



Research Article

Volume-01|Issue-01|2021

The Impact of Women on Rural Development in Nigeria Study of Ikeduru

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Article History

Received: 01.10.2021

Accepted: 20.10.2021

Published: 02.11.2021

Citation

Ebisi, N. (2021). The Impact of Women on Rural Development in Nigeria Study of Ikeduru. *Indiana Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 1(1), 1-7.

Abstract: This study “The Impact of Women on Rural Development” is basically centered on Ikeduru Local Government Area of Imo State. In this project, this may range from the backwardness in education, lack of representatives in government and lack of trust between the leaders and the followers. Nevertheless, the various women activities are noticed as being of importance to the development of the entire rural areas in Ikeduru. The theory that was used to carry out this research is system. This research has shown that development does not exist in vacuum. It takes place with cooperation between women in the society and the government should intensified effort in encouraging that.

Keywords: Women, Development, Government, Rural Area.

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INTRODUCTION

The most comprehensive perception of development is one that conceives a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, altitude and institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. Nigerian women are perceived as household property that join hand in economic activities of their families with regard to exchange in marriage, participation in agricultural activities and other areas that yield money (Azikiwe, 1992, & Esere, 2001). In socio logical perspective, the modern days Nigerian women take part in important economic activities to the benefit of their families and the entire nation. Family is a basic social group, united through bonds of kinship or marriage. It is present in all societies. Ideally, the family provides its members with management engage mostly in trading, craft and distribution of goods which, in most cases, come from rural areas. Few of the urban women are importers and marketers of goods from other countries. This became necessary as a result of gradual decline in the Nigerian economy which led to mass retrenchment in the labor market, high cost of living accompanied by high inflation rate (Amali, 2007).

Rural developmental process can increase the per capita income in the rural areas and also the living standards and social security. On the other hand, rural development is mainly based on agricultural sector, but it should go beyond agriculture because 70% of Nigerians work force is mainly employed in the this

sector and it is a predominance of small scale production using mostly local imputes.

Moreover, women of Nigeria were involved themselves in other social and developmental actions such as political, economic and other social development since the independence. Notable women activist during pre-independent like late Mrs. Fumalayo Ramsome kuti, and of recent chief Mrs. Bola Bolatope, Mrs. Margaret Ekpo, late Mrs. Kudurat Abiola, Dr Mrs. Jokumba Dosuma, Chief Mrs. Bosede oslin have been emerged themselves in various fields for their key role in their organizations. Therefore, this study evaluates the role of women in ensuring rural development focusing on Ikeduru local Government Area of Imo state, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite Significant improvement since attainments of independence in Nigeria like many nations in the developing world, extreme poverty remains wide-spread. This starts from the backwardness in education, lack of public separation, lack of finance, lack of representatives in government and lack of trust between leaders and followers. In spite of the above problems facing the development in Local Government Area and the general development of rural areas within this period is seen as being at an cleaning rate. Nevertheless, the various women activities are noticed as being of importance to the development of the entire rural areas in Ikeduru. Hence this research work seeks to study the role played by women in the development of Ikeduru local Government Area.

Research Question

- To what extent has women affected the development of Ikeduru. (2007-2017)?
- Does political apathy among women prevent the development of rural communities in Ikeduru?

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT

Women have made positive contribution in environmental management in Nigeria. They have contributed in environmental development like environmental education, which starts from the home with different rigorous domestic work. Children are taught how to sweep, to clean and wash both plates and their body. In doing this, they do not only learn to keep environment clean but they are taught the consequences of living in a dirty from environment. By so doing, Nigeria women train their children ranging from body cleaning to general house cleaning. They are indeed the first known environment educations.

At the community level especially in the traditional Ibo society where the market clean up exercise is been practiced, it is the women that sweep and weed all the roads and track in the community. No doubt, failure to weed or sweep any part assigned to one has great consequences. Similarly the streams are normally cleaned and weeded. Through this activity is all embracing but women do much of the works at is their responsibility to clear the refuse dumped in and around the stream while men clear the bushes around.

Women in the teaching profession are known to be very strict in ensuring that the class and school environment are kept clean. This they do by explicit teaching of the importance of cleanliness and how to get about it or by commanding neat and clean dressing while discouraging and condemning dirty habits. This attitude to cleanliness by women is not surpassing in view of the fact that women are naturally clean. For instance, no matter how poor women are their dressing must be clean, surrounding swept on a daily basis. This peculiar role of women has been recognized traditionally to the extent that the normal question asked by any visitor to any a dirty compound is "whether there are no women in the compound".

Apart from the inestimable role of women in domestic and academic development of their individual families, they have contributed to national development vis-aurs waste management and environmental consciousness is obvious to all. In the field of agriculture for instance, the African women have contributed immensely to proper waste management. It is important to know that the Nigeria women has made a lot of progress in waste utilization and recycling. The utilization and recycling of waste is like the African women and was never an European intervention. In the traditional Ikeduru women effectively utilized all waste

generated in and around the house to start with, when she uses fire wood she realizes that the ashes and charcoal should be dumped in her plantain garden and at time she uses it in scaring soldier ants from the house. Ikeduru local area women have contributed signification roles to the socio-economic and biological development of the vital part of the state. Generally, women are versatile gender contributing in a wide unquantifiable ways to the agricultural development, educational growth and economic growth of the country. Whenever women are found they play roles which help not only in keeping the environment clean but also aid in impacting environmental management ethics to those around them women have given life and hope to their families by providing decent and pollution free environment at their respective homes, through their peculiar indigenous methods of waste management and conversion to agro manure. They also contribute immensely in improving up our working ethic. Through cleaning jobs as most cleaning jobs in the offices and major roads are still done by the women.

THE CONCEPT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

It was the realization of various contributions which women have made towards the social, economic and political development of the country that the present administration had set up various programmers aimed at lifting women up from protracted slumber ginger and sensitizes them to appreciate their responsibility towards the participation in rural development of their country. The old and conservative belief of most people especially in the past is that women do not go beyond the kitchen.

According to Abubakar: He said there are things women should do that are suitable for them. They can be clerks or they can be in their homes and do things that keep them isolated from men for them to make and fix with men like the European is not acceptable. Finally he said "I do hope to see a Nigeria women heading me while I am alive" through Gami's stand is that of a religious fanatic but so many Nigerian's belong to this group who believe that women should not be given any leader. Ship position in the society.

Judith (2009) writes on Nigerian women and the Babangida administration. She felt that the administration has done a lot to improve the women and to secure social acceptability. Today a lot of women have been rehabilitated and posed with ever willing to participate in all sphere of the countries development. The federal government also inaugurated members National Committee for women. A Commissioner saddled with the responsibility of finding solution to the problems facing women in the country. She concluded

that in spite of these programmers executed by the government to change the status of women, there is still political apathy of their side plainly due to lack of exposure or inferiority complex.

The concept of women participation in rural development of our society particularly in Ikeduru local Government Area from the inception of Ikeduru local government area, there are some associations that come up like Awus, Ugiri- lke welfare union and other association from Ama Imo, umuezem, umuodom which were started by some few groups of active people including women such as Mrs. Josephine Okeye, Mrs. Adaze. They started this association with the aim of coming together to discuss the welfare of the community especially the market days and sweeping of the community road. It went on from stage to stage and the association grew to the extent that its activities were not only kindred development, but involves the socio-economic development of the rural people because other villages joined them. Ikeduru women progressive union extended that even the newly married women have the seriousness and urge to belong to the association. These associations help to build schools in the rural areas of Ikeduru Local Government Area to improve the welfare of the rural communities

Hence Obianuju (2014) argued that “it is her duty to feed the family, cloth her children and train them to respect the laws culture and the people.” The power of women to produce children and manage these human resources as well as doing other social work is hardly over emphasized. This, no meaningful development will take place without the women’s contribution together with men’s folk.

The Failure of Women in Rural Development

Women’s contribution in rural development has some limitations which hinders women from participating fully in rural development. Among those limitations, Goby & Erogals (2011) said it is undesirable that even when women have been faith Lesley’s exploited by the opposite sex, they have preserve to achieve result able attainment by the application of intelligence and determination often in the past, the scats have been heavily weighted against them. Today things are easier they have reached the flight in politics, arts, science and commerce. Another limitation is education for women to attain complex roles in the society, there is need for them to receive adequate education to function effectively.

Nawaz (2009) said there was also the belief that in training a girl child, parents are busy training someone else’s house keeper for the future, meaning that it is the girls future husband that stands to benefit from her education rather than her parents. In the traditional ikeduru community, women effectively utilized all waste generated in and around the house. To start with, when she uses firewood she realized that the

ashes and charcoal should be dumped in her plantain garden and at times she uses it in scanning soldier ants from the home. The Ikeduru women will gather all domestic animals and take them to the farm to enrich the soil, the same application goes to all kitchens. It may not be out of place to say that it was this knack to the African women that made the European to enslave many of them in order to utilize them in their farms and houses. In the rural areas particularly in Ikeduru women have contributed significantly to the women socio-economic and biological development of the vital part of the state.

Generally, women are versatile gender contributing a wide unquantifiable way to the agricultural development, educational growth and the overall social and economic growth of the country. Wherever women are found, they play roles be it from the top or the grassroots levels of the society.

Historical Origin of Ikeduru Local Government Area

It is relevant to trace the historical origin of the local government called Ikeduru. This is because it will enable us to ascertain their relationship both past and present and to enable us appreciating certain development dynamics that have taken place.

Origin

Ikeduru local government is the twenty local governments in Imo state in southern Nigeria, West Africa, Ikeduru local government area was created in 1976 and it is made up of eight autonomous communities which are Ngugo, Nneise, Nnnato, Attach, Infishi, Akabo, Amaimo, and Amasaku. They are the towns in Ikeduru local government is bounded by the East by owessi south area which is governed by Chief Sam Aka. Ikeduru is divided into five political zones, Attach, Akabo, Ngugo, Amaimo, Infish and fho as its headquarters. Akabo and Attah have common boundary.

Common Culture

There are many cultures in Ikeduru, every autonomous community have their own and they practice identical culture with minor valuation in Ikeduru local government area, we find out that they have all most the same culture like Ike tam festival which is celebrated once every year to show that the communities have started eating yam as tradition demands. They also have their way of traditional marriage Ikeduru in general are known for farming. In Ikeduru local government area Inyishi and Amaimo their highest welcoming ford for the visitors or during festival is oha suop but in ugirir Ike their welcoming food is uziza soup. They have common language.

Projects Embarked Upon By Women In Ikeduru

The women in Ikeduru local government have embark in self-help projects which are one of the best organizational mechanism for generating motivation

and encouraging mobilization for self-help as including wider participation of the communities population in decision making process of the local level. Mrs. Virgy Anyanwu who is one of the women head helps in buying pipe to circulate water everywhere in vgeri-ike

The Role of the Women in Rural Development in Ikeduru

History has shown that women have played significant role in rural development and in different communities all over the world. Like political, economic, social, education, family, health, agriculture and in all field of human Endeavour. These roles of women in the rural area by extension translate to national development.

In the area of politics, the women of Ikeduru have played a very important role in national and rural development. Such as minister of commissioner and even chairlady to their respective local government. The meaning of development has involved from its easier narrow conceptualization with economic indication of GNP to a move broad conceptualization as well as the acieration of economic growth, the reduction of inequalities among sex and tradition of absolute poverty.

In essence, development has economic growth component, a modernization of human development companion and equality or social justice component and a socio-economic transformation component all on a self-sustaining basis.

To many people rural development means agricultural development to some is primarily concerned with welfare. Rural development has been confused with rural transformation. The two are not the same because while “transformation” implies a change inform of appearance, nature condition or character, development implies a gradual growth or advancement through progressive change.

The impact of women in rural development therefore forms the individual through the collective development. The discourse here involves individual and collective role of women in rural development and both should be use accordingly because of time constraints. I am compelled to limit my study in few fields.

Area of Study

Ikeduru Local Government Area, considering the entitled subject matter “The impact of women on rural development”. It is an appropriate factor for the study judgment consideration from its numerous signification role being undertaken and played by the women in respect of the enhancement and effectiveness of these immune side actions reflections to the development of their rural communities.

Being this in mind, Ikeduru Local Government was caused out from Owerri districts pronounce in 1976. It have two autonomous communities namely:- Nneise and Nneto.

Data Analysis

The chapter presents and analysis response the respondents in area of the study. 400 questionnaires were issued to respondents out of which 350 were returned representing a response rate of 57.1%. Out of 350 respondents, 200 were females representing 57.1% of the total respondents while 150 which respondents 42.9% of the total respondents were males.

Tables and simple percentage was used for the purpose of presenting and analyzing data for this study. The research question guides the researcher in the presentation analysis of data. Data was presented in simple percentage frequency distribution to enable simplicity of data presentation and analysis.

The simple percentage:

$$\% = \frac{\text{number of respondents}}{\text{Total number of respondents}} \times 100$$

Table 1. Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	150	42.9%
Female	200	57.1%
Total	350	100

The table above shows that 150 respondents representing 42.9% were males while 200 respondents representing 57.1% were females. The result from the date shows that the females are generating in number.

Table 2. Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage
16-20	48	13.7%
21 -30	59	16.9%
31-40	93	26.6%
41-50	70	20%
51- above	80	22.8%
Total	350	100

In the above table the age distribution of the respondents was shown. Out of 350 questionnaires returned by the respondents 93(26.6%) has the highest respondents to the researcher.

Table 3. Marital Status of Respondent

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	63	18%
Single	78	22.3%
Devoiced	70	20
Widow/widower	99	28.3%
Separated	40	11.45
Total	350	100

This table indicates that 18% are married 22.3% are single, 20% are devoiced, 28.3% widow/widower and 11.4% are separated.

Table 4. Number of Times Sport in Ikeduru

Terms	Frequency	Percentage
2-5 years	65	18.6%
6-10 years	59	16.9%
11-15 years	86	24.6 %
16-20years	60	17.1%
21 and above	80	22.8%
Total	350	100

The table shows that 86 (24.6%) has the highest number of respondents who have stayed in Ikeduru Local Government in Imo State.

Table 5. Women Have Effectuated Development

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agreed	100	28.65%
Agreed	65	18.6%
Disagreed	55	15.7%
Strongly disagreed	55	15.7%
Undecided	70	20%
Total	350	100

The above table shows that 100(28.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed that affect development in Ikeduru Local Government in Imo State.

Table 6. Political Apathy Prevent Development in Ikeduru

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	90	25.7%
Disagreed	50	14.3%
Undecided	60	17.1%
Strongly agreed	100	28.6%
Strongly disagreed	50	14.3%
Total	350	100

The table clearly shows that 100(28.6%) of the respondents strongly agree that political prevent development in Ikeduru local government in Imo State.

Table 7. Numbers of Women Encouraged to Go School

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	60	17.1%
Disagreed	75	21.4%
Un decided	65	18.6%
Strongly agreed	70	20%
Strongly disagreed	80	22.9%
Total	350	100

The table indicates that 17.1% agreed, 21.4% disagreed, 18.6% has not decided, 20% strongly agreed and 22.9% strongly that women in Ikedru Local Government in Imo State are not encouraged, to go to school.

Table 8. Numbers of Women Arrowed to Participate in Societal Affairs in Ikeduru

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	57	16.3%
Disagreed	95	27.1%
Undecided	35	10%
Strongly agreed	63	18%
Strongly disagreed	100	28.6%
Total	350	100

The table show that 100 (28.6%) strongly disagreed that women are not allowed to participate in societal affair in Ikeduru local government in Imo State.

Table 9. Ways in Which Women Contribute towards Development Variables

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Financial support	82	23.4%
Women economic empowerment	77	22%
Other (specify)	64	18.3%
All of the above	85	24.3%
None of the above	42	12%
Total	350	100

The table clearly shows that 82 (23.4%) says is financial support, 77 (22%) women economic empowerment, 64 (18.3) others, 85(24.3%) agreed with all white 42(12%) said none of the above.

Table 10. Opinions of Women towards the Community

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	87	24.9%
Disagreed	66	18.8%
Undecided	35	10%
Strongly agreed	110	31.4%
Strongly agreed	52	14.9%
Total	350	100

The table shows that 110 (31.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed that women opinion do not matter in the community.

Table 11. Women should be Allowed in the Political Affairs

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	81	23.1%
Disagreed	70	20%
Undecided	69	19.7%
Strongly agreed	90	25.8%
Strongly disagreed	40	11.40%
Total	350	100

From the table 81(23.1%) agreed 70(20%) disagreed, 69 (19.7%) have not decided, 90 (25.8%) strongly agreed and 40(11.4%) strongly disagreed that women should be allowed in political affairs of Ikeduru.

Table 12. Women Contribute to Rural Development only from the Market

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Agreed	70	20%
Disagreed	30	8.6%
Undecided	50	14.3%
Strongly agreed	150	42.8%
Strongly disagreed	50	14.3%
Total	350	100

From the above 150 respondent representing 42.8% gives that women contribute to development only from the market

Table 13. Opinions that Motivate Women Development

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Abolition of dissimilarity	80	22.9%
Women economic empowerment	86	24.6%
Other	73	20.8%
All of the above	90	25.7%
None of the above	21	6%
Total	350	100

From the table 80 respondents representing 22.2% says women can be motivated through abolition of dissimilarity, 86 representing 24.6% says is women economic empowerment, 73 representing 20.8% says others, 90 representing 25.7% mentioned all of the above while 21 representing 6% respondents says none of the above.

Table 14. Type of Development Prevalent in Ikeduru

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Social infrastructure	90	25.7%
Economic activities	80	22.9%
Activism	70	20%
Social cohesion	40	11.4%
Other (specify)	350	100

The table shows that 25.7% says social infrastructure is prevalent, 22.9% economic activities, 20% activism, 20% social cohesion and other 11.4% mentioned theirs.

Testing of Hypothesis

The chi- square was used in testing of hypothesis which the researcher formulated earlier
The level of significance is 0.05

The test statistics is X^2

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

H₀: Women have to some extent affected the development in Ikeduru from 2007 – 2017.

Test 1

O _i	E _i	O _i - E _i	(O _i - E _i) ²	$\frac{\sum(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
65	70	-5	25	0.4
100	70	30	900	12.9
70	70	0	0	0
55	70	-15	225	3.2
60	70	-10	100	1.4

Degree of freedom n-1

$$= 5 - 1 = 4$$

X^2 Critical value = 9.488 n 9.49

X^2 calculation = 17.9

Decision rate: if X^2 calculated is greater than x^2 critical value reject the null hypothesis.

Decision since X^2 cal > X^2 critical value, thus women have to some extent affected the development in Ikeduru from 2007 – 2017.

H₁: Political apathy among women has seriously prevented development in rural community especially in Ikeduru L.G.A

T

est 2

O _i	E _i	O _i - E _i	(O _i - E _i) ²	$\frac{\sum(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
90	70	20	400	5.7
50	70	-20	400	5.7
60	70	-10	100	1.4
100	70	30	900	12.9
50	70	-20	400	5.7

Degree of freedom = n-1

$$= 5-1 = 4$$

X^2 Critical value = 9.488 n = 9.49

X^2 calculated = 31.4

Decision: Since X^2 calculated is greater than X^2 critical value (X^2 cal > X^2 crt), the hypothesis is rejected which means that political apathy among women has not seriously presented development in rural community especially in Ikeduru L.G.A.

DECISION OF FINDINGS

We have seen from the first and second hypothesis how women have to some extent affected the development in rural community in Ikeduru Local Government Area.

Development starts from individual to the general environment and women have traditional roles to play in development of the rural areas by keeping the homes clean, educating children and provision of emotional balance of their husband. No meaningful development will take place in the rural areas without the active support and participate of women.

From the analysis of the data in the questionnaire we now conclude that all the hypothesis

work are correct and still going to say that women are the bedrock to any specific national development.

CONCLUSION

After critically analyzing all the data collected and summarizing them, the researcher is hereby fully convinced that the role of women in rural development is of paramount importance to all and Sunday communities of the world. On the date, the researcher discovered that actually women in Ikeduru communities have been involved in rural development of the area despite the traditional and cultural restriction they do encounter.

Basically, the roles of women in Ikeduru communities has been fact both socially, economically, domestically and politically goes beyond towards the development of the communities. This has gone a long way to disapprove the general conception of the public that women are only to be seen and not heard.

In conclusion, Governments should intensify efforts in encouraging women in rural communities are to bring about more meaningful development in Ikeduru local Government Area.

Recommendation

The research after due analysis of the impact of women on rural development of Nigeria with a particular reference to the social, and economic development of the nation, the researcher made the following recommendation which she believes are very necessary.

- Based on the data collected it was discovered that the male counterparts do not encourage their women in development activities. Research therefore, suggests for a re-orientation of the market folks and the general public towards the importance of women participation in rural developmental programs and projects.
- Government should intensify efforts in encouraging women in rural areas for development as well as finding more means of mobilizing them to participate in rural development through enlightenment campaigns, women education, service and reserving certain posts in the economic section for women.
- Adequate enlightenment programs should be mounted through various workshops, seminars, conferences in order to bring home the impact of women participation in rural development.

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