



RESEARCH ARTICLE

FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN ACCESS TO LAND IN BICHI LOCAL

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the land ownership status of women and constraints of women in access to land. Personal interview was carried out with a sample of 385 women in four out of eleven wards in Bichi Local Government Area. The result indicates that majority of the women are landless. Married women who own land usually put their land under the custody of their husband. Capital is the major constraints to women access to land, unlike before where culture is the major constraints. Widows are the majority of the land owners and they actively participate in agricultural production with their children helping them. Women between 40 to 50 years form the majority of the women farmers. However women educational level makes them to know the importance of land either for agricultural, commercial or for residential purposes

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INTRODUCTION

One of major problem lingering around development through out the Africa is that of women's and access to land. Their is a common story about women and access to land tenure status that transcends ethnic cultural and national boundaries .The story begins by placing women not as owners of land but as owners of crops, they have right to cultivate and right to dispose of crops and crop income but not right to be allocated land or to alienate land. Their ultimate right to use land are associated with their position towards men as mother's wives sisters and daughter (Manuh, 2016). In the northern part of Nigeria, there is nothing to suggest that women should not own land. However the concepts of ownership imply that control over land cannot reside with women who are not usually considered household heads even in matrilineal societies (Ega, 1991). IFAD (2001) has reviewed the situation of the barriers that account for women's control over land. From this research conducted in a rural agrarian society, it is easier to shift education, health and non-farm assets to women than to give them land rights. The basic reason for this is power. Outsiders may see education and health as important assets, but in rural communities, land counts more. Land gives social and economic power and the impact can be almost immediate. Therefore, giving women land means giving them power. It is not surprising that women have such a hard time obtaining control of this valuable asset.

In many communities, the lineage authorities allocate land to the male household head. Women on the other hand have secondary cultivation rights that they obtain through male family members (Sarpong, 2006; Bortei-Doku, 2002).

The Research Problem

The ownership of land and easy access to farm inputs and services by rural women are essential to increase their productivity and hence income status. In societies following customary rules, women's direct access to land through purchase or inheritance is often limited. There is usually customary provision for indirect access to land in term of use right as community members, wives, mothers, sisters, or daughters. These use rights however, do not grant enough security for women when traditional family structures dissolve. The economic and social well being of women and their children are at increase risk when women face widowhood and divorce, or when the male head of household does not or cannot exercise his responsibilities to his family (Komjathy and Nicholas, 2014). Women are the majority of the world food producers. They are making up to 60 to 80 percent of agricultural workers in Africa and Asia and more than 40 percent in Latin America, yet most women don't have their own legal land (Manuh, 2016). Women and in particular widows and women-headed households tend to be denied, or are assigned weaker, land rights and as a result are often amongst the most vulnerable in the society. Strengthening their rights to land contributes not only to gender equality but also to poverty reduction, since women are responsible for household subsistence production and welfare (IFAD, 2001).

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Most of the researches on women and access to land made emphasis on culture and restriction on women of the Islamic religion as the major constraints to women access to land. Therefore the researcher will investigate whether this problem still exist in Nigeria where agricultural intensification, economic change and population growth have caused many changes in the society.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the research is to evaluate the factors influencing women access to land and use of land in Bichi Local government area of Kano state. This research hopes to achieve the aim through following objectives: i. to identify the constraints to women's access to land in the area. ii. to identify the nature of their participation in agricultural production

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area and data collection Bichi is a local government area located in Kano state; it is an area of Hausa speaking people within the Kano province of northern Nigeria. Bichi local government lies between latitude (7^0) north and longitude (12^0 north). The local government has a total mass of 350. 5km² and Bichi local government has an estimated population of about 150,683 people according to the 1991 census projected results.

because Bichi being a rural area, The population is homogenous picking few will be enough to represent the whole of population. Respondents for the interview were randomly selected. Each woman is allocated to a unified number in their houses. Then random table is used for the selection of samples. Personnel interview was used because most of the respondents are illiterate. The interview was based on their personnel characteristics such as age, educational level. Marital status, occupational status and daily in come. After identifying the above characteristics, the respondents were asked about their land ownership status, what they do with their land, constraints in access to land, and their participation in farming operation e.t.c. The data generated are quantitative in nature. The result of the variables obtained like land ownership status of women, age distribution, farming activities of the respondent, marital status and access to land and so on have been arranged according to their frequency of occurrences. Basic statistical methods of analysis have been used to describe them, which include histogram.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relationship of land ownership and socio-economic attributes of the respondents. The respondents educational level makes them to know the importance of land either for agriculture, commercial and residential purposes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	LAND TYPES				N = 166		
	Residential	Commercial	Agricultural				
Primary	1	11.1	4	16.7	23	17.2	16.87
Secondary	2	22.2	3	12.5	14	10.5	11.4
Tertiary	4	44.4	2	8.3	2	1.5	4.8
Adult Education	0	0	4	16.7	16	12.0	12.0
Qur'anic Education	2	22.2	6	25.8	50	37.6	34.3
Illiterate	0	0	5	20.8	28	21.0	20
Total	9	100	24	133	100	100	100

Source: Field Work, (2017)

Table 2. Age Distribution of Respondents and Participation in Farming Activities

YEARS	FARMING Activities of the respondents						
	Land preparation	Ridging	planting	Fertilizer application	weeding	harvesting	Processing farm produce
N =40	N=34	N=41	N=34	N=134	N=148	N=187	%
2	2	3	2	14	13	29	10.5
3	2	4	4	16	19	30	12.6
7	4	8	5	20	20	32	15.5
15	16	15	13	29	32	35	25.1
10	8	9	9	30	38	33	12.7
3	2	2	1	37	26	28	16

Source: Field Work, (2017).

The climate of Bichi local government has usual features of the northern belt of Nigeria. It experiences distinct dry and wet season. According to Olofin (1987) the natural vegetation of Bichi local government area in Kano state is the savannah type, most of region is contained within Sudan savannah variety. Most of the inhabitants are farmers. Some of the crops grown include maize, millet, guineacorn, rice, beans and groundnut. The data for this research was collected using primary survey. The instrument is the interview schedule. The variables captured are women. The data were collected from four selected ward in the local government they are Bichi in the central part, Kwamarawa in eastern part, muntsira in the southern part and Danzabuwa in the western part. The rationale behind is to have representative from all parts of Bichi. The census of the women was collected from national population commission Bichi zone.5% of the population was taken

From the analysis of the Table 1, it shows about one third of the respondent have Qur'anic education and majority of them use their land for agricultural purpose in which they give their husbands or relatives to practice agriculture for them and only few of them practice agricultural on their own because of the culture and restriction on women of the Islamic religion. About one eighth of the respondents use their land for commercial purpose some women sell their ornamental and livestock to buy land to give for hiring because they believe that if they give on hire, they will have more returns than to practice agriculture on their own. However only 4.8% of the respondents have tertiary education and majority of them said they are constructing house on their land because they are civilized they know they have right to build house as their men counterpart. From analysis, Table 2 shows that only about one fifth of the young women (10 – 30 years) participate in

Table 3. Marital Status of the respondents and Access to Land, Marital status affect women's access to land as shown in

Access Land	Marital Status								
	Married		Single		Divorce		Widow		N = 385
	N= 210	%	N=20	%	N54	%	N101	%	%
Own land	49	23.3	5	25	24	44.4	61	60.3	36.1
Do not own land	161	76.6	15	75	30	55.6	40	39.6	63.1
Total	210	100	20	100	54	100	101	100	100

Source: Field Work, (2017)

Table 4. Main Occupation of Respondent and Access to Land

Access of land	Occupation							
	N = 84		N = 219		N = 82		N = 385	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Own Land	55	65.5	64	29.2	20	24.4	36.1	
Do not own Land	29	34.5	155	70.8	62	75.6	63.9	
Total	84	100	219	100	82	100	100	

Source: Field Work, (2017).

Table 5. Monthly Incomes of Respondents

Amount (N)	Munstira ward	Bichi Ward	Danzabuuwa	Kamarawa Ward	All Ward
	N = 71	N = 83	N = 82	N = 68	N = 304
	%	%	%	%	%
0 – 1,500	7.0	10.8	14.6	19.1	12.8
1,500– 3,000	12.7	12.0	14.6	19.1	12.8
3,000-4,500	15.5	12.0	15.9	13.2	14.1
4,500-6,000	21.2	9.6	13.4	10.3	13.4
6,000-7,500	16.9	9.6	9.7	11.7	11.8
7,500-9,000	14.0	7.2	6.1	5.8	9.2
9,000-10,500	5.7	7.2	9.6	8.8	6.9
10,500-12,500	2.8	16.9	4.8	5.8	9.2
12,500-13,500	2.8	8.5		2.9	4.9
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Work, (2017).

farming activities because their husband don't allow them to participate, but the most interesting thing is that women in all the age groups participate in all farming activities. This was also observed by Hartin (2000) that record shows that after clearing and ploughing of the land by the men, the operation such as weeding, harvesting, processing and storing are all women's job. Women between 40 -50 years are the majority of the women farmers and they participate actively in farming activities including ridging and planting. Fertilizer application is considered as men work because they are too difficult for women from the analysis of the above table show that in absolute term as well as by proportion widows are the land owners and they actively participate in agricultural production with their children helping them. Widows are followed by divorced women, where more than 44% of them own land. Married women who owned land usually put it under the custody of their husband. This was also observed by Ega (1991) in a similar study that, on the general level, there is nothing to suggest that women should not own land. However, the concepts of ownership imply that control over land cannot reside with women, who are not usually considered household heads even in matrilineal societies and even if they were to borrow, rent or beg for land, the transaction would usually be carried out on their behalf by their husband or male relatives.

Occupation of Respondents and Access to Land

Occupation or position of an individual determines his incomes and his means to provide all the necessities for the family, and determines also the capacity of the individual to have access to land. Analysis of the table 4 shows that more than half of the respondents are business women and they are the majority of the landless, which are involved in other petty business such as knitting weaving and sewing preparing food for sales, livestock rearing and other petty trading.

Thus, while 65.5% women whose main occupation is agriculture has land about one fourth each of business women and house wives owned land.

Constraints to Women's Access to Land

In most society women have unequal access to rural land and associated natural resources. In many cases, society may have protected interest of women through customary law, religion law and legislation in the past, but changing socio – economic condition often result in old rules failing to ensure that women have access to the resources needed to raise and care for the families. Capital is the major constraints of women's to land in the study area.

Monthly Income of the Respondents

The income of the respondents is the most important key point because it determines the means and the capability of an individual to have access to land. Fig1, Shows that about three quarters of the respondent claimed that capital is the major factor constraining their access to land, one fifth implicated culture, 1.6% claimed lack of interest while 1% said women are not given land in the community because they don't have responsibilities of taking care of the family. In the past culture was the major constraint to women's access to land but now due to the current economic change in all four wards majority of the respondent claimed capital is their major constraints to having access to land because, their income is low they can not afford to buy land. Table 5, shows the monthly incomes of the respondents. Most of the respondent said whenever they have money, men sell their land to them, and there is no discrimination. Also most of the women said if the go out to farm to practice agriculture they are not ashamed since they come out to earn a living and they support their family and

children with their income. This was unlike in the past when women were not allowed to come out due to their culture and illiteracy. Finally, none of the respondent claimed religion as one of their constraints to their access to land because they inherit land according to Islamic law. Thus in general, capital is the major constraint to women access to land because their income is small, they cannot afford to buy land. This result is different from the similar study by (Gray and Kevane 2015) that land is no longer available through customary channels and women are severely restricted in their financial and social abilities to gain land through government or market routes. From the analysis of table 5, shows that Bichi central has highest level of income with an average of N 7,500.00 per month while Kwamarawa ward has the lowest level of income with average of N3,000.00 per month. The price of the land in the area starts from N15, 000 upward.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the result of this study shows that capital is the major constraint to women access to land unlike in the past when culture was the major constraints. Majority of the women are landless because their income is small so they cannot afford to buy land. However women participates in agriculture production especially women between 40 and 50 years are involved in virtually all aspect of farming activities and drive considerable benefit from them. The chances for greater participation in agricultural production is however, hindered by inadequate access to land and capital.

Recommendations

In order to involved more women in land ownership, active participation in agricultural production and other productive activities, the following recommendations are made.

Access to resources, removing barriers to access to information, Allocation of abundant land, Acquiring new skills and training and reducing labour time.

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