



## Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurial Programmes as Predictors of Community Development in Nigeria

Teslim Opeyemi Oloyede 

Department of Adult Education, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

Email: [teslim.oleyede@aaua.edu.ng](mailto:teslim.oleyede@aaua.edu.ng)

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### Abstract

Women constitute more than half of the entire population of the world, who are socially, economically, and politically marginalized. The economic burden placed on women requires alternative source of income for them to gain financial freedom and contribute immensely to socio-economic development of their society. Hence, the need for women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes for development of communities in Nigeria. This study examines women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes as predictors of community development in Nigeria. Five research questions were raised to guide the study. A self-structured questionnaire was the instrument used to elicit information from the respondents. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents were randomly sampled. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Finding of the study revealed that agro-business, catering services, mobile phones repairs and sales, food processing, frozen food and cooking gas are types of entrepreneurial programmes that exist in the studied area. It was revealed that women actively participate in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes. The study revealed that lack of awareness, poor funding, poverty, illiteracy and care-free attitude undermine empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes among women. The study therefore recommended that government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should support women participating in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes with provision of basic amenities and adequate funding to enhance women's socio-economic development. The study concluded that women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes is an indispensable tools of gaining financial freedom for actualizing women and community development in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Women empowerment, Entrepreneurial programmes, Community development

## INTRODUCTION

African society is characterized with cultural beliefs, norms and traditions that see women as weak and feeble-minded, who belong to the kitchen and their voice must not be heard in decision making process. This practice is grossly a discrimination and violation of women's right, it placed women at a disadvantaged group, who lives under the shadow of men. The situation has impoverished women, engendered their economic and political development, subjecting to domestic violence, lack of rule of law and social injustice, which often resulting to stagnation, unemployment, high poverty rate, and under-development of the region. Meanwhile, women constitute more than half of the entire population of the world, who actively participate in the nation building of any country. Women are the primary caretakers of the family, and also act as caregivers to the elders in every country of the world. They combine the role of wife and mother with engaging in socio-economic activities to support themselves, their family and immediate community. The significant contributions of women to socio-economic development of the home, community and the nation at large cannot be underestimated.

Karl (2015) opine that 'women are at the heart of development'. They control most of the non-money economy (subsistence agriculture, bearing and raising children, doing domestic labor) and taking important part in the money economy such as trading and wage employment. In the period of economy downturn, famine and high rate of poverty in any society, women take the lead in helping the family adjust to new realities and challenges, they are the prime initiators of ideas, not minding doing all sorts of menial jobs to ensure their family overcome predicaments. In spite of this, women occupied the majority of vulnerable groups who are socially, economically, and politically marginalized. In fact, the economic burden placed on women requires alternative source of income for them to gain financial freedom in order to lead a meaningful lives and contribute to socio-economic development of their communities (Allen and Truman, 2012).

Women are socially, economically and politically deprived from participating in decision making process that can affect their lives positively. Studies

have shown that despite the fact that women empowerment is directly proportional to their participation in community development and the general performance of community, little is still being done to empower these women in the society (Azikiwe, 2020). Studies carried-out in developed countries have shown that development in these countries has been achieved due to the power of empowering their women. In China and Bangladesh for example, women have equal access to education, information and technology, enabling them to acquire skills as equally as men to participate in developmental projects implementation. It is worth noting that entrepreneurial programmes serve as impetus to women empowerment which is vital to the survival of women and society at large. It empowers women with skill acquisition and vocational programme which enhances their productivity and financial freedom, thereby making them independent socially, economically, politically and become self-reliance (Hashemi, Schuler & Riley, 2016).

Community development is more than ever before linked to entrepreneurship which is the practice of starting a new business or reviving an existing business in order to capitalize on new found opportunities which is empowerment. Women promoting community development now see entrepreneurship as a strategic development intervention that could accelerate the community development process (Arthur, 2014). Development agencies see women empowerment through entrepreneurship as an enormous employment potential; politicians see it as the key strategy to prevent community unrest; farmers see it as an instrument for improving farm earnings; and women see it as an employment possibility near their homes which provides autonomy, independence and a reduced need for social support. To all these groups, however, entrepreneurship stands as a vehicle to improve the quality of life for women and communities and to sustain a healthy economy and environment (Muthusamy, 2021).

According to Abiona (2012) community development is a 'learning process which begins and ends within the community. Being self-help effort, community development is aimed at meeting the most pressing or felt needs of the communities, which are not receiving the immediate attention of

authorities at the local, state and federal levels. Community Development efforts are usually determined by communities to cover their mutual interests and needs. These might range from provision of basic amenities, education, health, civil responsibility, road maintenance, erecting school blocks, library, science facilities, clearing drains and environmental sanitation (Osu, 2019). Entrepreneur, according to Adim and Tamunomiebi (2018) is defined as one who shifts economic resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher-productivity and greater yield. While entrepreneurship is a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. This wealth is created by individuals who take the major risks which is part of psychological aspect of entrepreneurship in terms of equity, time and career commitment of providing value to some products or services, the products or services itself may or may not be new or unique but value must somehow be infused by the entrepreneur by securing and allocating the necessary skills and resources (Kamberidou, 2013).

Women empowerment is the process of giving women and girls the ability to make life choices and determine their own destiny. It is a critical component of the World Bank's Gender Strategy and is enshrined in Sustainable Development Goal 5-Gender Equality which is to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls, including violence and harmful practices. Kabeer (2005) defined women empowerment as a process of accepting women's viewpoints, making an effort to seek them and raising the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, equal status in society, better livelihood and training. It equips and allows women to make life-determining decisions on different societal problems. The principle of women empowerment held that for one to be empowered, one must come from a position of disempowerment. They must acquire empowerment rather than have it give to them by an external party. Empowerment is a process rather than a product (Mosedale, 2005).

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2023), increasing women's empowerment is essential for women's wellbeing and as a positive impact on agricultural production, food security, diets, and child nutrition. More than half of bilateral finance for agriculture and rural development already mainstream gender, but only

6 percent treats gender as fundamental. If half of small-scale producers benefited from development interventions that focused on empowering women, it would significantly raise the income of an additional 58 million people and increase the resilience of an additional 235 million people out of poverty.

Since Nigeria Independence, the country has witnessed numerous empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes such as Better Life for Rural Women, YouWin, SURE-P, N-POWER, TRADER-MONEY, MARKET-MONEY, loan credits to farmers and small-scale industries, but these programmes lacked the sustainability impetus, and thereby failed to alleviate the suffering of the masses. Therefore, re-awakening women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes in the face of daunting economic milieu and poverty is justified by bad governance and maladministration orchestrated by political leaders in which living a meaningful life has become the survival of the fittest. It is common knowledge that there is no appreciable development in Nigeria communities especially, the provisions of basic needs like food, shelter, clothing, healthcare services, educational facilities, and provisions of social amenities like good roads, portable water supply, and electricity among others. In view of these challenges, several non-governmental organizations, government agencies, politicians, philanthropist, and social groups have floated numerous empowerment programmes that aimed at empowering women thereby promoting sustainable development among which include: the Women in Agriculture Program (WAEP), the Women Agripreneurship Development Program (WADP), the Women's Right to Property Initiative (WRPI), and the Agriculture and Gender Empowerment Strategy (AGES) but their success was never encouraging due to poor programme implementation (Mela, Paul & Yakubu, 2024).

Women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes floats in recent times include: Digital Skills Empowerment Programme (DLSEP), Open Minds-Young Voices Programme (OMYO), Youth Empowerment Programme, Nigeria for Women Project, and Africa Faith & Justice Network (AFJN). These empowerment programmes aims at providing education, skill acquisition, training, sensitization, investment opportunities and

environmental resources, access to Agricultural inputs for women to become independent and self-reliance. However, the potency and sustainability of these programmes in alleviating poverty among women remains a source of concern. It is against this background that this study examine women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes as predictors of community development in Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The research questions focused in this study include:

1. What types of women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes exists in Akure North Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of awareness of empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes among women in Nigeria?
3. What is the attitude of women towards empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes in Nigeria?
4. What are the problem that hinders women's participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programme in Nigeria?
5. To what extent do women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes enhance community development in Nigeria?

### Theoretical Framework

#### Empowerment Theory

The term originates from American Community Psychology and is associated with the social scientist [Julian Rappaport \(1981\)](#). However, the roots of empowerment theory extend further into history and are linked to Marxist Sociological theory. These sociological ideas have continued to be developed and refined through Neo-Marxist Theory (also known as Critical Theory). In social work, empowerment forms a practical approach of resource-oriented intervention. In the field of citizenship education and democratic education, empowerment is seen as a tool of civic engagement to increase the responsibility of the citizen. Empowerment as a concept, which is characterized by a move away from a deficit-oriented towards a more strength-oriented perception, can increasingly be found in management concepts, as well as in the areas of continuing education and self-help. Rappaport's 1984 viewed empowerment as a process, the mechanism by which people, organizations and communities gain mastery over

their lives. It occurs through improvement of conditions, standards of living, events and a global perspectives of life.

[Rappaport \(1981\)](#) proposed that empowerment should be a primary focus of Community Psychology. He believed that empowerment is about helping those with less than their fair share of power to understand their own situation and gain more power. For Rappaport, empowerment includes considering people's needs, their rights and their choices, and it captures the breadth of concern with powerless that many groups experience. To fully address the powerlessness of individuals and groups, efforts toward empowerment must be made on multiple levels. At the individual level, awareness of one's lack of power can make one more likely to work towards increasing personal power. At a higher level, legal and societal sides of oppression may give rise to societal and political change. Thus, empowerment is a multilevel concept that impacts individuals, organizations, communities, and societies. From these beginnings, empowerment has come to be a key idea in community Psychology and has also been important to fields such as Social work, Public Health, Education, Political Science, Anthropology, and Community Development ([McConnell, Motley, Liao & McAuliff, 2017](#)).

#### Individual Empowerment

Individual empowerment allows people to exercise control and increase self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can be described as developing a sense of personal power, strength, or mastery that aids in increasing one's capacity to act in situations where one feels a lack of power. Individual self-efficacy is sometimes considered a "westernized" or "individualistic" construct built on the idea that simply having a belief in one's ability to achieve a certain outcome is all a person needs for self-empowerment. This would imply that an internal belief in oneself is both sufficient and desirable for changing a one's life. But change in self-efficacy without real change in one's life cannot truly be called empowerment ([Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010](#)).

#### Psychological Empowerment

In contrast, psychological empowerment at the individual and group levels requires increased awareness and understanding of the factors that influence our lives. It is a process by which we



become aware of the power dynamics that occur at multiple levels in our lives. This could be something like becoming aware of being treated differently due to the colour of one's skin. Or how the lack of resources in the community affects one's wellbeing. People then begin to develop skills for gaining control over relevant aspects of their lives, such as advocating for themselves or working on coping techniques to respond to discrimination. To truly address all the factors that affect a person's life, people's actions should also be directed toward changing the conditions of oppression at multiple levels, such as conditions in the home, at work, or on society (Keys, McConnell, Motley, Liao, & McAuliffi, 2017).

### **Critical Empowerment**

Critical empowerment leads individuals to identify personal and contextual factors that may be part of empowerment for particular individuals or groups. These factors may include additional skills, access to financial capital, access to other resources and opportunities, and access to individuals with greater power. Methods include, but are not limited to, training, developing advocacy skills, studying, becoming self-efficacious, and pursuing resources and opportunities. By increasing skills and access to resources, one can work towards achieving an increased sense of individual and psychological empowerment (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010).

### **Organizational Empowerment**

At the organizational level, it is useful to think of empowerment in two ways: empowering those within the organization, and being effective in fairly addressing organization level issues and working well with those outside the organizations and governmental policies and laws. Regarding the first meaning of organizational empowerment, empowering, we can think of ways an organization is empowering those individuals and groups within it. We first need to recognize that organization can control and influence those who are inside the organization (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). For instance, Maton (2008) identified a set of positive core organizational characteristics for empowering community settings. These include a group-based belief system, positive core activities, a supportive relational environment, opportunity role structure, leadership, setting maintenance and change. An empowered organization can be effective in working with its members, social organizations,

local community and larger society in order to address its needs and meet its goals.

### **Community Empowerment**

The concept of community-level empowerment has also received attention from community psychologists. Community empowerment means a community has the resources and talent to manage its affairs, to control and influence relevant groups and forces within and outside the community, and to develop empowered leaders and community organizations. One example of developing empowered leaders is community members learning to organize, so they can take part in improving their communities and take actions toward these improvements. Empowerment may be particularly important for communities rebuilding after trauma, such as survivor of natural disaster, or for individuals in a war-ravaged country (Anckermann *et al.*, 2005). Indicators of community empowerment include processes such as collective reflection, social participation, and political discussion, as well as outcomes such as having obtained adequate resources for improving community wellbeing and social justice (Fawcett *et al.*, 1994).

### **Societal Empowerment**

Empowerment is concerned not only with a psychological sense of control but also with the equal distribution of sources, attention to material, and political empowerment on the societal level (Nelson & Prilletsensky, 2010). Even if empowerment interventions are carried out at other levels, they typically must take broader, more structural societal forces into account. These forces include the impact of systemic racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, ageism, or classism over time. Societal empowerment concerns processes and structures affecting the empowerment of individuals, organizations, and communities. An important consideration is to what extent a society fosters equity, or the equal distribution of resources and opportunities, while providing support to those who have less than their fair share of resources. An empowering society is one that works to distribute resources equitably as well as effectively. Policies and practices that support such equity are critical, as are the voices of individuals, organizations, and communities. However, empowerment theory has been fairly criticized for focusing on empowering women, dismissing or ignoring men, but the truth

is, both genders desperately need to be equally empowered (Adams, 2008).

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design of survey type. The population of the study consists of women in Akure North Local Government, Ondo State, Nigeria. A sample of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were randomly selected using simple random sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire was used as instrument to elicit information from the respondents. The collected data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

## RESULTS

The results of the analysis for collected data are presented as follows:

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-22 years	25	21.0
23-27 years	10	8.3
28-32 years	14	11.6
32-36 years	10	8.3
37 years –above	61	50.8
Total	120	100

Table 1 shows that 21.0% of the respondents are within the age group 18-22 years, 8.3% of the respondents are within the age group of 23-27 years, 11.6% of the respondents are within the age group of 28-32years years, 8.3% of the respondents are between 32-36years while 50.8% of the respondents are within 37years and above. This indicates that 50.8% constituted the majority of the respondents who are within the age group of 37years and above.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	43	35.8
Female	77	64.2
Total	120	100

Table 2 shows that 35.8% of the respondents are male while the remaining 64.2% of the respondents were female. It implies that female dominate the larger part of the study area.

**Table 3:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christian	82	68.3
Islam	23	19.2
Traditional	15	12.5
Total	120	100

It was discovered that 68.3% of the respondents were Christian in the study area, 19.2% of the respondents practice Islamic religions, while the remaining 12.5% of the respondents are traditionalists.

**Table 4:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Educational background

Educational background	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	30	25.0
Junior Secondary	12	10.0
Senior Secondary	34	28.3
Vocational Training	16	13.3
ND	12	10.0
HND	10	8.3
B.Sc./B.Ed.	6	5.1
Total	120	100

In Table 4, the study revealed that 25% of the respondents have primary school leaving certificate, 10.0% of the respondents have junior secondary school certificate, 28.3% have senior secondary school certificate, 13.3% of the respondents artisans with vocational training certificate, 10% of the respondents have OND/NCE certificate, 8.3% of the respondents have HND certificate while 5.1% of the respondents have B.Sc/B.Ed certificate. This indicate that majority of the respondents possessed secondary school certificate.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Respondents Based on Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	15	12.5
Married	75	62.5
Divorced	20	16.7
Widow/Widower	10	8.3
Total	120	100

Table 5 revealed that 12.5% of the respondents are single, 62.5% of the respondents are married, 16.7% of the respondents are divorcee and 8.3% of the respondents are widow/widower.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Respondents Based On Occupational Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	10	8.4
Employed	31	25.8
Civil Servant	25	20.8
Artisan & Trading	54	45.0
Total	120	100

Table 6 revealed that 8.4% of the respondents are unemployed, 25.8% of the respondents are employed, 20.8% of the respondents are civil servant and 45.0% of the respondents are artisans or traders. This indicates that most of the respondents are involve in trading goods and services.

### Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question One:** What types of women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes exists in Akure North Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria?

**Table 7:** Respondents' view on women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes

S/N	Statement	Responses						Mean	Std.	
		SA	A	D	SD					
1	Agro-business is one of the major type of programme for women empowerment	88(73.4)	15(12.5)	10(8.3)	7(5.8)			3.53	0.879	120
2	Indoor and outdoor catering services has help me in many ways	18(15.0)	86(71.7)	7(5.8)	9(7.5)			2.94	0.714	120
3	I engaged in mobile phones sales and repair as an entrepreneurial activities	76(63.3)	16(13.7)	19(15.8)	9(7.2)			3.33	0.997	120
4	Food processing business is another lucrative enterprises business for women empowerment	79(65.8)	29(24.2)	7(5.8)	5(4.2)			3.32	0.623	120
5	Selling frozen foods increase my income on daily basis	13(10.8)	85(70.8)	8(6.7)	14(11.7)			2.81	0.731	120
6	Selling of cooking gas is another profitable entrepreneurial programme in my community	19(15.8)	62(51.7)	21(17.5)	18(15.0)			3.01	0.781	120

From the results in Table 7, item 1 revealed that 85.9% of the respondents agreed that Agro-business is one of the major type of programme for women empowerment, while 14.1% disagreed. Item 2 showed that 87% of the respondents agreed that Indoor and outdoor catering service has help them in many ways, while 13.0% disagreed. Item 3 revealed that 77% of the respondents agreed that they engaged in mobile phones sales and repair activities, while 23% disagreed. Item 4 showed that 90% of the respondents strongly agreed that Food processing business is another lucrative enterprises for women empowerment, while 10% disagreed. Item 5 revealed that 82% of the respondents agreed that Selling frozen foods increase my income on daily basis, while 18% disagreed. Items 6 showed that 68% of the respondents agreed that Selling of

cooking gas is another profitable entrepreneurial programme in my community, while 32% disagreed.

The finding on research question one revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that agro-business, catering services, mobile phones repairs and sales, food processing, selling frozen food and selling cooking gas are types of empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes that exist in the studied area. This finding is in line with the study of [Mela, Paul and Yakubu \(2024\)](#) who asserted that majority of businesses and entrepreneurial programmes are small scale businesses. People interested in small scale business entrepreneurship are most likely to make a profit that supports their family and a modest lifestyle. They aren't seeking large-scale profits or

venture into capital funding enterprise. Small scale business entrepreneurship is often when a person owns and runs their own business. They typically hire local employees and family members. Local grocery stores, hairdressers, small boutiques, consultants and plumbers are parts of this category of entrepreneurship. This is also corroborating [Chinonye, Iyiola, Akinbode, Obigbemi, & Eke, \(2015\)](#) which asserted that large scale entrepreneurship is when a company has a finite amount of life cycles. This type of entrepreneurship is for an advanced professional who knows how to sustain innovation. They are often a part of a large

team of C-level executives. Large companies often create new services and products based on consumer preferences to meet market demand. Small scale business entrepreneurship can turn into large company entrepreneurship when the company rapidly grows. This can also happen when a large company acquires them. Companies such as Microsoft, Google and Disney are examples of this kind of entrepreneurship.

**Research Question Two:** What is the level of awareness of empowerment and entrepreneurial programme among women in Nigeria?

**Table 8:** Respondents' view on level of awareness of empowerment and entrepreneurial programme among women

S/N	Statement	Responses						Mean	Std.	
		SA	A	D	SD					
7	Women's entrepreneurship has lower participation rates in among women in Akure	52(43.3)	43(35.8)	16(13.4)	9(7.5)			3.15	0.923	120
8	Women participate actively in entrepreneurial programmes in Akure	68(56.7)	22(18.3)	19(15.8)	11(9.2)			3.23	1.025	120
9	Radio and television jiggles make women aware of entrepreneurial programmes in their various community	78(65.0)	32(26.7)	7(5.8)	3(2.5)			3.54	0.721	120
10	Low level of knowledge and awareness hinders active participation of women in entrepreneurship programmes	90(75.0)	16(13.3)	8(6.7)	6(5.0)			3.58	0.826	120
11	Women associations encourages members to attend entrepreneurial programmes to improve their well being	89(74.2)	18(14.7)	6(5.0)	7(6.1)			2.63	0.641	120
12	Women get to know about empowerment programmes through community or landlord association	27(23.0)	35(30.0)	46(37.0)	12(10.0)			2.53	0.345	120

Results in Table 8, item 7 revealed that 59.1% of the respondents agreed that women entrepreneurship has lower participation rates among women, while 20.9% disagreed. Item 8 showed that 75% of the respondents agreed that women participate actively in entrepreneurial programmes, while 25% disagreed. Item 9 revealed that 91.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that Radio and Television jiggles make women aware of empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes in their various community, while 8.3% disagreed. Item 10: showed that 88.3% of the respondents agreed that low level of knowledge and awareness hinders active participation of women in empowerment and entrepreneurship programmes, while 11.7% disagreed. Item 11 revealed that 88.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that women associations and social groups encourages

members to attend empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes to improve their wellbeing, while 11.1% disagreed. Item 12 revealed that 53% of the respondents agreed that women get to know about empowerment programmes through landlord association, while 47% disagreed.

The findings on research question two revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that women has high level of awareness of empowerment and entrepreneurial programme through radio and television jiggles, women association, social groups, and landlord association but whenever they have low level of awareness, participation is usually low. This findings lay credence to [Olaniran \(2013\)](#) who asserted that radio is a powerful means of communicating ideas, events, information and sharing knowledge on various subjects. It is the



cheapest electronic media, homely and user friendly. It does not require a high level of literacy and technical skills to operate and understand its programme. It is the only medium through which information can reach a mass of audience and hard to reach people such as nomads, fishermen and pastoralists. [Osu \(2019\)](#) posited that television is a potent channel for mobilizing community member for development. It is capable of disseminate information to heterogeneous audience with a view to enhance their quality of life. [Ayogu & Agu \(2015\)](#) opined that women's participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes helps to gain employment opportunities that

enhance economic development. The result is in line with [Roy, Tripathy, & Tripathy \(2017\)](#) who asserted that entrepreneurship as becoming a more and more vital source of employment for women globally. With the present situation of loss of jobs across all sectors of the economy, women are engaged in more entrepreneurial activities to provide for their homes as some husbands, too, have lost their jobs.

**Research Question Three:** What is the attitude of women towards empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes in Nigeria?

**Table 9:** Respondents' view on attitude of women towards empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes

S/N	Statement	Responses						
		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.	
13	There is care-free attitude of women towards entrepreneurial programmes in Akure	95(79.1)	17(14.2)	6(5.0)	2(1.7)	3.71	0.640	120
14	Women who understands the importance of entrepreneurial programmes participate actively in the programme	23(19.2)	87(72.5)	6(5.0)	4(3.3)	3.08	0.610	120
15	Entrepreneurial programmes with lucrative income attracts women participation	10(8.3)	95(79.2)	10(8.3)	5(4.2)	2.92	0.574	120
16	Benefits of entrepreneurial programmes makes young and older women show good attitude towards the programme	68(56.7)	31(25.8)	12(10.0)	9(7.5)	3.32	0.935	120
17	Skill acquisition and vocational training liberate women from the shackles of poverty in our society	91(75.8)	13(10.8)	9(7.6)	7(5.8)	3.57	0.867	120
18	Empowerment programmes that distribute free machines, tools or equipment sees large turnout of women in the programme	85(71)	13(10.3)	15(13.0)	7(5.7)	2.40	0.667	120

Results in Table 9, item 13 revealed that 93.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that there is care-free attitude of women towards empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes, while 6.7% disagreed. Item 14 revealed that 91.7% of the respondents agreed that a woman who understands the importance of empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes will participate actively in the programme, while 8.3% disagreed. Item 15 showed that 87.5% of the respondents agreed that entrepreneurial programmes with lucrative income attracts women participation, while 12.5% disagreed. Item 16 revealed that 82.5% of the respondents agreed that benefits derived from empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes makes young and older women show good attitude towards the programmes, while 17.5% disagreed. Item 17 showed that 86.6% of the

respondents agreed that skill acquisition and vocational training liberate women from the shackles of poverty in our society, while 13.4% disagreed. Item 18 revealed that 81.3% of the respondents agreed that empowerment programmes that distribute free machines, tools or equipment sees large turnout of women in the programme, while 18.7% disagreed.

The findings on research question three revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that care-free attitude of women exists towards empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes but lucrative income, gaining of free machine, tools, equipment and other benefits after acquiring skill acquisition and vocational training of empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes makes young and older women show good attitude towards the programme. This finding is line with

Azikiwe (2020) who posited that job creation, skill acquisition, innovation and economic growth serves as a major force for women participation in entrepreneurial programmes. Women are the rising stars of the economies in developing countries to bring prosperity and welfare to women folk. This finding is in tandem with Bouzekraoui and Ferhane (2017) who asserted that the role of women entrepreneurs in economic growth and social change continues to dominate recent policy debates development. The growth of the proportion of women entrepreneurs in formal and informal economy in developing countries has drawn the

attention of both the academic and the development sector. Donors like international public institutions, national and local governments, NGOs, private companies, charities, knowledge institutes and business associations have initiated programmes and policies to promote and develop women's entrepreneurship.

**Research Question Four:** What are the problem that hinders women's participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programme in Nigeria?

**Table 10:** Respondents' view on problem undermining women's participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes

S/N	Statement	Responses						
		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.	
19	Poverty prevent women's participation in entrepreneurial programmes	85(70.8)	19(15.8)	8(6.7)	8(6.7)	3.51	0.889	120
20	Lack of awareness or sensitization programmes hinders women's participation in entrepreneurial programmes	15(12.5)	101(84.1)	2(1.7)	2(1.7)	3.08	0.452	120
21	Inadequate basic infrastructure prevent women's participation in entrepreneurial programmes	99(82.4)	11(9.2)	5(4.2)	5(4.2)	3.70	0.740	120
22	Lack of political will from the government in distributing free working equipment during entrepreneurial programmes prevents women's participation	82(68.3)	12(10.0)	23(19.2)	3(2.5)	3.53	0.777	120
23	Appointing unskilled or untrained facilitator to train women in entrepreneurial programmes prevents women participation	7(5.8)	108(90)	3(2.5)	2(1.7)	3.00	0.389	120

Results in Table 10, Item 19 revealed that 96.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that poverty prevent women's participation in entrepreneurial programmes, while 13.4% disagreed. Item 20 showed that 96.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of awareness or sensitization programmes hinders women's participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes, while 3.3% disagreed. Item 21 revealed that 91.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate basic infrastructure prevents women's participation in entrepreneurial programmes, while 8.3% disagreed. Item 22 showed that 78.3% of the respondents strongly held that lack of political will from government in distributing free working equipment during entrepreneurial programmes prevents women's participation, while 21.7% disagreed. Item 23 revealed that 95.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that appointing

unskilled or untrained facilitator to train women in entrepreneurial programmes prevents women participation, while 4.2% disagreed.

Findings on research question four revealed that majority of the respondents strongly agreed poverty, inadequate basic infrastructure, lack of political will from government, inadequate awareness and unskilled facilitators hinders women's participation in entrepreneurial programme. This finding is in line with Ahmed (2019) who summarized factors affecting women participation in entrepreneurial programmes in Nigeria as poverty, lack of support from governments, family issues, lack of access to capital, market competition, inadequate information, personal characteristics peculiar with women physiological nature, gender discrimination, weak networking power, lack of

access to important assets like land, and equipment, cultural and social barriers. No wonder why Halkias *et al.* (2011) posited that apart from family funding, female entrepreneur rely on bank loans, donations government schemes and charity by churches. This finding also corroborated Garg and Agarwal (2017) who asserted that problems faced by women entrepreneurs in India which is a developing country like Nigeria include lack of education, social barrier, gender discrimination, financial problem, personal barrier (fear of failure

and low self-esteem), market-related barriers (stiff competition and poor sales strategies), skill-related barrier, technological barrier, location of business and lack of motivation.

**Research Question Five:** To what extent do women empowerment and entrepreneurial programme enhance community development in Nigeria?

**Table 11:** Respondents' view on impact of women empowerment and entrepreneurial programme to enhance community development

S/N	Statement	Responses						
		SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std.	
24	Women with stable income actively participate in community decision makings	93(74.2)	14(15.6)	6(5.0)	7(5.2)	2.03	0.641	120
25	Women with entrepreneurial skills contribute immensely to socio-economic development of their community	90(75.0)	16(13.3)	8(6.7)	6(5.0)	3.58	1.025	120
26	Women with entrepreneurial skills contribute to political development of their community	78(65.0)	32(26.7)	7(5.8)	3(2.5)	3.54	0.721	120
27	Women contribute to employment creation and economic growth through their participation in entrepreneurial programmes	68(56.7)	22(18.3)	19(15.8)	11(9.2)	3.23	1.025	120
28	Women entrepreneurs contribute many energy and capital resources to their localities through entrepreneurial programme	52(43.3)	43(35.8)	16(13.4)	9(7.5)	3.15	0.923	120

Results in Table 11, Item 24 revealed that 89.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that women with stable income actively participate in community decision makings, while 10.2% disagreed. Item 25 showed that 88.3% of the respondents agreed that women with entrepreneurial skills contribute immensely to socio-economic development of their community, while 11.7% disagreed. Item 26 revealed that 91.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that women with entrepreneurial skills contribute to political development of their community, while 8.3% disagreed. Item 27 shows that 75% of the respondents agreed that women contribute to employment creation and economic growth through their participation in entrepreneurial programmes, while 25% disagreed. Item 28 revealed that 79.1% of the respondents agreed that women entrepreneurs contribute many energy and capital resources to their localities

through entrepreneurial programme, while 20.9% disagreed.

Findings on research question five revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that women with stable income, entrepreneurs, business owners and self-employed participate actively in community developmental projects and contribute immensely to socioeconomic and political development of their community. This findings lay credence to the study of Allen and Truman (2012) which indicate that women empowerment through entrepreneurial is the solution to the growing unemployment in-order to achieve development in the community, because it helps to generate employment for numbers of people within their own social systems. This is more beneficial for women in community area as it enables them to add to the family income while taking care of their farm income and livestock centered tasks. Community women possess abundant resources to take up an

enterprise which is the major reason for seeking a greater development process among them not leaving behind the critical constraints hindering the growth of women entrepreneurship development in the rural area. Also, Ahmed (2019) posited that community developer accepts empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes as central force to economic growth and development, without it other factors of development will be wasted or frittered away. However, the acceptance of women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes as a central development force will not lead to community development until there is an enabling environment that allows entrepreneurship development in rural areas.

## CONCLUSION

Poverty ravages men and women in the developing and under-developed countries. It transcends gender, race, colour, tribes or communities in most affected regions. It causes mental and psychological stress, malnutrition, illiteracy, health issues and high mortality rates among women and young girls. Meanwhile, women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes has been identified as the powerful tools to overcome poverty, and capacity building for individual, family, community and the nation at large. Thus, women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes can be seen as a vital strategy for any developmental efforts in building a self-reliance community. Although some initiatives have been established by government, non-governmental bodies and individual philanthropists but the sustainability of these programmes is germane to women and community development. The study therefore concluded that women empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes is an indispensable tool of gaining financial freedom for actualizing women and community development in Nigeria.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Good governance that foster gender equality and social justice will promote socio-economic and political development of women, which will in turn enhance their active participation in community development and nation building.
2. Government should provide adequate infrastructure and enabling environment for

empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes to enhance women development.

3. Government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and corporate bodies should make provision for social support programme that can help women to be fully empowered in entrepreneurial skills.
4. Awareness and sensitization programmes through radio and television should be organized to change men's mind set on the need for women participation in empowerment and entrepreneurial programmes to liberate women from the shackles of poverty.
5. Women should be given unlimited access to education, literacy, skill acquisitions and vocational trainings to enhance their capacity building for economic growth and sustainable development.

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