Gender Wealth Gap in Asset Ownership and Household Welfare in Lagos State, Nigeria

Vivian A. Odishika & Emmanuel I. Ajudua

Department of Economics,
National Open University of Nigeria.

Corresponding Email: ajuduaemmanuel@gmail.com

Abstract
This article examines the welfare implication of the asset gap of a range of assets owned by the principal couples in Lagos State, Nigeria households. Primary data was collected from 1000 households in Lagos State, selected through a multistage sampling procedure. The simple regression analysis and Levene's T-test both show that there is a wealth gap in Lagos State. As for the descriptive analysis, as regards land ownership three-quarters of the total land wealth belongs to the male respondents. Although the business asset gap is in favour of female respondents, the wealth gap is not, because the value of the businesses the male respondents have is greater than that of the female respondents. As regards welfare, the result shows that the welfare of respondents, which is captured by the decision-making process in household expenditure and the basic amenities used by household members, is affected by the household gender wealth gap. Therefore, the reduction of this gap is key to the overall development process of the State and the nation as a whole because gender equality promotes equity and inclusive development. Knowledge of the gender asset gap will set policymakers on the right path to take in the developmental process affecting women and children and hence curb intergenerational poverty. The study recommends, among others, that policies should be put in place to promote an enabling environment for women to be able to accumulate assets.

Keywords: Asset, Gender, Gap, Lagos, Welfare.

1. Introduction

In nations worldwide, promoting gender equality is a fundamental human right and also a development strategy. However, this is nowhere in the world where men and women have equal rights (International Monetary Fund, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2022). According to the World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Gender Gap Report, across the four sub-indices of gender comparison globally, the largest gender disparities are in political empowerment, and economic participation and opportunity. These two sub-indices according to the report have gaps of 75.3% and 42.2% respectively yet to be covered, while the other two sub-indexes (educational attainment and health and survival) have significantly lower gaps (World Economic Forum, 2020). Therefore, it follows that despite the low gender gaps in some areas, gender stereotype in labour markets continues to structure the kinds of work women and men do, the conditions under which they work and their rewards from work (United Nations Women,_2015; World Economic Forum, 2022), hence the gaps experienced in the economic and political sub-indexes.

Consequently, while men take up top positions in the formal sector, with better working conditions, women are either working as lower cadre staff in this sector, involved in unpaid care jobs, or in most cases are found in the informal sector of the economy working in precarious conditions (British Council, 2012; World Economic Forum, 2022). As such, they are overrepresented in the informal sector Chen

(2001), especially in Sub-Sahara African countries International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2018), like Nigeria where women are majorly found to be involved in either subsistence agricultural activities or petty trading (Jack & Roland, 2016). These two areas according to World Bank (2012), are besieged by gender productivity gap which is caused by lack of access to inputs- of which finance is a key component. ILO (2009), traces the lack of access to finance to commercial banks' usual focus on formal businesses, while neglecting the informal sector which is mostly dominated by women who do not own assets for collateral.

Asset ownership is therefore important in bridging the gap in economic outcomes, even more so than income as it can be used to cushion the effect of shocks, Deere, Alvarado and Twyman, (2010), as well as guard against poverty in the next generation (Quisumbing & Maluccio, 2000). However, one obstacle faced in monitoring and tracking progress of asset ownership by gender, is the lack of gender-disaggregated data at both the local and regional levels, (Githuku, Njunge & Nuijen, 2018). It is common to find most survey studies using the household as the unit of measurement while neglecting the individuals in the households, making it difficult to understand clearly how the ownership, access and control over assets affect the welfare of the individuals in the household (Swaminathan, Suchitra & Lahot, 2012). In linking the use of resources and household welfare, the World Economic Forum (2015) noted that women are more likely than men to invest a larger proportion of their resources in the education and health of their children thereby improving the welfare of the household members. Other researchers like Edet and Etim (2014) and Owusu-Danso (2015) also agree with this assertion. However according to Deere *et al.* (2010), the ability of women to own and control assets is greatly dependent on the society they find themselves and a focus on asset ownership necessarily draws attention to property rights, and specifically the property rights of married women. The society therefore plays a great role in women's ability to gain command over assets (Rustagi & Menon, 2010).

In Nigeria, three main ethnic groups dominate the society and these are the Igbos, Hausas and Yorubas, occupying the eastern, northern and western parts of the country respectively. These different ethnic groups though generally patriarchal in nature have different customs, and traditions. For example, according to Fasoranti and Arua (2003), as regards inheritance by a widow in Igboland, the property of the dead husband goes to his siblings rather than his wife and children. Whereas, in Yorubaland after the death of the husband, the leaders of the extended family would constitute themselves into a committee to share the man's properties among his children and close relatives. In the Northern part of the country which is home to the Hausa tribe, the Islamic Shari'ah law operates in most of the region Ifemeje and Ikpeze (2012). However, due to urbanization and modernization a lot of regions/Sates in the country have a mix of different cultural groups, which may have watered-down the rigidity in traditional beliefs overtime.

An example of such State is Lagos which although having predominately Yoruba indignity, has a high rate of migration to the State. Thus, the State boasts of being a global sociocultural melting pot attracting non-indigenes made up of Nigerians, Africans and other nationals (Lagos State Government, 2017). Asides the Yorubas, Lagos State has other indigenous ethnic sub-groups like the Aworis, Ogus, Ijebu and the Remos coexisting with these other non-indigenes. As such, while the Yoruba culture alongside the religious beliefs may still hold for the indigenous people, modernization and the other tribes' influence cannot be ruled out. Consequently, matters relating to assets ownership by gender of the owner and its implications on welfare of household members may be influenced by urban and modern structure of the State.

Although the urban status of the state gives it a better representation in terms of welfare related indexes like sanitary conditions, health care delivery, potable drinking water, National Bureau of Statistics (2018), some other indicators may not present favorable ranking. For instance, indicators not related to state of governance but peculiar to the particular people involved (women and children) may shed lighter on the welfare status of women and children in the State. Consequently, this could be the reason why the state has the highest rate (71.1%) of widows disposed of their property NPC (2019) and highest rate of school children involved in child labour in the country (Save the Children, 2016). However, in linking gender asset gap and welfare, there is a dearth in data. This is so because a handful of research on gender asset gap in Nigeria are yet to painstakingly examine the critical effect on welfare. For instance, Edet and Etim (2014), Dillion and Quinones (2010), and Ajadi, Oladele, Ikegami, and Tsuruta (2015) disaggregated gender ownership of assets in different states in Nigeria but focused on asset gap without looking at the wealth gap which shows the value of the assets nor the welfare implications.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to carry out a survey in Lagos State, Nigeria with the aim of disaggregating data by gender of assets owners. Range of productive assets would be analyzed in order to ascertain the gender wealth gap, and the welfare implication of the gap on household members in the State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Gender and Sex

It is often common to find people using the words gender and sex interchangeably. This is however not conceptually right, as sex refers to the biological characteristics that categorise someone as either female or male, while gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male (Reeves & Baden, 2000). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2013), refers to gender as “a primary marker of social and economic stratification”. This stratification creates gender inequality which according to The World Bank, means giving men and women different opportunities because of their gender (World Bank, 2006). The study of gender differences does not, therefore, see it as women based but rather it refers to it as the study of both men and women in relation to each other (GAAP, 2012).

As such, gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women or vice versa, but rather, it is about realizing the fundamental rights of everyone, and creating conditions where they have the right and ability to realise their full human potentials (UNICEF & UN Women, 2013 in UNDP, 2013).

Household

The household is particularly important in gender analysis because households play a key role in determining and shaping gender relations from the early stage in a person’s life and in transferring these from one generation to the other (World Bank, 2001). This is so because the household has been defined in diverse ways in different countries (UN, 2001) and by various authors, so much so that it has different definitions based on the perspective and area of interest of the person defining it. For example, Bolt and Bird (2003), view it in terms of sharing, as they define it as “where members share a common source of main income and food, and they sleep under the same roof or in the same compound”.

The United Nations (2001) also defines the multi-person household in the same light “as a group of two or more persons living together who make common provisions for food or other essentials for living”.

It is noteworthy to state here that for the purpose of this study, a household is taken to mean a group of people made up of two (male and female) adults and preferably with dependents who reside together and carry out domestic functions together. They may not necessarily be family members because, by definition, they are not the same.

Assets

For household members, assets are very important for their well-being. Simply put, assets generate income and can facilitate access to credit and capital (Oduro, *et al.,* 2011).

Assets can be broadly categorized into: natural resource capital, physical capital human capital, financial capital, social capital and political capital (GAAP, 2012). This study will concentrate on physical and financial assets as these are tangible assets that can be easily measured, owned and controlled by households.

Ownership Rights

Ownership as a concept can be easily misinterpreted and reported to mean control or access. According to Doss *et al.,* (2013), ownership infers holding all rights within a bundle of rights that characteristically includes the right to rent out, make improvements on, and decide how to use an asset at one's disposal. While access and control represent different components within larger bundles of rights (GAAP, 2012). These definitions clearly show that though different people may have some rights (like control and access) that make up the bundle of rights, only the owner has the right of alienation (Doss *et al.,* 2013).

2.2 Theoretical Review

Gary Becker New Household Economic (NHE) theory which he pioneered with Jacob Mincer in the 1960s (Grossboard, 2010). This theory was originally adopted to explain the decision-making, resource allocation, and utility maximization processes of households the new household economic theory and indeed the unitary approach, in general, originated in the standard demand analysis, it has been modified to include the determinants of education, fertility, health, child fostering, divorce, migration, home production, labour supply, land tenure, and crop adoption (Quisumbing & Mulaccio, 2000). This theory just like other unitary approach to family decision making came under strong criticisms as they were seen as way too simple and very misleading for the complex nature of a household resource allocation (Mattila-Wiro, 1999). In the words of Vermeulen (2000), the approach has empirical, methodological, and welfare economic deficiencies.

Hence the introduction of the collective approach to family decision making and resources allocation. These collective approaches are further sub-divided into two groups. These groups are the cooperative and non-cooperative approaches. They look at how the increase in the income of one household member affect the well-being of other members of the household. While the non-cooperative approach does not necessarily lead to a Pareto efficient allocation of resources in the household, the cooperative bargaining game theories do.

This research work is based on the Axiomatic bargaining theory of Manser and Brown and McElroy and Horney propounded in the 80’s (Vermeulen, 2000). Not only does it recognize a Pareto efficient allocation of resources, it also takes into consideration control of various sources of income. Other attributes of the approach which makes it suitable for this study is that it sees extra household environmental parameters as determinant to the bargaining power of household members. As such, not only does the internal forces within the marriage affect the individual bargaining power, the external forces such as custom, traditions, laws, tax laws (on divorce, alimony and child benefits) also determine how much bargaining power the individuals have.

2.3 Empirical Review

Several studies have been carried out to determine how welfare is achieved in a household when assets/ resources are disaggregated along gender lines. The study done by Alam (2012), carried out in Bangladesh is one of such studies. The study sought to investigate the differential impacts of male and female returns to borrowing from both non-microcredit and microcredit institutions on households' income allocation or spending. Using instrumental variable estimation method with selection and fixed effects to address sample selection, non-random program placement, and endogeneity of returns to borrowing and gender of the borrower due to unobserved heterogeneity. The study's results indicate that borrowers who are females are more likely to spend their income on goods that are valuable to them. They were also more likely to make major household decisions when their incomes increase. By looking at the income and the usage by the genders, this study makes a narrow judgment of the welfare situation of households in the study because income measures fluctuate more widely than asset stocks, making assets better store of wealth (Deere *et al.,* 2010) and as such better indicator of welfare (Dillon & Quinones, 2010).

Kabeer (2001) conducted a study in Bangladesh based on access to credit as a way of improving assets and welfare. Female and male beneficiaries of a microcredit program in two provinces in the country were interviewed and the study found that women who received loans have higher self-worth and more access to money. In many cases, it was found that the loans increased women's decision-making ability within the household, and this led to more women owning assets and to more education for daughters.

Smith, Ramakrishnan, Ndiaye, Haddad, and Martorell, (2003), similarly explored the relationship between women's status and children's nutrition in three developing regions: South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Women's status in this study is defined as women's power relative to men. The empirical results show that higher women's status has a significant, positive effect on children's nutritional status in all three regions. Further, the results confirm that women's status impacts child nutrition because women with higher status have better nutritional status themselves, are better cared for, and provide higher quality care to their children.

Moreover, Beegle, Frankenberg, and Thomas (2001), investigated if a woman's power relative to her husband's affects decisions about the use of prenatal and delivery care in Indonesia. Among other things, the results show that control over economic resources by a woman affects the couple's decision-making. Relative to a woman with no assets that she perceives as being her own, a woman with some share of household assets influences reproductive health decisions.

Panda and Agarwal (2005) in considering the welfare of the woman, looked at violence in the home. The authors investigated women's property status on women's risk of marital violence. Based on a household survey in Kerala in India, and with the aid of logistic analysis, the result showed that women who own fixed properties like land or houses are found to experience a significantly lower risk of violence in their marriages than women without properties.

Quisumbing and Maluccio (2000), used household data sets from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Ethiopia, and South Africa to conduct household analysis on welfare. The authors present measures of individual characteristics that are highly correlated with bargaining power, namely human capital and individually controlled assets, evaluated at the time of marriage. In all the country case studies, they rejected the unitary approach as a description of household behaviour, but to different degrees. Results from the regression analysis suggest that assets controlled by women have a positive and significant effect on expenditure allocations towards the next generation, such as education and children's clothing.

Other studies which found similar results are Duflo 2000; Quisumbing and Brière, 2000; Doss, 1996; Song, 2008; Kes, Jacobs, & Namy, 2011; Rubalcava, *et al.,* 2008). However, some authors Aluko (2015), Swaminathan *et al.* (2012) are of the view that wealth did not translate into equity in decision-making in the household.

3. Methodology

The study used the multistage sampling technique, which was done in four stages. In the first stage, the five administrative divisions in the state, popularly referred to as IBILE were identified. The second stage involved the purposive selection of the largest Local Governments Areas from the administrative divisions. The selection of the largest Local Government Areas was to ensure that there is heterogeneity in the population. Five wards were selected randomly from each of the five Local Government Areas in the third stage. In the final stage, households were randomly selected from each of the wards, with sample size divided equally for each ward. The selection of households was done in procedure which ensured that the sample is a representative of the study population along socioeconomic lines.

In order to obtain the best sample size that would effectively represent the population under study, this study used the statistical formula for determining sample size, given by the research division of the National Education Association (NEA) (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

From the calculations using both methods (Krejcie and Morgan; 384 and the Yamane equation; 400), the sample size results are very close. Therefore, a minimum sample size of 384- 400 is found appropriate for the study. However, according to Israel (2003), no matter the sample size calculation method used, it is advisable to oversample based on the anticipated response rate. Consequently, since it is common to have some questionnaires returned unanswered and also, in order to have a robust empirical analysis, a sample size of 1000 households.

Estimation Techniques

The different techniques used in this study are descriptive and empirical analysis (simple regression analysis). With the aid of a well-structured questionnaire, this study made use of descriptive analysis, i.e., simple percentages were used to present the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of principal female and male asset owners in households in Lagos State. This gave an insight into issues such as age, educational level, ethnic nationality, location, employment status, and income per month of respondents.

For the gender wealth gap, the gross value of total wealth, which is the sum of the reported market value of each asset owned by the respondents, was used. For jointly owned assets, the value was divided among the owners equally. The value calculation is necessary because it gives a clearer picture of the worth of an individual. It shows the quality of assets and not just the quantity.

For welfare analysis, the welfare indicators used lean heavily on the work done by Coudouel, Hentschel, and Wodon (2001) on well-being measurement for the World Bank Group. This study used indicators on health, expenditure, and the level of participation in decision-making by the woman to capture household welfare.

Health Indicators: focused on access to basic services - Sewerage connection, waste disposal system, and source of potable drinking water.

Expenditure decisions on: food per month, housekeeping, health care, and education were used.

Also, the type of dwelling of household members was used as an indicator of welfare. A woman being able to make decisions in the home goes a long way in affecting her welfare and that of her children.

To capture the decision-making process that can lead to household welfare outcomes, simple percentages, were used to present the information on respondents' decision-making process on household critical welfare indicators on health and household expenditures, Gender Asset Gap Project (GAGP) (2009), Oduro, *et al.,* 2011. There are six different decision-making outcomes; **1-** That the husband decides alone; **2-** that the wife decides alone; **3-** that the principal couple decides in consultation; **4-** that the wife decides with permission; **5-** that the husband decides with permission **6-** that someone else decides.

Chi-Square was used to test the null hypothesis, which states there is no significant relationship between gender wealth gap and household welfare in Lagos State. This was done at a 5% level of significance.

Model Specification

Model 1: To address the wealth gap between the male and female household members, the log of wealth (*lnW*) was regressed against gender variable (G) as shown in equation (1). This simple regression was employed to show the magnitude and direction of the wealth gap.

Using the male dummy as the reference category the model is specified as follows;

$lnW = f\ (G);\ i=0,1:\ (0=male,\ 1=female)$ ………………………………………..... (1)

The coefficient of the dummy variable shows the direction of the gap in relation to the reference category. The coefficient whether positive or negative indicates the direction of the gap in relation to the reference group. A positive coefficient for women in relation to men, indicates that women have higher mean wealth than men and a negative coefficient for women in relation to men shows that women have less mean wealth as can be seen in table 2.

4. Results and Discussion

Socioeconomic and Demographic Characteristics of Household Members

Descriptive analysis was carried out to determine the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of household members in Lagos State. From the descriptive analysis, it was gathered that most of the respondents fall within the 33-57 age group with a percentage of 82.4%. The ethnic nationality of the respondents is mostly Yoruba with 55.3 % of total respondents. Table 1 shows the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of household asset owners in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of household asset owners in Lagos State, Nigeria

Variables	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
Asset Owners(N)	**854**	**54**	**717**	**46**	**1571**	**100**
SELECTED LGAs OF RESPONDENTS						
Alimosho	315	53	284	47	599**(38)**	100
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	172	47	195	53	367**(23)**	100
Ikorodu	188	65	102	35	290**(19)**	100
Surulere	152	64	85	36	237**(15)**	100
Epe	27	35	51	65	78**(5)**	100
AGE OF RESPONDENTS						
18-22	2	33	4	67	6 **(0.4)**	100
23-27	4	11	34	89	38 **(2.4)**	100
28-32	14	13	96	87	110 **(7)**	100
33-37	31	17	150	83	181 **(11.5)**	100
38-42	113	48	124	52	237 **(15.1)**	100
43-47	260	62	159	38	419 **(26.7)**	100
48-52	159	66	82	34	241 **(15.3)**	100
53-57	168	72	48	22	216 **(13.8)**	100

Variables	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
58-62	71	79	19	21	90 **(5.7)**	100
Above 62	21	64	12	36	33 **(2.1)**	100
ETHNIC NATIONALITY OF RESPONDENTS						
Hausa	86	87	13	13	99**(6.3)**	100
Igbo	177	52	164	48	341**(21.7)**	100
Yoruba	418	48	451	52	869**(55.3)**	100
Others	173	66	89	34	262**(16.7)**	100
HOUSEHOLD HEAD	818	88	112	12	1571	100
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS						
Tertiary	504	70	219	30	723**(46)**	100
Vocational/others	64	54	55	46	119**(7.6)**	100
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RESPONDENTS						
Unemployed	9	1	45	6	54 **(3.4)**	100
Self employed	283	33	326	46	609 **(38.8)**	100
Paid employment	551	65	307	43	858 **(54.6)**	100
Others	11	1	39	5	50 **(3.2)**	100
INCOME PER MONTH OF RESPONDENTS						
< 30,000	99	40	148	60	247 **(15.7)**	100
30,000 - 50,000	161	44	203	56	364 **(23.2)**	100
50,001 - 100,000	213	49.9	214	50.1	427 **(27.2)**	100
100,001 - 150,000	133	60	87	40	220 **(14)**	100
150,001 - 200,000	67	72	26	28	93 **(5.9)**	100
200,001 - 250,000	55	74	19	24	74 **(4.7)**	100
250,001 - 300,000	28	80	7	7	35 **(2.2)**	100
Above 300,000	98	88	13	12	111 **(7.1)**	100

Source: Author's computation 2021

Table 2: Gender Mean Difference in Wealth

Group	Observations	Mean	Standard Error	Standard Deviation
Male	854	21646282.75	2075674.459	60658012.58
Female	717	10183772.57	1623675.139	43476914.88
diff		11462510.18	2710222.393	
p	.000	($t_{1532.631}$ =4.350, $p<0.001$)		

Source: Field survey, author's computation (2019)

As regards the value of this asset (land), Table 3 shows the worth of land owned by the respondents. Table 4 shows the mean value, the minimum value, the maximum value, and the sum of the individual wealth of the male and female respondents.

Table 4 indicates that out of the ₦2, 009,590,000 total value of land, the male respondents have about 80% of the total value of land, while the other 20% belong to female respondents.

Table 3: Land Value (Wealth) Owned by Respondents

Statistics	Male Business Value in (₦)	Female Business Value in (₦)	Total in (₦)
Max	50,000,000	10,000,000	
Min	150,000.00	130,000.00	
Mean	1,022,756.21	256,422.66	
Sum	1,606,750,000 (80%)	402,840,000 (20%)	**2,009,590,000 (100%)**

Source: Field survey, author's computation (2019)

Also, as with worth of land, business ownership also follows the same pattern of male dominance with 51% and 49% for the male respondents and female respondents respectively as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Business Value (Wealth) of Respondents

Statistics	Male Business Value in (₦)	Female Business Value in (₦)	Total in (₦)
Max	16,000,000	9,000,000	
Min	20,000	20,000	
Mean	175,995.49	167,538.71	
Total	273,145,000(51.3%)	259,685,000(48.7%)	**532,830,000**

Source: Field survey, author's computation (2019)
Note: Figures in parenthesis represent % of the business worth of the genders to the total business value.

Examining the Impact of Gender Wealth Gap on Household Welfare in Lagos State

The study uses the decision-making power in the household which according to Katz & Chamorro (2003) is an important welfare indicator of household members, to compare with the gender wealth gap. Table 4 shows the distribution of decision making within the household and wealth gap.
The wealth gap classification is based on the absolute difference between male and female share of household wealth, such that "Low" represents wealth gap below 0.50, "High" represents any gap above 0.50, while no gap represents equal wealth group. The decision making is captured with "yes", for all those who participate in decision making be it jointly or alone, while "no" represents those who do not participate in decision making process within the household.

From table 5. It can be seen that approximately 54% of the female respondents participated in decision making within the household, while 46% did not. This gives a good outlook of the decision-making process; however, a closer look at the figures, reveal more interesting information. On the distribution of respondents by the aforementioned classification of gaps, it can be observed that among the respondents with no gap, 79% participate in decision making within their households, for low asset gap group, 62% participate in decisions making within their households, while for the high asset gap group 48% participate in the decision-making process in their household. This implies that the lower the wealth gap, the higher the decision-making participation rate of female respondents. For those who do not make decisions, 4%, 20% and 76% of them belong to the no, low and high wealth gap groups respectively as seen in Table 6.

These observed differences in the decision-making process across the different wealth gaps categories are found to be statistically significant showing that female participation in decision making process is associated with household wealth gap.

Table 5: Distribution of Female Participation in Household Decision by Wealth Gap

Decision making within the household	No gap	Low gap	High gap	Total
Decision Makers (YES)	50 (79.37) [13]	109 (62.29) [28]	229 (48) [59]	388 (54) [100]
Non- Decision makers (NO)	13 (20.63) [4]	66 (37.71) [20]	250 (52) [76]	329 (46) [100]
Total	63 (100)	175 (100)	479 (100)	717 (100)

Pearson $chi^2(2) = 19.3736$ Pr = 0.000

Source: Field survey, author's computation (2019)
Note: Each cell contains the count, row percentages in parentheses and column percentages in brackets.

In Table 6, welfare indicators based on the use of amenities by household members were used to analyse the wealth gap. From the table, it can be seen that the majority of the respondents who belong to the high wealth gap group, have poor welfare, this group make up 70.41 % of the total poor welfare subsector. When considering the entirety of the result, the high wealth gap group constitutes 54% of the better welfare group and a whopping 70% of the poor welfare group. This shows that despite the urban status of the respondents which gives them better opportunities and services than rural dwellers, gender wealth gap has a negative influence on the welfare status of household members. To buttress this point is the P-value of 0.0000 which shows that the chi-square value is significant as shown in table 6. This value indicates that we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. The result shows that there is an inverse relationship between gender wealth gap and household welfare in Lagos State.

Table 6`: Welfare Level and Household Gender Gap

	Wealth Gap			
Welfare	**None**	**Low**	**High**	**Total**
Poor Welfare	8 2.37 12.70	92 27.22 18.40	238 70.41 30.79	338 100.00 25.30
Better Welfare	55 5.15 87.30	408 40.88 81.60	535 53.61 69.21	998 100.00 74.70
Total	**63** (4.72) 100.00	**500** (37.43) 100.00	**773** (57.86) 100.00	**1,336** 100.00 100.00

Pearson $chi^2 = 30.2137$ Pr = 0.000

Source: Field survey, author's computation (2019)
Key: Frequency, row percentage and column percentage and column percentage

Discussion of findings

From the descriptive analysis, looking at the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of assets owners in Lagos State, out of the 1571 respondents, 854 are males while 717 are females. Also, the results showed that Yoruba as an ethnic group made up 55 % of the respondents. This is not surprising as the State is predominantly a Yoruba state (Lagos State Government, 2017). On household headship, 88% of males and 12% of female respondents are household heads respectively. This gap in headship is obviously due to the societal influence of men being the head of households and as such the result is not surprising, because although globally the world has seen an increase in female headed households, it is more common in Northern America and Europe than in Asia and Africa (UN, 2017). This low percentage of female household headship was also recorded by (Oluka et al 2005; NPC 2019; NBS 2017).

On gender gap implications on welfare of household members, this study the level of the participation in decision making by the woman and also the basic amenities used by the family members to capture her welfare status and that of the household members.

Result from the descriptive analysis in table 6 and 7 show that in all the categories of decision making, more males than females have dominance in voicing of opinion in the household. By and large on decision making, although low gender wealth gap increases a woman's decision-making power in the household, men still have dominance in decision making as suggested in Aluko (2015) and Swaminathan *et al*. (2012). As regards amenities (Toilet used, waste disposal system, source of drinking water and, type of housing) used by household members, there is an inverse relationship between wealth gap and household welfare as shown in Table 5.

Thus, in summary the data obtained from the field in the course of this study was analysed using both the descriptive and inferential statistics and below are some of the salient findings of the research:

i) There is a significant gender asset gap biased in favour of men in Lagos State.

ii) There is a negative relationship between gender wealth gap and household welfare in Lagos State, Nigeria.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The data from in this study revealed various results on the issues pertaining to the analysis of gender wealth gap and household welfare in Lagos State. From the findings of this study, it is quite clear that there is gender wealth gap, which is biased in favour of males in Lagos State. The descriptive statistics used to test the effect of gender wealth gap on household welfare found an inverse relationship between the two.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and given the existing policies meant to address gender inequality both at national and global levels, the following recommendations are made:

i) Gender wealth gap was found to be biased in favour of men and therefore this study recommends that measures and policies should be put in to encourage ownership of assets by women. This could come in form of incentives for female sole land and property buyers and also for joint ownership of land or property purchased by married couple. This should be made where the woman's name appears on the document(s).

ii) Policy makers and stakeholders should encourage increase female participation in capacity building programs. This could come in form of life-long learning, small business training schemes or even conditional cash transfers to women so as to empower them to be able to acquire assets

Implications of findings

Though gender asset wealth cannot be wiped out just immediately, it can however be gradually reduced with careful implementation of the above recommendations. The reduction of this gap is key to the overall development process of Lagos State and the nation as a whole because gender equality promotes equity and inclusive development. Knowledge of the gender wealth gap will set policymakers on the right path to take in the developmental process affecting women and children and hence curb intergenerational poverty.

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