

# Gender Differences in Rural Dwellers' Involvement in Developmental Projects in Osun State

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**Abstract** - Rural development is the integrated approach to food production as well as physical, social and institutional infrastructural provisions with an ultimate goal of bringing about both quantitative and qualitative changes which result in improved living standard of the rural population. The study was conducted to investigate gender difference of rural dwellers' involvement in rural development projects in Atakunmosa-west Local Government area of Osun State. It also described the demographic characteristics of the respondents, identified different rural developmental projects undergone by the respondents, showed the problems associated with their involvement and determined the men and women perceived benefits of their involvement. Data were collected with the aid of well-structured questionnaire and were administered to 60 males and 60 females in 6 communities. A multi stage random sampling technique was employed in the selection of respondents and data analysis was by the use of SPSS. Some of the findings revealed that men were well involved and women were poorly involved in development projects. Majority of respondents were Christians, were not youths and married. All the respondents encountered one problem or the other during their involvement in rural developmental projects and at the same time perceived many benefits from their involvement. It was recommended among others, that women should be encouraged to be actively involved in physical development activities by giving them adequate recognition and attention so that they can have that sense of belonging. Government and non-governmental organization should introduce more gender responsive projects to rural areas, in order to ensure active and equal involvement of both men and women.

**Keywords:** Gender, Rural Development Projects, Rural Dwellers and Involvement

## I. INTRODUCTION

Rural development involves both community development and agricultural development. Jibowo (2000) defined community development as a process of utilizing the rural people to develop themselves through self-initiative and motivation with minimum assistance from government. Community development projects are geared towards provision of social amenities (borehole, construction of schools, electrification, construction of the hospitals *etc.*) for rural dwellers, in order to improve their standard of living. In other hand, agriculture developments are activities that involve improving quality and quantity of agriculture yields. Rural development is a veritable tool for fighting poverty and achieving economic prosperity at the grassroots level.

Obinne (1997) defined rural development as a process of creating and widening opportunities for individuals to realize full potential through education and share in decisions and action which affect their lives. Idachaba (2000) defined rural development as a means of providing basic amenities, infrastructure, improved agricultural productivity, extension services and employment generation for the rural dwellers. Obinne and Ogidefa (2010) perceived rural development to involve creating and widening opportunities for rural individuals to realize full potential through education and share in decision and action which affect their lives. They also viewed it as efforts to increase rural output and create employment opportunities and root out fundamental (or extreme) cases of poverty, diseases and ignorance. Hence, it is an integrated approach to food production, provision of physical, social and institutional infrastructures with an ultimate goal of improving the lives of rural dwellers.

The concept of rural development embraced by most countries connotes a process through which rural poverty is alleviated by sustained increases in the productivity and incomes of low - income workers and households. Rural development is used synonymously with agricultural development. This is because of the strong interrelationship between agriculture and rural development. Agriculture is a predominantly rural activity and efforts at rural development impact considerably on farmers who are the focus of agricultural development efforts. It is on this account that the integrated rural development projects in Nigeria were designed to ensure that agricultural and rural development efforts became part of a package of services offered to farmers and the rural population (Ijere, 1992). To bring the best out of these rural development projects, all and sundry must actively participate in them. Hence, there is need to find out level of gender involvement in developmental projects in rural area of Osun State.

Gender involvement has to do with the active participation of the people (men and women) in rural development projects (like FADAMA projects, rural electrification, construction of market *etc.*) and their ability to influence the social, political and economic issues that affect them so as to improve their socio-economic condition. The involvement of men and women in rural development projects encourages sustainable development to take place in a community. It allows people the opportunity to share

ideas, interests and responsibilities on issues that affect them. According to Human Development report (1993), involvement is participation of people in the social economic and political process that affects their lives. In rural communities, gender involvement in community projects is highly common and this makes development to be well sustained. The involvement of the people varies from the contributions of funds, material resources, personal labour, and attendance at meetings. The level of involvement by men and women in rural development projects has vital effect on rural development because men and women have different roles to play in development process and their ability to bring their views together enhance sustainable development in the community (Supriya, 2001).

Yemisi and Aisha (2009) mentioned that the contribution made by rural women to agricultural production and rural development in Nigeria is grossly underappreciated in spite of the dominant role women play in the sector. That women compete more favourably with their men folks in terms of their over-participation in agricultural activities and contribution to household economy and food security would be an understatement. The survival and sustenance of agriculture and rural development in Nigeria, as well as in many sub-Saharan Africa countries, rest squarely on the rural women. They therefore deserve to be given due recognition as far as decision-making process in agriculture is concerned as their involvement is highly needed in rural development projects.

Odebode (2012) observed that rural development is the mainstay of agricultural development and community development in Nigeria. Over the years, Nigeria government has been involved in several agricultural programmes which include Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, River Basin Development Authority, and Back-to-land programme, to improve rural areas. These projects were geared toward keeping farmers in the rural area to increase agricultural yield in terms of quality and quantity (Odebode 2012). Unfortunately, most of these programmes have not had a lasting impact and therefore vanished without achieving most of their objectives. One of the major factors for this failure is the inability of various stakeholders in agriculture to assign appropriate role(s) to men and women during any rural development projects. Men and women have distinct roles and needs which affect their level of involvement in rural development. Therefore, gender involvement in rural development needs to be carried out to find out gender specific roles. Better understanding of the gender involvement in different stages of rural development process will help in proper planning, implementation and evaluation of rural development projects. This study examines men and women involvement in stages of development process in selected rural development projects and factors responsible for their level of involvement in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State.

This paper thus addresses the following research questions

1. What are the different rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State that respondents are involved in?
2. What is the level of involvement of men and women in the developmental projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?
3. What are the problems encountered during the involvement of men and women in rural development activities in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?
4. What are the perceived benefits associated with men and women involvement in rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in selected villages in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State. Osun state was created on August 27, 1991 from old Oyo state with the creation of nine states by then Military Government of Nigeria. Osun state is a state in southwestern part of Nigeria. Osun State is populated mainly by Yorubas and is thus unified by a general language. But within the population, there are groups associated with particular dialect versions of Yoruba language. Among the major dialects are those associated with the Oyos, Ifes, Ijesas and Igbominas. Osun State is an inland state in south-western Nigeria. Its capital is Osogbo. It is bounded in the north by Kwara State, in the east partly by Ekiti State and partly by Ondo State, in the south by Ogun State and in the west by Oyo State.

Atakunmosa-west Local Government area of Osun state has its headquarters in Osu. The local government is predominantly inhabited by farmers who engage in small scale farming for food production and cash crops such as cocoa, kolanut, palm product, cassava, tomatoes, pepper, cocoyam, maize, etc. They also engage in other forms of agricultural practices like fishing, animal husbandry, bee-keeping as well as non-farm activities like blacksmithing, carpentry, trading etc. The study area is a Christian dominated area and each of the communities has its own traditional ruler at the helm of affairs.

The population for the study comprised men and women in Atakunmosa-West Local Government Area. The local government comprises of communities and villages among which are Osu, Iloba, Oke Osin, Prince, Okebode, Kajola, Ila, Esinra, and Lala. The study was carried out using multi stage sampling technique. It involved purposive selection of six communities because they speak the same language and engaged in similar developmental projects. The six communities are Okebode, Ila, Kajola, Esinra, Prince and Ijoka. Next houses within each community were conveniently selected. Respondents were then conveniently selected from each house to represent their households. One

male and one female were chosen to represent the entire household. A total of 120 respondents were selected. Data was collected using well-structured questionnaire. Before the collection of data in each of the selected communities, the researcher went to the communities to familiarize himself with the people and also to know the community projects that have been implemented in each of the communities. The community leaders informed the researcher of the rural projects that have been implemented and those that are presently on-going. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Demographic Characteristics of Rural Dwellers

##### 1. Sex

Equal number of male (50.0%) and female (50.0%) participated in the study.

##### 2. Age

Table I shows 1.0 % of male and 23.3 % of female were found between 26-35 years of age, 28.3 % of male and 53.3 % of female were within the age of 36-55 years. Also, about 61.7 % of male and 23.3 % of female were above the age of 55 years. This indicates that majority of the male respondents that were involved in rural development projects were older in age (above 55 years) than the majority of female that were involved in rural development projects, which are age 36-55 years. This could be as a result of the fact that older men involved more in farming than women in Atakunmosa-West Local Government Area of Osun State. The older the individual the less likely he/she is to involve fully in arduous and physical tasks. This finding is supported by Ekong (2003) which reported that age is a crucial factor that could affect involvement. This finding may also indicate that developmental projects did not take place in recent time. It is again hard to tell what effect this factor would have on involvement.

##### 3. Religion

The data in Table I reveals that 63.3 and 36.7 % of the male respondents were Christian and Islamic worshipers respectively. Also, 60.0 and 40.0 % of the female respondents were Christian and Islamic worshipers respectively. This indicates that the respondents were highly religious and their various religious beliefs may have influenced their level of involvement in rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government Area of Osun state. Religion is an accomplice in the stereotyping of women and reinforces the barriers that prevent them from participating politically, economically, and socially. For instance, in the northern part of Nigeria, women are held in

Purdah in deference to Islam. Only their husbands have unfettered access to them and their movements are restricted to their quarters. They depend entirely on their husbands and families to meet their needs. The conditions of their lives can only be guessed at, as most households subsist below the poverty line. Religion ensures that a significant number of women are barred from participating in politics, either as voters or as aspirants to elective offices, as well as economic activities (Mamah, 2011).

##### 4. Marital Status

The data in Table I reveals that 1.7, 96.7 and 1.7 % of the male respondents were single, married and widowed respectively. Also, 88.3 and 11.7 % of the female respondents were married and widowed respectively, but none was single among the female respondents. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were married which may aid involvement in developmental projects as family members could encourage one another.

##### 5. Educational Level

Data in Table I shows that among the female respondents, 51.7 % were non-literate, 13.3 % had primary education, 26.7 % had secondary education and 8.3 % had post-secondary education while among the male respondents, 33.3 % were non-literate, 11.7 had primary education, 33.3 % had secondary education and 21.7 % had post-secondary education. This might have serious effect on gender involvement in some stages of developmental process of rural development projects. This is in line with the findings of Kongolo and Bamgose (2002) who reported that most women in rural areas are illiterate, lack innovations, self-reliance attitude, are isolated, confined and marginalized through the non- interactive government policies in rural areas.

According to Akosile (2008) "the most recent available national MDGs progress report states that in Nigeria, the gross enrolment ratio for the boys has remained consistently higher than that of girls by over 10% with a male: female ratio of 55.9%:44.1%. At the level of secondary enrolment, girls have a much higher dropout rate such that by terminal class only 48.83% reach senior secondary school. Consequently, only 39.7% of female students graduate from universities and 37.54% from polytechnics. This is because some parents do not see the benefit of girl education as girls are given away in marriage to serve the husbands' families. This goes a long way to impair women participation in all aspects of community development. Ovwigho and Ifie (2004) reiterated the importance of education when they noted youth's involvement in cooperative endeavours. Akinbile et al. (2007) which confirms that majority of farmers always have primary level of education and this may be considered as a low level of literacy in many rural areas of the country.

TABLE I DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL DWELLERS

Variable	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>				
26-35	6	1.0	14	23.3
36-55	17	28.3	32	53.3
56+	37	61.7	14	23.3
<b>Religion</b>				
Islam	22	36.7	24	40.0
Christianity	38	63.3	36	60.0
Traditional	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	1	1.7	0	0.0
Married	58	96.7	55	88.3
Widowed	1	1.7	7	11.7
<b>Educational Level</b>				
Non-literate	20	33.3	31	51.7
Primary	7	11.7	8	13.3
Secondary	20	33.3	16	26.7
Post-secondary	13	21.7	5	8.3
<b>Occupation</b>				
Farming	56	93.3	44	73.3
Trading	2	3.3	16	26.7
Artisans	2	3.3	0	0.0
<b>Minimum Income per Month</b>				
<N10,000	5	8.3	8	13.3
N11,000-20,000	25	41.7	39	65.0
N21,000-30,000	26	43.3	13	21.7
>N31,000	4	6.7	0	0.0
<b>Native of community</b>				
Yes	38	63.3	30	50.0
No	22	36.7	30	50.0
<b>Years of resident for non-native</b>				
<10 years	3	5.0	2	3.3
11-20 years	6	1.0	18	3.0
21+	13	21.7	10	16.7
Not applicable	38	63.3	30	5.0
<b>Membership of social group</b>				
Yes	59	98.3	58	96.7
No	1	1.7	2	3.3
<b>Cosmopolitaness</b>				
Yes	57	95.0	60	100.0
No	3	5.0	0	0.0

\*Source: Field Survey, 2014

Education brings benefits to the educated in the form of access to information and it equips men and women alike for greater participation in economic, political, and other forms of community development. Education is a major determinant of effective participation in community development projects. The educated youth would most likely appreciate community development better than the less educated. If the youth appreciates community development his attitude towards participating in community development projects is likely to be favourable. Onu (1990) had reported the importance of education among rural development agents. The youths are potent agents in development in many rural and urban communities.

#### 6. Occupation

Data in Table 1 indicates that among female respondents, 73.3 % were farmers, 26.7 % were traders and none was an artisan, while among male respondents, 93.3 % were farmers, 3.3 % were traders and 3.3 % were artisans. Majority of the female and male respondents engaged in farming but there were more male farmers than female farmers. This shows that majority of respondents were farmers which could influence their involvement in rural development projects because of the perceived benefits derived.

#### 7. Minimum Income per Month

Data in Table I shows that among the female respondents, 13.3 % earned below N10, 000, 65.0 % earned between N11, 000 - 20,000 and 21.7 % earned between N21, 000 - 30,000. However, among the male respondents, 8.3 % earned below N10, 000, 41.7 % earned between N11, 000-20,000, 43.3 % earned between N21, 000 - 30,000 and 6.7 % earned above N31, 000. This shows that the respondents are low income earners and this may affect their involvement in rural development projects during the contributions of funds and donation of materials during the stages of rural developmental projects. According to Mamah (2011), financially, most Nigerian women are backward. Much of their work remains invisible, unremunerated and unrecognized. Their annual income has declined so sharply that most of the rural women are living below poverty line. Financial backwardness of women has made them depend on their husbands for living thereby making it difficult for them to take active part in development activities within the community. Since it is said that he who pays the piper dictates the tune, they do not go beyond the limit set by their husbands virtually in all they do. Very few women who go beyond the limit either cope with divorce or severe punishment from the husband.

#### 8. Native of the Community

Data in Table I shows that among the female respondents, 50.0 % were native of the community and 50.0 % were not native of the community among in which 3.3, 3.0 and 16.7 % had lived in the community below 10 years, 11-20 years

and above 21 years respectively while among the male respondents, 63.3 % were native of the community and 36.7 % were not native of the community among in which 5.0, 1.0 and 21.7 % had lived in the community below 10 years, 11-20 years and above 21 years respectively. Majority of the male respondents were native while half of the female were not native of the community. This shows that half of the female respondents are natives of other communities and this may affect their level of involvement in rural development projects. A non-indigene is less likely to participate fully in community development activities in a locality that is not his place of birth or where he has no lineage and obviously no commitment. However, an indigene of a community would better appreciate the conditions of his community because he has to contribute his quota to the development process. Ekong (2003) had opined that for a non-indigene to be fully accepted into rural social groups, the family he comes from must have lived in the community for a very long time, gained the acceptance of the people and contributed in various ways to the growth of the area.

#### 9. Member of Social Group

Among the female respondents, 96.7 % were members of any social group that involved in rural development projects and 3.3 % were not members of any social group. However, among the male respondents, 98.3 % were members of any social group that involved in rural development projects, and 1.7 % were not members of any social group. Majority of female and male respondents were members of social group which could aid their involvement in rural development projects.

#### 10. Cosmopolitanism

Data in Table I indicates that 100.0 % of female respondents often visit other community and 95.0 % of male respondents often visit other community while 5.0 % did not. This indicates that majority the respondents often travel out of their community which will contribute to their involvement in rural development projects.

#### B. Research Question 1: What are the different rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State that respondents are involved in?

Data in Table II shows that among the male respondents, 95.0 % were involved in FADAMA, 73.3 % were involved in rural electrification and 51.7 % did not on construction of roads, 76.6 % did not involve in police station construction and, 63.3 % did not involve in construction of maternity and, 75.0 % did not involve in construction of hospital and, 71.7 % did not involve in Palace construction and, 85.0 % did not involve in pipe borne water construction, 96.7 % did not involve in construction of schools.

However, among the female respondents, 85.0 % were involved in FADAMA, 65.0 % were involved in electricity

supply, 51.7 % did not involve in construction of roads and, 88.3 % did not involve in police station construction and, 88.3 % did not involve in construction of hospital, 86.7 % did not involve in Construction of Worship centre and, 96.7 % did not involve in pipe borne water construction and, 96.7 % did not involve in construction of schools.

This shows that all the respondents were involved in one rural development project or the others. It can also be deduced from the Table 2 that both females and males in Atakunmosa Local Government were more involved in FADAMA and rural electrification projects and not others. However, construction of pipe borne water and construction of school were the least involved by men and women of Atakunmosa-West Local Government Area of Osun State. This is an indication that most of the communities rely on rivers for source of drinking water as pipe borne water has not been constructed for them and not all the communities sampled have schools.

*C. Research Question 2: What is the level of involvement of men and women in the developmental projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?*

Data in Table 3 shows that among the female respondents, 95.0 % were involved in identification of needs, 93.4 % played leadership roles, 100.0 % were involved in provision of food, 100.0 % were involved in visit to project site, 98.3 did involve in attendance at the meetings, 90.0 % donated materials.

However among the male respondents, 98.3 % were involved in identification of needs, 98.3 % were involved in leadership roles, 100.0 % were involved in provision of food, 98.3 % involved in visit to project site, 100.0 % involved in attendance at the meetings, 100.0 % involved in contributions of funds, 93.4 % donated materials, 90.1 % were involved in decision making.

This indicates that both male and female respondents were fully involved in identification of needs, leadership role, decision making, motivation of members, provision of personal labour, information dissemination, provision of expertise, donation of materials, decision making, land donations, contributions of funds, visit to project site, motivation of members and attendance at meetings. This means that there is an active gender involvement in different stages of rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government Area.

The reason for this level of gender involvement could be because community development has been recognized as an essential asset in the promotion of the independence of local people with many organizations implementing multi-sectorial activities based on local conditions, such as activities in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries as well as in non-agricultural income generation, education, health care and hygiene or infrastructure improvement (Chambers, 1985).

TABLE II RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE STUDY AREA

Variable	Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>FADAMA</b>				
Yes	57	95.0	51	85.0
No	3	5.0	9	15.0
<b>Electricity Supply</b>				
Yes	44	73.3	39	65.0
No	16	26.7	21	35.0
<b>Construction of roads</b>				
Yes	29	48.3	29	48.3
No	31	51.7	31	51.7
<b>Police Station</b>				
Yes	14	23.3	7	11.7
No	46	76.7	53	83.3
<b>Construction of Maternity</b>				
Yes	22	36.7	16	26.7
No	38	63.3	44	73.3
<b>Construction of Hospital</b>				
Yes	15	25.0	7	11.7
No	45	75.0	53	88.3
<b>Palace Construction</b>				
Yes	17	28.3	11	18.3
No	43	71.7	49	81.7
<b>Town Hall Construction</b>				
Yes	22	36.7	13	21.7
No	38	63.3	47	78.3
<b>Worship Centres</b>				
Yes	14	23.3	8	13.3
No	46	76.7	52	86.7
<b>Pipe Borne water</b>				
Yes	9	15.0	2	3.3
No	51	85.0	58	96.7
<b>Construction of Schools</b>				
Yes	2	3.3	2	3.3
No	58	96.7	58	96.7

\*Source: Field survey, 2014.

However, men were fully involved in rural development than women. Females were poorly involved in the following stages of rural development processes; identification of needs (male 49.2%, female 47.5%), leadership role (male 49.2%, female 46.7%), attendance at meetings (male 50.0%, female 49.2%), contribution of funds (male 100.0%, female 49.2 %), decision making (male 45.0%, female 37.5%), information dissemination (male 49.2%, female 44.2%), land donations (male 39.2%, female 25.8%), provision of personal labour (male 42.5%, female 30.0%), provision of expertise (male 45.8%, female 20.0%).

TABLE III DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THEIR LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Variables	Male Percentage(Frequency)				Female Percentage(Frequency)			
	Highly Involved	Moderately Involved	Rarely Involved	Not Involved	Highly Involved	Moderately Involved	Rarely Involved	Not Involved
Stages in development process								
Identification of needs	70.0 (42)	18.3 (11)	10.0 (6)	1.7 (1)	50.0 (30)	38.3 (17)	16.7 (10)	5.0 (3)
Leadership role	61.7 (37)	23.3 (14)	13.3 (8)	1.7 (1)	26.7 (16)	45.0 (27)	21.7 (13)	6.7 (4)
Provision of foods/drinks	56.7 (34)	33.3 (20)	10.0 (6)	0.0 (0)	40.0 (24)	38.3 (23)	21.7 (13)	0.0 (0)
Visit to project	50.0 (30)	43.3 (26)	5.0 (3)	1.7 (1)	33.3 (20)	54.4 (31)	15.0 (9)	0.0 (0)
Attendance at meetings	55.0 (33)	38.3 (23)	6.7 (4)	0.0 (0)	46.7 (28)	38.3 (23)	13.3 (8)	1.7 (1)
Contribution of funds	46.7 (28)	41.7 (25)	11.7 (7)	0.0 (0)	38.3 (23)	41.7 (25)	18.3 (11)	1.7 (1)
Donation of materials	41.7 (25)	40.0 (24)	11.7 (7)	6.7 (4)	40.0 (24)	26.7 (16)	23.3 (14)	1.0 (6)
Decision making	36.7 (22)	36.7 (22)	16.7 (10)	10.0 (6)	16.7 (10)	25.0 (15)	33.3 (20)	25.0 (15)
Information dissemination	25.0 (15)	28.3 (17)	45.0 (27)	1.7 (1)	16.7 (10)	28.3 (17)	43.3 (26)	11.7 (7)
Land donations	25.0 (15)	11.7 (7)	26.7 (16)	36.7 (22)	21.7 (5)	8.3 (5)	21.7 (13)	48.3 (29)
Motivation of members	56.7 (34)	25.0 (15)	5.0 (3)	13.3 (8)	60.0 (36)	15.0 (9)	11.7 (7)	13.3 (8)
Provision of personal labour	25.0 (15)	30.0 (18)	28.3 (17)	16.7 (10)	15.0 (9)	25.0 (15)	20.0 (12)	40.0 (24)
Provision of expertise	20.0 (12)	33.3 (20)	26.7 (16)	20.0 (12)	8.3 (5)	28.3 (17)	23.3 (14)	40.0 (24)

\*Source: Field survey, 2014

TABLE IV DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY BENEFITS DERIVED DURING INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Variable	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Good health service	60	100.0	60	100.0
Good water supply	60	100.0	60	100.0
Better transportation	60	100.0	60	100.0
Easy disposal of farm produce	59	98.3	60	100.0
Increase in standard of living	59	98.3	60	100.0
Willingness to participate	60	100.0	60	100.0
Good communication among people	60	100.0	60	100.0
Increase technical know-how	60	100.0	60	100.0
Easy of identification of needs	60	100.0	60	100.0
Reduction in mortality rate	60	100.0	60	100.0

\*Source: Field survey, 2014

Findings from this study agree with Kongolo and Bamgose (2002) who reported that most women in rural areas are illiterate, lack innovations, self-reliance attitude, are isolated, confined and marginalized through the non-interactive government policies in rural areas. Male respondents who are physically stronger than the females seem to have less favourable attitude and this to a large extent will affect the involvement. Women's contribution to

local and community development is significant, but rural women everywhere are in a minority in decision-making and planning, particularly at regional and national levels. This is in part due to women's multiple roles and workload, but is also due to the persistence of traditional views about women's and men's roles in society.

In a similar study by Ajayi and Otuya (2006), majority of women were socially, culturally and politically barred from participating in community development planning and decision-making processes. When the members of the community are involved in the decision making process they develop a sense of ownership towards the project at hand (Roger *et al.*, 2008). The sense of local ownership that develop from the participatory process generate legitimacy which when combined with credibility create a strong social capital that allows any development project to be carried through. In short, legitimacy goes hand in hand with participatory approach because it aims to create a sense of ownership within the community towards the project. Credibility comes with the level of sustainability of the project. When a project is designed and implemented with the locals, there is always a better chance that it will be sustained and cared for by these same people, thus it gains more credibility. Involvement in community development begets commitment of both men and women.

*D. Research Question 3: What are the problems encountered during the involvement of men and women in rural development activities in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?*

Data in Table IV shows 78.4 % encountered lack of education, 86.7 % encountered low level of government assistance, 88.3 % encountered lack of resources, 75.0 % encountered lack of communal cooperation, 88.3 % encountered poor information dissemination, 75.0 % encountered poor communication among people, 71.6 % encountered low level of interest by the people, 83.3 % encountered shortage of funds. However, 38.4 % of the male respondents' encountered discrimination, 78.4 % encountered lack of education, 85.0 % encountered low level of government assistance, 80.0 % encountered lack of resources, 80.0 % encountered lack of communal cooperation, 88.3 % encountered poor information dissemination, 75.0 % encountered leaders not carry others along, 90.0 % encountered poor transportation, 93.3 % encountered shortage of funds.

TABLE V DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS

Variables	Male Percentage(Frequency)				Female Percentage(Frequency)			
	Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Not at all	Always	Occasionally	Rarely	Not at all
Problems encountered								
Discrimination	0.0 (0)	1.7 (1)	36.7 (22)	61.7 (37)	0.0 (0)	3.3 (2)	25.0 (15)	71.7 (43)
Lack of education	0.0 (0)	5.0 (3)	73.3 (44)	21.7 (13)	0.0 (0)	6.7 (4)	71.7 (43)	21.7 (13)
Low level of government assistance	1.7 (1)	8.3 (5)	75.0 (45)	15.0 (9)	0.0 (0)	10.0 (6)	76.7 (46)	13.3 (8)
Lack of resources	1.7 (1)	36.7 (22)	41.7 (25)	20.0 (12)	5.0 (3)	43.3 (26)	40.0 (24)	11.7 (9)
Lack of communal cooperation	1.7 (1)	13.3 (8)	65.0 (39)	2.0 (1)	1.7 (1)	1.0 (6)	63.3 (38)	25.0 (15)
Poor information dissemination	0.0 (0)	11.7 (7)	76.7 (46)	11.7 (7)	0.0 (0)	13.3 (8)	75.0 (45)	11.7 (7)
Poor communication among people	1.7 (1)	6.7 (4)	68.3 (41)	23.3 (14)	0.0 (0)	10.0 (6)	66.7 (39)	25.0 (15)
Low level of interest by the people	1.7 (1)	6.7 (4)	61.7 (37)	30.0 (18)	0.0 (0)	8.3 (5)	63.3 (38)	28.3 (17)
Leaders not carry other along	0.0 (0)	10.0 (6)	65.0 (39)	25.0 (15)	0.0 (0)	10.0 (6)	63.3 (38)	26.7 (16)
Poor transportation	1.7 (1)	11.7 (7)	76.7 (46)	10.0 (6)	0.0 (0)	15.0 (9)	70.0 (42)	15.0 (9)
Shortage of funds	38.3 (23)	16.7 (10)	38.3 (23)	6.7 (4)	33.3 (20)	20.0 (12)	30.0 (18)	16.7 (10)
Lack of awareness about the projects	1.7 (1)	10.0 (6)	75.0 (45)	13.3 (8)	0.0 (0)	15.0 (9)	66.7 (40)	18.3 (11)

\*Source: Field survey, 2014

This shows that majority of the respondents encountered different problems at different levels, ranging from always, occasionally, rarely and not at all. These problems encountered may hinder full involvement of men and women in rural developmental projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun state. These challenges may also lead to gender difference in the level of

involvement of rural dwellers' in developmental projects. Similar findings were reported by Ogunbameru *et al.* (2006), who identified factors such as access to credit, land and other agricultural inputs as militating against active participation of women in Women in Agriculture programme. Freman (2001) reported that farmers also complained about lack of capital to undertake farming.

*E. Research Question 4: What are the perceived benefits associated with men and women involvement in rural development projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State?*

Data in Table V shows that among female respondents, 100.0 % will benefit from good health service, good water supply, better transportation, easy disposal of farm produce, increase in standard of living, willingness to participate, good communication among people, increase technical know-how, easy identification of needs and reduction in mortality rate. However, among the male, 100.0 % will benefit from good health service, good water supply, better transportation, willingness to participate, good communication among people, increase technical know-how, easy identification of needs and reduction in mortality rate while 98.3 % benefited from easy disposal of farm produce and increase in standard of living. This shows that most of the male and female respondents perceived benefits from involvement in rural development projects which will aid their active involvement in rural development projects. Johnson et al. (2003) found similar result in the study of impact of user participation in agricultural and natural resource management research in developing countries.

**IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The study was carried out to determine gender differences in rural dwellers' involvement in developmental projects in Atakunmosa-West Local Government of Osun State. It was discovered that both men and women involved in some developmental projects like FADAMA, construction of road, construction of maternity etc., which may be because of perceived benefits derived from involvement in rural developmental projects. However, men were well involved while women were poorly involved, which may be due to different problems encountered at different levels of involvement and their demographic characteristics. A close look at the entire work especially at the findings made in the course of the study reveals that there is a gap in the level of involvement of male and female gender in the development of the Nigerian society. This less involvement of the female folk has contributed in no small measure to the backwardness of the country despite the enormous resources with which the country is endowed. It has to a great extent slow down the pace at which the communities grow and develop.

Based on the findings the following recommendations are made

1. The government and non-governmental organization should introduce more gender responsive projects to rural areas in order to ensure active and equal involvement of both men and women.

2. Extension services should be strengthened by the government in order to determine the gender role in a social system and to identify their needs in order to incorporate them in the planning and implementation stages of rural development projects.
3. The government should give adequate support to the rural dwellers by providing technical assistance to complex rural development projects which the people might want to embark upon in order to enhance their socio-economic conditions.
4. Efforts should be intensified by government to take functional literacy campaign for men and women farmers to the nooks and crannies of rural areas where these men and women reside in the study area.
5. Women should be encouraged by all stakeholders to be actively involved in physical development activities by giving them adequate recognition and attention so that they can have that sense of belonging to involve.

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