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Gender Analysis of Livelihood Status among Dwellers of Ileogbo Community in Aiyedire Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria

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The objective of the study is to gender analyse the livelihood status in Ileogbo community of Aiyedire Local Government Area of Osun State. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 173 respondents for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative survey was used to elicit information from the respondents. Data was summarised using frequency counts and percentages, and analysed using ANOVA. Result revealed that female youths have the lowest level of livelihood ability, while adult males have the highest. Male youths are more deprived of access to capital assets, while adult males are most asset-empowered. Female youths also are the least productive in the group, while male youths have the highest level of livelihood activity. Adult males have the highest livelihood status, followed by adult females, male youths, and lastly female youths. It is concluded that there is a significant difference within the livelihood status of adult males, adult females, male youths, and female youths in Ileogbo community. It is recommended that efforts should be made by governmental and nongovernmental agencies involved in rural development to reduce elite-capture to the barest minimum, as adult males tend to be domineering.

Keywords**:** gender; livelihood status; elite-capture; capital assets; inequality

Introduction

A livelihood status is the summation of an individual's abilities, assets, and activities; given Ellis (2000) definition of livelihood to be made up of the abilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities necessary for a means of living. Ability is vital in livelihood study as it does not only include mere physical labour, but include knowledge, training and special skills.

Included in the measurement of abilities are time input to work in hours per day and days per week. Others are years of experience, number of active family support, training on activities; either indigenous, non formal or formal, and also, support either from social groups or extension services. Livelihood analysis takes into account the range of tangible and intangible assets necessary to build a livelihood, identifying five types of core assets, namely; natural, physical, financial, human, and social assets. Natural capital comprises the biological resources (e.g. land, water, pasture, forest, wildlife, biodiversity, environmental resources, and common property resources) that are central to rural livelihoods.

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Physical capital includes hard infrastructure (e.g. shelter, energy, communications, roads, power and water), as well as production equipment and buildings that are more likely to be individually owned which enable people to pursue their livelihoods. Financial capital consists of stocks of money or other savings in liquid form. In this sense it does not includes financial assets only but also include easily disposable assets such as livestock, which in other senses may be considered as natural capital (Barrett *et al*., 2001). Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health available to an individual in other people that together enable them to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives. Social capital refers to formal and informal social relationships, including their degree of trust, reliability and adaptability (Durlauf, 2004).

Social capital is any assets such as rights or claims that are derived from membership of a group. This includes the ability to call on friends or kin for help in times of need, support from trade or professional associations (e.g. framers' associations) and political claims on chiefs or politicians to provide assistance. Livelihood activities are economic activities that people know, own and undertake to earn income today and into the future (Freeman *et al*, 2005). Livelihood activities undertaken by people are

shaped by their knowledge, inherent capabilities, and assets. It could be on-farm, off-farm, and non-farm in rural communities. On the other hand, it could be personal or group activities. Securing access to resources is a key condition for rural dwellers to improve their livelihood status. FAO (2009) concluded that rural women do not have equal access and control over assets as men, especially land and fund, reducing their socioeconomic well being. Rural women also lack access to social assets such as networks and associations, which weakens their influence in political decision-making process and collective representation (IFPRI, 2001). Moreover, females face inequalities in accessing education, skill development and training opportunities, which impair their abilities. Rural poverty originates and perpetuates inadequate access to productive resources. UNCED (2000) ascertained a strong link between access to assets and poverty, an end-result of a continuous low livelihood status.

Women are socially ensured with the responsibility of improving welfare, food security, and health of households. However, they engage in low-income activities and poor livelihood options that have serious implications on their livelihood status and overall well-being. Gender dimension is crucial for economic reasons and from the efficiency point of view. This is especially true in the agriculture sector, where gender inequalities in access to and control over resources are persistent, undermining a sustainable and inclusive development of the sector (World Bank, 2008). Gender roles and relations affect food security and household welfare, critical indicators of human development. Women form half of the world adult population and one-third of the labour force, fulfil almost two-third of all hours worked and receive one-tenth of world's income (World Bank, 2000). Also, among the poor, rural women are poorer and more vulnerable than men (FAO, 2009).

Nigerian women occupy an important position to improving livelihood, food security, nutrition, and health of families, communities and the nation. However, they engage in low-income activities; poor livelihood options that have serious implications on their livelihood status and overall well-being. It is thus pertinent to compare their livelihood status to that of their male counterparts to understand the extent and value of the inequality to ensure future equity and poverty alleviation. In lieu of the aforementioned, the following research questions will be answered by the study:

-What is the level of livelihood ability of males and females in the community?

-What is the level of access to assets of males and females in the community?

-What is the level of livelihood activities of males and females of the community?

-What is the level of livelihood status of males and females in the community?

Methodology

Ileogbo community is in Aiyedire Local Government Area of Osun State along with Kuta, Oluponna, and Oke-Osun communities. The local government area has an area of 262 km² and a population of 75,846 (NPC, 2006). It is located in North-western part of Osun State within Derived Savannah zone of Nigeria. Other neighbouring communities are Iwo and Ogbagba communities. Ileogbo community is largely agrarian. Major crops grown are cassava, maize, oil palm, kola, and cocoa while the major livestock reared are goats, sheep, and fowls. Ileogbo community is also known for cassava and palm fruit processing. Non agricultural activities engaged in are trading, okada/car/bus/pick-up riding, carpentry, welding, hair-dressing, among many others.

The population of this study was adult males, adult females, male youths, and female youths in Ileogbo community that are members of various professional associations/groups in the community. Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting 173 respondents for the study. A list of 28 professional associations/groups in Ileogbo community was obtained. Fifty percent of the associations (14) were sampled, with 1726 youths and adult members to serve as the sampling frame.

Quota sampling technique was used for categorisation as follows: individuals with ages 18 years through 30 years were considered youths, 31 years through 50 years were considered adults; given that in rural communities, majority finishes secondary school about 18 years old, marries before 30 years old, and weakens for their tedious activities above 50 years old. The list thus comprised of 258 male youths, 306 female youths, 623 adult males, and 539 adult females.

Proportionate sampling and simple random techniques were used, with ten percent of the youths and adults sampled for the study. Therefore, 26 male youths, 31 female youths, 62 adult males, and 54 adult females were sampled for the study; giving 173 respondents. Both qualitative (In-depth Interview with Key Informants and Focus Group Discussion) and quantitative (Questionnaires) survey was employed in year 2010 for the study. Interview schedule was used to elicit information from the 173 respondents, but 129 questionnaires were valid, with 28 male youths, 22 female youths, 37 adult males, and 42 adult females. Descriptive statistical tools –

frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the data collected, while inferential statistical tool – ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference between livelihood status of males and females in Ileogbo community.

The questionnaire was pre-tested using test re-test method, with reliability coefficient of 87.2, judging it to be reliable. The dependent variable of this study is livelihood status, while the dependent variables are livelihood abilities, access to capital assets, and livelihood activities. Ability was measured with a scale of amount of work done (hrs/day-Interval scale); numbers of days work per week (Interval scale); years of experience (Interval scale); number of active family labour (Interval scale); training (Ordinal scale – Indigenous-1, Non-formal-2, Formal-3); and Support (Nominal scale – Extension-1, Social-2). Assets were measured with checklists of quantity and quality of physical, social, human, financial, and natural assets. Natural assets – Number and Size (Interval scale); Access (Nominal scale – Wet season-1, Dry season). Physical assets – Access (Nominal scale – Yes-1, No-2); Condition of asset (Ordinal scale – Poor-1, Fair-2, Good-3). Financial assets – Access (Nominal scale – Yes-1, No-2); Period of access (Ordinal scale – Rarely-1, Occasionally-2, Always-3). Human assets – Sex (Nominal scale – Male-1, Female-2); Age (Interval scale); Educational qualification (Ordinal scale – Non formal-1, Adult education-2, Primary-3, Secondary-4, Tertiary-5); Number of activities contributed to (Interval scale); Time input into work (Hrs/Day and Days/Week – Interval scale). Social assets – Membership (Nominal scale – Yes-1, No-2); Position held (Ordinal scale – Member-1, Official-2, Executive-3).

Activities were measured with a scale of income generating (agricultural and non-agricultural) and non-income generating activities. Participation (Ordinal scale – No-0, Yes-1); Season of participation (Ordinal scale – Wet/Dry season-1, Both season-2); Rank of significance (Ordinal scale); Level of activity (Ordinal scale – Decreasing-1, Stable-2, Increasing-3). Lastly, livelihood status was computed as the sum of livelihood ability score, access to capital assets score, and livelihood activities score for each individual.

Results and Discussion

Livelihood Ability

Table 1 reveals that 95.5% of female youths have low level of livelihood ability, while 64.9% adult males have high level of livelihood ability. Result of analysis implies that capacity building is often targeted towards adult, and adult males have more access to it than their female counterparts – a form of elite capture. Moreover, it could be a result of livelihood diversification that is most often practiced by adults for household food security.

The qualitative survey shows that adults take on more livelihood activities than youths, and thus possess diverse skills and experiences. Male youths possessing more livelihood ability than female youths may be a function of having more free time to learn new skills or sharpen old ones, while the later spend more time nursing children and doing domestic chores.

This result corroborates Bakare-Yusuf (2003) who stated that women play pivotal reproductive and domestic roles that facilitate patriarchal economic and productive dominance and World Bank (2008) that gender differences, arising from the socially constructed relationship between men and women, affect the distribution of resources between them and cause many disparities in development outcomes. Livelihood ability is an important resource that must be built, and the opportunity for this should be open to all.

Table 1. Distribution of gender differences in livelihood ability N=129

Gender	Level of livelihood ability					
	Low		High		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Adult males	13	35.1	24	64.9	37	100.0
Adult females	17	40.5	25	59.5	42	100.0
Male youths	18	64.3	10	35.7	28	100.0
Female youths	21	95.5	1	0.5	22	100.0

Access to Capital Assets

Male youths are more deprived of access to capital assets with 85.7% of them having low access as shown in table 2. On the other hand, majority (59.5%) of adult males have high access to capital assets. Qualitative survey shows that adult men have more access to land, water sources, and forest (natural capital), production tools (physical capital), credit facilities (financial capital), and household labour (human capital) than the others.

However, qualitative survey also shows that females, both youth and adult participate more in groups, giving them high social capital score. This hitherto explains why female youths have higher access to capital assets than male youths, corroborating Manona (1999), who observed that patriarchal barriers to women's asset ownership have been largely removed.

Table 2. Distribution of gender differences of access to capital assets (N=129).

Gender	Level of access to capital assets					
	Low		High		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Adult males	15	40.5	22	59.5	37	100.0
Adult females	22	52.4	20	47.6	42	100.0
Male youths	24	85.7	4	14.3	28	100.0
Female youths	15	68.2	7	31.8	22	100.0

Table 3 implies that female youths are the least productive in the group, with 40.9% of them having low level of livelihood activity. However, 71.4% of male youths have high level of livelihood activity, showing them to be most productive. Qualitative survey shows that majority of artisans in the community are male youths, they are the motorcyclists, taxi drivers, pick-up drivers, carpenters, welders, and blacksmith, coupled with the fact that they engage in active farming. Result of analysis reveals that male youths contribute effectively to the socioeconomic reality of the community, given their extensive strengths and freedom from domestic servitude. Females are more agriculturally productive in Nigeria (Chukwuezi, 1999), but males still take the lead when comparing for both agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

Table 3. Distribution of gender differences of level of livelihood activity, (N=129).

Gender	Level of activity					
	Low		High		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Adult males	13	35.1	24	64.9	37	100.0
Adult females	17	40.5	25	59.5	42	100.0
Male youths	8	28.6	20	71.4	28	100.0
Female youths	9	40.9	13	59.1	22	100.0

Majority (64.9%) of the adult males have high livelihood status, while only 28.6% and 22.7% of male youths and female youths respectively have high livelihood status. High livelihood status of adult males indicates their low susceptibility to vulnerability (stress, shocks and risks); and capability to take more effective coping strategies in such cases. Adult males thus have better welfare than others as opined by Bryceson (2002).

Table 4. Distribution of gender differences of livelihood status N=129

Gender	Livelihood status					
	Low		High		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Adult males	13	35.1	24	64.9	37	100.0
Adult females	18	42.9	24	57.1	42	100.0
Male youths	20	71.4	8	28.6	28	100.0
Female youths	17	77.3	5	22.7	22	100.0

Test of Hypothesis

Table 5 reveals that there is a significant difference within the livelihood status of adult males, adult females, male youths, and female youths in Ileogbo community. This indicates that there is no equality in the livelihood system of the community. Moreover, livelihood status differs also across generational divide, given that there are significant differences between the adults and the youths, but not within the adults and the youths.

This is a common situation in Africa - it is either adults or men take it all, not minding the fact that male youths are the most economically productive in the community, and females the most agriculturally productive in Nigeria according to Chukeuezi (1999) and most economically active in the world as concluded by World Bank (2008).

Table 5. ANOVA result of livelihood status differences across gender, (N=129).

Gender	df	F	Significance
Within groups	3	9.709	0.000*
Between groups			
Adult males vs Adult females	125	9.709	0.272
Adult males vs Male youths	125	9.709	0.000*
Adult males vs Female youths	125	9.709	0.000*
Adult females vs Male youths	125	9.709	0.001*
Adult females vs Female youths	125	9.709	0.001*
Male youths vs Female youths	125	9.709	0.836

* Significant at ≤ 0.05

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that female youths have the lowest level of livelihood ability, while adult males have the highest. Male youths are more deprived of access to capital assets, while adult males have the highest. Also, female youths are the least productive in the group, while male youths have the highest level of livelihood activity. Adult males have the highest livelihood status, followed by adult females, male youths, and lastly female youths. Finally, there is a significant difference within the livelihood status of adult males, adult females, male youths, and female youths in Ileogbo community. Also, there are significant differences between the livelihood status of the adults and the youths, but not within the adults and within the youths.

The study recommends that gender mainstreaming should always be a compulsory component of every rural intervention. Efforts should be made by governmental and nongovernmental agencies involved in rural development to reduce elite-capture to the barest minimum, as adult males tend to be domineering. Moreover, there should be a

family reorientation that will encourage males to take more domestic responsibilities and allow females to take more socioeconomic roles. The younger generation need to be respected, trusted, and empowered to free themselves from the encroachment of the older generation, for them to take their rightful place as the socioeconomic future of the nation. Finally, efforts to mitigate the effect of livelihood shocks should be more targeted at female youths.

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