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The Role of Women Farmers' Organisations in Shaping Gender-Sensitive Agricultural Policies in Nigeria: Influence, Impact, and Challenges

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Abstract

This study examined the role of women farmers' organisations in shaping gender-sensitive agricultural policies in Nigeria, focusing on their influence and impact, as well as the challenges they face in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 275 respondents—including female farmers, policymakers from federal ministries, and representatives of women farmers' organisations such as WOFAN and NWAPDI—through structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The study found that women are increasingly aware of federal agricultural programs, with 76% acknowledging institutional involvement, and 74.5% actively participating in decision-making processes. However, socio-cultural norms, limited access to resources, and underrepresentation in leadership positions continue to constrain their full participation. Gender-inclusive policies, including the National Gender Policy and the National Agricultural Transformation Implementation Policy (NATIP), have facilitated women's engagement. However, their effectiveness remains inconsistent due to systemic and institutional challenges. The study highlights the critical intermediary role of women farmers' organisations in advocating for policy reforms and promoting inclusive participation. It recommends strengthening capacity-building initiatives, enhancing awareness campaigns, providing equitable access to resources, and ensuring effective implementation of gender-sensitive policies to empower women as equal partners in agricultural governance.

Keywords: Women farmers, Gender-sensitive policies, Agricultural governance, FCT Abuja, Policy advocacy

1.0 Introduction

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Nigeria's economy, accounting for a significant share of employment, food production, and rural livelihoods (Musa et al., 2025). Despite this importance, persistent gender disparities hinder women's full participation in and benefit from agricultural growth (Muhammed et al., 2025a). Notably, women constitute a large share of the agricultural labour force yet face systemic barriers in accessing land (Mukhtar et al., 2025), credit and inputs (Chinedu et al, 2021; Magaji & Bature, 2004), technology and decision-making platforms (United Nations Women, 2024). These imbalances undermine both equity and productivity, suggesting that gender-responsive approaches are key to unlocking the sector's full potential.

Women farmers' organisations have emerged as critical institutional actors aiming to bridge this gap by advocating for policy and institutional reforms that reflect women's needs and priorities. Organisations such as the Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN) and the National Women for Agricultural Progress (NWAP) play dual roles: empowering women farmers through capacity building, credit access, and collective action, and acting as intermediary voices between grassroots women and government policymakers. By organising women around shared interests, these organisations aim to increase bargaining power, visibility and influence in agricultural policy spaces.

The subject of gender-sensitive agricultural policy in Nigeria has gained traction, with the launch of the National Gender Policy in Agriculture in 2019 signalling the government's commitment to gender equity in the agricultural sector (Rural 21, 2024). The policy explicitly targets improved access to resources for women, recognition of their roles, and their engagement in decision-making. However, evidence indicates that implementation remains uneven, and translating policy into practice has been hampered by institutional inertia, power dynamics, and resource constraints (Abeku, 2025). This gap between policy intent and realisation underscores the importance of investigating how women's farmers' organisations influence agricultural policy and the challenges they face.

This study therefore examines the role of women's farmers' organisations in shaping gender-sensitive agricultural policies in Nigeria. Specifically, it investigates the mechanisms through which organisations such as WOFAN and NWAP negotiate with government ministries and other stakeholders, the extent of their impact on policy formulation and implementation, and the internal and external challenges they encounter. By doing so, the research contributes to understanding the dynamics of gender advocacy in agricultural governance and to identifying enabling factors and bottlenecks for effective policy engagement by women's organisations.

Understanding this interface between grassroots organisations and policy-making is crucial for sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria. When women's voices are included in policy discussions, agricultural strategies are more likely to reflect the realities of half the population, thereby enhancing productivity, resilience and equity. This study, therefore, seeks to generate actionable insights for stakeholders, including policymakers, development partners, and women's organisations, on strengthening the advocacy, representation, and influence of women farmers within agricultural policy systems in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Women Farmers' Organisations

Women farmers' organisations are formal or informal groups that bring together female agricultural producers to collectively address challenges, share knowledge, and advocate for their rights and interests within the agricultural sector. These organisations often provide platforms for capacity building, access to financial resources, technology, and markets, as well as opportunities for leadership development and networking (FAO, 2022; Ahmed et al., 2024). In Nigeria, organisations such as the Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN) and the National Women for Agricultural Progress (NWAP) have been instrumental in mobilising women for policy advocacy, ensuring that their voices are represented in decision-making at the local, state, and national levels (Okoye, 2021). By consolidating collective action, these organisations enhance women's bargaining power and ability to influence agricultural governance structures.

2.1.2 Gender-Sensitive

The term "gender-sensitive" refers to the recognition and incorporation of the distinct roles, needs, and challenges of different genders in planning, policy formulation, and program implementation (Magaji, 2002). Gender-sensitive approaches aim to reduce disparities, ensure equitable access to resources, and promote inclusivity in decision-making processes (World Bank, 2023). In the agricultural context, gender sensitivity involves acknowledging the specific barriers women face, such as limited land ownership (Muhammed et al., 2025b), restricted access to credit (Okoroafor et al., 2018), and underrepresentation in leadership, and implementing interventions that specifically address these challenges (FAO, 2022). Integrating gender-sensitive practices into agricultural programs and policies is crucial for achieving sustainable development goals and fostering inclusive growth in rural communities.

2.1.3 Agricultural Policies

Agricultural policies are strategic frameworks, regulations, and initiatives developed by governments or institutions to guide the development, management, and sustainability of the agricultural sector (Abubakar et al., 2025). These policies cover areas such as production, pricing, marketing, resource allocation, rural development, and food security (Nwajiuba, 2021). Effective agricultural policies are designed to enhance productivity, support farmers' livelihoods, and ensure equitable resource distribution, while also addressing socio-economic and environmental challenges (Magaji et al., 2024). In Nigeria, policies such as the National Agricultural Transformation Plan and the National Gender Policy in Agriculture have sought to create an enabling environment for farmers, including women, by promoting access to land, credit, inputs, and technical knowledge (Abdelhamid et al., 2020). The success of such policies, however, depends on implementation, monitoring, and the active participation of stakeholders, including women farmers' organisations.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social Capital Theory.

Social Capital Theory emphasises the value of social networks, trust, and norms in facilitating collective action and resource mobilisation (Putnam, 2000). In the context of women farmers' organisations, this theory helps explain how membership in groups

such as WOFAN and NWAP enables women to access critical resources, information, and influence in agricultural policy-making. The theory highlights that social networks not only strengthen solidarity among members but also increase their bargaining power when engaging with government agencies, thereby enhancing their ability to advocate for gender-sensitive agricultural policies. By framing the study around social capital, researchers can analyse how organisational linkages, trust, and collective action contribute to both women farmers' empowerment and policy influence in Nigeria.

2.3 Empirical Review

Enete and Amusa (2010) examined the factors influencing women's participation in farming decisions in cocoa-based agroforestry households in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Their findings revealed that formal education, farming experience, farm size, and hours spent on the farm positively affected women's contributions, whereas institutional, socio-personal, and economic constraints limited their involvement. The study recommended targeted interventions such as educational programmes, access to financial resources, and information support to strengthen women's decision-making in agriculture.

Jirgi, Oluwafemi, and Oseghale (2020) reviewed global literature on women's involvement in agriculture and found that women play essential roles across crop, livestock, and aquaculture production. However, their participation is constrained by limited access to finance, inputs, extension services, and market opportunities. The authors emphasised the need to integrate women into decision-making processes and policy formulation at local, national, and international levels to enhance productivity and empowerment.

Kayode, Adebayo, and Awoyemi (2024) investigated the determinants of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Ondo State, Nigeria. Their study found that access to credit, information, and agricultural inputs was a significant motivator of cooperative participation. At the same time, socio-demographic factors such as age, marital status, and income also influenced engagement. The authors recommended that policy interventions focus on improving financial access, capacity-building, and extension education to strengthen women farmers' active involvement.

Ezeokafor, Jacobs, and Ekwere (2021) assessed the impact of cooperative societies on women's empowerment in Nigeria. Their findings indicated that cooperative membership enhanced women's access to resources and collective action, though institutional and structural challenges persisted. The study recommended strengthening cooperative frameworks, ensuring operational autonomy, and improving institutional support to maximise women's empowerment through cooperative participation.

Aimua, Adofu, and Okwori (2024) analysed the effectiveness of agricultural interventions on women's productivity in Benue State, Nigeria. They discovered that training, credit provision, and input distribution had no significant impact on productivity, whereas education, farm size, and age were significant determinants. The authors recommended redesigning interventions to enhance women's access to productive resources and emphasised the importance of promoting education for girls and adult women to improve agricultural outcomes.

Ajah (2010) evaluated women farmers' perceptions of the Women-in-Agriculture Programme in southeastern Nigeria. The study found that women reported notable improvements in yields,

income, and decision-making power, with some regions exhibiting more substantial impacts than others. It was recommended that programme implementers maintain sustainability, scale up successful initiatives, and provide continuous support to enhance women's empowerment in agricultural practices.

2.4 Research Gap

While existing studies have extensively examined the factors influencing women's participation in farming decisions, cooperative membership, and the effectiveness of agricultural interventions (Enete & Amusa, 2010; Jirgi, Oluwafemi, & Oseghale, 2020; Kayode, Adebayo, & Awoyemi, 2024; Ezeokafor, Jacobs, & Ekwere, 2021; Aimua, Adofu, & Okwori, 2024; Ajah, 2010), there remains limited empirical evidence specifically investigating the role of women farmers' organisations in shaping gender-sensitive agricultural policies in Nigeria. Most studies focus on participation, empowerment, and productivity outcomes at the individual or cooperative level but do not adequately explore how organised women's groups influence policy formulation, engage with government agencies, or navigate institutional and structural barriers to advocate for gender-inclusive agricultural strategies. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which these organisations translate grassroots experiences into actionable policy recommendations, as well as the challenges they face in policy advocacy, have not been sufficiently examined. This gap highlights the need for research that bridges the intersection of women's collective action and policy impact in the agricultural sector, providing insights into the effectiveness and limitations of women farmers' organisations in shaping national agricultural policies.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively examine the influence of women farmers' organisations on gender-sensitive agricultural policy in Nigeria. A sequential explanatory design was utilised, beginning with quantitative data collection via structured questionnaires, followed by qualitative data collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews. This design enabled a nuanced understanding of the interactions among women farmers, federal ministries, and women-led agricultural organisations. The study's respondents included female farmers, government officials from the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security, Livestock Development, Marine and Blue Economy, and Women Affairs and Social Development, as well as leaders of key women farmers' associations, including the Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN) and the Nigeria Women in Agriculture Development and Progressive Initiative (NWAPDI). Secondary data were also reviewed to contextualise primary findings and provide insights into institutional policies, gender dynamics, and agricultural productivity trends.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria, which serves as the nation's policy-making and administrative hub. Covering approximately 7,315 square kilometres, the FCT comprises six area councils: Abaji, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje, Kwali, and Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Given its role as host to central federal ministries and women's agricultural organisations, the FCT provides a strategic setting for examining how institutional structures shape women's participation in agricultural governance. The study focused on four

ministries critical to agricultural policy and gender mainstreaming—Agriculture and Food Security, Livestock Development, Marine and Blue Economy, and Women Affairs and Social Development—alongside prominent women farmers’ organisations such as WOFAN and NWAPDI. This location enabled data collection from both grassroots actors and institutional policymakers.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised individuals aged 18 years and above who are directly or indirectly involved in agricultural decision-making within the FCT. This included three main categories: policymakers from relevant federal ministries; members of organised women farmers’ associations advocating for gender-inclusive agriculture; and other stakeholders, such as extension workers, NGO representatives, cooperative members, and rural women farmers engaged in crop production, livestock, and aquaculture. This stratified approach ensured a holistic representation of both institutional and grassroots perspectives on women’s roles in agricultural decision-making.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A total of 275 respondents were selected using a multi-stage sampling technique, ensuring balanced representation across key stakeholder groups. Stratified sampling categorised respondents into policymakers, organised women farmers’ organisations, and other stakeholders. Purposive sampling targeted senior government officials and experienced women farmers involved in gender-sensitive programs, while random sampling selected women farmers to reduce bias and enhance representativeness. Each group contributed 95 respondents, ensuring comparability across categories. The sample size was determined using Cochran’s (1977) formula at a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error, thereby enhancing the study’s statistical validity.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data included structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. Structured questionnaires were administered via Google Forms to collect quantitative data on women’s participation, barriers, and institutional influences in agricultural governance (Mishra et al., 2023; Oluwaseun & Chukwuemeka, 2022). In-depth interviews (n = 49) were conducted with policymakers, NGO representatives, and leaders of women farmers’ organisations, while three FGDs (n = 30) facilitated group discussions on experiences and perceptions regarding gender inclusion. Secondary data comprised policy documents, FAO reports, and statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, providing contextual support for primary findings.

3.6 Research Instruments

Three instruments were employed: structured questionnaires for quantitative analysis, semi-structured interview guides for qualitative inquiry, and FGD protocols for guided group discussions. All instruments were pilot-tested to ensure clarity, relevance, and reliability, and underwent expert review by gender and agricultural research specialists to enhance content validity.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS, summarising frequencies, percentages, and means, and regression analysis was employed to examine relationships between institutional factors and women’s participation. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and

analysed thematically using NVivo, identifying patterns related to empowerment, gender roles, and policy impact. Triangulation of both data strands was applied to strengthen validity and reliability (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Yin, 2018).

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was ensured through expert review, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha. Methodological triangulation and a pilot study with 20 participants further enhanced instrument reliability and the robustness of the research findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Abuja Research Ethics Committee. Participants were informed of the study’s purpose, provided written consent, and assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw at any stage. Interviews and FGDs were conducted in participants’ preferred languages to ensure cultural sensitivity.

4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Socio-Demographic and Economic Characteristics of Respondents

This section analyses the socio-demographic and economic features of respondents to understand the composition of women engaged in agricultural decision-making in the FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The demographic data provide insights into age, gender, education, occupation, and experience, which are critical factors influencing participation in policy and governance structures.

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	96	34.9
Female	179	65.1
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 1 shows that a majority of respondents (65.1%) are female, while 34.9% are male. This indicates that women dominate the agricultural sector under study, providing a strong foundation for exploring their roles in decision-making processes. The high representation of women ensures that the study accurately captures their perspectives, challenges, and contributions in both governmental and grassroots agricultural contexts.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18–25	71	31.3
26–35	108	47.6
36–45	51	22.5
46–55	42	18.5
56+	3	1.3
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 2 indicates that the largest age group of respondents is 26–35 years (47.6%), followed by 18–25 years (31.3%). A smaller proportion of respondents is 56 years of age or older (1.3%). This suggests a youthful population engaged in agriculture, which is promising for long-term sustainability, leadership development, and innovative contributions to agricultural policy and decision-making.

Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	137	49.8
Married	130	47.3
Divorced	1	0.4
Widowed	7	2.5
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 3 shows that 49.8% of respondents are single, while 47.3% are married. This near-equal distribution indicates that women at different stages of family life are engaged in agriculture. Marital status can influence decision-making autonomy and time allocation for farm activities, particularly in patriarchal settings. Understanding this is essential for designing inclusive policies.

Table 4: Educational Level of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
No Formal Education	0	0.0
Primary	1	0.4
Secondary	24	8.7
Tertiary	250	90.9
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents (90.9%) have a tertiary education. This high literacy level suggests that women in the study are well-equipped to engage in policy discussions, interpret institutional frameworks, and participate meaningfully in agricultural governance. Education is thus a critical factor influencing women's capacity to contribute to gender-sensitive policies.

Table 5: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Policy Makers	108	39.3
Farmers Organisation Officer	46	16.7
Extension Worker	20	7.3
NGO Representative (NWAP-DI)	22	8.0
Farmer	66	24.0

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	10	3.6
Others	3	1.1
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 5 presents respondents' occupations, revealing a mix of policymakers (39.3%), farmers (24%), and organisational officers (16.7%). The composition underscores the multi-layered participation in agricultural governance and highlights the influence of women across formal institutions and grassroots organisations. Such diversity strengthens inclusive policy-making and ensures that diverse perspectives are considered in decision-making.

Table 6: Length of Agricultural Experience

Experience (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
0–5	134	49.1
6–10	61	22.3
11–15	38	13.9
16+	42	15.3
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 6 indicates that 49.1% of respondents have 0–5 years of agricultural experience, suggesting a growing influx of women into farming. The presence of experienced women (16+ years) provides mentorship opportunities and strengthens leadership within agricultural organisations, while new entrants signal increased engagement and interest in gender-inclusive agricultural practices.

4.2 Women's Participation in Agricultural Decision-Making

Table 7: Awareness of Federal Ministries in Agricultural Decision-Making

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	209	76.0
No	66	24.0
Total	275	100

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 7 shows that 76% of respondents are aware of federal ministries involved in agricultural decision-making. This high level of awareness is promising for gender inclusion but highlights the need for targeted outreach to the 24% unaware of such institutions.

Table 8: Adequacy of Women's Involvement

Involvement	Frequency	Percentage
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Involvement	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	138	50.2
No	82	29.8
Not Sure	55	20.0

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 8 suggests mixed perceptions regarding women's involvement. Half of the respondents perceive adequate participation, while a significant proportion remain unsure or negative, signalling the need for enhanced transparency and institutional support for gender-inclusive decision-making.

Table 9: Active Participation of Women

Participation	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	204	74.5
No	44	16.1
Not Sure	27	9.8

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 9 highlights that 74.5% of women actively participate in decision-making, indicating strong engagement at grassroots and institutional levels. This trend underscores women's influence in shaping agricultural policies, particularly through organised groups.

Table 10: Existence of Programs or Policies Promoting Women's Participation

Programs	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	169	61.5
No	42	15.3
Not Sure	64	23.3

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 10 reveals that 61.5% of respondents are aware of specific programs promoting women's participation, highlighting some policy initiatives but also indicating gaps in awareness and policy reach at the community level.

Table 11: Significance of Women's Contributions

Significance	Frequency	Percentage
Least Significant	19	6.8
Fairly Significant	50	18.0
Significant	97	34.9
More Significant	53	19.1
Most Significant	57	20.5

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 11 indicates that the majority of respondents (34.9% significant + 20.5% most significant) perceive women's contributions as substantial. This underscores growing recognition of women's roles in agricultural governance and policy advocacy.

Table 12: Influence of Women on Policy Shaping

Level	Frequency	Percentage
High	75	27.4
Moderate	144	52.6
Low	53	19.3
None	3	1.1

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 12 shows that 52.6% perceive moderate influence, while 27.4% perceive high influence. While women are contributing, further strategies are needed to amplify their role in policy-making.

4.3 Role of Federal Ministries in Promoting Women's Participation

Table 13: Adequate Involvement of Women by Ministries

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	31	11.3
Agree	114	41.6
Neutral	76	27.7
Disagree	47	17.2
Strongly Disagree	6	2.2

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 13 indicates that 52.9% agree that ministries involve women, though 27.7% remain neutral, reflecting partial inclusion and the need for more proactive institutional engagement.

Table 14: Recognition of Women's Contributions in Policy Formulation

Contributions	Frequency	Percentage
Always	64	23.4
Sometimes	132	48.2
Rarely	70	25.5
Never	9	3.3

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 14 shows that 48.2% believe contributions are only sometimes recognised, highlighting inconsistent institutional acknowledgement of women's input.

4.4 Challenges Faced by Women in Agricultural Decision-Making

Table 16: Obstacles to Participation

Obstacles	Frequency	Percentage
Socio-Cultural Norms	133	48.4
Limited Resources	38	13.8
Lack of Education or Skill	38	13.8
Underrepresentation in Leadership	66	24.0

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 16 identifies socio-cultural norms (48.4%) as the main barrier, followed by leadership underrepresentation (24%). Economic and skill constraints also hinder women's participation, underscoring the multidimensional nature of the challenges.

4.5 Policy Effectiveness

Table 19: Implementation of Gender-Inclusive Policies

Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	31	11.3
Agree	108	39.3
Neutral	97	35.3
Disagree	32	11.6
Strongly Disagree	7	2.5

Source: Field Survey, April 2025

Table 19 shows that 50.6% of respondents agree on the effectiveness of gender-inclusive policies, while 35.3% are neutral. This indicates progress but highlights gaps in implementation and enforcement.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a growing awareness among women in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of federal agricultural programs and institutions, with 76% of respondents acknowledging their involvement in decision-making. This high level of awareness suggests that women farmers and professionals are increasingly informed about government structures and initiatives promoting gender-sensitive agricultural practices. Such awareness is critical because it enables women to advocate effectively for access to key resources, including credit facilities, farm inputs, and extension services, which directly impact agricultural productivity and household food security. The results align with previous research by Nwachukwu and Anuforo (2022), which highlighted that public sector interventions have made notable strides in promoting gender-sensitive agricultural policies, albeit with varying degrees of implementation at the community level.

Moreover, the study indicates that women are actively participating in agricultural decision-making, with 74.5% confirming engagement in governance and policy-related processes. This suggests that women's involvement is not limited to passive observation but extends to practical contributions at both grassroots and institutional levels. The participation of women across different age groups, educational backgrounds, and occupational roles underscores the diversity and depth of engagement, thereby

strengthening the potential for inclusive, context-specific decision-making. Nevertheless, despite this active involvement, structural and socio-cultural barriers remain prevalent. Challenges such as entrenched gender norms, limited access to productive resources, and underrepresentation in leadership positions continue to restrict the whole exercise of agency among women, thereby limiting their capacity to meaningfully influence policy outcomes.

Finally, the study highlights the partial effectiveness of existing gender-inclusive policies, including the National Gender Policy and the National Agricultural Transformation Implementation Policy (NATIP). While these frameworks provide a foundation for promoting women's participation, their impact is uneven due to systemic challenges, including inconsistent implementation, weak enforcement, and insufficient integration of women's perspectives into final policy formulations. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that women's contributions are only occasionally recognised, reflecting a gap between policy intent and practical outcomes. These findings emphasise the importance of strengthening institutional mechanisms, enhancing capacity-building initiatives, promoting advocacy, and ensuring culturally sensitive approaches that account for socio-economic realities. A coordinated strategy involving federal ministries, women's organisations, and grassroots stakeholders is therefore essential to empower women as equal partners in agricultural governance and policy formulation, consistent with the insights of Akpoti et al. (2021) and Adekola et al. (2022).

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that women farmers in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) play a significant and growing role in shaping agricultural decision-making processes. Findings indicate that while a majority of women are aware of federal agricultural programs and actively participate in governance, their influence remains moderated by socio-cultural norms, limited access to resources, and underrepresentation in leadership positions. Existing gender-inclusive policies, such as the National Gender Policy and the National Agricultural Transformation Implementation Policy (NATIP), have positively contributed to women's participation; however, their effectiveness is uneven due to systemic and institutional challenges. Overall, the study highlights the need for deliberate, coordinated, and culturally sensitive interventions to enhance women's meaningful engagement in agricultural governance.

Based on the findings, the study recommends strengthening capacity-building initiatives for women farmers to improve their technical, leadership, and policy advocacy skills. Federal ministries should enhance awareness campaigns and ensure equitable access to resources, programs, and decision-making platforms for women. Additionally, women's organisations should be supported through funding, training, and networking opportunities to enhance their advocacy for gender-sensitive policies. Policymakers must ensure that gender-inclusive policies are not only designed but effectively implemented, monitored, and adapted to local socio-cultural contexts to promote sustainable and inclusive agricultural development in the FCT.

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