Assessment of Youths' Participation in Beef Production Activities in Osun State, Nigeria

Adekunmi, A.O and Awoyemi, A.O
Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Services,
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract. The study assessed youth's participation in beef production activities in Osun State, Nigeria. The study was conducted in purposively selected areas of the state where beef production activities predominate. A validated interview schedule was used to elicit information from one hundred and eight youths in different abattoirs in the study area. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentage, mean, and ranking were employed to summarise the data, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Chi-square analyses were used to determine the relationships between selected socio-economic characteristics and the participation of youths in beef production activities. The study revealed that educational level and annual income had positive correlates with youth's participation in beef production activities. The major constraints militating against participation of youths in beef production activities were inadequate training on good management practices (69.4%) and high cost of cattle and difficulty in sourcing healthy cattle (53.7%). The study concluded that youths were participating in all the activities which place beef meat on the tables of the consumers but participated more in slaughtering and skinning of cattle and marketing of beef. It was therefore recommended that beef marketers need to be given adequate training on good management practices as regards beef production, and efforts should also be made by government and non-government organizations to empower beef marketers and ensure that they have regular supply of healthy and hygienic cattle for consumption.

Keywords: Assessment, Youth, Participation, Beef, Cattle, Production

Introduction

Youths are the major group much needed for agricultural transformation. In Nigeria, as in many countries of the world it has been realized that government alone cannot provide for the needs of all the youths, which constitute large proportion of the nation's population. Youths constitute a formidable force for sustainable agricultural development of any nation particularly the agrarian ones including Nigeria. This is because youths possess a lot of energies and other inestimable assets for productivity and general sustainable socio-economic development (Iwala, 2006). Studies have shown that children and youths contribute significantly in agricultural activities (Ugwok *et al*., 2005). However, due to acquisition of western education, there has been a depletion of this youthful labour force in agriculture. Though youths have desirable qualities that can promote agriculture, yet most of them have strong apathy toward it (Jibowo, 1998; Adedoyin, 2005; Adewale *et al*., 2005). This has resulted in mass unemployment and lack of sustainable livelihood activities among the youths (Breitenbach, 2006; Anyadike *et al*., 2012). The question of unemployment becomes even more significant, considering that an unemployed and frustrated youth population is a reservoir for instability and spread of social vices.

Prominent among the income-generating activities which are capable of curbing the menace of unemployment is the production of beef in Osun State. Although, youths engage in beef production activities such as purchase of cattle, transporting purchased cattle to slaughter's slab, cleaning of abattoirs, feeding of cattle, slaughtering, smoking of the slaughtered cattle, skinning, up to selling of beef to consumers. However, youths are encountering constraints in the course of carrying out these production activities. Aphunu and Natoma (2010) identified

the lack of incentives from government, insufficient land, and lack of infrastructure in the rural areas and inadequate training and extension services as major constraints to youths' involvement in beef production activities. Young people's innovativeness should be matched with the right skills and capital to realize the much needed dividends (Vale, 2012; FAO, 2010; Brooks, 2012). The lack of incentives and drudgery are some of the reasons why the youths are disinterested in agriculture (IFAD, 2011). Training them with reasonable and sufficient skills is a key issue in the development of sound human capital required for national development (Ocho, 2005) and hence beef production business. Beef production serves as a source of livelihood among youths and adults. Beef production in this study entails all activities from the purchase of cattle or cow to be slaughtered to the marketing or sales of beef meat. Despite the fact that a sizeable number of youths are participating in beef production activities in the study area, there has been inadequate researches on the extent of and reasons for their participation. Hence, this study proffers answers to the following research questions:

1) What are the socio-economic characteristics of youths in the study area?;
2) To what extent do youths participate in beef production activities in the study area?;
3) What are the reasons for youths' participation in beef production activities in the study area? and
4) What are the constraints affecting youths' participation in beef production activities?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess youths' participation in beef production activities in Osun State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives were to:

- describe the socio-economic characteristics of youths in the study area;
- determine the extent of youths' participation in beef production activities;
- ascertain reasons for youths' participation in beef production activities; and
- identify the constraints affecting youth's participation in beef production activities.

Hypothesis of the Study

H_0: There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of youths and their participation in beef production activities.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Iwo, Olaoluwa and Ayedire Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Osun State, Nigeria. The people are primarily Yoruba descents. The primary economic activity is agriculture with the main crops being cocoa, yams, maize, cassava and oil palm. Iwo has an area of 245km^2 and a population of 191,348 (NPC, 2006), Ayedire LGA with 265.783km^2 in size and 76,309 inhabitants as well as Ola-Oluwa LGA with 332.117km^2 and 76,227 inhabitants. The headquarters of the LGAs are Iwo, Ile-ogbo and Bode Osi respectively. Other economic activities in the area are textile production and beef production business.

The population of the study were youths participating in beef production activities in Osun State. Primary data were collected through the use of a well-structured interview schedule. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in selecting one hundred and eight respondents. At the first stage, three LGAs were purposively selected based on predominance of beef production business; and these were: Iwo, Olaoluwa and Bode-Osi LGAs. At the second stage, four, three and two registered beef marketers' associations each were proportionately selected from Iwo, Olaoluwa and Bode-Osi LGAs respectively and the final stage involved the random selection of forty-eight, thirty-six, and twenty-four youth butchers from the registers of the associations from Iwo, Olaoluwa and Bode-Osi LGAs respectively. A total of one hundred and eight respondents were selected for the study.

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, and ranking were used to describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, reasons for participation in the production activities, the extent of participation and the constraints to participation of youths. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Chi square analyses were employed to determine the relationship between some selected youths' socio-economic characteristics and the level of their participation in beef production in the study area. The dependent variable for this study was the youth participation in beef production and it was measured using structured questionnaire which consists of twelve items scale on beef production activities on two point rating scale of Yes (2) and No (1) and also twelve items scale was employed on extent of participation in beef production activities measured on a four point rating scale of regularly (3), occasionally (2) and seldom (1), never (0).

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Data in Table 1 show that the majority (87.0%) were male whilst 13.0 per cent of the respondents were female. The participation of more males than females might be due to the fact that males are less involved in domestic chores than females and that males are more energetic than females. The respondents within the age bracket of 26 to 30 years formed the highest group with 42.6 per cent and the mean age of 23.6 with standards deviation of 3.8. This implies that majority of the youths engaged in beef production were in the middle age which usually characterized with possession of physical strength which could withstand the rigours of beef production activities. Current educational status of respondents revealed that 76.9 per cent of the respondents had secondary education while 19.4 per cent attended higher institutions. Few of the respondents (2.8%) received adult literacy education while just 0.9 per cent had primary education. The findings revealed that all the youths engaged in beef production could read and write and this could have helped them increase their production efficiency. Nassif (2008) noted that education attainment is very important because it could lead to awareness of the possible advantage of modern farming technique and diversification of households' income which will in turn enhance household food security. The results in Table 1 also indicate that more than half of the respondents (62.0%) were married while 38.0 per cent were singles. Youths practicing Islamic religion (78.7%) dominated beef production while 21.3 per cent were Christians. The household sizes of more than half of the respondents (59.3%) ranged from 3-4 members per household with mean household size of 3. This implies that the youths were just starting to build their families/homes and bearing children.

All of the respondents (100.0%) belonged to religious organizations; also 100.0 per cent belonged to butchers' cooperative societies where they accessed credit to finance their beef production business. Other societies where the respondents retained their memberships were political groups (57.4%) and social clubs (38.0%).

The results in Table 1 also show that 66.7 per cent of the respondents earned between N40, 000 and N60, 000 per month from the beef production activities while 30 per cent of the respondents earned less with the mean monthly income of N41, 650.08. The fairly huge gains from beef production activities by the youths in the study area could encourage them to continue to participate more in the business of beef production.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics (n=108)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Central tendencies
Gender			
Male	94	87.0	

Female	14	13.0	
Age			
≤ 25	20	18.5	
26-30	46	42.6	Means=23.6
31-35	22	20.4	SD=3.8
36-40	20	18.5	
Educational level			
Adult/literacy education	03	2.8	
Primary education	01	0.9	
Secondary education	83	76.9	
Tertiary education	21	19.4	
Marital Status			
Single	41	38.0	
Married	67	62.0	
Religion			
Christianity	23	21.3	
Islamic religion	85	78.7	
Household size			
1-3	41	38.0	
3-4	64	59.3	Mean =3
5-7	1	0.9	
Above 7	2	1.9	
Membership of social organization			
Butcher's cooperative society	108	100.0	
Social club	41	38.0	
Political groups	62	57.4	
Religious groups (Islamic and Christian groups)	108	100.0	
Income (per month)			
<₦20,000	06	5.5	
₦20,001-40,000	27	25.0	
₦40,001-60,000	72	66.7	
₦60,001-80,000	03	2.8	
Mean =₦ 41.650.08			

Source: Field survey (2019)

Entries in Table 2 show the distribution of respondents based on their participation in beef production activities. The mean score of 3.12 was recorded for the youths' participation in washing of the slaughtered cattle after burning of hairs before skinning, and this was ranked 1st which indicates that this was the activity which the youths participated most in all the programme activities of beef. Washing of the slaughtered cattle was followed by beef hawking with a mean score of 3.01. Other activities which the youth engaged in and which came 3rd in rankling was skinning with a mean score of 2.28, and smoking of the slaughtered cattle ($\bar{X}$=2.28). Abattoirs cleaning came 5th in ranking. The participation of youths was not prominent in some activities such as the purchase of life cattle which was probably left to the hands of adults like these youths' parents who probably had money to buy whole cattle. Cutting of grasses and fending for other feeding materials to feed the cattle's was mainly the work of younger children and this activity was ranked 11th. This finding is in tandem with the finding

of Ishiani (2009) who reported that children, especially boys helped in waste disposal and livestock feeding.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents based on the extent of youths' participation in beef production

Beef production activities	Mean (X)	Rank
Fetching of water for use	1.89	8th
Abattoirs' cleansing	2.21	5th
Purchase of cattle	1.08	12th
Transportation from the market	1.16	10th
Cutting grasses for cattle to feed	1.10	11th
Feeding of the cattle	1.74	9th
Slaughtering of cattle	2.12	7th
Smoking of the slaughtered cattle	2.28	3rd
Washing of the slaughtered cattle	3.12	1st
Skinning of the slaughtered cattle	2.28	3rd
Sorting of the carcasses	2.20	6th
Marketing /hawking of beef (cattle meat)	3.01	2nd

Source: Field survey (2020)

Data in Table 3 show different reasons why youths engaged in beef production activities. More than half of the respondents (51.9%) submitted that they were participating in beef production activities simply because it was their parents' job and this ranked highest in reasons for participating in beef production. About 44.4 per cent of the respondents advanced lucrativeness of the job in and around the community as a reason which made them to engage in beef production activities and this was ranked 2nd. Some youths (38.9%) developed interest in the activities and this ranked 3rd, about 27.8 per cent of the youths were out of school hence took beef production as a means of livelihood. It was found from the study that 27.8 per cent of the youths who hawk are probably out of school youths.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents based on reasons for participation in beef production activities

Reasons for participation	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
It is the parents' job	56	51.9	1st
It is a lucrative job in the community	48	44.4	2nd
Other source of income	27	25.0	5th
No other job to do	12	11.1	6th
No opportunity of formal education	30	27.8	4th
Interested in the job	42	38.9	3rd

Note: Multiple responses were given
Source: Field survey (2020)

The result in Table 4 revealed various constraints faced by the youths in beef production activities. The most pressing constraints of the youths were inadequate training on management and hygiene of beef (69.4%), high cost of live cattle (53.7%) and poor financial supports (50.9%). Other constraints include competitions among marketers of beef (25.9%) and inadequate skills in beef production and marketing (21.3%). By implication, some of the constraints of beef production activities reduced the youths' participation in beef production activities. Such constraints are inadequate skills and high competition in beef production.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents based on the constraints to beef production

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Poor health training on management and hygiene on livestock	75	69.4
High cost of cattle	58	53.7
Limited access to credit and poor financial support	55	50.9
Inadequate skills in beef production	23	21.3
High competition in beef marketing	28	25.9
Competition with other protein sources	17	15.7

Note: Multiple responses were given
Source: Field survey (2019)

The results of chi square analysis in Table 5 show that the participation of youths in the marketing of beef had positive significant association at P≤0.01 with sex (x^2=31.37), religion (x^2=52.67), and educational level (x^2=37.2), however there was no significant association between marital status of the respondents and their participation in beef production at 0.05 level of probability. The above information established that an increase in the value of the above significant variables would result in the corresponding increase in the youths' participation of beef production.

Table 5. Results of Chi square analysis showing the relationships between some selected socio-economic variables and participation of youths in beef production

Variable	Chi-square	Df	P- value	Decision
Sex	31.37	1	10.012	S
Religion	52.67	2	0.032	S
Marital Status	10.92	3	0.13	NS
Educational level	37.23	3	0.001	S

Note: Level of significance =0.001; S= Significant, NS= Not Significant
Source: Field survey (2020)

The results of Pearson Product Moment Correlation in Table 6 show that memberships of social organization (r=0.144) and annual income (r=0.146) had positive correlates with the participation of youths in beef marketing. These can be interpreted to mean that membership of social organization can positively enhance more participation in beef marketing activities through accessibilities to loan facilities and other opportunities. Also, the higher the annual income of beef marketers the higher the production and marketing of beef since their profits in previous sales might probably increase their turnovers. Other variables which were negatively significant with the youths' participation in beef production activities were age (r=-0.179) and household size (r=-0.103). This can be interpreted that as the beef producers/marketers ageing, there may be every likelihood that their participation in beef production decrease. These variables therefore are paramount factors in the participation of youths' on beef production.

Table 6. Results of Correlation analysis showing the relationships between selected socio-economic variables and participation of youths in beef production

Variables	Correlation (r)	P-value
Age	-0.179***	0.064
Household size	-0.103***	0.029
Membership of social organizational	0.144***	0.038
Annual income	0.146***	0.032

Note: ***Significant at the 0.01 level; **Significant at the 0.05 level
Source: Field survey (2020)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that majority of the youths who participated in beef production were males. Youths between the age brackets of 26 to 30 years formed the highest group among those engaged in beef production. All the youths engaged in beef production could read and write. The activity which they engaged in most was the washing or cleansing with water of the slaughtered cattle or carcasses. More than half of the respondents were participating in beef production because it was their parents' major means of living. Sex, religion, educational status had positive association with the participation in beef in production activities while membership of social organization and annual income were significant positive correlates of youths' participation in beef production. The paper therefore recommended that government at all levels and Non-Government organizations should give financial assistance to help individuals and groups of marketers of beef. Regular and adequate training should be organized for beef producers on health statuses of animals and even marketers themselves. Beef marketers should be encouraged to form associations through which government and other non-government agencies could assist financially.

References

Adedoyin, S.F. (2005). Youth and Children Programme in Nigeria. In S.F. Adedoyin (Ed.), *Agricultural Extension in Nigeria* (AESON) (251pp).

Adekunle, V.A.J., & Akinbuluno, M.O. (Eds.) (2006). Proceedings of the 2nd Annual conference in Agricultural Research for Development in Nigeria and Agricultural Technology. Federal University of Technology, Akure 223-231.

Adewale, J.G., Oladejo, J.A., & Ogunniyi, L.T. (2005). Economic contribution of Farm children to Agricultural Production in Nigeria. A case study of Ekiti State. *Journal of Social Sciences, 10*(2), 149-152.

Anyadike, Y. (2012). Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects unit. *J. of Edu and Gen. Studies, 1*(4), 088-122.

Aphunu, A., & Natoma, C.N. (2010). Rural Youth in Agriculture Production in Delta Central Agricultural Zone: Challenge to Agricultural Extension Development in Delta State. *Journal of Agricultural Extension, 14*(2).

Breitenbach, M.C. (2006). A model for Rural Youth participation in Local Government: A South African case study. *Annuals of Child and Youth Studies, 1*(1), 72-84.

Brooks, K., Zorya, S., & Gautam, A. (2012). *Employment in Agriculture; Jobs for African's Youth.* 2012 Global Food policy Report. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2011). Future Farmers: Exploring Youth Aspirations of African Agriculture future.

IFAD (2011). Feeling future generations- young rural people today, prosperous farmers tomorrow. Plenary panel discussion, 34th session of the Covering council, Rome.

Ishiani, Z. (2009). Key gender issues in urban livestock keeping and food security in Kisumu, Kenya. In A. Houorka, H. De Zeevw, & M. Njenga, (Eds.), *Women Feeding cities: Mainstreaming Gender in Urban Agriculture and Food Security* (pp. 105-112). Practical Action, London.

Iwala, O.S. (2006). Assessment of Youth in Agriculture Programme in Ondo State: Descircibility and Effectiveness. In G.E. Onibi, S.O. Agele, V. A. J. Adekunle, & M.O. Akinbuluno (Eds.), *2006 proceedings of the 2nd annual conference in Agricultural Research for development in Nigeria and agricultural technology* (pp. 223-231). Federal University of Technology; Akure.

Jibowo, A.A. (1998). *Agrological Transmission: The secret of National Food surplus*. An Inagural Lecture delivered on July 11th at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Nassif, F. (2008). *The gender-livestock climate change connection: Local Experience and lesson learned from Morocco*. Livestock and Global climate change conference. Hamnanet, Tunisia BSAS. 2008.

Ocho, L.O. (2005). Basic Resources needs for successful business management. In I.O. Nwangu (Ed.), *Education and Life Issues and concerns.* Enegu: Institute for Development studies.

Ugwoke, F.O., Adesope, O.M., & Ibe, F.C. (2005). Youths participation in Farming Activities in Rural Areas of Imo State, Nigeria: Implications for Extension. *Journal of Agricultural Extension, 8,* 136-142.