

Skills Required by Retirees in Poultry Production for Improved Livelihood in Oju L.G. A, Benue State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates skills required by retirees in poultry production for improved livelihood in Oju L.G. A, Benue State. The study adopted a survey research design. Three objectives, three research questions and one hypothesis was used for the study. The population for the study is 69 comprises of 20 Agricultural extension agents and 49 retirees. There was no sampling because the researcher was able to manage the entire population hence, a census survey. The instruments for data collection were a structured questionnaire titled: Skills Required by Retirees in Poultry Production Questionnaire (SRBRIPPQ). The questionnaire was face and content validated by three experts two from the Department of Agricultural Education and one from the department of Animal Production, Joseph Sarwaun Tarka University, Makurdi. To ascertain the reliability of the instruments, it was trial-tested using 7 Agricultural Extension Agents and 10 Poultry farmers (Retirees) in Makurdi, Local Government Area. Completed copies of the instrument were retrieved and test using Cronbach Alpha reliability method which give a coefficient of 0.91 indicating that the instruments were reliable. 20 copies of the questionnaire were administer to the extension agents and 49 copies of the questionnaire to the poultry farmers (retirees) and were retrieved immediately after completing the questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that 3.39 of the Retirees required skills in breeding, 3.33 required skills in feeding while 3.30 required skills in marketing of poultry product for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. However, poultry production in Oju has not been giving needed attention despite the fact that it is very economical and easy to raise. Based on the findings of the study it was therefore recommended that the skills identify in feeding of poultry production should be incorporated into the programme of skills acquisition centres for used to trained and retraining of Retirees for improved livelihood in the area. Also stakeholder in the sector should also assist by organizing workshop for Retirees in breeding of poultry as this would help provide additional income for them.

Keyword: Skills, Retirees, poultry production, improved livelihood

INTRODUCTION

The capacity to venture into poultry production with success required competency and skills it on this note Osinem and Nwoji (2015) described skill as the capacity to carry out a task expertly. The authors further added that skill entails the development of performance capability through the repeated execution of an action and is a well-established habit of accomplishing things. Skill is the habit of acting, thinking and behaving in specific activity in such a way that the process becomes natural to the individual through practice (Okorie, 2011). In this context, skills refer to the ability of the retirees to carry out poultry

production with optimum result. According Wever and Obiyai, (2019) skills are classified into the following: technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills, Occupational skills, cognitive skills, manipulative/psychomotor skills, communication skills etc. All these skills are necessary for a successful establishment of poultry production by the retirees.

Retirees are individuals that have disengaged from their initial employment after a long service but are still able and willing to continue their existence in any desirable but less strenuous occupation (Olaitan, *et al*, 2011). Jerry (2010) emphasized that re-engagement of the retirees in a sustainable occupation requires some retirement plans to help provide a livable income when a person stops working. Some of these plans include government – sponsored retirement plans and individual savings plans. There is high possibility that retirees can continue to sustain their livelihood if they are skills and guided to invest part of their savings or pension on viable and bankable occupations like poultry.

Poultry are domesticated birds such as chickens, ducks, quails, turkeys, and geese with the aim of raising them for meat and egg production as well as using their incidental products, such as feces and feathers, in industries as raw materials (Stiles, 2017). The practice of raising birds began many years ago with the removal of their eggs and young from their natural habitat, which led to their domestication as farm animals used by humanity as food. Poultry production can be subdivided into three distinct parts named small, medium and large scale. In other word refers to as backyard, semi-commercial and commercial (Heise, Crisan and Theuvsen, 2015). In developing nations like Nigeria for example, poultry production is a significant aspect of the agricultural economy and is a tool for socioeconomic development, increased income, and at the same time improved the quality of living of the rural areas (Okumadewa, 2019). In Nigeria, poultry production outnumbers all other types of livestock, thus it is not unexpected that it is widespread across the nation (Adeyemo and Onikoyi, 2012). The authors added that today, chicken production has transformed from a backyard hobby into a business venture due to its high turnover rate and rapid returns on investment compare to other livestock's. Poultry, which is next to ruminant as a source of protein in Nigeria, accounts for almost 25% of local meat production (Nwagu, 2012). The poultry sector is characterized by relative faster growth in consumption and trade volume than many other agricultural livestock sector. This singular farming has improved the livelihood of those go into the business as an occupation. Therefore, for retirees to be actively involved in poultry production they have to be equipped with the necessary skills and competencies needed to operate and progress in the business.

Statement of the Problem

Improper retirement plans and problems associated with retirement packages provided by the government and other organizations Oju Local Government Area of Benue State has led to hardships among retirees such as financial insufficiency, poor feeding, and inability to pay life sustaining bills. Others include dysfunctional family matters as well as psychological or behavioural disorders like depression, hypertension, identity crisis, alcoholism, loneliness, fast ageing and ill health occasioned at times by loss of good accommodation among others (Iwena, 2018). The author added these problems seem to range from sudden loss of life, loss of the usual monthly salary, anxiety about a residential home, lack of occupation, dwindling status, decreased strength and deteriorated health condition and physical disabilities. According to predictions made by the World Economic Forum (2019), the demand for chicken products would rise by 60% on the African continent by 2030, with Nigeria being its biggest market. Poultry production seems to be the cheapest business that does not required large capital to start with. According to Kim & Isma (2013) 62% of the retirees prefers poultry production compare to other business like rice, Maize, fishery and so on. But unfortunately retirees in Oju L. G. A of Benue state are yet to utilize this opportunity to improve their standard of living. Researcher personal investigation revealed that most of the retirees have inadequate skills required to venture into the business. It on this note the researcher investigates the skills required by retirees in Poultry Production for improved livelihood in Oju L. G. A, Benue State.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to identify Skills required by retirees in Poultry Production for improved livelihood in Oju L.G. A, Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to identify:

1. Determine skills required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L. G. A, Benue State.
2. Determine skills required by retirees in breeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L. G. A, Benue State
3. Determine skills required by retirees in marketing of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Benue State

Research Questions

1. What are the skills required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L.A, Benue State?
2. What are the skills required by retirees in breeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L. G. A, Benue State?
3. What are the skills required by retirees in marketing of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L. G. A, Benue State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Agricultural extension agents and poultry production on the skills required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L.G.A, Benue State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design, the design is suitable because data were collected from the representative sample and the result was generalized on the entire population of the respondents in the study area. The population for the study is 69 comprises of 20 Agricultural extension agents and 49 retirees. There was no sampling because the researcher was able to manage the entire population hence, a census survey. The instruments for data collection were a structured questionnaire titled: Skills Required by Retirees in Poultry Production Questionnaire (SRBRIPPQ). The questionnaire was self-structured by the researcher. The questionnaire is divided into 2 parts. The first part is made up of demographic data of the respondents while part 2 contains a total of 41 items which was used to obtain information on skills required by retirees in poultry production. Each response option has of Highly Required (HR), Required (R) Slightly Required (SR) and not Required (NR). This has corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was face and content validated by three experts two from the Department of Agricultural Education and one from the department of Animal Production, Joseph Sarwaun Tarka University, Makurdi. To ascertain the reliability of the instruments, it was trial-tested using 7 Agricultural Extension Agents and 10 Poultry farmers (Retirees) in Makurdi, Local Government Area. Completed copies of the instrument were retrieved and test using Cronbach Alpha reliability method which give a coefficient of 0.91 indicating that the instruments were reliable. The data was collected by the personally by the researcher with the help of one trained research assistants who is familiar with the study area. The researcher administer 20 copies of the questionnaire to the extension agents and 49 copies of the questionnaire to the poultry farmers (retirees) and were retrieved immediately after completing the questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Any item with a mean value of 2.5 and above will be regarded as required while any mean less than 2.5 were regarded as not required. In the same vein any items with a p-value greater than or equal to alpha value of 0.05 was regarded as not significant and not rejected while any items with a p-value less than the alpha value of 0.05 was regarded as significant and rejected.

RESULTS OF FINDINGS

Question 1: What are the skills required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L.A, Benue State?

Table 1: Mean Rating on the skills required by retirees in feeding poultry birds for improve livelihood (N=20, 49).

SN	Item statement	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Ability to identify the age of the birds	3.29	0.597	Required
2	Ability to Feed chick mash at age (0-4)	3.41	0.671	Required
3	Ability to Provide a starter ration of 240g CP/Kg DM at age (5-8) weeks	3.39	0.559	Required
4	Ability to provide grower ration of 200g CP/Kg DM at (10-15) weeks	3.25	0.651	Required
5	Ability to provide finisher ration of 160g CP/Kg DM at (19-24) weeks.	3.43	0.606	Required
6	Ability to provide pullet of 8-12 weeks with grower mash.	3.16	0.72	Required
7	Ability to provide layers (9-11) weeks with layer mash twice a day	3.49	0.586	Required
8	Ability to feed poultry birds with 3.5g of maintenance ration each day	3.28	0.662	Required
9	Ability to feed hen with 4.6g of maintenance ration each day until hatching.	3.32	0.556	Required
10	Ability to provide layers of (20-40) weeks with diet containing ME value of 2750Kcal/kg	3.3	0.649	Required
11	Ability to provide water at libidum.	3.45	0.607	Required
12	Ability to provide Culled birds with 165g/CP/Kg DM in their diet.	3.2	0.655	Required
	Grand mean	3.33	0.63	Required

Table 1 shows that all the twelve items had a mean score of 3.16 to 3.49 above the bench mark of 2.50 for required on a four point rating scale. This indicates that all the twelve items are required skills by retirees in feeding of poultry for improved livelihood in Oju L.G.A of Benue State. The standard deviation of the twelve items ranging from 0.56 to 0.72 indicating that the responses from the respondents were not far from the mean.

Table 2: t-Test Result of Respondents on Skills Required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood (N=20, 49).

Variable	N	Mean	Std	Df	Sig	Alpha value	Remark
Ext. agents	20	3.25	0.51851	67	0.221	0.05	NS
Retirees	49	3.363	0.74754				

Keys: N= Number of respondents, Std = Standard deviation, df = degree of freedom, Sig. = P-value; NS = Not Significant.

Table 2: present t-test of the mean ratings of respondents on the skills required by retirees in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The result shows that the p-value (sig) is .221 which is greater than alpha value 0.05 (at 67 degree of freedom) indicating that the test is not significant hence there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of respondents of agricultural Extension Agents and Retirees on the skills required in feeding of poultry in Oju, Benue State, the hypothesis was therefore retained.

Question 2: What are the skills required by retirees in breeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L.A, Benue State?

Table 2: Mean rating on the skills required by retirees in breeding poultry birds for improve livelihood (N=20, 49).

SN	Item statement	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Ability to select pullet (14-15 weeks) for breeding.	3.33	0.586	Required
2	Ability to identify cockerel (14-15 weeks) for mating.	3.45	0.0631	Required
3	Ability to cage 4-5 hens with one cock to ensure appropriate mating.	3.32	0.696	Required
4	Ability to provide hen with roosting bar	3.32	0.581	Required
5	Ability to preserve eggs in a cool and dry place with control humidity	3.41	0.671	Required
6	Ability to keep poultry bird with poor eggs formation in separate cage	3.36	0.641	Required
7	Ability to provide nesting box for laying hens to safety of the eggs	3.36	0.641	Required
8	Ability to replace unproductive hens	3.19	0.55	Required
9	Ability to identify fertile eggs through shell texture or by candling	3.54	0.632	Required
10	Ability to keep eggs in covered floor to prevent depression	3.29	0.571	Required
11	Ability to preserved eggs in a cool and dry place with controlled humidity	3.42	0.695	Required
12	Ability to select clean, crack-free eggs for hatching	3.33	0.533	Required
	Grand Mean	3.34	0.62	Required

Table 2 shows that all the 12 items had a mean values ranging from 3.19 to 3.54 which werw above the cut-off point of mean 2.50 on a four-point scale. This implies that all the 12 items are skills required by retirees in breeding of poultry bird for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The standard deviation of all the 12 items ranged from 0.53 to 0.69, indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and each other in their responses.

Question 1: What are the skills required by retirees in marketing of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju L.A, Benue State?

Table 3: Mean Rating on the skills required by retirees in marketing poultry birds for improve livelihood (N=20, 49).

SN	Item statement	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Ability to identify the buyers	3.30	0.626	Required
2	Ability to identify with local farmers association to access distant market	3.36	0.618	Required
3	Ability to advertise the bird for sale through mass media and internet (social media)	3.37	0.573	Required
4	Ability to maintain good customer relationship	3.45	0.631	Required
5	Ability to select mature birds at 19-22 weeks for sale.	3.23	0.622	Required
6	Ability to select good eggs for market	3.33	0.637	Required
7	Ability to grade fowl eggs based on sizes crate	3.30	0.626	Required
8	Ability to grade mature fowl based on size and weight	3.35	0.564	Required
9	Ability to sell the stock separately based on buyers demand	3.25	0.715	Required
10	Ability to fix price for each grade according to weight	3.26	0.610	Required
11	Ability to sell as live, smoked or dried meat	3.17	0.804	Required
12	Ability to keep accurate record of sales	3.32	0.717	Required
	Grand Mean	3.30	0.65	Required

Table reveal that all the 12 items had mean values range from 3.17 to 3.45 above the cut-off point of 2.50 on a four point scale. This implies that the 12 items are required by retirees in marketing of poultry bird for improve livelihood Oju, Benue State. The standard deviation of the 12 items ranged from 0.56 to 0.80 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and each other in their responses.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from Table 1 reveal that retirees required 12 skills in feeding of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The skills are: identify the age of the birds, Feed chick mash at age (0-4), Provide a starter ration of 240g CP/Kg DM at age (5-8) weeks, provide grower ration of 200g CP/Kg DM at (10-15) weeks, provide finisher ration of 160g CP/Kg DM at (19-24) weeks, provide pullet of 8-12 weeks with grower mash, provide layers (9-11) weeks with layer mash twice a day, feed poultry birds with 3.5g of maintenance ration each day, feed hen with 4.6g of maintenance ration each day until hatching, provide layers of (20-40) weeks with diet containing ME value of 2750Kcal/kg, provide water at libidum, provide Culled birds with 165g/CP/Kg DM in their diet. The result from hypothesis on Table 2 shows that there was no statistical significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Extension Agents and Retirees on the skills required in feeding of poultry for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The findings was inline with Lamidi (2016) who found that feeding of poultry birds required the following: provision of water at libitum, feed keet with starter mash until 6 weeks, provide culled bird with protein ration. To support this assertion therefore, Inaja (2017) reported that in formulation of ration for poultry birds, attention should give to a balanced ration that meet their nutritional requirements from day one to 25 weeks of age, as well as quantity of feed used under controlled feeding ranges between 9.75kg and 10kg per cock or 11.5kg and 12kg per bird.

Finding from table 3 shows that retirees required 12 skills in breeding poultry birds for improve livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The skills were: select pullet (14-15 weeks) for breeding, identify cockerel (14-15 weeks) for mating, cage 4-5 hens with one cock to ensure appropriate mating, provide hen with roosting bar, preserve eggs in a cool and dry place with control humidity, keep poultry bird with poor eggs formation in

separate cage, provide nesting box for laying hens to safety of the eggs, replace unproductive hens, identify fertile eggs through shell texture or by candling, keep eggs in covered floor to prevent depression, preserved eggs in a cool and dry place with controlled humidity, select clean, crack-free eggs for hatching. The findings of the study was in conformity with the findings of Khairunnesa (2012) who found that there are 7 skills in breeding of poultry birds, among which are: identify fertile eggs by size and texture, select pearl and lavender breeds, brood eggs for 21 days, among others. The success of the skills identify can only be achieved when other skills such as selection of day old keets to start a flock, confine keets until 6 weeks, providing pullets with higher perches and so on are meet (Hunter,2014).

Findings from table 4 reveal that retirees required 12 skills in marketing of poultry birds for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State. The Skills are: identify the buyers, identify with local farmers association to access distant market, advertise the bird for sale through mass media and internet (social media), maintain good customer relationship, select mature birds at 19-22 weeks for sale, select good eggs for market, grade fowl eggs based on sizes crate, grade mature fowl based on size and weight, sell the stock separately based on buyers demand, fix price for each grade according to weight, sell as live, smoked or dried meat and to keep accurate record of sales. The most important skills needed are in accordance with the income of the retirees. The study was inline with Ebegbulem and Asuquo (2017) who said that although most of the income of the retirees are small as such can easily be invested in poultry production and get good return as the potential to raise profit level are higher if resources are well utilized. In addition to this Emmah (2016) found out that one naira invested on an average poultry birds within the period of twelve weeks will yield 12.30% indicating that poultry production is profitable. Furthermore, Yakubu et al, (2014) identified the following marketing skills: know your customer and markets, create remarkable customer, be a great storyteller, never acquiring new marketing tricks among others.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

1. The Retirees in Oju, Benue State need skills is feeding of poultry for improved livelihood.
2. Retirees required training skills in breeding of poultry for efficient and effective production for improved livelihood in Oju, Benue State.
3. To improve the livelihood of the Retirees therefore it was discovered that marketing skills are needed to enable them remain in the business.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the following recommendation were made

1. The skills identify in feeding of poultry production should be incorporated into the programme of skills acquisition centres for used to trained and retraining of Retirees for improved livelihood in the area.
2. Stakeholder in the sector should also assist by organizing workshop for Retirees in breeding of poultry as this would help provide additional income for them.
3. The findings of this study should be made available to the stakeholders in the state who will ensure that marketing channels of poultry production and distribution are put in place for better sale.

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