

Community Power Structure: The Role of Local Leaders in Community Development Decision Making in Ajaawa, Oyo State, Nigeria

F.A. Kuponiyi

Department of Agricultural Economics & Extension, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, P. M. B. 4000, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria

Telephone: 2348033528088 (Mobile); E-mail: adekupo2000@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS Leaders. Community Development. People Mobilization

ABSTRACT This study investigates the participation of local leaders in decision-making in Ajaawa Community of Oyo State, Nigeria. Sixty community leaders (both visible and concealed) were identified and interviewed with the aid of validated interviewed schedule. Data revealed that the respondents spread across social, political, religious and traditional functions. Twenty percent are female, 90% married, while 8% are below 40 years old, mean age is 58years. About 88% are literate. Major areas of decision-making where leaders regularly participate are religion, chieftaincy, community safety and community development. Community development commands the highest involvement (81.7%) followed by community safety (70%). Of all the CD projects undertaken in the last 5 years, the market had the highest proportion (71.7%) of leaders involved in its decision-making followed by the palace (63.3%). Leadership responsibility areas for each project are people mobilization, meetings, finance, and linkage. Personal participation in CD projects by the leaders revealed that the market and palace commanded the highest involvement. Where leaders unite and make sound collective decisions, the community maintains peace and development.