

## Gender Contribution of Fulani Rural Dwellers to Household Food Security in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT** Actualizing food security through adequate food production is not a sole responsibility of men alone as women too play significant if not dominant roles of supplying all ingredients necessary to achieve food security in developing countries. It is against this background that the study on gender contribution of Fulani rural dwellers to household food security in Yewa North Local Government was based. A total of 131 respondents were randomly sampled for the study though 120 questionnaires were analyzed as 11 questionnaires were discarded due to misinformation. Questionnaires were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and chi-square. Majority of the respondents fall within the age brackets of 36 – 45 years of age with a mean of 41 years of age. Majority (63.3%) is in monogamous homes while (36.7%) are in polygamous homes majority have family size between 7-9 with a mean of 8 people. Majority of the men occupation was livestock rearing while trading was the main occupation of the female respondents. Majority sell milk products as source of income generating activity. Most men were involved in livestock rearing while majority of the women were involved in crop-farming as a means of livelihood. Majority of the Fulani men and women make sure that food items are available at homes. Both male and female respondents ranked lack of capital as their major constraint to food production. Chi-square analysis revealed that there was significant relationship between age ( $\chi^2$  value =13.25  $p^3=0.05$ ) sex ( $\chi^2$  value =20.87  $p^3=0.05$ ), family structure ( $\chi^2$  value=5.01  $p^3=0.05$ ), educational background ( $\chi^2$  value=10.76  $p^3 = 0.05$ ), primary occupation ( $\chi^2$  value=94.12  $p^3=0.05$ ) and their contribution to household food security. T-test showed that there is significant difference ( $p^3 =0.05$ ) in men and women's contribution to household food security. However, women have been identified to contribute more to household food security than men even when cultural tradition denies them access to farmland and capital. It is therefore suggested that Fulani women should be encouraged to attend adult literary classes in order to improve their salary level and farm inputs should be given to them at very subsidized rate.

### INTRODUCTION

Food security may have different meanings to different people. The International Conference on Nutrition (ICN), held in Rome in 1992, defined food security as “access by all people at all times to the food needed for a healthy life” (FAO/WHO, 1992a). Essentially for a country to achieve food security three basic aims must be in focus:

- ❖ Ensuring adequacy of food supplies in terms of quantity, quality and variety of food;
- ❖ Optimize stability in the flow of supplies
- ❖ Secure sustainable access to available supplies by all who need them.

However, adequate food availability at the national, regional and household levels, obtained through markets and other channels in the cornerstone of nutritional well-being. At the household level, food security implies physical and economic access to foods that are adequate in terms of quantity, nutritional quality, safety

and cultural acceptability to meet each person's needs. Household food security depends on adequate income and assets, including land and other productive resource owned. Food security is ultimately associated with access to nutritionally adequate food at household level, i.e. the ability of households or individual to acquire a nutritionally adequate diet at all times.

Food production is not the sole responsibility of men alone as it is believed in some circles (Olawoye, 1996); women play significant, if not dominant roles in supplying all three ingredients or pillars necessary to achieve food security in developing countries (IFPRI, 1995). In addition to farm work, women are solely responsible for housework including taking care of children and the elderly in the family and in most cases engaging in off-farm income earning activities. But, the risks involved in household management are often difficult to be handled by a single individual. So both the male and female usually

engage in some activities in order to provide income for family needs and to fulfill certain household responsibilities. In the pastoral system every member of the household contributes to, and benefit from, raising animals. Labor is specialized, by assigning labor to gender and age group thereby optimizing their production method (Janzen and Enkhtsetseg, 2002). Although the Fulani share herding task, men's work differ from women's work, as adult's work differs from children's work however, labor differentiation is not rigid among the Fulani, regardless of age or gender, all member of the household learns all the herding skills (Iro, 2003).

In order to improve the food security problem of households in traditional African society in particular, there should be increase in women's physical and human capital, increase in women's ability to generate income, protect women's health and nutritional status so as to effectively assist the men in ensuring improvement in household food security by engaging actively in production activities that would generate income to cushion and cope with adverse conditions of food insecurity (IFPRI, 1995).

However, the Fulani people have long been in the cattle business. They migrate and come into contact with different African tribes. Many Fulani completely or partially abandon their traditional nomadic life in favor of a sedentary existence in town or on farm among the conquered people. The Fulani men search for the best grazing land for their cattle, repair homes, dig or re-dig wells, prepare fields for planting and gather fodder for their animals while their women counterparts take care of all household tasks. They are responsible for laundry, collection of firewood, caring for Fulani children and weaving mats with dried grass while Fulani girls begin to learn their role early. Boys follow their fathers to learn how to tend the cattle or work in the millet field and the girls gather firewood and help to look after their younger siblings. However, Omotayo (2002) stated that the settlements of the Fulani pastoralist in the humid zone of southwest Nigeria is usually located in the peri-urban areas, in order to gain access to a regular market for their products, mainly dairy.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the gender contributions of Fulani rural dwellers to household food security in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State. Thus the following specific objectives are raised to:

Determine the personal characteristics of Fulani men and Fulani women in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Determine the contribution of Fulani men and Fulani women to household food security Determine the Fulani men and women's constraints to food production.

However, the study becomes imperative because to achieve household food security among the Fulanis in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State who happen to be practicing sedentary life system, there is need to consider gender contributions of Fulani men and women who are food producers and income earners for the household.

## METHODOLOGY

The study area is Yewa North North Local Government area of Ogun State. It has its Headquarters in Ayetoro. The inhabitants are mainly Yorubas, speaking various dialects. They comprise of the Yewa and the Ketus. Their major occupation is farming, consequent upon the large expenses of fertile land with a large deposit of mineral resources for industrial potentials.

The local government is essentially a semi-savannah vegetation area endowed with conducive climatic conditions for agricultural pursuits throughout the year. Agricultural remains the largest employer of labour in the area, as majority of the people are peasant farmers with a few engaging in mechanized farming. The area is richly endowed with fertile soils suitable for large-scale farming and cattle rearing. Major crops planted in the area are cassava, maize, orange, tomatoes, yam, banana, beans, rice, cocoa, kolanut, palm-oil and sugar can among others.

There are 14 major towns under the Yewa North Local Government of Ogun State. They are Ayetoro, Eggua, Ebute, Ibese, Iboro, Igbogila, Igan-Okoto, Igan Alade, Imasai, Ijako-Orile, Sawonjo, Joga-Orile, Oja-Odan, Owode-Ketu. Fifty percent of these towns were selected for the study giving a total of seven towns for the study. The towns randomly selected are Ayetoro, Eggua, Igan-Okoto, Imasai, Ijako-Orile, Igbogila and Owode-Ketu. Household numbers of each community was got from the local government secretariat. Eleven percent of the household in each of the towns was chosen for the study. In the households sampled, the household head (mate) was interviewed in the first household,

the eldest wife is interviewed in the second household and the procedure goes on respectively. This gave a total of 131 respondents for the study. However, a total of 120 questionnaires were analyzed as 11 questionnaires were discarded due to miss-information and uncooperative attitude of the respondents. The data were collected between the month of October and September, 2005.

**Table 1: Number of respondents in each of sampled towns**

Sample Town	Total Number of household/ town	11% Household was sampled	Number of questionnaire returned
Ayetoro	245	27	25
Eggua	114	13	11
Igan-Okoto	154	17	15
Imasai	218	24	22
Ijako-Orite	104	11	10
Igbogila	132	15	4
Owode-Ketu	219	24	23
Total	1186	131	120

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of analysis in Tables 2-10 show the distribution of respondents according to their personal characteristics, such as marital status, age, household size, educational backgrounds, primary occupation, contribution to household food security, constraints to food production and analysis of inferential statistics.

**Table 2: Gender distribution of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	63	52.1
Female	57	47.9
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2005

**Table 3: Age distribution of the respondents**

Age Range	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
16-25	4	6.4	2	3.5	6	5.0
26-35	5	7.9	10	17.5	15	12.5
36-45	27	42.8	20	35.1	47	39.2
46-55	18	28.6	25	43.9	43	35.8
55-65	5	7.9	-	-	5	4.2
65 and above	4	6.4	-	-	4	3.3
Total	63		57	100	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 2 reveals that 52.1% of the respondents are male while 47.9% are female. The reason has been that most male always migrate from their traditional environment in search of green pasture. Only few men migrate with their wives and children.

Table 3 shows that majority (39.2%) of the respondents are between ages 36-45 years old. However appreciable number (35.5%) of the respondents is between 46-55 years old. About 71.4% of the male respondents fall within 36-55 years of age with a mean age of 39 years while 79.0% of the female respondents fall within the same age category. This implies that the population is predominantly made up of average age people who are very active and still in their reproductive age.

Table 4 reveals that majority (40.0%) of the respondents have family size between 7-9 with a mean of 8 people. About 49.2% of the male respondents have family size of 7-9 persons and 31.6% of the female too are in this category. Peterson (1985) observed that income and household size are the main factors responsible for the differences in the amount budgeted for feeding in the various households.

Table 5 shows that 95.0% of the respondents have no formal education while 1.7% has primary education. Majority of the respondents are illiterate with no formal educational background. Corroborating this is Oladunjoye (1998) who reported in her finding of role of Fulani women Agropastoralists in Rural dairy production in Oyo State that none of the Fulani women were found to have any form of formal education.

Table 6 shows that primary occupation of most of the male respondents is livestock rearers (79.4%) as compared to 15.8% of the female respondents. Trading constitute the primary occupation of the female respondents (61.4%) as compared to only 3.2% of the male respondents. Majority of the men (79.4%) are

**Table 4: Frequency distribution of respondents household size**

Household	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
3 and less	3	4.7	2	3.5	5	4.2
4-6	19	30.2	27	47.4	46	38.3
7-9	30	47.6	18	31.6	48	40.0
10-12	11	17.5	10	17.5	21	17.5
Total	63	100.0	57	100.0	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2005

**Table 5: Frequency distribution of respondents educational backgrounds**

Educational Background	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	60	95.2	54	94.7	114	95.0
Primary Education	1	0.2	1	1.8	2	1.7
Secondary Education	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adult Education	2	4.6	2	3.5	4	3.3
Total	63	100.0	57	100.0	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2005

**Table 6: Frequency distribution of respondent's primary occupation**

Primary Occupation	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Crafting	4	6.3	-	-	4	3.3
Crop Farming	7	11.1	13	22.8	20	16.7
Livestock Rearing	50	79.4	9	15.8	59	49.2
Trading	2	3.2	35	61.4	37	30.8
Total	63	100.0	57	100.0	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2005

livestock rearers while majority of the women are traders (61.4%). This implies that men and women are involved in different kinds of job in order to meet their household needs.

Table 7 shows that majority (73.0%) of the male respondents always contribute to household food security by giving money to household members to buy food stuff for household consumption as compared to 22.8% of the women. About 46.0% of the male respondents occasionally hunt for meat, gathered snails from forest for household consumption while 69.8% never prepare food for household. This implies that majority of the Fulani men always give money to their household to buy household need. Also, majority (78.9%) of the female respondents always prepares food for the household and keep livestock for household use. About (70.2%) of the female respondents gathered firewood for household use. Likewise, 71.9% of the female respondents occasionally give money to household members to buy

foodstuff for household consumption. This implies that women's contribute to household food security is in no small measure as they contribute in divers ways.

Table 8 indicates that both male and female Fulani respondents rank lack of capital as the major constraint to meeting household food security. However, while Fulani male respondents rank lack of agricultural technologies as the second constraints the female Fulani respondents rank lack of access to land as the second major constraints to household food security. This implies that the Fulani respondents are facing different problem in order to meet their household food security. Almost all the respondents are of the opinion that giving adequate fund or access to credit facilities will help to improve their productivity.

Table 9 shows that there is significant relationship between age ( $\chi^2 = 13.25$  p-value = 0.05); sex ( $\chi^2 = 20.87$  p-value = 0.00); family structure ( $\chi^2 = 5.009$  p-value = 0.05); educational

**Table 7: Frequency distribution of respondent's contribution towards household food security**

Contribution	Male			Female		
	Never contribute	Occasionally contribute	Always contribute	Never contribute	Occasionally contribute	Always contribute
I give money to household members	12(19.0)	24(38.1)	27(42.9)	24(42.1)	25(43.9)	8(14.0)
I give money to household members to buy foodstuff for household consumption	4(6.4)	13(20.4)	46(73.0)	3(5.3)	41(71.9)	13(22.8)
I buy food stuff for household food consumption	25(39.7)	17(27.0)	21(33.3)	3(5.3)	35(61.4)	19(33.3)
I prepare food for household	44(69.8)	16(25.4)	3(4.8)	3(5.3)	9(15.8)	45(78.9)
Hunt for meat, get snail from forest for household consumption	15(23.8)	29(46.0)	19(30.2)	35(61.4)	16(28.1)	6(10.5)
Process farm produce for household consumption	26(41.3)	16(25.4)	21(33.3)	10(17.5)	10(17.5)	37(65.0)
Get firewood, kerosene and water for preparing food for household	36(57.1)	16(25.4)	11(17.5)	8(14.0)	9(15.8)	40(70.2)
Grow crops for household consumption	17(27.0)	20(31.7)	26(41.3)	10(17.5)	15(20.3)	32(56.2)
Keep poultry for household use	23(36.5)	8(12.7)	32(50.8)	10(17.5)	33(58.0)	14(24.5)
Keep livestock for household use	6(9.5)	12(19.1)	45(71.4)	8(14.0)	8(14.0)	41(72.0)
Cultivate land for food consumption for the family	10(15.9)	23(36.5)	30(47.6)	10(15.9)	23(36.5)	30(47.6)

Source: Field Survey, 2005

\*Figures in parenthesis are percentage

**Table 8: Frequency distribution of respondent's constraints to food production**

Constraints	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Lack of access	47	5 <sup>th</sup>	35	8 <sup>th</sup>
Poor weather condition	41	8 <sup>th</sup>	36	7 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of capital	59	1 <sup>st</sup>	52	1 <sup>h</sup>
Lack of transportation system	57	3 <sup>rd</sup>	46	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Lack of Agricultural technologies	58	2 <sup>nd</sup>	44	4 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of extension services	47	5 <sup>th</sup>	42	6 <sup>th</sup>
Lack of access to land	44	7 <sup>th</sup>	47	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Pest and diseases of crops and livestock	55	4 <sup>th</sup>	44	4 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Multiple Responses.

**Table 9: Chi-square analysis of respondent's personal characteristics and their contribution to household food security**

Variable	df	$\chi^2$	p-value	Comment
Age	5	13.249	0.02	Significant
Sex	2	20.87	0.00	Significant
Family structure	1	5.009	0.03	Significant
Household size	3	4.642	0.20	Not Significant
Educational background	3	10.758	0.01	Significant
Primary occupation	7	94.116	0.00	Significant
Secondary Occupation	7	42.757	0.00	Significant
Income generating	2	11.420	0.00	Significant

background ( $\chi^2=10.758$  p-value =0.01); primary occupation ( $\chi^2=94.116$  p-value = 0.00); and their contribution to household food security while household size is not significantly related to the respondents' contribution to household food security. This implies that age, sex, family structure, educational background and primary

occupation are related to household food security.

Table 10 shows that there is significant difference in men and women's contribution to household food security. This implies that women and men contribute differently toward household food security. However, table 6 gave the frequency contribution of men and women to household

**Table 10: t-test Analysis of Men and Women's Contribution to Household Food Security**

<i>Contribution to Household Food Security</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>95% confidence of the difference</i>	
				<i>Difference</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
				Equal Variance assumed	-5.532	110	0.000
Equal variance not assumed	-5.514	107.128	0.000	-5.0160	0.90972	-6.812	-3.212

food security and it was observed that women greatly contribute to household food security than men. Quisumbing (1994) said women's incomes are more strongly associated with improvement in children's health and nutritional status than are men's income.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Actualizing food security through adequate food production is not a sole responsibility of men alone as women played significant roles to achieve food security. It is against this background that the study on gender contribution of Fulani rural dwellers to household food security in Yewa North Local Government area of Ogun State was initiated. It was noticed that most of the respondents interviewed were male though 47.9% are female. The population of the Fulani in the area is predominantly made up of average age people who are very active and still in their reproductive age. Majority of the respondents have family size between 7-9 people with a mean of 8 people. Majority of the respondents are illiterate with no formal educational background, this is in line with Oladunjoye (1998) who found that Fulani women have no form of formal education. Studies further revealed that Fulani men and women are involved in different kinds of job in order to meet their household needs.

Majority of the Fulani men always give money to their household to buy household needs while Fulani women prepare food for the household and keep livestock for household use. Fulani women give money to household members to buy foodstuff for household consumption occasionally. This indicates that women's contribution to household food security is in no small measure as they contribute in so many ways. Findings further revealed that Fulani men and women are facing different kinds of problem in order to meet their household food security. They are of the opinion that giving adequate fund or access to credit facilities will help to improve their productivity.

Chi-square analysis indicates that age, sex, family structure, educational background and primary occupation are related to household food security. Further inferential analysis shows that Fulani men and women contribute differently toward household food security.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of food and adequate nutrition to any nation cannot be over-emphasized. To nourish is "to sustain with food", food is a necessity of life, and all creatures must eat to live. Food acquisition is therefore a major pre-occupation of all animals. Humans are virtually unique among animals in the practice of agriculture. Both men and women play critical roles in agriculture throughout the world; producing, processing and providing the food we eat. Rural people are responsible for greater part of the world's food production. Although, the rural people contribute significantly to the nation's agricultural sector, they are mostly faced with the problem of household food security and difference in gender. Therefore, the study identified gender contribution of Fulani rural dwellers to household food security. Thus men and women were found to be playing very vital roles at homes and contributing to household food security but study showed that women contribute more to household food security than men even though cultural tradition denies them access to farmland, capital and so on, they still manage to provide food for their household. It is however, recommended that more income generating projects should be introduced to the Fulani people to enhance their ability to earn cash in order to have more means of meeting the household needs; government should provide basic infrastructure such as market, agricultural input supply centers, improved breeds of cattle and so on so as to increase the Fulani output and also extension activities should be intensified to educate the Fulani people particularly the women on the most efficient technique of managing farm resources.



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