

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LAND ACCESSIBILITY AMONG FOUR SUB-ETHNIC GROUPS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

FAMAKINWA*Michael, Abiodun Fafolarin AGBOOLA, Dorcas Lola ALABI

*Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, Faculty of Agriculture,
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria*

Corresponding author: famakinwamichael2013@gmail.com

Abstract: The paper compared accessibility to land among sub-ethnic groups in rural communities of Osun State, Nigeria. Primary data were collected from four major sub-ethnic groups from 30 selected communities in the State using multistage sampling procedure. Data were analysed with descriptive statistics such as percentages, means and standard deviation while ANOVA was used for inferential purpose. Results showed that the mean age of respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and ijesa sub-ethnic groups were 48, 47.1, 44 and 48 years respectively. Majority (84.7%, 73.9% and 72%) and about 60% were married. 55%, 36%, 30.5% and 26.1% from Igbomina, Oyo, Ijesa, and Ife respectively had easy access to land while majority (82%, 70.7%, 72.5% and 66.1%) had full control over land usage. Significant difference existed in land accessibility ($F=3.517$). The study therefore concluded that accessibilities to land, rights to land and control over land differ among sub-ethnic groups.

Key Word: land accessibility, land control, land rights and sub-ethnic groups

INTRODUCTION

Land assets, whether soils, home sites, and crop, grazing and forest land, are important everywhere. More importantly, in countries where agriculture is the major occupation and livelihood strategy of the majority, ownership of land is significant and directly associated with power. In many parts of the world, land is an element of identity and social status, which confers political and economic power on the owner. It defines his origins and the status of his family. Land is a source of identity and cultural heritage. According to Odeny (2013), land is one of the cornerstones of economic development on which farmers, pastoralists and other rural based livelihood activities depend on a significant component of business assets that plays crucial role in business investment strategies. Thus, securing land rights could have a significant impact on sustainable economic development. Land in rural areas is both a means of agricultural production, livestock rearing and a place for gathering natural products that play an important role in local economies such as woodcutting, wild harvesting, grazing, fishing, hunting, among others.

According to FAO (2002), in many societies, there is a strong correlation between the decision-making- power that a person enjoys and the quantity and quality of land rights held by such. In rural areas, land is a cohesive force that unites people together because of the belief it is communally owned. In fact, land is regarded as a heritage or legacy bequeathed by ancestors to future generations. In Nigeria, land is not

just a factor of production but a major determinant of the people's livelihoods especially in rural communities. It is an important vehicle that provides access to economic opportunities, accumulation of wealth, and transfer of wealth from one generation to another among in the rural populace (Baye, 2007). Access is the right to enter a defined physical area and enjoy its benefits (Scandizzo, 2000). Land access and the ability to exchange it with others and use it effectively are of great importance for poverty reduction, economic growth and private sector investment as well as for empowering the poor (Augustinus and Deininger, 2005).

Land access for agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises, however, depends on the nature of rights attached to the use of such lands. The nature of access of farmers to productive opportunities on the land is dictated by the existing land tenure system (Fabiya, 1985). Aluko and Amidu (2006) opined that if Nigeria is to achieve meaningful economic development the issue of accessibility to land should be well addressed. Land availability for agricultural production in Nigeria involves a complexity of interacting variables including population, land tenure system, level of technology and stage of development (Ojo and Afolabi, 2003). These variables especially land tenure system put serious limitation on the amount of land available for agricultural production.

Land tenure structures vary from one area to another in Nigeria because of differences in cultural heritages, ecological, social, economic and political factors. Under the customary land tenure system, which is still very much prevalent, the distribution of rights is based on socio-political system (the political history of the village and region from which the alliances and hierarchical relationships between lineages are derived) and family relationships (access to land and resources depending on one's social status within the family) (Berry, 1993; Umezulike, 2004). It is, also, worth noting that in most of these customary landholding systems, community level decisions about land are taken by chiefs or community heads on behalf of, and in trust for the clan or family. Chiefly authority is generally ascribed to a patriarchal lineage, and most major decisions are taken by men (Ntsebeza, 1999).

It has been established by Onyido (2009) that socio-cultural bond to land in Southwestern Nigeria makes it almost impossible for anybody whether indigenes or non-indigenes to acquire or gain access to a large area of land, even on a leasehold basis, to embark on large-scale agricultural and other livelihood activities. In most rural communities, non-indigenes are usually restricted on type of crops to be grown on the land, sometimes, the size of land and quality of land they can have access to may not be good their desired enterprises especially farming. Similarly, in communities where lands are communally owned, the community leadership determines what could be done on the land and the types of crops (whether arable or perennial) that could be cultivated. The plight of the rural dwellers especially non indigenes became is usually at stake under such arrangement. Consequently, this may have negative effect on their level of production (Ojo and Afolabi, 2003).

Based on the foregoing, it becomes imperative to investigate the issue of land accessibility as it affects the rural dwellers in various communities of Osun State. Hence, the study was designed to compare land accessibility among sub-ethnic groups

in rural communities of Osun State, Nigeria. It specifically, described the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, examined their land rights and investigated land accessibility among the sub-ethnic groups in rural communities of Osun State.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study was conducted in Osun State of Nigeria. This state is occupied by Yoruba ethnic group, but within Osun state are four sub-ethnic groups. Sub-ethnic groups are groups of people within an ethnic group with some degree of variations in dialect, norms and culture. Osun State is heterogenous in nature because it has four major sub-ethnic groups namely the Igbomina, the Ife, the Ijesha and the Oyo. The Igbomina occupies two Local Government Areas (LGAs), the Ife, the Ijesha and Oyo sub-ethnic occupies four, six and eighteen LGAs respectively. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents. At the first stage, one rural LGA was purposively selected from each sub-ethnic group. The selected LGAs were Ifedayo, Ife East, Obokun and Ayedire from Igbomina, Ife, Ijesha and Oyo sub-ethnic group respectively. At the second stage, five percent of the communities in each of the 4 LGAs were proportionately selected making a total of thirty communities. At the final stage, a total of two hundred and sixty (260) respondents were proportionately selected from all the communities based on their population sizes. Duly pretested and validated interview schedule was used to collect quantitative data from the respondents while qualitative data was elicited through Key Informant Interview sessions (KII). Appropriate descriptive statistical techniques were used to summarize the data collected and ANNOVA was used to test the hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents: Results in Table 1 reveal that many (54.2%, 49.3%, 46% and 34%) of the respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and ijesa sub-ethnic groups respectively were between the ages of 31 and 50 with the mean age of 48 ± 7.9 years, 47.1 ± 8.3 years, 44 ± 10 years and 48 ± 8 years respectively. This implies that majority of the respondents were still in their active ages during which they could still be productive and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic welfare of their families and that of their society at large. Majority (81.4%, 84.1%, 90% and 78.2%) of respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and ijesa sub-ethnic groups respectively were males. Since majority were farmers, the results indicate that farming activities were male dominated as expected because traditionally farming work is known to be gender specific because of drudgery associated with it.

About 81.4%, 87%, 86% and 87.7% of the respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and ijesa sub-ethnic groups respectively were married. This suggests that marital status seem to be an important social factor often considered for gaining access to land in the study area. Further results show that majority (74.6%, 84.1%, 98% and 69.5%) indicated that farming was their main occupation, from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups respectively. Although Igbomina had higher percentage than

any other sub-ethnic groups, the results implies that majority of the respondents were farmers. The findings give credence to the submission of Ekong (2010) which reported that majority of rural dwellers engaged in farming. However, the finding also suggests that rural dwellers also engaged in varieties of non-farm occupations. Further analysis show the mean farm sizes of respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups were 2.2 Ha, 2.5Ha, 2.5Ha and 2.3Ha respectively. This implies that majority were small scale farmers which could be as a result of the communal system of land accessibility which make it difficult to acquire large area of land for agricultural activities. The findings corroborate Agboola (2006) that mean farm size of farmers in Osun and Ondo State was 2.07. This could also be due to fragmentation of land resulting from inheritance of divided of farmland among wives of deceased male farmers as it is usually practised in Western Nigeria.

The mean years of residence for respondents in Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups were 44.4 years, 42.6 years, 42.3 years and 42.9 years respectively. This implies that a good proportion of the respondents had spent long years in their communities of residence. However, this does not necessarily mean that they were indigenes of the communities where they resided. A resident that had spent long years in a particular community might likely have easy access to community land and other factors of production. Also, high proportions (71.2%, 81.2%, 88% and 80.5%) from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups respectively had access to credit. Accessibility to credit could influence land accessibility because farmers that have access to credit would likely have opportunity to borrow money to acquire more land for farming activities. The mean household sizes of respondents from Oyo, Ife, Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups were 7 persons, 8 persons, 8 persons and 8 persons respectively. The findings imply that respondents had fairly large household size which could possibly serve as farm labours. This result is similar to the findings of Sidi *et al*, (2017) who reported that the mean household size of rural farmers was 9 persons.

Accessibility to land among Sub-ethnic groups: Results in Table 2 reveal that majority (82%, 72.5%, 70.7%) and 66.1% of the respondents from Igbomina, Ife, Ijesa and Oyo sub-ethnic groups respectively had full control over the usage of their land while the remaining percentages from each of the sub-ethnic groups had partial control over the usage of their land. The results indicate that respondents from Igbomina had better control over the land usage than any other sub-ethnic groups. This could be due to the fact that respondents from Igbomina sub-ethnic group were indigenes of the communities while respondents from Oyo sub-ethnic groups had larger percentage of farmers with partial land control because many of them were tenants in villages of Ife, Ijesa and Igbomina.

The key informant interviews conducted showed that only the land or farm owners had full control over the land while the tenants' farmers have only partially control over land. Land ownership is a function of land control.

"Farmers that inherited their farms from their parents who are indigenes or purchase their farms either outrightly or indirectly had control over land in this community"(Community head of Iyanfoworogi, Ife East LGA, Osun State).

Table 1.

Distribution of respondents by their socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Oyo (n=72) (%)	Ife (n=65) (%)	Igbomina (n=59) (%)	Ijesa (n=74) (%)
Age (years)				
≤ 30	3.4	13.0	6.0	7.3
31-50	54.2	49.3	46.0	34.1
≥ 51	42.4	37.7	48.0	58.5
Mean ± SD	48 ± 7.9	47.1 ± 8.3	44 ± 10	48 ± 8
Sex				
Male	81.4	84.1	90.0	78.0
Female	18.6	15.9	10.0	22.0
Marital status				
Single	6.8	5.8	4	12.2
Married	81.4	87	86	87.7
Divorced	3.4	-	10	-
Widowed	8.5	7.2	-	6.1
Access to credit				
Access	71.2	81.2	88	80.5
No access	28.8	18.8	12	19.5
Household size (person)				
≤1-6	47.5	37.7	48.0	34.1
7-12	45.8	55.1	40.0	58.5
≥ 13	6.8	7.2	12.0	7.3
Mean ± SD	7.2±3.5	7.9±3	8.2±3.1	7.9±3.2
Years of residence				
≤ 25	13.6	14.5	16.0	25.6
26 – 50	49.2	60.9	46.0	32.9
≥ 51	37.3	24.6	38.0	41.5
Mean ± SD	44.4± 18.4	42.6±18.5	42.3±14.3	42.9±21.7
Farm size (Ha)				
≤ 1	23.7	23.2	18.0	30.5
1.1- 2.5	66.1	56.5	64.0	46.3
≥2.6	10.2	20.3	18.0	23.2
Mean ± SD	2.2±1.1	2.5±1.3	2.5±1.3	2.3±1.5
Occupation				
Farming	74.6	84.1	98.0	69.5
Trading	15.3	7.2	-	17.1
Artisan	3.4	5.8	-	9.8
Salaried work	6.8	2.9	2.0	3.7

Field survey, 2015

Table 2.

Variables	Distribution of respondents by land rights			
	Oyo (n=72) (%)	Ife (n=65) (%)	Igbomina (n=59) (%)	Ijesa (n=74) (%)
Degree of access to land				
Very easy access	30.5	26.1	54.9	36.0
Fairly easy access	52.0	52.2	32.9	52.0
Not easy access	12.5	21.7	2.2	12.0
Land control				
Full control	66.1	72.5	82.0	70.7
Partial control	33.9	27.5	18.0	29.3

Field survey, 2015

About 55%, 36%, 30.5 percent and 26.1 percent of the respondents from Igbomina, Oyo, Ijesa, and Ife respectively indicated that it was very easy for them to access land used for farming and other economic activities. 52.2 percent, 32.9 percent 39 percent and 52 percent from Ife, Igbomina, Oyo and Ijesha respectively had fairly easy access to land for farming. While few (30.5%, 21.7%, 12.2% and 12 %) of respondents from Oyo, Ife, Ijesa and Igbomina respectively indicated that it was not easy for them access land. This implies that respondents from Igbomina had better access to land than any other sub-ethnic groups in the study area.

The following key informant interview excerpts butteressed the degree of access enjoyed by land users in all the sub ethnic groups.

“It is very easy for whoever wants to farm, he can easily get land here because we are accommodating especially to non-indigenes” **(High chief from Ibokun, Obokun LGA, Osun State)**

“We don’t have problem in releasing our farms or lands to whoever want to use it for farming provided that he is ready to abide by the rule and ready to pay his rent promptly” **(Baale Idi-ogun, Ayedire LGA)**

“Irrespective of indigenes of whoever wants to obtain land for farming, shall be given land provided he has integrity and money to pay for rent or lease, we have many Idoma, Urhobo and Ibo here” **(High chief Lukosi of Ajebamdele-Lukosi, Ife East LGA)**

Both the qualitative and quantitative findings established that majority of the respondents from all the sub-ethnic groups had either very easy or easy access to land. This is an indication that all there is no discrimination against any ethnic group as in securing land for farming and other economic activities. However, it could be observed from the findings that respondents who indicated difficult were more in Ife sub ethnic group than others. Indept interview revealed that this observation was due to the fact that Oyo indigenes residing among Ife sub-ethnic group were not allowed to purchase land for farming.

Level of land accessibility of respondents: The results in Table 3 show that respondents from Igbomina sub-ethnic group had highest level of land accessibility (80%), followed by Ijesa (69.5%), Ife (63.5%) and Oyo ethnic groups (61.8%). The

results imply that majority of the respondents in all the sub-ethnic groups had high level of land accessibility which in turn would favour agricultural production and other livelihood activities.

Table 3.

Distribution of respondents by level of land accessibility

Level land accessibility	Oyo (n=72) (%)	Ife (n=65) (%)	Igbomina (n=59) (%)	Ijesa (n=74) (%)
Low	38.2	36.5	20	30.5
High	61.8	63.5	80	69.5
Mean score	0.66	0.67	0.80	0,72

Field survey, 2015

Land rights of respondents: The land rights investigated in the study include rights to plant arable crops, rights to plant permanent crops, rights to fell trees on the land for sale, right to hire out land among others. Results in Table 4 show that all (100%) respondents from the four sub-ethnic groups had rights to plant arable crops while respondents from Igbomina sub-ethnic groups formed the majority of those who had rights to grow permanent crops (96%), rights to plant permanent crop (96%), rights to fell trees on the land for sales (88%), rights to hire out land (86%), rights to sell land (88%), rights to bequeath land (86%) and rights to develop land (84%). While 80.5%, 73.2%, 76.8%, 76.8%, and 78% of respondents from Ijesa sub-ethnic group had right to plant permanent crops, hire out, sell and bequeath their land. This implies that respondents from both Igbomina and Ijesa sub-ethnic groups had better land rights and this would quicken rural development as new entrants would have access to land and encourage better food security than other sub-ethnic groups.

Table 4.

Distribution of respondents by land rights

Variables	Oyo (n=72) (%)	Ife (n=65) (%)	Igbomina (n=59) (%)	Ijesa (n=74) (%)
Rights to plant arable crops	100	100	100	100
Rights to plant permanent crops	76.6	79.7	96	80.5
Rights to fell trees on the land for sale	71.2	72.2	88	76.8
Rights to hire out the land	74.4	72.5	86	73.2
Rights to sell the land	71.2	72.2	88	76.8
Rights to bequeath the land	72.9	72.5	86	76.8
Rights to develop the land	74.4	75.2	84	78

Field survey, 2015

Differences in land accessibilities among sub-ethnic groups: The results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in Table 5 show that there were significant difference in land accessibility ($F=3.512$, $p \leq 0.05$) among the sub-ethnic groups studied. This implies that land accessibilities vary from one sub-ethnic group to another. This could be as a result of noticeable difference in the level of land accessibilities respondents from Igbomina, Ijesa, Ife and Oyo sub-ethnic group.

A post hoc analysis of multiple comparisons of land accessibilities among the sub-ethnic groups was conducted using the Tukey test to ascertain that accounted for the difference. The results in Table 6 revealed that statistical difference only occur between Ijesa and Oyo sub-ethnic groups when comparing them together and no difference among others. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5.

Analysis of variance of respondents selected from all the four sub-ethnic groups					
	Sum of Squares	D.f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.284	3	3.428	3.512*	0.016
Within Groups	249.855	256	0.976		
Total	260.138	259			

* Significant at 0.05
Field survey, 2015

Table 6.

Multiple comparison test of land accessibility among sub-ethnic groups				
Individual ethnic group	Other sub-ethnic groups	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Oyo	Ife	-0.10710	0.17518	0.928
	Igbomina	-0.39898	0.18990	0.156
	Ijesa	-0.47313*	0.16866	0.028
Ife	Oyo	0.10710	0.17518	0.928
	Igbomina	-0.29188	0.18348	0.386
	Ijesa	-0.36603	0.16139	0.108
Igbomina	Oyo	0.39898	0.18990	0.156
	Ife	0.29188	0.18348	0.386
	Ijesa	-0.07415	0.17726	0.975
Ijesa	Oyo	0.47313*	0.16866	0.028
	Ife	0.36603	0.16139	0.108
	Igbomina	0.07415	0.17726	0.975

* Significant at 0.05
Field survey, 2015

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded from the study that accessibilities to land, rights to land and control over land differ among sub-ethnic groups in the study area. This could have serious implications on agriculture and rural development activities in the area. It was therefore recommended that local community leaders should formulate indigenous policies that would ensure fair access to land irrespective of the sub-ethnic background.

REFERENCES

1. Adedipe, N.O, Olawoye, E.S, Olarinde, E.S, & Okediran, A.Y. (1997). Rural communal tenure regimes and private land Ownership in western Nigeria. Land Reform Buletin 1997/2, Sustainable Development Department, Food and Agriculture Organisation of

the United Nations, FAO, Rome .<http://www.fao.org/sd/LTdirect/LR972/wt728t13.htm> (accessed 15, July 2019).

2. Adedipe, N.O. (1991). Environmental and technical support factors for large-scale farming in Nigeria. National Seminar on Large-Scale Farming. Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Lagos.

3. Agboola, F. A. (2006). Socio-Economic Assessment of Farmers' Usage of Indigenous and Non Indigenous Pest Control Technologies in Cacao Agro-Ecosystems of Ondo and Osun States, Nigeria. An *Unpublished Ph.D. thesis*, Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Pp 130.

4. Aluko, B. T and A. Amidu (2006), Urban Low-Income Settlements: Land, Deregulation, and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. Paper presented at the Fifth FIG Regional Conference Promoting Land Administration and Good Governance, 8–11 March, Accra, Ghana. http://www.fig.net/pub/accra/papers/ts03/ts03_03_aluko_amidu.pdf (accessed 31 May 2016).

5. Augustinus, C. Deininger, K. (2005). Innovations in land tenure reform and administration in Africa in Land Rights for African Development: From Knowledge to Action, CAPRI Policy Briefs, CGIAR system-wide program on collective action and property rights; United States Development Programme (UNDP) and International Land Coalition: Geneva; 14–16.

6. Baye, M. F. (2007) Globalization, Institutional Arrangement and Poverty in Rural Cameroon in Kakwagh, V. V (ed.) Changing Customary Land Tenure System in Tivland: Understanding the Drivers of Change. *Canadian Social Science* Vol.6 No.6, 2010.

7. Berry, S. 1993 No Condition is permanent: The social Dynamic of Agrarian Change in sub-African. University of Wisconsin, Madison.

8. Fabiyi, Y.L. (1985). “Changes taking place in the land tenure system in Oyo and Ogun States: An Analysis of the Views of Professionals and Some Customary Courts”, *Nigerian Agricultural Journal*, Vol.19 (20), 7-12.

9. Food and Agriculture Organisation, (2002). Land Tenure and Rural Development. FAO Land Tenure Studies, Rome. Pp 3-8. <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y4307E/y4307eo5.htm>

10. Ntsebeza, L. 1999. Land tenure Reform in South Africa: An Example from the Eastern Cape Province. Dry lands Issue Paper No. 82. International Institution for Environment and Development, London

11. Odeny, M. (2013). Improving Access to Land and Strengthening Women's Land Rights in Africa. Paper prepared for presentation at the “Annual world Bank Conference on Land and Poverty” The World Bank - Washington DC, April 8-11, 2013

12. Ojo, S.O. and J.A. Afolabi (2003). Effects of Farm Distance on Productivity of Farms in Nigerian *Journal of Applied Science*, 6(1): 3331 – 3341

13. Onyido, K. (2009). Land Reform, Agriculture and Food Security in Nigeria. A lead paper delivered at the October Lecture of the Association of Heads of Federal Establishments, Abia State Chapter, 20th October, 2009.(Online) Available :<http://www.mouau.edu.ng/handbook/eloquent-testimony-purposeful-leadership-2006-2011/6-part-three-invited-papers-economic-0> (May 8, 2015).

14. Umezulike, I. A. (2004). The Land Use Act-More than Two Decades after and Problems of Adaptive Strategies of Implementation. Snaap Press Limited, Enugu.