



Tropentag, September 18-20, 2019, Kassel

“Filling gaps and removing traps
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Gender Specific Utilisation of Forest Products among Rural Dwellers in Osun State, Nigeria

WAHEED SULAIMON¹, OLANIKE DEJI², OLAMIDE OLOWOYO¹

¹*Obafemi Awolowo University, Dept. of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Nigeria*

²*Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Dept. of Gender Research in Rural Areas, Germany*

Abstract

This study specifically determined male and female's level of utilisation of forest products among rural dwellers in Osun State, Nigeria, through the instrumentality of gender lens. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used in selecting a total of 240 respondents. Structured interview schedule and Focus Group Discussion guide were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential tools. The results show that the mean level of utilisation of forest products for male respondents was 267 ± 70.3 , while that of female respondents was 248 ± 72.0 (with a maximum obtainable score of 747). The results of t-test show that calculated t-value of 2.042 was higher than the critical t-value of 0.042 at $p \leq 0.05$ with 238 degrees of freedom. This result implies that there was a significant difference in the utilisation of forest products by male and female respondents. The Focus Group Discussion results show that male respondents have a favourable disposition in their utilisation of economically viable forest products than females. This in turn has created a source of financial advantage through a robust economic engagement of males in the study area. However, females have always been at the receiving end of natural resource policies which tend to favour males at their detriment. This in turn has hindered sustainable utilisation of forest products in the study area. In conclusion, there was a significant difference in the level of utilisation of forest products by male and female respondents. Hence, there is need to address this inequality by engendering policy frameworks that focus on gender equality in order to ensure sustainable forest resource utilisation as a panacea for economic development.

Keywords: Forest products, gender, gender disaggregation, rural dwellers, utilisation