

## Gender Inclusion and Rural Women's Attitudes toward CBARDP in Bauchi State, Nigeria

Rabiu Barau Bal<sup>1\*</sup>, Welyne Jeffrey Jehom<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Sa'adu Zungur University, P.O.BOX 065. Bauchi, Nigeria

Email: rabiubaraubal@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universiti Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Email: welynejj@um.edu.my

### CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (\*):

Welyne Jeffrey Jehom  
(welynejj@um.edu.my)

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines rural women's attitudes toward the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) in Bauchi State, Nigeria, with a focus on gender inclusion and participation in agricultural development initiatives. A qualitative research design was adopted, and data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 36 rural women selected using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that rural women generally have positive perceptions of the CBARDP programme, largely due to awareness created through community meetings and extension services. Participation in the programme enhanced farming knowledge, increased agricultural productivity, and improved household income. The study also found that the programme contributes to women's empowerment by strengthening their confidence and decision-making capacity in agricultural activities. However, several challenges were identified, including limited access to credit facilities, inadequate extension services, and socio-cultural barriers such as restrictive gender norms and limited land ownership. The study concludes that while CBARDP has significantly improved rural women's livelihoods, addressing institutional and socio-cultural constraints is essential for enhancing gender inclusion.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study is one of the few studies that employed bottom-up approach to improve the socio-economic conditions of rural women and identified challenges that affect their participation in the programme. The study concludes that while the CBARDP programme has contribute to improving rural women's agricultural activities and livelihoods in Bauchi State, addressing structural barriers and strengthening gender-inclusive policies are essential for enhancing women's participation in agricultural development programmes.

## 1. Introduction

Rural development remains a critical priority in many developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa where agriculture constitutes the primary source of livelihood for rural populations. In Nigeria, the agricultural sector plays a vital role in employment generation, food security, and poverty reduction. However, persistent challenges such as poverty, low agricultural productivity, limited access to resources, and gender inequality continue to constrain rural development outcomes (Liverpool-Tasie et al., 2011; Olaniyan & Onisanwa, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires inclusive development strategies that actively involve rural populations, particularly women who play significant roles in agricultural production and rural household economies.

Despite their substantial contributions, rural women frequently face structural barriers including limited access to land, credit facilities, agricultural technologies, and extension services. Socio-cultural norms and institutional constraints further restrict their participation in decision-making processes within rural development initiatives (Keen & Anwar, 2024; Elias et al., 2024). Also, attitude plays a critical role in shaping individuals' willingness to participate in development programmes and adopt innovations. Positive attitudes enhance participation, knowledge adoption, and sustainability of interventions, while negative attitudes may limit engagement and reduce programme effectiveness (Gopal & Sathyanarayanan, 2022; Gunarathne et al., 2023; Ragasa et al., 2026).

Although several studies have examined rural development programmes in Nigeria, limited attention has been given to understanding rural women's attitudes toward CBARDP interventions, particularly in Bauchi State. Existing research has largely focused on programme outcomes such as agricultural productivity and general participation, with less emphasis on gender-specific perspectives and lived experiences (Nura, 2022; Orji et al., 2024). This gap highlights the need for empirical studies that explore how rural women perceive and respond to community-based agricultural development initiatives.

### 1.1. Research Objectives

The specific objectives are:

- i. To assess rural women's perceptions of the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) in Bauchi State.
- ii. To examine the attitudes of rural women toward their participation in CBARDP agricultural and rural development activities.
- iii. To identify the factors influencing rural women's attitudes and level of participation in the CBARDP programme.
- iv. To analyze the challenges and opportunities experienced by rural women in participating in the CBARDP programme in Bauchi State.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Concept of Gender Inclusion in Rural Development

Gender inclusion refers to the process of ensuring that both men and women have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from development initiatives, particularly in sectors such as agriculture where gender inequalities are historically entrenched. In many rural communities across developing countries, women constitute a significant proportion of the agricultural labor force but often have limited access to productive

resources such as land, credit facilities, extension services, and modern farming technologies (Elias et al., 2024). These inequalities restrict women's economic potential and limit the overall effectiveness of agricultural development programmes.

Scholars have emphasized that gender-inclusive agricultural policies are critical for achieving sustainable rural development and improving livelihoods in rural communities. According to Rola-Rubzen et al. (2023), gender inclusion promotes equitable resource distribution, improves productivity, and strengthens community resilience. Similarly, Tchamyou et al. (2025) argue that gender equality in rural development contributes to economic growth, poverty reduction, and social stability in developing countries. Evidence from several countries also indicates that empowering rural women through agricultural development programmes improves household welfare, enhances food security, and contributes to broader socio-economic transformation (Basak & Chowdhury, 2024; Nemera Woyessa, et al., 2025; Sarkki, et al., 2024; Semkunde et al., 2022). Therefore, integrating gender considerations into agricultural policies and development programmes is essential for achieving inclusive rural transformation.

## **2.2. Women's Participation in Agricultural and Rural Development Programmes**

Participation refers to the active involvement of individuals or groups in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development initiatives. In the context of rural development, participation enables community members to contribute their knowledge, resources, and experiences to development interventions (Boadi, 2021). Several studies have highlighted the importance of women's participation in agricultural programmes for achieving sustainable rural development outcomes. Ali and Kamraju (2023) note that women's participation in rural development programmes enhances agricultural productivity, strengthens household food security, and promotes social inclusion. Similarly, Man et al. (2024) found that rural women's participation in agricultural activities is influenced by factors such as education, access to resources, household responsibilities, and socio-cultural norms. When women actively participate in development programmes, they are more likely to adopt improved agricultural practices, diversify income sources, and contribute to community development. In many rural communities, men typically control productive resources and make key agricultural decisions, while women's roles are often limited to labor-intensive activities. These constraints highlight the importance of designing development programmes that explicitly promote gender inclusion and empower women within rural communities.

## **2.3. Community-Based Agricultural and Rural Development Programmes (CBARDP)**

The CBARDP programme focuses on improving agricultural productivity, strengthening rural infrastructure, and promoting community participation in development activities. According to Abdulhamid et al. (2016), the programme was designed to empower rural communities by providing access to agricultural inputs, training, extension services, and rural infrastructure. Similarly, Aminu (2015) reports that CBARDP interventions have significantly improved the livelihoods of rural women by increasing agricultural productivity, enhancing income opportunities, and promoting women's participation in development initiatives.

Empirical evidence from different regions of Nigeria suggests that CBARDP programmes have contributed to improved agricultural practices and increased income among

beneficiaries. For example, Orji et al. (2024) found that awareness campaigns and extension services associated with CBARDP improved farmers' participation in agricultural development activities. However, despite these positive outcomes, challenges such as limited funding, inadequate monitoring, and gender disparities continue to affect the overall effectiveness of the programme (Kakamba et al., 2024). Understanding beneficiaries' perceptions and attitudes toward such programmes is therefore essential for improving their implementation and sustainability.

## **2.4. Attitude and Participation in Rural Development Programmes**

Attitude refers to an individual's psychological tendency to evaluate a particular object, programme, or idea positively or negatively. In the context of agricultural development programmes, attitudes can influence farmers' decisions to participate in projects, adopt new farming practices, or support development interventions. Research indicates that positive attitudes toward agricultural development programmes significantly enhance participation and programme effectiveness. According to Ikeoji and Agbidi (2022), farmers who perceive agricultural interventions as beneficial are more likely to adopt improved farming techniques and actively participate in development programmes. Similarly, Ragasa et al. (2026) found that gender attitudes and perceptions significantly influence the adoption of agricultural innovations among rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

However, attitudes toward development programmes are often shaped by several factors, including past experiences, socio-cultural norms, level of awareness, and perceived benefits of the programme. In rural communities where development interventions have previously failed or produced limited benefits, community members may develop negative attitudes toward new programmes. Therefore, understanding the attitudes of beneficiaries, particularly rural women, is essential for ensuring the success of community-based agricultural development initiatives.

## **2.5. Theoretical Insights**

### *2.5.1. Gender and Development (GAD) Theory*

The Gender and Development (GAD) theory provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding gender inclusion in rural development programmes. The theory emphasizes the importance of addressing structural inequalities between men and women in development processes. Interestingly, the GAD approach emphasizes transforming the social, economic, and institutional structures that create gender inequality (Naz et al., 2025). The GAD perspective highlights that sustainable development cannot be achieved without addressing gender disparities in access to resources, decision-making power, and economic opportunities. In the context of agricultural development programmes, the theory suggests that empowering women through access to agricultural resources, training, and decision-making opportunities can significantly improve development outcomes (Rola-Rubzen et al., 2024). Applying this theoretical framework to the present study helps explain how gender inclusion within programmes such as CBARDP can influence rural women's participation and attitudes toward agricultural development initiatives.

### 2.5.2. Participatory Development Theory

Participatory Development Theory also provides an important framework for understanding community-based agricultural development programmes. The theory emphasizes the involvement of local communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development initiatives. Participatory approaches ensure that development programmes are responsive to the needs, experiences, and priorities of beneficiaries (Boadi, 2021).

The theory argues that development programmes are more sustainable and effective when community members actively participate in decision-making processes. Participation enhances local ownership of development initiatives and improves the likelihood of long-term success. In the context of the CBARDP programme, participatory development approaches enable rural women to contribute their knowledge and experiences to agricultural development initiatives, thereby improving programme effectiveness and promoting inclusive rural transformation.

## 3. Research Methods

This study adopted a qualitative research design to explore rural women's attitudes toward the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) in Bauchi State, Nigeria. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate as it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward social programmes and development initiatives. The study was conducted in rural communities in Bauchi State, a predominantly agrarian region in northeastern Nigeria where agriculture remains the primary source of livelihood. Over time, several agricultural development initiatives have been implemented in the state to improve rural livelihoods, among which the CBARDP programme focuses on enhancing agricultural productivity, strengthening rural institutions, and promoting community participation, particularly among women.

The population of the study consisted of rural women who are beneficiaries or participants in the CBARDP programme. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants with direct experience and relevant knowledge of the programme. This approach is widely used in qualitative research to ensure that selected participants can provide rich and meaningful insights into the phenomenon under investigation. A sample of approximately 36 participants was selected based on the principle of data saturation, which guides sample adequacy in qualitative research. Data collection continued until no new themes or meaningful insights emerged from subsequent interviews, indicating that thematic saturation had been reached. This approach ensures sufficient depth of understanding and is consistent with established qualitative research standards (Guest et al., 2006; Saunders et al., 2018). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to express their views freely while enabling the researcher to guide discussions using questions aligned with the study objectives. The interviews focused on awareness of the programme, attitudes toward participation, perceived benefits, and challenges encountered. To ensure effective communication, the interviews were conducted in the Hausa language and later translated into English for analysis.

The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis following a systematic and iterative process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interview recordings were first transcribed

verbatim and reviewed repeatedly to ensure familiarity with the data. Open coding was then conducted by assigning labels to meaningful segments of the data, which were subsequently grouped into categories based on similarities and patterns. These categories were refined into overarching themes that reflect rural women's perceptions, attitudes, benefits, and challenges associated with the programme.

To ensure rigor and trustworthiness, several strategies were employed. Credibility was enhanced through careful transcription and member checking, where selected participants validated the interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1988). Dependability was ensured by maintaining consistency in coding procedures and documenting the analytical process. Reflexivity was also observed, with the researcher remaining aware of potential biases and ensuring that interpretations were grounded in participants' responses (Nowell et al., 2017). These procedures enhance the reliability and validity of the qualitative findings.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The study interviewed 36 rural women who were beneficiaries or participants in the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) in Bauchi State. The demographic characteristics of the participants were analyzed to provide contextual understanding of their socio-economic background.

Table1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20–30 years	6	16.7%
	31–40 years	12	33.3%
	41–50 years	10	27.8%
	Above 50 years	8	22.2%
Marital Status	Married	26	72.2%
	Single	4	11.1%
	Widowed/Divorced	6	16.7%
Education	No formal education	12	33.3%
	Primary education	10	27.8%
	Secondary education	8	22.2%
	Tertiary education	6	16.7%
Main Occupation	Crop farming	20	55.6%
	Livestock farming	8	22.2%
	Agro-processing	6	16.7%
	Petty trading	2	5.5%

Source: Research compilation

The study interviewed 36 rural women who are part of the CBARDP, in Bauchi State. Their demographic characteristics are given in Table 1. The age distribution reveals that most respondents were in the 31-40 years bracket (33.3%), with the next highest 41-50 years (27.8%), 51-above (22.2%) and 20-30 years (16.7%). This suggests that a majority of the participants are in the economically active population and this is likely to increase their

ability to actively participate in agricultural interventions. Regarding marital status, majority of the respondents were married (72.2%), widow/divorced (16.7%), and single women (11.1%) had lower percentages. This implies that the participation of women in rural development programmes is dominated by married women. But it also indicates gendered domestic systems whereby the involvement of women can still be mediated by the male authority, which is the focus of Gender and Development (GAD) literature. Education level shows that a large percentage of the respondents had never had any formal education (33.3%), primary education (27.8%), secondary education (22.2%), and tertiary education (16.7%) respectively. This implies that the levels of literacy are usually low to moderate and this can affect the way the participants access, interpret and use the information available in the programmes. In terms of occupation, most of the respondents were in crop farming (55.6%), then livestock farming (22.2%), agro-processing (16.7%), and petty trading (5.5%). The emphasis on agriculture, especially crop production, in rural livelihoods is highlighted by this distribution. It also raises the topicality of CBARDP interventions to the economic reality of participants, which is also a probable reason why they engage in the programme positively. The general demographic picture indicates a population of economically active rural women with low levels of formal education and high levels of agricultural livelihoods. This background plays a significant role in their perceptions, attitudes, and experiences in the CBARDP programme.

#### 4.2. Thematic Findings

The findings reveal that rural women generally have a positive perception of the CBARDP programme, largely shaped by awareness channels such as community meetings, extension services, and local leadership structures (Table 2). Participants demonstrated clear understanding of the programme's objectives, particularly in relation to training, provision of inputs, and rural development support.

Table 2: Theme 1: Awareness and Perception of CBARDP

Theme	Sub-theme	Description	Illustrative Response from Informants
Awareness of CBARDP	Community awareness channels	Information received through community meetings, extension agents, and local leaders	<i>"We first heard about the programme during a community meeting where the village head and extension officers explained how it would help farmers in our area." W2</i>
	Knowledge of programme objectives	Understanding of training, agricultural inputs, and rural development support	<i>"The programme teaches us better farming methods and sometimes provides improved seeds and fertilizers to help our farms." W14</i>
Perception of Programme	Positive perception	Viewed as beneficial for farming and livelihoods	<i>"The programme is good for us because it helps us improve our farming and gives us knowledge about modern farming practices." W26</i>
	Community development impact	Perceived as improving agricultural productivity and economic well-being	<i>"Since the programme started, many women in our community have improved their farming and are earning more from their harvest." W16</i>

Source: Research compilation

Illustrative responses such as *"We first heard about the programme during a community meeting..."* (W2) highlight the importance of localized communication strategies. This supports Participatory Development Theory, which posits that inclusive information-sharing mechanisms enhance community ownership and acceptance of development initiatives (Boadi, 2021).

Beyond awareness, respondents perceived the programme as beneficial to agricultural productivity and economic well-being. For example, participants noted improvements in farming outcomes and income generation within their communities. This aligns with studies (Orji et al., 2024; Kakamba et al., 2024) emphasizing that awareness is a critical determinant of programme success. However, this study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating that awareness does not merely facilitate participation but also shapes how women evaluate the relevance and impact of development interventions.

### 4.3. Theme 2: Attitudes toward Participation in CBARDP

The analysis revealed that the attitudes of rural women towards participating in CBARDP are strongly positive (Table 3). The motivation behind these attitudes includes the need to increase knowledge on farming, productivity and household income. This proactive engagement is demonstrated by statements such as *"the fact that I enrolled in the programme because I wanted to learn better farming practices. ..."* (W4)

Table 3: Theme 2: Attitudes toward Participation

Theme	Sub-theme	Description	Illustrative Response from Informants
Attitude toward participation	Positive motivation	Desire to improve farming knowledge and income	<i>"I joined the programme because I wanted to learn better farming methods and increase my harvest."</i> W4
	Empowerment and confidence	Increased confidence in participating in agricultural activities	<i>"The training we received made me confident to manage my farm better and try new farming practices."</i> W36
Participation outcomes	Increased interest in agriculture	Women more actively involved in farming activities	<i>"After joining the programme, I became more interested in farming and started spending more time on my farm."</i> W2
	Skill acquisition	Training improved agricultural skills	<i>"The programme taught us modern ways of planting and managing crops, which has improved my farming skills."</i> W22

Source: Research compilation

Involvement also helped build up confidence and decision-making abilities as seen in the statements like *"the training helped me to have confidence in the way I manage my farm ..."* (W36). The result is consistent with the Gender and Development (GAD) framework, which highlights the overall idea that the access to resources and training boosts the agency and the empowerment of women (Naz et al., 2025; Rola-Rubzen et al., 2024).

Moreover, the involvement sparked more interest in farming and the acquisition of skills, and hence better farming practices. This corroborates earlier findings (Ikeoji and Agbidi,

2022; Man et al., 2024) that associate positive attitudes with increased participation and adoption of innovation. Notably, this research makes a contribution to the discussion because of placing attitude as a major mediating variable between programme exposure and empowerment outcomes.

#### 4.4. Theme 3: Livelihood Benefits of the CBARDP Programme

The results show that the use of CBARDP has considerable economic and social returns to rural women (Table 4). On the economic side, there was reported growth of productivity and income of the participants due to better farming methods and availability of inputs. *“Since the programme started, many women in our community have improved their farming and are earning more from their harvest.”\* (W16) An example would be my harvest has grown (W4) and I can better feed my family (W30) is a reflection of their livelihood improvement. ”\**

Table 4: Theme 3: Benefits and Livelihood Outcomes

Theme	Sub-theme	Description	Illustrative Response from Informants
Economic benefits	Increased agricultural productivity	Improved crop yields and farming techniques	<i>“After attending the training, I started using better planting methods and my harvest has increased.” W4</i>
	Income generation	Increased household income	<i>“The programme has helped me earn more from my farm, and now I can support my family better.” W30</i>
Social benefits	Women empowerment	Improved decision-making power	<i>“Before, I depended on my husband for many decisions, but now I contribute more to decisions about farming and family needs.” W26</i>
	Community collaboration	Increased cooperation among women farmers	<i>“Through the programme we formed groups and help each other during planting and harvesting.” W10</i>

Source: Research compilation

These results are consistent with the GAD view, according to which access to productive factors correlates with enhanced economic well-being and inclusive development (Rola-Rubzen et al., 2024). Abdulhamid et al. (2016) and Basak and Chowdhury (2024) report similar findings. In addition to economic benefits, the programme brought about social benefits, such as empowerment, improved decision-making, and collective action. Women claimed to be more engaged in the decision-making process and closer collaboration in the form of collective activities. This underscores the fact that CBARDP is not only about the generation of income but about the greater societal change.

#### 4.5. Theme 4: Challenges and Barriers to Participation

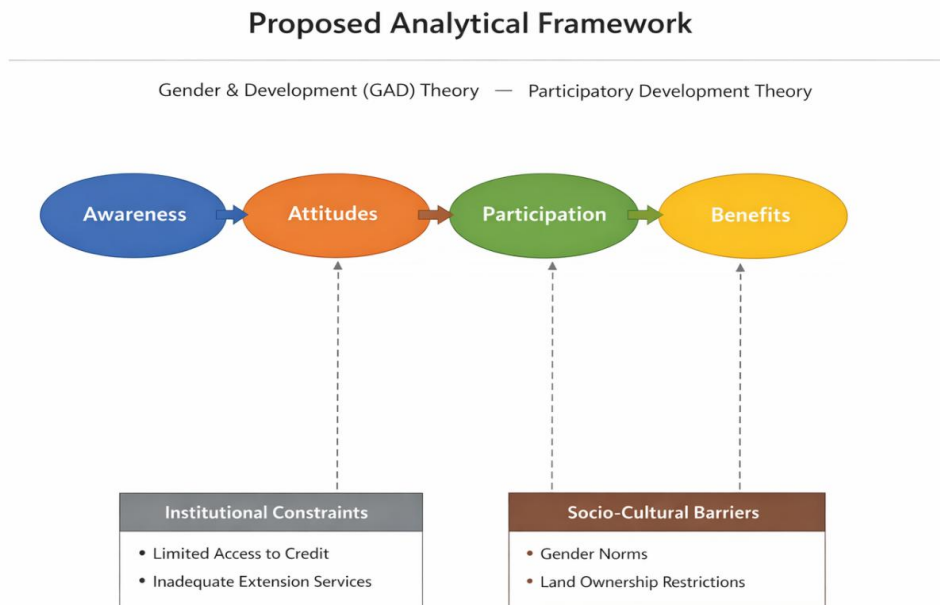
Although there were positive results, the findings indicate that there are still institutional and socio-cultural obstacles that restrict participation of women (Table 5). Other important institutional issues are that access to credit and provision of extension services are low, and as such the ability of women to grow agricultural activities is restricted. *“\*Indicatively, financial exclusion is pointed out with the sentence, it is difficult to get loans.”\* (W18).*



#### 4.6. Thematic Model of Findings

Figure 2 presents the thematic model developed from the study findings. The model illustrates the relationship between awareness, attitudes toward participation, programme involvement, livelihood outcomes, and structural barriers affecting rural women's participation in CBARDP. The framework demonstrates how awareness and positive perceptions encourage participation, which subsequently contributes to empowerment and socio-economic improvement, while institutional and socio-cultural barriers continue to limit full inclusion.

Figure 2: Thematic model



The proposed analytical framework (Figure 2) and thematic model jointly illustrate a structured pathway through which rural women engage with the CBARDP programme, beginning with awareness, which shapes their attitudes, leading to active participation, and ultimately resulting in socio-economic benefits and empowerment outcomes. This progression reflects the core assumption of Participatory Development Theory that inclusive communication, access to information, and community engagement enhance ownership and sustained participation in development initiatives. At the same time, the framework integrates Gender and Development (GAD) Theory by emphasizing that access to resources, institutional support, and reduced structural inequalities are critical for improving women's agency, decision-making capacity, and livelihood outcomes. The model further suggests that increased awareness and positive perceptions encourage participation, which enhances agricultural productivity, income generation, and economic independence among rural women. This interpretation is supported by existing studies (Boadi, 2021; Abdulhamid et al., 2016; Aminu, 2015; Basak & Chowdhury, 2024; Rola-Rubzen et al., 2023), which demonstrate that participation in agricultural development programmes strengthens women's farming capacity and socio-economic empowerment. However, the framework also acknowledges that this pathway is not automatic, as institutional constraints (such as limited access to credit and inadequate extension services) and socio-cultural barriers (including restrictive gender norms and limited land ownership) can moderate participation and limit outcomes (Keen & Anwar, 2024; Nhleko et al., 2023). Overall, the model provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how individual perceptions, participatory processes, and structural

conditions interact to shape rural women's experiences and determine the effectiveness of community-based agricultural development programmes, particularly when supported by gender-sensitive policies and inclusive institutional frameworks (Elias et al., 2024; Tchamyou et al., 2025; Rola-Rubzen et al., 2024).

## 5. Conclusion

This study examined rural women's attitudes toward the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) in Bauchi State, Nigeria, to understand how gender inclusion influences participation in agricultural development initiatives. The findings revealed that rural women generally have positive perceptions of the CBARDP programme and recognise its importance in enhancing agricultural productivity and improving rural livelihoods. Most participants became aware of the programme through community meetings, extension agents, and local leaders, indicating that community-based communication channels play a crucial role in promoting awareness of development programmes. The study also found that rural women demonstrate positive attitudes toward participation in the programme, largely due to the training opportunities, access to agricultural inputs, and institutional support provided through CBARDP.

Furthermore, the study established that participation in the programme has contributed to improving the socio-economic conditions of rural women in the study area. Participants reported benefits such as improved farming practices, increased agricultural productivity, and enhanced household income. In addition, the programme has helped strengthen women's roles in agricultural activities and increased their confidence in participating in community development initiatives. However, despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were identified that affect women's participation in the programme. These challenges include limited access to credit facilities, inadequate agricultural extension services, and socio-cultural barriers that restrict women's access to land and other productive resources.

The study concludes that while the CBARDP programme has contributed significantly to improving rural women's agricultural activities and livelihoods in Bauchi State, addressing structural barriers and strengthening gender-inclusive policies are essential for enhancing women's participation in agricultural development programmes. Promoting gender equality in rural development initiatives will not only improve agricultural productivity but also contribute to sustainable rural transformation and poverty reduction in Nigeria.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Project (CBARDP) and strengthen rural women's participation in agricultural development initiatives:

- i. Government agencies and development organizations should ensure that rural women have improved access to agricultural inputs, credit facilities, and modern farming technologies to enhance their productivity and economic empowerment.
- ii. Extension services should be strengthened to provide regular training and technical support to rural women farmers. Extension officers should also adopt gender-sensitive approaches that encourage women's active participation in agricultural programmes.

- iii. Policymakers should develop and implement gender-sensitive policies that address socio-cultural barriers limiting women's participation in agricultural development initiatives, particularly in relation to land ownership and decision-making processes.
- iv. Development agencies should increase awareness campaigns through community meetings, local radio programmes, and agricultural extension networks to ensure that more rural women are informed about available agricultural development programmes.
- v. Rural women should be encouraged to form or join agricultural cooperative groups, as collective action can improve their access to resources, training opportunities, and financial support.

### **Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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