



## RURAL WOMEN' CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING THE HOUSEHOLD WELLBEING IN OLORUNSOGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

Rural women's contributions to sustainable household wellbeing are functions of the status of their personal attributes. The study investigated the rural women's characteristics that enhanced the household wellbeing in Olorunsogo Local Government Areas of Oyo State. A Multistage sampling procedure was used to select 120 respondents for the study. Data on respondents' socioeconomic characteristics, livelihood activities, living conditions, constraints to wellbeing, mitigation strategies employed, and dimensions of household wellbeing were collected and analysed using descriptive (frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean scores) and inferential (PPMC and Chi-square). The result shows that the respondents' mean age, household size, and monthly income were 39.9 years, 7.6 persons, and N24,699.15 respectively. The dimensions of household wellbeing were possessions of mobile phones (97.5%) and aluminium windows (97.5%) which was high for 67.5%. The respondents' livelihood activities were Trading (WMS=2.53) and livestock rearing (WMS=1.81) with 50% living condition's level. The main respondents' constraint to household wellbeing was low income (WMS=1.95) and was high for 56.7%; while the main mitigating strategy employed was to take less preferred and less expensive food (WMS=1.95) and was low for 55% of the respondents. Significant relationship existed between respondents age ( $r=0.836$ ), marital status ( $\chi^2=4.0872$ ), primary occupation ( $\chi^2=4.4078$ ), monthly income level ( $r=0.403$ ), social organisation ( $\chi^2=4.0260$ ) and the respondents wellbeing. The high constraints of the respondents do not influence the respondents' wellbeing negatively due to the average living condition. Hence respondents should be encouraged to diversify their income sources for enhanced living condition to maintain the wellbeing status.

**Keywords:** Living condition, Mitigation strategies, Rural women, Household wellbeing, Rural livelihood activities.

### INTRODUCTION

Rural women play a crucial role in the economic development of both developing and developed nations (FAO, 2022). The global involvement of women in development cannot be overemphasized as the primary concern and focus of women is usually the high welfare status of the household. They are being said to be the key actor and an important stakeholder in the achievement of sustainable development goals. The active role they played internationally, nationally, locally, and even for the wellbeing of the rural household should not be taken for granted (Adeniyi and Adebayo, 2021).

According to Ibrahim, Hassan, and Kamaruddin (2018), household wellbeing is described as the availability of goods and services that household member consumes and the things, they feel are useful to them. This mostly includes adequate nutritious food, sound education for their children, improved access to health care, clean sources of water and comfortable housing, access to ICTs tools and improve technologies among others. This is all about having a good way of life that can enhance human development. However, women had been known for championing the course of food production across the value chain, especially with the motive of meeting the household wellbeing needs (Adeniyi and Yekinni, 2020; Amayo, Akidi, Esuruku and Kaptui, 2021). Their active role in food production starts from pre-planting operation till harvesting and turning the harvested produce into

edible substance on the household members' table (FAO, 2022).

According to Amayo *et al* (2021), women play a vital role in sustaining nutrition and food security at the household level, they have been said to be responsible for about half of the global food production in form food crops (Cassava, maize, vegetables among others) and domestic animals (Poultry, sheep, and goat), especially for their own household; while most of them are in control of the health wellbeing, education, and nutrition security of members of the rural family.

Studies have shown that role played by rural women as directors of household nutrition security have made them to be committed to meeting the nutrition needs of their households. They were known to be obliged to effectively attend to every generation in their household adequately in a bit to ensure their household's wellbeing, rural women have been passionate about the good health status of their household. Hence, rural women as well assume the role of first nurse in their homes as they care for their children, older and aged persons even the sick ones among the household members (Adeniyi and Adebayo, 2021).

In other to meet up with the enormous task of providing for household needs, rural women do diversify into different livelihoods to ascertain the wellbeing of their household (Duntoye and Mbaegbu, 2022). The Livelihood embarked on by women in rural communities include Trading,

processing of farm produce, crop production, teaching, handcraft and creative art, raising of livestock, tailoring, charcoal selling, hairdressing, firewood selling, production of local soap, and weaving of clothes among others with the motives of reducing poverty and vulnerability to the barest minimum among rural households. The diversification has also been a surviving technique for women in rural community as it enhances and stabilizes their income (Adeniyi, 2020).

The activeness of women in pursuing their household wellbeing depends on the endowment and enablement of the available resources at their disposal. That is, their capability endowment. Hence, women could be said to be one of the key factors in household wellbeing as most of the meaningful household food security might depend on women. Rural women's contributions to the sustainable household wellbeing are functions of the status of their personal attributes that are not a homogenous in nature, these differences include their age, marital status, primary occupation, position in husbands house, ethnicity, educational background, cosmopolitaness, race, income, social group belonged and religion among others (Akanji et al, 2020; Amayo et al, 2021 and Duntoye and Mbaegbu, 2022).

The rural women are constraints in their efforts to enhance their household wellbeing as greater number of them lack access and control over productive resources such as land, steady source of income, decision making ability, environmental degradation, high educational standard (Adeniyi, 2020). To this end they devise several mitigation techniques in other to stabilise and enhance the wellbeing status of the rural household. Hence, the need to delve into the Rural women's characteristics affecting the household wellbeing in Olorunsogo Local Government Area Oyo state, Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study ascertained the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, examined the livelihood activities in which rural women engaged in, identify the mitigation strategies employed by rural women, examine the constraints to household wellbeing and investigate the level of household wellbeing among the rural women in the study area. It was hypothesised that there is no significant relationship between the selected socioeconomic characteristics and their contribution to household wellbeing

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study area was carried out in Olorunsogo Local Government area (LGA) in Oyo State with the latitude 8044'57" N, longitude 40 7'52" E. The major occupation of the people in the area is farming and trading. The study's population were all rural women in the study area. The primary data for the study were collected using a well-structured interview schedule. Multi-stage sampling

technique was used for selecting the respondents. At the first stage, simple random sampling of 40% of the 10 wards in the LGA was made. The selected wards were Aboke; Onigbeti 1 (Iyamopo); Opa/Ogunniyi and Waro/Apata-Alaje. The second stage involved the proportionate selection of 40% of women from different households in the selected wards giving the sample size of 120 respondents. Descriptive (Frequency, percentage and mean) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation) were used to analyse the data. The respondents' 27 dimensions of wellbeing was measured by the material resources possessed. The frequency was used to rank the items in descending order hence the item with highest frequency was adjudged as being the most important measure of wellbeing in the area. An index of wellbeing was calculated and was used to categorise the respondents into high and low categories using the 'greater than and lower than the mean' criterion. The respondents' seven (7) living conditions like types of toilets, sources of water and access to power supply among others were measured with the scale of always (3), sometimes (2), rarely (1) and not at all (0). The weighted mean score was used to rank each of the conditions in descending order. An index of living conditions was calculated and was used to categorise the respondents into high and low categories using the 'greater than and lower than the mean' criterion. The respondents' likely 22 mitigation strategies were measured with the scale of always (3), sometimes (2), rarely (1), and not at all (0). The weighted mean score was used to rank each of the mitigation strategies used by the respondents into high and low categories using the 'greater than and lower than the mean' criterion. Respondents' 12 identified constraints to household wellbeing were captured with the scale of very severe (3), severe (2), mild constraint (1) and not a constraint (0). The weighted mean score was used to rank each of the constraints in descending order. An index of constraint was calculated and was used to categorise the respondents into high and low categories using the 'greater than and lower than the mean' criterion. Socioeconomic variables like age, household size, occupation, educational level, number of years spent in school, income level, social organisation and ownership of housing were measured accordingly.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Socioeconomic characteristics**

The result shows that the respondents' mean age, numbers of years spent in school, household size, and monthly income were 39.9 years, 12.16 years, 7.6 persons and N24,699.15, respectively. This implies that respondents were in their productive age, literate with fairly large household size, and with monthly incomes lower than the minimum wage in Nigeria. The



respondents' educational years and monthly income might influence the contributions of the respondents to household wellbeing (FAO, 2022 and Duntoye and Mbaegbu, 2022). However, the result in Table 1 further revealed that most (88.3%) of the respondents do not belong to any social organisation, which implies the status of the

respondents' social network. The result of this study is in contrast with the research outcome of Akanji et al, (2020) in which higher percentage of the respondents were member of a social group; nevertheless, social groups might be a very good conduit of developmental intervention targeting rural communities in developing nations.

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to socio-economic characteristics**

Socio-economic characteristics	Percentage	Mean
<b>Age</b>		
20-29	15.0	
30-39	36.6	
40-49	30.0	39.9 years
50-59	13.3	
Above 60	4.9	
<b>Household size</b>		
1-5	31.7	
6-10	53.4	7.6 persons
11-15	11.6	
Above 15	3.4	
<b>Years spent in school</b>		
0	4.2	
6-12	51.7	
13-15	17.5	12.16 years
Above 15	26.8	
<b>Social organisation</b>		
Cooperative	4	3.3
Religion	6	5.0
NUT	4	3.3
None	106	88.3
<b>Income level</b>		
1000-20000	58.9	
21000-40000	25.8	
41000-60000	12.4	N24,699.15
Above 60000	3.3	
<b>Total</b>	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2021

#### **Distribution of respondents according to living conditions**

Result in Table 2 shows that 61.7% of the respondents used water closet and few (4.2%) used bucket latrine, while most of the respondents indicated well (95.0%) and public borehole (80.8%) as their sources of water. Only 19.2% sourced drinking water from the stream. This implies that clean sources of toilets and water were available for the respondents, which can prevent them from polluting the environment, be free of water borne

diseases and enhance the household wellbeing (FAO, 2022 and Adeniyi, 2020). The most common means of respondents' transportation was trekking (95%), they mostly used self-medication (82.5%), employed Amotekun security services (89.2%) and live in face-to-face apartment (45.0%). The result in Table 2 further shows that the respondents were security conscious, nevertheless, the respondents use of self-medication should be discouraged due to the havoc the act does to health wellbeing.

**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to living conditions**

<b>Living conditions</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Type of Toilet</b>	
Use of pit latrine	34.2
Use of bucket latrine	4.2
Use of water closet	61.7
<b>*Source of water</b>	
Public pipe borne water	27.5
Public borehole water	80.8
Private borehole water	40.0
Well	95.0
Stream	19.2
<b>*Access to power supply</b>	
PHCN only	50.8
PHCN and generator	45.0
Generator	5.8
Kerosene as source of power supply	46.7
Candle	15.8
Touch light	94.2
Solar	30.0
<b>*Means of transportation</b>	
Trekking	95.0
Bicycle	11.7
Tricycle	95.8
Private motor bike	76.7
Private vehicle	65.0
<b>*Types of medical facilities</b>	
Private hospital	70.8
Public hospital	80.0
Trade medical	40.8
Self-medication	82.5
<b>*Security</b>	
Use of community security guard	78.3
Use of OPC	31.7
Use of Amotekun	89.2
<b>*Type of housing</b>	
Fact to face	45.0
Self-contain	10.7
Flat	37.5
Bungalow	0.8
Duplex	6.7

**Source: Field survey, 2021 \* Multiple Response**

**Distribution of respondents according to dimension of household wellbeing**

The results in Table 3 shows that owning a mobile phone (97.5%) and dwelling in a house with an aluminium window (97.5%) ranked first among the dimension of household wellbeing in the study area. Followed by this were the possession of a toilet (93.3%) and a good source of water (91.7%) in their dwellings with the least being owing a vehicle (15.8%). This result implies that the respondents viewed possession of communication tools and dwelling in a decent house as an indication of wellbeing even beyond owning a vehicle. This shows how rural women valued communication as a

great asset, especially with the use of mobile phone which gives timely, effective, efficient information as at when needed. This corroborates the study of Adeniyi (2020) in which rural women asserts that mobile phone was an indispensable three-in-one tool in rural community; as it was always used for information dissemination (calling and receiving; and Radio source of information) as well as a source of illumination (search light). The result in Table 3 further shows that the wellbeing status of the respondent was better-off for 67.5% of the respondents. This implies that the respondents' wellbeing was not worse (Ibrahim et al, 2018)).

**Table 3: Distribution of Respondents according to Dimension of household wellbeing**

<b>Dimension of Household wellbeing</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Own a mobile phone	97.5
Dwelling has an aluminium window	97.5
Have a toilet	93.3
Good source of water	91.7
Extension service improved	91.7
Household more secured	90.0
Dwelling has an iron door	89.2
Bed net to prevent malaria	89.2
House closer to children's school	83.3
Police security service	82.5
Own a modern stove	80.0
Possession of night guard	78.3
Own a furniture	77.5
Own a radio	76.7
Own ruminant animal(s)	75.0
Satisfying food needs	66.7
Own gas cooker	60.0
Fumigate to prevent any disease	55.0
Paying for health service	52.5
Eat balance diet	52.5
Easy accessibility of transportation to food market	51.7
Good refuse dump	50.8
House closer to health clinic	50.0
Own a generator	49.2
Own a land	46.7
Ability to pay for utility bills without stress	45.8
Easy payment of children school fee	35.8
Own a gas cooker	34.2
Own a motorcycle	23.3
Convenient means of house rentage payment	20.8
Own a bicycle	17.5
Own a vehicle	15.8
<b>Level of Household wellbeing</b>	
Low household wellbeing	32.5
High household wellbeing	67.5

Source: Field survey, 2021

#### **Livelihood Activities engaged in by Rural Women**

The result in Table 4 shows that trading (2.53) and raising livestock (1.81) were the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> livelihood activities engaged in by the respondents with teaching (0.44) being the least activity engaged in. This implies that women perform a lot of economic activities for the purpose

of generating income for the upkeep of their household wellbeing. The livestock raised by the women was in line with the study of Adeniyi (2020) in which women asserted that they keep animals as a source of income; and as a ransom for their children which all pointed to the wellbeing of their household.

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents Livelihood Activities Engaged by Rural Women**

Livelihood Activities	WMS	Rank
Trading	2.53	1 <sup>st</sup>
Raising livestock	1.81	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Crop production	1.53	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Making of yam flour	1.51	4 <sup>th</sup>
Selling of charcoal	1.13	5 <sup>th</sup>
Selling of farm produce	1.04	6 <sup>th</sup>
Making of cassava flour	0.97	7 <sup>th</sup>
Making of solid pap (Eko)	0.85	8 <sup>th</sup>
Garri processing	0.80	9 <sup>th</sup>
Local soap production	0.58	10 <sup>th</sup>
Wood selling	0.58	10 <sup>th</sup>
Teacher	0.44	12 <sup>th</sup>
Tailoring	0.41	13 <sup>th</sup>
Hair making	0.37	14 <sup>th</sup>
Nursing	0.29	15 <sup>th</sup>
Snailry	0.27	16 <sup>th</sup>
Making of shea butter	0.15	17 <sup>th</sup>
Working in a bakery	0.08	18 <sup>th</sup>
Nylon making	0.03	19 <sup>th</sup>
Knitting	0.02	20 <sup>th</sup>
Making locus beans	0.02	20 <sup>th</sup>
Weaving of aso ofi	0.01	22 <sup>nd</sup>

Source: Field survey, 2021

**Mitigation strategies employed by the rural women**

The result in Table 5 shows that the main mitigation strategy employed by the respondents was reliance on less preferred and less expensive food (1.95). This was closely followed by limiting

the ration at mealtime (WMS of 1.51) with the least strategy employed being sending household members out to beg for food. This implies that respondents were able to mitigate the constraints to the wellbeing of their households.

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents according to the mitigation strategies employed by rural women**

Mitigation strategies	WMS	Rank
Rely on less preferred and less expensive food	1.95	1 <sup>st</sup>
Reduce the size of meal	1.51	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Purchase food on credit	1.43	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Restrict consumption by adults in other for small children to eat	1.42	4 <sup>th</sup>
Reduce number of meals eaten in a day	1.40	5 <sup>th</sup>
Feed working members of household at the expense of non-working members	0.95	6 <sup>th</sup>
Borrow food from a friend or relatives	0.67	7 <sup>th</sup>
Gather wild food, hunt or harvesting of mature crop	0.67	7 <sup>th</sup>
Consume seed stock held for next season	0.54	9 <sup>th</sup>
Skip entire days without food	0.35	10 <sup>th</sup>
Send children to eat with neighbours	0.10	11 <sup>th</sup>
Send household members to beg for food	0.08	12 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Level of mitigation strategies</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Low mitigation strategies	60	50
High mitigation strategies	60	50

Source: Field survey, 2021

**Constraints faced by rural women in contributing to household wellbeing**

Findings from Table 6 showed that the most severe constraint to the household wellbeing was low income from livelihood activities (2.31). This was closely followed by insufficient capital (2.30) and joblessness of the respondents (1.81). This shows that low income was the backbone of the

constraints to respondents' wellbeing as it was a hindrance for contributing adequately to the wellbeing of their household. The reason for the low income might be the disparity in resource distribution between men and women in developing nations (Odebode, Aboderin, and Aboderin, 2018; Adeosun and Owolabi, 2021). The result further shows that the constraint was high among 56.7% of



the respondents as this might likely affect the level of their well-being. This is in line with the assertion of Duntoye and Mbaegbu (2022) that women have a

lot of barriers to wellbeing when compared with their male counterparts.

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to constraints to household wellbeing**

Constraints	WMS	Rank
Low income	2.31	1 <sup>st</sup>
Insufficient capital	2.30	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Joblessness	1.81	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Poor health care facilities	1.78	4 <sup>th</sup>
Poor cooperation from husband	0.76	5 <sup>th</sup>
Insufficient livelihood information	0.58	6 <sup>th</sup>
Large household size	0.51	7 <sup>th</sup>
Being a Widow	0.19	8 <sup>th</sup>
Being a Divorcee	0.15	9 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Level of constraint</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Low constraint	51.96	43.3
High constraint	68.04	56.7

Source: Field survey, 2021

#### Relationship between respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and household wellbeing

The result in Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between respondents' age ( $r=0.836$ ), marital status ( $\chi^2=4.0872$ ), primary occupation ( $\chi^2=4.4078$ ), number of years spent in school ( $r=0.777$ ), monthly income level ( $r=0.403$ ), household size (0.263), social organisation ( $\chi^2=4.0260$ ) and the respondents wellbeing. The significance of age implies that the activeness of the respondents will contribute more to the wellbeing of the household for food security. In the same vein, the significance of the level of education implies that

respondents with a higher level of education will contribute better to household wellbeing than those with a low level of education since education promotes innovation (Duntoye, and Mbaegbu, 2022). Thus, more educated women are likely to be more innovative and entrepreneurial and hence, contribute more to household wellbeing. Furthermore, the significance of occupation implies that the different livelihoods engaged in by the respondents contribute to their household wellbeing. The result also indicates that the income of the respondents translated to their wellbeing status meaning that higher income will enhance the household's wellbeing.

**Table 7: Relationship between respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and household wellbeing**

Variables	r-value
Age	0.836*
Years spent in School	0.777*
Monthly income	0.493*
Household size	0.263*

  

Variables	$\chi^2$ -value	Df
Marital status	4.026*	1
Primary occupation	4.4078*	2
Social organisation	4.0872*	2

Source: Field Survey, 2012 \*P  $\leq 0.05$  level

#### CONCLUSION

The study concluded that rural women characteristics like age, literacy level, marital status, income level, main livelihood, and their interpersonal relationships significantly enhanced the wellbeing status. Also, the respondents' access to clean sources of water, toilet facilities and electricity; with high security consciousness though with low utilisation of solar energy, earn them the moderate living condition. However, the mitigation strategies employed by the respondents was able to effectively put a check on the constraints to their

wellbeing, while the constraints to the wellbeing inform their living condition.

The study recommends that respondents should pull their resources together or visit the Bank of Agriculture for loan to expand their economic opportunities so as to overcome the main constraints faced towards the household well-being. The awareness campaign on the clean and cheap solar power source in rural communities should be intensified by solar industries for better living conditions. Women should be enlightened by the extension agents on the concept of a balance diet in their quest for less expensive and less preferred

foods for enhanced household food and nutrition security. Hence, factors that promote respondents' high wellbeing should be encouraged by the developmental agencies for sustainable household wellbeing.

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