

# ATTITUDE OF RURAL WOMEN TOWARDS LEADERSHIP POSITION IN OGBOMOSO SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

\* Adewole W.A., Adetunbi S.I, Ayoade A.R.,

Author (s) Institutional Affiliation: Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Nigeria

Corresponding Author: Adetunbi S.I

[Siadetunbi@lautech.edu.ng](mailto:Siadetunbi@lautech.edu.ng)

## ABSTRACT

The general objective of the study is to determine the attitude of the rural women towards leadership position in Ogbomosho South Local Government Area of Oyo state. Specifically, the study described the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, identified the areas where the respondents can hold leadership position in the community, examined the benefits of leadership position to the respondents and determined the constraints of the respondents to taking up leadership positions.

Multistage sampling technique was used in selecting 90 respondents for this study. Data was collected with the aid of a well-structured interview schedule while descriptive statistical tools (frequencies, percentages, mean and weighted mean score (WMS)) and inferential tool (Pearson Product Moment Correlation) were used to present the results of the findings.

The results of the findings revealed that the respondents were of the middle age with the mean age of 43.5years. Majority (80.0%) were married, little above half (53.3%) were Christians, 35.6% had primary school education while the mean household size was 6. Household (98.9%), and gender (97.8%) were the groups where women takes leadership position. promotion of gender equality, makes women to be respected and a form of women empowerment (100%) were the identified benefits of involvement in leadership position. The traditional views on the role of women in the Society was ranked first with the weighted mean score (WMS) of 1.8 ranked first as constraints to taking leadership position. Women to command special respect and prestige in the community was ranked first with WMS of 4.84 and Women's involvement in leadership is a panacea for gender justice with WMS of 4.82 were the most ranked attitude of respondents to taking leadership position. The chi square analysis revealed a significant relationship between marital status ( $X^2 = 176$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Religion ( $X^2 = 0.044$ ,  $P = 0.003$ ) educational status ( $X^2 = 45.80$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), Primary Occupation ( $X^2 = 65.20$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and secondary occupation ( $X^2 = 7.511$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and Attitude of rural women towards leadership position.

The study concludes that the respondents were mainly married, in their middle age with relatively large family size and many years of business experience. Traditional views of the role of women in society was the major constraints to taking up leadership position by the respondents It is hereby recommended that there should be a deliberate programme by government, Non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and other stakeholders in women issues towards changing the traditional view of the role of men in the society.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Women and men are an essential resource of all nations and societies. Women have been playing a key role, not only in the improvement of family wellbeing, but also in the development of the economic, political, and ecological environments. However the role and social status of women in the past were limited by tradition,

law, religion, etc. (Bartol et al., 2003) Therefore, women have less opportunity to play their role in the society in comparison to men. The role of women and men in the relationship pattern of decision - making and division of labor in the family are determined based on the gender status of men and women. The gender role is one of the important factors of interrelationship between husband and wife in the family. Women's fundamental role is a housewife who has to be responsible for house caring and child rearing (Boonto, 2008). The decision-making in family is one of the ways of the female empowerment. Participation in decision-making process in household matters considers that a female is accounted for in the family. In all societies, the issue of women's participation and how they participate economically, socially and culturally is considered to be important. Family decision-making has changed over the last several decades (Hoyt, 2005).

Changing roles of women, increasing women's education, and increasing participation of women in the labor force are important keys for family decision-making changes (Kiani, 2012).

In developing countries, women play a vital role to the welfare of the family. They are basically viewed as the potential mothers and homemakers. Hence, decision-making power of women within the family has been looked upon as one of the important factors which may effect on well-being of the family (Sultana, 2011).

Sustainable and all around developments of a society cannot be brought about without the full and unreserved participation of both woman and man in the development process, and such a balanced development should also call for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and the protection against all forms of violence against women. According to World bank (2012), although women constitutes two third of the world's working hours, produce half of the world's food and above all, bear and rear children, women continue to suffer from all forms of discrimination and from the absence of adequate protection against violence (World bank, 2012).

According to Meaza (2009), Nigeria is party to all major human right treaties including the most important women's conventions, i.e., CEDAW which calls for equal participation of women in public decision making, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BDPA), which requires governments to attain a 30% benchmark for women's representation in all public decision making positions (Meaza, 2009). Moreover, various literatures argue that as compared to prior decades, the participations of women in leadership throughout the world are somehow increasing. But, in spite of the incremental progress towards women's participation in public spheres, it is generally recognized that women have largely remained outside of formal leadership roles due to various factors.

### **Statement of Problem**

To help bring a rural community to action, it is necessary for individuals and groups to provide good leadership. When good leadership is provided, the people participate voluntarily in the accomplishment of stated objectives. The approach to rural community development is always through local leaders who not only act as pioneers of projects but also help in influencing and motivating their people to action. For any rural community development to be successful, influential local leaders must be involved else they might undermine the progress of such programmes.

Accordingly, as it was stated by Meaza, the main factors which have contributed for such disparities include: structural barriers, unequal socio-economic opportunities, and inadequate access to mentors and support networks (Meaza, 2009). Furthermore, the same source have depicted out that rigid work place structure and gender stereotypes that relate socially defined characteristics with certain groups in most cases also dissociate women from leadership roles. Traditional and persistent barriers have been shown to hinder the active pursuit of women to obtain positions of leadership (Powell et al., 2002); Women in leadership in Nigeria in general have been noted to be very few, and yet demographically, they constitute the majority. Resultantly, most women are either struggling to access leadership or have long been pushed to the periphery through the use of patriarchal arguments. This state of affairs has been perpetuated largely through sociocultural beliefs systems. The importance of this research bases on the idea that attitudes toward women in leadership affect women's participation in leadership, and in turn, women in positions of leadership engage in policies that positively affects women (Caiazza, 2004).

The general objective of the study is to examine the attitude of rural women in Ogbomoso South Local Government towards taking leadership position in the community. Specifically, the study identified the socio-economic characteristics of the rural women in Ogbomoso South local government. Identified the groups where the respondents can hold leadership position in the community, examined the attitude of the respondent to leadership position in the society identified the benefits of leadership position to the respondents and determined the constraints of the respondents to taking up leadership positions

## METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ogbomoso South local government area., Ogbomoso, Oyo state, Nigeria. Ogbomoso South is located approximately on the intersection of latitude 8008 North and longitude 4015 East. It is about 105 km North East of Ibadan (State capital), 58 km North West of Osogbo, 53 km South West of Ilorin and 57 km North East of Oyo town. The population was approximately 166,034 as of 2006 census with an area of 3542.82 square kilometers with about 60% of the dwellers being civil servants and also engaged in farming (both crops and animal production. The major economic activities of the people is farming while few of them are artisans. The predominant crop that are usually cultivated in the area are maize, cassava, yam, vegetables, and so on.

The population of the study comprised of all the rural households in Ogbomoso south local government of Oyo state. Multistage sampling technique was adopted in selecting a total of 90 respondents for the study while a well-structured interview schedule will be used to obtain relevant information from the respondents. Data for the study was analyzed using tools like frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation, while Chi Square was used to test the hypothesis of the study.

### 4.1 Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 revealed that 28.9% were between 31 and 40 years, 32.2% were between 40 and 50 years, 22.2% were between 51 and 60 years while the mean age of the respondents was 43.5 years. Impling that the respondents were of middle age and still have capacity and many years ahead of them to be involved in leadership positions. Marital status revealed that 7.8% of the respondents were single, majority (80.0%) were married, 5.6% were separated, 1.1% were divorced while 5.6% were widowed. Little above half (53.3%) were Christians while 46.7% of the respondents were Muslims. Also, 22.2% of the respondents had no formal education, 35.6% of the respondents had primary school education, 26.7% of the respondents had secondary school education while 15.6% of the respondents had tertiary education. 14.5% of the respondents had between 1 and 3 household size, 45.6% of the respondents had between 4 and 6 household size, 37.7% of the respondents had between 7 and 9 household size while 2.2% of the respondents had above 9 household size. The mean household size is 6. This implies that the respondents had a relatively large household size. Table 1 further revealed that 33.3% of the respondents were farmers, 24.4% of the respondents were artisans while 37.8% of the respondents were traders. The secondary occupation revealed that 12.2% of the respondents were civil servants, 13.3% of the respondents were artisans, 28.9% were farmers while 45.6% were traders. The result revealed that the responds were involved in different secondary occupations with trading as the most practiced secondary occupation among the respondents. Furthermore, 21.1% of the respondents had between 1 and 10 years of business experience, 30.0% had between 11 and 20 years of business experience, 34.4% had between 21 and 30 years of business experience, 10.0% had between 31 and 40 years of business experience while 3.3% of the respondents had above 40 years of business experience. The mean year of business experience is 20.3 while majority (77.8%) were members of social organization and 22.2% of the respondents were not members of any socio-organization.

**Table1: Distribution of the Respondents by their Socio-economic Characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
<b>Age</b>			
<=30	10	11.1	
31-40	26	28.9	
41-50	29	32.2	<b>43.5</b>
51-60	20	22.2	
Above 60	5	5.6	
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	7	7.8	
Married	72	80.0	
Divorced	5	5.6	
Separated	1	1.1	
Widowed	5	5.6	
<b>Religion</b>			
Christianity	48	53.3	
Islam	42	46.7	
<b>Level of Education</b>			
Non formal Education	20	22.2	
Primary Education	32	35.6	
Secondary Education	24	26.7	
Tertiary Education	14	15.6	
<b>Years spent in School</b>			
0	23	25.6	
1-6	32	35.6	<b>8.2</b>
7-12	22	24.4	
Above 12	13	14.4	
<b>Household Size</b>			
1-3	13	14.5	
4-6	41	45.6	<b>5.8</b>

7-9	34	37.7
Above 9	2	2.2
<b>Primary Occupation</b>		
Farming	30	33.3
Trading	22	24.4
Civil Service	4	4.4
Artisan	34	37.8
<b>Secondary Occupation</b>		
Civil service	11	12.2
Farming	26	28.9
Artisan	12	13.3
Trading	41	45.6
<b>Years of Business Experience</b>		
<=10	19	21.1
11-20	27	30.0
21-30	31	34.4
31-40	9	10.0
Above 40	3	3.3
<b>Membership of Socio-organization</b>		
Yes	70	77.8
No	20	22.2

Source: Field Survey, 2019

## 2 Groups where Women Take Leadership Position in the Community

The distribution of the respondents by areas where women takes leadership position revealed that 98.9% identified household level, 97.8% indicated gender group, 94.4% identified age grouped while 91.1% mentioned political parties and religious organizations. Other areas of leadership position identified by the respondents are community organizations (83.3%), trade groups (82.2%) and socio-cultural organizations (67.8%). The results indicates that household level and gender groups were the major groups where women are involved in decision making.

Various	Frequency	Percentage
Household level	89	98.9
Religious Organization	82	91.1
Socio-cultural Organization	61	67.8
Trade Groups	74	82.2
Community Organization	75	83.3
Gender Groups	88	97.8
Age groups	85	94.4

Political parties

82

91.1

Source: Field Survey, 2019

### 3 Benefits of Involvement in Leadership Position by Rural Women

The distribution of respondents by benefits of taking up leadership position revealed that all (100%) the respondents identified promotion of gender equality, makes women to be respected and a form of women empowerment, 98.9% mentioned greater recognition and social prestige, 94.4% sees it as helping to develop strong network ties while 91.1% of the respondents indicated enhancement of self-confidence of women. The results implies that promotion of gender equality, makes women to be respected and a form of women empowerment are the major benefits of taking up leadership position by the women.

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Benefits of Taking up Leadership Position**

Benefits of taking up Leadership Position	Frequency	Percentage
It is a form of women empowerments	90	100
Greater recognition and social prestige	89	98.9
Enhance the self confidence	82	91.1
Makes women to be respected	90	100
Develop strong network ties	85	94.4
Promotes gender equality	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

### 4: Constraints to taking up Leadership Position by Rural Women

The distribution of the respondents by the constraints to taking leadership position revealed that traditional views on the role of women in the Society was ranked first with the weighted mean score (WMS) of 1.8. This was closely followed by heavy household chores, home keeping or household responsibilities time consuming with WMS of 1.7. Next is overburden of domestic responsibilities and negative attitude or disposition of the husband towards it with WMS of 1.6. Others are in this order; Religious factor and lack of training and prior exposure to leadership (WMS =1.5); Poor attitude of women themselves towards it and lack of clear-cut policies and programmes that prepares women for leadership (WMS=1.6) while heavy household chores, home keeping or household responsibilities time consuming had the least ranking with WMS of 1.2. The results implies that traditional views of the role of women in society was the major constraints to taking up leadership position by the respondents.

**Table 4: The distribution of the respondents by Constraints to taking Leadership position**

Constraint to taking Leadership Position by Rural Women	Major Constraint	Minor constraint	Not a Constraint	WMS	Rank
Religion factors	57(63.3)	19(21.1)	14(15.5)	1.5	5 <sup>th</sup>
Traditional Views on the Role of Women in the Society	54(60.0)	36(40.0)	-	1.8	1 <sup>st</sup>
Lack of confidence	33(36.7)	45(50.0)	12(13.3)	1.2	8 <sup>th</sup>
Poor attitude of women themselves towards it	45(50.0)	24(26.7)	21(23.3)	1.3	7 <sup>th</sup>

Overburden of domestic responsibilities	55(61.1)	29(32.2)	6(6.7)	1.6	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Lack of training and prior exposure to leadership	52(57.7)	32(35.6)	6(6.7)	1.5	5 <sup>th</sup>
Negative Attitude or disposition of the husband towards it	52(57.7)	36(40.0)	2(2.2)	1.6	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Heavy household chores, home keeping or household responsibilities time consuming	64(71.1)	25(27.8)	1(1.1)	1.7	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Lack of clear-cut policies and programmes that prepares women for leadership	37(41.1)	38(42.2)	15(16.7)	1.3	7 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field Survey, 2019

## 5 Attitude of Rural Women towards Taking up Leadership Positions

The distribution of the respondents by their attitudes towards leadership position revealed that women to command special respect and prestige in the community was ranked first with the weighted mean (WMS) score of 4.84. This was closely followed by Women's involvement in leadership is a panacea for gender justice with WMS of 4.82. Next is Women have tendency to open frank discussion and away from the forceful exertion of authority by men with WMS of 4.41. Others are in the following order: Women in leadership are thought to be more consultative style of leadership than men (WMS=4.40); Leadership position could put women under pressure to achieve set goals especially from their men counterpart (WMS=4.39); There is a general assumption that women in leadership position are usually rigid, difficult to please and very tough (WMS=4.23); Household responsibilities might be a limitation to performance of women in Leadership position.(WMS=4.08); Women in leadership are more willing to recognize their own limitations (WMS=3.89), Without the appropriate policies and programmes to promote women in leadership women will always be discriminated against (WMS=3.77) while women are bad leaders-if entrusted with power, they will no longer respect and honour their husband had the least ranking with the WMS of 2.03. The results implies that women to command special respect and prestige in the community was their major attitude to taking leadership position.

**Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents by their Attitude towards Leadership Positions**

Attitudinal Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	WM S	Rank
Women's involvement in leadership is a panacea for gender justice.	75(83.3)	14(15.6)	1(1.1)			4.82	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Women in leadership are thought to be more consultative style of leadership than men	37(41.1)	52(57.8)	1(1.1)			4.40	4 <sup>th</sup>
It makes women to command special respect and prestige in the community	76(84.4)	14(15.6)				4.84	1 <sup>st</sup>
	47(52.2)	23(25.6)		3(3.3)	17(18.9)	3.89	8 <sup>th</sup>

Women in leadership are more willing to recognize their own limitations

47(52.2) 36(40.0) 4(4.4) 3(3.3) 4.41 3<sup>rd</sup>

Women have tendency to open frank discussion and away from the forceful exertion of authority by men

Leadership position could put women under pressure to achieve set goals especially from their men counterpart.

55(61.1) 25(27.8) 1(1.1) 8(8.9) 1(1.1) 4.39 5<sup>th</sup>

There is a general assumption that women in leadership position are usually rigid, difficult to please and very tough.

43(47.8) 31(34.4) 12(13.3) 2(2.2) 2(2.2) 4.23 6<sup>th</sup>

Household responsibilities might be a limitation to performance of women in Leadership position.

44(48.9) 27(30.0) 7(7.8) 8(8.9) 4(4.4) 4.08 7<sup>th</sup>

Without the appropriate policies and programmes to promote women in leadership women will always be discriminated against

32(35.6) 29(32.2) 7(7.8) 20(22.2) 2(2.2) 3.77 9<sup>th</sup>

Women are bad leaders. If entrusted with power, they will no longer respect and honour their husband

9(10.0) 6(6.7) 4(4.4) 31(34.4) 40(44.4) 2.03 10<sup>th</sup>

Source: Field Survey, 2019

### Test of Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents and the Attitude of rural women towards leadership position.

The results of chi square analysis between some selected socioeconomic characteristics and Attitude of rural women towards leadership position revealed a significant relationship between marital status (Chi value =176, p=0.000), Religion (Chi value = 0.044, P=0.003) educational status (Chi value = 45.80, p = 0.000), Primary Occupation (Chi value = 65.20, p = 0.000) and Credit facilities (Chi value = 7.511, p = 0.000) and Attitude of rural women towards leadership position. The results implies that all the significant variables decisively influenced the attitude of the respondents towards leadership position in the community.

**Table 6: Results of Chi Square Analysis showing the Relationship between some selected socioeconomic Characteristics and Attitude of rural women towards leadership position**

Variable	Chi Value	DF	p-value	Remarks
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Marital status	176.78	4	0.000	Significant
Religion	0.044	1	0.003	Significant
Educational status	45.80	6	0.000	Significant
Primary Occupation	65.20	3	0.000	Significant
Secondary Occupation	7.511	1	0.006	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2019

### Conclusion and Recommendation

Traditional views of the role of women in society was the major constraints to taking up leadership position by the respondents while women to command special respect and prestige in the community was their major attitude to taking leadership position. Its hereby recommended that there should be a deliberate programme by government, Non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and other stakeholders in women issues towards changing the traditional view of the role of men in the society.

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