

# Livelihood as Poverty Coping Strategy of Rural Women in Song Local Government Area, Adamawa State

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**Abstract** – This research studied Livelihood as Poverty Coping Strategies among rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa state, the research specifically identified their socio economic characteristics, assessed their livelihood activities, assessed the poverty coping strategies employed by rural women in the study area. The study had two hypotheses and they were stated in the null form,  $H_0$ 1 There is no significant relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State, hypothesis one There is no significant relationship between selected socio economic characteristics and poverty coping strategies of the rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The primary data was solicited through administration of a well structured interview schedule, to the respondents. the respondents were selected using the systematic random sampling. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The study shows that, 70% are between the age of 28-43years, most of the respondents are married 55%, the result shows that 67% have the household have large family size of 6 and above, furthermore, 41.8% of the respondents had attained primary school. The research result reveals that the women in the study are involved in a lot of livelihood activities, such as piggery, brewing of local drink which include *kunu*, *subo drink*, *fura da nunu*, *burkutu*. They are also into sesame seed production, cowpea, *bambara nuts*, maize and groundnut production, trading, and the sales of fuel wood, hairdressing, pottery and sales of fruits. Women in the six districts are involved in series of strategic acts. They employed poverty coping strategies in both dry and wet season, women are involved in both monetary and non monetary, The descriptive statistics use of mean, frequency and percentage, for the objectives while the inferential statistic made use of the PPMC and the Chi-square. The result shows that there is no significant relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The result of the second hypotheses shows that there is significant relationship between respondents' age ( $\chi^2=7.040$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and poverty coping strategy in the study area, while there is no significant relationship between marital status ( $\chi^2 = 4.866$   $p=>0.05$ ), family size ( $\chi^2=0.466$   $p= >0.05$ ), and educational level ( $\chi^2 = 3.625$ ,  $p= >0.05$ ) and poverty coping strategy. It was recommendations that timely provision of inputs such as seed and fertilizers by government or Non-governmental Organizations at affordable rate, Facilitate for processing/storage, crops should be provided for the rural women to prevent them from selling off their farm produce immediately after harvest. They rural women should stop selling off their assets as a coping strategies but should strafe to get help or loan from external bodies.

**Keywords** – Livelihood, Poverty, Coping Strategy, Rural Women.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a situation considered inadequate for a decent living it is the general sense is the lack of necessities of life such as food, shelter, medical care, and safety, [1]. Also he said that, the problems of the poor includes social inferiority, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness and humiliation. According to [2], poverty has been massive, pervasive and engulfs a large proportion of Nigeria society. Others such as [3], [4], [5] and [6], asserted that the poor is exposure to risk, limited opportunities to income generation, misery, crime, untimely death, fear, despondency depression and suicide. According to [7], the characteristics of the poor are limited access to proper diet and social amenities, the children of the poor attend poorly equipped public school and are mostly use for child labour. According to [8], poverty that is experienced by Nigerians is pervasive, multifaceted and chronic, affecting most of the populace.

According to [9], 75% of the poor lives in the rural area. The typical poor are mostly farmers, traders who lived in poor environment mostly in the rural areas, and they constitute about 70% of Nigeria living below the poverty line, [10].

### *Coping strategies*

According to [11], coping strategies are strategies that are designed to relieve the impact of the risk when they occurred. The main forms of coping consist of individual saving or borrowing, migration, selling labor (including that of children), reduction of food intake, or the reliance on public or private transfers. [12], refers to coping strategies as strategically selected acts that individuals and households in a poor socioeconomic position use to restrict their expenses or earn some extra income to enable them to pay for basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, and not fall too far below their society's level of welfare.

### *Types of coping strategies*

There are many classifications and typologies of coping strategies in the literature on the subject. [13], draws a rough distinction between coping strategies focused on making better use of internal household resources and coping strategies focused on mobilizing external resources provided by the state, the local community, relatives, friends, private organizations such as the church and so

forth. As discussed [14], a distinction can be drawn between monetary and non-monetary resources:

1. Monetary resources include earnings from formal or informal labor or financial support provided by the local or national authorities.

2. Non-monetary resources include activities by household members to meet their own needs, informal relations of mutual support or the exchange of services, and goods or services supplied by official agencies. [14], stated that reducing household expenditures is a non monetary coping strategies which can be achieve by:

1) Consuming less, cutting down on expenditures perceived as luxuries (holidays, entertainment, transportation, the newspaper), or trying to maintain the same consumer level with less money by purchasing cheaper items.

2) Intensive use of internal household resources, an example is self supporting household that grows their own vegetables, makes its own clothes, does its own repairs and even builds its own house.

3) Market-oriented activities such as selling home-grown vegetables and other products at the market,

4) Seeking the support of powerful external bodies such as the state, local authorities or private organizations Non Governmental Organizations (NGOS). This type of coping strategy is by far the most important, in many cases there are extra provisions for the most vulnerable groups with medical care and the food stamps in the United States, which are meant to provide the low income groups with medical and health care and food, [12].

The two types of poverty coping strategies are further classified in to two types, according [15], the weak strategies include sale of assets, promoting the labour force participation including that of children) reducing consumption patterns, restriction of food intake of family members; taking children out of school to reduce education expenditures, or postponing health care expenditures, relocating (migration) and/or restructuring households. While the active coping The active coping strategies include an increase in home production, change in place of residence, finding supplementary work or second job, formal borrowing e.g., from banks, petty trading and others, [16], [15] and [17].

#### *Rural women livelihood activities*

Livelihoods are both economic activities (agricultural and non-agricultural) and non-economic activities that people know, own and undertake to earn income today and into the future. Livelihood is defined as comprising the capabilities, assets required for a means of living, [18], [19].

According [20], livelihood is the activities, assets and the access that jointly determine the living gained by the rural households. Rural women's farming and farm-based activities are major sources of household income. Women do labour intensive work in paddy cultivation such as planting and harvesting, they are into livestock rearing which provides stock for consumption and sale. Women in fishing communities do fish processing, marketing, net making and net repair. [21]. The rural women are directly and indirectly involved in all phases of agricultural

activities with major participation in post harvest activities, homestead gardening, food and nutrition affairs etc [22].

One of the common ways for the Nigeria women to meet their needs is to combine several livelihood activities [23], Some of the livelihood activities of the rural women includes cultivation, herding, hunting, wage labour, trading, hawking, weaving, carving processing and fetching [24].

#### *Livelihood strategies*

Livelihood strategies are the combination of activities that people choose to undertake in order to achieve their livelihood goals. They include productive activities, investment strategies and reproductive choices. Livelihoods approaches try to understand the strategies pursued and the factors behind people's decisions, to reinforce the positive aspects of these strategies and mitigate against constraints. The choice of strategies is a dynamic process in which people combine activities to meet their changing needs. For example, in farming households, activities are not necessarily confined to agriculture but often include non-farm activities in order to diversify income and meet household needs says [25].

#### *Sustainable Livelihood*

A livelihood is said to be sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, and provide for future generations,

A sustainable livelihoods approach is a holistic method of addressing development issues that centers the discussion on people's livelihoods, [26]. Sustainable livelihoods is a chameleon-like concept that can serve many functions: it is at one time an established development objective, an analytical tool used to understand the factors influencing a community's ability to enhance their livelihoods, and a method of eradicating poverty [27].

#### *Relationship between livelihood and coping strategies*

There is a relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies, the relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of rural women are: food security, reduced poverty, improved community infrastructural development, better use of Natural Resources, improved social economic situation and improve statue and well being of vulnerable group, [28].

#### *Statement of the Problem*

One of the most prevalent and pervasive social problem in Adamawa State is poverty, where many people live in conditions of poverty or near poverty. [29], reported that women faces social and political marginalization, they are economically deprived, financially disadvantaged, they have insufficient access to health and education, they have the least access to land, finance or other needed resources to enhance their production which will help reduce their poverty level.

Even though rural women combine a range of livelihood activities such as crafts, trading, farming, food processing in order to gain a living, yet they are still poor. Women in

Africa participant substantially in agricultural production, they contribute about 60% of the labour force, produce 80% of food but they own only one percent of farm asset [30]. It is against this background that the study was carried out in order to find out ways through which the poor rural women can improve on their livelihood activities and reduce the gap between poverty and their poverty coping strategies, thus, this research provided answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the socio economic characteristics of the respondents in the study area?
2. What livelihood activities are the respondents involved in?
3. What are the poverty coping strategies employed by the rural women in the study area?

#### *Objectives of the study*

The general objective of the study is to assess the poverty coping strategies employed by rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria, while the specific objectives are to;

1. identify their socio economic characteristics of the respondents;
2. examine livelihood activities of the women in the study area;
3. asses the poverty coping strategies employed by respondents in the study area.

#### *Justification of the Study*

Despite the fact that the rural women play an important part in the production of food and goods, are involved in field work, home based business [31]. There is a critical relationship in the role the women play in the sustenance of the family, community and the nation, [32]. Women in the rural area are mostly responsible for the well being of their household, because of this, they are involved in a number of livelihood activities, but there is still a wide gap between the income they gain from their livelihood activities and their poverty coping strategies, that is why this research intends to reduce the gap that exist between their livelihood activities and their ability to cope with poverty. This study will also be useful to development or

intervention agencies to improve rural infrastructures that are essential for sustaining agricultural development that can improve the living standard of the rural women.

#### *Hypotheses of the Study*

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study;  
*Ho<sub>1</sub>* There is no relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

*Ho<sub>2</sub>* There is no significant relationship between selected socio economic characteristics and poverty coping strategies of the rural women in Song Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

#### *Conceptual framework*

The conceptual framework of the study defines the assumptions underlying this study. It shows the relationship that exists between the depend variable and the independent variables. The independent variables were the socio economic characteristics of the respondents and their livelihood activities, while the dependable variable is the poverty coping strategies.

The framework presupposes that, the socio economic characteristic of the respondents (such as age, household size, educational level and marital status) will directly influence the type of livelihood activities they choose and also their coping strategies, for instance, women in the prime of their age are more capable of employing active coping strategies. So also the coping strategies employed by the women can affect their socio economic characteristics, such as their household status and even their educational level, an example of this is when a household is involved in reduction of household size as a coping strategies and gives out their child/children to work in a rich man house and if the rich man decides to send them to school, this has brought about reduction in the household size and their educational level will also be changes hence, a change in their socio economics characteristics. Thus, there is a relationship between the socio economics characteristics of the rural women and the poverty coping strategies the employ.

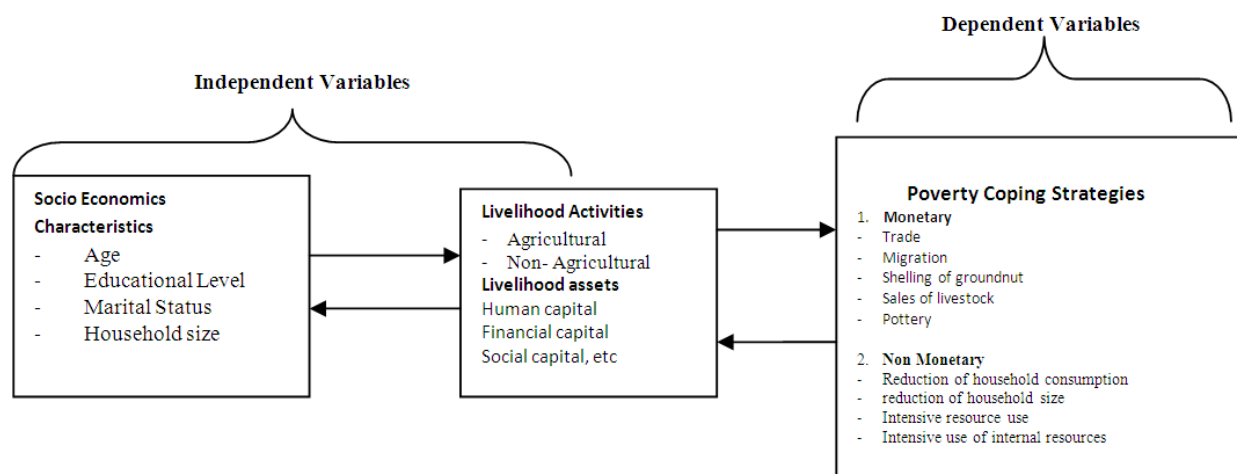


Fig.1. Conceptual Framework of livelihood activities as a poverty coping strategies among rural women in Song LGA, Adamawa state

In the same vein, the livelihood assets available to them will determine the type of livelihood activities they will undertake, and their livelihood activities are capable of affecting their socio economic characteristics while socio economics characteristics can influence the type and the number of livelihood activities they employ. So also, the livelihood activities of the rural women can influence their ability to cope with their poverty situations, their livelihood activities will also help to decide what type of poverty coping strategies (monetary or no monetary, strong or weak) they will employ in any situation they may find their selves. And their poverty coping strategies can help them to decide the type of livelihood activities (agricultural or non agricultural).

## II. METHODOLOGY

### Study area

Song Local Government is located in longitude 12°35' E to 12°41'E and latitude 9°44' to 10°12' N of the equator. It shares boundaries with Gombi to the East, Maiha local government to the South-east, Girei and Fofure local government to the West and Shelleng to the North, [33].

The vegetable cover of the area is characterized with Guinea Savannah which consists of mainly trees, shrubs and grasses. The area has a warm climatic condition throughout the year with an annual average temperature of 28°C, the hottest month is April with maximum temperature of 40°C says [33]. Song has two distinct seasons which are the dry and the rainy seasons. The rainy seasons is associated with heavy rains and it starts from March to October while the dry season starts from November to March, during which the harmattan (N.E winds) prevails. The rainfall of 1100mm annually is recorded. The relative humidity varies from 20-30% (low) around Jaunuary to march and becomes high 80% in August [34].

Song comprises of six districts namely; Song, Suktu, Waltadi, Sigire/Mboi, Ditera and Zumo. The people of Song Local Government are predominately farmers they are involved in the cultivation of maize groundnut, sesame, millet, beans, and they also rears animals.

### Sources of data

Both the primary and secondary data were used to source for information for the research work. Primary source of data made use of structured questionnaire to collect information on the respondents socio economics characteristic and information on their livelihood activities and coping strategies. While secondary data was sourced from books, Journals and internet. The information collected from the secondary source were the 2006 population census figure for women of Song LGA, and the information use for the review of literature.

### Sampling Frame and sample Size

Systematic random sampling technique was used to draw sample for the study, According to the 2006 census, the population of the women of age eighteen and above in Song LGA were 54600. Using the growth rate of 3.2% and the formula below

$$N_t = N_0 \times e^{rt}$$

Where;

$N_t$  = population size at time  $t$

$N_0$  = initial population size

$e$  = exponential (2.7182)

$r$  = growth rate (3.2%)

$t$  = time period of growth

where,

$N_0 = 54600$

$e = 2.7182$

$r = 3.2\% / 100 = 0.032$

$t = 6\text{years}$

hence,  $N_t = 54,600 \times 2.7182^{0.032 \times 6}$

$$54600 \times 1.211670517 = 66157$$

Thus, the estimated population of the women from the age of eighteen in the study area is 66,157 by the year 2012. One hundred and eighty (180) questionnaires were administered in the six districts of the local Government Area. From the six districts, fifty villages were selected (as shown in the table below). Fifteen villages were sampled Ditera district: koti, Dirma, Ditera, Dumne, Tinde, Hombo, Dindima, Dondi, Batum, Botta, Shimba, Bwarah, Malero, Bidoma and Bakka . From mboi, three villages were sampled: gudu mboi, sigire and garin tuwo. The villages sampled from Song district were sixteen: Songari, Loko, Gadan mayo, Wuro dauda, Murke, Dibango, Bolki, Bokki, Dadinkowa, Mailero, Ngewa, Tarawol, Brawol, Fattude babal and Bichel 1 Bichel 2. From Suktu, seven villages sampled were kuma, Roma, Salasa, Zata, Mbai, Jimbo and Gberwene. Six villages were sampled from Waltadi district, these were Waltadi, Prambe, Dirma, Simba, Kukta and Tsau biri while three villages were sampled from Zumo district: Holma, Pakin and Zumo.

Table I: The sampling frame

S/No	The districts in Song	Villages in the districts	Sampled villages	No. of Resp
1	Ditera	36	15	50
2	Mboi/Sigiri	9	3	14
3	Song	39	16	53
4	Suktu	19	7	26
5	Waltadi	15	6	23
6	Zumo	8	3	14
	TOTAL	126	50	180

Source: Field survey 2012

### Data analysis

The research made use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics like frequency counts, percentage, mean, were used to analyzed objectives 1 to 5. The inferential statistics Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Chi-Square were used to test hypotheses 1and 2, at 5% level of significance, PPMC

$$r = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$



Where

Y = dependent variable

X = independent variables

$\Sigma$  = summation

Chi-Square

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2 / E$$

Where:

O = observed frequency

E = the expected frequency

$\Sigma$  = Summation

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Distribution of Respondents socio economic characteristics*

Table II shows that 17% of the respondents are below the age of 27, 70% of the respondents falls within the age group of 28-43 years. This shows that most of the respondents are in their active (28-43 years) age and are also in their reproductive age, which mean that most of the respondents have the strength and ability to work more, but their reproductive role and the time they spend doing house chores may reduce their potential in livelihood activities, which is agreement with [23] that women in their reproductive age or child bearing age have serious challenge in their daily activities. [35], are of the opinion that women in this age group, are young and in their active age. While [23], said that all things being equal, women in their active age are more productive. According to [36], women in their active age are capable of getting involved in many income generating activities to better their livelihood activities. Since majority of the respondents are in their active age, the implication is that such women are capable of getting involved in different income generating activities to augment their feeding and standard of living, even that all thing being equal.

#### *The respondents' marital status*

Table II shows that 55% of the respondents married, those that are separated from their husband are 2%, the frequency of widows is 22%, while those that are divorced are 6.9% and those that are single 14%. Most married women in the rural area are defector house head and are responsible for the family well being hence, they have to diversify their income generating activities in order to carter for the needs of their family members. This was also the opinion of [37] who said that married women have responsibility that have to reflect in their income generating activities.

The mean score of the household size is 6, it means that those whose household size is more than 6, has a large family and other wise a small family size. The result shows that majority (67%) have large household size while the remaining 33% have a low family size. The implication of a large family size means more or higher level of poverty, this is because there are more mouth to feed and to carter for (more expenditure), though there is more labour to sale, in order to get money/income, but they spend the income on their feeding, clothing health, education, hence rural household with large family size

will remain in perpetual poverty. According to [38], household size will make the members strive for food to feed the member of the household.

Majority of the respondents (41.8%) have attained primary school, 23.3% have no formal education, and 21.2% have attained secondary school while the 9.0% have NCE. This result shows that majority of the respondents, do not have sufficient knowledge/skills that can help them boost their livelihood activities this is in agreement with the result of [39], which says that the uneducated community are prone to hard and tedious work in the domestic and agricultural fields. They also said that even though educated people can be promoted from unskilled job to skilled labour but these opportunities and facilities are not available in the remote rural area, so they have to still be engaged in unskilled labour which implies that, education oriented activities by women in the area is limited, which means that the rural women will continuously dependence on agriculture and environmental based activities such as gathering and sales of Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP). According [40], households with higher levels of education are significantly more likely to adopt active coping strategies. [41] argues that education ensures that people gain skills and knowledge, and ensures that they use their skills and knowledge productively leading to a choice of better coping strategies. But since majority of the respondents do not have the educational background needed to improve their livelihood and coping strategies, the implication of this is that the rural women will be involve in coping strategies that will not reduce their poverty level.

Table II: Distribution of the respondents' socio economics characteristic

Age group	Freq	Percentage (%)
< 29	30	17
28 – 43	126	70
>42	24	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	99	55
Widow	40	22
Single	26	14
Divorced	13	7
Separated	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Household size</b>		
1-5	60	33
6-10	98	54
11-15	16	9
16-20	6	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational level</b>		
Primary level	79	41.8
No formal education	44	23.3
Secondary level	40	21.1
Tertiary level	17	9.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: field survey 2012

### Distribution of Respondents by Livelihood Activities

The research reveals that the women in Song Local Government are involved in a lot of livelihood activities, which ranges from piggery brewing of local drink ( *kunu*, *subo drink*, *fura da nunu*, *burkutu*), production of crops such as sesame, maize, cowpea, rice, bambara nut, groundnut, guinea corn. The most common animals reared and sold are chicken, duck, guinea fowl. The non agricultural livelihood activities of the respondents were trading, sales Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) such as fuel wood, fruits leaves and bark of trees, hairdressing, pottery. It will be noticed that livelihood activities of the rural women are mostly agriculturally based; this corresponds with the opinion of [20], who said that rural women's farming and farm based activities are the major sources of household income. But they are also into other activities which according to [25], livelihood activities are not necessarily confined to only agriculture but often include non-farm activities in order to diversify income and meet household needs.

Table III: Distribution of Respondents by Livelihood Activities

Activities	Freq	Percentage
<b>Agricultural activities</b>		
Production and sells of livestock	145	19
Production and sells of food crops	160	21
Crop processing	67	9
<b>Non- agricultural activities</b>		
Sales of labour	44	5.8
Trading	78	10.3
Sales of local drinks	28	3.7
Handcraft	35	4.6
Pottery	5	0.6
Sales of cooked/roasted/fried food	122	16.0
Sales of NTFP	76	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey 2012

\*multiple responses

### Distribution of Respondents by Coping Strategies to Poverty

The result in Table IV revealed that women in the six districts are involved in series of strategic acts strategically selected by individuals and households in a poor socioeconomic position to restrict their expenses or earn some extra income to enable them to pay for the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter. These poverty coping strategies are employed in both dry and wet season. During the rainy season, the women are involved mostly on farming based activities such as shelling of groundnut that will be use as seed, sales of labour on the farms crop production, some women migrates to villages where they will get land for agricultural activities or to sale their labour, and during the dry season, they turn to other coping strategies. The result also shows the rural women are involved in both monetary and non monetary, the monetary coping strategy is the one that brings monetary gain such strategies are, trading, pottery, migration (mobility), while the non monetary coping strategies they are involved in that do not bring in any money but helps the rural women survive, these strategies include reduction of household consumption, migration, reduction of household size. The research also revealed that most of the coping strategies they employed are selling off of their assets (crop and livestock) which are weak coping strategies, [15] says that, weak strategies include sale of assets, promoting the labour force participation by family members. This finding is in tandem with what [42] discovered in their study that, the adoption of weak coping strategies by households may have permanent effects that will make it difficult if not impossible for them to be salvaged from falling into chronic poverty. Furthermore, selling off assets as a coping strategy is not costless for the fact that it may lead to low level of welfare in both the short and long run. This finding was in tandem with the findings of [15], who alleys the fear that the implication of adopting weak coping strategies is that, they will remain in perpetual poverty. The implication of employing weak poverty coping strategies is that the rural women in the study area is will continuously remain in poverty.

Table IV: Distribution of Respondents' Poverty Coping Strategies

Activities	Involved F(%)	Dry	Wet	Both
<b>Monetary</b>				
Shelling of groundnut	73(7.3)	17(9.0)	3(1.6)	53(28.0)
Trading	78(7.8)	-	-	78(41.3)
Sale of labour	44(4.4)	1(0.5)	18(9.5)	25(13.2)
Sale of NTFP	106(10.6)	1(0.5)	11(5.8)	94(49.7)
Contribution from Fadama	10(1.0)	-	1(0.5)	10(5.3)
Sale of livestock	160(16.0)	-	3(1.6)	156(82.5)
Crop production	145(14.5)	-	132(69.8)	10(5.3)
Sale of nunu	28(2.8)	1(0.5)	-	27(14.3)
Pottery	5(2.6)	-	-	5(2.6)
Hand craft	35(3.5)	3(1.6)	1(0.5)	31(16.4)
Migration	31(3.1)	1(0.5)	2(1.1)	28(14.8)
Sale of boiled or roasted maize	26(2.6)	-	18(9.5)	7(3.7)
Sale of boiled cassava	16(1.6)	-	13(6.9)	3(1.6)
Frying and selling yam	70(7.0)	1(0.5)	5(2.6)	64(33.9)

#### Non-monetary

Reduced household consumption	35(3.5)	1(0.5)	7(3.)	26(13.8)
Work exchange group (gayya)	81(8.1)	-	63(33.3)	18(9.5)
Migration	13(1.3)	-	-	13(6.9)
Intensive resource use	21(2.1)	-	1(0.5)	20(106)
Reduction of household size	26(2.6)	-	10(5.3)	16(8.5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>999 *(100%)</b>			

Source: field survey 2012, \* multiple responses

#### Hypotheses testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance as shown in Table V. PPMC analysis revealed that there is no significant relationship between their livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies ( $r=0.027$ ,  $p> 0.05$ ) the null hypothesis is accepted. This shows that the women in the study area are involved in livelihood activities that bring in little or no income that can hardly meet their daily needs. The implication is that the more the rural women are involved in livelihood activities that brings in little income, the less their ability to cope with poverty this explain why they women in the study areas are still living in poverty despite the fact that they are involved in a number of livelihood activities. Will can be said that there is no relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of the respondents because the livelihood activities they are involved are not capable of securing them against poverty due to the low income the generate from such activities. According to [28], the relationship between livelihood activities and poverty coping strategies of rural women are: food security, reduced poverty, improved community infrastructural development, better use of Natural Resources, improved social economic situation and improve statue and wellbeing of vulnerable group.

The results of the Chi-square reveals that there is a significant relationship between respondents' age ( $\chi^2=7.040$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and poverty coping strategies, this means that women within their active age have greater ability to diversify their livelihood activities and cope better with their poverty situations. While there is no significant relationship between marital status ( $\chi^2=4.866$   $p=>0.05$ ), household size ( $\chi^2=0.466$   $p=>0.05$ ), and educational level ( $\chi^2=3.625$ ,  $p=>0.05$ ) and coping strategies (Table V). Marital status of the respondents was not significant to coping strategies due to the fact that rural women either married or not have equal opportunities and resource hence the result. Household size does not have any significant influence on poverty coping strategies. Though education, is believed to be the key for helping the poor out of poverty, and most of the respondents are not adequately educated and the little education they get is inappropriate for current need and also for the fact that they stay in rural area where there are little or no facilities/infrastructure, that can aid them in their livelihood activities and their ability to cope with poverty, hence the reason why education is not important to even the educated women living in the rural deprived areas.

Table V: Relationship between Socio Economic Characteristics and Poverty coping strategies of the Respondents

Socio economics characteristic	Df	$\chi^2$ - value	p- value	Decision
Age	2	7.040	0.030	S
Marriage	4	4.866	0.301	NS
Household Size	1	0.466	0.495	NS
Education	3	3.625	0.305	NS

Source: Field survey 2012

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of this research, the following recommendations hereby made:

- Ensure the timely provision of inputs such as seed and fertilizers by government or Non-governmental Organizations at affordable rate, this will help them to improve their production.
- Facilitate for processing/storage, crops should be provided for the rural women to prevent them from selling off their farm produce immediately after harvest.
- They rural women should stop selling off their assets as coping strategies but should strafe to get help or loan from external bodies.
- The NGO/Government should train and equip the rural women with appropriate skills that will help them to better their productivity and also to provide them with the appropriate facilities.

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