

Information Sources and Utilization by Poultry Farmers in Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study examined the information sources and utilization behavior of poultry farmers in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. Data were collected from 70 poultry farmers in six out of the ten wards based on significant participation in poultry farming. Data were collected using structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools. The results revealed that 38.6% of the respondents were 45 years old or younger. All (100%) of the respondents had one form of education or the other, 80 % were married while 52.9 % were female. Information on poultry disease, prevention and cure and poultry meat processing and preservation, were the major information needed by the respondents. Feed sellers was the significant source of information used by the respondents, while information on poultry feeds and their sources, housing management and day old chicks were the major poultry farming information utilized by the respondents. Odd timing of extension message was the significant constraint to information seeking and utilization by the respondents. It was therefore recommended that contact farmers (feed sellers) should be used in disseminating the poultry farming information needed by the respondents. Also extension messages designed for the farmers should be disseminated at a time convenient to them.*

Key Words: *Poultry farming, information, source, utilization.*

I. Introduction

Poultry constitute the largest group of livestock with an estimate population of 14, 000,000 birds mostly chicken, duck and turkey (FAO, 1999). In traditional Africa Household, poultry production was considered a family backyard enterprise characterized by low productivity in the poultry industry, the Nigerian government laid emphasis on modern method of poultry production by introducing several scheme, one of such scheme was “the village poultry improvement scheme” whereby imported cocks of improved breeds were mixed with village hens for mating while native cocks were killed (Oladeji, 2011). The broilers and layers here were also introduced to meet the increasing demand for meat and egg in the country.

For poultry production to be effective and efficient, farmers and consumers alike, need to be equipped with the necessary information about poultry production, poultry products/ by products and their economic importance as well as information on poultry marketing. Since Agriculture is information driven industry, farmers seek and rely on information for optimum performance. Information seeking behavior refer to the strategies deployed by farmers to access information that could address their information needs to satisfy inadequacies in knowledge on certain basic practices with particular references to technical, marketing, social and legal issues. Effective communication of innovations in agriculture to farmers to farmers remains a promising strategy for increasing. For the farmers to adopt the innovations and continue to put them to use the new ideas must reach their farms and homes through effective communication (Undiandeye and Vosanka, 2008).

It is therefore imperative to study information sources and utilization behavior of poultry farmers in the study area concurrently. Also most of the studies on poultry production in the study area centers on economic analysis without much work on information sources and utilization of the respondents. It is this gap in knowledge that this study intend to fill. The study specifically

- i. determined the socio-economic characteristics of the poultry farmers in the study area,
- ii. assessed the poultry farmers information need,
- iii. determined the poultry farmer’s source of information,
- iv. determined the information used by farmers in the study area,
- v. identified constraints, of information sources and utilization by the poultry farmers in the study area

II. Methodology

The study was carried out in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. Jalingo Local Government Area is situated between latitude 9⁰00’N and 9⁰30’N and longitudes 11⁰00’E and 12⁰00’E.

The area has a total land mass of 3171 km² and a total population of 144, 183 people (NPC 2006). A multistage sampling technique was used in selecting 70 poultry farmers used in the study. In stage I, six out of

the ten wards in the study area were purposively selected based on their participation in poultry production. In stage II, 70 poultry farmers were selected using the snowball sampling technique, the primary data for the study was generated using structured questionnaire administered to individual's respondents. The data generated was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean frequency and percentage to capture the objectives of the study.

III. Results And Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1, reveals the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Respondents' age distribution reveals that majority (38.6%) of the respondents were within the age range of 36-45 years, 32.9% were within age range of 46-55 years, while 1.4% fall within the age bracket of 56-65 years. This implies that majority of the respondents were within their productive ages and have the capability to seek and utilize information on poultry farming.

The marital status of the respondents revealed that majority (80%) were married, 12.9% were single while widows/widowers constitute 7.1% of the respondents. The high level of involvement of married people in production is to augment their income to provide for family needs and protein in their diet. This agrees with Omelelin et al, (2007) who observed that in Africa setting, married people are considered more responsive in generating income and food to meet the family need.

The sex distribution of the respondents reveals that majority (52.9%) of the respondents were female while male constitutes 47.1%. This indicates that there were more female poultry farmers than their male counterparts in the study area. The possible reason for women's involvement might be to generate income and contribute to wellbeing of the family.

The educational attainment of the respondents reveals that, majority (37.1%) had BSc./HND, 34.3% had NCE/ND, 18.6% had MSc. While respondents that had Adult Education and SSCE constituted 5.7% and 4.3% respectively. This implies that all the respondents had one form of education or the other. This will influence their information seeking and utilization positively.

Household size distribution of the respondents reveals that majority (50%) had household size of 1-5 persons in their household, 45.7% had between 6-10 persons in their households while 2.9% and 1.4% of the respondents had household sizes of 11-15 persons and 16-20 persons respectively. this implies large households has additional demand for basic needs competing on the scarce family resources needed for farm enterprise thereby limiting their participation in poultry production.

The primary occupational distribution of the respondents, reveals that majority (71.4%) were civil servants, 15.8% farmers, 10% were traders, 1.4% artisans and also 14% were student. This implies that poultry farming cut across several occupations.

Poultry production experience varies among the respondents. Majority (68.6%) of the respondents had between 1-3 years of farming experience, 11.4% had 4-6 years of farming experience while only 5.7% had 13-15 years of farming experience. This shows that most of the respondents were just venturing into poultry production. Therefore there is need for them to have access to production information that will make informed and effective production decisions.

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Age		
Range		
26-35	23	32.9
36-45	27	38.6
46 -55	19	27.1
56 – 65	1	1.4
Total	70	100
Marital Status.		
Status		
Single	9	12.9
Married	56	80.0
Widowed	5	7.1
Total	70	100
Sex		
Status		
Male	33	47.1
Female	37	52.9
Total	70	100
Educational Qualification		
Status		
SSCE	3	4.3
B.Sc/HND	26	37.1
ND/.NCE	24	34.3
M.Sc	13	18.6
Adult Education	4	5.7
Total	70	100
Household Distribution		
Household size		
1-5	35	50.0
6-10	32	45.7
11-15	2	2.9
16-20	1	1.4
Total	70	100
Occupation		
Occupation		
Farming	11	15.8
Trading	7	10.0
Civil servant	50	71.4
Artisan	1	1.4
Students	1	1.4
Total	70	100
Years of Experiences		
Farming Experience (Years)		
1-3	48	68.6
4-6	8	11.4
7-9	4	5.7
10- 12	6	8.6
13 – 15	4	5.7
Total	70	100

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Information needs of the respondents

Table 2 reveals that information on housing and environmental management ($\bar{X} = 2.22$), day old chicks and their sources ($\bar{X} = 2.26$), feeds and their sources ($\bar{X} = 2.23$), Diseases and their prevention ($\bar{X} = 2.7$), Poultry growth ($\bar{X} = 2.29$), Egg laying/egg picking ($\bar{X} = 2.29$), Feed storage ($\bar{X} = 2.01$), Drainage system ($\bar{X} = 2.26$), broiler processing and preservation ($\bar{X} = 2.53$), and market information ($\bar{X} = 2.43$), where the information significantly required by the respondents as their mean scores are greater than the cut off mean of 2.0. This implies that extension agents, and veterinary personals in the study area should assist poultry farmers to access more information in those areas of need. The findings also reveal that information on land ($\bar{X} = 1.99$), water sources ($\bar{X} = 1.93$), credit facilities ($\bar{X} = 1.83$), and labor ($\bar{X} = 1.94$) were not significantly needed by the respondents.

Table 2: Distribution of information needs of the respondents

Information need	High need		Low need		No need		Mean score
	(F)	%	(F)	%	(F)	%	
Production	26	37.1	34	48.6	10	14.3	2.22
Housing and Environmental Management							
Day old chicks and their sources	31	44.3	26	37.1	13	18.6	2.23
Feed and their sources	29	41.14	28	40.0	13	18.6	2.23
Poultry disease, prevention and cure	51	72.8	17	24.3	2	2.9	2.70
Poultry growth	22	31.4	46	65.7	2	2.9	2.29
Egg laying and egg picking	22	31.4	46	65.7	2	2.9	2.29
Input							
Land	14	20.0	41	58.6	15	21.4	1.99
Water source	11	15.7	43	61.4	16	22.9	1.93
Credit facilities	9	12.9	40	51.1	21	30.0	1.83
Labour	16	22.8	34	48.6	20	8.6	2.47
Fuel	24	34.3	29	41.4	17	24.3	2.10
Equipment Repair	14	20.0	48	68.6	8	11.4	2.09
Feed storage	15	21.4	43	61.4	12	17.2	2.01
Drainage system	31	44.3	26	37.1	13	18.6	2.26
Marketing							
Poultry processing & Preservation	39	55.7	24	34.3	7	10.0	2.5
Market information	35	50.0	30	42.9	5	7.1	2.10

Cut-off Mean 2, Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Respondents’ use of information sources

Table 3 reveals that feed sellers ($\bar{X}=3.91$), mobile phones ($\bar{X} = 3.54$), veterinary personnel ($\bar{X} = 2.5$), News papers ($\bar{X} = 2.37$), Radio ($\bar{X} = 2.27$), and television ($\bar{X} = 2.17$), were the major sources on information on poultry farming and are significantly used by the respondents as their mean sources fall above the cut-off mean of 3.0. This implies that promoters of poultry farming in the study area should make use of these media in channeling poultry farming information to poultry farmers as most poultry farmers in the study area relied on them.

Table 3: Distribution of respondent’s use of information

Information source	Level of Use										Mean
	Daily		Weekly		Fortnightly		Monthly		Do not		
	(F)	%	(F)	%	(F)	(%)	(F)	(%)	(F)	(%)	
Extension Agent	2	2.9	2	2.9	8	11.4	0	0.0	58	82.9	1.71
Farmer’s Association	2	2.9	6	8.6	6	8.6	15	21.4	41	58.6	1.76
Internet	2	2.9	7	10.0	7	10.0	0	0.0	54	77.2	1.61
Radio	2	2.9	25	35.7	3	4.3	0	0.0	40	57.1	2.27
Television	0	0.0	26	37.1	2	2.9	2	2.9	38	54.2	2.17
Bulleting/Posters	3	4.3	13	18.6	2	2.9	1	1.4	51	72.8	1.80
Newspapers	8	11.4	14	20.0	10	14.3	2	2.9	36	51.4	2.37
Mobile Telephone	21	30.0	31	44.3	0	0.0	3	4.3	15	21.5	3.54
Seminar/Workshop	4	5.7	3	4.3	0	0.0	1	1.4	62	88.5	1.79
Ministry of Agriculture	0	0.0	2	2.9	0	0.0	3	4.3	67	92.2	1.16
Journals	1	1.4	5	7.1	0	0.0	4	5.7	61	82.7	1.34
NGO	6	8.6	10	14.3	1	1.4	1	1.4	52	74.3	1.81
Feed sellers	15	21.4	42	60.0	3	4.3	3	4.3	16	23.0	3.91
Veterinary personals	0	0.0	28	40.0	14	20.0	3	4.3	15	35.7	2.5

Cut-off mean =3, Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Respondent’s Utilization of Poultry Farming Information

Table 4 reveals that information on disease control ($\bar{X} = 2.77$), environmental condition ($\bar{X}=2.64$), day old chicks ($\bar{X} = 2.53$), market price ($\bar{X} = 2.41$), and egg picking ($\bar{X}=2.23$), were the information significantly utilized by poultry farmers in the study area as their mean score fall above the cut-off mean of 2. However information on budgeting ($\bar{X}1.96$), and insurance ($\bar{X} = 1.70$), were not significantly utilized by the respondents. This implies that poultry farmers in the study area need to be educated on farm budgeting as it affects allocation of production resources in farm business. Poultry farmers in the study area also need to be educated on the need to insure their farms against uncertainties associated with poultry farming.

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents' Utilization of Poultry Farming Information
Extend of Utilization

Information	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		Mean
	(F)	%	(F)	%	(F)	%	
Disease control	56	80.0	12	17.1	2	2.9	2.77
Environmental condition	49	70.0	17	24.3	4	5.7	2.64
Feeds	48		20	28.6	4	5.7	2.69
Day old chicks	42	60.0	23	32.9	5	7.1	2.53
Poultry production management	39	55.7	27	38.6	4	5.7	2.5
Egg picking	25	35.7	36	51.4	9	12.9	2.23
Market price	34	48.6	31	44.3	5	7.9	2.41
Insurance	11	15.7	27	38.6	32	45.7	1.70
Budgeting	20	28.6	27	38.6	23	32.9	1.96

Cut-off mean = 2, Source: Field survey, 2012

Respondents Constraints to Information Seeking and Utilization

Table 5 reveals that 20% of the respondents indicated that complexity of poultry farming information was a severe constraint to information seeking and utilization. Likewise, 24.1%, 28.6% and 37.1% of the respondents were of the opinion that irregular message content, irregular extension contact and odd timing of extension messages constitute severe constraints to information seeking and utilization by poultry farmers in the study area.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents based on the severity of information seeking and utilization in poultry production

Constraints	Severe		Not severe		Not a constraint		Mean
	(F)	%	(F)	%	(F)	%	
Complexity of information	14	20.0	26	37.1	30	42.9	1.77
Irrelevant message content	17	24.3	18	25.7	35	50.0	1.74
Irregular extension contact	20	28.6	18	25.7	32	45.7	1.87
Odd timing of extension messages	26	37.1	27	38.1	26	37.1	2.26

Cut off mean = 2, Source: Field survey 2012

IV. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that majority of the poultry farmers in the study area were within their prime ages. They had attained one level of education or the other with few years of poultry farming experience. Also majority of them were female and were married. Information on poultry housing, environmental management, day old chicks and their sources, poultry feeds and their sources, disease prevention and cure, poultry growth, egg laying and egg picking, labor, equipment repair, feed storage, drainage system, poultry meat processing and market information were the major information needed by the poultry farmers in the study area. The study further concludes that mobile phones and feed sellers were the major sources of information used by the respondents while information on disease control, environmental conditions, feeds, housing management, day old chicks, poultry production management, egg picking, market price and cost of production were the poultry farming information significantly utilized by the respondents. Odd timing of extension messages was identified as the major constraint to information seeking and utilization by the respondents. Therefore, mobile phones and contact farmers should be used in disseminating the poultry farming information needed by the farmers.

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