

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT IN OKIGWE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA  
OF IMO STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT:** The study examined women's empowerment and community development in Okigwe LGA, Imo State. Three research objectives, three research questions and three research hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was used, and a questionnaire served as the instrument of data collection. A total of 176 participants were selected as the study sample. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentages, and the hypotheses were tested using chi-square. Based on the data analysis, the findings revealed that there is a significant impact of educational empowerment on women's contribution to community development; there is a significant relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development; and employment of women contributes to women's community development. The significance of the above findings is that it will add positive values to self-reliance among women when they are properly empowered. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Nigerian government should empower women through educational and technical training to enable them to contribute significantly in community development. More so, women in good positions should try significantly to prove that they have significant things to offer in promoting community development, peace and harmony and unity in society.

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment, Community Development, Skill Acquisition, Educational Empowerment, Employment

**INTRODUCTION**

Community development has been one of the basic issues which people promote and discuss. This is because when community development is achieved, it has significant value on human capital improvement and infrastructural transformation at the rural level. To achieve community development, there is a need to consider the role of women. Women serve as mothers, homemakers, conflict managers, and direct assistants to their husbands in their efforts to encourage community development. For that, there is a need for women's empowerment. According to Uche (2016), women empowerment aims at increasing the capacity of women, making them aware of their potential. Such empowerment includes educational, employment, financial and political empowerments. Women can significantly contribute to community development if they are well empowered. Therefore, community development can be described as a process of growth and progressive change in the physical, economic, health, welfare institutional and organizational set up of a community.

Women occupy a special position in terms of their roles in society. This includes women's participation in many activities which affect the well-being of their families in particular and their society at large. Any society that wants to achieve a high level of development and transformation should not overlook the power of women in both human and infrastructural development of communities. The women should be well empowered in all ramifications. Women in different rural areas in Nigeria in general and Okigwe LGA in particular has always contributed in building maternity homes in their communities, training their children in school, training their children on skill acquisition, inculcation of the right cultural value on their children, assisting their husbands for economic stability and assisting in building community halls in different villages. Women's empowerment, which can help to achieve community development, could be achieved through educational empowerment, skill development and employment of women.

Notwithstanding existing policies at all levels of government in Nigeria, women contribution to community development is nothing to write home about, and such has contributed in poor infrastructure and human capital development in different communities in Nigeria in general. The above issues therefore necessitated this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Educational marginalisation of women in most cases makes them to be in disadvantage position and therefore affects their contribution to community development. Not only that, the religious and traditional belief system and practices are affecting women's community development efforts. Traditionally, people believe that women should play home function and up-bringing roles and not take active part in civil service and other government functions that will enhance their economic status to contribute in rural development. The educational level of most Nigerian women is low, and that has hindered their contributions to community development. Based on the foregoing, Women face significant marginalization, limiting their contributions to community development in Okigwe LGA, hence the need for this study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objectives of this study focused on women empowerment and community development in Okigwe L.G.A, Imo State. Specifically, the study is designed to:

1. To find out the impact of educational empowerment on women's contribution to community development.
2. To determine the relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development.
3. To identify the extent to which the employment of women contributes to women's community development.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were based on the statement of the problem:

1. What are the impacts of educational empowerment on women's contribution to community development?
2. What is the relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development?
3. To what extent does employment of women contribute to women's community development?

### **Research Hypotheses**

In line with the objectives and research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant impact of educational empowerment on women's contribution to community development.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Employment of women does not contribute to women's community development.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Conceptualising Women**

People in the world over are either men and women, boys and girls, and such are used to describe masculine or feminine gender. The focused of this study is therefore the feminine gender. In pursuance of this study, the concept of women refers to the female human category. Basically, women are the female folks, our mothers, sisters, aunts, wives, and daughters in our society who are not men or boys (Ekong, 2018). According to Abiola (2019) a woman is someone who is recognised by sex as an adult feminine gender. Men are different from women based on physical appearance, body system, and Gods giving characteristics.

#### **The Concept of Community Development**

Development involves not only economic growth but also conditions in which people in a country have adequate food, jobs, and the income inequality among them is greatly reduced. Pearce et al (2016) held that development is a value word, implying change that is desirable. They added that what constitutes development depends on what social goals are being advocated by the development agency, government, analyst or advisers. Community development is a social action process in which people of community organize themselves for planning and action to improve their infrastructure and human capital (Nwapi, Ubah & Onyeiwu, 2023). They identify their common and individual needs and problems, make group and individual plans to meet these needs, execute these plans with a maximum reliance upon community resources.

Community development is about self-help development efforts from members of the community (Nwakoby, 2017). Thus, an urban community that identifies a need for a transformer in its locality

and takes initiative to raise the required funds and other resources with which to provide for itself is actually undertaking community development. Similarly, community development can also occur in the rural areas. In fact, many rural communities are often found with one form of community development project or another. These include community roads, markets centres, village squares among others. It is development that is “self-started” or self-engineered within the community.

For Chukwuezi (2020), Community development is a strategy or approach for improvement that is directed towards a specific field of social development requiring action on the part of the people to improve their condition of living, whether social, economic or cultural. Its effect in the field of social development is socially conditioned, since it brings about awareness and the improvement of relationships between individuals, groups, communities and organizations to ensure a sustained development. In this light, from a humanitarian perspective, it may be seen as a search for community, mutual aid, social support and human liberation in an alienating, oppressive, competitive and individualistic society.

Similarly, community development can also occur in the rural areas. In fact, many rural communities are often found with one form of community development project or another. These include community roads, markets centres, village squares among others. In point, whereas rural development is all about the transformation and improvement of welfare in rural areas, irrespective of the source of development, community development is specific (Ilediegwu, 2021). It is development that is “self-started” or self-engineered within the community. For example, a community in a local government in Imo State may choose to install additional electricity transformer to meet the increased power needs of that community.

### **The Concept of Women Empowerment**

Ike (2019) opined that empowerment involves a radical alternation of the process and structures that reproduce women's subordinate position as a gender. This is because empowerment means people taking control over their lives in all issues. According to Uche (2016), women empowerment aims at increasing the capacity of women, making them aware of their potential. Discrimination against women is a fact that cannot be denied or swept away with ignominy and callousness. In fact, the patriarchal institution has kept women subjected, humiliated, marginalized, and oppressed in society. Women, especially in Africa, are denied certain basic human rights such as free education, health care, employment, political development and, most times, religious equality with their male counterparts. Even though the bible states that God made them male and female to complement one another, men, use culture, religion, custom and politics to relegate women to the background.

When women begin to enjoy their rights in the society, then they are being empowered (Abiola, 2019). education is a vital tool for emancipation and social justice due to its long-term effect and its utilization value, which makes it a ready tool in the emancipation and empowering process. To educate therefore is the training of the mind and character in order to be informed. In giving children the right education, the discrimination against women is mostly perpetrated by the

uneducated. Most educated parents will give their children equal opportunities to education. (Uche, 2016).

### **Women Educational Empowerment and Community Development**

According to Uangbaoje (2019), education is the prime means of social mobility. For Ganze, de Graaf and Treiman (1992) cited in Uangbaoje (2019), education offers a chance to make up for the various wrongs suffered by one's previous generations. Educational empowerment increases women's ability to take advantage of opportunities in society. Education may provide the know-how which is valuable in business or profession but there are other skills required to grab opportunities. Education also plays a role in income. In most cases, median earnings increase with each level of education (Chukwu, 2018). In some cases, the highest degrees, professional and doctoral degrees, make the highest earnings, while those with lower qualifications earn less. Higher levels of education are associated with better economic and psychological outcomes for women (i.e., more income, more control, and greater social support and networking). Women involved in Nigerian leadership will improve if they are well educated. A leader must have charisma, which appeals to the citizens (Egwu, 2018). Therefore, when women are empowered through education, they will take active part in political leadership and community development.

Education plays a pivotal role in skill sets for acquiring jobs, as well as specific qualities that stratify people with higher SES from those with lower SES. Here, where high and middle-class parents take an active role in their children's education and development /training them to high education, low-income parents have come to realize the benefit of education and are training their children to even higher education for a better tomorrow (Kasa, 2015). Education empowers everybody in the society including women. For that, when women are empowered through education, they will contribute positively to development through active participation in development planning and implementation (Okafor, 2019). Therefore, the high level of women neglect as it concerns educational training at primary, secondary and tertiary level forms the major challenge contributing to women.

### **Skill Training and Women Community Development**

The socioeconomic status (SES) of women can increase when they enjoy skill training in the community (Adefemi and Agunbiade, 2019). Such skill training will enable women to have better economic lives and contribute to community development (Chukwu, 2018). According to Abiola (2019), skill acquisition encompasses not just job training but also self-employment ventures like tailoring, bakery, hair salon, fashion and designing, and so on. Women who are educated and skilled are an engine of development in their respective communities. In so doing, they gain the confidence of their people and subsequently mobilize them easily (Egwu and Egwu, 2016). The socio-economic statuses of Nigerian women are so little when compared to that of men because of their dependency nature.

Skill training can encompass quality of life attributes as well as the opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society. Poor skills for women, specifically, is not a single factor but rather is characterized by multiple physical and psychosocial stressors (Agina, 2017). To Chukwu

(2018), poor skills for women affect overall human functioning, including our physical and mental health. For that, women's inability to play good roles for development is because of poor women skill acquisition.

### **Employment of Women and Community Development**

According to Uangbaoje (2019), employment is an economic condition that plays a very important role in changing the status of an individual. In other words, employment of women is another important indicator of social mobility. When women are empowered through their jobs, it leads to their improved socio-economic status. Empirically, it has been shown that better-employed, wealthier, and more occupationally skilled women are more likely, on average, to enhance community development (Achike, 2019). On the basis of employment, women can achieve a high status in society. In Nigeria today, employment is the important determinant of social class. Employment has other subtle overtones like income from investments is more prestigious than income from welfare payments. Income from the professions is better than wages (Uangbaoje, 2019). Therefore, the nature and source of one's income carry suggestions as to one's family background and probable way of life.

Women's income can also come in the form of unemployment or worker's compensation, social security, pensions, interests or dividends, royalties, trusts, alimony, or other governmental, public, or family financial assistance. The poor financial disposition of most women in Nigeria is a serious militating factor which accounts in the most part for women's defeat. The lack of employment has placed womenfolk either as subordinate or weak players in the political game. About 70% of women in Nigeria currently live below the poverty line (Chukwu, 2018). In this case, the cost of realizing development goals is still far beyond the reach of even the most highly placed women" (Yahaya, 2012). The relatively pathetic financial status of Nigerian women is a major limiting factor for their effective participation in community development.

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **The Theory of Economic Determinism**

The theory of economic determinism was postulated by Friedrich Engels (1820-1995) based on Karl Marx's viewpoint. This theory posits that an economic consideration constitutes the basic factors that induce change in the society. This means, in effect, that the forms and behaviour of men, women, government, religious/traditional institutions, educational institutions, families and other social institutions and organizations are determined by a society's economic system (Ubah, 2016). This theory holds that economic factors are the most crucial factors in explaining social behaviour and that a society's economy determines all other political, social, and cultural phenomena. It is economic consideration that leads to the establishment and expansion of schools, industries and organizations, it induces people to form political parties and to contest election, to embark on various forms of skill, to get married and take the type of decision that will promote family welfare, to get or acquire education, and to work hard to earn promotions and awards in their places of work.



Turning to the economic situation in the society, it could be observed how the women, the less-privilege, the protection at or they have not being cheated, oppressed and maltreated by the men, bourgeoisies, the haves, and the wealthy invariably controls the factors of production. This led Marx to conclude that there is a class struggle among people in society. This struggle may be between men and women, the rich and the poor, the lord and the serf, the oppressor and the oppressed, the employer and the employee, the bourgeois and the proletariat, the leader and the follower, etc. Suppose one relates this theory to the situation in present day Nigeria. In that case, it will be clearly observed that economic interest and consideration are at the root of what is happening in the political system as it relates to women political participation. The economic status of most women is nothing to write home about.

Women make up the majority of the poor population. They depend on their husbands, family members, and friends for survival. Men dominate all issues and realities because they have the needed finance to do so. Therefore, it becomes a reality that women can only be truly empowered and take an active part in development if their economic status is improved.

### **Empirical Review**

Some work has been done in related areas of this study.

Ekong (2018) carried out research on the contributions of women to national development, for example from Akwa Ibom State. He observed the role and extent of women's involvement in the National Development Process. It examines the contributions of women to National Development using example from the civil service. The study used Akwa Ibom State as the case study. Information on workers from level 07 and above was sourced from the state Civil Service Commission, school boards and political party offices. A total population of 33,670 workers was used, of which 19,941 (59.23%) were women in different administrative capacities. Research result shows that women dominate in teaching and nursing professions in the state and form more than 40% of workers in other professions. The future of the civil service, especially education and health in the country, seems to depend on women. However, by a contribution of factors, women could contribute more to National Development if deliberate efforts are made to encourage them. Various programme options are therefore suggested.

Ohaegbuchi (2014) carried out a research on women in community development, interrogating the role of women in August meetings in southeast Nigeria. He asserted the involvement of women in community development with a view to interrogating the impact of the annual women's August meeting in the South East Nigeria. The paper shows how a combination of community development and an August meeting can be a viable project that has the potential of making women even more relevant and capable of being a model in the quest for sustainable development, which is part of the Millennium Development Goals. It discusses the role of women in the quest for sustainable development through community development. The paper argues that the involvement of women in community development promotes peace and, consequently, gives room for sustainable development and good governance. Thus, ways of realizing these objectives are highlighted. Also in focus is the need to separate politics from the activities of the women's August meeting as the paper revealed that the annual gathering has assumed the status of a political

jamboree. Therefore, the research submits that the yearly August meeting should be used to consolidate peaceful relations and create an environment which deters the emergence or escalation of tensions that may lead to violent conflict. Thus, giving room for community development for no development thrives in an environment where there is violent conflict. Methodologically, primary and secondary data were used, and for theory, social responsibility theory was used in the study, which proved effective in carrying out the research.

Ike (2019) focused on political participation and women's empowerment in Nigeria. The study was carried out following the inability of the Nigerian government (at all levels) to implement the 35% UN affirmative action for women in elective and selective positions. Four (4) research questions, four research objectives and two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The researcher adopted a survey research design. The questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection, and the data were analysed using simple percentage and chi-square. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between the socio-economic status of women and their level of political participation, and religious and traditional beliefs and practices have positive impacts on women's political empowerment. Based on the findings, the study recommends that female political empowerment in Nigeria through constitutional reform is required to promote a feminine political model against the historic and unyielding masculine model. More so, to attain sustainable democracy and effective women political participation in Nigeria, the federal government should empower women-in-line with the international declarations, instructions, and protocols on women's rights issues.

Ubonso (2018) examined the role of women in community development in Ahiazu Mbaise LGA of Imo State. The study was carried out to examine the contribution of women in community development and the challenges hindering their effective contribution in the society. Based on the above, the researcher formulated four research objectives, four research questions and two hypotheses. Descriptive survey research design was used, and a questionnaire served as the instrument of data collection. The people of Ahiazu Mbaise LGA made up the population, from where 180 persons were sampled using the purposive sampling technique. Though out of 180 questionnaires distributed, only 170 were properly filled, returned and used. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentages, and the hypotheses were tested using chi-square. Based on the data analysis, the findings revealed that there is significant role of women in human capital/infrastructural development, there is significant relationship between socio-economic status of women and contribution in community development, there is significant impact of educational empowerment on women contribution to community development and that women have significantly contributed in building of health centres, town hall and training of their children. Based on the findings, we recommend that the Nigerian government at all levels should empower women through technical/educational training, job opportunities and involving them in decision-making as that will make them contribute significantly to community development. Hence, we conclude that women are the instrument for improved development at the community level.

Abiola (2019) examined Women's political participation and grassroots democratic sustainability in Osun State, Nigeria (2010-2015). It studies the Osun State and women's representation in both the federal and state levels, and in the legislative and executive arms of government, indicating it



has the second highest women's representation in South West, Nigeria. This study adopted survey research design. Data were collected through questionnaires and unstructured interviews. Simple percentage was used for data analysis. The findings revealed that the number of women involved in political participation in Osun State is low compared to their male counterparts yet they are beginning to make great strides. It was found that women's representation at the two levels of involvement in the period under study was 50 women or 20.5% of the group while male representation was 244 or 79.5 %. Further, it was revealed that the under representation of women in political participation in Osun State was due to certain socio-cultural factors like violence, discrimination against women, people's perception of politics as a dirty game and cultural beliefs. It is recommended that there needs to be local policies to end all discrimination against women as well as a platform of action entrenched in the constitution.

Adefemi and Agunbiade (2019) appraised the participation of women legislators in law-making process at the Houses of Assembly, Southwest Nigeria. It highlighted women legislators' challenges, experiences and contributions with a view to providing information on the representation and participation level of women in law-making in Nigeria. Survey method was used. Structured interviews were conducted with key respondents consisting of purposively selected women legislators, women leaders of political parties and members of Houses of Assembly in Lagos, Ekiti and Oyo States. A total number of 24 respondents were interviewed in the three states. Data collected were analysed using content analysis. Results showed that women legislators have been highly involved in legislative debates by sponsoring diverse motions despite their low representation in the selected State Houses of Assemblies. Also, results affirmed that factors such as shunning of ideas and motions, lack of equal knowledge of partisan politics, lack of adequate education, discrimination, marriage, and late night meetings and sittings remain some of the challenges that women legislators in Southwest Nigeria face. To overcome these problems, the study recommended the development of electoral reforms that promote equitable representation of women.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to investigate the subject matter.

The population size for this research is 176. It covers the entire community government council executive in 22 autonomous communities (11 wards) in Okigwe LGA, Imo State. The community government council of each autonomous community comprises 8 members: the traditional ruler, the president general, the vice president general, the secretary general, the assistant secretary general, the youth leader, the women leader, and the PRO. Therefore, our study population is 176 in all.

**Table 1:** Study population.

Categories of people selected in each autonomous community	Population size
The Traditional Ruler	22
The President General	22
The Vice President General	22
The Secretary General	22
The Assistants Secretary General	22
The Youth Leader	22
The Women Leader	22
The PRO	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>

Because the population is not large and accessible, the entire population of 176 was used as a sample.

In this direction, the sample technique used in this study is the census enumeration method. Since the population is not too large (176), the researcher used census method so as to study the entire population as sample. A structured questionnaire was used, covering demographic variables and key themes such as educational empowerment, skill acquisition, and employment. Content validity was used as the researcher gave the instrument to experts for vetting. In addition, test-retest reliability through the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (which gave 0.87 reliability) was applied for the study. The test re-test enabled the researcher to carry out a pilot study which gave positive result of 0.87 value.

The data collected were analysed using simple percentages and chi-square.

## **DATA PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Section A: Demographic Variables of Respondents**

**Table 1:** Age distribution

Age Bracket	Number of Respondents	Percentage
20-29 years	32	18.8%
30-39 years	65	38.2%
40-49 years	55	32.4 %
50 years & above	18	10.6 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

From Table 1 above, the results show that 32 respondents, representing 18.8 % of the entire sample, fell within the age bracket of 20-29 years, 65 respondents, representing 38.2%, fell within 30-39

years, 55 respondents, representing 32.4%, were within 40-49 years, and the remaining 18 respondents, representing 10.6%, were within 50 years and above.

**Table 2:** Marital status

Marital status	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Married	128	75.3%
Single	42	24.7 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

The results from Table 2 above show that 128 respondents, representing 75.3% of the entire sample, were married, and 42 respondents, representing 24.7%, were single.

**Table 3:** Sex

Sex of respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	140	82.3
Female	30	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

The results from Table 3 above show that 140 respondents, representing 82.3% of the sample, were male while 30 respondents, representing 17.6% of the population, were female.

**Table 4:** Educational status

Educational status	Number of Respondents	Percentage
FSLC/SSCE/GCE	80	47.1%
NCE/OND	59	34.7%
BSC/HND	31	18.2%
MSC/PHD	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

The results from Table 4 above indicated that 80 respondents, representing 47.1% of the sample, have FSLC/SSCE /GCE as their educational status, 59 respondents, representing 34.7%, have NCE/OND as their educational status, and 31 respondents, representing 18.2%, have B.Sc/ HND as their educational status. None of the respondents, representing 1.8%, have M.Sc/Ph.D as their educational status.

**Section B: Substantive Issues of the Research**

**Item 5:** There is a significant impact of educational disadvantage on women's contribution to community development.

**Table 5:** Responses on if there is a significant impact of educational disadvantage on women's contribution to community development.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	70	41.2%
Agreed	59	34.7%
Disagreed	36	21.2%
Strongly disagreed	5	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

Table 5 above indicated that 70 respondents representing 41.2% strongly agreed, 59 respondents representing 34.7% agreed, 36 respondents representing 21.2% disagreed while 5 respondents representing 2.9% strongly disagreed.

**Item 6:** Training women in handiwork and educational problems will reduce the challenges affecting them in community development.

**Table 6:** Responses on whether training women in handiwork and educational problems will reduce the challenges affecting them in community development.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	60	35.3%
Agreed	40	23.5%
Disagreed	38	22.4%
Strongly disagreed	32	18.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

Table 6 above shows that a total of 60 respondents, representing 35.3%, strongly agreed, 40 respondents, representing 23.5% agreed, 38 respondents, representing 22.4% disagreed, and 32 respondents, representing 18.8% strongly disagreed.

**Item 7:** There is significant impact of skill acquisition on women contribution to community development.

**Table 7:** Responses on if there is a significant impact of skill acquisition on women's contribution to community development.

Reponses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	77	45.3%
Agreed	50	29.4%
Disagreed	23	13.5%
Strongly disagreed	20	11.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

From the above table, it can be seen that 77 respondents, representing 45.3%, indicated strongly agreed, 50 respondents, representing 29.4%, indicated agreed, 23 respondents, representing 13.5%, indicated disagreed, and 20 respondents, representing 11.8%, indicated strongly disagreed.

**Item 8:** When women are empowered through skill, they will have the needed finance to contribute to community development.

**Table 8:** Responses on if when women are empowered through skill, they will have the needed finance to contribute in community development.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	55	32.4%
Agreed	45	26.5%
Disagreed	40	23.2%
Strongly disagreed	30	17.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

From Table 8 above, 55 respondents, representing 32.4%, strongly agreed; 45 respondents, representing 26.5%, agreed; 40 respondents, representing 23.2%, disagreed; and 30 respondents, representing 17.6%, strongly disagreed.

**Item 9:** There is a significant contribution of women's employment in community development

**Table 9:** Responses on whether there is a significant contribution of women's employment of community development

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	70	41.2%
Agreed	59	34.7%
Disagreed	36	21.2%
Strongly disagreed	5	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

Table 9 above indicated that 70 respondents, representing 41.2%, strongly agreed, 59 respondents, representing 34.7%, agreed, 36 respondents, representing 21.2%, disagreed, and 5 respondents, representing 2.9%, strongly disagreed.

**Item 10:** Women in better jobs play more roles in community development.

**Table 10:** Responses on if women in better jobs play more roles in community development.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agreed	60	35.3%
Agreed	40	23.5%
Disagreed	38	22.4%
Strongly disagreed	32	18.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field survey, 2025

Table 10 above shows that a total of 60 respondents, representing 35.3%, strongly agreed, 40 respondents, representing 23.5% agreed, 38 respondents, representing 22.4% disagreed, and 32 respondents, representing 18.8% strongly disagreed.

### Testing and Interpretation of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant impact of educational empowerment on women's contribution to community development.

To test the above hypothesis, questions 5 and 6 of the questionnaire stated in tables 5 and 6 of this chapter were used. It should be noted here that the hypotheses were tested using a two-point Likert scale format of positive and negative responses. This is to say that strongly agreed and agreed were merged as positive responses, while disagreed and strongly disagreed were merged as negative responses.

**Table 11:** Observed frequency for hypothesis one.

Options	Number of Respondents		Percentage
Positive responses	129	100	229
Negative responses	41	70	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>

**Source:** Computed from table 5 and 6 based on field survey

$$\sum = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$



$$E_{1,1} = \frac{229 \times 170}{340} = 114.5$$

$$E_{1,2} = \frac{229 \times 170}{340} = 11.5$$

$$E_{2,1} = \frac{111 \times 170}{340} = 55.5$$

$$E_{2,2} = \frac{111 \times 170}{340} = 55.5$$

**Table 12:** Computation of chi-square ( $X^2$ )  $\sum(O_i - E_i)^2$

EI

Observed frequency ( $O_i$ )	Expected frequency ( $E_i$ )	$O_i - E_i$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
129	114.5	14.5	210.5	1.84
100	114.5	-14.5	210.5	1.84
41	55.5	-14.5	210.5	3.79
70	55.5	14.5	210.5	3.79
<b>340</b>				<b>11.26</b>

$X^2$  calculated – 11.26. And  $X^2$  is calculated at a 5% level of significance, degree of freedom 1=3.84

### Decision Rule

Since the calculated chi-square is greater than the critical value, that is,  $11.26 > 3.84$ , we will accept the alternative hypothesis, reject the null hypothesis, and conclude that educational empowerment has a significant impact on women's contribution to community development.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development.

To test the above hypothesis, questions 7 and 8 of the questionnaire, as stated in tables 5 and 8 of this chapter, were used; hence, they provide answers to the hypothesis. It should be noted here that the test of hypotheses was done using a two-point Likert scale format of positive and negative responses. This is to say that strongly agreed and agreed were merged as positive responses, while disagreed and strongly disagreed were merged as negative responses.

**Table 13:** Observed Frequency for hypothesis two.

Option	Number of respondents		Total
Positive response	127	100	22
Negative response	43	70	
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	

Source computed from table 7 and 8 above, base on field survey.

$$\Sigma = \frac{\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total}}{\text{Ground total}}$$

$$E_{1,1} = \frac{227 \times 170}{340} = 113.5$$

$$E_{1,2} = \frac{227 \times 170}{340} = 113.5$$

$$E_{2,1} = \frac{113 \times 170}{340} = 56.5$$

$$E_{2,2} = \frac{113 \times 170}{340} = 56.5$$

**Table 14:** Computation of chi-square ( $X^2$ )  $\sum (O_i - E_i)^2$

EI

Observed frequency ( $E_i$ )	Expected frequency ( $E_i$ )	$O_i - E_i$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{EI}$
127	113.5	13.5	182.25	1.61
100	113.5	13.5	182.25	1.61
43	56.5	13.5	182.25	3.23
70	56.5	13.5	182.25	3.23
<b>340</b>				<b>9.68</b>

$X^2$  calculated =9.68 and  $X^2$  tabulated at 5% level of significance, degree of freedom 1=3.84

### Decision Rule

Since  $x^2$  calculated is greater than  $X^2$  tabulated, that is  $9.68 > 3.84$ , we will accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis and hence conclude that there is significant relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Employment of women does not contribute to women community development.

To test the above hypothesis, questions 9 and 10 of the questionnaire stated in tables 9 and 10 of this chapter were used. It should be noted here that the hypotheses were tested using a two-point Likert scale format of positive and negative responses. This is to say that strongly agreed and agreed were merged as positive responses, while disagreed and strongly disagreed were merged as negative responses.

**Table 15:** Observed frequency for hypothesis three.

Options	Number of Respondents		Percentage
Positive responses	129	100	229
Negative responses	41	70	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>

**Source:** Computed from table 9 and 10 based on field survey

$$\Sigma = \frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column total}}{\text{Grand total}}$$

$$E_{1,1} = \frac{229 \times 170}{340} = 114.5$$

$$E_{1,2} = \frac{229 \times 170}{340} = 11.5$$

$$E_{2,1} = \frac{111 \times 170}{340} = 55.5$$

$$E_{2,2} = \frac{111 \times 170}{340} = 55.5$$

**Table 16:** Computation of chi-square ( $X^2$ )  $\sum(O_i - E_i)^2$

EI

Observed frequency (O <sub>i</sub> )	Expected frequency (E <sub>i</sub> )	O <sub>i</sub> -E <sub>i</sub>	(O <sub>i</sub> -E <sub>i</sub> ) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
129	114.5	14.5	210.5	1.84
100	114.5	-14.5	210.5	1.84
41	55.5	-14.5	210.5	3.79
70	55.5	14.5	210.5	3.79
<b>340</b>				<b>11.26</b>

$X^2$  calculated – 11.26. And  $X^2$  calculated at 5% level of significance, degree of freedom 1=3.84

### **Decision Rule**

Since the chi-square calculated is greater than the critical value, that is  $11.26 > 3.84$ , we will accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis and conclude that employment of women contributes to women community development.

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Test of hypothesis one shows that there is significant impact of educational empowerment on women contribution to community development. For Ike (2019) financial disadvantage on women's contributions affects community development efforts. For Ekong (2018) involving women in decision-making in the society will enhance their participation in community development programmes. Educational empowerment increases women's ability to take advantage of opportunities in society. Education may provide the know-how which is valuable in business or profession but there are other skills required to grab opportunities. Education also plays a role in income (Adefemi & Agunbiade, 2019).

Test of hypothesis two discovered that there is a significant relationship between skill acquisition for women and community development. For Ubonso (2018), the major challenges affecting women's contribution to community development include lack of skill or training for self-employment. According to Abiola (2019), skill acquisition encompasses not just job training but also self-employment ventures like tailoring, bakery, hair salon, fashion and designing, and so on. Women who are educated and skilled are an engine of development in their respective communities.

The test of hypothesis three indicated that employment of women contributes to women's community development. For Ubah (2016) marginalised, women in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular have been marginalized significantly, and that has hindered them from contributing positively to community development. There is need for employment of women in good occupation to make them play active development roles (Abiola, 2019). The areas where women have been marginalized in our society include good job, employment and decision making (Ohaegbuchi, 2014)

### **Conclusion**

Community development has been one of the basic issues which people promote and discuss. This is because when community development is achieved, it has significant value on human capital improvement and infrastructural transformation at the rural level. One of the basic people that contribute to community development in any country is the women. The contribution of women in community development cannot be overemphasised. Unfortunately, there are many challenges affecting women in playing their developmental roles. Such challenges which affect women in their efforts to achieve development in most cases include low level of education, lack of human development empowerment, marginalisation from social institutions – men, church, traditional

institutions and many others. The above challenges have made it possible that women may not contribute to development as it should be.

Educational of women, in most cases, puts them in a disadvantaged position and, therefore, affects their contribution to community development. Not only that, the religious and traditional belief system and practices are affecting women's community development efforts. Traditionally, people believe that women should play a home function and up-bringing role and not take an active part in civil service and other government functions that will enhance their economic status to contribute in rural development.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian government should empower women through educational and technical training so that they can contribute significantly to community development.
2. Women in good positions should try to prove that they have something significant to offer in promoting community development, peace, harmony, and unity in society.
3. The Nigerian government should pragmatically implement the 35% affirmative action policy, which will promote effective women's representation in political, economic, and social life in Nigeria.

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