



## Evaluation of Sources of Information for Raising Village Chickens in Bauchi State, Nigeria (Short Communication)

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### SUMMARY

An evaluation of sources information for raising village chickens was conducted among 72 farmers from nine communities in Bauchi State, Nigeria. Eight farmers were selected based on their experience and ownership of more than 20 chickens by members of the community during a group discussion session held with farmers, poultry traders and butchers and community leaders. The result showed respondents were mostly full-time farmers (65.3%) who were married (98.4%) and over 18 years of age with over 5 years of experience in village chicken farming (77.8%). A combination of Radio and community were identified by most respondents (32%) as their major source of information on village chicken production. Schools, on the contrary, were the least reported source of agricultural information (3%). Diversifying sources of information could likely enhance the effectiveness of reaching farmers with technical information on raising village chickens.

**Key words:** Sources of information, village chickens, village chicken farmers, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

Village chickens is the most dominant and numerous of village poultry enterprise, and could enhance the attainment of sustainable development goals (SDGs) of elimination of hunger, poverty and empowerment of women through improved income and nutrition (Sonaiya, 2009) In spite of these, local chicken production is commonly

limited by high mortality due to diseases, poor nutrition and the paucity of technical information on: selection of good breeds, prevention and control of major diseases like Newcastle disease, improvements in nutrition, housing and marketing of village chickens. (Riise *et al.*, 2004; Sonaiya, 2009). To effectively communicate technical information to these farmers, would require an

evaluation of sources of existing information to facilitate improved capabilities building towards effective information delivery. This study was designed to identify farmers' sources of information on village chicken production in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Study area**

This study was carried out in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The State is located within latitudes 7° 52'N and 8° 56'N and longitudes 7° 25'E and 9° 37'E and shares boundary with Kaduna, Benue, Yobe, Gombe, Plateau, Taraba, Kano and Jigawa States (Independent electoral commission 2008) (Figure 1). The State have twenty Local Government Areas (LGAs) with a human population of 5,515,300 (Independent electoral commission, 2008) and a village poultry population of about 5,832,750 (Adene and Oguntade, 2006).

### **Sample size**

This study was carried out among 72 farmers in nine communities (Chinade, Shira, Kafin-Madaki, Jalam, Sade, Kutaru, Dass, Toro and Udubo) (Table 1) in Bauchi State using a multistage random sampling technique. The political map of Bauchi State (INEC 2007) was used to randomly select three Local Government Areas from each of the three senatorial districts of Bauchi State. Three villages were randomly selected from the list of communities in each of the three senatorial districts of Bauchi State (Independent Electoral commission, 2008). In each community 8 farmers with experience in village chicken production were selected during a focus group discussion held in each community. Thus, a total of 72 village

chicken farmers were selected during 8 focus group discussion sessions. The participants of focus group discussion in each community comprise of local chiefs, community leaders, farmers and poultry traders. Selected farmers were asked to list their sources of information on village chicken production. Their responses were assigned to the following categories: (1) School (2) Radio (3) Television (4) Community (5) Extension/ veterinary office (6) Multiple sources (7) other sources. Those who answered multiple or other sources were asked to specifically list the sources.

### **Data analyses**

Data were analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics.

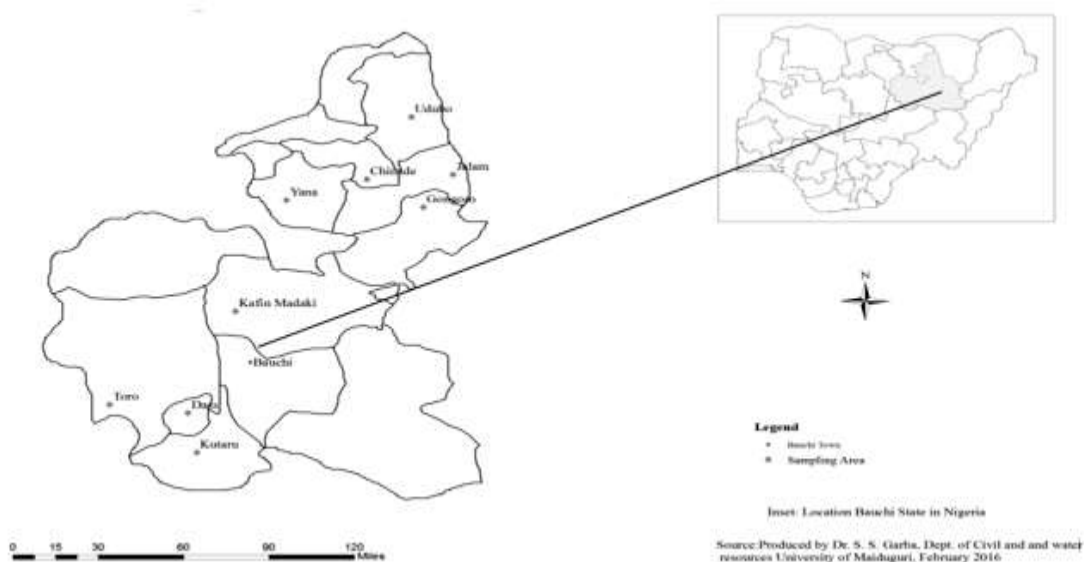


Figure 1: Map of Bauchi State showing the nine communities studied with Bauchi the State capital (Garba, 2016).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents who answered questionnaire on sources of information on village poultry health and production

Demography	Number of responses	
	*(n = 72)	%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Full time farmers	47	(65.3)
Civil servant, traders, artisans and others	25	(34.7)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	32	(44.4)
Female	40	(55.6)
<b>Age</b>		
<18 years	1	(1.40)
>18 years	71	(98.4)
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	1	(1.40)
Married or widowed	71	(98.6)
<b>Education</b>		
Non western or Informal	35	(45.6)
Formal	37	(54.4)
<b>Experience in chicken Rearing</b>		
<5 years	16	(22.2)
>5 years	56	(77.8)

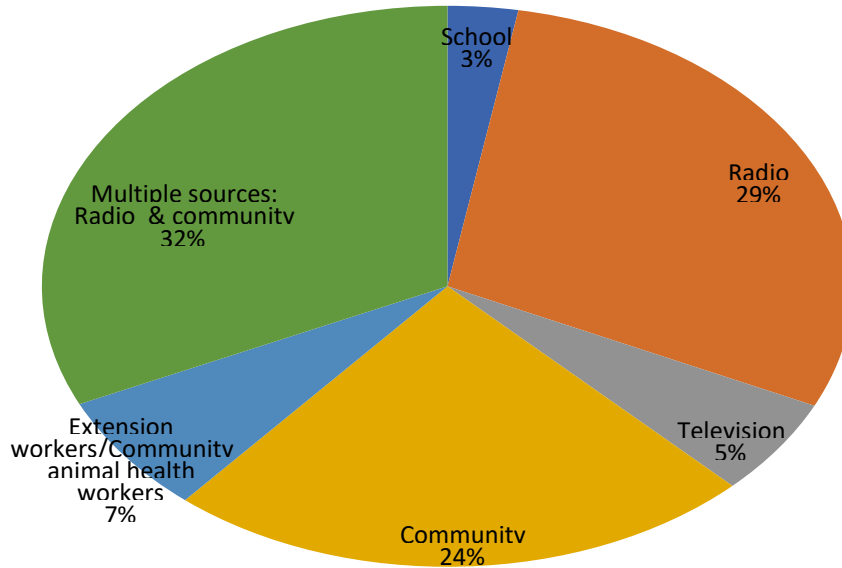


Figure 2: Distribution of farmer sources of information on village chicken production in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result showed respondents were mostly full-time farmers (65.3%) who were married (98.4%) and over 18 years of age with over 5 years of experience in village chicken farming (77.8%)

That major sources of information for village poultry farmers were Radio and Community (32%) and Radio (29%) (Figure 2) tend to suggest that information via the radio could easily be disseminated within members of the community especially, where farmers are encouraged to share aired program on poultry production with their friends or relations.

The low cost of purchasing and maintaining a radio set combined with the ease of listening to aired programmes while engaging in household chores at the same time might perhaps explain why it is a major source of information to farmers. This finding agrees with Assam *et al.* (2012) who found radio to be a good source of information on highly pathogenic avian influenza; and Maurice *et al.* (2019)

who found that farmers do listen to aired programmes on poultry diseases in Adamawa States, Nigeria.

The recognition given to the community as the next single source of information on village chicken production (24%) (Figure 2) was similar to the findings of Folitse *et al.*, 2018 in Accra Ghana. It is a commendable practice that family, friends or relations in a community can disseminate information on poultry production and diseases provided members of the community were sharing the right information. Yet, the high chicken mortality associated with existing village chicken production in Nigeria (Sonaiya, 2009) seems to suggest the need for suitable sources of information that will reach farmers with technical information on village chicken health and production.

The findings that few respondents obtained their information on village chicken production via extension workers (5.9%) agrees with the works of Sonaiya (2009) who reported that less than 5%

of village chicken farmers had access to extension agents. Limited interactions between extension workers and farmers could affect the demonstration and learning of practical activities like debeaking and vaccination against important poultry diseases. Since the engagement of extension services in the delivery of agricultural information to farmers was reported to produce better outcome than the media (Hoffman *et al.*, 2009), it becomes very important for the Bauchi State Government to retrain, employ and deploy more extension workers to its rural communities for the purpose of providing timely technical information and practical demonstrations of new innovative ways of raising village chickens. Erratic electricity supply in most rural communities could probably be the reason why Television was not reported as a good source of agricultural information. That respondents in this study reported schools as their least sources of agricultural information (3%) seems to suggest the need to incorporate practical and field demonstrations in animal production at schools to facilitate knowledge and effective dissemination of information that is aimed at improving poultry and livestock production.

None reporting by respondents of other sources of communications like live presentations, drama, videos, posters and veterinary leaflets in this study seem to suggest some limitations in the kind of information farmers are receiving. The establishment of rural library and information centers as suggested by Folitse *et al.* (2018) might probably aid in the inclusion of these sources of information to reach farmers with information on poultry health and production.

Even though, posters, as source of information were used for raising awareness and containment of avian influenza outbreak in Nigeria (Assam *et*

*al.*, 2012) respondents in this study did not report them as a source of information. Similarly, social media Platforms like internet and handsets among others were not reported as sources of agricultural information in this study. They might perhaps play an important role in dissemination of information about village chicken production in the future.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study reported Radio and Community as the major sources of information for raising village chickens in Bauchi State. This study recommends that Bauchi State Government retrain and recruit more extension workers to improve their sources of information on village chicken health and production.

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