



## ASSESSMENT OF POULTRY WOMEN AGRIPRENEURS PERCEPTIONS ON THE CAUSES OF INSURGENCY IN YOBE STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The study assessed the perceptions of poultry women agripreneurs on the causes of insurgency in Yobe State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving snowball sampling techniques were employed in selecting 300 poultry women agripreneurs. Primary data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that 38.4% of the poultry agripreneurs fell within the age range of 35-44 years in the insurgency area while 29.9% fall within the age range of 45-54 years in the non-insurgency area. Most of the women agripreneurs (70.7%) in poultry production were formally educated, about 86.7% were married amongst the poultry agripreneurs with majority (65.5% and 81.2%) had years of experience of 1-10 years both in the insurgency and the non-insurgency area. The results revealed that 41.3% of the poultry agripreneurs in insurgency areas and 68.8% in non-insurgency areas engage in crop farming as their other source of income. Results on level of perception of poultry women agripreneurs revealed that prevalent of poverty has the highest mean score (4.57), this is followed by level of unemployment (4.56). The least perceived cause was lack of parental care with a mean value of 4.34. The overall mean value of perceived cause of insurgency was 4.49. Meanwhile the severe constraints are unavailability of inputs (3.41) and unavailability of credits (72.8%) during the insurgency. The study concluded that poverty, unemployment and wrong religious education are the causes of the insurgency. The study recommended that all community leaders should be cautioned against wrong teachings and the Government should empower women economically. This can be achieved through training of women in entrepreneurial skills acquisition, giving out soft loans to enable women with good business ideas to start up.*

**Keywords:** Insurgency, Perception, Poultry, Women Agripreneurs,

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## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a vital economic activity in which women could empower themselves towards partaking in economic development in the absence of other forms of employment. This is why agricultural entrepreneurship is recognized as a viable enterprise for women to invest in Nigeria. Incorporation of women into agricultural entrepreneurship is a welcome development as it will contribute to the sustainable development initiatives. However, this is a herculean task in Nigeria due to numerous challenges. Women often encounter an array of business challenges in many societies. For example, work hours restriction set against women, the types of job permitted for women to engage in and other socio-cultural factors pose hindrances to the successful operation of women's businesses, thereby depriving them of harnessing their own economic opportunities and contributing their part as productive members of the labour force in Nigeria (Lawal *et al.*, 2016).

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 (Ogunlade 2009), where fowls range freely and scavenge in the backyard which requires only a minimal cash expenditure on feed. 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 (Ogunlade 2009).

Insurgency could be defined as a religious or political battle launched among an organized, sponsored and aggrieved set of people in order to change the order of government in an attempt to enforce a certain principle or ideology that is contrary to the will of government and the people (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2022). Insurgency in a broad sense is likened as a breach of peace and security, whether historical, religious, ethno-regional, civil, social, economic, and political that contributes to recurring conflicts, and leads to wanton destruction of lives and property (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). Hence, protection of the environment, lives and property in this context is considered the most important element required for the sustainable production activities in agriculture to take place.

The insurgency's detrimental effects on the rural economy and way of life severely weakened the region's demographic well-being. In the northeast, there were less meaningful jobs even before the crisis, and there are even fewer now. Agriculture accounted for the majority of labour force participation (43%) as well as the non-Agricultural, primarily unorganized sector (39%). Based on the submission of the World Bank (2015), the rate of labour involved in agriculture substantially declined (to about 27%) at the peak of the insurgency (2012-2014). This showed that the insurgency has considerably reduced Agricultural activity and restricted access to land for raising crops and livestock. Since agricultural production has decreased, food prices have increased and households are now more susceptible to shocks and stressors. This has caused a significant increase in unemployment, food insecurity, and poverty in the area. In real terms, the crisis caused the poverty rate to increase from 47.3% in 2011 to roughly 71% in 2019 (Eme and Ibietan, 2012; NBS, 2019; Avis, 2020).

The consequences of the insurgency in north eastern Nigeria, such as destruction of lives and properties, are serious issues that cannot be overlooked. There is a paucity in relevant gender and Women Economic Empowerment data in northern Nigeria which has been particularly pronounced, even more so in the Northeast. Women in the north are more likely to

be absent from the formal economy than other parts of the country. However, their absence from official data is due primarily to invisibility than to lack of economic contribution. It is estimated that at least 85% of women in the north are believed to be engaged in economic activities, with 55% categorized as off farm activities, and about 45% believed to be engaged in farm enterprise (NBS, 2019). It is likely that the number of women engaged in farm enterprises is higher. While estimates regarding women's productivity are significant, the nature of women's work in northern Nigeria, partially determined by the practice of seclusion among married women, means that more data is needed on labor dynamics, returns for work, enterprise decisions and processes, and economic relationship of both within and outside of the household (WISE, 2018), and of the barriers that women face in fully benefitting from economic programs and opportunities.

Iliyasu *et al.* (2015) asserted that the effects of the insurgency on livestock production in north eastern Nigeria is catastrophic. Their study documented livestock losses incurred by livestock farmers in each of the north eastern State. Their study revealed that most of the farm animals killed by straying bullets were the ones on free range and semi-intensive management systems, and such practices were predominant throughout north eastern Nigeria. The study focuses on effects of insurgency on livestock production only. The study did not factor in the assets, crops and other sources of income of these farmers to see how they were affected by the insurgency. The study did not also include women agripreneurs as a special group and how the insurgency affected their livelihoods. This created a gap in their work and this gap is part of what this research work seeks to address. This knowledge can assist donors and policymakers alike in supporting resilient value chains where insurgency is a risk and determining how to maintain investments during periods of instability. Thus, this study assessed the perceptions of poultry women agripreneurs on the effect of insurgency on livelihoods in the study area, with the following objectives:

- i. describe the socio-economic characteristics of poultry women agripreneurs;
- ii. examine the perceptions of poultry women agripreneurs on causes of insurgency; and
- iii. describe the constraints faced by poultry women agripreneurs as a result of the insurgency.

## METHODOLOGY

### The Study Area

Yobe State is located on Latitudes 11° 45'N - 13° 30'N of the Equator and Longitudes 9° 30'E - 12° 30'E of the Greenwich meridian. The State shares borders with three States; to the eastern boundary is Borno State, to the west is Jigawa and Bauchi States while to the north is international border with Niger Republic (Chinedu and Olaolu, 2010). Yobe State has area coverage of about 47,153 km<sup>2</sup> (NPC, 2007). In terms of topography, Yobe State is relatively flat, and the elevation is approximately between 450 to 480 meters above sea level (Ali *et al.*, 2014). The River Yobe, from which the State derived its name, is the biggest river in the State. It flows eastwards and drains into Lake Chad. It has a few tributaries, one of the most important being River Alkalam, where the famous yearly *Bade* fishing and cultural festival takes place (Komadugu Yobe Basin Project, 2006). Yobe State has hot and dry climatic features in the northern part for most of the year. In the southern part, especially in the rocky area of Gujba and Fika LGAs, it is hot between the months of March and June and cooler for most part of the year. The hottest months are March, April and May with temperatures ranging from 39°C – 42°C. The period of rainy season in the State varies from place to place, but generally lasts for about 120 days in the north and more than 140 days in the south. Annual rainfall ranges from 500mm-1000mm and the rainy season is normally from June to September in the north and May to October in the south. The two vegetation zones in the state, namely, the Sahel in the north

and the Sudan Savannah in the south have been severely under threat of desert encroachment thereby creating arid and semi-arid conditions (Ali *et al.*, 2014). The loose border between Yobe and Niger Republic has predisposed the State to attacks from insurgents as these insurgents gain easy entrance and exit through the border. Presence of border with Republics of Niger to the North, Chad to the north-east and Cameroon to the east has made the State more prone to attacks by insurgents as these insurgents have multiple borders to gain easy entrance and exit out of the State (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2014).

Yobe State has a projected population of 4,166,503 million in 2023 based on the 2006 National Census. The climatic conditions in Yobe State make it very suitable for cereal crop production since most cereals don't require heavy rainfall to get established. Also, low prevalence of animal diseases because of limited disease carrying insects which are usually high in forest and water-logged regions of the country have made Yobe State more conducive for animal production. Their main crops are sorghum, millet, maize groundnut, cowpea and vegetable while rice and wheat are grown in the Fadamas (inland valleys) and in irrigated areas (WOFAN, 2007). The conducive nature of the state for agriculture especially the cultivation of cereals and rearing of livestock has made many of the rural dwellers engage in agriculture as their major source of livelihood.

### **Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

A multi stage sampling technique was used for sample selection in the study area. The first stage involved purposive selection of Six (6) Local Government Areas (LGAs) from the insurgency affected areas and six (6) LGAs from non-insurgency affected areas in the study area making up a total of 12 LGAs. The insurgency affected areas were directly attacked and security compromised while the non-insurgency affected areas had indirect effect of the insurgency (YOSADP, 2022).

In the second stage, two (2) villages were randomly selected from each of the 12 LGAs selected to make up a total of 24 villages for the study. In the third stage, snowball sampling technique was employed in selecting 300 (150 each from insurgency and non-insurgency areas) poultry women agripreneurs in the study which was used as the sample size for the study and 25 questionnaires were administered in all the LGAs. Snowball sampling technique was employed because of lack of sampling frame and to locate the population of interest. However, 297 questionnaires were retrieved from the poultry agripreneurs and used for the study.

**Table 1: Sample Size for Poultry Women Agripreneurs**

	LGA (12)	Villages (24)	Sample size
Insurgency Areas	Gujba	Buniyadi	13
		BuniGari	12
	Gaidam	Gumsa	13
		Ashekiri	12
	Tarmuwa	Babbangida	13
		Chirokusko	12
	Yunusari	Bukarti	13
		Yunusarigari	12
	Damaturu	Kukareta	13
		Masandari	12
	Gulani	Bumsa	13
		Bularafa	12
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>150</b>
Non-insurgency Areas	Potiskum	Mamudo	13
		Yarimaram	12
	Nguru	Afunori	13
		Bulabulin	12
	Karasuwa	Jajimaji	13
		Bukarti	12
	Bade	Katuzu	13
		Lawan Musa	12
	Jakusko	Buduwa	13
		Jakusko	12
	Nangere	Kukuri	13
		Dawasa	12
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>150</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>300</b>

**Source: Yobe State Agricultural Development Program (YOSADP), 2022**

### Method of Data collection

The data for this study was obtained mainly from primary sources. The primary data was collected from respondents through administration of structured questionnaire. Other information was obtained from literature materials textbooks, relevant websites, libraries, Journals, conference proceedings, magazine, internet and other articles relevant to the study.

### Method of Data Analysis

The analytical tool used to achieve the objectives of the study was descriptive statistical tool. This includes the use of frequency count, mean, standard deviation, percentages, and mean score. This was used to describe the socio-economic characteristics of poultry women agripreneurs (objective i) and the constraints faced by women agripreneurs as a result of the insurgency in the study area (objective iii). Mean score was used to examine the perceptions of women agripreneurs on causes of insurgency and the five (5) points Likert scale is categorized as; Strongly Agree = (5), Agree = (4), Disagree = (3), Strongly Disagree = (2) Undecided (1). The 5 – point Likert scale has a mean threshold of 3.00, that is any of the effect that is  $\geq 3.00$  shows a strong perception, while a mean of  $< 3.00$  threshold shows a weak perception.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Socio-economic characteristics of the Respondents

**Table 2: Socio-economic Characteristics of Poultry Women Agripreneurs**

Variables	Poultry Agripreneurs in Insurgency Areas (n= 143)		Poultry Agripreneurs in Non-Insurgency Areas (n= 154)	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
<b>Age (years)</b>				
15 – 24	11	7.7	15	9.7
25 – 34	32	22.4	45	29.3
35 – 44	55	38.4	45	29.2
45 – 54	39	27.3	46	29.9
55 -64	06	4.2	03	1.9
Mean $\pm$ standard deviation	38.6	$\pm 10.3$	37.5	$\pm 9.8$
<b>Highest level of education</b>				
No formal education	42	29.4	29	18.8
Primary	17	11.9	73	47.4
Secondary	29	20.3	36	23.4
NCE/OND	30	21.0	10	6.5
HND/first degree	20	14.0	03	1.9
Postgraduate	05	3.5	03	1.9
<b>Marital status</b>				
Single	09	6.3	02	1.3
Married	124	86.7	102	66.2
Widowed	04	2.8	42	27.3
Divorced	06	4.2	08	5.2
<b>Years of experience</b>				
1 – 10	91	65.5	26	81.2
11 – 20	29	20.8	03	1.9
21 – 30	19	13.7	03	1.9
Mean $\pm$ standard deviation	11	$\pm 8.1$	2.4	$\pm 0.6$
<b>Other sources of income</b>				
Trading	44	30.8	32	20.8
Crop farming	59	41.3	106	68.8
Civil service	30	21.0	11	7.1
Others	10	7.0	05	3.2

**Source: Field Survey, 2023****Age of respondents**

Table 2 depicts 38.4% of the poultry agripreneurs in insurgency areas are between the ages of 35-44 years while 29.9% are between the ages of 45-54 years in non- insurgency areas. The mean age for women poultry agripreneurs in insurgency areas is 38.6 while the mean age for the respondents in non-insurgency areas is 37.5. The findings implies that both categories of poultry agripreneurs are young and active producers, they can contribute to the growth of poultry enterprise and family nutrition.

This is in line with the findings of Baiyegunhi and Fraser (2009) that majority (86%) of the farmers studied in Kaduna State were within the middle age group of 26-54 years. This similarity is best explained by the fact that both studies were conducted in the northern part of Nigeria. However, this result was contrary to the finding of Nwaiwu (2015) which revealed the mean age of farmers in south eastern Nigeria to be 57 years. This difference could be due to the regional variation in the areas of study which may be attributed to the fact that the more fertile lands for agriculture in the north encourage youths to go into farming and livestock rearing compared to southeast where gully erosion and floods have destroyed many farmlands, thereby, making farming and livestock rearing very unattractive to the youths.

It can be inferred that the respondents were typically young and active but with also important variation around the mean age. Given that the study area is rural in nature, the usefulness of the youth during and after the insurgency period could also be in terms of facilitating the transformation of agriculture through their willingness to adopt improved technologies such as improved seed varieties, hybrid species and agrochemicals in order to increase their productivity and ultimately improve their standard of living. This is because, studies on adoption of innovations like improved seed varieties, chemicals and agronomic practices emphasize that youths are more risk oriented and often adopt more than their older counterparts.

**Educational level of the respondents**

The importance of education in every aspect of human endeavours cannot be over emphasized because it is a significant factor of human capital that can be used to trigger changes. According to the result as seen in Table 2, respondents with no formal education had the lowest proportion 29.4 %in poultry agripreneurs in insurgency areas and 18.8% in non-insurgency areas. This means that most women agripreneurs (70.7% in insurgency areas and 81.4% in non-insurgency areas) were formally educated. It also means that educational attainment in the study area is high which will affect future possibility of diversified rural livelihood. The findings agree with that of Nwaiwu (2015) which showed that most of the farmers (72.5%) had formal education and that of Ogunmefun and Achike (2015) which showed that most of the subject studied have primary (33.8%) education. This finding disagrees with that of Apata *et al.*, (2010) which assert that most of the Nigerian farmers had no formal education. This difference could be attributed to the reason that respondents in both studies were not selected based on what they produce be it livestock or crop.

**Marital status of the respondents**

The results revealed that about 86.7% were married amongst the poultry agripreneurs. This finding is not different from the assertion made by Ogunmefun and Achike (2015) in their work that majority (81.3%) of the respondents were married. The similarities as observed in the work of Ogunmefun and Achika (2015) could be attributed to the fact that both studies were conducted in rural areas and which in most cases, people marry at early age to increase manpower for farming. The implication of having more married people in a rural area means more procreation which helps in building a virile farming population and invariably increasing food production.

### Years of Experience of the respondents

Results in Table 2 showed that the majority of poultry women agripreneurs have between 1 and 10 years of experience producing poultry (81.2% in non-insurgency areas compared to 65.5% in insurgency areas). According to a research by Ogunmefun and Achike's (2015), they believe a typical farmer should have 13 years of experience. This was in contrast to the findings of this research; this cause could be attributed to the respondents' varied ages. It could be that Ogunmefun and Achike (2015) had younger respondents in their study. An average respondent who worked in business and government had an average of 10 and 5 years of experience, with standard deviations of 7.25 and 2.87 years, respectively. They took into account both male and female farmers in their study. This result implies that the respondents' experience in their primary sources of income is sufficiently high to contribute to improvements in their varied agriculturally based sources of income and increased efficiency.

### Other Sources of Income of the Respondents

According to the results, 68.8% of poultry agripreneurs in the non-insurgency areas and 41.3% of those in the insurgency areas participate in crop farming as a secondary source of income (Table 2). The results of this study agreed with that of Zaridis *et al.* (2015) who discovered that younger women agripreneurs with a high degree of education are not restricted to agricultural income alone but instead search for additional non-agricultural income. Some of them attempt to raise their educational standing in order to look for non-agricultural employment in metropolitan regions since they are dissatisfied with their farm income and think that there are more opportunities for a better quality of life in a large metropolis. Even though they have a high level of education, a small percentage of women farmers, mostly young ones, are willing to stay in rural areas as long as the government provides them with help to do so. The similarities of both studies arise from the fact that both studies focus on rural women agripreneurs.

### Perception of Poultry Women Agripreneurs on Causes of Insurgency

**Table 3: Poultry Agripreneurs' Perception on Causes of Insurgency (n = 297)**

Causes of Insurgency	SA(%)	A(%)	U(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean
Lack of parental care	63.3	22.2	2.0	9.8	2.79	4.34
Wrong religious education	65.6	27.9	2.0	2.7	1.7	4.53
Unemployment	68.0	26.9	0.7	2.0	2.3	4.56
Illegal immigration	64.3	25.2	4.7	5.0	0.7	4.48
Illiteracy	65.0	25.6	3.7	3.0	2.7	4.47
Prevalent poverty level	66.0	29.0	2.4	1.0	1.7	4.57
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>4.49</b>					

**Keys:** SA (strongly agree), A (agree), U (undecided), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree)

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

Table 3 shows that majority of women agripreneurs believe that poverty (66.0%), unemployment (68.0%) and wrong religious education (65.6%) are the causes of the insurgency. The study is similar to the assertion by Joseph (2015) that Poverty, unemployment and ignorance contribute significantly to the spread of the insurgents' activities in Northern Nigeria. Most Nigerians agreed that the current insurgency in the North is worsened by the high level of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy prevalent in Northern Nigeria. As opined by Joseph (2015) this reality is corroborated by Marxist proposition on religious influence on man. When a young man is poor, illiterate and unemployed he becomes a clean slate for any



kind of brainwashing which is more potent when it comes from religion aided by culture. This is so because this category of people lacks the intellectual power to logically question or critique what they are told. Also, the activity component of the brainwashing provides a quasi-equivalent of employment, and thus they feel engaged in acting out what they have been brainwashed on (Awoyemi, 2012). To buttress this, Danjibo (2009) claimed that majority of the insurgents were largely illiterate youths who engaged in petty trading or had dropped out of school. This standpoint also accounts for why the movement has large and committed followers among the Almajiris. Nigeria is ravaged by underdevelopment, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, lack of basic social amenities, corruption, increased cost of living, etcetera, all of which have instigated grievances against the system and created breeding ground for terrorism (Folarin and Oviasogie, 2015).

### Constraints Faced by Poultry Women Agripreneurs

**Table 4: Constraints Faced by Poultry Agripreneurs as a Result of Insurgency (n = 297)**

Constraints	VS (%)	S (%)	NS (%)	U (%)	Mean	Decision
Inaccessibility to output market	53.5	19.1	25.0	2.4	2.69	NS
Inaccessibility to input market	48.1	20.5	24.2	7.0	2.55	NS
Restriction of movement in and out to carry out productive activities	47.8	15.5	27.6	9.0	2.44	NS
Unavailability of labor	59.9	16.4	20.2	3.4	2.87	VS
Unavailability of Credits	69.0	23.9	4.0	3.0	3.41	VS
<b>Overall Mean</b>					<b>2.80</b>	

**Keys:** VS (Very Severe), S (Severe), NS (Not Severe) U (Undecided)

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

The mean score for the constraints faced by women agripreneurs in poultry farming is 2.50. Hence values  $\geq 2.50$  are considered as Very severe constraints while values  $\leq 2.50$  are considered as Not severe constraints. Restriction of movement in and out to carry out productive activities has the least mean score (2.44) because of the practice of seclusion amongst the women agripreneurs in the study area. This is due to the socio-economic norms and gendered economic norms that prevent the women from carrying out productive activities outside the household. Unavailability of credits with the highest mean score (3.41) is the most severe constraints faced by the poultry agripreneurs as most financial institutions were inaccessible or destroyed during the insurgency. Output markets and inputs markets were also inaccessible during the insurgency which was instrumental to the detrimental effect caused to the poultry enterprise.

The findings resonate with a report by the Women's Income Generation in North East, Nigeria (WISE 2018), which stated that women agricultural entrepreneurs in north eastern Nigeria encounter barriers in form of social norms and, more specifically, gendered economic norms. These barriers restrict not only their access to economic opportunities but also their ability to interact with a wider range of markets. Contrary to their male counterparts, women face socially ingrained obstacles when it comes to accessing resources, whether tangible possessions like land and animals or more consistent financial flows. The returns women are able to realize as a result of their economic productivity are impacted by this inequality. It has

been observed, for instance, that although women make significant contributions to the poultry production, gendered economic norms that frame the poultry market have left women powerless when it comes to ensuring a just financial return on those productive inputs. Male dominance of the trading space as a whole limits women's ability to realize any significant or transformative economic advancement, even when they are not restricted by rigid restrictions like seclusion that prevent their presence in the markets.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that poverty, unemployment and wrong religious education were the major perceived causes of insurgency in the region. If interventions are not quickly made to salvage the situation, insurgency in the region may deteriorate and destroy all rural livelihoods. Poultry women agripreneurs face social, cultural and gendered economic norms that hinder their productivity. A favourable policy environment that is gender sensitive in terms of access to and control of productive and natural resources such as livestock, micro-credit, veterinary services, and assured markets should be provided and socio-economic and technical constraints needs to be addressed to strengthen women's influence and social empowerment.

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