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### Assessment of the Contribution of Women Entrepreneur towards Entrepreneurship Development in Nigeria

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#### KEYWORDS

Women,  
Entrepreneurship,  
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Contribution

#### A B S T R A C T

This paper is on assessing the contribution of women entrepreneur towards entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to assess the factors that motivate women into entrepreneurship, ascertain the challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development, and assess the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. The study was carried out in four cooperative societies in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study had population size of 335 out of which a sample size of 182 was realised using Taro Yamane's formula at 5% error tolerance and 95% level of confidence. Instrument used for data collection was primarily questionnaire and interview. The total numbers of 182 copies of questionnaire were distributed while 176 copies were returned. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Three hypotheses were tested using Pearson chi-square statistical tools. The findings indicate that need for independence and self-fulfillment will significantly motivate women into entrepreneurship, financial constraint and government regulations are the significant challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development; and Job creation and poverty alleviation are the contribution of women towards entrepreneurship development. The study however recommends that government, private sector and NGOs should organize empowerment programmes that are geared towards encouraging women to start their own business. Women entrepreneurs should learn to take advantage of their environment whether favourable or unfavourable because environment has the potential of pulling or pushing women into entrepreneurship. Women entrepreneurs should also take out time to consider the challenges other women in business are facing and find out how best those challenges could be tackled before taking the decision of going into business.

## **Introduction**

Entrepreneurship as the engine of economic growth and wheel that pedal the vehicle of economic development has been recognized for its importance in the area of job creation, revenue generation, poverty alleviation and wealth creation (Josiane, 1998). Entrepreneurship is important for the support of small and medium enterprises (United Nations, 2006). Entrepreneurship is therefore a process that involves a willingness to rejuvenate market offerings, innovate, risks taking, trying out of new and uncertain products, services, markets and being more proactive than competitors towards exploring new business opportunities (Wiklund and Shepherd, 2005).

The importance of entrepreneurship integration of the people in a nation cannot be overemphasized especially, women who have been under appreciated for a long time in developing economies. Women play essential and dynamic roles in economic life, they adapt easily to change and are very creative. As agents of development in all societies women play tremendous roles through creativity and innovations both in the formal and informal sector although, highly prevalent in the informal sector. Women are therefore becoming increasingly important in the socio-economic development of both developed and developing economies as they account for significant percent of the operators of Small and Medium Enterprises (Kjeldsen and Nielson, 2000).

Women entrepreneurs make a substantial contribution to national economies through their participation in start-ups and their growth in small and medium businesses. Their interests and activities in the economic growth and development especially in the area of Women entrepreneurship have

received outstanding interest of researchers. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2005 confirm that women participate in a wide range of entrepreneurial activities across the 37 GEM and their activities in different countries have paid off in form of many newly-established enterprises for job and wealth creation. The role of entrepreneurs as agents in the labour market for creation of employment, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and provision of resources has helped tremendously to increase the number of women-owned entrepreneurial ventures in the world (United Nations, 2006).

Women entrepreneurship contributes more than 50% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of most nations both developed and less developed. Its contributions to economic development have been predominantly in the area of job creation, poverty alleviation, environmental vitality, wealth creation and human capital (Ojo, 2006).

However, the operation of Women entrepreneurship involves considerable risks, hard work, enormous sacrifice and sincerity of purpose which cut across various obstacles. The risks, challenges and obstacles affect women entrepreneurs more than their men counterparts, making their chances of success to be considerably lower than men (Hisrich and Brush, 1986). Considering the various challenges and obstacles facing Women entrepreneurship particularly in Nigeria which include; capital inadequacy, unavailability of the required infrastructures, shortage of manpower to mention but few, someone may quickly conclude that women are usually discouraged from venturing into enterprise development. But today the story is a different one; women are starting and growing businesses at an unprecedented rate.

## **Statement of the Problems**

Women entrepreneurs make a substantial contribution towards entrepreneurship development in Nigeria; however, the realization of these potential contributions has been flawed by a lot of challenges. Despite the potential contributions of women entrepreneur towards entrepreneurship development, entrepreneurship in Nigeria has continued to perform below expectation and hence the expected role women entrepreneur will play towards Entrepreneurship development in Nigeria has been constrained by challenges women entrepreneurs face in Nigeria such as Government regulations, gaining access to finance, lack of access to information technology, lack of access to control property, family dependence, restriction to family business with limited leadership role, which has been the cause of the failure of many Women entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The study focuses on assessing the contributions of women toward entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

## **Objectives of the study**

The specific objectives of the study include the following

1. To assess the factors those motivate women into entrepreneurship
2. To ascertain the challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development.
3. To assess the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development in Nigeria

## **Research questions**

This research shall attempt to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the factors that motivate women into entrepreneurship?

2. What are the major challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development?
3. What are the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development in Nigeria?

## **Research hypotheses**

These hypotheses were formulated for the study:

(1)H<sub>1</sub>: Need for independence and self-fulfillment significantly motivate women into entrepreneurship.

H<sub>0</sub>: Need for independence and self-fulfillment do not significantly motivate women into entrepreneurship.

(2)H<sub>1</sub>: Financial constraint and Government regulations are the significant challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development.

H<sub>0</sub>: Finance and Government regulations are not significant challenges facing women towards Entrepreneurship development.

(3) H<sub>1</sub>: Job creation and poverty alleviation are the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development.

H<sub>0</sub>: Job creation and poverty alleviation are not contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development.

## **Materials and Methods**

The study was carried out primarily through the survey method and interview of employees in four cooperative societies in Enugu State, Nigeria. Primary data were obtained through the use of interviews, questionnaire and observations while Secondary data were obtained through books, journals, and the internet. A sample size of 182 was obtained from the population of 335 at 5% error tolerance and

95% level of confidence using Taro Yamane's statistical formula. The reliability test was done using test-retest method. The result gave a reliability coefficient of 0.76, indicating a high degree of consistency. Out of the 182 copies of the questionnaire distributed 176 representing 96.7% were returned. The three hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Chi-Square statistical tools were used to test the hypotheses. A computer aided Microsoft special package for social science (SPSS) was used to aid analysis.

## **Review of related literature**

### **Conceptual framework**

There are lots of literatures on what entrepreneurship is all about. Landström (2005) states that entrepreneurship is discovering new business possibilities in the market which can be individual or people who start business based on an entirely new products or services; also establishment of more handicraft or services oriented business with more imitative products and services. Shane (1992) describes entrepreneurship as a process that involves seven different stages which are: existence of opportunity, discovery of opportunity, decision to exploit opportunity, resource acquisition, entrepreneurial strategy, organizing process, performance. Schumpeter (1934) sees entrepreneurship as a progression of change where innovation is the most very important function of the entrepreneur. It is the necessary requirement for economic development. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and the ability of an individual to seek investment opportunities, set up and run an enterprise successfully. The Oxford advanced dictionary of current English (Hornby 1975) defines entrepreneurship as the ability to organize a business undertaking and assume

the risks for the sake of profit, also as the willingness of one to start, control and direct the processes of production of goods and services and bear the risks too. Entrepreneurship is plainly continuous process of combining resources to produce new goods or services, suffices to say that entrepreneurship is all about change which we see as one of the major characteristics of an entrepreneur who as well search for change, responds to it and exploits it as an opportunity. Entrepreneurs introduce new products and ideas, establish unknown needs, and create employments as well make wealth available in the economy. Boettke *et al.* (2009) state that the growth of economy will not be understood if the true agents of change known as an entrepreneur is removed from the process. The development of entrepreneurship has become a global phenomenon since it is perceived as the sure-way solution out of poverty. Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new and assuming the risk, (Hisrich and Peters, 2002).

### **Entrepreneur defined**

According to Schumpeter (1954) being an entrepreneur is not a profession and entrepreneurs do not form a social class. This makes it very difficult to define an entrepreneur as a functional economic group or to classify one set of persons as entrepreneurs. Rather an entrepreneur can be seen as an element of the mechanism or agent of change. Boulton and Carland (1984) define an entrepreneur as an individual who establishes and manages a business for the principal purpose of profit and growth. Bagby (1988) sees an entrepreneur as a person that utilizes the opportunity of instability, turbulence, lack and change to produce something new or modifies an existing one for profit motive. Gartner (1989) defines an entrepreneur as

someone who creates an organization. Pickle and Abrahamson (1990) see an entrepreneur as one who organizes and manages a business, undertakes and assumes the risks for the sake of profit. The entrepreneur evaluates perceived opportunities and strives to make the decisions that will enable the firm to realize sustained growth.

Envick and Langford (2000) define an entrepreneur as someone who owns and operates his/her own business. Parboteeah (2000) defines entrepreneurs as individuals who pursue opportunities without regard to the resources they currently control. Thomson (2002) states that entrepreneurs are individuals, who survey their potential business environment, identify opportunities to improve it, marshal resources, and act to maximize operational opportunities. Thus, Fasua (2007) states that an entrepreneur is a middle man, creative person, a person who perceives and is alert to opportunities; a special person; an innovator; a resourceful and original person; an imaginative person; a risk taker; a reward seeker and a coordinator of resources.

### **Types of Entrepreneur**

Timmons (1978) classify entrepreneurs as craftsman and opportunistic; Vasper (1980) classify entrepreneurs into economic, philosophy, business, political, communistic and social entrepreneurs; Minniti and Arenius (2003) classify entrepreneurs into nascent, new, opportunistic and necessity entrepreneurs. Thus, Grafisk (2000) classify entrepreneurs into six different types which include; self-employed, traditional self employed, growth-oriented, leisure or subsistence and network entrepreneurs.

(i) **The Self-employed Entrepreneur:** This type of entrepreneur results from the establishment of new enterprise and the owner has the business as his primary

occupation. At the initial stage of the business, the entrepreneur is both the self-employed and an entrepreneur. This type of business includes hotel business, restaurant business, trading etc.

(ii) **The Traditional Self-employed Entrepreneur:** This type of entrepreneur exists when someone has taken over and continues on running a personally owned enterprise and who is not necessarily an entrepreneur. This type of entrepreneurs are usually found in the service, trade and in rural district culture in occupation such as farming, building, construction, manufacturing and related occupation.

(iii) **The Growth-Oriented Entrepreneur:** The growth-oriented entrepreneur is usually neither registered as an entrepreneur nor as a self-employed person. The business is usually registered as a limited company and the owner is known as growth-oriented entrepreneur (United Nations, 2006). They have better prospects of survival, innovation and growth than other entrepreneurs. Kerta (1993) sees this type of entrepreneurs as social entrepreneurs. Thus, Burlingham (1990) sees this type of entrepreneur as new breed of women entrepreneurship.

(iv) **The Family-Owner Entrepreneur:** The family enterprise is a business that is usually passed on from generation to generation. Under this type of entrepreneur, the new owners are neither entrepreneurs nor self-employed. Founding a company is considered a natural step in the growth or reorganization strategy of an enterprise, but the subject is only referred to briefly (Grafisk, 2000).

(v) **The Network Entrepreneur:** This type of entrepreneur is usually found in all traditional categories of life. The entrepreneur under this category in most

cases is project oriented and establishes the business in line with the emergence of the projects. He or she may be an employer or a project manager in one project and then enter the next project as an employee. This type of enterprise can be found in consultancy services and information technology.

### **Characteristics of women entrepreneurship**

The peculiar characteristics of Women entrepreneurship have helped in determining their performance in the Nigerian economy. By their nature, Women entrepreneurship constitute the most viable and veritable vehicle for self-sustaining industrial development. They possess common capability to grow an indigenous enterprise culture more than any other strategy. Women entrepreneurs often have a special personality. They value autonomy and independence. They possess energy and a high need for achievement. Women entrepreneurs often have a strong internal locus of control. They perceive change as opportunity and are willing to take careful risks (Udechukwu, 2004).

Moore, (1990) defines a female entrepreneur as the female head of a business who takes the initiative of launching a new venture, who is accepting the associated risks and the financial, administrative and social responsibilities and who is effectively in charge of its day-to-day activities.

Women entrepreneurs often have a special personality. They value autonomy and independence. They possess energy and a high need for achievement. Women Entrepreneurs often have a strong internal locus of control. They perceive change as opportunity and are willing to take careful risks. They usually have social skills and

possess a balance between intuition and thinking.

Adeleja (2005) states the following as the peculiar attributes of Women entrepreneurship;

- Creativity.
- Provision of inputs and or material components for large enterprises.
- They are mainly found everywhere especially in the local communities and fastest tools for job creation.

Olutunla (2001) identify the main elements and characteristics of women entrepreneurship to include:

Easy entry into the economic activities  
Reliance on indigenous resources such as finance and materials  
It is a family owned enterprise  
Small scale of operation  
Labour intensive depending mainly on family and labour adopted  
Technology, skills to operate the business are required outside formal school system and  
There exists an unregulated and competitive market.

The peculiarity of Women entrepreneurship in enhancing economic development can be best described in this statement;

Women entrepreneurship constitutes the most dynamic segment of many transitional and developing economies.

They are more innovative, faster growing, usually of family/individual ownership, subjective in decision making and possibly more profitable as compared to larger sized enterprises (Ogunleye, 2004).

## **Theoretical framework**

**Sociological theory:** The theory of sociology is another underlying factor behind the study of entrepreneurship. In furtherance of McClelland's need theory, Hagen (1962) was more concerned with socio-historical process which produces the psychological 'needs' behind the entrepreneurial disposition and less with the specific casual connections between such needs and the recruitment of performance of entrepreneurs. He also shows greater awareness of the gap between motivational disposition and actual behaviour. In addition to achievement of McClelland, Hagen incorporates other needs such as intelligence, world news and environment (Akeredolu-Ale, 1975). Sociological theorists of entrepreneurship were preoccupied with the analysis of need distribution among members of a society but strongly criticized the notion that the most fundamental causal factors behind the emergence and performance of entrepreneurs are psychological.

**Economic Theory:** The theorists here saw an entrepreneur as an agent of economic change. They argued that changes either in the environment or organization are a transformation that can occur as a result of the reaction of some economic forces. Economists assume that entrepreneurs behave rationally towards some economic forces (business opportunities, resources etc.) that result to change in environment in form of enterprise. Entrepreneurship was seen as a process or positive event to every economic revolution. Without entrepreneurs, the other factors of production such as land, labour and capital cannot transform themselves into economic value (product and services). Knight (1978) sees entrepreneurs as agents that bear risks and uncertainty.

Kirzner (1999) states that economic theorists see competition as a motivating factor for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skill. Women entrepreneurs are not exception from this economic perspective to entrepreneurial study. Women play a distinct role in the market system through their ability to manage and control other factors of production. Hence their motivation to entrepreneurship. The more their perception as agents for economic revolution, the more their motivation into entrepreneurship and vice versa.

## **Contributions of women entrepreneurs in economic development**

Entrepreneurship has no respect for sex, color, height, individuals, race or culture. Women in different nations play equal role with their men counterparts in economic development through entrepreneurship. An entrepreneur, whether male or female play important role in a particular economy. In an attempt to offer an acceptable definition of an entrepreneur, "An entrepreneur is: a person who assumes the risks associated with uncertainty, an innovator, a decision maker, an industrial leader, an organizer and a co-ordinator of economic resources, a contractor, a resource allocator, a person who realizes a start up of a new business, an employer of other factors of production, the owner of an enterprise, manager or super rider, a person who supplies financial capital (Wennekers and Thurik, 1999).

Women entrepreneurship development has been recognized as important because of the contributions of women's entrepreneurs to the economic development in both developed and less developed countries. Women entrepreneurs therefore enhance economic development through:

**Employment creation:** Women entrepreneurship development can help women –owned businesses generate more income which then can be used to support their households and improve their family welfare outcomes (Thomson, 2002). This income can help women to start and grow their businesses which will in turn help them to offer employment to others in their community.

**Poverty alleviation:** Many women support themselves and their families through the income they receive from their entrepreneurial activities (Kantor, 1999). Women also are more involved in organizing programmes that focused on empowering women and youths for poverty alleviation. For instance, in Nigeria, Cowan is an Ngo formed by women and they are doing a lot in line with their set objective -to alleviate poverty among the Nigerian women.

**Economic Vitality:** Economic vitality is a necessary condition for achieving social vitality which improves the standard of living of the citizens of nation. Important factors that make living attractive are flow of information, education, health, housing and transportation which are developed and sustained through entrepreneurship. The easiest approach to economic vitality is through women entrepreneurship development. Women have been known for their ability to combine different activities that have the potential to enhance the standards of living and quality of life of the citizenries. Floro (2001) argues that women are more likely to juggle their working time between the market sector and non-market economic activities. Non-market production whether it involves subsistence crop production, water and fuel gathering, food preparation and housecleaning or care for the children and elderly is a crucial element in determining the quality of life.

**Economic and socio-political empowerment:** Women now have access to and control over income and working conditions. This has empowered them for full involvement and participation in economic, social and political policy making that might result to changes in gender inequality and discrimination especially in the labour market. It is believed that with self-employment and entrepreneurship, women gained confidence, self-esteem and decision-making experience leading to greater control over their lives in social, economic and political spheres (Kantor, 1999).

**Financial sustainability:** Small enterprises tend to have the flexibility and innovativeness that are critical business needs in developing economy. As women form micro and macro enterprises and bring their values, products and services to the market place, they become involved in changing the face of the nation's business. As Steinem (1992) notes, women entrepreneurs tend to take a "holistic approach to balanced life, work, family, economic, and cultural values. They integrate economic techniques such as job training, job creation, marketing and management with work place innovations such as flexible scheduling, childcare, language workshop for immigrants.

**(vi) Economic growth:** The increase of women prominence in entrepreneurship has positive contribution to the country's G D P and Gross National Income (GNI) (Kantor, 1999). Statistically, more than 30% of the contributions of the country's GDP, comes from women that are self-employed especially in micro and small sized enterprises (Kerta, 1993). This sector of business and its entrepreneurial characteristics are viewed by many to be



central to innovation and are considered the engine of economic growth.

**Wealth creation:** Wealth creation and social vitality are the economic goals of both men and women entrepreneurs. To achieve this, women entrepreneurs usually combine their efforts to form a strong base either in the rural or urban areas and channel the same towards economic development. Teamwork, networking and managerial competence have been recommended as good promotional strategies that can be adopted by women entrepreneurs to pull their resources together towards best business practices, contacts, and references. Business networks can help women identify and secure partners for future transactions (Thomson, 2002).

**Economic:** Job creation both for the women and others can be a panacea for the increasing unemployment/under employment rate in the country. Women are afforded opportunities to create their own businesses and make adequate use of their acquired skills and training.

**Social:** Women are contributing immensely to both their families and the communities. Most of the women-owned enterprises are serving not only the communities but also larger business organizations. They also offer women the possibilities of effectively managing their dual role as career women and as mothers at home.

**Political:** Although politically, there are few women in political position. Encouraging women enterprise will considerably help to reduce the disparities between women and men increase their autonomy and allow them to play a more active role in the political and economic life of their country (Thomson, 2002).

In Nigeria women play important roles in small enterprise development. They are

mostly involved in crafts, weaving of sweaters for school children, mat making; farming both production of food crops, fish farming and poultry, mortar and pestle making, retail and whole scale trade. Most businesses like skin care and beauty businesses, cosmetics, restaurants, café, wholesale and retail shops are owned and run by women in Nigeria.

### **Challenges facing women entrepreneurs**

Although there are many contributions to be accredited to women entrepreneurs, a number of constraints have been identified as detriments to these contributors. Women entrepreneurs face many challenges, including government rules and regulations, gaining access to finance, and building an ICT infrastructure that enables efficiency and growth (United Nations, 2006).

Women entrepreneurs require confidence, leadership and management skills and must find ways to access new markets. Kantor (1999) argues that women often experience greater constraints on their economic actions relative to men. Mayoux (2001) states that “there are certain factors that limit the ability of women entrepreneurs to take advantage of the opportunities available to them in their environment and these factors have been identified as the reasons why women business fails”. These include poor financial management, liquidity problems, management inexperience and incompetence, problems in coping with inflation and other external economic conditions, poor or non-existent books and records, sales and marketing problems, staffing, difficulties with unions, the failure to seek expert advice, limited social and business networks, a low level of demand in the local economy, the value and system of tenure for housing, constraints in access to finance, lack of work experience and skill,

and lack of role models (United Nations, 2006).

In spite of the potentials and contributions of Women entrepreneurship to economic development, the activities of Women entrepreneurship in Nigeria have been flawed by the following challenges.

**Lack of access to control of property:** The restriction of women from having access to and control of property constitutes a fundamental constraint on women entrepreneurs. The legal system in most countries has not been able to recognize and enforce women's equal right to property and ownership. Statistically, International Labour Organisation (ILO) has on record that only 1% of the world's assets are in the name of women (Mayoux, 2001). Property in this context includes; land, houses, lockup-stores, production plants, equipment, motor van etc. Legal backing on women's access to and control of property will help women in setting up their own firms without much stress.

**Lack of access to and control over income:** Another constraint that faces women entrepreneurs is lack of access to and control over income. Low income, low investment and low profit may limit women's ability to save. More than 65% of the poor and rural settlers in Nigeria are women. Women usually face discrimination in the labour market (both in their remuneration and the nature of job they are offered). This affects their income, investment, and savings. Inability to save, can affect their start-up capital there by discouraging them from owing businesses. Mayoux (2001) observes that Women have limited control over the incomes they earn. Gendered rights and responsibilities between man and women within households invariably operate to constrain women's

ability to control their own income and access to male income. Even when women have opportunity to earn high income, by virtue of culture and tradition, they are subjected under their husbands who have control over them and their money. This can hinder their participation in business.

**Lack of access to information technology:** The number of women in the technology is very low unlike in other sectors such as health care, hotel, education, restaurant etc.

**Lack of information on women entrepreneurship:** there is little information available on women entrepreneurship or women owned business in Nigeria in particularly and in the world generally.

**Age limit:** Unlike men, there are certain periods in a woman age/time that she cannot do business –for instance, during pregnancy, labour period, child nursing and such other times that are peculiar to woman. Due to this, entrepreneurship therefore tends to be a midlife choice for women. Hence, majority of women start up business after the age of 35 (Dane, 1984).

**Family dependence:** Most of the family members depend on women for care and hospitality, thereby limiting their full involvement and participation in business.

**Restriction to family business:** Most women entrepreneurs are somehow restricted to family business because of their family commitment. This affects their level of ingenuity, creativity, innovativeness and competitiveness.

**Inaccessibility to required funds:** Women also may not have equal opportunity to access finance from external sources such as banks, and other finance institutions as a result of this, they tend to prefer using

personal credit/saving in financing their business. This discourages a lot of women from going into entrepreneurship.

**Religious predicament:** Some religion prohibits women from coming out of their homes and environments thereby restricting them from getting involved in business.

**Non involvement of women in decision making:** Women all over the world and in all sectors are usually marginalized, especially in the planning stage of development. The decision for the execution of projects done in Nigeria such as construction of roads, building of markets, building of civic centers etc are done without consultation of the women by their men counterparts (Okunade, 2007).

**The Offensive of the economic planner:** The women are totally neglected in the economic planning process. The opinion of the men assumed to be the same with that of women. Even the work they do in most cases, is not giving economic value. Dane (1984) is right when she asserts, “all the work by women in the family enterprises and on the land is given no economic value, and women are being exploited in the employment field”.

**Much emphasis on domestic role:** No matter the role of a woman in the society, she is mainly remembered for the domestic role. A woman, whether a director of a company, an educationalist, an entrepreneur, or a professional, must go back to the kitchen. The popular saying that a “woman education ends in the kitchen”- tends to prohibit women from going into business. “The kitchen” role dominates every other role of a woman (Kpohazounde, 1994).

**Limited leadership role:** Women especially in Nigeria have always been assumed not to be matured for leadership

position. They are usually given the seconding position in company’s meetings and as government functionaries. For instance in meetings (not women meetings) a women cannot move motion, but she can second it (Mayoux, 2001).

Mayoux (2001) observes that there are certain factors that limit women entrepreneurs' ability to take advantage of the opportunities available to them in their environment and these factors have been identified as the reasons why their business fail. These factors include:

- poor financial management
- liquidity problems
- management inexperience and incompetence
- poor or non-existent books and records
- sales and marketing problems
- staffing
- difficulties with unions
- the failure to seek expert advice
- limited social and business networks
- a low level of demand in the local economy
- the value and system of tenure for housing
- constraints in access to finance
- lack of work experience and skill, and
- Lack of role models.

### **Empirical review**

#### **To assess the factors that motivates women into entrepreneurship**

Rutashobya and Nchimbi (1999) maintain that as for the reasons that make women go into business, evidence from Africa shows that negative push factors such as husbands’ low wages that cannot meet all household needs and structural adjustment programmes made women go into business. Other push factors are the desire for independence,

capital limitation, training and perceived marketability of the product. In this regard, female entrepreneurs who were in employment are reported to have gone into business much earlier than those in developed countries.

### **To examine the challenges facing women entrepreneurship development**

Hyuha and Turiho-Habwe (1999) Observe that the major constraints facing female entrepreneurs are low self-confidence, low achievement motivation, low future orientation and passive orientation. Kibera (1999) identify the following constraints: lack of education and training; socio-cultural traditions; financial constraints; legal and regulatory constraint; and lack of business management skills. Financial constraints are due to several factors, for example, lack of education, lack of women's lobbies, low employment levels of women, lack of collateral, lack of information about availability of loans, negative attitudes by banks and the need to use business earnings for family needs.

### **To assess the contribution of women towards entrepreneurship development**

Kantor (2000) argues that focusing on the role of women in microenterprise development is justified for at least three reasons. First, is the sheer number of women who are active in this sector worldwide? Businesses owned by women account for 25 to 33 per cent of all businesses in the world (Kantor, 2000). The second reason is welfare improvement. Since there are so many women in the sector, agencies with socially oriented goals supporting microenterprises can use the large number of women in them to justify women's inclusion. The third reason is that microenterprises contribute to women's social and economic empowerment. It is

increasingly becoming more apparent that self-employment and entrepreneurship contribute to women's self-esteem and confidence. While appreciating these three reasons, it is also important to consider the subject from a gender perspective. This means that it should always be remembered that women have different needs from those of men because of the particular roles and responsibilities assigned to them by society. Accordingly, without control over income one cannot make decisions about its use. In the same vein, the findings show that income earning by women gave them more decision-making power in their respective households as pointed out by Kabeer (1999).

## **Result and Discussion**

The data obtained from the field were presented and analyzed with descriptive statistics to provide answers for the research questions while the corresponding hypotheses were tested with Pearson chi square at 0.05 alpha level.

Table 2 is the output of the computed Chi-Square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies with the response options of agree and disagree based on the responses of the research subjects from the four cooperative society.

Pearson Chi-Square computed value ( $X^2_c=181.484$ ) is greater than the Chi -Square tabulated value ( $X^2_t=16.92$ ) with 9 degrees of freedom (df) at 0.05 level of alpha ( $X^2_c=181.484, p < 0.05$ )

### **Decision rule**

The decision rule is to accept the alternate hypothesis if the computed Chi- Square value is greater than tabulated Chi-Square value otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

### **Decision**

Since the Pearson Chi- Square computed  $X^2_c = 181.484$  is greater than Chi- Square table value  $X^2_t = 16.92$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, we conclude that need for independence and self-fulfillment significantly motivate women into entrepreneurship.

Table 4 is the output of the computed Chi-Square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies with the response options of agree and disagree based on the responses of the research subjects from the four cooperative society. Pearson. Chi-Square computed value ( $X^2_c = 253.780$ ) is greater than the Chi –Square tabulated value ( $X^2_t = 16.92$ ) with 9 degrees of freedom (df) at 0.05 level of alpha ( $X^2_c = 253.780, p < 0.05$ )

### **Decision rule**

The decision rule is to accept the alternate hypothesis if the computed Chi- Square value is greater than tabulated Chi-Square value otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

### **Decision**

Since the Pearson Chi- Square computed  $X^2_c = 253.780$  is greater than Chi- Square table value  $X^2_t = 16.92$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, we conclude that finance and government regulations are significant challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development.

Table 6 is the output of the computed Chi-Square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies with the response options of agree and disagree based on the responses of the research subjects from the four cooperative society. Pearson. Chi-Square

computed value ( $X^2_c = 167.760$ ) is greater than the Chi –Square tabulated value ( $X^2_t = 16.92$ ) with 9 degrees of freedom (df) at 0.05 level of alpha ( $X^2_c = 167.760, p < 0.05$ )

### **Decision rule**

The decision rule is to accept the alternate hypothesis if the computed Chi- Square value is greater than tabulated Chi-Square value otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

### **Decision**

Since the Pearson Chi- Square computed  $X^2_c = 167.760$  is greater than Chi- Square table value  $X^2_t = 16.92$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, we conclude that job creation and poverty alleviation are the contribution of women towards entrepreneurship development.

### **Findings**

The findings of the study include the following:

- (1) Need for independence and self-fulfillment significantly motivate women into entrepreneurship. ( $X^2_c = 181.484 > X^2_t = 16.92; p < 0.05$ ).
- (2) Finance and government regulations are significant challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development. ( $X^2_c = 253.780 > X^2_t = 16.92; p < 0.05$ )
- (3) Job creation and poverty alleviation are the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development. ( $X^2_c = 167.760 > X^2_t = 16.92; p < 0.05$ ).

### **Conclusion**

Women entrepreneurship constitute the most viable and veritable vehicle for self-sustaining industrial development. Although their numbers are small, women

entrepreneurs have contributed, in no small way, to the economic growth of Nigeria. The contributions of women entrepreneurs in today's entrepreneurship development cannot be underestimated. Their contributions mostly are in the areas of job creation, poverty alleviation, economic growth and financial sustainability. Women entrepreneurs face a lot of challenges which may discourage them from going into business, yet they are being motivated to start their own businesses.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were provided:

- (i) Women should understand that they play important role in nation's building, they should therefore be prepared to start up entrepreneurial activity whether they are supported or not. This will help in building up their self- confidence and self-esteem which are important factors in taking the risks involved in starting and growing entrepreneurial ventures.
- (ii) Women entrepreneurs should learn to take advantage of their environment

whether favourable or unfavourable. Environment has the potential of pulling or pushing women into entrepreneurship.

(iii) Women entrepreneurs should take out time to consider the challenges other women in business are facing and find out how best those challenges could be tackled before taking the decision of going into business. If women entrepreneurs were aware of the challenges they might face, they could better prepare mentally and strategically toward the challenges.

(iv) Women entrepreneurs should endeavour to go for training irrespective of the circumstances that led them to start business of their own. Whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, training and skill acquisition is inevitable for effective and efficient operation. This will help in enhancing the performance of women entrepreneurs.

(v) Microfinance Banks and other formal financial institutions can also help in encouraging women entrepreneurs by increasing the proportion of their loan advancement to women so as to increase their accessibility to required credit. By so doing, more women will be interested in running their own business.

**Table.1** What are the factors that motivate women into entrepreneurship?

S/No		Agreement Freq	Disagreement Freq	Total
1	Need for independence motivate women to go into business.	169 (170)	7 (6)	<b>176</b>
2	Strong desires to control their future encourage women to start their own business.	173 (170)	3 (6)	<b>176</b>
3	Self-fulfillment induce women to go into business.	168 (170)	8 (6)	<b>176</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>528</b>

Source: Field Work, 2013

H<sub>1</sub>: Need for independence and self-fulfillment significantly motivate women into Entrepreneurship.

**Table.2** Chi-square tests computed from the frequency cross tabulation

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	181.484(a)	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	176.294	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.105	1	.745
N of Valid Cases	528		

Source: SPSS Version 15.00

**Table.3** What are the major challenges facing women towards entrepreneurship development?

S/No		Agreement	Disagreement	Total
		Freq	Freq	
1	Financial constraint is a challenge	173 (171)	3 (5)	<b>176</b>
2	Lack of access to information technology is a challenge	171 (171)	5 (5)	<b>176</b>
3	Government regulations hinder the success of women entrepreneur.	169 (171)	7 (5)	<b>176</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>528</b>

Source: Field Work, 2013

**Table.4** Chi-Square Tests Computed from the Frequency Cross Tabulation

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	253.780(a)	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	268.868	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	68.669	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	528		

Source: SPSS Version 15.00

**Table.5** What are the contributions of women towards entrepreneurship development?

S/No		Agreement	Disagreement	Total
		Freq	Freq	
1	Women entrepreneur contribute to job creation.	173 (169)	3 (7)	<b>176</b>
2	Poverty alleviation can be achieved through women entrepreneurship.	169 (169)	7 (7)	<b>176</b>
3	Women entrepreneur improve Economic Growth.	165 (169)	11 (7)	<b>176</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>528</b>

Source: Field Work, 2013

**Table.6** Chi-square tests computed from the frequency cross tabulation

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	167.760(a)	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	175.531	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.140	1	.013
N of Valid Cases	528		

Source: SPSS Version 15.00

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