

Agribusiness Promotion and the impact of Women Empowerment among Smallholder Farmers in Wum Municipality, Cameroon

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Abstract: In most rural areas, where customary practices prevail, land is owned and controlled by men. Essentially, women are considered to be part of a man's property that's why in Wum many young girls suffer from: unwanted and early pregnancies, early age sexuality, low level education and employment. The role of women empowerment in the promotion of agribusiness among smallholder farmers in Wum Municipality has as objectives: to identify and discuss the factors fueling women empowerment; the implications of women empowerment on agribusiness promotion and verify the problems associated with women agribusiness activities in Wum municipality. Methodologically, primary data was collected using well-structured questionnaires administered using simple random sampling to a sample of 150 respondents. The quantitative data was coded and analyzed using the OLS technique. The results showed that: marital status, household size and level of education are correlating with women empowerment in Wum municipality. Women empowerment is observed to be strongly corroborating with Agribusiness promotion, while inability to acquire extension workers, non-professional network, and remote access to market are the frequent problems face by women in Wum municipality. The study suggests that the decision makers should augment workshops and farm trainings to ease agribusiness promotion. This is a wise-step towards economic development.

Keywords: Empowerment, Promotion, Agribusiness, Smallholder Farmers, Wum, Cameroon

1. Introduction

Women constitute half of the workforce in agriculture and statistics has it that globally women contribute 60 to 80% of the labor in agriculture and animal husbandry (Srivastava, 2017). Rural women play a more outstanding role in agriculture than urban women as they are critical contributors in the entire food system starting from the selection of

seeds, sowing, manuring, drying, storing and feeding the family from the harvested product. Even though women are significant denominators in the food system they continue to have unequal access to productive resources and opportunities than that of man. Their involvement in selection of suitable crops and adoption of innovative and good management practices, is very low. Thus, Srivastava argues that agriculture is underperforming because half of its farmers, which are women do not have equal access to the resources and opportunities they need to be more productive (Srivastava, 2017). The major reasons for women lagging may be lack of authority in decision making in agricultural production, lack of access to natural capitals such as land and water, lack of education, patriarchal tendencies which leave women more vulnerable, lack of economic resources such as credit facilities and loans, lack of awareness about the new technologies in agriculture and the poor access to extension services.

The economic empowerment of rural women and the achievement of gender equality is central to ensuring economic growth and sustainable development. This is clearly recognized in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which emphasize the relevance of promoting gender equality across all dimensions of development, in addition to the standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment. It is also recognized as a major thread in the rural transformation agenda. (Barrett, 2016) In rural economies, women account for a significant proportion of the agricultural workforce in many countries and play a major role as small holders, wage labourers and value chain actors. Their contribution will rise in regions characterized by the strong outflow of male migrants and the shift into non-farm employment, which will result in the further feminization of the agricultural sector (WFP, 2011). Recognizing and taking account of the differences between women and men in terms of their resources, time availability and technical expertise makes good business sense. Evidence demonstrates that greater attention to identifying and addressing the differing constraints, needs and priorities of rural women and men, as well as differences between younger and older women and men, in the design and delivery of services or labour recruitment results in improved productivity and higher rates of economic growth (World Bank Group, 2015). Moreover, with women over-represented among those living at the bottom of wealth pyramid – especially households headed by women – there is further justification for gender-differentiated approaches on the grounds of poverty reduction.

Women are a precious asset to humanity, due from their triple indispensable role in the society; they make enormous contributions to productivity (food security); they are the principal source of child bearing otherwise known as population growth and their major role of domestic care (cooking, washing, serving, fetching and grooming). In these

functions, women working in agriculture give in more than other labour occupations especially in rural Cameroon. It is estimated that in Cameroon, rural women supply about 90 percent of the food needed for subsistence by the population (FAO, 2011). During the high growing season, women devote 6 to 8 hours a day to agriculture in addition to their household work while the men work mainly in the cash crop sector (WFP, 2011). Women bear the entire responsibility for food production and also help men with land preparation, harvesting and other works in cash crops. In the fishing and animal domestication domain, while men are primarily responsible for fishing and livestock, women are in charge of fish processing and marketing, raising poultry and small livestock and share in the processing of milk products, both for home consumption and for sale. In general, rural women work 1.5 to 3 times longer than men (FAO, 2011).

In rural areas, women working in agriculture practice both peasant and subsistence farming. Peasant farming is the growing of crops and rearing of animals on a small scale mainly for sale while subsistence farming is the rearing of animals and growing of crops on small scale for personal or family consumption. This type of farming system, is not only physically demanding and often dangerous occupation, but the natural conditions that arise from it being an out-door job create these circumstances. Prolonged sun exposure is a common concern, and a factor that is accompanied by severe health risks. Heat can be one of the most arduous aspects of farm labour, and the reoccurring case of inadequate breaks contributes to this dilemma; heatstroke has been reported as the leading cause of work-related death among farm workers (Bafana et al, 2012; Arcury, 2010).

In many parts of the world including Cameroon, women are facing threats to their lives and health, given that they are overburdened with house and farm work. In Cameroon, women's abilities and knowledge are usually not recognized in the effort towards sustainable economic development. Many women in Cameroon, most of who live in the rural areas, do not have the right to personal political and social opinions, their right to inherit property is, most of the time, checked through the use of customary laws and cultural practices. Violence against women, in Cameroon, is a common phenomenon; women are usually not allowed to form their own opinions when it comes to reproductive rights and health-related issues. They are simply required, by tradition, to abide by what their partners or spouses think about such important issues that, strangely, affect their lives directly (WFP, 2011).

Globally, women 'represent an increasing share of the world's labour force-over a Third in most regions except Southern and Western Asia and North Africa (WFP, 2011). In Cameroon women constitute about 51% of the population and therefore, by sheer numbers, are a force to be reckoned with in the overall Development process of

the nation. Although referred to as the 'backbone' of the Cameroon's rural economy, the womenfolk in Cameroon are still largely Marginalized, without power and influence and left at the margin of society shouldering all the burdens of household maintenance, child care, health and education of the family with little opportunity to advance their status. Historically women have been restricted to household chores, and to early and sometimes forced marriages which have consequently limited their chances of pursuing formal education like their male counterparts and participating fully in the nations' economic and political life. They remain disadvantaged in securing paid jobs, suffer from wage differentials, occupational segregation, and higher ugh rates. Their disproportionate representation in the informal and subsistence sectors limits their economic advancement. The literacy rate among women aged 15-24 is 77.2% which is below the global rate of 82.3% (World Bank Group, 2015). The girl-boy literacy ratio also decreases from primary through secondary to higher education.

Cameroon's rural women are among the poorest of the poor in society. Despite legislation which guarantees everyone the right to property ownership, few have control over property. Most do not have access to formal credit facilities. Rural women are very hard working, industrious and ready to learn and work even harder to improve their livelihoods. This effort has been recognized by the Cameroon Government and the many development partners working in Cameroon. This is why women have been described as the 'backbone' of the rural economy in Cameroon. In spite of this, the government and the other development partners do not seem to be doing enough to encourage and promote the many grassroots level initiatives by these women which are beginning to enrich lives in many rural communities in Cameroon. The Government of Cameroon and many of these organisations have policies and programmes (World Bank Group, 2015). In Cameroon men own the land they live on, while women spend their lives working on it for the survival of their family, but have no legal rights to it. Though the Constitution of Cameroon subscribes to the doctrine of the United Nations Charter which advocates for the rights to all to use, enjoy, own and dispose of property, this is not reflected in the reality of life in Wum.

Women are assuming increasing roles in the education of children, provision of food, and paying for medical services, but pervading traditional belief systems work against their rights to land, which is the main source of livelihood in the predominantly agrarian economy of Cameroon, and for the rural woman in particular. In most rural areas, where customary practices prevail, land is owned and controlled by men. Essentially, women are considered to be part of a man's property Many young girls in Wum suffer from: unwanted and early pregnancies, an early age of sexual activeness,

in some cases encouragement from parents to be promiscuous, and a low level of literacy and employment due to incomplete schooling. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment needs to advocate for gender-sensitive enforcement of laws, and needs to educate women about their rights so that they themselves are able to advocate for the implementation of laws that protect their rights. The objectives targeted in this study are: to identify and discuss the factors fueling women empowerment; the implications of women empowerment on agribusiness promotion and verify the problems associated with women agribusiness activities in Wum municipality.

2. Related Literature

The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself. In addition, it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development. The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household. In all parts of the world, women are facing threats to their lives, health and well-being as a result of being overburdened with work and of their lack of power and influence. In most regions of the world, women receive less formal education than men, and at the same time, women's own knowledge, abilities and coping mechanisms often go unrecognized.

The power relations that impede women's attainment of healthy and fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, from the most personal to the highly public. Achieving change requires policy and programme actions that will improve women's access to secure livelihoods and economic resources, alleviate their extreme responsibilities with regard to housework, remove legal impediments to their participation in public life, and raise social awareness through effective programmes of education and mass communication. In addition, improving the status of women also enhances their decision-making capacity at all levels in all spheres of life, especially in the area of sexuality and reproduction. This, in turn, is essential for the long-term success of population programmes. Experience shows that population and development programmes are most effective when steps have simultaneously been taken to improve the status of women.

Education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. More than 40 years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted that "everyone has the right to education". In 1990, Governments meeting at the World

Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, committed themselves to the goal of universal access to basic education. But despite notable efforts by countries around the globe that have appreciably expanded access to basic education, there are approximately 960 million illiterate adults in the world, of whom two thirds are women. More than one third of the world's adults, most of them women, have no access to printed knowledge, to new skills or to technologies that would improve the quality of their lives and help them shape and adapt to social and economic change. There are 130 million children who are not enrolled in primary school and 70 per cent of them are girls.

WFP (2011) tried to evaluate the role and level of women's involvement in decision-making at the household level. Women were asked questions to inform if they, or another person, had the final say in decisions such as women's healthcare, important household purchases and visits to her family. These questions only addressed women in a union. No matter the decision to be made, women responded that it is the spouse who mainly decides. Effectively, 59% of women said that the husband/partner decides in healthcare-related issues, 49% for important household purchases and 44% for visits to the woman's family or parents. Decisions are made conjointly by the women and the husband/partner in 23% of cases concerning the women's healthcare, 31% for important purchases and 31% for visits to the woman's family. It is when it concerns their own healthcare that women participate less frequently in decisions: in only 16% of cases does the woman decide and in 23% of cases it is the woman with her spouse. These results show the vulnerability and the dependence of women, notably in issues concerning decision-making with respect to their own healthcare.

However, it is noted that a significant percentage of women are not involved in taking of any of the three decisions (30%). This percentage drops sharply with increase in age, but also the higher her level of education and the standard of the household life she lives. One observes significant differences of exclusion/marginalization of women in decision making depending on certain socio-demographic characteristics. In terms of employment, women who do not work (47%) are more marginalized than those who work without pay (38%) and those who work and are paid (22%) (Srivastava, 2017). This exclusion is higher in the rural areas (36%) than in other cities (26%) and in Yaoundé/Douala (17%) (Slavchevska et al., 2016; Pittman, 2010). This exclusion in taking decisions varies from a maximum of 52% in the Far-North to a minimum of 10% in the North-West.

One can compare the points of view of the men and those of the women concerning the control of the man's revenue. Thus, 6% of men in union said it was mainly their wife/partner who decided on the use of their revenue. In 32% of cases, the woman is

associated with the decision on the use of the money earned by the man, and in 62% of the cases, it is the man himself who mainly decides. Among the men in union who earned money for their work, it is in the North (85%), Adamawa (81%), the Far-North (74%) and the West (70%) where the percentage of those who decide alone on the use of their money is the highest.

Moreover, this percentage is also high among those 20-24 years old (75%), among those without children (71%) and those from the poorest households (74%) (Kachel, 2016). Finally, the higher the level of education of the man, the more decision-making on the use of money he earns is done conjointly: from 16% of men without education, this percentage rises to 32% among those with primary level education and gets to 36% among those who have secondary level 2nd cycle or more. When the man does not have an education, the woman is associated with decision-making in 17% of cases versus 45% when the man has secondary level 2nd cycle education or more (Inglehart et al., 2002).

Conceptually, figure 1 shows the derivation of Agribusiness Promotion through women. It suggests series of factors that serve as indicators for women empowerment and agribusiness promotion. Trainings in agriculture, modern equipment, managerial decision, access from farm to market, access to credit, level of education and many more are some of the factors used as indicated below. The frame work holds the conception that the more positively affected a woman is by an indicator, the more that person is prone to being empowered in her agribusiness activities (Liu, 2013).

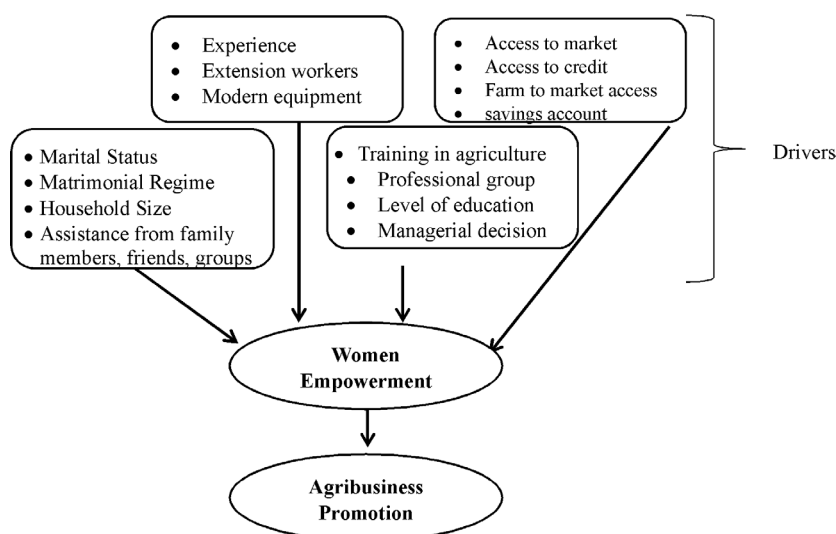


Figure 1: Linking women empowerment and agribusiness promotion

Source: Author

3. Methodology

Wum municipality is located between latitude 6N and 7N and longitude 9E and 10E and situated in Menchum division of the North West region of Cameroon. It has a surface area of 776.67km². In 2012 Wum's estimated population was 80,123 inhabitants. The Aghem language, spoken in Wum, is also called Wum. It is located some 83km from Bamenda Town, the regional capital. It is surrounded to the west by Menchum Valley Subdivision, south by Bafut, East by Fundong and North by Fungom Subdivision. It has an altitude of about 900m to 2140m above sea level in the mountains and about 600m in the valleys, which explains why timber production is possible in the area.

Wum is a town and commune in Cameroon. It is the capital of Menchum division in the Northwest region. Wum is the third biggest town in the North West Region of Cameroon. It lies on a plateau at an elevation of about 1100 m near the edge of the western highlands of Cameroon. It is 80km north of the regional capital Bamenda (by dirt road). It lies 3km from Lake Wum (lat. 6.4072°N and long. 10.0554°E), one of five small crater lakes within 15 km of the town in the hilly, volcanic landscape. Lake Nyos, a crater lake from which a limnic eruption killed nearly 2000 people in 1986, is 25 km to the east. The soil type ranges from sandy, silt and clay, which permits the growing of a variety of agricultural products. Wum is within Sudano – Savanna Zone covered mostly with grass which favor the grazing of cattle. Forest patches such as in Atwe and Itiaku are used mostly for medicinal plants and are also home to many species of wild animals. The Wum council forest has a potential for providing wood, timber and poles.

The Wum Municipality hosts a good number of species of wildlife. There are species such as antelope, hare, porcupine, cane rats, monkey, deer and chimpanzees. Most of these animals are hunted by poachers for food or as an economic activity. sand, clay and stones. Sand is gotten mostly from rivers. This is a great source of income quite a number of persons. Tropical climatic zone with distinct rainy and dry seasons. The total annual rainfall ranges between 2512.5mm and 2829.6mm. The Climate result in two farming seasons and favors the cultivation of food and cash crops. The municipality is made up of undulating land with uneven relief characterized by mountains and hills made up of forests and grassland suitable for grazing. Common features are; rocky cliffs marked by several water bodies. These add to the beauty of the municipality. Wum municipality falls within the North West Plateau, full of running springs, streams and waterfall. Water bodies such as the Menchum falls which is the highest in West Africa, swift running streams, rivers and lakes such as Lake Wum, Iillum, oshien and Atwe. (Wum Council Development Plan).



Figure 2: Map of Wum in the Northwest Region. Source: FAO (2011)

Data Setting

The data was collected in July 2023. A brief pilot study was conducted to test questionnaire. Two female Small holder farmers were called in for the pilot interview to note questions that were difficult to understand. After the two Interviews some adjustments were made. For example, the word empowerment was difficult to understand and we had to look for an alternative and commonly used Aghem language in Wum. This made it much easier for the participants of all level of education to understand the language.

One hundred and fifty questionnaires were administered using simple ratified random sampling. The respondents were chosen from nearby villages that fall in Wum municipality. Since this research was conducted in a poor rural area, not all the respondents did understand English so my research assistant (that was selected from the indigenous people) translated questions into Aghem and filled the questionnaire forms in English for participants who couldn't. The questionnaires were administered in three days within Wum town and selected nearby settlements in the municipality. For the qualitative part, face-to face interviews with key informants, focus group discussions (FGD) was conducted. A total of five key informant interviews were conducted. The interviews were conducted with the help of two Wum native. The population of this study comprise of the female small holder farmers in Wum Municipality in Merchum division. The data collection tools for this research was designed to get information from a total of 150 respondents, primarily composed of small holder female farmers

in Wum municipality. Population is the units from which a sample is to be selected to make some inferences for the research (Fon and Edokat, 2012). The stratified random technique was used to select the respondents. This sampling technique was preferable because all the elements in the population had equal chances of being selected and to be included in the study without bias

Data processing involves; coding, editing and classification. The data was edited first to check for errors before beginning the entry. For this mixed approach study a side by side comparison approach is used for data analysis. The quantitative data was coded and analyzed using SPSS. The data was then presented using tables and figures. The qualitative raw data was first recorded and then transcribed. The transcripts were brought together with the field notes from the researcher's notebook to come up with themes to answer the research questions guided by the literature review and adopted conceptual framework.

Empirical Specification

Theoretically we made use of the economic model of the family developed by Blau et al (2017). This forms the conceptual basis for our analysis of the contribution of women empowerment on agribusiness promotion. Based on these authors, the relationship between women empowerment and agribusiness can be described within the framework of a simple household production model (Tambi, 2021). Thus, the generic model of agribusiness promotion for farmer i , is assumed to be:

$$AP_i = \lambda_1 \chi_i + \delta_1 FT_i + \varepsilon_{i} \quad (1)$$

Whereby AP_i is a binary variable representing agribusiness promotion i' in Wum municipality; χ_i is a vector of agribusiness promotion such as: experience, extension workers, training in agriculture, modern equipment, professional network, access to market and management decisions, etc. These are factors believed to be influencing agribusiness promotion apart from women empowerment. FT_i is women empowerment which can either be: marital status, matrimonial regime, education level, household size,. Further, δ_1 is a random error term while the coefficient δ_1 is the parameter of primary interest and represents the impact of women empowerment on agribusiness promotion and λ_i shows the effect of the other factors apart from women empowerment.

The equation (1) above reports the Probit estimate that measure the marginal effect of women empowerment on agribusiness. The probit estimate is an appropriate estimate in this type of a study because it attempts to capture the impact of women's empowerment to a farmer's agribusiness practices. However, this single-equation estimate may be upward or downward biased depending upon the effect that women empowerment has on agribusiness culture and on the correlation between omitted

variables and women empowerment. For example, if women empowerment has a positive impact on agribusiness, then we would expect the probit estimate of δ_1 to be biased upward. To avoid this problem of endogeneity, we have seriously scrutinized our selection of variables in the agricultural production equation. This means that our model is void of any biases. In addition, as reviewed in Tambi (2021) we can calculate the marginal effects of women empowerment based on the following equation;

$$ME(\chi^k) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i \frac{\delta p(AP_i = 1 | \chi_i, FT_i, \hat{\beta}, \hat{\lambda}, \hat{\delta})}{\delta \chi_i^k} \quad (2)$$

Where: χ^k as the average of the marginal effect of everyone in the sample and χ_i is a vector of characteristics with χ_i^k the k'th element in that vector, thus, the marginal effect women empowerment on agribusiness will be:

$$ME((\chi) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_i \langle P(AP_i = 1 | FT_i = 1) - P(AP_i = 1 | FT_i = 0) \rangle \quad (3)$$

The marginal effect of women empowerment on agriculture will be estimated in STATA 13.0 as clearly demonstrated in the next section. Prior to collecting data some ethical considerations were taken by the researcher. The researcher ensured that informed consent was given by the respondents. As part of each interview the researcher and the assistant introduced themselves and explained that the purpose for the research was purely for academic reasons and that the research was not in any way going to give any direct benefits to them and their households.

This was done to avoid biased answers from the respondents with the thought that maybe the research will benefit them. For the respondents of the questionnaire their anonymity was ensured in that their names were not recorded at all. Several respondents were skeptical to which NGO I was affiliated to. However, I consistently introduced myself as a student to remove any prejudice and skeptics among the respondents. It is important to highlight the limitations of this study. Firstly, the research is limited to those who are female small holder farmers and to directly-involved stake holders in this domain in Wum. Secondly, limited finances and inaccessibility constraints did not enable the researcher to touch every corner in Wum Municipality.

4. Results

4.1. Characteristics of Women in Agribusiness in Wum

Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of respondents by age group. From the table, it is seen that the majority of the respondents were in the age group of 25-35 which is

made up of 55 respondents by count of 150 and a 36.7% of 100%. The following age group is that for respondents between 35-45, where the survey had a turnout of 46 in count and 30.7% of the total 150 respondents. While the age group of <25 and >45 made up of 18.0% and 14.7% respectively. The close call between the age groups of 25-35(36.7%) and 35-45 (30.7%) discloses that the population of Wum is made mostly of youthful adults (25-45years). It also suggests that Wum is dominated by capable working female population. The table above represents the marital status survey results of the respondents who participated in this study.

As seen on Table 1, 82.7% of the respondents attested to be married and only a handful of 17.3% were single. This result is backed by the fact Wum municipality is rather a rural community and agriculture is the predominant activity, being married here automatically take you to the farm as most women need farm harvests to feed the family and raise some income. Another reason is that in Wum young girls are naturally bound to go into marriage at very young ages. Also the result can be attributed to lagging support young girls get to further their education, which usually leaves them with no other choice than to be betrothed.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Distribution of respondents by age			
<25 years	27	18.0	18.0
25-35 years	55	36.7	54.7
35-45 years	46	30.7	85.3
>45 years	22	14.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	n/a
Distribution of respondents according to Matrimonial Regime			
Single	26	17.3	17.3
Married	124	82.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	n/a
Distribution of respondents according to level of education			
None	21	14.0	14.0
Primary	38	25.3	39.3
Secondary	80	53.3	92.7
University	11	7.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	n/a
Distribution of respondents by household size			
<5 persons	8	5.3	5.3
5-10 persons	74	49.3	64.6

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
>10 persons	68	45.3	100
Total	150	100.0	n/a
Distribution of respondents by experience in current agribusiness activity			
<5 years	18	12.0	12
5-10 years	41	27.3	39.3
>10years	91	60.7	100
Total	150	100.0	n/a

Source: Author

Table 1 represents the data responses of the respondents' marital statuses and their level of education respectively. There, it can be seen that the proportion of women in a monogamy marriage was the highest at 63.3%, while those in a polygamous marriage made up just 22.7% and the single ladies made for 14%. The level of education for the respondents had the following results; the highest responses came from women with secondary education mounting up to 53.3%, followed by those who have primary education (25.5%). Those without any education had 14% of the total responses. While respondents with university education made up of 7.3% of the total respondents. Table 1 shows a cross tabulation of matrimonial region and respondents' level of education, which portrays the various educational levels of the women and their respective marital statuses. Here we find that of the 150 women who participated in this study, most of those in polygamous marriages are between no education and primary education and with just a few (7 respondents) are secondary school leavers. This is also backed by the fact that there were no university respondents in a polygamous marriage. Thus, it is safe to say that women in Wum municipality find themselves in disempowering situations like polygamous marriages because of their little or no education. However, the results show that most of the women (95 of 150) were in monogamous marriage, which indicates that women in Wum have the tendency to be empowered through their matrimonial regime but are being hindered through inadequate education.

Table 1 show that a greater proportion of households in Wum have a family size of 5-10 persons, this range makes for 49.3% of the total respondents who attested their family sizes in this study. Followed by this range, we have the family size of more than 10 persons, where we find that these households making up 45.3% in this study. These two results have just a 4% difference. Thus it can be concluded that most of the households in Wum are made up of medium and large household sizes. From the above table, it is seen that the majority (60.7%) of women who participated in this study had a working experience of 10 and above years. Second to this were respondents with

working experience of 5-10 years. They make up for 27.3%, just 12.0% attested to have an experience of less than 5years.

4.2. Synopsis of Women Empowerment in Wum

From the Table 2, the overall quality for access to credit as an indicator for women empowerment stands 60.9%. This means the more exposed women are to credit, the more they are considered empowered. Also, women's empowerment in agriculture is very much affected by their exposure to usable land. The results show that access to land affects women empowerment at 56.8%. More so, access to farm inputs has an overall quality of 75.4, making it a very important indicator of women empowerment as women cannot be empowered in agriculture if they lack basic farm inputs.

Savings account has an overall quality of 64.9%. The data above shows that women's exposure to savings account is very important to their empowerment status, as this will help the women to save their earnings, and allow them to better manage their funds. Also, assistance from religious groups has an overall quality of 58.4%, making it a good indicator for women empowerment.

Table 2: Synopsis of Women Empowerment in Wum

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Mass</i>	<i>Overall Quality</i>	<i>%Inert</i>
Access to credit			
Yes	0.088	0.609	0.030
No	0.037	0.609	0.070
Land ownership			
Yes	0.089	0.334	0.029
No	0.036	0.334	0.071
Access to land			
Yes	0.088	0.568	0.029
No	0.037	0.568	0.071
Access to farm inputs			
Yes	0.085	0.754	0.032
No	0.040	0.754	0.068
Savings account			
Yes	0.059	0.649	0.053
No	0.066	0.649	0.047
Assistance from religious groups			
Yes	0.063	0.584	0.050
No	0.063	0.584	0.050

Source: Author

4.3. Factors Fueling Women Empowerment in Wum Municipality

The Table 3 presents indicators for drivers of women empowerment. Using marital status as an indicator, it is seen that the t-value was 12.94, therefore it is 90% acceptable as an indicator for women empowerment. Followed by this is educational level, where it is seen that educational level as an indicator for women empowerment in agriculture is acceptable at 95% and is significant at 5%. The result therefor suggests women are more empowered when they attain a recommendable level of education and when they find themselves in a good marital statutory. Also, the household size of a woman plays an important role in determining the indicators for women empowerment. Table 3 presents the household size at a t-value of 2.74 depicting it is a very good indicator as it is 95% acceptable with a significance level of 5%.

More so, it is seen that extension workers also play a major role in women empowerment in agriculture in the Wum municipality. It is significant at 10% and 90% acceptable. Followed by, is Training in Agriculture. The research proved that women who have had some sort of training in agriculture is somehow more empowered than the counterparts who have not received any training in agriculture. Using Training in Agriculture as an indicator for women empowerment, it was realized that this tool was significant at 95% as an indicator for women empowerment in Wum. It is also seen that belonging to professional groups does increase the chances of a woman being empowered in Wum.

Table 3: Drivers of Women Empowerment in Wum Municipality

Indicator	Coef.	Std. Err.	T	P> t
Marital_Status	-.7637709	.3946008	12.94	0.055
Matrimonial_Regime	-.1583367	.1856812	-0.85	0.395
Education_Level	-.2987411	.121457	2.46	0.015
Household_Size	.4540596	.1655858	2.74	0.007
Experience	-.1104094	.1360913	-0.81	0.419
Extension_Workers	-.4016778	.2350811	1.71	0.090
Training_In_Agriculture	.8588809	.358683	2.39	0.018
Morden_Equipments	-.945172	.3292687	-2.87	0.005
Professional_Group	-.637903	.2574536	2.48	0.014
Management_Decisions	-.081733	.2056811	-0.40	0.692
Access_To_Market	.0796305	.198666	0.40	0.689
_Cons	3.245529	1.23555	2.63	0.010
R-squared	0.2789			
F-Statistics	52.02[0.0000]			
Observation	150			

Source: Author

municipality. To a lesser extent, the research did find that the women empowerment is embedded in the women's access to the market from the farm.

Objective one was to discuss the factors fueling women empowerment in Wum. A series of drivers were considered the first of which was Marital Status. The results indicated that marital status greatly affects a woman's ability to be empowered, thus, women empowerment is highly determined by the marital status of the woman. This is against our prior expectation as we expected that marital status did not significantly affect women empowerment in Wum. This is however justifiable in the sense that; women in a better marital status may get opportunities like; furthering education, attending workshops and seminars, which will in turn boost her agricultural capabilities.

On the other hand, when the woman finds herself in a deplorable marriage, then she certainly will lack certain opportunities to better their lives. The second indicator looked at was level of education. The results showed that the empowerment level of a woman is greatly affected by the woman's level of education. The higher in education the woman is, the more empowered and self-sustainable that women. Also, the household size was seen to be a good indicator of women's empowerment in Wum. Households in Wum were seen to be considerable large, this doesn't allow for the woman to have enough time for her own personal development.

4.4. Estimate of Women Empowerment and Agribusiness Promotion

While table 4 above explains the indicators of women empowerment in Wum municipality, Table 9 seeks to explicate the indicators of Women Empowerment

Table 4: Women Empowerment and Agribusiness Promotion

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Coef.</i>	<i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P> t </i>
Marital_Status	-.017377	.0634193	2.27	0.784
Matrimonial_Regime	-.0093677	.0295227	-0.32	0.751
Education_Level	-.015882	.0196782	-0.81	0.421
Household_Size	-.0404523	.0269644	-1.50	0.136
Experience	-.0170224	.0216327	1.79	0.433
Extension_Workers	.0168512	.0376713	2.45	0.655
Training_In_Agriculture	.1150426	.0580494	1.98	0.050
Morden_Equipments	-.1057046	.0537515	-1.97	0.051
Profesional_Group	-.0514809	.0417251	2.23	0.219
Management_Decisions	.0255134	.0315227	1.81	0.420
Access_to_Market	-.0070632	.0326355	-0.22	0.829
_Cons	-.0092387	.0134992	2.68	0.495
R-squared	0.0815			

Source: Author

and Agribusiness Promotion. Marital Status is a major determinant of Women Empowerment and Agribusiness Promotion, significant at 5% (see table above). This suggests that a woman's marital status directly affects her ability to be empowered or not in Agribusiness. Thus, an unhealthy marriage causes women to be under empowered, while a good and supporting marriage will help these women to be significantly empowered in agribusiness activities. Experience in current agribusiness activity is also seen to be acceptable at 10% as an indicator for women empowerment in Agribusiness. According to this study, the longer a woman had stayed in a particular activity, is to a greater an extent a tool for her empowerment in the said agribusiness activity.

From the table above, it is represented that the input of extension workers is very significant to women's empowerment. This indicator is seen to be significant at 5%, which makes it 95% acceptable as an indicator for women empowerment in Wum municipality. Extension workers are very important in empowering a woman. They come with expertise ideas which help women increase the productivity of their various activities. More to this is training in agriculture, which is also significant at a 5% level suggest that women are more empowered when the receive trainings in agriculture. Belonging to Professional group is seen to be a very considerate indicator for women empowerment in agribusiness. The results prove that with women belonging to professional groups it helps them to be more empowered in their agribusiness activities. At this social gathering, the women get to learn skill that when applied to their various activities it helps them excel. Such skill are one which it would or may be very difficult for the women should they not be a part of such group. This result is consistent with of Barone-Chapman (2014). Finally, the ability for a woman to make management decisions concerning her activity in the agribusiness sector is seen to be a very commendable indicator for empowerment in agribusiness.

4.5. Problems associated with Women Agribusiness Activities in Wum

Table 5 presents a set of variables from which the problems facing women empowerment in Wum Municipality will be derived. On the acquisition of extension workers, it was noticed that this service pose as a hindrance to women empowerment in that the majority of women farmers (64%) attested to not being able to acquire an extension worker. Looking at the contribution of training in agriculture to women empowerment, it is noticed that, this variable cannot be considered a problem because many women (62.7%) indicated to have had some sort of training in agriculture. Being involved in a professional group that helps women in their agribusiness life cannot actually be considered as a measure for women empowerment in Wum but rather as a problem

facing women empowerment. This is so as 66% of the respondents refused being a part any professional group.

Table 5: Problems facing women Agribusiness Activities in Wum Municipality

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Observation</i>	<i>Non-Constraint</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Constraint</i>	<i>%</i>
Extension Workers	150	54	36	96	64
training in agriculture	150	94	62.7	56	37.3
modern equipment	150	124	82.7	26	17.3
professional group	150	51	34.0	99	66.0
Access from farm to market	150	57	38.0	93	62.0
Management decisions	150	84	56.0	66	44.0
Access to credit	150	105	70.0	45	30.0
Land ownership	150	107	71.3	43	28.7
Access to land	150	102	68	43	28.7
Assistance from family members	150	106	70.7	44	29.3
Assistance from friends	150	70	46.7	76	50.7
Assistance from religious groups	150	75	50	75	50
Access to farm input	150	102	68	48	32
Savings account	150	71	47.3	79	52.7

Source: *Author*

Access from farm to market is one of the most endearing and most prominent in our day to day agribusiness life. The survey results gotten from Wum municipality showed that Access from farm to market was a major problem facing women empowerment in agribusiness in Wum. 62.0% of the respondents attested to difficulty in getting produce from farm to market. On decision making, despite the sociocultural environment of Wum, most of the women there pointed out that they make most of the decisions themselves (55.0%). All in all, the result above suggested that the major problems facing women empowerment in agribusiness in Wum are; Inability to acquire extension workers, not being a member of a professional group, Lack of access from farm to market.

One of the major problems facing women empowerment in agribusiness in Wum are; Inability to acquire extension workers, not being a member of a professional group, Lack of access from farm to market. On the acquisition of extension workers, it was noticed that this service pose as a hindrance to women empowerment in that the majority of women farmers were not able to acquire an extension worker. Being involved

in a professional group that helps women in their agribusiness life cannot actually be considered as a measure for women empowerment in Wum but rather as a problem facing women empowerment. Most of the women who participated in this study weren't part of any professional group, thus, it reduces their ability to get vital and useful update and trainings to better their agricultural activities. Also, Access from farm to market is one of the most endearing and most prominent issues in our day to day agribusiness life. The survey results gotten from Wum municipality showed that Access from farm to market was a major problem facing women empowerment in agribusiness in Wum. 62.0% of the respondents attested to difficulty in getting produce from farm to market.

5. Conclusion

The study was carried out to assess the role of women empowerment in agribusiness promotion in Wum Municipality, Menchum Division, North West Region Cameroon. It was carried out to examine the implications of Women Empowerment on Agribusiness enhancement in Wum. Specific objectives of this study were; to identify and discuss the factors fueling Women Empowerment in Wum municipality, to investigate the actual effects of Women Empowerment on Agribusiness Promotion in Wum municipality, to verify the problems associated with women agribusiness activities in Wum municipality. The target population for the study was women concerned in the agribusiness sector in Wum municipality. The total number of participants was 150 women in the agribusiness sector in Wum. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and the respondents were interviewed by the researcher. This was administered among a random sample of 150 women to get the primary data for this research.

The results showed that marital status, household size, level of education had a significant effect on women empowerment in Wum municipality. It also showed that experience in agribusiness, acquisition of extension workers, trainings in agriculture, belonging to professional group and management decision making, had a positive effect on agribusiness promotion. Finally, we observed that the major problems facing women empowerment in agribusiness in Wum are; inability to acquire extension workers, not being a member of a professional group, lack of access from farm to market. The study suggests that workshops and farm trainings should be organized to provide women with practical knowledge in agriculture. This is a wise-step towards economic development.

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