



**Women Economic Empowerment on Economic Development in Selected Communities
in Enugu State, Nigeria, 2015 – 2022**

Dr. Anikeze Nnaemeka Hillary¹; Egwuagu Uloma Bridget²; Daniel Ukamaka Loveth³

^{1, 2 & 3} Department of Public Administration,
Faculty of Management Science,
Enugu State University of Science and Technology. ESUT.

Emails: ¹nnaemeka.anikeze@esut.edu.ng; ²ulomaegwuagu@gmail.com

Abstract

Research purpose: The current economic state of most women is a product of the roles they are expected to fill. These roles were seen as their primary responsibilities, and they were discouraged or even prevented from pursuing careers outside of these roles. The objectives of the study are to: find out the extent women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria, assess the extent women skill acquisition have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive method of research design, while the population of the study is 172 and sample is 120. Out 120 questionnaires administered, 115 are valid for the study.

Research Findings: This means women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria. This implies that women acquiring educational Knowledge have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Conclusion: The study concluded that women economic empowerment have impacted on economic development in communities of Enugu state, Nigeria.



ISSN: 2811-1710 (Paper) ISSN: 2811-1729 (Online)

Global Research Journal of Business Management

Vol. 4, No. 1: 48 - 59, 2024

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Final recommendations: The society should allow women to participate in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and it will contribute to economic development in Nigeria, Government should make room for more social skim programs for women especially for skill acquisition has impacted on poverty reduction and it will contribute to economic development in Nigeria, Gender equality, especially the female gender should be allow for white-collar jobs and is part of economic development in the society and Women should be allow to participate in politics hand this will impact on poverty reduction positively in communities in Africa at large.

Key words: Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, women skill acquisition, poverty reduction

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Historically in Nigeria and many other African countries, women were often expected to fulfill traditional roles within the family and household, such as caregiving and homemaking. These roles were seen as their primary responsibilities, and they were discouraged or even prevented from pursuing careers outside of these roles. In some communities in Nigeria, women are seen as house wife has cultural and historical roots, but it's essential to recognize that these perspectives are evolving and not universally applied. Traditional gender roles in many African societies often placed women in domestic roles, including taking care of the home and children (Akpala, 2018). This was influenced by various factors such as cultural beliefs, economic structures, and colonial legacies. However, it's important to note that Africa is a vast and diverse continent with a wide range of cultures and societies, and not all of them held or continue to hold these traditional views.

Problem

The problem of women empowerment in economic development of communities mostly in Nigeria is a serious concern. The situation has engendered political instability, dictatorial governments, lack of rule of law/social justice, and irresponsible leadership's e.t.c, resulting to stagnation in poverty and underdevelopment; this raises some major concerns on the factors responsible for the failure of women empowerment on economic development in communities and even local government areas of Nigeria, like of women financing, bearing of children, illiteracy, gender equality, empowerment etc. in Nigeria. On this backdrop, these project works assess women empowerment on Economic development in communities in Enugu state, Nigeria.

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****Objectives**

The specific objectives are:

- i. To find out the extent women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria
- ii. To assess the extent women skill acquisition have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria

Questions

Some questions extracted from the above objectives are below:

- i. To what extent women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria?
- ii. What extent women skill acquisition has impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

- i. H_0 : Women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.
- ii. H_0 : Women skill acquisition has not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**Conceptual Review****Review on Women Economic Empowerment and Economic Development of Communities**

Women's economic empowerment is recognized as one means for reducing poverty and economic growth. Women play a significant role in Nigerian economy, and are highly visible in the micro and small enterprises sub-sector. The majority of them are engaged in small income generating self-employment in agriculture and non-agricultural activities with low prospect for growth (Dejene, 2014). The economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite for sustainable development, pro-poor growth and the achievement of all the millennium development Goals (MDGs). Gender equality and empowered women are catalysts for



ISSN: 2811-1710 (Paper) ISSN: 2811-1729 (Online)

Global Research Journal of Business Management

Vol. 4, No. 1: 48 - 59, 2024

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

multiplying development efforts. Investments in gender equality yield the highest returns of all development investments (OECD, 2010).

Process of Women's Economic Empowerment

Women's economic empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable economic development and pro-poor growth. To achieve women's economic empowerment anticipation requires sound government policies, and long-term commitment. Gender-specific perspectives must be incorporated at the initial design stage of policy and programming. Women must have equal equitable access to assets and services; infrastructure programmes should be designed to the benefit of the poor, both men and women, and employment opportunities must be improved while increasing recognition of women's vast unpaid work (OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2012). Women's Economic Empowerment can be achieved through equal access to and control over critical economic resources and opportunities, and the elimination of structural gender inequalities in the labour market including a bettering of unpaid care work.

Obstacles to Women's Economic Empowerment

- (a) Lack of Fund: Many of these women rely on personal savings or on contributions from relatives and friends to fund their enterprises, and without property ownership they lack collateral to access credit from formal financial institutions.
- (b) Scale of Operation: Most women in developing countries especially Nigeria has small enterprises operating mainly in the informal sector of economy. They face multiple challenges that diminish their opportunities and dampen their potential as businesswomen and entrepreneurs.
- (c) Education and Training: They have limited access to education and training, have less or no freedom to choose their business, and are faced with discriminatory attitudes in property, marital and inheritance laws.
- (d) Structural and cultural factors: These make it more difficult for women to access vocational training programmes due to their care giving responsibilities and societal expectations about which jobs are suitable for them.

2.1 THEORIES

Marxist Approach

In theoretical terms, Karl Marx prepared the ground for debate of women's issues. His theory is based in economic determination, especially; he argued that the ownership and control of means of forces of production have exerted the most significant influence on societal satisfaction system. Marxian approach to gender stratification centers, on the extent to which women's access to the control of the forces of production determines their relative position in the society. The approach adopted by the Marxian school is borrowed from the works of Engels (1968). This focuses on the role played by familiar structure and to the extent to



ISSN: 2811-1710 (Paper) ISSN: 2811-1729 (Online)

Global Research Journal of Business Management

Vol. 4, No. 1: 48 - 59, 2024

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

which women participate in social production. Thus, Engel argues that a nuclear family is based on the supremacy of the man, its expressed aim is the begetting of children of undisputed paternity, this paternity being required in order that those children may in due time inherit their father's wealth.

Socio-Cultural Approach

Socio-cultural approach is the best approach to adopt as my theoretical framework, because it is the culture of the people that placed women as weaker vessels, and sees them as less important when decisions need to be taken for the growth of communities and even in their household, and this belief moves from generation to generation. This cultural approach deals with tradition, beliefs, values, norms and practices system of the people living in the same society.

2.2 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Abraham, O. and Bridget U. (2023) looked at the relationship and impact of rural women empowerment and rural development in Nigeria's south-south geopolitical zone in their paper titled 'Rural women empowerment and development in Nigeria'. In the study, a cross-sectional research design was used, and data was gathered through a survey of 750 people using a non-probability sampling technique. 476 of the 750 questionnaires distributed were retrieved and analyzed. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used to analyze data collected using percentages, Pearson product moment correlation, and linear regression analysis. The study's findings revealed a significant relationship between rural women empowerment and rural development in Nigeria's south-south geopolitical zone. The study also found that rural women empowerment has a positive and statistically significant impact on rural development in Nigeria's south-south geopolitical zone. Based on these findings, the study suggests, among other things, that government empowerment policies should always take the female gender into account for necessary upliftment, as this will help to improve their status and rural development in Nigeria.

Nwabude, and Nwogwugwu, (2022) investigate women empowerment and economic development a case of Idemili north local government in Anambra state of Nigeria. The issue of women empowerment in Nigeria with special focus on the local/rural parts where the main residents are women has been of great concern to scholars and policy makers. In this study we have taken special interest on the developments in the Idemili north local government areas of Anambra state. we found that the women there are not empowered: they have no infrastructure and are least awarded despite that they produce much of the food, do much of the farm work and as well carry on with their biological responsibility of child bearing and rearing. the paper hence recommends that education must be provided for the girl child. It further recommends the elimination of widowhood practices; stopping of early marriages as



ISSN: 2811-1710 (Paper) ISSN: 2811-1729 (Online)

*Global Research Journal of Business Management**Vol. 4, No. 1: 48 - 59, 2024***WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

well as the provision of opportunities for improved agricultural practices for the female gender.

Kingdom, M. (2021) women and socio-economic growth in Nigeria: A development strategy. The contribution of women to the socio-economic growth of developing nations has received little attention in the existing literature in terms of their roles in the process, and Nigeria is not an exception. The study adopted the survey research design with the use of random sampling technique to select respondents. Chi-square was used to analyze the data. The results indicated that 1% increase in women's contribution raised the level of GDP by 58.4%; that income generating activities of women to include agricultural produce, marketing of farm produce, crafts making and food processing; and that despite all the efforts women put in development, their capacities are not optimally utilized due to socio-cultural and political hindrances such as access to land, loans, education. The paper therefore recommended women empowerments, policy initiatives to upgrade their roles which is one of the important objectives of the global development strategy, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), where sub-Saharan Africa plays a latecomer role' in its realization.

Many researchers have carried out related studies on women economic empowerment and economic development, but there is a lack of literature on the women economic empowerment on economic development in communities of Enugu State, Nigeria, particularly in areas of on- women participating in small and medium scale enterprises, women acquiring educational knowledge, women going for white-collar jobs, women participation in politics and poverty reduction. Therefore, this study is to adequately fill in this gap.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive method of research design, specifically survey design involving the method of collection of data, analysis and interpretation of data with a view of Women economic empowerment and economic development in communities of Enugu state, Nigeria.

Sources of Data

There are two sources of data used for this study which are primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected, by administering questionnaire to local government workers in Enugu North secretarial of Enugu state. Furthermore, personal and oral interviews were conducted among the selected staff in the faculty used in this study. And these are data

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

mainly sourced from already made materials of other authors and researchers. They are available in relevant textbooks, journals, newspapers and internet and in the school library.

Population and Sample Size

The population of the study, amount 172, which is gotten from field survey, conducted using some selected women entrepreneurs registered with National Association of Small Scale Industries (NASSI) in Enugu North Local government area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

The researcher decided to take a sample believing it would be a fair representation of the population. This was achieved using Taro Yamani's formula as given below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = The desired sample size

N = Population

e = Maximum acceptable level of error

1 = Mathematical constant

The researcher assumed a 5% level of tolerable error hence the sample size was determined as shown below:

Substituting

$N = 172$

$e = 0.05$

Using the formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = \frac{172}{1 + 172(0.05)^2} = \frac{172}{1 + 172(0.0025)} = \frac{172}{1 + 0.43} = \frac{172}{1.43} = 120$$

$n = 120$

Sampling Technique

The Sampling technique adopted for the selection of respondents was field survey method because each department do not have equal chance of being selected.

Method of Data Presentation and Analysis

The data from the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency tables and simple percentages. Brief analytical comments were used to summarize the findings of that questionnaire as shown in chapter four of this work. Simple percentage formula used will be shown below:

$$\frac{f}{N} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where f = frequency

N = sum of cumulative frequency

The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistical tool; given as:

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

Where \sum = summation sign

o = observed frequency data

e = expected frequency data

Decision Rule: Accept null hypothesis if table value is greater than calculated value, otherwise reject null hypothesis

4. PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, data generated were presented, analyzed and interpreted. However, it commenced with the distribution and return of the instrument of data collected.

Presentation of Data

Distribution and Return of Questionnaire

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate

Options	Number of Questionnaire Distributed	Number of Questionnaire Returned	% of Returned Questionnaire	Number of Valid Questionnaire	% valid Questionnaire
Senior Staff	91	91	75.83	89	74.17
Junior Staff	29	29	24.17	26	21.67
Total	120	120	100	115	95.84

Source:Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.1 shows the 120 copies of questionnaires distributed, and were still returned back with 100%, while 115 copies of the questionnaire representing 95.84% are only valid copies for the study due to mis-handling. The valid copies are used for rest of the analysis of this work.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using the chi-square statistical tool, which is given as;

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$$

Where: x^2 = chi - square

o = observed frequency

e = expected frequency

Σ = summation sign

Operational Assumptions

Level of significance 5% = 0.05

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Degree of freedom (df) = $(r - 1)(c - 1)$

Where: r = Number of rows

c = Number of columns

$$df = (2 - 1)(3 - 1)$$

$$1 \times 2 = 2$$

Critical value or table value = 5.991

Hypothesis I

H_0 : Women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria

Table 4.4 was used for testing hypothesis I

Options	Great Extent	%	None	%	Little Extent	%	Total
Senior Staff	60	52.17	5	4.35	20	17.39	85
Junior Staff	20	17.39	5	4.35	5	4.35	30
Total	80	69.56	10	8.70	25	21.74	115

Chi-Square Table

O	E	$(o - e)$	$(o - e)^2$	$\frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$
80	38.33	41.67	1736.39	45.30
10	38.33	-28.33	802.59	20.94
25	38.33	-13.33	177.69	4.64
115				70.88

Table value = 5.991; Calculated value = 70.88

Decision: Since the calculated value (70.88) is greater than the table value (5.991), the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected, while the H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted. This means that women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Hypothesis II

H_0 : Women acquiring educational Knowledge have not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Table 4.5 was used for testing hypothesis II

Options	Great Extent	%	None	%	Little Extent	%	Total
---------	--------------	---	------	---	---------------	---	-------

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Senior Staff	80	73.91	5	4.35	15	13.04	100
Junior Staff	5	4.35	5	4.35	5	4.35	115
Total	85	78.26	10	8.70	20	17.39	115

Chi-Square Table

O	E	(o - e)	(o - e) ²	$\frac{(o - e)^2}{e}$
85	38.33	46.67	2178.09	56.82
10	38.33	-28.33	802.59	20.94
20	38.33	-18.33	335.99	8.77
115				86.53

Table value = 5.991; Calculated value = 86.53

Decision: Since the calculated value (86.53) is greater than the table value (5.991), the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected and the H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted. This implies that women acquiring educational Knowledge have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

4a. Discussion of Findings

The discussions of findings are as follows:

To what extent women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria, long service reward is a strategy to improve employees performance in any organization because it shows that the organization reward the employees priceless effort (Jehanzeb& Bashir, 2013). This is in line with data analysis above that Women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria

What extent women acquiring educational Knowledge have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria, bonuses to employees performance encouraged the worker to increase in output and this is an advantage to the organization according to (Khan, Abbasi, Waseem, Ayaz, &Ijaz, 2016) and this were revealed in the hypotheses analysis above, that women acquiring educational Knowledge have not impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**5.1 Summary of Findings**

**WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

From the above analyses, the following findings were made:

1. Since the calculated value (70.88) is greater than the table value (5.991), the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected, while the H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted. This means women participating in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

2. Since the calculated value (86.53) is greater than the table value (5.991), the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected and the H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted. This implies that women acquiring educational Knowledge have impacted on poverty reduction in Enugu state, Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher women need education, skills, access to assets/credit, social protection in order to fully develop their productive assets and tackle poverty. In reality, women face many challenges in their entrepreneurial development and overcoming many of the obstacles requires reduction in gender discriminatory norms and practices. However the major conclusion of the study show that women empowerment are have positive significant on economic development in communities of Enugu state, Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

- i. the society should allow women to participate in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and it will contribute to economic development in Nigeria.
- ii. Government should make room for more social skim programs for women especially for skill acquisition has impacted on poverty reduction and it will contribute to economic development in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

- Adegoroye, A. (2018). The Roles of Selected NGOs in Economic Empowerment of Rural Akomolafe, O. (2016). "Open and Distance Learning as a Mechanism for Women Akpala, S. (2018). *Women's Rights are Human Rights*. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.
- Alkali, Z. (2020). *Feminism A radical theme in West Africa literature, An African woman right*. Houston, U.S.A: Touchstone Publishers.
- Danjuma, M. & Alkali G. (2013). *Factors Militating Against Women Economic*
- Dejene, Y. (2014). *Promoting Women's Economic empowerment In Africa* retrieved from DEJENE.9-15-07DOC.PDF



ISSN: 2811-1710 (Paper) ISSN: 2811-1729 (Online)

Global Research Journal of Business Management

Vol. 4, No. 1: 48 - 59, 2024

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Eyben , R., Kabeer, N. and Cornwall, A. (2018). Conceptualising empowerment and the from <https://www.oecd.org/dac/povertyreduction/50157530.pdf> Goals , New York: United Nations Halt, Rinchart and Winton Inc.
- Holy Bible (2010), “The Subordination of Women to Men,” Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishers.
- Kabeer, N. (2011). Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. Discussing Malmberg, C. (2016) “Case study on the role of Women in Rural Transport: Access of Women to *Management*, 13(6), 47-51
- Mayoux, L. (2019). “Questioning Virtuous Spirals: Micro-finance and Women’s Empowerment
- Nziome, M. (2012), “Women in Politics and Public Decision-Making” in U.F. Himmestrand et al (eds.) *African Perspective in Development, Controversies, Dilemma and Opening* London: James Curray.
- OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality (2015) Women’s economic empowerment retrieved of Development Studies.
- Ojo, O. (2010), “Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria,” Ibadan: John Archers Publishers. Performance and Job Satisfaction,” *Journal of Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, Vol.9.
- Pritchard, D. and Karasack, W. (2010), “The Effect of Organizational Climate on Managerial Job
Routledge, Talor and Fransis Group.
- Schmitz, C.(2019). Working Paper December on Sida Gender Equality Team Indevelop-IPM, Sida.
- United Nations (2010) Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development United Nations Development Program (2015) Human Development Report. New York
- Vandana, D. and Robert, P (2014). The companion to development studies, New York.
- Williams, F. (2016) *Reasoning with Statistics – How to Read Quantitative Research*. Florida: Women in Ibadan Land” *Journal of Gender and Behavior*, 6(2), 25-37.
- World Bank (2011) Engendering Development Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources,
- Zoellick, R. (2010) . Extracted from World Bank President Zoellick’s speech at the MDG3