

Constraints and enablers of poultry farming on the rural women's empowerment in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper investigates the constraints and enablers of poultry farming on the rural women's empowerment in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Design/methodology/approach: The study selected a sample of 256 women farmers through a simple random sampling. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data. Regression analysis was utilized for hypothesis testing.

Findings: The study identified gender-based discrimination, obsolete technology, insufficient capital access, and market access as the main constraints. The results show that poultry farming promotes women's participation in family and community decision-making, enhances their ability to cover home expenses, and helps them achieve financial sustainability.

Limitations and Research Implications: The study is limited to modern factors influencing the participation of rural women in poultry farming. This stimulates further research interest in understanding the influence of women's involvement in agriculture on their standard of living, fostering a broader dialogue on rural women's empowerment through farming practices in Kaduna State and Nigeria as a whole.

Practical Implications: The findings of this study will be valuable to the Kaduna state Ministry of Agriculture, the NGOs, and Agricultural Extension Services in Kaduna state to gain insight into strategies to support women farmers in achieving greater productivity, provide women farmers with adequate inputs and services, and improve female extension services with strategies to reduce poverty.

Originality/Value: The study posited that poultry farming is a critical tool for empowering rural women despite their challenges, addressing key constraints, and enhancing access to capital and technical resources. Despite these challenges, poultry farming remains a viable livelihood strategy for rural women due to its low startup costs and high turnover rate.

Keywords: Farming Constraints, Rural Women, Rural Livelihoods, Poultry Farming, Women's Empowerment.

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Introduction

Poultry farming presents an avenue for rural women in Kaduna State, Nigeria, to achieve economic empowerment and enhance their quality of life. As one of the most accessible agricultural ventures, poultry farming enables women to generate income, contribute to



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household food security, and achieve some level of financial independence (Amusan et al., 2021). Despite this potential, rural women face multifaceted challenges that hinder their effective participation and success in poultry farming, limiting its transformative impact on their empowerment and livelihoods (Desta, 2021).

Poultry farming has emerged as a critical aspect of rural economic activities, particularly among women in developing countries (Idamokoro & Hosu, 2022). In Nigeria, where agriculture contributes significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and serves as the primary source of livelihood for rural households, poultry farming provides an essential pathway for empowerment and poverty alleviation (Aderemi et al., 2021). The sector holds tremendous potential for improving household nutrition, generating income, and fostering self-reliance among rural women. Women, who constitute a substantial portion of the agricultural labour force, play pivotal roles in livestock production, including the rearing of poultry for meat and egg production (Kumar et al., 2021).

Women play essential roles in agriculture, providing inputs, working on the farm, generating off-farm income, and doing the unpaid house chores, but often the gains go to the husband and children (Pierotti et al., 2022). According to Joshi (2020), women's productive contributions to agriculture are greatly devalued because their labour at home, on the farm, and in unofficial businesses is not paid for. Women characterised as "invisible" workers make up the majority of the Yoruba ethnic group's labour force in the southern region of Nigeria, where yams, maize, tobacco, and cassava are grown (Eke et al., 2023).

The benefits of poultry farming for rural women are apparent, challenges such as limited access to credit, inadequate training, and poor infrastructure remain significant obstacles. Women in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State face difficulties in acquiring modern poultry technologies, navigating male-dominated market systems, and managing diseases and feed costs (Parkavi et al., 2023). These challenges necessitate targeted interventions from government and non-governmental organisations to support women poultry farmers through training, financial aid, and the establishment of women-friendly agricultural policies (Oisamoje & Omorogbe, 2021).

Literature Review

Constraints Faced by Rural Women Poultry Farmers

Market Access

Market access is another significant barrier. Poor road networks, limited market information, and gendered power dynamics within value chains constrain women's ability to sell their poultry products competitively (Sanusi et al., 2025). These challenges not only reduce their income potential but also perpetuate gender inequality in agricultural markets. Addressing these issues is imperative for leveraging poultry farming as a tool for rural women's empowerment in Kaduna State. Promoting equitable access to resources, financial support, technical training, and market integration can significantly enhance the socio-economic outcomes of women in poultry farming, contributing to broader poverty alleviation and rural development goals (Mukaila et al., 2021). Given this background, the study therefore seeks to examine poultry farming constraints on rural women's empowerment in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Limited Access to Resources

Women frequently have less access to essential resources such as land, credit, and agricultural inputs compared to their male counterparts (Gebre et al., 2021). Land ownership, a critical asset for agricultural productivity and investment, is often denied to women due to patriarchal norms and legal constraints in many regions (Wamboye, 2024). This disparity

restricts women's ability to make decisions about land use or to use it as collateral for loans. Access to credit is equally constrained, as financial institutions often prioritise male farmers or require land ownership as a prerequisite for loans. Consequently, women struggle to invest in modern farming technologies and inputs such as fertilisers, high-yield seeds, and irrigation systems, which significantly limit their productivity and economic returns (Amayo et al., 2023).

Moreover, access to training and agricultural extension services is limited for women. Extension programs often target male farmers, assuming they are the primary decision-makers in agriculture. Women are thus excluded from learning about advanced agricultural practices, new technologies, and climate-smart techniques that could enhance their productivity. This exclusion perpetuates a cycle of low productivity and economic dependency (Mbunda, 2025).

Underrepresentation in Decision-Making

Women are significantly underrepresented in leadership roles within agricultural sectors. This is evident across various contexts, from local cooperatives to national agricultural policymaking bodies. For example, in the United States, women of all races are underrepresented as decision-makers on farms, with Black women farmers accounting for only a small fraction of female producers (Ball, 2020; Pilgeram et al., 2022).

In developing countries like Nigeria, cultural norms and traditional gender roles often prevent women from participating in community-level decision-making about resource allocation and agricultural priorities (Eshikhena et al., 2025). This lack of representation means that women's unique challenges and needs are frequently overlooked in agricultural policies and programs, resulting in a persistent gender gap in resource distribution, extension services, and market linkages (Cheong et al., 2024; Phiri et al., 2022).

Gender-Specific Constraints

Cultural norms and gender roles impose additional constraints on women in agriculture, limiting their ability to participate fully in agricultural activities. In many regions, women are burdened with unpaid domestic work and caregiving responsibilities, leaving them with less time and energy to devote to farming (Pathak, 2022). Agricultural extension programs are often male-dominated, with training sessions designed around the schedules and preferences of male farmers. This exclusion deprives women of access to critical knowledge and tools necessary for improving their farming practices (Yuliati et al., 2024).

Women's contributions to agriculture are also undervalued and often go unrecognised. For instance, their work in subsistence farming and livestock rearing is frequently categorised as household labour rather than an economically valuable activity. This perception marginalises women within agricultural value chains and undermines their bargaining power in both household and community decision-making processes (Ebhuoma, 2020).

Impact of Climate Change

Climate change poses an additional layer of challenges for women in agriculture. As primary caregivers and food providers in many rural households, women are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate variability (Nosheen et al., 2023). Erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, and floods threaten crop yields and livestock, exacerbating food insecurity and increasing the workload for women. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, women often have to travel longer distances to fetch water or find alternative income sources when agricultural yields decline due to climate shocks (Nosheen et al., 2023).



Barriers to Market Access

Limited market access further restricts women's ability to maximise the economic potential of their agricultural activities. Poor infrastructure, such as inadequate road networks, disproportionately affects women farmers, who often produce on a smaller scale and have fewer resources to transport goods to market (Rob & Cattaneo, 2021).

Access to market information is another critical challenge. Women often lack the networks or technology needed to stay informed about market trends and pricing. This lack of information limits their bargaining power, making them more vulnerable to exploitation by intermediaries who offer lower prices for their produce. Addressing these market barriers is essential for ensuring equitable participation and economic empowerment for women in agriculture (Saa & Abidjuju, 2025).

Health and Labour Constraint

The physical demands of agricultural work, combined with limited access to healthcare, pose significant challenges for women farmers (Wheeler & Nye, 2025). Pregnant and nursing women face heightened health risks due to strenuous activities such as planting, harvesting, and carrying heavy loads. The absence of gender-sensitive agricultural tools further exacerbates this issue (Sadiq et al., 2024). Most farming equipment is designed for male users, increasing the physical strain on women and reducing their efficiency. Additionally, the lack of childcare facilities in rural areas means that women must balance agricultural labour with caregiving responsibilities, further limiting their productivity (Inwood & Stengel, 2020).

Socio-cultural Norms

Studies show that socio-cultural norms significantly restrict women's access to critical agricultural resources such as land, credit, and extension services in Kaduna State. For instance, cultural practices in the region often exclude women from decision-making processes related to agricultural production, including poultry farming, leaving them reliant on male counterparts for resource allocation and financial support (Elias et al., 2024; Phiri et al., 2022). This dependence limits women's ability to scale their poultry farming activities and undermines their autonomy.

Economic constraints

Educational barriers also play a critical role. Many rural women lack the technical knowledge and skills required to manage poultry farms efficiently (Kumar et al., 2021). Women who receive technical training report higher productivity and income, underscoring the importance of capacity-building initiatives. However, access to such programs remains limited due to institutional inefficiencies and gender biases in extension services (Mbunda, 2025; Nyberg et al., 2025).

Women Empowerment

Women's empowerment specifically focuses on enhancing women's ability to participate fully in economic, social, and political life. It involves providing access to resources, opportunities, and rights that enable women to have control over their lives (Sen et al., 2023).

Aziz (2025) builds on this by highlighting empowerment as the increase in women's ability to make significant life choices in circumstances where this power was previously unavailable to

them. This definition underscores the transformative nature of empowerment in addressing systemic inequalities.

Ogbari et al. (2024) further elaborate on it as a process that enhances women's capacity to make decisions and transform those decisions into desired actions and outcomes, thereby improving their social, economic, and political status. Their perspective emphasises the direct impact of empowerment on women's broader societal roles.

Bhatia and Singh (2020) frame empowerment as a process that equips women with resources, opportunities, and skills to boost their participation and influence in the economic, social, and political realms. This view stresses the importance of providing tangible support and opportunities for women's active participation in various sectors. Kruahong et al. (2023) describe women's empowerment as a multifaceted concept that improves women's ability to access resources, engage in decision-making, and gain control over their lives and communities. Their definition highlights the interconnected dimensions of empowerment, ranging from resource access to community involvement.

Rural Women Empowerment

Rural women's empowerment pertains to improving the status and capabilities of women living in rural areas, enabling them to contribute effectively to their communities and economies. This includes access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. A study by Patil et al. (2022) analysed the rearing knowledge of poultry farming among rural women and found that training in different management practices, such as preparation of poultry feed with locally available materials, significantly empowered them by improving their socio-economic status.

Roles of Women in Agricultural Production

Women play an indispensable role in agricultural production, contributing significantly to food security, rural development, and poverty alleviation. Across the globe, they participate in a wide range of activities, including crop production, livestock rearing, agro-processing, and value addition, often forming the backbone of agricultural systems. Their contributions extend beyond the physical labour of farming to include household nutrition management, financial decision-making, and community development efforts (Van den Berg et al., 2020).

In sub-Saharan Africa, women constitute approximately 50% of the agricultural labour force. They engage in tasks ranging from planting and weeding to harvesting and marketing produce, making them integral to food production and household sustenance (Odey et al., 2020). Women farmers are also the primary cultivators of staple crops like maize, millet, and sorghum, which form the dietary foundation for millions of households. Additionally, in regions like Nigeria, women dominate the poultry farming sector, managing everything from feeding to disease control, which significantly contributes to their families' income and food security (Sulaiman et al., 2023).

East African women also play a vital role in the dairy and poultry sectors. In Kenya, women manage up to 80% of poultry farming activities, including feeding, disease management, and marketing eggs and live birds (Garsow et al., 2022). These activities are not only a significant source of household income but also crucial for improving household nutrition. Moreover, programs aimed at empowering women in these sectors have demonstrated tangible benefits, such as reduced poverty levels and enhanced educational opportunities for their children (Ogbari et al., 2024). Similarly, in Ethiopia, women's participation in small-scale dairy farming



has improved milk production and distribution networks, contributing to food security and market stability (Derbe et al., 2023).

Globally, women's involvement in agroforestry and sustainable farming practices has been transformative. In Southeast Asia, for example, women contribute to the cultivation of high-value spice crops like pepper and cardamom, which are essential for export markets and local economies (Dagar et al., 2023). Their adoption of sustainable techniques, such as intercropping and organic farming, has improved soil fertility, reduced environmental degradation, and increased agricultural productivity (Sekhar et al., 2024). Similarly, in West Africa, women in the cocoa sector play critical roles in harvesting, fermenting, and drying cocoa beans to meet export quality standards. Their contributions not only ensure the sustainability of the sector but also enhance household incomes and regional economic growth (Shenbei et al., 2023).

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the theoretical framework of structural functionalism, its applicability to rural women, and development in particular. Structural functionalism examines the individual components of society, for example, the family, government, and education, in terms of how they work together to maintain social order and harmony.

In the context of this study, structural functionalism emphasises the importance of rural women in development initiatives, such as the Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) and similar programmes that aim to enhance their socioeconomic status. These various participants, government policymakers, extension agents, researchers, and rural women farmers function as specialised parts of the system, interacting for the greater purpose of improving living standards, fostering social order, and ensuring harmony across rural communities. According to Tambo et al. (2023), empowering women within these frameworks creates a ripple effect that enhances household food security, boosts local economies, and strengthens community resilience. Studies have applied structural functionalism to rural development initiatives, emphasising how interconnected societal elements, such as community organisations, government programs, and women's groups, contribute to collective progress.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey design method using interviews and questionnaires. The data obtained from the participants' responses were analysed using the frequency and percentage table in which computation was made based on a Likert 5 scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The hypotheses were then tested using a regression model.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

This quantitative study used a simple random sampling method to determine the sample size based on its relevance and appropriateness to the study objectives. The sample size of the study area was determined using Yamani (1964) formula.

Instrument for Data Collection

The information and data were effectively gathered from women farmers in the study area by the used of interviews and a well-structured questionnaire. The collected data were analysed using SPSS software.

Results and Discussion

Analyses of the Constraints Faced by Rural Women in Poultry Farming and Its Impact on Productivity.

Table 1 shows that fifty-seven (57) respondents representing 23.7% of the sample strongly agreed, sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% agreed, thirty-six (36) respondents representing 14.9% disagreed, forty-five (45) respondents representing 18.7% strongly disagreed, while forty-one (41) respondents representing 17.0% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that limited access to modern poultry farming technology reduces efficiency and increases mortality rates. This implies that limited access to modern technology is seen as a major barrier that negatively impacts efficiency and increases mortality rates in poultry farming. Some may disagree because they have access to traditional farming methods that are still effective despite limited technology.

Table 1. Limited Access to Modern Poultry Farming Technology Reduces Efficiency and Increases Mortality Rates.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	57	23.7
Agree	62	25.7
Disagree	36	14.9
Strongly disagree	45	18.7
Undecided	41	17.0
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that fifty (50) respondents representing 20.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-seven (57) respondents representing 23.7% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly disagreed, while fifty (50) respondents representing 20.7% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that a lack of capital prevents them from expanding their poultry farm, limiting their overall production capacity. Lack of capital is perceived as a significant constraint that hinders women's ability to expand their poultry operations and increase production. Disagreement might come from a belief that personal financial management, rather than a lack of capital, is the main barrier to expansion.

Table 2. Lack of Capital Prevents Me from Expanding my Poultry Farm, Limiting my Overall Production Capacity

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	50	20.7
Agree	57	23.7
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	50	20.7



Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 shows that fifty-one (51) respondents representing 21.2% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-five (55) respondents representing 22.8% agreed, forty-five (45) respondents representing 18.7% disagreed, thirty-six (36) respondents representing 14.9% strongly disagreed, while fifty-four (54) respondents representing 22.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that unpredictable weather conditions lead to disease outbreaks and high poultry mortality, reducing output. Unpredictable weather conditions are recognised as a serious threat to poultry farming, leading to disease outbreaks and increased mortality rates. Some respondents may have different experiences with weather impacts, believing they can manage such challenges effectively.

Table 3. Unpredictable Weather Conditions Lead to Disease Outbreaks and High Poultry Mortality, Reducing Output.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	51	21.2
Agree	55	22.8
Disagree	45	18.7
Strongly disagree	36	14.9
Undecided	54	22.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-three (53) respondents representing 22.0% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly disagreed, while forty-two (42) respondents representing 17.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that difficulty accessing high-quality poultry breeds results in lower egg production and slower growth rates. Accessing high-quality poultry breeds is viewed as a challenge that affects production quality and growth rates, impacting overall profitability. Disagreement could stem from successful experiences with local breeds or access to alternative sources of quality poultry.

Table 4. Difficulty in Accessing High-Quality Poultry Breeds Results in Lower Egg Production and Slower Growth Rates

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	62	25.7
Agree	53	22.0
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	42	17.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 shows that sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-three (53) respondents representing 22.0% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly

disagreed, while forty-two (42) respondents representing 17.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that they struggle to purchase quality feed and vaccines without access to credit facilities, which lowers their farm’s productivity. The struggle to obtain credit facilities is a critical issue that limits women’s ability to buy necessary resources for successful poultry farming. Some may feel they can manage without credit facilities, relying on personal savings or community lending.

Table 5. Do Women Struggle to Purchase Quality Feed and Vaccines without Access to Credit Facilities, Which Lowers Your Farm’s Productivity?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	62	25.7
Agree	53	22.0
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	42	17.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 shows that sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-three (53) respondents representing 22.0% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly disagreed, while forty-two (42) respondents representing 17.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that the high cost of poultry feed reduces profitability and affects the growth rate of their poultry. High feed costs are a significant factor in reducing profitability, making it difficult for poultry farmers to sustain their operations. Disagreement might arise from experiences where feed costs did not significantly impact profitability due to other income sources.

Table 6. High Cost of Poultry Feed Reduces Profitability and Affects the Growth Rate of Poultry Products.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	62	25.7
Agree	53	22.0
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	42	17.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 7 shows that sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-three (53) respondents representing 22.0% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly disagreed, while forty-two (42) respondents representing 17.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, most respondents agreed that inadequate veterinary services lead to frequent disease outbreaks, increasing poultry mortality. Inadequate veterinary services are perceived as a major risk, leading to increased disease outbreaks and higher mortality rates in poultry flocks. Some respondents may have reliable veterinary support or feel confident managing their poultry health without external help.



Table 7. Inadequate Veterinary Services Lead to Frequent Disease Outbreaks, Increasing Poultry Mortality.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	62	25.7
Agree	53	22.0
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	42	17.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 shows that sixty-two (62) respondents representing 25.7% of the sample strongly agreed, fifty-three (53) respondents representing 22.0% agreed, forty-six (46) respondents representing 19.1% disagreed, thirty-eight (38) respondents representing 15.8% strongly disagreed, while forty-two (42) respondents representing 17.4% of the sample size were undecided with the statement. Thus, the majority of respondents agreed with the statement that gender-based discrimination limits their access to land, markets, and training opportunities in poultry farming. Gender-based discrimination is recognised as a barrier that limits women's access to essential resources like land and training opportunities in poultry farming. Disagreement could stem from personal experiences of equal access to resources, despite broader societal issues.

Table 8. Gender-based Discrimination Limits Farmers' Access to Land, Markets, and Training Opportunities in Poultry Farming.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	62	25.7
Agree	53	22.0
Disagree	46	19.1
Strongly disagree	38	15.8
Undecided	42	17.4
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 9, the regression results show that capital access does not significantly impact poultry farming productivity. The coefficient of 0.9533 indicates a small positive effect, meaning improved access to capital may slightly enhance productivity. However, the P-value (0.2797) is greater than 0.05, making this relationship statistically insignificant. While capital access may help poultry farmers expand their businesses, it is not the primary constraint affecting productivity.

Table 9. Constraints faced by rural women in poultry farming have no significant impact on productivity.

Variable	Coefficient	P-Value
Constant	2.2500	0.9531
Capital Access	0.9533	0.2797

Researcher Analysis (2025).

The constant value of 2.2500, with a P-value of 0.9531, suggests that even when capital access is removed, there is no other strong predictor explaining productivity. This reinforces the idea that other factors, such as access to modern technology, veterinary services, feed quality, and

market accessibility, may significantly improve productivity. Since capital access alone does not have a strong statistical impact on productivity, policy interventions should focus on other productivity-enhancing factors such as improving access to technology, quality feeds, veterinary care, and training programs.

In Table 10, the ANOVA F-value (5.541) and p-value of 0.002 indicate that the constraints identified in the study significantly hinder women’s productivity. Constraints such as limited access to modern technology, credit facilities, technical training, veterinary services, and weather variability directly reduce women’s ability to maximise production. The ANOVA F-value (6.368) with a p-value of 0.001 strongly indicate that poultry farming is a significant tool for empowering women and promoting rural development, promote business sustainability and also contribute to Gross Domestic Products of Kaduna State.

H1: Constraints faced by rural women in poultry farming have no significant impact on productivity.

Table 10. ANOVA Summary Table.

ANOVA Summary	F-Value	p-Value
Factors influencing participation	7.754	0.000
Constraints on productivity	5.541	0.002
Empowerment potential	6.368	0.001

Researcher Analysis (2025)

Conclusion

Despite its benefits, various challenges hinder women's participation in poultry farming. These include inadequate access to capital, outdated technology, gender-based discrimination, and market constraints. Addressing these barriers through government policies, financial support programs, and skill development initiatives will be essential in maximising the benefits of poultry farming for rural women, corroborating the studies of Azumah et al. (2023), on financial constraints in rural women’s agricultural enterprises. Unpredictable weather conditions were also highlighted as a constraint, with 22.8% of respondents in Table 3 acknowledging that adverse weather leads to disease outbreaks and high poultry mortality. Moreover, Table 8 shows that 25.7% of respondents agreed that gender-based discrimination limits their access to land, markets, and training opportunities. These findings align with the work of Quisumbing et al. (2014), which emphasised that gender disparities in resource allocation limit women's economic empowerment in agricultural sectors.

The findings align with global and regional studies showing that rural women often rely on personal savings or informal loans, which are insufficient for significant investments (Ganle et al., 2015). Buhari & Maguru (2021) found that poultry farming enables women to self-employ, increasing their social value within communities. More so, Kumar et al (2021) emphasised how income generated from poultry farming is often reinvested into children’s education and family needs, reinforcing its role as a sustainable empowerment strategy. Regarding constraints, the ANOVA test results indicate that limited access to modern technology, inadequate capital, and weather variability significantly hinder productivity ($F = 5.541, p = 0.002$). The findings suggest that interventions should focus on improving access to credit facilities, technical training, and veterinary services to enhance productivity. Finally, the study confirms the significant contribution of poultry farming to women's empowerment and rural development ($F = 6.368, p = 0.001$). The strong correlation ($r = 0.720$) between poultry farming and empowerment underscores its transformative potential. These findings align with a previous study by Mataka et al. (2023), which emphasised the role of livestock farming in enhancing women's social and



economic status. The findings demonstrate that poultry farming is a critical tool for empowering rural women despite their challenges. By addressing key constraints and enhancing access to financial and technical resources, poultry farming can be further leveraged to promote sustainable rural development.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed.

- i. Government and financial institutions should expand microfinance programs, grants, and low-interest loans tailored to women in poultry farming.
- ii. Policies should improve technology access, veterinary services, feed quality, and training programs to enhance productivity.
- iii. Government agencies and NGOs should provide market access, cooperative farming initiatives, and entrepreneurship training to maximise these benefits.
- iv. Kaduna State Government and stakeholders should invest in rural market infrastructure to improve women's access to buyers and fair prices for their products.

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