

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **The contributions of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic development (A study of selected local governments in Anambra state Nigeria)**

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## **Abstract**

**This empirical paper investigates the contributions of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic development in Nigeria. The broad objective of this study is to critically examine the contributions of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic development in Anambra State Nigeria. The population of this study was 3000 selected women entrepreneurs from three the local governments in Anambra State. It was impracticable to study the whole population therefore the study settled for a sample size. The sample size of the study was computed to be 353 using Taro Yamani formula {1967}. The study used descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) to answer the two research questions posed. Hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance with Pearson Product Moment correlation and multiple regressions were employed in Data analysis. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science version 17) software was used to run the analysis. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Three hundred and fifty three (353) copies of questionnaire were administered, and one hundred and forty six (146) copies were returned. Consequently, the findings of this study portrayed a significant impact between Women entrepreneurship activities, job creation, wealth creation, youth empowerment, poverty reduction, employment generation and increase in standard of livings of people. The study therefore recommends that government should ensure that managerial lessons are accompanied with the skill acquisition programs to all women in order for them to understand the rudiments of owning and sustaining a business. The study also recommends that women entrepreneurs that have overcome the inertia of starting a business should come together to create platforms that can help those women who are yet to take a step or kick-start such venture.**

**Key Words: Women entrepreneurs, Economic Development, Job Creation, Sustainable wealth creation.**

## **Introduction**

Statistically, women constitute more than 50% of the Nigerian population and out of this only about 35% of them are involved in entrepreneurship which can be under the form of micro, small, medium and large enterprises (Odoemene, 2013). In Nigeria, regardless of women's population, educational, economic and social status, they are not well represented in the policy making process, especially in issues of business and man power development. However, given the dynamic nature of the

Nigerian environment, a number of changes have emerged, including the recognition of the potential of women and their contributions to the economy. As Mordi (2010) observed that traditional roles occupied by the Nigerian women in the family are changing as the result of changes in the family configuration and setting which has allowed women to undertake more practical and functional roles within the society.

Changes in the family structure and functions which resulted from the process of rapid urbanization had brought women into the mainstream of the Nigerian

economy and business world. Most women are now operating as de facto heads of households in settings and a number of these women are involved in entrepreneurship and business management in order to provide income for their family/ home keeping. Considering women's multiple roles in our society (roles as mothers, wives, breadwinners etc) and the circumstances surrounding their peculiar nature which pose constrain to their full involvement in business, there is a need to create conducive and enabling environment to encourage their participation in the economic development. Promoting women entrepreneurship development demands more attention to be focus upon issues that restricts women entrepreneur. Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria are major contributors to economic growth because without any doubt they are generating employment.

Consequently, women are making significant contributions to their families and country at large particularly in this era of economic distress. Hence, this study is aimed at examining the various contributions of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic development.

### Statement of Problem

Countries around the world are increasingly formulating policies to make it easier to start a business. These changes could benefit women entrepreneurs significantly. McConnell (2007), in the Doing Business Report, indicated that countries that ranked highest on its ease of doing business scale, are associated with higher percentages of women entrepreneurs and employees in comparison with their male counterparts.

Entrepreneurial activities in most countries are known to be male dominated especially in the developing countries; the ratio of women entrepreneurs to men entrepreneurs varies considerably across the world. Women entrepreneurs operate within gender bias among other constraint that can constitute a threat or create opportunity for women entrepreneurs (Eren, 2012). Women entrepreneurs are often marginalized to the informal sector; the ability of women entrepreneur to formalize and grow their business to create jobs and enhance productivity is hampered. Prejudice against women entrepreneurs is experienced much more severely in Africa countries due to oblivious cultural practices, religion bigotry, discrimination and tradition of patriarchal cultures (The Baud, 2012). Against this backdrop, this study examines the contributions of women entrepreneurs to socio-economic development in Anambra State Nigeria.

### Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to critically examine the contributions of women entrepreneurship in economic development in Anambra State.

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To examine the impact of the activities of women entrepreneurs on poverty reduction in Anambra State.
- To ascertain the level of women entrepreneurs activities by way of job creation, wealth creation, and crime reduction in Anambra State.

### Research Questions

To realize the above mentioned objectives, the following questions were posed.

- How does women entrepreneurs' activity contribute to poverty reduction?
- To what extent do women entrepreneurs activities contribute to wealth creation, job creation and crime reduction in Anambra State?

### Hypotheses

To answer the research questions posed for the study, the following hypotheses were formulated in a null form.

**H01:** Women entrepreneurial activity cannot adequately reduce poverty and unemployment.

**H02:** To a large extent women entrepreneur activities cannot contribute to wealth creation, job creation, and crime reduction in Anambra State.

### Review of Related Literature

One of the most important issues of humanity is economic growth; both in national economies and world economy, recession and propensity periods are regularly succeeding with different amplitude (Ailenei and Mosara, 2011). From time immemorial, the issue of human progress has become the most important concern to economic growth. Nations of the world prosper when important performances in economic growth are achieved.

Entrepreneurial development is one of the most effective tools for reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development; as observed by Mordi, Simpson, Sigh, and Okafor (2010) the traditional roles played by a woman in a typical Nigerian family configuration and functional setting which has allowed women to undertake more practical and functional roles within the society. Despite the number of changes that have emerged, recognition of the potential of women and their contribution to the economy still remains unacknowledged. Scholars have researched to the roles of SME's and considered it as one of the major engine driving national economic growth and women involvement in micro, small and medium scale enterprises(SME's) which contribute more than 97% of all enterprises, 65% of the nations GDP and 94% of the total share of the employment (Mayoux, 2011; Udechukwu, 2011; Ndubuisi, 2012). Women entrepreneurs have been known to be inclined towards business where they have most experience and knowledge (Goffic&Scase, 2013).

## **Women Entrepreneurs**

Following Lewis (2009) entrepreneurs tend to have a number of common traits which include characteristics concerning creativity and innovation, foresight, imagination, and daring. Theories on what makes people entrepreneurs or externally induced or motivated factors, such as lack of employment opportunities, dissatisfaction at work, and supportive government initiatives.

Women entrepreneurs are simply women that participate in total entrepreneurial activities, who take the risk involved in combining resources together in a unique way so as to take advantage of the opportunity identified in their immediate environment through production of goods and services. Most of them are involved in macro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSME's) which contributes more than 97% of all enterprises, 60% of the nation's GDP and 94% of total share of the employment (Mayoux, 2011; Ndubuisi, 2012). The spectrum of women in entrepreneurship often ranges from home based businesses (HBB) to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME's) (ILO, 2008). Women entrepreneurs generally share the same motivations with their male counterparts (Kerk, 2013).

### **Obstacles to women entrepreneurship**

It is essential to determine the factors that might inhibit entrepreneurial activities among women, taking into consideration the large contribution women entrepreneurs can make to the economy. Richard, Howarth and Finnegan (2012) commented that women entrepreneurs suffer from significant material constraints through the unhelpful attitudes arising from society's negative attitude towards women in business. Women entrepreneurs often feel that they are victims of discrimination. This statement was also emphasized by Orhan (2009), who found that one of the most interesting issues with regard to women entrepreneurship is the different ways women are discriminated against in concealed ways.

According to Kuratko and Welsch (2010), women entrepreneurs have long felt that they have been victims of discrimination. Various studies examined the types of discrimination and some have been attempted to document them. Researchers Sexton and Bowman-Upton (2009) suggest that female business owners are subject to gender-related discrimination. In addition, Abor and Biekper (2010) emphasized that this discrimination against women seems to be even worse in sub-Saharan African countries, such as Ghana, where the financial sector is male oriented. Challenges to women entrepreneurship cover a wide spectrum, including level of education, inter-role conflicts emanating from greater parenting responsibilities, a dearth of financial assistance and socio-cultural constraints (Ghosh and Cheruvalath, 2007). Although men and women both experience personal problems, women recorded more difficulties. This is especially true with regard to a lack of self confidence and not being taken seriously by providers of fund when applying for funds (Bridges, O'Neill, and Cromie, 2013). It is

widely acknowledged that African women have access to fewer resources than men. For example, relative to men, they tend to have lower access to land, credit facilities, education and training facilities (Katepa-Kalala, 2009).

Furthermore, in many African countries like Nigeria, women have fewer inheritance rights either by law or obstacles preventing women from realizing their economic potential as well as constraining economic development (Ong, 2008). Downing and Daniels (2012) argue that growth-oriented donors have promoted investment strategies in Africa that typically exclude women due to the commonly held view that women enterprises are concentrated in un-dynamic subsectors that have little potential for contributing to the growth of the economy.

### **The Economic Contribution of Women in Nigeria**

Across the different Africa regions Women have stood up to agitate on the importance of the roles of women in the society. Such women include the likes of Madam Tinubu of Egbaland in the western part of Nigeria. She was a notable trader, who also had political power. She safeguard her Economic Empire against the invasion of the British, Brazilian and Saro traders. Due to her success as a business woman and a politician, she was given the title of Iyalode of Egbaland. As Marketers of the farm product, the contribution of women to the economic well being of Nigeria is enormous and much greater than they are acknowledge for. Some women do help their Husband on the distant Farm to plant Cassava, while their husband plants Yams. The women are largely responsible for the harvesting of Farm product and they carry it to the Market to sell. Nigerian women are economic assets to their family and Society. The role of women in Nigerians economic sector cannot be over emphasized, as they engaged in weaving, Pot making, and dyeing to assist themselves financially. The role of Women in the family units made them indispensable entities in the struggle to survive against the harsh realities of time and tended to endow women with significant influence in their society. Nigerian women are sensitive, compassionate understanding empathetic. They are givers and nurturers of life.

### **The Social Contribution of Women in Nigeria**

Findings have shown that women are understanding, givers and nurturers of life. Their roles in child bearing and raising children are indispensable in any given society. It is through her that the child learns the first rule in the social life: Good manners and acceptable behaviours, until the child is weaned. A Mother does not only take care of the education of the children, but also instruct her Family member on how to have good manners and etiquettes which are habit and acceptable social behaviour. Despite woman's contribution in both financial and Educational sectors, they are not treated as equals to the men in some African societies. Women in most

African communities are placed second to men, since creation they are believed to be subordinate to men.

Although these women are economically independent, they are submissive in nature. Women in Africa have joined women in other nations in their quest for rights, opportunity, relevance and recognition. Various women in the world stood against all area of life endeavor. Happily today we have an Avalanche of female writers in Africa. The list include: Stella Oyedepo, Zaynab Alkali, Ifeoma Okoye, Mable Segun, Adaorah Lily-Vlasi, Remi Adedeji, FolashayoOgunrinde, Flora Nwapa, Helen Ovbiagele etc. The emergence of women writers on the literary scene in Nigeria marks the beginning of female centered novels. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo trilogy the last of the Strong ones, House of symbols and Children of the Eagle have succeeded in gaining wide readership. Ezeigbo is a feminist writer that believes that when a woman writes, she writes based on her personal experiences which tend to be more of things experienced by the gender in terms of injustice done to them. Female writers like Maya Angelou, Margret Atwood, Susan Brown Miller, Simon de Beauvoir, Mariam Ba, Judith Butler, Buchi Emecheta and so many more, have risen to fight for their belief in the Social, Political and Economic equality of the sexes. This they called feminism. Feminism can be defined as the movement aimed at establishing and defending equal Political Opportunities for women. Much has been written by critics concerning the definition of Feminism as a concept but perhaps no view has identified its outstanding Tenets more aptly than that which links it to the social disabilities under which women lived for most of the time Human History. To this extent therefore, Oliver Banks has defined feminism as a Historical phenomenon, which started from:

A sense of dissatisfaction with the conditions of women's live and Opportunities coupled with the beliefs that women's disabilities rise not from nature itself, nor indeed from any ills which afflict mankind but from the way in which woman's desire and abilities have been made subordinate to their needs, desire and interest of men. This explains why the concept of Feminism incorporates the belief and faith that a solution could be found to the problem their proving for not only an ideology but also a programme of action. Emecheta's central idea in *The Joys of Motherhood* is feminism. She fights against exploitation and pursue the cause of women in her text.

### ***Empirical Literature***

The study of Okafor, and Mordi (2010) examined the Effect of Environmental Factor on Women Entrepreneurship Development in Lagos State Nigeria. The study stressed that women's involvement in economic development has been recognized as important especially in the area of entrepreneurship Using 104 women entrepreneurs as respondents and correlation matrix to test the hypotheses, the result revealed that government policy as an environmental factor has negative correlation with women entrepreneurship development and this affects other factors. The study therefore recommends that to encourage women's participation in the economic development, the government should make policies that

will positively enhance the accessibility of women entrepreneurs to the required funds and other resources.

In another study of Oluwole and Azuh, (2014) on the Impact of Women Entrepreneurs on the Economy of Ota Nigeria, the study sought to find the roles and contributions of women small and medium scale enterprises (SME) operators to the development of the city with 146 women entrepreneurs as respondents. Data collected were analyzed using simple frequency tables and regression analysis. The findings revealed that the extent to which the variance in poverty level can be explained by the activities of women entrepreneurs is 32.3% ie ( $R^2=.323$ ),  $F= 16.790$ , and  $P\leq 0.001$ . This shows that the activities of women entrepreneurs have significant effect on poverty level in Ota Ogun State Nigeria. The study also discovered that a lot of women are uneducated; as far as business technicalities are concerned. Therefore, the study recommends that state Government should encourage women in entrepreneurial activities and provide sound conducive business environment for women through provision of infrastructural facilities such as power supply, good roads, water and micro credit that will enhance women's participation in business,

In a practical investigation of women Entrepreneurship in Lesotho by Stephen and Mampoli, (2013), using 54 women entrepreneurs as respondents, the study revealed that women entrepreneurs were motivated by pull factors, such as the need for independence, self fulfillment, work flexibility and a need for a challenge to self employment. It was also revealed that these women are faced with some challenges such as obtaining finances, work-home conflict, lack of education and training in business and management skills. However, practical recommendations are that government and women entrepreneurs should overcome these obstacles through skill training and issuing of grants to ensure that women entrepreneurs can sufficiently contribute to the economy and empower themselves economically.

However, Lamidi (2013) examined the extent to which Gender and Cultural beliefs have influenced Women Entrepreneurs. The study therefore attempts to link gender bias and subculture like regional, ethnicity and religious practices within the context of national culture that affect women entrepreneurs in developing nations. The findings indicate that gender, ethnicity and religion play important role in entrepreneurship development and how women entrepreneurs are perceived and valued. The study therefore recommends that government should make policies and create enabling environment that would boost female entrepreneurs in the generation of employment and wealth creation.

### **Methodology**

The study critically examined the contributions of women entrepreneurship in socio-economic development in Anambra State. The focus of the study was on women entrepreneurs from three (3) local government areas in Anambra State which comprises of Nnewi north, Nnewi south, and Ekwusigbo local government area.

**Research Design**

The study used a descriptive survey design. The purpose of using descriptive survey was to collect detailed and factual information that describes an existing phenomenon. Data was collected based on the concepts defined in the research model and hypotheses tested. The study relied on primary data which was obtained through the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires was divided into section A and B. Section A consists of socio-economic demographic characteristics of the respondents, while section B consists of questions that were carefully drawn to elicit the required information from the respondents. A structured 5-point modifies likert scale battery of strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Undecided (3) Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) in line with Atiku, Genty and Akinlabi (2011) was also adopted. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree/ disagree with various statements. The scores of the respondents from each local government were aggregated and average to derive a single score for each of the response.

**Population, sample size determination and sampling technique**

Oyesiku (2010) described the population of any work as the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. It therefore follows that unless the total population is explicitly defined before the actual work, it is difficult if not impossible to evaluate

the adequacy of the selected sample. Consequently, the population of this study is 3000 women entrepreneurs from three (3) local governments in Anambra state being Nnewi north, Nnewi south and Ekwusigo (MSME, 2013). One thousand three hundred (1300) women entrepreneurs from Nnewi north, Seven hundred (700) from Nnewi south and One thousand (1000) from Ekwusigo local government area (MSME's, 2013) were selected. Usually the huge size of the most population of study makes it impracticable to survey the whole population (Oyesiku, 2010). Consequently, most studies settle for a representative sample of the population. The sample size of this study was computed to be 353; this was arrived at by using formular suggested by Taro Yemini (1967) for estimating sample size.

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

Where n= sample size  
 N= the entire population  
 E= Error term (0.05)  
 1= constant

The overall sample size reflected a proportion of each stratum in the population under study. The proportion is computed as follows:

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

$$3000 / 1 + 3000(0.05)^2 = 353$$

Hence the number of women entrepreneurs sampled in this study is as presented in the table below

**Table 1:** Population of women entrepreneurs in selected local government and total number sampled

Local government	Total population	Total no sampled
Nnewi North	1300	63.4
Nnewi south	700	34
Ekwusigo	1000	48.6
Total	3000	146

Source: field survey 2016

**Method of Data Analysis**

The descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and graphs were used for the analysis of the research questions while hypotheses testing were done with Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regressions were employed in data analysis. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 17) software was used to run the analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05% level of significance. At 5% level of significance, reject the null hypothesis for test with probability estimates lower than 5% (0.05) and conclude that they are statistically significant. Otherwise, we accept 0.05 (when probability estimates are above and conclude that there is no overall statistically significance).

**Presentation and Interpretation of Results**

Of the 353 copies of questionnaire distributed to respondents from each local government, a total of 146 completed copies of questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of about 41.3%. The researcher was able to collect the copies of the questionnaires from the respondents because it is a convenient sampling which made the respondents available and easily accessible.

## Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Majority of the respondents are women

entrepreneurs from Nnewi north local government. Of this number 63.4 respondents or 43.3% are in Nnewi north, 23.3% in Nnewi south and 33.3% in Ekwusigo local government. In addition their marital status showed that 71.2% were married and 19.2% were single.

**Table 2:** Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	28	19.2
Married	104	71.2
Divorced	4	2.8
Widowed	10	6.8
Total	146	100
<b>Educational status</b>		
No Basic Education	10	6.8
Primary education	30	20
Post primary	62	42.4
Tertiary, HND &Equivalent	48	30.3
Total	146	100
<b>Desire to further education</b>		
No for now	75	51.3
Yes	32	22
Already in a programme to Further my education	39	26.7
Total	146	100
<b>Age</b>		
21-25 years	32	21.9
26-35 years	44	30.1
36-45 years	40	27.4
46-55 years	22	15.1
56 years and above	8	5.5
Total	146	100

Source: Field survey 2016

6.8 percent of the respondents have no basic education while 20 percent has their primary education.

## Analysis of Research Questions

**Research question 1:** How does women entrepreneurs activities contribute to poverty reduction?

**Table 3:** Response of the respondents to questionnaire item 5-7 and their Percentages

s/n	Variable	SA	A	U	D	SD	Remarks
5	Entrepreneurs activities has the prospect of eradicating poverty in society with rising unemployment	60 (41)	43 (29.5)	10 (6.9)	20 (13.7)	13 (8.9)	Strongly agree
6	Entrepreneurs provides good and adequate preparation for starting up and growing new firms	73 (50)	38 (26)	17 (11.6)	10 (6.9)	8 (5.5)	Strongly agree
7	Women entrepreneurs provide training/knowledge skills necessary to empower unemployed youth and women	48 (32.8)	65 (44.5)	10 (6.9)	15 (10.3)	8 (5.5)	

Source: Computation from SPSS 17 Analysis

Questionnaire item 5, 6 and 7 were used to address the research question one. The responses to research question one was shown in table 3 above. The study shows that women entrepreneur activities have the prospect of eradicating poverty in the society with rising unemployment. This is evident from the results which

indicated that 41 percent of the respondents were in strongly agreement that women entrepreneurs activities eradicates poverty; provides start-up fund for new firms, and provides training and knowledge skills necessary to empower unemployment.

**Research question 2:** To what extent do women entrepreneur activities contribute to wealth creation, job

creation and crime reduction in Anambra state?

**Table 4:** Response of the respondents to questionnaire item 8-10 and their percentages

s/n	Variable	SA	A	U	D	SD	Remarks
8	Entrepreneurs activities in the long run increases the gross domestic product of nation otherwise called wealth creation	34 (23.3)	67 (45.9)	12 (8.2)	18 (12.3)	15 (10.3)	Agree
9	Women entrepreneurs activities can be a catalyst for engendering peaceful society and economic development	68 (46.6)	40 (27.3)	21 (14.4)	8 (5.5)	9 (6.2)	Strongly agree
10	Women entrepreneurs could be re-design for promoters of SME's operating in clusters, and women co-operatives	45 (31)	70 (47.9)	15 (10.2)	12 (8.2)	4 (2.7)	Agree

**Source:** Computation from SPSS 17 Analysis

Research question two is directed at determining whether entrepreneurship activities assist in sustainable wealth creation and job creation. Questionnaire items 8, 9, and 10 were used to analyze research question two. 45.9 percent of the respondents were of the view that entrepreneurship activities can bring about wealth creation; serves as a catalyst for engendering peaceful

society and economic development; as well as for business incubation and co-operatives. The result shows that most respondents believe that the adoption of entrepreneurship activities among women will enhance sustainable wealth creation.

Test of Hypotheses

**Table 5:** Regression analysis used to test all the hypotheses

Hypothesis	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean square	f-value	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig value
1	22.427	4	5.607	16.790	.323	<0.001
2	27.312	4	6.929	10.736	.233	<0.000
3	16.952	4	4.238	5.531	.238	<0.001

**Source:** From Analysis Result of field survey 2016

Table 5 above showed the Regression analysis used to test all the hypotheses.

- H01: Women entrepreneurial activity cannot adequately reduce poverty and unemployment.

Women involved in entrepreneurship have improved the level of comfort of their families; enjoy better health care and skill acquisition, so encouraging women to start businesses would increase the level of educated children. Interpretation of result-the result from the table above revealed the extent to which the variance in poverty level can be explained by the activities of women entrepreneurs is 32.3% ie (R<sup>2</sup>sq= .323) at p<p<0.001

- H02: To a large extent women entrepreneur activities cannot contribute to wealth creation, job creation, and crime reduction in Anambra State.

The results from the table above revealed the extent to which the variance in crime rate can be explained by the activities of women entrepreneurs is 23.3% ie (R square=.233) at below 0.000 significance level. The significance level below 0.000 implies a statistical confidence of above 99% which implies that the activities of job creation by women entrepreneurs have a significant

effect on crime reduction rate in Anambra state. We therefore reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect between women entrepreneur activities, job creation, wealth creation and crime reduction.

### Discussions and Findings

- From the finding of the research work, question 5-7 of the research questions were used to identify the impact of the activities of women entrepreneurs on the poverty level in Nnewi north, Nnewi south and Ekwusigo local government area in particular and Anambra state in general. The test for the hypotheses on using regression indicates that the activities of women entrepreneurs affect poverty level at 32.3%of variance and 0.001 significant levels. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis. This means the more women engagement in entrepreneurial activities the greater the decrease in poverty level. This answers the research question one and is in line with the first objectives of the study.
- Questions 8-10 of the research questions were used to identify the impact of the activities of women entrepreneurs on the level of crime reduction, job creation and wealth creation in

Anambra state. The test for the hypotheses on using regression indicates that the activities of women entrepreneurs affect poverty level at 23.3% of variance and 0.000 significant levels. Therefore we accept the alternate hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. This means that the more women engagement in entrepreneurial activities the greater the decrease in crime level rate and higher the wealth creation and job creation.

## Conclusion

The objective of this research is to critically examine the contributions of women entrepreneurs in socio-economic development in Anambra State Nigeria. Therefore, this study concludes that the future of Anambra state depends on women active involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Investing in women entrepreneurs therefore, is a wise choice. Hence the government should lay a solid foundation by encouraging the education of female children. The government can also establish more training centers including vocational centres for women to acquire skills. In order to enhance productivity and produce goods of global repute, the government must organize platforms that would sensitize women on the need for continuous self- development and capacity building. This study has fulfilled uprightness by identifying the roles women entrepreneurs play in the society. This supposedly implies that if only the necessary steps are taken to address the factors that prevent women from owning their own businesses, the economy of Anambra state and its environs will improve more than its present status. Since a woman not having transforming education, which is education beyond secondary level, is of substantial proportion (43.2%) in the study area, government should ensure that managerial lessons are accompanied with the skill acquisition programs in order for them to understand the rudiments of owning and sustaining a business.

## Recommendations

- The study therefore recommends that women entrepreneurs that have overcome the inertia of starting a business should come together to create platforms that can help those women who are yet kick-start such venture. Cooperation between relevant women entrepreneurs will be essential to fight for some necessary rights and privileges, and help women who aspire to be entrepreneurs to keep them afloat.
- Government should make policy that is suitable for women entrepreneurs and provide them assistance in obtaining a soft loan for startups as well as support to run the race since SME accelerate the pace of economic growth and development.
- Skill acquisition, educational and vocational centers should be introduced in all the local governments in Anambra State to assist in

stimulating women who are interested to start their own business. This will in turn reduce poverty; create jobs and wealth as well.

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