

GENDER UTILIZATION OF FOREST PRODUCTS AMONG RURAL DWELLERS IN OSUN STATE NIGERIA



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OVERVIEW

This study specifically determined male and female's level of utilization 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 analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The results show that the mean level of utilization of forest products for male respondents was 266.99 ± 70.31 , while that of female respondents was 248.23 ± 72.04 (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 utilization of forest products by male and female respondents.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Forest resources are greatly valued productive resources among rural dwellers in the African continent. This is due to the fact that rural people see forests and their resources as wealth creating and livelihood supporting assets (Adebayo, Oyun and Kadeba, 2000). It is documented in literature that gender disparities in rights constrained the set of choices available to females in many aspects of life, often profoundly limiting their potential to partake in or benefit from all forms of development. Hence, females in rural communities of the country command less range of productive resources than males, especially land and forest resources. Also, there has been no empirical evidence that males and females have equitable access to forest products in Nigeria. Furthermore, literature has revealed that in Nigeria females face unfavourable land tenure system that tend to deny them long term access to land for cultivation and harvesting of timber from natural forests, even as members of land holding communities of Africa (Osemeobo, 2004).

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by their socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Male (n=120)		Female (n=120)		Total (n=240)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Primary Occupation						
Farming	49	40.8	20	16.7	69	28.8
Trading	49	40.8	80	66.7	129	53.8
Civil service	9	7.5	11	9.2	20	8.3
Artisan	13	10.8	9	7.5	22	9.2
Total income (Naira)						
<100,000:00	21	17.5	13	10.8	34	14.2
100,001:00-300,001:00	28	23.3	38	31.7	66	27.5
300,001:00-600,000:00	19	15.8	26	21.7	45	18.8
600,001:00+	52	43.3	43	35.8	95	39.6
Mean	374925.58		345100.01		360012.71	
Standard deviation	4.13		2.96		3.59	
Ethnicity						
Yoruba	113	94.2	111	92.5	224	93.3
Hausa	1	0.8	2	1.7	3	1.3
Igbo	2	1.7	5	4.2	7	2.9
Foreigner	4	3.3	2	1.7	6	2.5

Source: Field survey, 2015.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of respondents on forms of utilization of forest mammals, crustaceans, pisces and aves

	Food%		Income%		Medicine%		Trophy%		Clothing%		Pet%		Game%	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Bat	64.2	52.5	0.8	4.2	2.5	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.8	7.0
Crab	78.3	81.7	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Civet-cat	79.2	80.0	9.2	13.3	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.8	0.0
Wild goat	55.0	37.5	9.2	10.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.8	0.0
Striped Jackal	0.8	0.0	0.8	2.5	2.5	1.7	0.8	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.0
African buffalo	10.5	2.5	4.2	2.5	2.5	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.0
Rabbit	69.2	70.0	2.5	0.0	1.7	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.5	8.8	0.0	0.0
Insect	62.5	50.0	0.8	1.7	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fish	94.2	93.3	0.0	9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bird	86.7	81.7	1.7	4.2	2.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	23.8	0.0

Source: Field survey, 2015. Note: * - Multiple choices

Table 3: Independent t-test Analysis of the Significant Difference of Gender on Level of Utilization of Forest Products

VARIABLES	N	MEAN DIFFERENCE	SD. ERROR	T
Male	120			
Female	120	18.77	9.19	2.042*

Significant at .05 level; df = 238; Critical t = 0.042 Source: Field survey, 2015.

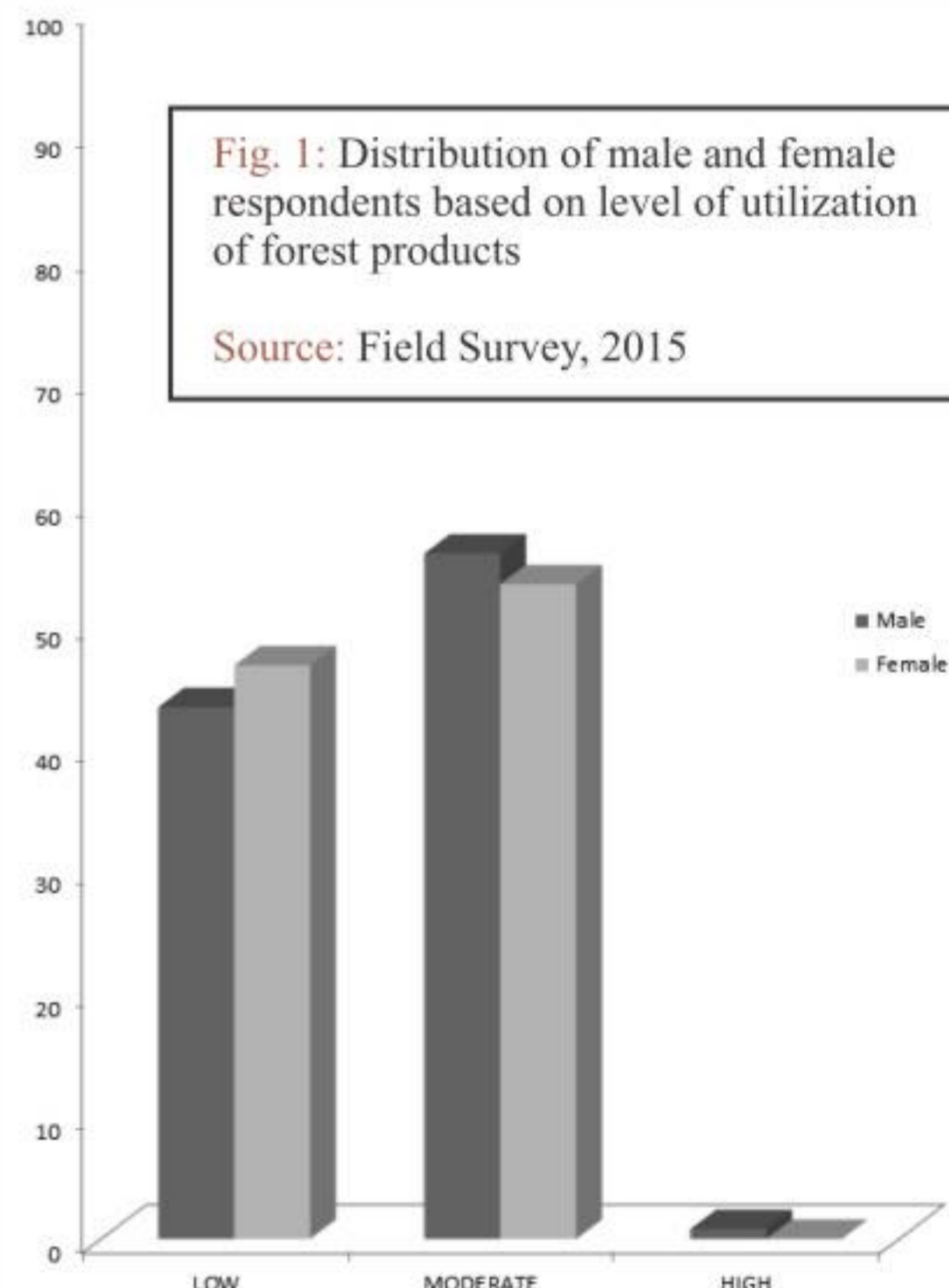


Fig. 1: Distribution of male and female respondents based on level of utilization of forest products

Source: Field Survey, 2015

RECOMMENDATIONS

◆ The regime of diversification should be made gender responsive to connect with the forest sector since it provides the ground for agriculture through several services to boost productivity of rural male and female farmers in order save the country the cost of importation of agricultural commodities and other forest products.

◆ While the adoption of some models of community forestry practices in Nigeria which include; agroforestry, afforestation programme, taungya system, wood lot, forest homestead, shelterbelt or wind break, silvipasture, urban forestry and joint forest management are encouraged, we must never neglect the issue of gender to realizing the goals for which these practices were established since the fundamental roles taken up in forestry activities by males and females as discussed in this work are crucial to the socio-economic well-being of male and female rural dwellers.

REFERENCES

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