broiler production generally in the sub Saharan African has not been able to meet its traditional roles and linked to this as asserted by Eleke, (2005); Ume, et al (2013) are poor productivity, high mortality, poor management practices, high cost of feed, poor access to improve chicks and poor market prices

However, studies revealed that youths participation in agriculture in most developing countries, Nigeria inclusive have hindered by factors include, poor access to land, poor financial support, lack of relevant modern tools, inadequate and improper records, weak extension system (Oladrosu, 2010). Others are problems of HIV/AIDS, non-recognition of agriculture as a profession, and inadequate rural infrastructure (Nwachukwu, 2008). Furthermore, nowadays parental perception of youths' involvement in agriculture is dismal as it tends to dwarf participation of youths in agriculture. For instance, Adeosun, (2009) accentuated that many parents forbid their children from becoming farmers but only involving them because they do not have a better economic activities. It is against this back drop that, this study is carried out to ascertain the determinant factors for youths participation in agricultural program as studies have been on how to harness their potentials (Akwiwu *et al.*, 2005), youth migration (Angba, 2003), preference for agriculture discipline (Ajaero and Njoku, 2005) and

youths' restiveness (Adesope *et al.*, 2000). This will help to design appropriate intervention strategies in order to mobilize this precious and volatile group in order to attain meaningful economic development in Imo State in particular and as well as Nigeria in general. Specifically, the objectives are to describe the socioeconomic characteristics of the youths, determine the effects of the youths' socioeconomic characteristics on their level of participation and identify the constraints to youths' participation in broiler production programme.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Imo State, Nigeria. The state, one of the nine states in Eastern Nigeria Agricultural Zone, is made up of twenty-seven local government areas categorized into three agricultural zones of Orlu, Owerri and Okigwe. With a population of 2.49 million (NPC, 1991), the major economic activity of the people is farming which is carried out mainly at subsistence level. Crop production features the cultivation of yam, maize, cassava oil palm, pineapple and different types of vegetables. The animals reared include poultry, sheep, goat, pig, cattle and most recently snail and grass-cutter. Fish farming is also practiced.

Two seasons, rainy and dry, April to October and November to March respectively are experienced in the tropical climate of Imo State. The rainfall ranges from 1500 to 2000 mm and the temperature is between 26 and 28 °C with relative humidity of 80-90%. Two out of three agricultural zones of the state were randomly selected. One local government areas were randomly sampled from each agricultural zone. From each local government area, five communities were sampled and from each community, ten youths were randomly sampled. In all, 100 youths were sampled to provide data for the study.

Multistage random sampling technique was used to select towns, villages

and respondents. In the first stage, four (Adegboye, et al., 2006) towns out of seven (7) were randomly selected. In the second stage, 5 villages were selected from each town. This brought to a total of twenty villages. In the final stage, five (5) youths involved in the programme each were selected from the towns. This brought to a total of one hundred respondents for the detailed study.

Questionnaire and oral interview were used to source information on primary data, while review of related literature, textbooks, journals and other periodicals were used as basis for secondary data. The specific objective i and iii were captured using the frequency distribution and percentage, while objective 2 was address using logit regression model. Logistic regression model is a qualitative choice model used to explain relationship between a dependent discrete variable and explanatory variables (Polson and Spencer, 1991). A variety of multivariate statistical techniques are used to predict a binary dependent variable from a set of independent variables.

The logistic regression model was specified as follows:

$$Y = \text{Ln} \left(\frac{P}{1 - P} \right)$$

$$\text{Ln} (P/1 - P) = b_0 + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 \dots B_9 X_9 + e$$

Where:

Y = Dependent binary variable (participate = 1, do not participate = 0)

P = Probability of participating in agriculture

Ln = Natural logarithm function

b₀ = Constant

b₁-b₉ = Regression coefficients

X₁-X₉ = Explanatory variables; X₁= youth awareness (aware =1, otherwise =0); X₂=Age (yrs); X₃= Years of experience (years); X₄= Educational level (yrs); X₅= Member of association (dummy) and X₆=Farm size (Ha).

E = Stochastic error term

(^P/_{1-p}) = Odd ratio (odds in favour of participation)

Chi-square was used in place of R² to measure goodness of fit (Gujarati, 1988):

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showcased that 58% of the respondents were male, while 42% female.

The domination of male youths could be attested to independent/autonomy life from parents' male youths always seek as sign of attainment of maturity. As result they could engage in any money yielding venture, including farming for survival (Adeosun, 2009). Furthermore, majority (70%) of the sampled population were less than 30years, 30%; 30-40% years. The higher percentage of youth of less than 30 years could be linked to age of graduation from different higher institution of higher learning in the country in particular. This finding concurs with (Adewale, et al., 2005), who opined that most unemployed youth are less than 35years old in his study area.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	23	58
Female	17	42
Age		
Less than 30	28	70
30-39	8	20
40-49	24	10
Marital Status		
Single	25	62
Married	15	38
Divorced	0	0
Widow	0	0
Widower	0	0
Educational Level		
No formal education	0	0
Primary education complete	1	3
Primary education complete	2	5
Secondary Education	11	27
Tertiary Education	26	65
Farming Experience		
1-5	10	10
6-10	30	30
Membership		
Yes	30	30
No	10	70

Source; Field Survey; 2015.

Table 1 also posited that 62% of the respondents were single, while only 38% married. This implies that most job seekers are single. This finding was contrary to Adegboye, et al(2006)who found out in their study that married youth are more likely to participate in agricultural activities than unmarried ones. This is due to the fact that married youth have more family responsibilities than unmarried youth. Furthermore, the predicted of participating in rural agriculture is higher for married youth, which could be adduced to

ownership of land resources especially by males, who are heirs, increased concern for household welfare and food security following the marital responsibilities and conviction overtime of the importance of agriculture in rural livelihood. Most youths were members of cooperatives as indicated in Table 1. Cooperative helps in training, ease of access to credit and access to agricultural improved inputs for higher production and productivity (Elchli, 2009).

The result obtained from Table 2 showed that Awareness of agriculture programme youth activities contributed to youth participation at 5% significant level of probability. The result indicated that youths who are aware of the government agricultural programme activities would be willing to participate more in the program management activities. This finding concur with (Haruna, et al., 2010) who observed in his study that for effective Fadama users association (FUA) participation in irrigation management activities, sensitization, mobilization and facilities are very important for effective participation. What's more, the coefficient of age influenced the youth participation in agricultural programme at 10% significant level of probability, however in negative direction. The sign identity of the variable could be related to the fact that younger youth of 15-20 years are engaged in farming activities, which disagree with (FAO, 2006,) who reported that only older youths are engaged in agriculture and farm activities. Also years

of farming experience influenced youth participation in government agricultural programme was positive and significant at 1% alpha level. Experience youth farmers are competent, set realistic goals and are committed to farm management activities (Adewale, et al., 2005). Farm size coefficient positively influenced youth participation in agricultural program and significant at 5% risk level. Farm size reflects availability of capital access to credit, even good management ability, proxy for wealth status and income. As expected, the coefficient of level of education was negative and significant at 1% alpha level. This may connote the negative attitude educated people generally have for farming in preference for white collar job particularly in developing countries. Nevertheless, education is very important to the individuals as it enhances their innovativeness and decision making processes especially on whether to participate on a programme or not (Nwaru, 2006). Education and training produces a labour force that is mobilized, more skilled, prone to risk taking and adaptable to the needs of a changing economy (Ezedinma, 2006). Therefore, there is need for government and non government agencies to put in place policy options to engage the youths to avoid engaging into-social vices. Furthermore, there is need to make our education system to be dysfunctional in order to curb unemployment and its hideous consequences to the society (Elichi, 2009)

Table 2 Effects of the youths' socioeconomic characteristics on their level of participation

Determinants	Parameter	Coefficient	Standard error	t-ratio
Youth awareness	a ₁	0.0520	0.0227	2.2916**
Age	a ₂	0.0928	0.0636	1.4148**
Farming exper.	a ₃	0.6912	0.0912	7.5759***
Educational level	a ₄	-2.9577	0.4013	-7.360***
Farm size	a ₅	8.8599	2.4599	2.2000**
Extension contact	a ₆	-0.1023	0.0624	0.9602
			0.1963	0.5211
Coop asso,	a ₇	0.0444	0.0530	0.0269*

Source: Computed from Field Survey, 2015

*** = significant at 1% , ** =significant at 5% , * = significant at 10%

Majority (85%) of the respondents reported problem of poor access to credit as shown in table 3. Credit helps for modernization and commercialization of farming but

unfortunately this important resource eludes many farmers because of ignorance and lack of collateral as demanded by lending agencies (Tanko, et al., 2010).

Furthermore parental restriction (62%) was complained by the respondents. This could be negative attitude of many household had towards agriculture as job for never do wells. Poor access to extension agent that will disseminate innovations to farmer for agricultural development were revealed by 57% of the sampled population. The extension agents are few in number compared to farmers' population and less motivated as well, hence affecting their efficiency and effectiveness (Tanko, *et al.*, 2010). The finding of (Ume, *et al.*, 2010) agree with the assertion.

Also, 72% of the respondents reported problem of persihability and low agricultural output prices. The non-availability of cold room to address the perishability of agricultural products as well as poor road net - work to urban area have caused many farmers to sell their produce immediately after harvest when the prices are low to the detriment of their profits in order to avoid spoilage. Furthermore, 72% of the respondents encountered the problem of poor access to modern tools. Agriculture in most developing countries is still peasant, as crude tools are used in farming which requires great strength. Nevertheless, youths detest drudgery equipment in farming and in effect abandon such enterprise in preference to less energy challenging type no matter how the financial reward could be (Alawode, 2009)

Moreso, poor access to production input such as fertilizer, pesticides and among others as result of scarcity and high cost was reported by 70% of the sampled youths as showcased in Table 3. In addition, poor access to land was completed by 75% of the sampled youths in most developing countries. In effect, youths found it difficult to procure land under such system and thus dampen down their zeal to farming. Haruna, *et al.*, 2010 Besides, 65% of the sampled youth is indicated in table 7 encountered the problem of HIV/AIDs. This ill-health affects the victim's strength to farming which is often strenuous. (Eleke, 2005) observed that agricultural output is

gradually decreasing because of mortality in the workforce, as susceptibility and vulnerability of the youths to HIV/AIDs increases.

Table 3: Constraints limiting youth Participation in Broiler production.

Farming Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of credit facility	34	85
Low yield	11	27
Parental Restriction	25	62
Poor access to Extensive service	23	57
Poor access to modern tools	29	72
High and poor access to improved	28	70
Production input		
Poor access to land	30	75
Low prices of Agricultural product	29	72
HIV/AID disease	26	65
Problems of theft	5	12
High cost of feed and vaccines	34	85

Multiple Responses
Source: Field Survey, 2015

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the above results, the following conclusions were drawn; Most of the youths were single and less than 30 years. The determinant factors to youth participation in broiler production were, age of the youth, youth awareness, years of farming experience and farm size. The constraints to youth participation in broiler programme were; poor access` to credit facilities, poor access to extension services, high cost of feed and vaccines and low prices of agricultural products.

Based on the result, the following recommendations are proffered,

- (1) Enhancing youth's access to loan/credit through microfinance banks and other commercial banks at moderate interest rate
- (2) Extension agents should be motivated through trainings, fringe benefits and reduction of gap between extension services- farmers.
- (3) Government and concerned organizations should help youthfarmers to have access to improve production inputs and at reduced cost.
- (4) Infrastructural development of rural areas should be tracked with all seriousness it deserved to discourage

urban drift of youth when their contribution to agricultural development cannot be over emphasized

- (5) The Nigeria 1979 land use act should be revisited, so that land can be available to genuine youth farmers.
- (6) Youth's broiler farmers should be taught on how to formulate conventional feed for their birds, instead of relying on industrial feeds which are often expensive.
- (7) Improving youths' access to education through adult education programme, seminars and mass mobilization.
- (8) Experienced youths farmers and even new entrant should be encouraged into the business through provision of essential improved inputs at reduced cost.

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