



Gender Discrimination in Land Administration; Implications and Strategic Measures for mitigating

Akeredolu, T.B.

Department of Quantity Surveying

University of Ibadan

Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

E-mail: tolaniosuolale@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the implications of gender discrimination in land administration and examines measures for mitigating such discrimination in Lagos State, with a view to promoting equitable land administration and allocation. Primary data were collected from 120 respondents in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State using a well-structured questionnaire. The data collected covered respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, the implications of gender discrimination, and measures for addressing gender discrimination in land administration. The data were analysed using mean ranking analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The findings revealed that limited access to, control over, and use of land-related services and productive resources ranked highest among the identified implications of gender discrimination, with a mean score (MS) of 4.67, while experiences of violence or intimidation of women during the process of accessing land ranked lowest (MS = 3.78). Regarding measures for mitigating gender discrimination, creating more opportunities for activities that promote and strengthen women's participation was ranked highest (MS = 4.90). This finding indicates a strong consensus among respondents on the need for active government intervention to enhance women's participation in land administration. Improving female education ranked second (MS = 4.80), highlighting education as a critical foundation for empowering women and reducing gender-based inequalities in land access and administration. This was followed by the transformation of prevailing societal norms (MS = 4.55), while strengthening land administration institutions to address gender discrimination ranked lowest among the proposed measures (MS = 3.95). The study concludes that addressing gender discrimination in land administration requires a multifaceted approach, with education serving as a critical instrument for empowering women to understand, claim, and exercise their land rights, complemented by stronger governmental intervention. The study recommends the development and effective implementation of gender-sensitive legal and institutional frameworks, supported by appropriate enforcement and monitoring mechanisms. The implementation of these measures could contribute significantly to reducing gender discrimination in land administration, thereby promoting greater gender equality, equitable access to land, and the empowerment of women.

Keywords: Gender Discrimination, Land Administration, Property Right, Gender Equality, Land, Tenure Security.

Journal Reference Format:

Akeredolu, T.B. (2026): Gender Discrimination in Land Administration; Implications and Strategic Measures for mitigating. *Humanities, Management, Arts, Education & the Social Sciences Journal*. Vol. 14, No. 1, Pp 27-42. www.isteams.net/humanitiesjournal.
[dx.doi.org/10.22624/AIMS/HUMANITIES/V14N1P4](https://doi.org/10.22624/AIMS/HUMANITIES/V14N1P4)

1. INTRODUCTION

Land is one of humanity's most valuable and enduring resources. It provides the foundation for shelter, food production, economic activities, and social identity. In development studies, land is viewed not merely as a physical space or natural resource, but also as a source of livelihood, wealth creation, and social and economic power (Ayodeji, 2025). Access to and control over land significantly influence individuals' capacity to produce, accumulate assets, secure livelihoods, and participate meaningfully in community decision-making. Consequently, equitable land administration, encompassing ownership, use, transfer, and inheritance rights, is fundamental to the achievement of social justice and sustainable development. However, in many developing countries, gender discrimination remains deeply embedded in land administration systems. Cultural norms, patriarchal inheritance practices, and institutional biases continue to constrain women's rights to own, inherit, access, or manage land.



Such discrimination occurs under both customary and statutory systems, where male relatives, traditional authorities, or community leaders may exercise considerable influence over land allocation, documentation, and decision-making processes (Akinola & Adeyemo, 2021). Despite women's significant contributions to agricultural production and household sustenance, they frequently lack formal land titles and adequate decision-making authority over land resources (UN-Habitat, 2022). The relationship between land and gender discrimination is therefore both structural and economic because land ownership provides social status, tenure security, livelihood opportunities, and access to financial resources such as credit. When women are denied equitable access to and control over land, their capacity to improve their livelihoods, participate in governance, accumulate wealth, and overcome poverty is significantly constrained. Studies have indicated that gender inequality in land administration can perpetuate intergenerational poverty, reduce agricultural productivity, and undermine communities' resilience to economic and environmental shocks (World Bank, 2024).

In response to these challenges, global and regional frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 and SDG 10, as well as the African Union's Land Policy Initiative (LPI), advocate inclusive land governance that promotes equal access to land for both men and women. Nevertheless, implementation gaps persist at the local level, where cultural practices, institutional weaknesses, and resistance to change continue to undermine land reform initiatives. Therefore, examining the implications of gender discrimination in land administration and identifying practical measures for addressing it are critical to promoting gender equity, improving livelihoods, and fostering sustainable development within the study area.

According to Agbalajobi (2010), the concept of gender originated from a Latin noun referring to kind or group. Gender may also be used as a grammatical concept to classify words into masculine and feminine categories. In contemporary social discourse, however, the concept of gender is used to describe the socially constructed perceptions, roles, responsibilities, expectations, opportunities, and rewards that societies assign to individuals based on their sex. Margaret (2012) observed that discrimination can affect both males and females in different circumstances, although women are often disproportionately affected by discriminatory practices.

The subordination of women has historically been embedded in social and cultural practices and has remained a persistent challenge to the achievement of fairness, justice, and equity within society. The mainstream development agenda is therefore confronted with the challenge of enhancing women's roles in land administration and ownership. Gender-based discrimination exists in varying forms across societies, often resulting in the marginalisation or devaluation of women. Udegbe (2014) explained that being male or female is associated with socially constructed labels that influence behavioural expectations, opportunities, and social roles. Similarly, Margaret (2012) noted that women have traditionally been directed towards occupations and social roles considered culturally appropriate for their gender.

Evidence of gender discrimination in land administration is substantial. Women are often less likely to own or rent land and, when they do, they may have access to smaller parcels or land of comparatively lower quality (Ayodeji, 2025). Deere et al. (2011) further reported that even where women own land, they may lack control over or access to the resources required for its productive development.



This situation is inconsistent with the significant contributions women make to agricultural production and other livelihood activities. Across different countries, several challenges hinder the effective development and administration of land resources. These challenges can adversely affect national economic performance because of the strong relationship between land resources and economic development. Effective land administration is particularly challenging in developing countries, where institutional, legal, cultural, and economic constraints may limit the capacity of governments to manage land resources effectively (Cavalcanti & Tavares, 2007).

The effectiveness of land administration can therefore be regarded as an important component of a country's broader economic and institutional development. Gender discrimination within land administration remains a significant concern in many developing countries, and Nigeria is not excluded from this challenge. Adeniran (2007) examined gender inequalities in land-related matters and affirmed that gender is an important issue in the study of women's social and economic history. Across many societies, women do not enjoy equal access to land compared with men. Nevertheless, women perform vital economic and social roles within their communities. In rural areas, for instance, women undertake a substantial proportion of unpaid household activities while also making significant contributions to agricultural production. Approximately half of the world's food is produced by women, while an estimated two-thirds of women workers in developing countries are engaged in the agricultural sector (Salam, 2003). Despite these contributions, women's labour has historically received inadequate economic recognition from governments and major development institutions (Salam, 2003).

For a country's development to be meaningful and inclusive, it should provide all willing and capable individuals, irrespective of sex, with equitable opportunities to access and utilise land resources (Shayo, 2005). The increasing participation of women in the labour force is therefore recognised as an important indicator of socio-economic development. Against this background, examining gender disparities in access to and control over land is essential to understanding the broader implications for Nigeria's development. The findings of such a study can assist relevant government agencies and other stakeholders in formulating and implementing land policies that promote equitable access to land and strengthen the effectiveness of land administration for both men and women.

Agbalajobi (2010) identified societal structures and cultural perceptions as important factors contributing to discrimination against women. In many traditional settings, men are perceived as stronger, more capable, and more suitable for roles involving control and administration of land, whereas women are often expected to remain within socially prescribed gender roles. These perceptions can create loopholes within land administration practices and may restrict women's access to land assets and inheritance rights. In some communities, women's entitlement to land may be conditional upon their marital status, family relationships, or perceived contributions to the household. Such practices reflect cultural norms and social rules that have become embedded within community institutions and continue to influence land-related decisions. It is against this background that this study examines the implications of gender discrimination in land administration and identifies measures for addressing such discrimination in Lagos State.



This study focuses on land administration in Ikorodu, Lagos State, with particular attention to the experiences of both indigenes and non-indigenes residing in the area. Ikorodu was selected as the case study because of its increasing land development activities involving individuals and private developers, which provide a relevant context for examining contemporary land administration practices and gender-related challenges. The location also provides access to relevant respondents and sources of data required for the study. Furthermore, Ikorodu has a diverse population comprising both indigenous residents and non-indigenous groups, making it an appropriate setting for examining different experiences and perceptions relating to land administration (Akingbade, 2012).

2. OVERVIEW OF LAND ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

According to Deininger and Binswanger (2019) Land is a vital economic resource and source of livelihood in the world particularly as the case may be in Nigeria as people depend on land for a living. A Traditional Nigerian has always viewed land as the fundamental element of their economic well-being as well as part of social and cultural identity. There are some common characteristics identified in African land-holding systems which are: collective ownership of land by the tribe, the community or the lineage, inalienability of land, flexible access mechanisms to land and land-related resources, and community-based land administered and managed by the Chiefs who are in charge of the village disputes.

Property in Nigeria, which is closely linked with speaking about land, the systems of land administration have a major impact on the sets of rights to property that can be inherited in Nigeria. Land is divided into three major types: communal land, individual (or private) land, and public (or state) land. Customary land is held as “corporate aggregate”, through groups such as towns, patrilineal or matrilineal groups, and family systems. Such land can be used jointly, by any member, or divided amongst families for use. This land may be distant farmland, forest, or spaces like the market square (Emery, 2015).

Private tenure in customary systems tends to be on the basis of the family unit; with the family head distributing rights to land that are inheritable to children, but non-alienable without consent of the family head. It may be stated that the head of the family in most Nigerian contexts are predominantly male and have the right to land inheritance (Ntsebeza, 2019). Emery (2015) also presented an argument that the requirement of family consultation is a rule of law, and not a matter of convenience. While all individuals who are members of the community or family have a right to a portion of the land, this does not hold true for women as they are viewed as temporary members. Therefore, they do not have permanent and inheritable rights to the land, but rights to use and enjoyment of land while physically in the family. Individuals may also hold land in their own right for example, through clearing vacant land. However, most land is acquired through inheritance within customary systems.

Land rights are usually conceived of as the rights to use, enjoy, and exploit land including information about, decision – making around and benefits from the latter. Women’s land rights are fragile and transient, being dependent upon age and marital status (including type of marriage and the success of that marriage), whether they had children (including the number and sex of those children) and their sexual conduct (Fabiya, 1990).



Fabiya (1990) criticized the act in spite of the Nigerian Land Use Act (LUA) of 1978, which restructured the property rights system in the country from a mixed private property rights system into a collectivist framework, concerns about women's land rights persist. The impact of inequality in land rights has aggravated women's socio – economic status, increased the number of women engaging in sex work, allowed for sexual harassment and violence against women and contributed towards marital instability, separation, and divorce. This is an especially significant threat to women in an era of rising land prices, increasing land scarcity, and rising competition to control this resource (Olawoye, 2014).

Yakubu (2015) claimed that land policies and reforms are solutions to eradicate the women threat on land administration. However, elements that should address gender issues explicitly, for example, gender equality clauses are not used. Some land policies do not include such clauses, but nevertheless have different impacts on women and men and on different subgroups of women and men. In particular, policies that attempt to commercialize and privatize land, in the hope that this will promote investment and economic growth, can have negative consequences on women's access to and control over land. Globally, findings show that women's land right when compared with men's are seriously disadvantaged. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the causal factors of gender discrimination on land administration with a view to eradicating any existing factors hindering equal access to land in Lagos state Nigeria.

2.1 Implications of Gender Discrimination in Land Administration

Battling for equality on all fronts a consequence of gender inequality with regards to customary laws that have prevented women from gaining inheritance rights to land has resulted in many young girls being denied an education they deserve. For many young women in Nigeria education is a way out of poverty. Disparities between girls and boys start in primary school and the differences widen through the entire educational system (Mwabu and Ackerman, 2013). Ajala (2017) based on the study carried out on gender discrimination examined the economic implications of gender discrimination in land administration in rural areas in Nigeria. It was discovered that the majority of the land (92.7%) yields financial returns owing to the fact that some of the households carry out farming activities on the land. Although only 12.8% of the women collect the income from the land.

Aside from the collection of income, the study also discovered that the majority of the women do not receive any share from the proceeds from the land. It was also found that over 70% of the women cannot be allowed to use the land as a collateral in obtaining a loan in order to carry out a business or an investment that can fetch returns. Majority of the respondents provided that gender discrimination has had a high impact in their ability to get income. All these unpleasant results translate to women's poverty. It is evident in the study as the majority of the respondents earn below 30,000 monthly. Ajala (2017) concluded in his study that there is an urgent need to address the issues on gender discrimination so as to ensure reduction of women poverty. A wrong perception of the concept of gender by policy makers, charged with the responsibility for policy articulation and execution continues to challenge the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment goals. Salami (2015) claimed that there is still evidence that gender education has not permitted all levels of the populace, thus the impression that gender issues are exclusively about women still persists. Salami (2015) highlighted some implications of gender discrimination and where it thus affects the women gender such as:



2.2 Resource Management and Utilization

Gender imbalance substantially limits women's access to control over and use of service and productive resources. Women face numerous challenges within the agricultural sector, including lack of control over land, capital and even their own labor. Other challenges include lack of access to appropriate technologies, exploitation by marketers or service providers and lack of access to productive opportunities (Adeniran, 2007).

Despite the contribution of women in the agricultural sector, their role in promoting economic growth and social stability continues to be inadequately recognized and undervalued. The following factors were listed by Ajala (2017) which are:

- The male-dominated culture in Nigeria makes women inferior in society;
- Customs that forbid women from owning land and the sexual division of labor which keeps women subordinate to men; and
- The problem of unpaid productive activities performed by women at the domestic front.

Given the above, appropriate gender sensitive policy that dismantles every form of discrimination against women in agricultural production and land use systems will be a priority policy for implementation.

2.3 Measures to Eradicate Gender Discrimination :

The idea that women and men are equal and that individuals have freedom of choice is clearly the dominant discourse at the present time in Nigeria. Gender discrimination does still exist despite the dominance of the laws that emphasize individual freedom of choice (Odimegwu, 2011). According to Ojo (2002) on solution to gender eradication postulates the following recommendations to improve the conditions of women: The House of Representatives should consider the adoption of a bill that constitutes strategies to fight against discrimination in Nigeria. This law must extend laws covering discrimination in Nigeria particularly on grounds of sex/gender and other factors like ethnic origin, age, religion, marital status, family status.

Kasunmu (2006) suggested that educating the female gender who has been condoned by the ignorant people who may have no idea of the fact that their rights are being violated as a solution to eradicating discrimination. Therefore, it is necessary that empowerment is given to the women in order for them to acknowledge what rights they have as civilians and citizens of their country. Attempts should be made to change the prevailing norms, customs and traditions that create an environment for discrimination of women to take place. This could be done by conscious efforts being made to educate traditional rulers and religious leaders as regards the benefits of educating and empowering women.

For gender discrimination to be resolved on land administration, the following points were proposed by Akinola (2018), Society should acknowledge equal democratic participation for accredited individuals on land administration, government should create more rooms for activities to reinforce the women, there should be empowerment programmes for women and girls, policies should be on ground to guide the women, and there should be proper monitoring of the policies.



3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Study Population

The target population for this study comprised both indigenes and non-indigenes residing in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State. The study focused on residents who were considered relevant to the investigation of gender discrimination in land administration within the study area. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select respondents based on their relevance to the objectives of the study. The study population was drawn from selected organisations, markets, residential areas, and commercial locations within Ikorodu Local Government Area. A total of 120 questionnaires were administered to selected respondents across these locations. Ikorodu was selected as the study area because of its heterogeneous socio-economic characteristics, including industrial areas, diverse residential neighbourhoods, banks, hotels, markets, and other commercial activities. These characteristics provide a suitable setting for obtaining information from residents with diverse experiences and perceptions regarding land administration.

3.2 Methods of Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire designed to obtain relevant information from respondents in the study area. The questionnaire consisted predominantly of multiple-choice and closed-ended questions covering respondents' demographic characteristics, the implications of gender discrimination in land administration, and measures for addressing gender discrimination. The questionnaires were administered directly to selected respondents within the study area.

3.3 Tools for Data Analysis

The data collected were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed in analysing the data. The descriptive statistical techniques included frequency distribution, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation. These techniques were used to summarise and present the characteristics of the respondents and their responses to the study variables. Mean ranking was also employed to rank the identified implications and measures according to their respective mean scores. Inferential statistics were used to examine relationships and differences within the data and to draw conclusions about the study population based on the sample observations.

The specific inferential statistical technique employed was analysis of variance (ANOVA), where appropriate, to determine whether statistically significant differences existed among the relevant groups of respondents.



Table 1 : Implication of Gender Dscrimination

S/N	Items	MS	SD	R	F	pValue
1.	Gender imbalance substantially limits women's access to control over and use of service and productive resources	4.67	0.50	1	2.06	.04
2.	Lack of access to appropriate technologies for thefemale gender	4.67	0.71	1	0.96	.03
3.	Leads to exploitation by marketers or service providers	4.67	0.71	1	0.32	.01
4.	Leads to lack of access to productive opportunities	4.22	1.09	4	1.15	.02
5.	Gives women an inferior position in society	4.22	0.67	4	0.32	0.81
6	keeps women subordinate to men	4.11	1.36	5	1.10	0.36
7	It promotes uneducated women	4.44	0.53	2	0.91	0.44
8	Leads to female gender being dependents.	4.33	0.87	3	0.19	0.90
9	Leads to violent experience or intimidation of women in theprocess of accessing land	3.78	0.67	7	1.02	0.39
10	Leads to forced migration and risk of displacement of women	4.11	0.78	5	0.90	0.45
11	Leads to psychological distress or trauma because ofland-related disputes	4.22	1.19	4	0.56	0.64
12	Gender imbalance leads to lack of access to legal and paralegalaccess for the female gender	3.89	0.93	6	1.31	0.28
13	Gender imbalance leads to women's reduced ability to engage inclimate change and mitigation activities	4.22	1.09	4	0.65	0.59
14	Gender imbalance leads to women's reduced ability to access and benefit from government support programmers related to landacquisition	4.22	1.09	4	0.16	0.92
15	Gender imbalance leads to women's increased reliance on informal and customary land tenure systems, which may not adequately protect their rights.	4.11	1.36	5	0.18	0.91
16	Gender imbalance leads to reduced ability of women to exercise their human rights like right to adequate housing and a decent standard of living	4.22	1.09	4	0.54	0.31
17	Gender imbalance leads to women's increased vulnerability topoverty and homelessness	4.11	1.36	5	0.65	0.42
18	Gender imbalance leads to women's reduced participation inmanagement of agricultural activities and other natural resources	4.11	1.36	5	0.75	0.73
19	Gender imbalance can have significant impacts on a nation'seconomy	3.89	0.93	6	1.21	0.87
20	Gender imbalance leads to women's inability to use land forfinancial investments or as collateral for financial transactions	4.11	1.36	5	3.01	0.96



Table 1 presents the respondents' perceptions of the implications of gender discrimination, particularly its effects on women's access to resources, opportunities, rights, and socio-economic status. The mean scores for most of the items are above 4.00, indicating a high level of agreement among the respondents regarding the adverse effects associated with gender discrimination in land administration. The standard deviation (SD) values indicate varying degrees of dispersion in the respondents' views, with some items showing relatively greater consistency than others. The highest mean score of 4.67 was recorded for the implication relating to limited access to, control over, and use of services and productive resources. This finding indicates that respondents strongly perceived restricted access to productive resources as a major consequence of gender discrimination in land administration. Other highly rated implications include limited access to appropriate technologies and the exploitation of women by marketers. These findings suggest that gender discrimination may create systemic barriers that restrict women's ability to control and benefit equitably from land-related resources, services, and technological opportunities.

Table 2: Propose Measure Effect in Eradicating Gender Discrimination in Land Administration

S/N	Items	MS	SD	R	F	pValue
1.	There is a need to improve female gender education.	4.8	0.45	1	1.15	0.05
2.	Attempts should be made to change the prevailing norms	4.55	0.78	2	2.06	0.03
3.	Society should acknowledge equal democratic participation for accredited individuals on land administration	4.33	0.62	3	0.87	0.04
4	Government should create more rooms for activities to reinforce and promote women participations	4.9	0.58	1	1.25	0.02
5	There should be empowerment and mentorship programmes for women and girls to increase awareness to knowledge and rights regarding land ownership and rights	4.4	0.89	4	0.92	0.08
6	Policies should be available to guide the women, and there should be proper monitoring of the policies.	4.25	1.12	5	1.35	0.15
7	Government intervention on land administration	4.7	0.55	2	0.78	0.4
8	Gender-sensitive legal frameworks should be developed and implemented effectively	4.38	0.65	3	0.34	0.66
9	Land administration institutions should be strengthened to address gender discrimination	3.95	1.25	7	1.15	0.32
10	Gender-sensitive land-use planning and management that prioritizes women's rights to land should be developed and implemented	4.22	0.82	5	0.67	0.48

Where the reported significance values (p-values) are less than 0.05, the corresponding differences or relationships are considered statistically significant at the 5% level, subject to the specific statistical test applied. The findings further indicate that respondents strongly agreed that gender discrimination relegates women to disadvantaged positions within society and restricts their access to productive opportunities. The relatively higher standard deviation values for some of these items suggest that respondents' perceptions varied to some extent. This variation may reflect differences in respondents' personal experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, or perceptions of gender-related practices within the study area.



The influence of gender discrimination on women's social and economic roles is also evident from the moderate to high mean scores recorded for items relating to women's subordination, restricted educational opportunities, and increased dependency. Although items concerning psychological distress arising from land disputes and reduced capacity to participate in climate-change-related activities recorded comparatively lower mean scores, their ratings still indicate that gender discrimination may have broader consequences for women's psychological well-being, livelihood opportunities, and participation in community development activities.

Furthermore, gender discrimination was perceived to affect women's legal rights and economic participation. Mean scores above 4.00 for items relating to access to legal rights, human rights, and economic vulnerability indicate a strong level of agreement among respondents. However, the relatively higher standard deviation values associated with some of these items suggest differences in the perceptions of respondents. The findings relating to women's participation in agricultural management, dependence on informal land tenure arrangements, and vulnerability to poverty further demonstrate the multidimensional nature of gender inequality in land administration. Overall, the findings indicate that gender discrimination in land administration has far-reaching social, legal, economic, and livelihood implications for women. The results suggest that restrictions on women's access to and control over land and productive resources may contribute to economic dependency, limited livelihood opportunities, vulnerability to poverty, and reduced participation in socio-economic development. Therefore, addressing gender discrimination requires comprehensive interventions that simultaneously target institutional practices, legal frameworks, educational opportunities, cultural norms, and women's access to productive resources.

Table 2 presents the respondents' perceptions of measures for addressing gender discrimination in land administration. The mean scores recorded across most of the items are relatively high, indicating a strong level of agreement among respondents regarding the relevance and potential effectiveness of the proposed measures. The standard deviation (SD) values indicate varying degrees of dispersion in respondents' opinions, suggesting that while there is substantial agreement on most measures, the extent of consensus differs across the individual items. The highest mean score of 4.90 was recorded for the measure advocating that government should create more opportunities for activities that reinforce and promote women's participation. This finding demonstrates a strong consensus among respondents on the importance of active government intervention in enhancing women's participation in land administration. The result suggests that respondents perceive government support and the creation of enabling opportunities as essential mechanisms for improving women's involvement in land-related decision-making and resource management.

Improving female education ranked second, with a mean score of 4.80. This finding underscores the perceived importance of education as a fundamental instrument for empowering women and addressing gender disparities in land administration. Improved access to education can enhance women's awareness of their legal and land rights, strengthen their capacity to make informed decisions, and improve their ability to participate effectively in land-related processes. Government intervention in land administration also received a high mean score of 4.70, further demonstrating the importance respondents attach to institutional and governmental action.



Changing prevailing societal norms (MS = 4.55) and acknowledging equal democratic participation in land administration (MS = 4.33) were also highly rated. These findings indicate that addressing gender discrimination requires not only policy interventions but also changes in cultural attitudes, social expectations, and institutional practices that may restrict women's participation in land administration.

Empowerment and mentorship programmes for women, as well as the development of gender-sensitive legal frameworks, also received relatively high mean scores of approximately 4.40. These results indicate broad support for interventions aimed at strengthening women's capacity, improving their representation, and providing an appropriate legal framework for protecting their land rights. The relatively higher standard deviations recorded for some of these measures suggest some variation in respondents' perceptions regarding their applicability or implementation. Similarly, the development of gender-sensitive land-use planning recorded a mean score of 4.22, highlighting the importance of incorporating gender considerations into land-use planning and governance processes.

This approach could contribute to more equitable decision-making by ensuring that the needs and interests of both men and women are considered in land-use policies and development planning. Strengthening land administration institutions recorded the comparatively lowest mean score of 3.95 among the proposed measures. Although this was the lowest-rated measure, the mean score remains relatively high, indicating that respondents still generally agreed that institutional strengthening is relevant to addressing gender discrimination. Its comparatively lower ranking may suggest that respondents perceived other interventions, particularly government-supported participation, education, and changes in societal norms, as more immediate or influential measures.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that addressing gender discrimination in land administration requires a multifaceted approach involving government intervention, improved female education, empowerment and mentorship initiatives, gender-sensitive legal and planning frameworks, and transformation of prevailing societal norms. The high mean scores across the majority of the proposed measures indicate substantial support among respondents for coordinated interventions at governmental, institutional, legal, educational, and societal levels. Such an integrated approach is likely to provide a stronger basis for improving women's participation, access to land resources, and decision-making within land administration.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that gender discrimination in land administration has significant social, economic, and livelihood implications for women. The high mean scores recorded for several of the identified implications indicate that respondents perceive gender discrimination as a major constraint on women's access to, control over, and utilisation of productive resources. In particular, the highest-rated implication, limited access to, control over, and use of services and productive resources (MS = 4.67), suggests that women's restricted access to land-related resources remains a major manifestation of gender inequality. Such restrictions may limit women's capacity to develop productive assets, improve their livelihoods, and achieve greater economic independence.



The findings further indicate that gender discrimination is associated with limited access to appropriate technologies and increased vulnerability to exploitation by marketers and other service providers. Restricted access to productive technologies reduce women's ability to maximise the benefits derived from land and other productive resources. In agricultural settings, for instance, inadequate access to improved technologies, inputs, and related services constrain productivity and income-generating opportunities. These limitations consequently reinforce women's economic dependence and weaken their bargaining position within households and communities (Salman 2012).

The study also highlights the broader social implications of gender discrimination in land administration. The relegation of women to disadvantaged social positions and restrictions on their access to productive opportunities may reinforce existing patterns of gender inequality. Similarly, limitations on educational opportunities and increased economic dependency may further constrain women's capacity to participate effectively in decision-making processes. These findings demonstrate that gender discrimination in land administration extends beyond the issue of land ownership itself and can influence women's broader social and economic status.

Psychological and social consequences were also identified among the implications of gender discrimination. Although the items relating to psychological distress arising from land disputes and reduced participation in climate-change-related activities recorded comparatively lower mean scores, their ratings nevertheless indicate that these issues remain relevant. Women involved in land-related disputes experience stress and emotional distress, particularly where they have limited access to legal assistance or institutional mechanisms for protecting their land rights. Similarly, restrictions on women's participation in environmental and climate-related activities may limit their contribution to community resilience and sustainable resource management.

The findings also suggest that gender discrimination contribute to women's economic vulnerability through restricted access to formal land tenure arrangements, limited participation in agricultural management, and increased exposure to poverty. Since secure land rights can provide a basis for livelihood development, investment, access to credit, and economic security, barriers to women's access to land may have implications beyond individual households and may affect broader socio-economic development. Addressing these barriers is therefore important not only for advancing gender equality but also for promoting more inclusive land administration and sustainable development.

With regard to measures for addressing gender discrimination, the findings indicate strong support for government intervention. The highest-ranked measure was the creation of more opportunities for activities that reinforce and promote women's participation (MS = 4.90). This finding demonstrates respondents' strong perception that government has an important role to play in creating an enabling institutional environment for women's participation in land administration. Government intervention may include the development and implementation of inclusive land policies, improved access to land administration services, awareness programmes, and mechanisms for increasing women's representation in land-related decision-making.



Improving female education was ranked second, with a mean score of 4.80. This finding reinforces the importance of education as an instrument for empowering women and improving their awareness of land rights and administrative procedures. Educated women may be better positioned to understand relevant legal provisions, identify discriminatory practices, seek appropriate assistance, and participate effectively in decisions concerning land ownership and management. Education should therefore be complemented by targeted land-rights awareness and legal literacy programmes. Changing prevailing societal norms also received a high mean score (MS = 4.55), indicating that respondents recognise the influence of cultural attitudes and social practices on women's access to land.

This finding suggests that legal reforms alone may not be sufficient to address gender discrimination if discriminatory cultural practices continue to influence land allocation, inheritance, ownership, and decision-making. Consequently, interventions should include community sensitisation, engagement with traditional and community leaders, and advocacy aimed at promoting equitable attitudes towards women's land rights. The development of gender-sensitive legal frameworks and empowerment and mentorship programmes for women also received substantial support. These measures suggest the need for both institutional and capacity-building interventions to strengthen women's ability to claim and exercise their land rights.

However, the effectiveness of such frameworks depends largely on their implementation, enforcement, accessibility, and monitoring. Strengthening land administration institutions, although ranked comparatively lower (MS = 3.95), remains relevant because effective institutions are necessary for translating legal provisions and policy commitments into practical outcomes. Overall, the findings demonstrate that gender discrimination in land administration is a multidimensional issue requiring coordinated interventions across educational, legal, institutional, governmental, and socio-cultural dimensions. The results suggest that improving women's knowledge and capacity, transforming discriminatory social norms, strengthening government intervention, and ensuring effective implementation of gender-sensitive policies can contribute to more equitable land administration in Lagos State.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the implications of gender discrimination in land administration and identified measures for addressing the problem in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State. The findings demonstrate that gender discrimination has significant implications for women's access to and control over productive resources, economic opportunities, social status, legal rights, and participation in land-related decision-making. The highest-rated implication was limited access to, control over, and use of services and productive resources (MS = 4.67), indicating that resource inequality remains a major concern in the study area. The study further established strong support for interventions aimed at reducing gender discrimination in land administration. The creation of more opportunities to promote women's participation ranked highest among the proposed measures (MS = 4.90), followed by improving female education (MS = 4.80), government intervention in land administration (MS = 4.70), and changing prevailing societal norms (MS = 4.55). These findings indicate that addressing gender discrimination requires more than legislative intervention alone; it requires coordinated action involving government institutions, communities, educational initiatives, and land administration stakeholders.



Education emerges as a particularly important instrument for empowering women by improving their awareness of land rights and strengthening their capacity to participate in land-related processes. At the same time, discriminatory cultural and societal norms need to be transformed to create an environment in which women can exercise their land rights without social or institutional barriers. Gender-sensitive legal frameworks should also be developed, effectively implemented, and supported by appropriate enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.

In conclusion, reducing gender discrimination in land administration in Lagos State requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that addresses both structural and socio-cultural barriers. Strengthening women's access to education and land-related information, promoting inclusive participation, reforming discriminatory practices, strengthening institutional mechanisms, and ensuring effective policy implementation can contribute to more equitable land administration. Such interventions have the potential to improve women's access to land resources, strengthen their socio-economic empowerment, and contribute to broader gender equality and sustainable development in the study area.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Strengthen women's awareness and education on land rights:** Government agencies and relevant stakeholders should provide targeted land-rights education and awareness programmes to improve women's knowledge of land ownership, inheritance, and administrative procedures.
2. **Reform discriminatory cultural practices:** Traditional institutions, community leaders, and relevant government agencies should work together to identify and reform cultural and customary practices that restrict women's access to and control over land.
3. **Promote women's participation in land administration:** Government should create more opportunities for women to participate in land-related decision-making processes and ensure adequate representation of women in relevant land administration institutions and community structures.
4. **Implement and enforce gender-sensitive policies:** Existing land laws and policies should be reviewed to eliminate discriminatory provisions and ensure effective enforcement, monitoring, and accountability for violations of women's land rights.
5. **Provide institutional and economic support:** Land administration institutions should be strengthened to provide accessible, transparent, and gender-responsive services, while women should be supported through appropriate financial and empowerment programmes that improve their capacity to acquire and develop land.
6. **Adopt gender-sensitive land-use planning:** Land-use planning and development policies should incorporate gender considerations and ensure that women's interests and land rights are adequately considered in land allocation, development, and management.



REFERENCES

- Adeniran, A.I. (2008). Educational Inequalities and Women's disempowerment in Nigeria. *Gender and Behavioural*, 6(1), 1662-1674.
- Agbalajobi, D. T. (2010). Women's participation and the political process in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(2), 75-82
- Ajala, T. (2017). Gender discrimination in land ownership and the alleviation of women's poverty in Nigeria: A call for new equities. *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law*, 17(1), 51-66.
- Akinola, O. A., & Adeyemo, R. (2021). Gender inequality and land rights in Nigeria: Implications for sustainable development. *Journal of African Policy Studies*, 12(3), 45-60.
- Cavalcanti, T.V., & Tavares, J. (2007). Women prefer larger governments: Growth, structural transformation and government size,(Working Paper). Universidade NOVA de Lisboa.
- Deininger, K., & Binswanger, H. (1999). The evolution of the World Bank's land policy: principles, experience and future challenges, *The World Bank Research Observer*, 14(2), 247-276.
- Deere, C. D., Lastarria-Cornhiel, S., & Ranaboldo, C. (2011) *Tierra de Mujeres: Reflexiones sobre el acceso de las mujeres a la tierra en American Latina*. Fundacion Tierra ; ILC.
- Fabiyi, Y.L. (1990), *Land Policy for Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives* (Inaugural lecture series NO. 99). Obafemi Awolowo university press.
- Kasunmu, A. J. (2006). *Nigerian Family Law*. London: Butterworths.
- Kehinde. A. (2025). Unlocking access to livelihood capitals and its impact on land allocation decisions among smallholder farmers in Nigeria. *Sustainable Futures*.10.101040
- Margaret, M. (2012). The analysis on gender and the society in Gender inequality and women participation in politics: the Nigerian Experience.
- Mwabu, G. and Ackerman, X. (2013): Focusing on quality education in sub-Saharan Africa. *Education plus Development* <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/education-plus-development/posts/2013/05/28-quality-education-sub-saharan-africa-mwabu-ackerman>. Accessed April2014.
- Ntsebeza, L. (2019), *Land Tenure Reform on South Africa: An example form the Eastern Cape Province*, (Drylands issue Paper, No. 82). International Institute for Environment and Development.
- Odimegwu, C. O. (2001). Couple formation and domestic violence among the Tiv of Benue State, Nigeria. In *International Colloquium : Gender, Population and Development in Africa*(pp. 4-8). UAPS; INED; ENSEA; IFORD.
- Ojo, A. (2002) *Socio-Economic Situation*. in *Africa Atlases :Nigeria*, (pp. 126-127). Les Editions J.A.
- Olawoye, C.O. (2014), *Title to Land in Nigeria*, Evans Brothers Limited, London.
- Salman R.K., & Abdulaheem. N.M., (2012) *The economic rights of women under Islamic Law: The Obstacles and challenges in contemporary Nigeria*. *An international human right journal*, 3,120-133
- Salami, B. (2015): *Women's inheritance rights in Nigeria: Transformative practices*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto] Faculty of Law. Nairametrics. nairametrics.com
- Shayo, R. (2005). Women participation in party politics during the multiparty era in Africa: The case of Tanzania. *EISA Occasional Paper*, 34, 1-14.
- Udegbe, I.B (2014) *Political Restriction and Women's Access to Power*. in A.I. Amunwoet. (Ed.), *Federalism and Political Restriction in Nigeria*. Spectrum Books Ltd.



- UN-Habitat. (2022). Women and land in the 21st century: Challenges and opportunities. United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
- World Bank. (2024). Bridging the gender gap in land administration: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank Publications.
- Yakubu, M.G. (2015), Nigerian Land Law, Macmillan, London.