THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN OGORI/MAGONGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KOGI STATE, NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by me and that it is a record of my own research work. It has not been presented in any previous application for a higher degree. All borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged by means of references and quotation marks.

SIGNATURE_____ DATE _____

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CERTIFICATION

This thesis with the title "The Role of Women in Agriculture in Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area, Kogi State, Nigeria: Problems and Prospects", meets the regulations governing the award of Degree of Masters of Science (Sociology) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria and is approved for its contributions to scientific knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God who has kept and preserved my life to finish this study.

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the problems and prospects as they affect the role of women in agricultural production in Ogori/Magongo local government area of Kogi state. Non acknowledgement of the contributions of women to the agricultural processes, the myriad of problems militating against the full achievement of women's potential in agricultural production and the absence of concrete actions that would encourage women's participation in agriculture have been issues of great concern at both local and international levels. This study set out to analyse women's role in agriculture, to identify the problems women face in agriculture, and to explore the future prospects for women in agriculture. Data were collected through researcher-administered questionnaires while in-depth interviews conducted with selected ward farm leaders. The quantitative data were sorted out, coded, edited and analysed using frequencies and percentages, while the qualitative data were transcribed and utilized to support the quantitative data. The findings indicate that, women play a vital role in agricultural production in the area of planting and weeding, harvesting, processing and storage of produce and the keeping of small animals such as goats, chickens and rabbits. Women also contribute to household chores such as preparation and serving of food, fetching of water and firewood. However women have limited access to land, labour, farm inputs, loans and other necessary agricultural support inputs. Consequently, they have resorted to using local manure, local tools, local seedling, while utilizing their traditional agricultural knowledge. It is therefore recommended that there is need for a holistic approach towards addressing the constraints women faced in agriculture in view of their importance to the rural and economic development of the nation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The role of women in agriculture varies according to the structure, needs, customs, and attitudes of the societies in which they live. In prehistoric times, women and men participated almost equally in hunting and gathering activities to obtain food. With the development of agricultural communities, women's roles came to revolve more around the home. They prepared the food, made clothing, and cared for the children, while also helping to plough fields, harvest crops, and tend animals. As cities developed, some women sold or traded goods in the marketplace.

Wilmot (1985:89) notes that, the domestic roles of women led to the domestication of plants and animals and that while men were out hunting, immobilized women reared the smaller animals that were caught and brought home by the men. They could also observe relations between seeds on the ground and growth of plants which led to the notion of planting or cultivation. Wilmot further observed that, "women must have played strategic roles in the development of tools, the digging stick for cultivation and the axe (a sharp stone tied to a stick with leather thongs) for protecting herself and her young from marauders".

Today, agriculture has significant impacts on the economy of countries and also lives of people in terms of income, food and employment especially as quite a large number of the worlds population work and lives in the rural areas. It must however be noted that the impact of agriculture on countries, people and gender varies from one area to the other.

Kiriro (2003:1) states that,

> of the 1.2 billion people in the world that are estimated to live on less than one dollar a day, about three quarters work and live in rural areas, and depend to a large extent on agriculture. Agriculture accounts for a large share of the Gross Domestic Product for the low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs). It employs a large proportion of the labour force, represents a major source of foreign exchange, supplies the bulk of basic food and provides subsistence and income for large rural populations.

Booth (2000:2) observes that,

> agricultural and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa varies from one area to another, depending on a range of factors, including natural resource endowments, history, political stability/ and the cultural and socio-economic environment. The greatest challenge to Africa's agricultural sector is to increase production and the value of agricultural products. As the amount of arable land available is limited, such an increase will have to be based on intensification and on adding value to products. Women are in the forefront of meeting this challenge, as agricultural production is primarily their domain.

What then can we say are the roles of women in agriculture and how do they impact on their ability to engage in productive activity?

Akello and Sarr (1999:4) also observed that,

> in the developing world as a whole, agriculture accounted for 63% of the total female employment in 1997. In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture is still the most important sector for female employment, accounting for 75%, although recent research has suggested that the female labour force in the agricultural sector is often substantially underestimated. The results from time and task allocation studies show that women work more hours than men in productive activities. At the same time, women's labour in the informal sector, both rural and urban, remains high but largely unrecognized, and no account is taken of their labour in the household.

The contribution of women could therefore be said to be very significant, but in most cases taken for granted. Statistics could have also unwittingly assigned women's contribution a zero valuation with their labour regarded merely as "unpaid family contribution". Women have been productive partners in agriculture and they play various roles as farmers, farm wives and agricultural professionals. It could be argued therefore that the failure to recognize women's

contribution led to the situation whereby women are denied assistance required to improve efficiency in agricultural production.

In many African countries, women are said to contribute a larger percentage of the agricultural labour force. Kiriro (2003:10) states that, "according to FAO, between 2000 and 2030, global demand for food is expected to soar as total world population swells by 2.1 billion people. In much of the developing world, the task of producing the additional food will fall on women, who already produce 50 to 90 percent of domestic food crops in Asia, and between 80 and 90 percent in many sub-Saharan Africa countries".

Ogunlela and Muktar (2009:20) note that,

> the role that women play and their position in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quite dominant and prominent. Their relevance and significance, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. Findings from a study financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) revealed that women make up some 60-80 percent of agricultural labour force in Nigeria, depending on the region and they produce two-thirds of the food crops. Yet, in spite of these, the widespread assumption that men – and not women—make the key farm management decisions has prevailed. Sadly, female farmers in the country are among the voiceless, especially with respect to influencing agricultural policies.

It is noteworthy that, such policies, which are aimed at increasing food security and food production, tend to either underestimate or totally ignore women's role in both production and the general decision-making process within the household.

The Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture (2008:3) notes that,

> women's pivotal role in agriculture has never been recognized fully. They work as female agricultural labourers, as farmers, family labourers and (with male out-migration, widowhood, etc.) as managers of the farm and farm entrepreneurs. Women in agriculture refer not only to women agricultural labourers and farmers but also to women working in the various sub-sectors of agriculture and allied non-farm work. Women contribute 40% of the agricultural workforce and this percentage is rising.

The importance and relevance of women in agricultural production can therefore not be overemphasized. This is because they are known to be more involved in agricultural activities than men in sub-Saharan African countries including Nigeria.

Effland and Gold (1998:1) note that,

> women farm, on their own in some cases, or as partners in the work of family farms, performing essential household production tasks, as well as tending gardens, livestock, and assisting in the fields as needed. And that, in many cultures women are the farmers, on whom families and communities depend on for food production. Women also often help support family farm operations or their households through paid farm work for others, or through off-farm and nonfarm businesses or paid employment.

It is therefore clear that apart from the contribution of women in agricultural production which has not been properly acknowledged, the economic roles of women have usually been undervalued, underestimated and hardly acknowledged for proper articulation in development plans and policy information.

Kiriro (2003:10) quotes the Director-General of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Dr. Jacques Diouf in 1999 as saying that, "if the world and national leaders are to have any hope of feeding their growing populations over the next 30 years, they will need to take a hard look at national policies and make sure the economic contributions of rural women are factored in".

The Report of Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture (2000:7) observes that, "historically the farming industry is male-dominated and much literature and information on farming, both qualitatively and quantitatively, reflects this ownership pattern. Virtually all reports on the topic of rural women highlight the inadequacies of the statistical base. Their approach was not blind to the sex of the workers involved in farming; rather it ignored the female workers entirely".

Akello (1999) notes that, in rural communities in Nigeria, farm operations such as tilling and ridging which require greater physical exertion are performed by men. Since these operations are the most strenuous jobs on the farm, the erroneous impression has been created that women do less work, 'the farmer' is often presented as the man.

Women can therefore be seen to play a crucial role in agricultural development, yet they are perhaps the least integrated of the players in the development process. Despite their valuable contribution, the role of women in agricultural production has been subordinated to that of men over the years.

Akello and Sarr (1999:4) cite Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO, 1999) as observing that in sub-Saharan Africa, many trends are emerging with regard to health, population and access to resources. And that, "these changes have had a profound impact on the role of women in agriculture." Specifically therefore, women constitute now the majority of smallholder farmers, provide most of the labour, and manage their small-scale farmsteads on daily basis. Low social status and limited access to means of production force women into impoverishment. Of the world's 1.3 billion people living in poverty 70% are women".

It has been argued that socio – cultural, economic and institutional factors hinder the recognition of the important roles women play in agriculture. For instance, the land tenure system in most rural communities in Africa restricts women's access to land. (Doss 1999:10) cites Hansen (1994) who reports that, "in Northwestern Zambia, farmers buy and sell the rights to use cleared land. The land itself cannot be sold, but the rights to use cleared land can be".

Koopman Henn (1983) notes that land may be allocated through traditional means e.g. the lineage or village head allocates land to individuals and these allocations will be based on the head's perception of different individuals' need for land. Women may also obtain land through a

male relative and the access may entail limitation on the uses of the land. For example, among the Beti of southern Cameroon, women cannot inherit land. They are granted food plots by their husbands, but they cannot plant cash crops on them. Jackson (1985) notes that, in Hausa land in Nigeria, trees are individually owned, but the owner of the trees is not necessarily the owner of the land on which the trees grow.

Akello and Sarr (1999:6) note that, "in sub-Saharan Africa, women farmers, entrepreneurs and wage earners contribute significantly to the national gross domestic product and to national welfare. But their efforts are hampered by a lack of capital, modern implements, distribution facilities and market outlets. In addition, it is not common for men to take over the sale of women's produce and to control women's income".

The main challenges for this sector besides gender disparities are to unlock the untapped potential that lies in the people of Africa. The other challenge is low profitability and competitiveness that constrains the participation of all spectrum of people and economic entities. All these are generally influenced on the other hand by low investor confidence in agriculture, inadequate support and delivery system and poor and unstable management of natural resources.

Considering therefore, the role of women in agricultural production, women could be said to be very involved in virtually all aspects of agriculture. This study, conducted in Ogori/Magongo local government area of Kogi State, is intended to examine the role of women in agriculture, the problems and factors limiting or hindering their active participation in agriculture while also exploring women's prospects in agricultural production.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Global Agricultural Information Network (2009:2) states that,

> Nigeria's agricultural sector is primarily subsistence-based, employs about 70 percent of the population and contributes about 40 percent to the Gross Domestic Product. Crop production accounts for about 85 percent of agricultural activities, with livestock and poultry accounting for 10 percent, and fisheries and forestry 5 percent. Domestic food products such as corn, sorghum, tubers, and seafood (fish) are the traditional foodstuff consumed by the majority of the population. Despite growth in agriculture in the past few years, Nigeria remains a major importer of food and agricultural products, largely bulk commodities such as wheat from the United States, rice and sugar from Asia and Brazil, fruit juice concentrates/pre-mixes and dairy products.

Odebode (2012:139), the World Bank (2000), Federal Office of Statistics (2000) and Arokoyo (2003) have observed that, "agriculture is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy, employing about 70-80 percent of the population with the GDP contribution of N34,950.00 million between 1980-1985. This increased from N40,500.00 million in 1986 to N59,389.00 million in 1996. The aggregate agricultural production declined till 1980 (oil boom era). This led to a sharp decline in per capita real GDP in agriculture. By 1985, the index per capita real GDP of agriculture was 35 percent".

Ogunlela and Muktar (2009:19) note that, "most farmers in Nigeria operate at subsistence, smallholder level in an extensive agricultural system; hence in their hands lies the country's food security and agricultural development. Particularly striking, however, is the fact that rural women, more than their male counterparts, take the lead in agricultural activities, making up to 60 – 80 percent of the labour force". It is however ironical that their contributions to agricultural and rural development are seldom noticed and, they have either no or minimal part in decision-making process regarding agricultural development.

Meena (2005:2) states that,

> most African communities have had gender specific roles in agricultural production. Land clearing is normally assigned to men while women and men participate in tilling the land. Weeding is normally done by women, who are also responsible for transporting crops from the farm to the home or to cooperative units. In terms of division of labour, studies indicated that women have been contributing more time in the agricultural cycle than men. A recent study done by the World Bank, for instance, estimated that women in sub-Saharan Africa produce up to 80% of all the staple food, own less than 10% of the land. In another study, on world economic crisis and its impact on women, it was further estimated that women in this region contribute up to 30% of labour in ploughing, 50% of labour in planting, 60% of labour in weeding, 85% of labour in processing and preserving food, while performing up to 95% of domestic chores.

It must be noted however that, the role of women in agriculture may not be limited to their direct involvement in the agricultural process alone because there are indirect involvements that impact on agricultural production.

The African Leadership Forum (1989:4) also observes that,

> the contribution of women in African agriculture has not received adequate policy recognition. Accordingly, special constraints faced by women, especially in the denied or very limited access to farm credit, land and production inputs, have not been addressed by policy makers. In some instances, women account for no less than 50 percent of the food produced on farms, but are only allocated one percent of the resources. Consequently, their full potential in accelerating agricultural production and food security has not been realized. The introduction of new technologies has not always been gender-neutral as some new innovations have unwittingly imposed economic losses on women in agriculture: the failure of researchers and inventors to incorporate knowledge of existing food production, processing and marketing between men and women.

Women have been said to be much involved in virtually all aspects of the agricultural processes despite their daily domestic chores such as meal preparation, compound cleaning and child caring. Greenidge (2000:4) states that, “in most sub-Saharan African countries women make significant contribution to food production and the processing and marketing of foodstuffs. However, rural women in Africa still face formidable obstacles to their potential role as a major economic and social force in the development of the agricultural sector in their countries”.

Most indigenous agricultural and food processing equipment like hoes, mortar and pestles, winnowing baskets and grinding stones are labour intensive and strenuous to utilize. Jaja (1990) observed that the use of modern technology is low especially among women and that most of the modern labour saving devices like tractors and dehuskers are designed for men because lots of energy is needed to operate them. In some cases, the introduction of these labour saving devices, made men to take over women's sources of regular income.

Obikuaku (1977) observed that, the hydraulic oil press provided by the Ministry of Agriculture to help the women in Gbedun village in Ibadan to overcome the considerable amount of energy expended in the extraction of palm oil failed completely despite the women's conviction of its advantages in time and energy conservation. The explanation for the failure was based on the time and the size of the mortar, which suited the men more. The mechanization interventions as indicated above simply shows that the more mechanization advances, the more women are marginalized because the machines are designed for men.

Though women have been much involved in virtually all aspects of the agricultural processes, their potential has remained underdeveloped. However, women seem to be having a change of role especially in agricultural production in that they now do the bulk of agricultural work which was not the case before. Women had some selected crops which they cultivated like Beans and Guinea Corn, but now women cultivate some male crops which include Yams, Cocoa Yam and Cassava. This has made some men to be redundant. It is obvious therefore that the changing role of women in agriculture has made most women to be food providers under stringent conditions.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:17) notes that,

> "Women are known to produce two-thirds of the world's food. In general, women provide 50-60 percent of the labour input, increasing to 80 percent in paddy and

rice production. Due to rise in the number of female-headed households as substantial numbers of males migrate to cities, more women are becoming functional heads of both households and farming activities. Further, although production of major food crops has improved in recent years, rapidly growing populations and expanding industries in many developing countries have caused a continuous increase in the demand for food and commercial crops".

The research questions that arise revolve around the roles, contributions, constraints and coping strategies of women in agriculture. They are as follows

1. What are the social characteristics of women who participate in agriculture?
2. What roles do women play in the agricultural circle of the area under study?
3. What are the problems that women face in agriculture?
4. What methods are women adopting to cope with constraints being faced?
5. What are the possible solutions to these problems?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the study is to examine the roles, and extent of women's participation in agriculture in Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

(1) To determine the social characteristics of women who participate in agriculture.
(2) To analyze women's roles in agriculture.
(3) To identify the problems that women face in agriculture.
(4) To examine the methods adopted by women to cope with the constraints they are facing in agricultural production.
(5) To use the results obtained from the study to offer suggestions for remedying women problems in agriculture.

1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The area covered by this study is Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. In a study of this nature, one is bound to encounter some difficulties. The problems encountered were mostly logistics in the sense that there was limited time to carry out this research as intensively as the researcher would have wanted to, and the finance available was limited. These made the researcher handicapped and as such the research work was limited to this Local Government.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The choice of this area is based on the fact that the researcher is conversant with the area and that women in these communities engage actively in agriculture yet their work is looked at as minor or as an extension of household chores. Agriculture generates income and helps in uplifting the quality of life of women and their families which in turns brings about development in the rural area.

Women's roles in agriculture can lead to development in the rural areas which would in turn bring about national development, thereby contributing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the country. Viewed against this background, this study becomes necessary as it focuses on the roles, problems and prospects of women in agriculture.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The African Development Bank Group (2010:1) notes that, "Africa is rich in natural and human resources. More than 900 million people live in Africa. Agriculture plays a vital role. An estimated seventy percent of the population depends on agriculture for full-time employment and many others rely on agriculture for part of their household income."

Agriculture has also been said to be the bedrock of economic development in Nigeria. Koyenikan (2008:52) cites the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (2000) as stating that,

> agriculture is important to the Nigerian economy as it engages about 70% of the labour force and contributes over 40% of the Gross Domestic product. It provides food for the teeming population and raw materials for industries. The sector is faced with mirage of problems which militate against optimizing its potential. Some of the constraints include low productivity, poor marketing and distribution infrastructures, inadequate access to credit, weak extension services and inadequate database among others.

Records have also indicated that women play a very important role in agriculture. According to the Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture, (2008:3) the,

> women's pivotal role in agriculture has never been recognized fully. They work as female agricultural labourers, as farmers, co-farmers and (with male out-migration, widowhood etc.) as managers of the farm and farm entrepreneurs. Women in agriculture refer not only to women agricultural labourers and farmers but also to women working in the various sub-sectors of agriculture and allied non-farm work. Women constitute 40% of the agricultural workforce and this percentage is rising. Today, 53% of all male workers, but 75% of all female workers and 85% of all rural female workers are in agriculture. An estimated 20% of rural households are de facto female headed due to widowhood, desertion, or male out-migration.

The question here is, to what extent have the increased feminization of agricultural work or labour been taken into account in any planning process or documented in any policy document?

Booth (2000:3) notes that,

> the role of women in agricultural and rural development is surrounded by a large amount of myth and misunderstanding. Significant changes have occurred in the agricultural sector over the past 20 years, both in the role played by women and in the understanding of this role, but the continued absence of appropriate policy and programme strategies mean that women's contribution to agriculture remains invisible. This persistent failure to recognize and account for the value of women's knowledge and labour in the agricultural sphere, and to integrate the reality of women's situation into development theories, policies and programmes, is evident throughout the global economic development environment.

A review of related literature on the role of women in agricultural would broaden our knowledge, lead to a better understanding of women in development and provide a clearer focus of our study. The literature review revolves around the objectives of the study, that is, the

(1) Role of women in agriculture.

(2) Gender division of labour in agriculture.

(3) Gender dimension of crops and cropping pattern in agriculture

(4) Changing role of women in agriculture.

(5) Problems faced by women in agriculture.

2.1 OPERATIONALISATION OF CONCEPTS

Igun (1994:9) in Otite (1994) states that,

> concepts denote or point to phenomena hence they become shorthand descriptions of the phenomena. Concepts play the crucial role of sensitizing observation to phenomena and the possible classifications of phenomena. Concepts are composed of definitions which are systems of terms,, for example, sentences of language, the symbols of logic, the notations of mathematics, etc. The system of terms indicates the phenomenon or aspects of it represented by a concept.

In a nutshell, concepts tune and shape the researcher's mind along specific objectives. They must therefore be based on available literature and the researcher's own definition. The major concepts to be operationalised to avoid ambiguities include, "Role", "Women" and "Agriculture".

ROLE

Igun (1994:10) in Otite (1994) sees social role as, "the set of expected behaviour of an occupant of a social position". That is to say, the part played by someone in a given social context, with any characteristics or expected pattern of behaviour that it entails. For example, the behaviour expected of an African Village elder or a rural African woman.

Wilmot (1985:89) notes that, "all economic relations and activities are embedded in particular social structures, are engendered by these structures and depend on them for their existence and form. At the same time economic activities and relations determine the capacity of the social structure and the laws of its development". This goes to say that the social structure will determine the allocation of statuses and roles in the economic system while the level of economic development will determine the capacity of the social structure to generate these roles and statuses.

Doss (1999:1) notes that, "there is no simple way to summarize gender roles within African households and communities. If we seek to understand gender dynamics, it is not sufficient – although it may be useful – to compare male and female farmers or male- and female-headed households. Instead, we need to understand entire systems of household behaviour as they are embedded in the agricultural and non-agricultural economies".

In the opinion of the researcher and for the purpose of this study "Role" should be seen as the aggregate of the parts played by women in the context of agriculture as regards land clearing, tilling the land, planting, fertilizer application, harvesting, processing and distribution of

agricultural products both for home consumption and for sale in the markets. Such roles are carried out with a view to filling in a gap which must have arisen in the agricultural process in view of production for subsistence or commercial purposes.

WOMEN

The Report of the Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture (2000:8) notes that in Ireland,

> the vast majority of female labour is contributed on farms where the worker's husband is recorded as the holder. Over 16,000 females are recorded as farm holders (i.e. 9.6% of land holdings are owned by women) and almost half of these are aged 65 years or more. When combined with the marital status provided for in the 1991 census of population, the age profile suggests that in many cases women only gain this holder status in their later years as widows.

Kiriro (2003:10) notes that the International Labour Organization Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138), states that, "the minimum age shall not be less than 15 years, although developing countries, whose economies, educational and administrative facilities are insufficiently developed, may initially permit children of 12 – 14 years of age to carry light work of certain types and under certain conditions".

The major concern of Kiriro is that, children, especially those working in commercial agriculture are exposed to long daily and weekly hours of physically strenuous work, to injuries caused by tools, to repeatedly shouldering heavy loads, to the hazards of insect bites and to the hazards linked to the handling of agrochemicals. Although all farm workers are exposed to all these hazards, the vulnerability of the children requires greater attention in the application of standards, occupational health and safety regulations.

Though in some parts of northern Nigeria girls are married out at an early age, some of whom are about 12 years, and are being regarded as wives, and therefore classed as women, the

researcher views a woman as an adult human female who must have passed through childhood and adolescence and is generally aged 18 years or above.

AGRICULTURE

Opio (2003:669) sees agriculture to mean,

> the production, processing and marketing of crops, livestock and fish from producer to consumer. Agriculture as defined is a major part of overall natural resource based activity. Other areas include forestry and wild life. Agricultural enterprises range from large capital intensive production and processing units to small-scale activities ranging forming only part of the people's livelihood strategies in the developed or industrialized countries. In contrast, the majority of agricultural products in developing countries are grown, processed and marketed by small family operated enterprises.

The researcher views "Agriculture" as the management of the growth of plants and animals for human and animal use. Such activities include the cultivation of the soil, growing and harvesting of crops, breeding and raising of livestock and dairying, all aimed at the production of food, animal feeds and fibre. Agriculture extends to the processing, packaging and marketing of agricultural products. Agriculture is about all activities relating to agricultural input, provision, farming and the processing and distribution activities that add value to farm products. It provides for two basic human needs, namely food and fibre, and has strong economic and employment linkages with other sectors of the economy thus contributing substantially to economic growth of a country.

2.2 ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Locating women within the rural context where agriculture is the dominant source of family survival is an important point of departure in understanding the role that women play as participants in the agricultural sector. While men in the rural areas are primarily responsible for the physically strenuous work in the garden or on the farm, women work in the garden or on the

farm alongside men, planting, cultivating, weeding and harvesting produce. One such important aspect of women's work in the fields is where the men engage in uprooting peanuts plants, while the women complete the tedious work of removing the peanuts from the roots.

Booth (2000:8) notes that,

> a typical farm household in sub-Saharan Africa is a complex institution based on:
> - A clear distinction between men's and women's roles, including management of different types of production, either individually or together;
> - Individual responsibility for mobilizing the factors of production, through barter or monetary exchanges, for individual or joint use;
> - Defined patterns for exchange of goods and services among the household members;
> - Elaborate arrangements determining who makes decisions with regard to selling, consuming, processing and storing agricultural products.

This implies that, the individual rather than the household constitutes the basic unit of production and historically, these rights and obligations have usually disadvantaged women and resulted in economic and social relationships that distort the terms of exchange among household members.

Odebode (2012:140) cites the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1992) as noting that,

> most farmers in Nigeria operate on the subsistence and smallholder level in an extensive agricultural system; therefore, in the country's food
> security lie in their hands. Women farmers are the principal labour force on small holder farms and perform the largest share in land preparation, weeding, transporting, processing and marketing of agricultural products. Women therefore contribute greatly to agricultural production in Nigeria and take the lead in most agricultural activities. They make up to 60-80 percent of the labour force. Therefore the significant role they play in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quite prominent and dominant.

It could therefore be argued that, the role of women in agriculture is a necessary panacea for rural and national development of Nigeria.

Akello and Sarr (1999:6) cites FAO (1999a) as also observing that,

> in sub-Saharan Africa, women farmers, entrepreneurs and wage earners contribute significantly to the national gross domestic product and to welfare. But their efforts are hampered by a lack of capital, modern implements, distribution facilities and market outlets. In addition, it is common for men to take over the sale of women's produce and to control women's income. Efforts to improve the situation need to address institutional policies and programmes, governance, constituencies and legal rights.

On market days, women could be seen transporting produce to and from the markets on top of their heads or using other forms of transportation such as donkeys, bicycles and motor-cycles. These women play a vital role as there are no other mechanisms to transport produce to and from the markets.

Kiriro (2003:9) notes that,

> access to markets is strongly affected by the state of the roads and proximity to waterways. Better transport facilities translate into better availability of agricultural services and products, access to educational and financial institutions, and increased trade. Unfortunately, Africa has the lowest density of paved roads in the world and 14 of its countries hosting a third of its population are landlocked. This hinders international trade.

Ogunlela and Muktar (2009:27) cites Afolabi (2008) as stating that,

> focusing on the activities of rural women in Ondo State of Nigeria made a careful analytical study of women's agricultural activities and discovered that they are very strong pillars of the economy in the State. Women in the State are organized into groups, which are often engaged in more than one economic activity. Emerging from the study were the following facts: (a) that rural women in the state are major contributors to food production; (b) that these rural women have successfully managed human and economic resources to achieve optimum results; (c) that they became employers of labour, thereby reducing unemployment; and (d) that output from the farms of these rural women contributed to reduction in food shortage crisis. By so doing, they contribute substantially to national agricultural output, maintenance of the environment and family food security.

There is however a disparity in the issue of transportation of produce to and from the countryside for sale in the markets. Women and men are both involved in the transportation of produce around the country, but the difference is in the volume of produce transported, and the

subsequent value placed upon that activity. Due to the economic situation, some women have also started transporting produce in bulk using Lorries and trucks.

The Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture (2008:3) also notes that,

> women work extensively in production of major grains and millets, in land preparation, seed selection and seedling production, sowing, applying manure, fertilizer and pesticide, weeding, transplanting, threshing, winnowing and harvesting. In livestock production, fish processing, collection of non-timber forest produce etc. Women have a very large role. In animal husbandry, women have multiple roles, ranging from animal care, grazing, fodder collection and cleaning of animal sheds to processing of milk and livestock products. Keeping milch animals, small ruminants and backyard poultry is an important source of income for poor farm families and agricultural labourers.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:9) notes that,

> women have always played an important role in agriculture, undertaking a wide range of activities relating to food production, processing and marketing. Beyond the farm, women play a key role in land and water management in all developing countries. Women are most often collectors of water, firewood and fodder. They have access to a store of knowledge on the medicinal use of plants; they have been in the forefront of soil conservation programmes; and it is women who perform most of the household labour devoted to animals. As migration to the cities of the developing world gathers speed, women carry with them these rural skills and are responsible for the growth of urban and peril-urban agriculture, which is now recognized as being vital to food security.

The implication of the above statements are that, the contribution of women to agricultural and rural development should be maximized by implementing solutions to the specific problems they encounter as economic and social stakeholders (social, economic, cultural and legal obstacles). This will be better achieved by taking women's know-how into account in a participatory approach.

It could therefore be argued that, the economic situation in relation to Nigerian women merits further examination because their activities and survival strategies produce economic benefits to the household at local and national levels, not only through their activities within the visible formal economy but mainly through the invisible informal and invisible care economy.

2.3 GENDER DIVISION OF LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE

Opio (2003:699) notes that, "gender refers to the social roles and relationships between men and women. This includes the different responsibilities of women and men in a given culture or location unlike the sex of men or women which is biologically determined; gender roles of men and women are socially constructed and such roles can change overtime and vary according to geographical location."

Nisha (2008:8) notes that, "labour is one of the primary factors of production. It is considered to be important not only because it is productive but also because it activates other factors and makes them useful for production purposes. The size of labour force in a country is determined by the number of people in the age group of 15-59 years as generally children below 15 years and old people above 59 years do not participate in productive activity."

There is growing recognition worldwide that gender bias constitutes significant constraints that contribute to food insecurity given the cultural role of women as food producers, food providers and contributors to household nutritional security. At the same time, there is growing evidence that reducing gender disparities could promote agricultural growth, greater income for women and better food and nutrition for all. Therefore, the integration of a gender perspective that recognizes the different roles, constraints and access to, and control over resources of men and women in agriculture and rural development must therefore be at the heart of any strategy for food security and poverty alleviation.

Odebode (2012:146) cites Olawoye (2002) as noting that, "gender as a concept is used in the social sciences to define the roles and activities of men and women. These roles are socially defined by the traditions and beliefs of a particular culture. Gender is therefore not synonymous

with sexual differences which are based only on biological characteristics; the gender constructions are culture specific and assign different identities and roles to men and women".

It is to be noted however that, gender is not the only criterion for classifying labour allocations. In many circumstances, the age and status of the individuals within the household may affect their responsibilities. Women in different categories may be given different roles, opportunities and responsibilities.

Regarding specific farm operations, Opio (2003:700) notes that,

> women on average contribute 55% of land preparation, 65% of planting, 85 -90% weeding, over 95% of food processing, and a high proportion of rural water and wood-fuel acquisition. It is worth noting that currently, these operations are predominantly (up to 93%) accomplished using rudimentary hand tools (the hand hoe, axe, panga and machete). Where production operations are mechanized, mainly based on traction, men are the main beneficiaries. Marketing of farm produce and access to market information continue to be the domain of men, and this situation perpetuates women's disadvantages in the agricultural sector.

Wallerstein et al (1996:14) cites Meillassoux (1994); Boserup (1990) as noting that,

> in sparsely populated areas, as in sub-Saharan Africa, large families can put into use more land than small ones. In both cases, child labour has been widely used, which in the long run does not restrict household size. Also, the fact that women in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where higher proportions of males were forced to work in urban areas, have been relegated to the (subsistence) agricultural sector in the rural areas provided additional incentive for bigger household and demographic growth.

Doss (1999:2) observes that,

> in many places in Africa, traditionally there has been a strict division of labour by gender in agriculture. This strict division of labour may be based on crop or task, and both types of division of labour by gender may occur simultaneously. Women may mobilize male labour for some tasks involved in their crops and men frequently mobilize women's labour for crops they control. These divisions are not static and may change in response to new economic opportunities.

Women may have been estimated to contribute a greater percentage of labour in food production, processing, preservation and distribution, Odebode (2012:145) however notes that,

"division of labour in food production in the rural areas of Africa is usually both task and crop specific. While men do the land clearing, grow perennial crops, provide meat and raise large animals, women do the hoeing, planting, thinning, weeding and care for small domestic animals".

It is noteworthy that, although tradition often specifies some tasks or crops as women's and some as men's, these may change over time because as opportunities for men to work outside of agriculture increases, women's involvement in agriculture may also increase. As men leave for better jobs in the cities, women take over many of the traditionally male tasks.

Notwithstanding the above assertions, the narrow definition of work seem to exclude most of the work performed by women and thus implying that women activities are not part of the mainstream planning process, thereby resulting in the fact that they do not reasonably benefit from the allocation of desired resources.

2.4 GENDER DIMENSION OF CROPS AND CROPPING PATTERN

Ayensu (1989:135) notes that,

> "in fact, it is not surprising for African men to acknowledge the fact that well over 70 percent of the agricultural labour force in Africa is made up of women. Subsistence farming involving such crops as cassava, yams, coco yams, sweet potato, plantain and maize, are grown in a wide variety of agro-ecological zones had always involved a large proportion of women. Such farming supports the livelihood of many rural families as a source of food and a source of family income with which to purchase other foodstuff and other commodities.

It is however difficult to tell whether women grow lower-value subsistence crops because they have different preferences and concerns or because they have limited access to land, inputs, credit, information, or markets. The situation with maize is particularly complicated because maize may be grown as both a cash and subsistence crop.

Opio (2003:669) notes that in Uganda, "the division of labour between men and women in agricultural production varies considerably from region to region, community to community. However, it is usually men who are responsible for large-scale cash cropping, especially when it is highly mechanized, while women take care of household food production and small-scale cultivation of food and cash crops requiring low level technology."

Studies in Nigeria reveal women's important roles in agriculture and trading. The women surveyed were found to be engaged in the growing of yams, cassava, maize and tobacco. They perform such tasks as planting, harvesting and fertilizer application among others. However, they did not assist in bush clearing, land preparation and weeding.

Wallerstein et al (1996:144) cites Jacobsen (1993) as noting that,

> there is an in-built gender bias in development policies that is shared by all, from development experts down to local peasants (and even their wives), the belief that women and the work they do are inherently unproductive. The ideology of the male breadwinner bringing home a valuable cash earning has become universal. Yet empirically the work of women – growing food for household consumption (80 per cent of it in Africa, 70-80 per cent of it in India, about 50 per cent of it in the Caribbean) drawing wood, fetching water – consumes 12-18 hours per day, and enhances the value of cash income by 30-60 per cent. In all regions about 50 per cent of cash-crop cultivation was done by women although men tended to claim the profits.

Doss (1999:2) notes that,

> in some areas, men and women may tend to grow different crops. One frequently made distinction is that cash crops and export crops are 'male crops' while subsistence crops are 'female crops'. The standard explanation for the division of crops by gender is that women are responsible for feeding the family and thus prefer to grow subsistence crops for household consumption. Men involved with agriculture, on the other hand, are responsible for providing cash income and so are said to grow cash and export crops.

It is however important to define what is meant by a crop being a man's or a woman's, because cropping involves numerous stages, each involving a variety of decisions and the use of inputs. Calling a crop a man's or a woman's will imply reference to the gender of the farmer who

controls the output. Decisions about labour inputs include whose labour will be used and whether to use outside labour and different people may be involved with any given crop. How do we also explain the situation of Maize which used to be grown by women as a subsistence crop but is now also grown by men as cash crop? If we have to consider the varieties of Maize grown, then it may imply that not only the crop but also the variety of a given crop grown may vary by gender. We must also note that as economic circumstances change traditional norms may also change.

2.5 CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

It has been noted that, gender roles and responsibilities are dynamic and they change with new economic circumstances. This is because, as the opportunities for one group increase, whether women, children or smallholder farmers, their relationships with others in their households and communities are renegotiated.

Opio (2003:699) notes that, "because societies are constantly evolving and adopting to new pressures the allocation of tasks between sexes within the community also undergoes changes. For example, as some tasks are mechanized men are taking over the roles of women. Whereas women heads of households are taking on management responsibilities at home (as well) as men move to the urban areas to seek for jobs."

Doss (1999:4) notes that, "although tradition often specifies some tasks or crops as women's and some as men's, these may change over time". She cites Baumann (1928) as observing that, "as the opportunities for men to work outside of agriculture increased, women's involvement in agriculture are also increased". She also cites Krantz and Fiege (1983); Alwang

and Siegle (1994); Danhauser et al (1994) and Saito (1994) as also noting that, "with new opportunities arising, gender division of labour in many places are becoming less rigid".

Notwithstanding the fact that there may be cases in which the adoption of a crop variety is conditioned by traditional notions of appropriate for men and women, there is growing evidence that these norms changes as economic circumstances shift. It will therefore be expected to see women adopting modern varieties of maize when it is appropriate for them to do so.

Though tasks may be viewed as women's or men's: in practice, the divisions are blurred with both men and women involved in many tasks. Relatively few tasks are done only by men or only by women. We may then ask, what is division of labour by cropping or by task? How have these changed over time, especially in response to changing economic opportunities?

Doss (1999:4) states that, "many changes in the gender division of tasks are related to increasing outmigration of men from agricultural communities, as they seek higher earnings elsewhere. As the men leave the area, women take over many of the traditionally male tasks. In addition, when men move into non-farm activities, women become more involved in cash cropping".

It is to be noted however that, gender division of labour may be changing, but it may not be that men are taking over women's agricultural activities, especially the production of food for home consumption. Men may go into the production of crops that were traditionally women's but they may not be substituting their wives labour within the household. Rather, it could be that some new opportunities has arisen and activities that had been considered women's have become more productive or profitable, for example, the growing of maize which had hitherto been for home consumption but is now purchased and utilized by the Breweries and also for making of Animal Feeds.

Apart from engaging in the production of crops, women also tend fruit trees. Nur (1989:78) notes that,

> the primary contribution of agriculture is food, whose adequacy is essential for nutritional health. Fruits, and vegetables, examples, mango, pawpaw, tomatoes, carrots, etc., provide vitamin A as well as vitamins B and C. Green leafy vegetables e.g., spinach, sweet potato leaves, cassava leaves etc., are rich in several nutrients such as iron, folic acid, etc. Weaning foods could be made locally by mixing cereals with legumes or oil seed, and this could be promoted the nutritional point of view.

The Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture (2008:5) notes that policy changes have had an impact on women in agriculture. It observed that,

> with the contraction within the agricultural sector, farm employment has declined drastically. Change in cropping pattern with the switch to commercial crops, export crops, horticulture and floriculture has reduced the demand for manual labour in which women were engaged. This means that they are getting excluded from opportunities of livelihood in these new modes of agriculture.

The capacity to identify and develop income-generating activities depends to a large extent on knowing what options are available and the likely risks inherent in pursuing these options. Booth (2000:7) notes that,

> women illiteracy rates are in many cases twice as high as men's, demonstrating their disadvantage in comparison to men and imposing a significant constraint to accessing information. Primary school enrolment rates for girls are lower than for boys; more importantly, the rate at secondary school levels is rarely at a par with or higher than those for boys. High illiteracy and low enrolment rates, especially in secondary schools, affect women's ability to acquire the skills needed for income-generating activities and will have repercussions for generations to come.

The extent to which these changes benefit or disadvantage women and men is not always clear, and it is difficult to predict what changes will occur. The fact that adopting a new technology may cause a reallocation of labour across tasks and alter the balance between

households and outside labour suggests that it may be difficult to compare households that have adopted technology and those that have not.

2.6 PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Notwithstanding the immense contribution of women to agriculture as highlighted in various studies, women have had to contend with various difficult and often complex conditions that impede attaining their full potential. They usually have to combine domestic and agricultural responsibilities, resulting into longer working hours.

According to Nurnberger (1999:105), "in traditional societies, women usually bear the brunt of the situation. They carry the daily water supply for the family on their heads for kilometers, till the land, repair the homestead, cook the meals, go through regular pregnancies, care for the toddlers, and spend whole nights to fulfill ritual obligations. Their work is taken for granted and there is no escape from endless drudgery".

Doss (1999:7) notes that, "women face the additional burden of pregnancy which limits their ability to perform farm tasks that are compatible with watching small children, but many tasks may be quite difficult in the later stages of pregnancy." The implication of this is that, decreased availability of labour due to pregnancy and lactation may have negative effect on small and poor households because the age and childbearing status of women would certainly affect the household labour available for agriculture.

While women perform valuable work that contributes to the functioning of the agricultural sector, yet their work is still perceived as secondary to that of men. Men's role tend to be perceived as more economically beneficial, while women's role are less economically visible and therefore perceived as less valuable.

Greenidge (2000:4) states that, "in most sub-Saharan African countries, women make a significant contribution to food production and to the processing and marketing of foodstuffs. However, rural women in Africa still face formidable obstacles to their potential role as a major economic and social force in the development of the agricultural sector in their countries".

It is to be noted that, unless women are duly recognized and encouraged, and the agricultural sector is developed, it would sooner or later become a serious obstacle to both industrial and aggregate growth. Increased production in agriculture should be viewed as a necessary prerequisite for creating better living conditions for the millions of people in the rural areas.

Booth (2000:3) notes that, "invisibility is one of the numerous obstacles preventing women from realizing their full potential. Many of these obstacles arise from cultural and social constraints that perpetuate women's marginalized situation. Rather than remedying the situation through 'adjustments', a fundamental shift which removes the veils of blindness is required".

Different kinds of labour as carried out in the agricultural sector are valued differently and are also compensated differently. Men's work is usually seen as more difficult, requiring more strength, therefore, more respected. How then do we explain the situation where women transport heavy produce on their heads to the markets while men use lorries to transport bulk produce to the same markets? It can therefore be argued that, although each role is vital to the agricultural process, the roles do not possess the same value and are not compensated in the same manner.

Burkey (1996:100) observed that "very few cultures in the world treat women as equals to men especially in the Third World countries and not only those with strong Islamic traditions". He lamented that "it is too much to expect that the male extension agents, because of their

commitment to work with the rural people, will automatically be immune to the prejudice against women found in their own cultural backgrounds". Learning these methods from the men who had just been taught has obvious limitations. The men may not have fully understood everything taught by the agents. Even if they did, they would rarely transmit all of it to the women. Also, the men would not really be expected to answer adequately questions from women, which only trained agents could answer.

In most developing countries, limited facilities exist for the training of rural women. Even where such exist, the focus is not usually on training the women as mangers in the agricultural sector, but as home makers. This may be explained as due to "cultural limitations" since it is traditionally believed in Nigeria that women are not meant to go out to work but to stay at home and work in the kitchen. Many educated women however contribute to the labour force though there exist a high proportion of uneducated women.

Meena (2005:6) notes that, "culture has been used to justify the subordinate position of women in the household, a factor which excludes women from property ownership. Culture has also been used to justify the existing unequal division of labour. Some cultural norms concerning age of marriage and marriage rights have also limited women's participation in formal schooling".

Booth (2000:3) notes that,

> the absence of quantitative and qualitative data on women's role in agriculture and rural development is the most notable – albeit hidden – factor. Terms to describe women's economic activity such as 'non-economic work' or even 'family responsibilities' have not been defined or given a value. Women's most fundamental role in society – procreation – is very often given a negative value, being seen as a hindrance to otherwise productive activities, a cause of lost income, lower productivity and increased cost.

Koyenikan (2008:53) states that, “agricultural extension brings about changes, through education and communication in farmers attitude, knowledge and skills. The role of agricultural extension involves dissemination of information, building capacity of farmers through the use of a variety of communication methods and help farmers make informed decisions.”

Ezeh and Okoli (2008:1) cites Saito and Spurling (1992) as noting that,”despite the significant role of female farmers in the third World, their level of productivity is constrained because agricultural technology has been designed on the assumption that farm managers are men. “They also observed that, this assumption gave rise to several other constraints on the progress of third world female farmers: failure of extension workers to reach them; limited access to credit inputs; lack of access to relevant technological information; and lack of incentive to increase productivity.

Though new technology increases efficiency, most rural women have limited access to information and such new technologies. This has constituted a serious limitation to rural women’s scope to increase their efficiency in agricultural production. In a nutshell, men have become major beneficiaries of technological innovations in all sectors including agriculture. Most extension staff also tends to overlook the needs of women in agriculture, caring for the men, perhaps due to their greater involvement in the production of cash crops. As a result, vital information and low priority is given to domestic technology, food processing, cooking, cleaning, sewing, fetching firewood, carrying water and all the normal traditional responsibilities of the rural women.

Notwithstanding the existence of agricultural extension services in Nigeria, the extension service has been bedeviled by several problems. Koyenikan (2008:53) cites Agbamu (2005) as identifying some of the problems such as,

> inadequacy and instability of funding, poor logistic support for field staff, use of poorly trained personnel at local level, ineffective agricultural extension linkages, insufficient and inappropriate agricultural technologies for farmers, disproportionate Extension Agent: Farm Family ration and lack of clientele participation in programme development. Others are poor input supply, irregular evaluation of extension programmes and policy, institutional and programme instabilities of National agricultural extension systems.

Wallerstein et al (1996;143) cites Jacobsen (1993) as noting that in Africa and Asia,

> women formerly had in most cases had access to land through lineage heads and kinship ties. Access to credit, agricultural technology, improved seeds, and access to agricultural extension services often depended on land ownership. This barred women from competing in cash-crop schemes. At the same time there was little research and development of subsistence food crops.

It could however be argued that, for extension services to be effective, it has to go beyond the issue of the transfer of technology, to the development of skills and knowledge of farm families for sustainable agriculture and rural development. There must be a shift from the training and visit which emphasizes individual contact and technology transfer, to adopting a group approach with a view to ensuring effective use of limited resources, personnel, time and fund. Such an approach should ensure participation, ownership, inclusion and empowerment.

The vast majority of women cannot afford to run the risk of taking loans for investments or restructuring their production with new seeds of different crops. Even if they could, they do not have access to borrow money for such purpose since future crops are rarely accepted as collateral and they cannot take the risk of placing their small holdings at the mercy of moneylenders. In cases where they do have access to credit, they normally have to pay very high interest rates.

Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:20) cites the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (1999) The World Bank (2000) as noting that,

> much has been written about the past failure of government extension workers to reach women farmers and the cultural bias which has, in many countries prevented women from active participation in group training, extension meetings and most importantly, access to inputs such as fertilizer and credit. These services have been predominantly staffed by men – according to FAO only 15% of extension workers are women – and they tended to direct their services to male farmers or heads of households, excluding female-headed households (World Bank).

Similarly, the agricultural extension agents usually impart knowledge of new and improved agricultural production methods to men, who in turn may or may not impart to women. Structural changes in the institutional framework of agricultural production has been said to have negative impact on women's contribution to agriculture. For instance, the Land Use Act NO.6 of 1978 which was formulated in order to provide a uniform framework for land tenure in the country and to promote effective acquisition, and use of land gives little or no consideration to the domestic or economic role of women.

The Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:19) notes that,

> when women do own or have access to land they often have a limited access to agricultural support services, such as credit with which they can purchase inputs, and to advice and training in agricultural technology. This limited access may arise from a range of factors, including legal restrictions (such as the need for a male signatory); lack of collateral (e.g. land title); lack of information about credit availability; and lack of small-scale services such as micro-credit schemes.

Doss (1999:11) notes that, "access to land is not static, nor is tenure over land. As circumstances change, farmers' access and secure tenure to land may also change. These circumstances may include legal revisions such as the formal registering of land, or economic changes such as increased agricultural productivity or population pressure on the land. Many such changes have been occurring in Africa."

It may be argued that, though it does not matter how an individual obtains access to land or how access to land changes with varying economic conditions, both women's access to land

and the security of women's land tenure will affect decisions regarding the adoption of technology. Women may obtain land through a male relative, but that access may also entail limitations on the use of the land.

Women have no access to policy making bodies whether at the local, national or international levels and rural development programmes are usually directed at men who usually participated in the formulation of policies. It may be argued that, in Nigeria, men tend to have the opportunity to obtain higher levels of education and as a result men overwhelmingly occupy the various policy making and leadership positions to the disadvantage of the women.

In most developing countries, limited facilities exist for the training of rural women. Even where such exist, the focus is not usually on training the women as managers in the agricultural sector, but as home makers. This may be explained as due to "cultural limitations" since it is traditionally believed that in Nigeria, women are not meant to be go out to work but to stay at home and work in the kitchen. Many educated women however, contribute to the labour force though there exist a high proportion of uneducated women.

Booth (2000:1) notes that,

> the assumption that the problems confronting women, and society as a whole, would be solved by the resurgence of open-market activity and growth has yet to be borne out. Underlying this assumption is lack of recognition that, within the household, women have distinct rights and obligations, as well as distinct functions with regard to market activities. Their situation is determined by their multiple responsibilities for the care and well-being of their families and the community, household tasks, and farm and non-farm income-generating activities.

2.7 PROSPECTS OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

The Commonwealth Secretariat (2008:9) notes that,

> the key role played by women in agriculture was in the past largely unacknowledged in government statistics and decision-making. This situation has

> started to change over the last two or three decades and much has been achieved in giving recognition to these importances of women in the agricultural sector in many parts of the developing world. However, these recent advances may be endangered by such factors as structural adjustment programmes (SAP), the drive to commercialize agriculture and retreat of government from rural development in many countries. These factors have eroded gains and threaten a return to the situation where women's role is not fully recognized and where gender-blind policies and programmes fail to address the needs of women farmers.

Opio (2003:700) states that "planners and policy makers are increasingly becoming mindful of the major aspects of socially ascribed gender function and specific needs of men and women in agriculture and other areas.

Are we tend to believe that efforts are being made to address the unacknowledged contribution of women in agriculture, or should we still take it as the same rhetoric that have been variously made during the innumerable conferences, seminars and policy statements?

African Development Bank Group (2010:6) notes that, "technology holds out promise , improved traditional crops including cassava, NERICA rice, and maize are increasingly available as involving farmers at all stages of variety development proves more effective than previous academic approaches. Where they do not compete with food crops, water or other development on marginal land, new crops such as biofuels and new processing such as ethanol from sugarcane creates more opportunities."

CTA (1999:32) notes that, Strategies and activities have been devised by individual and a range of groups from businesses and multilateral agencies to grassroots organizations -for promoting women's income generating activities. A common feature of successful strategies is that they reflect an understanding of the specific characteristics of women's contribution to rural and agricultural sectors, of the complexity of the role of women in rural society and of the

particular cultural and socio-economic constraints women face in developing income- generating activities.

CTA Annual Report (1999:6) cites that, the United Nations (1995) as noting that, "in adopting the platform for Action, governments have committed themselves to a strategy of mainstreaming gender perspectives throughout the policy, planning and budgeting processes in all ministries and institutions. The emphasis on mainstreaming gender perspectives in all sectors- including rural development and agriculture reflects recognition that the interest of women, as well as men, must be systematically pursued."

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many sociological theories about man and society. However, this study will summarize and adopt the Functionalist perspective utilizing the theory of social change. Wilmot (1985:175) notes that, "functionalism is associated with the sociologist Talcott Parsons (1902-79) who developed it to its highest level. But it had its origin in the evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin while many of its basic concepts were developed by Auguste Comte (1798-1857), Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)".

The early Functionalists often drew an analogy between society and an organism such as the human body. They observed that an understanding of any organ in the body, such as the heart or lungs, involves an understanding of its relationship to other organs and in particular, of its contribution towards the maintenance of the organism.

Martindale (1960:440) notes that, "functionalism can be traced to a movement in the late nineteenth century philosophy under the influence of Darwinism on the biological and social sciences. Its distinguishing properties are found to be in its concern with relations and activities

rather than substances. Characteristic notions identifying functionalism are: transformation, dynamic patterns and processes, growth expansion, emergence".

Functionalism therefore regarded society as an organism or a mechanical system with various parts all working for the benefit of the whole. It assumes that, when one part fails to work the other parts will malfunction. The malfunctioning of one part is reflected in malfunctioning of the whole. The basic unit of analysis in society and its various parts are understood primarily in terms of their relationship to the whole.

Gross (1967:300) notes that, "in the past few years, prompted largely by the advent of automation and the surge of interest in underdeveloped lands, the technology and social change thesis is again becoming prominent. At the same time the old controversies concerning the role of technology in social causation are being renovated".

The Functionalist theory of social change is based on the assumption that:

1. As societies develop, they become increasingly more complex and interdependent.
2. Society consist of interdependent parts which work together to maintain the equilibrium of the whole, rather than like the human body with its interdependent organs working for the health of the entire organism.
3. All members accept their roles.
4. All members accept the moral values of their society.
5. Social order is achieved through complex processes of socialization, education and sanctions.
6. History is seen as a series of phases through which societies progress, each phase is characterized by an increase in rationality.

The theory has been criticized on the basis that it really only attempts to explain institutional change. The theory's view of society as a balanced system that integrated small but necessary changes was quite consistent with the time when society was relatively placid. However, Preston (2000:5) argued that, "this social theory lost credibility because it proved inadequate to explain the rapid upheaval and social unrest of the late 50s and 60s".

Social change theory also assumes that the society is in transition and as it grows it undergoes changes. In order for the society to cope with these changes, it has to create and adopt new forms of structures/institutions which would enable the society to function.

Wilmot (1985:175) notes that, "theories of social change must recognize that man is a conscious being whose freedom and spontaneity give him the capacity to choose, make decisions, create and rebel. At the same time his freedom is bounded by the social and physical worlds".

Preston (2000:3) also notes that,

> social theories were, and still are today, products of their times and are characterized to a greater or lesser extent by the prevailing views and ideologies of their eras. When studying social theories, and using one or more of them in an attempt to explain social and cultural change, it is important to recognize this fact about them and to be conscious, if not critical, of their biases, values and assumptions inherent in them.

As in all other aspects of functionalist theory, functionalism tries to explain society from various perspectives such as social change. To understand its explanation of social change, one has to look at its background in the biological and especially evolutionary theory. In applying this doctrine to its theory of social change, functionalism sees the movement of society from the simple to the more complex.

Gouldner (1977:357) cites Parsons (1961:219-239) as noting that,

> social change in part occurs through the development of new and distinct arrangement and structures for performing certain functions. With the emergence of newly differentiated structures certain of the moral norms governing each unit change, as do the relationship among them. 'Differentiation' not only means a change in the activities of previously established units, it also means a loss of certain activities, of the rights to perform them, of the reward and gratification provided for performing them, and of the power to perform them.

Preston (2000:5) notes that the key concepts in the functionalist theory of social change are those of differentiation and integration, stating that, "differentiation occurs as society becomes more complex but the new institutions must be integrated with each other into the whole. In other words, change occurs (differentiation of institutions, for example, to take over functions of previously non-differentiated institutions) but structures within society change or emerge to compensate. The new structures are integrated to ensure the smooth functioning of society".

Social change may therefore refer to change in social structure: the nature, the social institutions, the social behaviour or the social relations of a society, community or people. It is any event or action that affects a group of individuals that have shared values or characteristics. It may also be seen as a modification in social relationships which may not necessarily be that of progress nor must it inevitably produce greater happiness for all the people concerned.

Wilmot (1985:174) notes that, "social change implies alteration in the structure or organization of society or its component parts over time. Alteration may be in size, complexity, direction, or function. Since society is a product of interaction and is organized as a system, it is presumed that alteration in any part will affect the structure of the whole. This should however, be understood in perspective".

Jibowo (2000:215) notes that,

> one variant in the life of all living and non-living things is change. When it takes place in the lives of interacting human beings, it is termed social change. When

> viewed within the context of a social system, it is the alteration in the systemic attributes of a social system. It therefore involves any change in ideas, values, norms, social roles, habits, obligations of people, or change in life-style, life goals, chances, environment, or in the composition or organization of their society.

Understanding the role of women in agriculture involves an understanding of the interaction of women with other parts of the society especially as it relates to their contribution to the economic well-being of the society. This is because society is a system of dynamic interactions. Wilmot (1985:174) notes that, "each set of interactions produces a new situation, a new reality in the social structure. Overall the structure is altered in the direction of greater complexity".

This alteration can bring both positive and negative change and this may affect the societal system in many ways. Some of these changes are exogenous (external factors e.g. introduction of new innovation by a changed agent) while others are endogenous (internal factors e.g. change in leadership within the community or an epidemic or death within the community).

Munck and O'Hearn (1999:94) notes that, "production and consumption are simultaneously physical and social activities and take place in given social contexts, which are organized in particular ways. In the contemporary world, most societies are capitalist and exhibit gender and ethnic inequalities. These social relations strongly influence the ways in which production and consumption are organized and as a consequence structure the nature of everyday life".

Munck and O'Hearn (1999:95) cites Marx (1973) as noting that,

> at a fundamental level the logic of social change is composed of ideal and material causality. Ideal causality refers to the way in which human beings are able to shape their own destinies. They are able to conceptualize their future or elements of their future and either individually or collectively seek to bring their ideas into being. Human beings are not entirely free agents, however, but subjects who have to act in pre-given, natural, technological and social conditions.

> Material causality refers to the effects of these natural and social conditions on human action and of natural and economic laws which shape the way nature and society can be modified.

Social change is noticeable in the lives of most rural population of developing countries such as Nigeria. Among such social change are; economic change, political change, technological change, cultural change and behavioural change. These are manifested thus:

1. Economic change: there have been changes in the system of processing, storage and distribution of agricultural products though rather very slowly.
2. Political change: this is manifested in the distribution and operation of social and political power.
3. Technological change: there has been striking technological change in the rural areas which has experienced changes in the physical, biological and chemical dimension of agricultural production.
4. Cultural change: the primary role of the mother has increased from that of raising up children to include economic provision for the family, a role which was primarily played by the father.
5. Behavioural change: this is manifested in the change in knowledge, skill and attitude of people as a result of their exposure to educational experiences especially through extension workers.

The social change approach of the Functionalist theory is chosen because it seems to be a more appropriate theoretical approach that could better address the issue of the role of women in agriculture in Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area for the following reasons:

1. The Nigerian Agricultural terrain is being gradually developed. Consequently, it is affecting relations as it affects the various roles played by individuals in the agricultural sector, especially women.
2. The Nigerian Society, especially as it affects Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State, is growing from the traditional to the modern, as it is being influenced by the introduction of technology and competition from the industries. This affects the availability of farm labour and the crops grown.
3. The coping strategy especially when men out-migrate is that women take over the cultivation of formerly known male crops, while also assuming the headship of the household when the males are away.

Furthermore, the Functionalist theory of social change provides the basis for a realistic analysis of the role of women in agriculture in a developing rural community such as Ogori/Magongo which is undergoing changes in its agricultural sector.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methods and techniques used in the collection and analysis of data relating to the role of women in agriculture in Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State. It considered the role played by women in agriculture, whether the roles are changing, and the problems faced by women in agriculture. This research design was necessary in view of the need to have a systematic guideline with which to achieve the objectives of the study.

The chapter covered the location and period of study of the selected areas, the types and sources of data collected the population of study, samples and sampling procedures, techniques of data collection, the dependent and independent variables, and the method of data analysis.

3.1 BRIEF ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE STUDY AREA

Ogori/Magongo Local Government is located in the Central Senatorial District of Kogi State. It is at the extreme south western portion of Kogi State, some few kilometers away from the boundary with Edo state. Ogori and Magongo, the major towns in Ogori/Magongo Local Government are surrounded by hills which rise to between 32 – 196 meters above sea level. Ogori/Magongo local government area was created in 1991. It had a total population of 39,622 as at the 2006 national census (Wikipedia). The two districts, Ogori and Magongo in this local government used to be primarily agricultural settlements before the advent of colonialism but with the coming of the Europeans and the introduction of western education, Ogori/Magongo

began to produce a crop of artisans, especially in masonry, carpentry, painting and decoration, trading and lumbering.

The major occupation of the people in the Local Government Area is agriculture, with over 90% of the population operating small farms not exceeding two hectares. The prominent crops grown include yams, cassava, guinea corn, maize, cocoyam and beans. These crops are staple foods because they are used almost daily by all households for food. The economic trees are iroko, obeche, raffia palm, kolanut, locust bean and cocoa.

Jibowo (2000:113) notes that, "marriages in which family power rests with the father are described as *patriarchal*. Such family is made up of some generations of related kinsmen. Patricentric marriages are those in which power over the family largely resides in the male. Such families consist of the father, his wife or wives and their children.'

Ogori and Magongo have shared lots of customs and traditions in common right from the time of old. Ogori and Magongo practice the patriarchal system, in which all household decisions are made by men while women have little or no say. Even when women want to venture into any occupation e.g. trading, the consent of the husband or heads of household has to be sort.

In the past agriculture was primarily men's work with the women only helping to bring the harvested products home. From the land clearing to harvesting, the work was done by men but now the women are getting more involved. There is a change in the role of women in that most of the agricultural work is done by them (Osheidu, 1990).

The issue of lack of farm labor did not arise in the past because men usually got married to more than one wife with most of them having many children. These children were usually used for farm labor. But now due to the advent of Christianity, most men marry only one wife thereby having lesser number of children. In the past being that men were the ones engaged in

agricultural work, the land tenure system favored them because only men had access to land. Women did not own land and it is still operational up till now.

But there is a changing role in the agricultural production system in that women are more engaged in agricultural work now. They do most of the work from clearing to harvesting and marketing. Crops that were planted by men before used to be cash crops but now women plant both cash and subsistent crops that are usually consumed daily in the house e.g. beans, maize, guinea corn, cassava and yams.

Agricultural production in the study area is now widely practiced by women. The role of women is changing; they that used to be out of agriculture are now the ones fully practicing agricultural production under stringent condition.

Women in this Local Government Area do not own land. Land is inherited from a man's family and is recognized as inalienable. Spinning, weaving and dying used to be the chief predominant occupation of women. They still engaged in selling palm – oil, palm wine- "pitto" (local wine), "olele" and "dadawa" made from beans. Women only engage in harvesting and processing of agricultural products. However, with the migration of most male members of the family for greener pastures elsewhere due to lack of employment in the towns, women are now engaging in almost all aspects of agricultural production. Agriculture has helped women to improve the family standard of living, and the purchasing power of women has improved significantly. (Olagboye 2002)

Despite all the above, women still face lots of problems, For example, crude implements are used especially by women in agriculture. These implements include hoes, axes, knives, pestle and mortar (for shelling). The few available modern technologies e.g. tractors, maize shellers, are mostly used by the men. The implication of this for women is low productivity, low income and

low purchasing power. Other members of the family and the community in general are negatively affected as a result of the women's poor economic activities.

The climate of Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area is characterized by two main seasons, the wet/rainy season and the dry/harmattan season. The wet or rainy season usually begins around March and often ends in October, but could sometimes extend to November. Rainfall is usually fairly heavy with June, September and October being the wettest. There is usually a short break in August. In dry years, rainfall could begin as late as April. The wet season is very often signaled by violent windstorms, which could be destructive to buildings especially the roofs, farm crops and plants.

Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area is chosen because of women's high participation in agriculture, its relief features consisting of having hills surrounding the areas notwithstanding which farming is extensively carried out, and its accessibility to the South via Edo State and North via Lokoja by road whereby its agricultural products are easily transported to other parts of the country.

3.2 TYPES AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher utilized a combination of data collection techniques to allow for a detailed investigation. The techniques used are questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

Researcher administered questionnaires were use as primary instruments for the collection of data. This method allowed for personal contact with the respondents and also for the acquisition of first hand information.

In-depth interview was also used as primary technique to support the questionnaires and it aimed at encouraging the respondents to interact freely with the researcher as it relates to the research problem. The in-depth interview was semi-structured and conscious effort was made to ensure that the research objectives are adequately addressed.

Data extracted from stored information was used to complement other instruments. Efforts were made to gain access to some vital information from relevant institutions that have bearing with the study.

3.3 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING SIZE

Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area is politically divided into ten wards, namely, Eni, Oshobane, Okibo, Okesi, Ileteju, Aiyeromi, Obinoyen, Oturu, Ugugu and Obatigben. Out of the two Districts, Ogori has the six wards while Magongo has four. The procedure used regarding the selection of respondents in the study varied according to the requirement of the particular data to be collected. Three wards were selected from the six (6) wards in Ogori District, while two (2) wards were selected from Magongo District all using simple random sampling.

A total of two hundred and fifty (250) questionnaires were administered. Fifty (50) questionnaires each were administered in each of the five (5) selected wards.

For the in-depth interview, the opinion leaders in each of the ten (10) wards that make up Ogori/Magongo were purposively selected to gain insight into their assessment of the role of women in agriculture as it relates to Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area.

3.4 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative method of data analysis was used together with the qualitative method in order to get insight into the community life, motivation for their behaviour and also possibly discover other unexpected phenomenon. The mass of data collected was analyzed using computer statistical package.

Qualitative data generated from the in-depth interview was analyzed by grouping and sorting out the comments and responses. In order words, it was analyzed from transcribed information and write-ups. This included listening to the tapes, reading field notes, creating emerging patterns of inferences, adoption of inferences and drawing overall conclusions.

In an effort to describe the reality on the ground, the research made use of univariate and bivariate analysis using frequencies and percentages

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings and discussions of the study are presented in relation to the objectives of the study. Data in this study was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively employing the statistical tools of frequencies, percentages and cumulative frequencies. During the in-depth interview, the respondents were asked specific questions and encouraged to talk freely with the researcher.

4.1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

TABLE 4.1.1: **DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO AGE**.

Ages	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Below 21 years	4	1.8	1.8
21 – 30 years	65	29.1	30.9
31 – 40 years	99	44.4	75.3
41 – 50 years	47	21.1	96.4
Above 50 years	8	3.6	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.1.1 above indicates that 44.4% of the women farmers are within the ages of 31 and 40 years while 1.8% are below the age of 21 years. This implies that a large proportion of farmers were middle-aged and able bodied, and can therefore be regarded as active, agile and physically disposed to pursue farming activities. The table also reveals that, as age increases, the

participation of women in agriculture in the study area decreases. It may be argued that this may be due to decrease in physical strength and sometimes decrease in family responsibilities since the children grow up and help in one way or the other in the family upkeep.

TABLE 4.1.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF EDUCATION.

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Did not go to School	9	4.1	4.1
Primary school	32	14.3	18.4
Secondary School	29	13.0	31.4
Tertiary	153	68.6	100.0
Total	223	100.0	98.2

Table 4.1.2 above shows that majority of the respondents are literate with 68.6% having attended tertiary institutions while 4.1% did not have any form of education. This indicates that there is high level of literacy in the area of study. Although the general characteristics of the rural Nigeria and developing countries indicate a low literacy level, the involvement of literate women in agriculture in a rural area like Ogori/Magongo may be attributed to early missionary activities and the importance attached to education by the people of the area. Furthermore, the creation of Ogori/Magongo Local Government means that more literate persons who are civil servants must have also engaged in agricultural activities.

TABLE 4.1.3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO RELIGION.

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Christianity	196	87.9	87.9
Muslim	25	11.2	99.1
Traditional	2	0.9	100
Total	223	100	

Table 4.1.3 shows that 87.9% of the respondents are Christians while 0.9% practices traditional religion. This goes to imply that majority of the women who participate in agricultural production are Christians. The low representation of Muslim women in agricultural production in the study area may not be unconnected with cultural and religious restrictions. The percentage of traditional religious practice in the area could also be attributed to missionary activities whereby most of the residents of the area were converted to Christianity.

TABLE 4.1.4: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONS.

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Civil Servant	59	26.4	26.4
Trading	35	15.7	42.0
Farming	123	55.2	97.3
Housewives	6	2.7	100
Total	223	100	

Table 4.1.4 above shows that, 55.2% of the respondents were fully involved in agriculture while, 2.7% are full-time housewives. It is however noteworthy that, the major occupation of rural dwellers is farming and majority of the people in developing countries are rural dwellers who engage in subsistence agriculture and other related activities for their livelihood. Though some respondents may be civil servants, this is so because of the creation of Ogori/Magongo Local Government whereby most of the staff still engage in one form of agricultural production or the other, in order to make ends meet or just for interest.

TABLE 4.1.5: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS.

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Single	3	1.4	1.4
Married	207	92.8	94.2
Widowed	2	0.9	95.1
Divorced	9	4.0	99.1
No response	2	0.9	100
Total	223	100	

Table 4.1.5 shows that 92.8% of the respondents are married while 0.9% are widows. The high percentage of married women is not unrelated to the fact that in rural Nigeria and other developing countries, there is the issue of early marriage and as soon as a girl is matured she must get married, therefore suggesting that they combine their roles as mothers and homemakers with their work and participation in agricultural production.

TABLE 4.1.6: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO FAMILY TYPE.

Type of family	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Extended family system	150	67.3	67.3
Nuclear family	69	30.9	98.2
Others (Single Parenting)	2	0.9	99.1
No response	2	0.9	100
Total	223	100	

Table 4.1.6 above shows that 67.3% of the respondents operate an extended family system while 0.9% operates other form of family system such as single parenting. This goes to suggest that the extended family system dominates the agricultural sector of the area of study and

provides access to labour, especially family labour, thereby augmenting production and increasing returns. Large families have been encouraged in rural Nigeria and developing countries in view of its importance in providing family labour.

4.2 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

TABLE 4.2.1: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Level of education	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Did not go to school	9	6.5	6.5
Primary school	28	20.1	26.6
Secondary school	24	17.3	43.9
Tertiary institution	78	56.1	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

Table 4.2.1 above indicates that 56.1% of the women who participate in agriculture had tertiary education while 6.5% did not go to any school. The explanation for this could be that being a rural area, most graduate female civil servants employed in the services of the local government, banks, primary and secondary schools in Ogori/Magongo combine their occupation with agriculture as secondary source of income. Most engage in poultry, animal husbandry, fish farming, processing, to augment their income. The unemployed graduates were also found to be engaging in one type of agricultural production or the other.

TABLE 4.2.2: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE BY MARITAL STATUS

Marital status	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Single	3	2.2	2.2
Married	125	90.0	92.2
Widowed	2	1.4	93.6
Divorced	7	5.0	98.6
No response	2	1.4	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

Table 4.2.2 above shows that 90% of the women who participate in agriculture are married while 1.4% are widows. This goes to suggest that such women participate in agriculture so as to support their families as mothers and home makers.

TABLE 4.2.3: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULURE BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative %
Civil servant	40	28.8	28.8
Trading	30	21.6	50.4
Farming	63	45.3	95.7
House wives	6	4.3	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

Table 4.2.3 above shows that 45.3% of the women who participate in agriculture are basically farmers while 4.3% is housewives. It is therefore suggested here that since it is a rural area, it is expected that the major occupation of women in this area should be agriculture.

TABLE 4.2.4: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE BY TYPE OF FAMILY

Family type	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative %
Extended family	85	61.2	61.2
Nuclear family	50	36.0	97.2
Others (single parenting)	2	1.4	98.6
No response	2	1.4	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

Table 4.2.4 above indicates that 61.2% of women who participated in agriculture belong to extended families while 1.4% are single parents. This shows that, because of the number of people within the extended family, it becomes necessary for women to engage in agriculture in order to be able to cater for their large families.

TABLE 4.2.5: DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE BY RELIGION

Religion	Frequency	Percent	cummulative %
Christianity	115	83.0	83.0
Islam	22	16.0	99.0
Traditional	2	1.0	100.0
Total	139	100.0	

Table 4.2.5 above shows that 83.0% of women in agriculture are Christians while 1.0% belong to the traditional religion. This may be because of missionary activities whereby people of this area converted to Christianity and the area is now predominantly Christians. Though cultural and religious restrictions affect the participation of Muslim women in agriculture in this

area, most of such are engaged in food processing, poultry and small animal (goats, sheep) husbandry.

4.3 ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

TABLE 4.3.1: DISTRIBUTION ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE

S/N	Gender division of labour	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		No comment		Total	
1.	Clearing, cleaning and ploughing of farmlands	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
		18	7.8	42	18.3	18	7.8	152	66.1	-	-	230	100.0
2.	Planting and weeding of farmlands	140	60.9	22	9.6	50	21.7	18	7.8	-	-	230	100.0
3.	Harvesting, processing and storage of produce	160	69.6	13	5.7	37	16.0	20	8.7	-	-	230	100.0
4.	Transportation of produce	5	2.2	171	74.4	50	21.7	4	1.7	-	-	230	100.0
5.	Marketing of produce	11	4.8	159	69.1	48	20.9	12	5.2	-	-	230	100.0

Table 4.3.1.1 above shows that 66.1% of the respondents disagreed that women are more involved in the clearing, cleaning and ploughing of farmlands while 7.8% strongly agreed. This goes to suggest that men are primarily responsible for the physically strenuous work on the farm. The opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori disrict corroborated this finding when he said that, "clearing, cleaning and ploughing of farms is too much for a woman. How do you expect a woman to begin to cut down big trees or to dig the ground? It doesn't happen here". When interviewed, the opinion leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district stated that, "in this area, it is a job for the men".

Table 4.3.1.2 above shows that 60.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that planting and weeding of farmlands is mostly being carried out by women while 7.8% strongly disagreed. This goes to suggest that women are not involved in strenuous activities which may not be totally so. This finding agrees with the opinion leader of Obatibgen ward in Magongo district who

stated that, “what else do you want the women to do after we the men have prepared the farm for them? Planting and weeding is the duty of the women and children”. The opinion leader of Okibo ward in Ogori district on his part said that, “as soon as we have prepared the farmland for them, we proceed to work on our big farms where we plant crops that fetch us money to pay our children’s school fees and buy other things for the family”.

Table 4.3.1.3 above shows that 69.6% strongly agreed that it is the women that harvest, process and store the farm produce while 8.7% strongly disagreed. This may be so because the men may feel they have done most of their strenuous work, so the women should complete the remaining farm work. The opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Magongo district agreed stating that, “sometimes we assist the women and children to harvest the crops but it is their work to process and store the crops. They know where to put the crops so that it will not go bad and since they do the cooking, they will have easy access to it”. The opinion leader of Ileteju ward in Ogori district responded during the in-depth interview saying, “Harvesting of food crops is mostly done by the women and children, cooking is done by the women, so they must keep their products very well”.

Table 4.3.1.4 above shows that 74.4% of the respondents agreed that women do the transporting of the crops from the farms to the house and to the markets if they need to sell part of the produce while 1.7% strongly disagreed. This may be so because of gender bias. The men may feel it is degrading to see a man carrying crops on his head in this modern time. The opinion leader of Oturu ward in Magongo district agreed with the finding when he said, “it is true. When it comes to crops like maize, beans, coco yam and cassava, it is the women that transport such to the house and to the markets because they carry just enough to sell on their heads”. The opinion leader of Oshobane ward in Ogori district also spoke in the same vein when he stated that, “the

women carry the crops in small quantities until they finish carrying everything to the house. The truth is that, they cannot carry very heavy crops, only the one they cook or want to sell".

Table 4.3.1.5 above shows that 69.1% of the respondents agreed that marketing of subsistence crops is done by women while 5.2% strongly disagreed. This may be as a result of men mostly preferring to market bulky cash crops rather than selling crops in small quantities. The opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district agreed and stated that, "selling of small small crops like beans is for women not men like us" while the farm leader of Ogugu ward in Magongo district said, "do you expect somebody like me to take something like ten mudu (measures) beans to sell in the market? In this area men sell things like Cocoa, bags and bags of maize, bags and bags of Soya beans and tons of palm kernel to business men who carry them to places like Lagos and Ibadan".

TABLE 4.3.2: CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO THE CROPPING PATTERN IN AGRICULTURE

S/N	Cropping pattern by gender	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No comment		Total	
1.	Beans	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
		170	74.0	10	4.3	38	16.5	12	5.2	-	-	230	100.0
2.	Maize	142	61.8	12	5.2	10	4.3	66	28.7	-	-	230	100.0
3.	Coco-yam	150	65.2	25	10.9	24	10.4	31	13.5	-	-	230	100.0
4.	Yams	12	5.2	43	18.7	15	6.5	160	69.6	-	-	230	100.0
5.	Soya beans	25	10.9	45	19.6	30	13.0	130	56.5	-	-	230	100.0
6.	Cassava	145	63.0	25	10.9	25	10.9	35	15.2	-	-	230	100.0
7.	Guinea-corn	139	60.4	36	15.7	30	13.0	25	10.9	-	-	230	100.0

Table 4.3.2.1 above shows that 74.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that beans is cultivated by women while 5.2% strongly disagreed. This is so because the cultivation of beans need a lot of patience and time which most men may not have. This was corroborated by the opinion leader of Okesi in Ogori district who said that, "except for big time commercial farmers, in this area beans is only cultivated by women who use it for the family and sell small quantity when they need to buy something". The opinion leader of Oturu ward in Magongo district also said, "Planting of beans is for women and children".

Table 4.3.2.2 above shows that 61.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that maize is predominantly cultivated by women while 4.3% disagreed. This is so because maize is mostly used as food unlike now that it is being used for beverages and animal feeds. While the opinion leader of Okibo ward in Ogori district agreed that maize is predominantly cultivated by women when he said, "it is planted by women for family use" the opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Magongo district said, "who told you that it is only planted by women? You want me to show you my maize farm? It is like you don't know that today maize is money?"

Table 4.3.2.3 shows that 65.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that coco yam is a crop cultivated by women while 10.4% disagreed. This is because coco yam is chiefly used by women as food. During the in-depth interview, the opinion leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district agreed saying that, "coco yam is emergency food so it is the women that usually cultivate it" while the opinion leader of Aiyeromi ward in Ogori district disagreed saying, "men also cultivate coco yam here. You know coco yam farm work is hard and it is not easy for the women, so we do it together".

Table 4.3.2.4 above shows that 69.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that Yams are cultivated by women while 5.2% strongly agreed. This is so because the cultivation of yams

requires a lot of energy. And also, though yam is used as food, it is also a cash crop which men easily sell for economic gains. The opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district strongly disagreed that yams are cultivated by women saying, "Where will the women get the power to withstand the work that they have to do if they cultivate yams? My friend the work concerning yams is not a small job". The opinion leader of Obatigben ward in Magongo district also said, "in this area, yams is for men not women. Who will give them the strength to do such hard work?"

Table 4.3.2.5 above shows that 56.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that Soya beans is cultivated by women while 10.9% strongly agreed. Soya beans is a cash crop and men seem to want to dominate its cultivation. During the in-depth interview the opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Magongo district disagreed stating that, "don't you know that a Soya bean is sold for cash? Cash crops are meant for men while the women are meant to cultivate food crops for the family". The opinion leader of Oshobane ward in Ogori district also disagreed stating that, "women don't cultivate Soya beans in this area. It is for the men. We sell it for money to take care of our families".

Table 4.3.2.6 above shows that 63% of the respondents strongly agreed that Cassava is cultivated by women while 10.9% disagreed. This is because it is the women who use cassava as food and also process it into various forms such as "garri" and starch. The opinion leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district agreed saying that, "the same way women cultivate coco yam is the same way they cultivate and take care of Cassava. That is their work'. The opinion leader of Aiyeromi ward in Ogori district disagreed saying, "let me tell you, coco yam, Yam and Cassava are very hard to cultivate and women alone cannot do it. We must help them. So we do it together".

Table 4.3.2.7 above shows that 60.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that Guinea Corn is cultivated by women while 10.9% strongly disagreed. Gunea corn being a subsistence crop is mostly being processed into various foods by the women. Women also use it for brewing local beer so as to make a little money. During the in-depth interview it was also agreed that Guinea Corn is cultivated by women. The opinion leader of Ileteju ward in Ogori district said that, "it is grown by women who use it for family food or sell part of it to women who brew our local drink called 'pitto'. The opinion leader of Oturu also said that, "women grow it for food or for brewing of local drink known as 'Pitto'".

TABLE 4.3.3: CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

S/N	Contribution of women in the household	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No comment		Total	
1.	Food preparation, cooking and serving	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
		200	87.0	20	8.7	10	4.3	-	-	-	-	230	100.0
2.	Fetching of water	190	82.6	25	10.9	-	-	9	3.9	6	2.6	230	100.0
3.	Collection of firewood	185	80.4	25	10.9	20	8.7	-	-	-	-	230	100.0
4.	Child care, house cleaning, sewing and mending of clothes	209	90.9	21	9.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	230	100.0
5.	Backyard gardening	195	84.8	15	6.5	9	3.9	11	4.8	-	-	230	100.0
6.	Household animal husbandry(goats, chicken, rabbits, etc	205	89.1	5	2.2	7	3.0	10	4.4	3	1.3	230	100.0

Table 4.3.3.1 above shows that 87% of the respondents strongly agreed that women prepare, cook and serve food to the family while 4.3% disagreed. This may be because preparation, cooking and serving of food has traditionally been the responsibility of women. This agrees with the statement of the opinion leader of Oturu ward in Magongo district who said during the in-depth interview that, "do you expect a man to cook for his family? Naturally, the women do this". The opinion leader of Aiyeromi ward in Ogori district also agreed saying, "preparation, cooking and serving of food we all know is a woman's duty and not for men".

Table 4.3.3.2 above shows that 82.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that women do the fetching of water for family use while 3.9% strongly disagreed. Fetching of water has also been the traditional responsibility of women and children as a result; it is not out of place for women to perform that function. The opinion leader of Okesi ward in Ogori district corroborated this finding when he stated that, "fetching of water for family use in this area is the duty of the woman and her children. The men are usually too busy doing other serious jobs to cater for the family". The opinion leader of Obategben ward in Magongo district also agrees stating that, "of course, who do you think should fetch water for family use? Is it the men? Not in this town".

Table 4.3.3.3 above shows that 80.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that women do the collection of firewood for use in the house while 8.7% disagreed. This may be because the men may fell and break the firewood and leave it for women and children to carry them home. Where this is not done, they have to look around to fetch the firewood. The opinion leader of Ileteju ward in Ogori district does not totally agree when he said that, "women most of the time collect firewood for use in the house, but sometime we men also help them to collect firewood on our way back from our farm". The opinion leader of Obategben ward in Magongo district

retorted saying, “why are you asking me about things you know are supposed to be done by women? In the area you come from, is it men that fetch firewood for women to cook?”

Table 4.3.3.4 above shows that 90.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that women carry out the duties of child-caring, house cleaning and sewing and mending of clothes for members of the family while 9.1 also agreed. These chores have also been traditionally the responsibility of women. This finding was also generally accepted during the in-depth interview with the opinion leader of Oturu ward in Magongo saying, “who else should do that job”, the opinion leader of Okesi ward in Ogori district saying, “it is women’s duty” and the opinion eader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district also saying, “you know it is the duty of the women”.

Table 4.3.3.5 above shows that 84.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that women carry out backyard gardening while 3.9% disagreed. Since the men may be out hunting or doing other jobs, immobilized women have to carry out backyard gardening especially to have easy access to food ingredients such as spinach, okra, and pepper. While the opinion leader of Oshobane ward in Ogori district agreed saying that, “backyard gardening is carried out by women and small children” the opinion leader of Obinoyen in Magongo district does not totally agree as he stated that, “not all backyard gardening is done by women. Men also plant some herbs usually used for the family as medicine. This is because we don’t have to go far into the bush to look for them when we need it”.

Table 4.3.3.6 above shows that 89.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that women are responsible for house-hold animal husbandry such as; rabbits, goats and chicken while 3.0% disagreed. While the men may be out rearing big animals like cows or carrying out work on plantations, women may keep these small animals for meat or for sale to get economic gains. The opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Magongo agreed saying that, “women keep these animals

mostly for family use and for sale to solve urgent family issues while the men deal with big animals such as cows and also go to hunt for antelopes, and other big animals like bush pigs, buffalos, elephants and others". The opinion leader of Okibo ward in Ogori district also agreed saying, "generally, it is the women that keep such animals in the house. They use it for food and sometimes for sale to take care of their small, small problems".

4.4 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

TABLE 4.4.1: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT ACCORDING TO OWNERSHIP OF FARM LANDS.

Ownership of farmlands	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
Don't own farmland	181	81.0	81.0
Own farmland	42	19.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Table 4.4.1 above shows that 81% of the respondents do not own the land they cultivate, while only 19% own the land on which they cultivate. This points to the fact that traditionally, in rural Nigeria and Africa, women do not own land. Land is owned through inheritance which mostly favours the men. This finding was also corroborated by the opinion leader of Aiyetoro ward in Ogori district, during the in-depth interview when he stated that, "in this area, land is owned only by men. Women don't inherit land. Do women inherit land in your place?" The opinion leader of Obinonyen ward in Magongo district spoke in the same vein saying, "our women only farm either on the family land, her husband's land or she has to hire it and pay a

token before being allowed to farm". This goes to suggest that since the society still operates a patriarchal system, the land tenure system does not favour the women in that only men are allowed to own land.

TABLE 4.4.2: **DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR FARM SIZES.**

Acres	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative %**
0 – 2	145	65.0	65.0
2 – 4	37	16.6	81.6
4 – 6	19	8.5	90.1
6 – 8	9	4.0	94.1
8 – 10	13	5.9	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.4.2 shows that 65% of the respondents cultivate about 2 acres of land while 4% cultivate between 6-8 acres. This goes to suggest that agricultural production in the area of study is at the subsistence level with products meant mainly for household consumption and sometimes for sale in the local markets for the purpose of income to purchase other domestic needs. Since women do not own land and do not have access to credit facilities, the size of land that could be given to the women to cultivate is also limited to the subsistence crops that they have to cultivate. According to the opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district, "most of what the women produce is for home consumption. They cannot afford large farms because they cannot afford to rent tractors, fertilizer is expensive and the cost of labour is high".

TABLE 4.4.3: RESPONDENTS' ACCESS TO FARM INPUTS

S/N	Access to farm inputs	Not available		Scarce		Available but expensive		No comment		Total	
1.	Access to fertilizer	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
		33	14.8	14	6.3	176	78.9	-	-	223	100.0
2.	Access to tractors	28	12.6	95	42.6	100	44.8	-	-	223	100.0
3.	Access to labour	34	15.2	22	9.9	167	74.9	-	-	223	100.0
4.	Access to loans	66	29.6	145	65.0	12	5.4	-	-	223	100.0
5.	Access to improved seeds	39	17.5	173	77.6	11	4.9	-	-	223	100.0
6.	Access to extension services	60	26.9	163	73.1	-	-	-	-	223	100.0

Table 4.4.3.1 above shows that 78.9% of the respondents indicated that fertilizer was available but expensive while, 6.3% said it was scarce. This goes to suggest that respondents have to resort to other means of fertilizer such as making use of local manure like animal feaces and decomposed plants. The opinion leader of Oturu ward in Magongo district said that, "fertilizer is not easy to come by. Sometimes even with our money, we have to travel all the way to Okene to purchase it and it is very expensive". The opinion leader of Oshobane in Ogori district also agreed with the finding when he stated that. "Fertilizer is only given to people who belong to the ruling party. We have to go to them to buy it".

Table 4.4.3.2 above shows that 44.8% of the respondents said that tractors are available but expensive while 12.6% said tractors are not available. This goes to suggest that, in view of the size of land being cultivated by women, it will be too expensive to engage the use of tractors. Instead, the women will prefer to use family and other forms of labour. According to the opinion

leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district, “where do you expect the women to get such money to hire tractors? How big is their farms, and what do they produce?”

Table 4.4.3.3 above shows that 74.9% of the respondents said that labour is usually available but expensive while 9.9% said labour is scarce. This may be because most people are also engaged in their farms and if you have to hire labour such persons have to leave their farms. As a result they have to charge high rates. The opinion leader of Aiyetoro in Ogori district agreed with this finding when he said that, “in this area, whenever you want to hire labour, you have to prepare food, brew or purchase local drink that we call ‘pito’ for the labourers and you again pay them some money.” The opinion leader of Obinoyen in Magongo district said, “My brother, sometimes it is better to use your family members only and do your farm work gradually than to hire people. Times have changed. People are only after money now. It is not like those days when farm work is done on community basis. Today we go to your farm and tomorrow we go to my farm.”

Table 4.4.3.4 above shows that 65% of the respondents said that access to loans has been scarce while 5.4% said the loans were available but expensive. Though provisions are made to provide agricultural loans by government, cooperatives and banks, such loans are hardly available, the conditions attached are too stringent and the interest rates are too high. According to the opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district, “we don’t encourage our women to collect any loan. You know why? The interest charged is too high. When she cannot pay, who do you think will be force to find money to pay back? It is definitely the husbands.” The opinion leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district also spoke in the same vein when he said, “loans are too expensive because of the interest they usually charge. How much farm produce do the women produce that they can sell and pay back such loans.”

Table 4.4.3.5 above shows that 77.6% of the respondents indicated that improved seeds were usually scarce while 4.9% said that the improved seeds were usually available but expensive. This goes to suggest that most women would prefer to make use of local seeds especially considering the fact that the seeds are usually scarce and where it is available they are expensive. The opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Magongo district said, "why do you waste your time looking for 'oyibo' (improved) seeds? Even the problem you have to undergo in farming it is enough. It is easier to use the local seeds." The opinion leader of Okibo ward in Ogori district stated that, "improved seeds are too expensive even when you see it. The processes in farming it is also too much."

Table 4.4.3.6 above shows that 73.1% of the respondents indicated that access to extension services was scarce while 26.9% said it was not available. This may be because most extension workers are men and some extension workers are even reluctant to relate to the women due to cultural or religious considerations. Some do not even bother to visit the rural farmers but prefer big time farmers. During the in-depth interview, the opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district stated that, "I cannot remember when last an extension worker visited this area. They are always on the farms of big men." The opinion leader of Uturu ward in Magongo said that, "if you see them this year, you will not see them again until sometimes after two to three years. Is that enough to help the women to understand farming? Even when they come, the women are too busy with their house work."

4.5 COPING STRATEGIES

TABLE 4.5.1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS COPING STRATEGIES TO FARM IMPLEMENTS AND INPUTS.

Use of manure, local tools and untreated seedlings	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative %
Those that use	196	87.9	87.9
Those that do use	27	12.1	100.0
Total	223	100	

Table 4.5.1 above shows that 87.9% of the respondents use manure, local tools and untreated seedlings in place of the fertilizer, tractors, treated seedlings and other modern implements while 12.1% indicated that they do not use local tools untreated seedlings and manure. Since all these inputs are expensive, scarce or unavailable, the women may have no other option than to make do with the locally available inputs which have been traditionally used by them. The opinion leader of Ugugu ward in Magongo district agreed with the finding when he stated that, "what else do you want the women to do when everything is expensive or scarce to get?" The opinion leader of Oshobane ward in Ogori district said, "Let me tell you, all these things you are counting (fertilizer, tractors, improved seeds and modern implements) have been carried to the rich men's farms. It is better for you to use what you have. Our women make use of local things and they are doing fine."

TABLE 4.5.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Cumulative %**
Yes they belong	80	35.9	35.9
No. They do not	143	64.1	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.5.2 shows that 35.9% of respondents' belonged to co-operative societies; while 64.1% said they do not belong to any co-operative society. This may be as a result of the non-existence of such cooperative societies in that area. During the in-depth interview, the opinion leader of Illeteju ward in Ogori district stated that, "the Cooperative societies do not operate in this area. However, if you have to belong to a cooperative society, you have to travel to Okene. Our women have their local contributions which we call 'esusu' (thrift) and this cannot give them enough money to expand their farms." The opinion leader of Obategben ward in Magongo district said that, "only a few women belong to one Cooperative society or the other. It will be good if Cooperative societies could be established in this area. It may assist the women."

TABLE 4.5.3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS SEEKING ADDITIONAL KNOWLEDGE ON AGRICULTURE

	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Cumulative %**
Didn't Respond	27	12.1	12.1
Want to know more	171	76.7	88.8
Don't want to know more	25	11.2	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.5.3 shows that 76.7% of the respondents indicated they would want to know more on agriculture in order to improve their production and help out in the sector while 12.1% were undecided. Since the women may want increased productivity, and this can be achieved through the use of hybrid seeds, tractors, herbicides and other inputs, they will naturally want to know more. The opinion leader of Okesi ward in Ogori district agreed with the finding saying that, "who will not want to know more about farming. We inherited farming and the style of farming today is changing." The opinion leader of Uturu ward in Magongo district also stated that, "With what is happening today, farming is different from what it was before, so it is good for us and the women to get more knowledge about farming."

TABLE 4.5.4: RESPONDENTS SOURCES OF LABOUR

Credit Facilities is sourced through	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %

How do you Source Labour?	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative %
Paid Labour	60	26.9	26.1
Family Labour	163	73.1	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.5.4 shows women coping strategy on difficulty to access to labor. The table shows that 73.1% of the respondents make use of family labour while 26.9% make use of paid labour. This seems to suggest that making use of family labour is aimed at reducing costs. The opinion leader of Obinoyen ward in Mangongo district said " you know that women don't like spending too much, they like keeping their money", The opinion leader of Eni ward in Ogori district also said, "you should know that a woman hardly accepts that she has money"

TABLE 4.5.5: RESPONDENTS SOURCES OF CREDIT

1. Traditional "Adashe" contributions.	135	61.0	61.0
2. Loans from family members and friends	83	37.0	98.0
3.Government Agricultural loans	5	2.0	100.0
4. Loans from Banks.	-	-	100.0
Total	223	100.0	

Table 4.5.5 shows women coping strategy on credit facility. The table shows that the use of traditional credit facility of "Adashe" contribution is more prominent with 61.0% while 2.0% of respondents got Government Agricultural loans. This is because the traditional "Adashe" contribution is more acceptable in the area and no interests are charged. The opinion leader of Eni ward stated that, "this system is easier and you are not afraid of court case". The opinion leader of Obinoyen stated that, "if you want problems then go to the banks. The 'Adashe' system is better."

It is note worthy here that despite the numerous problems faced by women in agriculture, there is hope for significant improvement in view of the various efforts being put in place with regard to the need for food security in view of globalization.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Considering the roles women play in agriculture, the study found out that, women play vital roles in agricultural production in the areas of planting and weeding of farmlands, harvesting, processing and storage of produce, transportation of such produce to the house, and the marketing of such produce in the local markets. Apart from their usual household chores, women were also found to be involved in animal husbandry, particularly those of keeping small animals like chicken, goats, rabbits, etc. Women were also found to be responsible for the cultivation of such crops as; beans, maize, cocoyam, cassava and guinea corn, though some men have started cultivating maize for its economic value.

Regarding the problems faced by women in agricultural production, the study found out that, women have very limited access to land, labour, farm inputs, loans, treated seeds, extension services and information.

On the strategies devised by the women to cope with these problems, the study found out that, women resorted to the use of local tools in place of modern ones, the use of manure such animal faeces in place of modern fertilizer and local untreated seeds in place of hybrid seedlings.

Women have been found to have played significant roles in the agricultural production process especially as it relates to labour. This finding agrees with Ayensu (1989:135) who notes that, “in fact, it is not surprising for African men to acknowledge the fact that well over 70 percent of the agricultural labour force in Africa is made up of women.” Odebode (2012:140) cites the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (1992) as noting that,

"women farmers are the principal labour force on small holder farms and perform the largest share in land preparation, weeding, transporting, processing and marketing of agricultural production." It further noted that, "they make up to 60-80 percent of the labour force. Therefore the significant role they play in meeting the challenges of agricultural production and development are quite prominent and dominant". Though women have been contributing significantly to agriculture, their contributions have been variously disregarded. Booth (2000:3) notes that, "this persistent failure to recognize and account for the value of women's knowledge and labour in the agricultural sphere, and to integrate the reality of women's situation into development theories, policies and programmes, is evident throughout the global economic development environment".

Women were also found to have also been significantly engaged in the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products as noted by the Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:9) who stated that, "women have always played an important role in agriculture, undertaking a wide range of activities relating to food production, processing and marketing." Greenidge (2000:4) also states that, "in most sub-Saharan African countries, women make a significant contribution to food production and to the processing and marketing of foodstuffs.

The cropping pattern of women engaged in agricultural production in the area of study was found to be mostly that of subsistence agriculture meant mainly for household consumption. The women were found to cultivate mostly maize, guinea corn, cassava, cocoyam, and carried out backyard gardening, while also keeping small animals like chicken, goats and rabbits. Ayensu (1989:135) notes that, Subsistence farming involving such crops as cassava, yams, cocoyam, sweet potato, plantain and maize, are grown in a wide variety of agro-ecological zones and had always involved a large proportion of women. Such farming supports the livelihood of

many rural families as a source of food and a source of family income with which to purchase other foodstuff and other commodities". The Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture (2008:3) also notes that, "women work extensively in production of major grains and millets." It further went on to state that, "in animal husbandry, women have multiple roles, ranging from animal care, grazing, fodder collection and cleaning of animal sheds to processing of milk and livestock products. Keeping milch animals, small ruminants and backyard poultry is an important source of income for poor farm families and agricultural labourers".

Apart from their direct contribution to agricultural production, women also carry out domestic chores that contribute to agricultural production in the form fetching of water and firewood, the preparation of food and even the mending of torn dresses. This finding agrees with Nurnberger (1999:105) who notes that, "in traditional societies, women usually bear the brunt of the situation. They carry the daily water supply for the family on their heads for kilometers, till the land, repair the homestead, cook the meals, go through regular pregnancies, care for the toddlers, spend whole nights to fulfill ritual obligations. Their work is taken for granted and there is no escape from endless drudgery". The finding also agrees with Wallerstein et al (1996:144) who cites Jacobsen (1993) as noting that, "yet empirically the work of women – growing food for household consumption (80 per cent of it in Africa, 70-80 per cent of it in India, about 50 per cent of it in the Caribbean) drawing wood, fetching water – consumes 12-18 hours per day, and enhances the value of cash income by 30-60 per cent."

On the problems faced by women in agricultural production, the study found out that women faced quite a number of problems one of which is the problem of land ownership. This agrees with the Report of the Advisory Committee on the Role of Women in Agriculture (2000:8) notes that in Ireland, "the vast majority of female labour is contributed on farms where

the worker's husband is recorded as the holder." It further notes that, "when combined with the marital status provided for in the 1991 census of population, the age profile suggests that in many cases women only gain this holder status in their later years as widows". Wallerstein et al (1996;143) also cites Jacobsen (1993) as noting that in Africa and Asia, "women formerly had in most cases had access to land through lineage heads and kinship ties." It also agrees with Meena (2005"6) who notes that, "culture has been used to justify the subordinate position of women in the household, a factor which excludes women from property ownership."

Women were also found to have very limited access to agricultural support services and this is in line with the Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:19) who notes that, "when women do own or have access to land they often have a limited access to agricultural support services, such as credit with which they can purchase inputs, and to advice and training in agricultural technology." Wallerstein et al (1996;143) also cites Jacobsen (1993) as noting that in Africa and Asia, "access to credit, agricultural technology, improved seeds, and access to agricultural extension services often depended on land ownership. This barred women from competing in cash-crop schemes. At the same time there was little research and development of subsistence food crops".

The failure of extension workers to view women's contribution as significant and to include women in their programmes has been found to constitute an obstacle to the effort of women in agricultural production. The Commonwealth Secretariat (2001:20) cites the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) (1999) The World Bank (2000) as noting that, "much has been written about the past failure of government extension workers to reach women farmers and the cultural bias which has, in many countries prevented women from active participation in group training, extension meetings and most importantly, access to inputs such as fertilizer and credit.

These services have been predominantly staffed by men – according to FAO only 15% of extension workers are women – and they tended to direct their services to male farmers or heads of households, excluding female-headed households (World Bank)".

Meena (2005"6) also notes that, "culture has been used to justify the subordinate position of women in the household, a factor which excludes women from property ownership. Culture has also been used to justify the existing unequal division of labour. Some cultural norms concerning age of marriage and marriage rights have also limited women's participation in formal schooling".

Generally the findings indicated that women play significant role in the agricultural production process especially as it relates to labour and the crops they cultivate which are mostly used to feed the family. However, with outmigration, women's traditional role in agriculture is changing with women cultivating crops that were hitherto cultivated by men and men now also involved in cultivating such crops as maize for economic gains.

The theory of social change believes that, as societies develop, they become increasingly complex and interdependent with each segment of the society striving to maintain a balance. When men have to leave the rural areas for paid jobs in the cities, women naturally assume the responsibilities left behind by the men and act as household heads, do most of the farm work and cultivate crops that were traditionally cultivated by men. Men who are not able to leave for the cities, engage in cultivating crops which were traditionally for subsistence but have become of economic value such as maize.

The findings also indicated that women faced problems such as gender bias, lack of access to farm inputs and extension services, lack of access to land, credit facilities and hybrid seedlings. The local, national and international communities are now making effort to address

these imbalances. The theory of social change sees society as going through series of phases in their development which is expected to be characterized by increase in rationality as is being experienced now with the role of women in agriculture being appreciated thereby indicating that there are prospects for women in the agricultural sector.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the fact that women play significant roles in the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products, and that they constitute up to 60-80% of the agricultural labour force, their contributions have not been properly acknowledged. Meanwhile the traditional role of women in agriculture is undergoing significant changes. This is because, as opportunities for men to work outside agriculture increased, women involvement in agriculture also increases. Consequently, gender division of labour and cropping pattern becomes less rigid.

Despite the immense contributions of women in agricultural production, they are faced with difficulties which affect their ability to achieve maximum productivity. Such difficulties include among others: lack of access to adequate land, agricultural inputs, agricultural extension services and information, and also gender discrimination. Women also have to contend with non-agricultural chores such as caring for the babies, fetching of water and firewood, preparation and serving of food for the family, and also mending of torn clothes.

Major efforts are now being made at the local, national and international levels towards giving women's role in agriculture its desired attention. From the policy, planning and budgeting processes as it affects all ministries and institutions, governments are committing themselves to a strategy of gender mainstreaming in agriculture. Although culture has been used to justify the subordinate position of women in the household, government developments have indicated that women are increasingly purchasing land for agricultural purposes especially in areas of poultry

and fish farming. It has been observed that cooperate bodies and non-governmental organizations are effectively carrying out services such as provision of credit, improved variety of seeds, training and extension services for women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher found out that very little attention has been given to the role women play in the agricultural production process. Most of the attention has been focused on the men who produce perennial crops that are meant for cash. As a result of this visible neglect, women have resorted to evolving measures to cope with the attendant difficulties they faced in the agricultural production process. It is in the light of this that the following long and short term measures are recommended for consideration in policies, ways and means of improving the role of women in the agricultural production process:

1. It was found out that women have no legal access to land and that most of the lands cultivated by women belong to the family or is being hired. It is therefore recommended that, in all legal measures on land rights, especially land reforms, there should be special focus on the rights of women and single women headed households including widows, abandoned and deserted women. This should not be limited to agricultural property, but also include homestead property.
2. The study found out that women contributed a large percentage of family labour in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Consequently, it is recommended that, family labour and unpaid work of women in all farm and non-farm activities should be recognized and accounted for in the Gross Domestic Product. All policies, research and evaluation activities should take note of such domestic and non-domestic activities supporting the agricultural sector.

3. It was found out that, agricultural extension workers are mostly males and they hardly have time to attend to women during their extension visits either due to gender bias or due to traditional and religious considerations. It is therefore, recommended that, a cadre of women agricultural extension workers should be created in order to ensure that women farmers have greater access to technology and knowledge that will reduce their labour time while also increasing their productivity.
4. Women were found to produce most of the food crops for subsistence. Consequently, priority should be given to the production of food crops in view of the current food crisis being experienced worldwide. This should be done by ensuring continuous and affordable supply of inputs, credit at minimum interests, minimum support prices and the expansion of procurement, extension and other agricultural services.
5. The study found out that women lacked access to modern technology which mostly traction driven. As a result it is recommended that the skills of women artisans should be tapped towards achieving grass root innovations that will blend modern day technologies with local knowledge and practices in the production of seeds and agricultural inputs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN OGORI/MAGONGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KOGI STATE, NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Please indicate your answers by ticking the appropriate parenthesis or filling the blank spaces or by an x in the boxes as it best describe your feelings. I undertake to use your response for purely academic purpose and to treat them as absolutely confidential. Thanks.

Interviewer ……

Date……

A. SOCIO-CHARACTERISTIC INFORMATION

1. Village……..
2. Ward…….
3. Age of respondent ……
4. Religion
   a. Christian ( )
   b. Muslim ( )
   c. Traditional ( )
   d. Others (specify)…….
5. Educational level (Highest).
   a. None ( )
   b. Koranic ( )
   c. Primary school ( )
   d. Post Primary ( )
   e. Tertiary ( )
6. Marital Status : Married ( ) Single ( ) Divorced ( ) Widow ( )
7. What type of family is in your household?

   Nuclear family (parents and children only) ( )
   Extended family (parents, children, and other relatives ( )
   Others (specify)……
8. Primary occupation
9. Secondary occupation

B. ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE

Women have been said to be the major contributors in the following agricultural activities. Do you agree? Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box.

S/N	Gender division of labour	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No comment
1.	Clearing, cleaning and ploughing of farmlands					
2.	Planting and weeding of farmlands					
3.	Harvesting, processing and storage of produce					
4.	Transportation of produce					
5.	Marketing of produce					

CROPPING PATTERN IN AGRICULTURE

The following crops are said to be mostly cultivated by women. Do you agree? Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box.

S/N	Cropping pattern by gender	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No comment
1.	Beans					
2.	Maize					
3.	Coco-yam					
4.	Yam					
5.	Soya beans					
6.	Cassava					
7.	Guinea-corn					

CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The following activities are said to be mostly carried out by women. Do you agree? Please indicate by ticking the appropriate box.

S/N	Contribution of women in the household	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No comment
1.	Food preparation, cooking and serving					
2.	Fetching of water					
3.	Collection of firewood					
4.	Child care, house cleaning, sewing and mending of clothes					
5.	Backyard gardening					
6.	Household animal husbandry(goats, chicken, rabbits, etc					

C. PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE OWNERSHIP OF FARM LAND.

Do you own the farmland that you usually cultivate? Yes ( ) No ( )

What is the average size of the farmland that you cultivate?

0 – 2 Acres ( ) 2 – 4 Acres ( ) 4 – 6 Acres ( ) 6 – 8 Acres ( )

8 – 10 Acres ( )

Do you hire labour to work on your farm? Yes ( ) No ( )

ACCESS TO FARM INPUTS

S/N	Access to farm inputs	Not available	Scarce	Available but expensive	No comment
1.	Access to fertilizer				
2.	Access to tractors				
3.	Access to labour				
4.	Access to loans				
5.	Access to improved seeds				
6.	Access to extension services				

ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENTS

26. Have you ever received any training for the kind of agricultural work you are doing? Yes ( ) No ( )

27. If yes, how frequent? Monthly ( ) Quarterly ( ) Yearly ( ) Whenever they wish to come ( ).

28. Are you interested in knowing more about agriculture Yes ( ) No ( )

29. If yes, what do you need to know?

a) Animal husbandry
b) Agricultural mechanization
c) Improved seeds
d) New methods of agricultural farming
e) All of the above

4.6 COPING STRATEGIES WITH REGARD TO FARM IMPLEMENTS AND INPUTS

Do you use manure in place of fertilizer? Yes ( ) No ( )

Do you use local farm implements like hoes sickles, cutlasses in place of modern ones like?

Tractors, spraying machines and combined harvesters? Yes ( ) No ( )

Do you use hybrid seeds? Yes ( ) No ( )

Is there a Cooperative society in you locality? Yes ( ) No ( )

Do you belong to any of the Cooperative society? Yes ( ) No ( )

What recommendations would you make towards improving the role of women in agriculture?

Do you have any questions for the researcher?

Thank you.

APPENDIX B

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SELECTED WARD FARM LEADERS IN OGORI/MAGONGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KOGI STATE, NIGERIA.

A. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Ward …….
2. Age ……..
3. Occupation ……

B. ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

1. What roles can you say women play in agriculture with regards to land clearing, ploughing, weeding, planting, harvesting and other such farm work?
2. What crops do women in your area mostly cultivate?
3. Are the roles of women in your area changing from what it used to be before?
4. What roles do women play with regard to household chores and other agricultural activities?

C. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

1. What problems can you say women face in agricultural production in your area in terms of land, farm inputs and extension services?
2. Can you say the men also face the same problems?

D. COPING STARTEGIES

1. How do women in your area cope with these problems?
2. Were those coping strategies effective?

E. WOMEN'S PROSPECTS IN AGRICULTURE

1. Do you think that women have any future in agricultural production?
2. What makes you think so?

Thank you.