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Independent decision-making for sustainable livelihood in pastoral households: a focus on women in Bauchi and Gombe States, northern Nigeria

This study aims to determine how demographic characteristics influence the independent decision-making capabilities of pastoralist women in Bauchi and Gombe States, in northern Nigeria.

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Despite the efforts of female pastoralists to enhance the sustainable livelihoods of their households, they are often constrained by their inability to make critical decisions independently about their livelihoods and family lives. This study aims to determine how demographic characteristics influence the independent decision-making capabilities of pastoralist women and the significance of their independent decision-making in enhancing sustainable livelihoods in pastoralist households in the Bauchi and Gombe States of northern Nigeria.

Results indicate that pastoralist women's ability to make independent decisions is significantly influenced by their age, marital status, and educational qualifications in most scenarios presented in the study. Most times, decisions on crop/livestock production and sales, family expenditures, family size, and family healthcare are mostly taken by men (who also are the head of households in pastoral communities) or other male household members, even though the funds spent or invested are generated by women who labour tirelessly on the fields to earn income from their own livestock, household livestock and/or by raising the livestock of others.

The findings of this study suggest a need for the restructuring of societal power relations, both at the household and community levels, such that women are empowered to make decisions regarding livestock management and family life, reflecting more of their concerns. The study recommends that social capital be made available to pastoralist women, which can ultimately translate into better livelihood outcomes.

Read the journal article [here](#).

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Fulani woman carrying firewood on top of the mountainous and rocky terrain of Dass Local Government Area, Bauchi state, Nigeria - Image by [Abdallahji](#) / Shutterstock

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