

GENDER SEGREGATION AMONG KARE- KARE FARMERS IN POTISKUM SENATORIAL ZONE OF NORTH- EASTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the participation of Kare-Kare woman in agriculture at Potiskum senatorial Zone of North- Eastern Nigeria. The study is very important as it identify constraint to women productivity in farming and economic development. In carrying out the study the methodology employed include oral histories, administration of interview and focus group discussion. The use focus group discussion is to clarify and validate information collected during interview. This study reveal that both Kare- Kare women and men engaged in farming, however at age group of fifteen and above women participation increased significantly than men. Yet their contribution culture denied them access to use surplus produce of the household farm. More so, despite the importance of land as a factor of production culture placed women at disadvantage position. The study further reveals that extension services follow the cultural trend by focusing on men only.

Keywords: Woman, Kare- Kare, division of labor, ownership, access

INTRODUCTION

The participation of women in agriculture is important and deserved recognition and support to achieve sustainable development particularly in Africa. The Beijing Conference concluded that unless the contribution of women to economy and development recognized and supported, sustainable development would remain elusive. The roles of women in agriculture vary widely by region, age, and ethnicity and are changing rapidly (FAO, 2011). Participation of women in agriculture at most communities in Yobe state was historically constructed by cultural and later modified by societal development. As such, women contribution to agriculture varies with culture. Thus, woman in one cultural group perform certain task that woman in another cultural group cannot perform. In Africa women are primary resource users and most of the responsibility for growing and collecting food, medicines, fuel, housing materials, providing cash income for schooling, health care and other family needs rests on their shoulders (Ilahi, 2000). As such, they do much of the work needed to

maintain family. African women are also usually responsible for marketing agricultural produce; indeed they do greater part of agricultural work in addition to domestic responsibilities (Boserup, 1970).

Women rather than being “dependent” have had to perform multiple roles by responding to family, economic and social expectations at the same time. Change affecting family have more implication on women than men. Addati and Cassier (2008), observed the burden of caring for HIV/AIDS sick family members and orphaned children on women. The combined time burden of household chores and farm work is severe for women in Africa (Ilahi, 2000). While women spent time working in their family farms, they are not well compensated to the family labour (Maertens and Swinnen, 2009). Evidence from a number of studies conducted in most developing countries confirms that women, on average, are paid less than men even for

equivalent jobs and comparable experience (Ahmed and Maitra, 2010).

In Nigeria societal development has forced rural women that formally engaged in agriculture to move into the urban centers in search for white collar jobs. Unfortunately they end up in prostitution and under employment. In most Nigerian urban centers recently affected by political and ethnic conflicts these women suffer the most. African women are subjected to specific constraints due to cultural inequalities, and these constraints lower the results they obtain. The cultural and tribal constraints most frequently identified are: lack of access to land, marginalization, lack of access to decision-making power, women's heavy workload, lack of education and training.

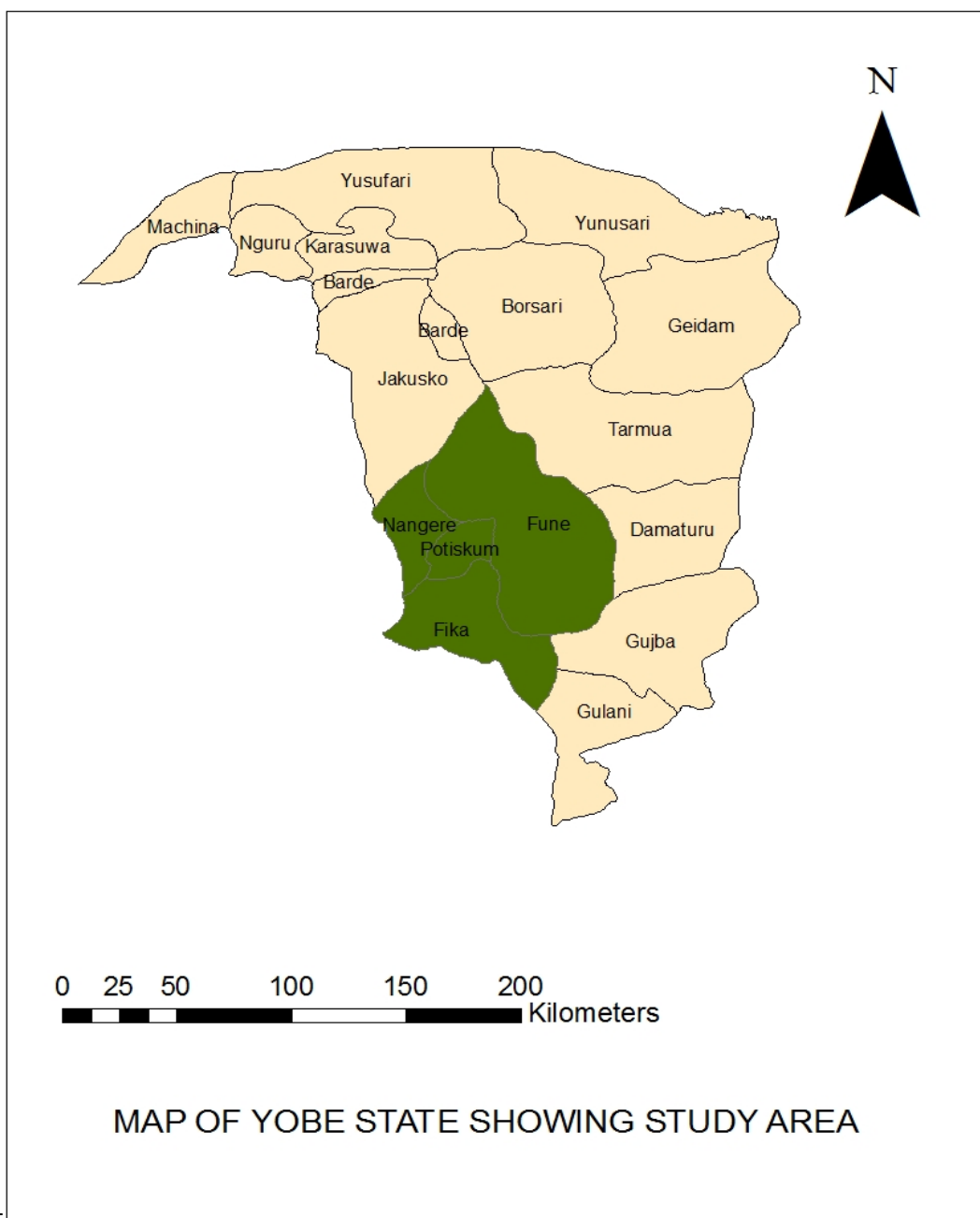
In the recent decades, several research findings have documented constraints to women participation and productivity in agriculture. This paper elaborated on the existing knowledge.

STUDY AREA

This study was conducted in Potiskum Senatorial Zone of North- Eastern Nigeria. It is located between latitude 10°45' to 11°27' North and longitude 11°00' to 12°27' East. The senatorial zone is one of the three senatorial zones of Yobe State of Nigeria and is the most populated and composed of ethnic groups that makes their livelihood basically from farming. The zone is made up of four

local government areas namely; -Fika, Fune, Nangere and Potiskum. It covers an area of about 8,695 KM². The population of the area was put at 731,354 by 2006 National Population Census. Potiskum Zone have bedrock structure belief to be developed at the Northeastern extreme of Keri- Keri formation. The climate of the area can be described under the Sudan savannah climate, which is characterized by semi-arid conditions with long dry season followed by short period of rainfall. The wet season begins from June to September, with an annual average rainfall of about 794mm. The temperature is fairly consistent and the hottest months are March and May with average temperature between 39° to 40°. Vegetation cover is directly related to environmental factors such as soil, rainfall and human intervention. The soil is most often characterized by high ferrogenised Keri-Keri sandstone drift. The soil is reddish brown and contained similar features of Gombe plain in the south while in the northern part the soil is sandy and loose in nature.

The main economic activities are farming and animal rearing. Farming is basically subsistence mainly for consumption purpose. The notable subsistence farming in the area is rain fed. Irrigation agriculture has not achieved its much deserved position. Major crops cultivated include millet, beans, groundnut and sorghum and are often multi-crop type of farming.



METHODS

Data for this study were collected through Focus Group Discussion and administration of interview schedule on both men and women farmers to find out whether they have equal access to

agricultural facilities or why women face some constraints in farming.

A total number of 284 farmers were interviewed with equal number of men and women. List of both men and women farmers

of each sample village were compiled separately from community association registers. Respondents were selected using simple random sampling with table of random

numbers. The number of respondents selected from each village is proportional to size of registered farmers. Table 1 show the sample frame and size.

Table 1 Sample Frame and Size

S/N	Local Government Area	Name of Settlement	Male Population	Female Population	Total Population	Sample Size
1	Fika	Kukar Gadu	260	310	570	56
		Janga	140	211	351	36
2	Fune	Ngelshegele	171	230	401	40
		Murba	91	120	211	20
3	Nangere	Tikau	121	140	261	28
		Watunane	190	250	440	44
4	Potiskum	Laile	89	130	219	20
		Garin Maje	179	224	403	40
	Total		1241	1615	2856	284

Source: Field Work 2013

A total of eight settlements were selected villages (two from each local government). The selection of villages at the expense of towns is based on the fact that majority of the farming activities is taking place in villages. In selecting the villages, purposive sampling was used by selecting Kare- Kare settlements. After interviews were completed focus groups were used to clarify and validate information from the interviews. At each sample settlement Focus Group Discussion was conducted with separate group of young and aged men; and young and aged women. Each group consists of 14 participants selected by the researcher during interview based on their interests and understanding of the research topic. The data generated was analyzed using SPSS software version 16 and data is presented using descriptive statistics (tables and graph).

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN FARMING

The Kare- Kare ethnic group is a west- Chadic branch of tribes and share similar culture with the other three core ethnic groups in the area and farming is the means of livelihood. Culturally both men and women engage in farming. According to the research finding both men and women own small farms in addition to the household farm. Data in table 2 show that male starts to participate in farming at the age of 6-9 while a lady start participating actively after the first year of marriage. In the age group of fifteen and above women participation increase significantly than men as most men seek job opportunities outside farming. While men combine farming with other occupation, women after marriage are encourage by culture to be fully involved in farming as any other occupation outside farming is being frowned at.

Table 2: Age and marital status of Respondents

Variables	Female		Male	
	No.	%	No.	%
Age				
6- 15	02	1.4	24	16.9
16- 25	42	29.5	10	7.0
26- 35	54	38.0	47	33.0
36- 45	32	22.5	41	28.8
46- 55	08	5.6	12	8.4
>55 Years	04	2.8	08	5.6
MaritalStatus				
Single	02	1.4	37	26.0
Married	130	91.5	96	67.6
Divorce/widow	10	7.0	09	6.3s

Source: Field Work 2014

A woman during her first year of marriage can work in her own or husband farm and is free from working at the household farm. However during the second season after her marriage working in the household farm became mandatory. Woman can keep on working at household farm from morning to afternoon and if she so wishes go to her small farm called “*yammaci*” in the evening.

Early in the morning, usually around 5.30-6.00 am all members of the household with the exception of the young ladies go to the household farm. The work is shared equally among the members of the household irrespective of gender and without considering women reproductive and domestic task.

In addition to the other four ethnic groups, Fulani and Kanuri made significant impact in Fune Local Government. Hinckley (1987) also noted that Abore and Woodabe Fulani adopted a sedentary way of living at village of Duddaye North of present Potiskum local government area. Historically, Kanuri and Fulani appear to have entirely different culture with other four core tribes of Potiskum senatorial district regarding women participation in farming. Culture in the former restricts women in certain farm labour while in the latter tribe neither the man nor the woman

participates in farming and cattle rearing is the only means of livelihood. Historically, Fulbe or the Fulani’s are perhaps the only non- farming pastoral group in the Potiskum area. This finding was supported by the early findings of Azarya (1976) who noted that even when sedentarised, the fulbe keep away from farming which they view with contempt. To the extent, Sa’ad (1987) reported that Fulfulde the Fulani tribe adage epitomizes “*A janga ha’a moda; a dura ha a mara; a fila ha’a riska; a rema ha’a maya*” (means “you study until you became learned; you graze cattle (for others) until you posses your own; you engage in trade until you became rich; but you till the land until you die” i.e. nothing useful comes out of farming).

Drought, desert encroachment, conversion of rangelands into other uses and increased insecurity has made Fulani people whose very survival is strongly linked to pastoralism to sedentarized and engage in farming. Despite this development, women are still deprived the right to participate in farming. It can be argued that this cultural constraint has grave micro and macro consequences on economies of Fulani women.

DIVISION OF LABOR

Traditionally, there is a division of labour by sex in respect to different farm operation among Kare- Kare ethnic group. Physical labour of land preparation was carried out by

men while women perform duties of storage, processing, marketing and transporting farm produce. Planting, weeding, and harvesting is both men and women task.

Table 3: Traditional Agricultural task among sex

Agricultural Task	Men Only	Women Only	Men and Women
Land Preparation	X		
Tilling	X		
Planting			X
Weeding			X
Harvesting			X
Transporting		X	
Storage		X	
Processing		X	
Marketing		X	

Field Work 2014

During harvest of millet and guinea corn, men cut off the stalk using hoe while women cut the head of the stalk by the use of knives. Harvesting of beans and groundnut was women task. Nowadays however,

modernization of agriculture and migration of young men from rural to urban areas in search for white collar jobs and education has changed the traditional pattern of division of labour between men and women.

Table 4: Modern Agricultural task among sex

Agricultural Task	Men Only	Women Only	Men and Women
Clearing			X
Ploughing/ harrowing			X
Planting			X
Weeding			X
Fertilizer application	X		
Harvesting			X
Transporting	X		
Storage	X		
Processing			X
Marketing			X

Field work 2014

Most farm operations task that were formally seen as "male task" is now been carried out by women as well. Similarly, women duties such as marketing of farm produce is now been carried out by men as well. To the

disadvantage of women, findings of this study reveals that hard labour such as land clearing, tilling and harvesting of corn stalk that was formerly carried out by men only are now emerging women responsibilities. More so,

women light duties are now been collected and perform by men.

OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND CROP GROWN

Women among Kare- Kare ethnic group are in fact responsible for the greater per cent of the food produce at the household farm. Data generated in this study shows that women work on the average of six to eight hours daily on their household farms and two to three hours on their own small farm. Yet their contribution in household farm culture denied them access to use surplus produce of the household farm. Their only benefit is the three square -meal. The surplus produce can only be use by the head of the household who contribute less in the farm labour. It is noted by the findings of this research that in Kare-Kare culture, the head of household never participate actively in farm labour but rather supervise.

Traditionally gender segregation in the ownership of crop grown exists among the Kare- Kare tribe of Potiskum Senatorial Zone. At the end of harvest, all the Quantity of crop grown at the household farm goes the entire family and control by the head of the

household. Every morning the head of the household gives one measure (*kambi*) to the women on duty to prepare meal for the entire family. Culture empowered the head of the household to sell part of the produce for his needs. Women members of the household can only sell harvest from their evening farm called *yammaci* for their other needs. In a situations where surplus of the harvest is made, the head of the house sell the surplus to buy farm animals and implements for the household. Part of the harvest cannot be used in buying soup ingredient for women to cook. Women under this culture and tribe have to use the little produce from their small farms for buying soup ingredients. This cultural attitude against women put them at economically disadvantage position.

According to the traditional system of Kare- Kare as the other core ethic groups of Potiskum Senatorial Zone, so much value is placed on land because farming is the main occupation and the only means of livelihood. Despite the important role played by land as factor of production, more so, both women and men engaged in agriculture, culture placed women in a disadvantage position.

Table 5: Land Ownership among Kare - Kare Farmers

Kind of Ownership	Men		Women	
	No.	%	No.	%
Own Land (through inheritance)	90	63.4	04	2.8
Buy Land	05	3.5	58	40.8
Hire Land	15	10.6	12	8.5
Use Family Land	28	19.9	32	22.5
Use Relatives Land (Not Household Land)	04	2	36	25.5

Source: Field Work 2014

Under the culture and tradition of Kare- Kare tribe land used to be owned communally by the family. Land decent to son, probably to the eldest son. Research findings reveal that more men own land in comparison to women (table 5). Similarly 40% of women farmers buy land to own farm lands against 3.5% among men,

while 25.4 % of women depend on relatives, only 2.8% of men depend on relatives for farm land. The remaining 23 % were lucky to be farming on some parts of the household land. This indicated a serious gender gap in land ownership.

ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL LOAN AND EXTENSION SERVICES

Cultural laws had often put women farmers at disadvantage position especially when it comes to agricultural loan and extension services. Agricultural loans in form of credit are important to farmers by improving their practices and increased area of cultivation. Kare- Kare women farmers in the study area are not much aware of any formal credit institute. They only go into mortgage with few wealthy individual amongst them during the most difficult period of the year (i.e the wet season). Findings of this study shows that only 10.5% of women farmers are lucky to have collected loan while remaining have not either due to unawareness of formal credit

institution or the lack of collateral/lack of certain percentage of money needed by the credit institution as requirement for collecting loan. Almost 79.5 % of me have benefited from loan or credit services. This is due the reason that men being the head of households intercept the loan and don't inform women the channels of accessing the loans. Women narrated that in many instances husbands use cultural laws to denied them permission of visiting credit institutions in town. Sometimes men use their assets as collateral for collecting loans while the loan goes to them alone. This low level of access to agricultural loan has affected the productivity of women farmers among Kare- Kare tribe.



Figure 2 Access to loan and services

The extension services follow the cultural trend by focusing on men only. Findings from this research reveal that over 90% of the women interview neither participated in workshop nor visited by extension workers. Even the few invited for workshop were denied permission from their husbands. Women ideas and experience are not recognized. The participatory approach of

World Bank, NGO's and other donor agencies is only in principle but not in practice. Women from local community elite households were usually selected to represent the voice of the women farmers while they never participate in farming.

CONCLUSION

Kare- Kare women actively involved more in farming activities than men and as such carry a double burden of work as they cope with domestic task. Modernization of agriculture has not had much impact on Kare- Kare woman. Women farmers do not have access to agricultural loan and extension service. In spite the fact that women farmers among Kare- Kare tribe are assuming more responsibilities in farming activity, they are confronted with cultural, social and economic problems. To improve the productivity and reduce poverty among Kare – Kare women,

they should be targeted for farm input and at affordable price. Policies that can help in providing access to land for women need to be put in place. The policy response should understand the root of inequality to land access rather than merely address symptoms. Traditions rulers can help in achieving a sound policy. Women farmers should be given access to agricultural loans and have current information on agricultural production. Women's empowerment groups can serve as an important source of information and social capital for women farmers.

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