INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
P-ISSN: 1118-4256, E-ISSN:3034-4327
Vol. 6| No.3 | Oct 2025
Page No.: 86 – 105

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

Ezeokafor, Uche Rose PhD
ezeokaforuche@gmail.com

Okuagba, Celestina Uloma
ulomamu@gmail.com

[1&2]Department of Entrepreneurship studies
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam

Abstract

Women entrepreneurs are pivotal to economic development through job creation, innovation, and poverty reduction. Nevertheless, their potential in Nigeria is constrained by challenges such as inadequate access to finance, limited asset ownership, and socio-cultural barriers. This study examined the relationship between women's entrepreneurship and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria, focusing on financial access and asset ownership. Employing a descriptive survey design, the study targeted 1,325 registered female SME owners, from which 307 respondents were proportionately selected using Taro Yamane's formula. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed with descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed significant positive relationships between access to finance and economic growth ($r = 0.573$, $p < 0.05$), and between asset ownership and economic growth ($r = 0.611$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that women's entrepreneurship substantially drives economic progress when supported by financial inclusion and property rights. It recommends gender-responsive credit policies, flexible collateral requirements, and legal reforms to expand women's access to assets and productive resources, thereby strengthening inclusive and sustainable development.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurship, Economic Growth, Access to Finance, Asset Ownership, Anambra State, Nigeria

Introduction

Women entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a crucial engine of economic growth and a cornerstone of societal development. It reflects the capacity of women to initiate, organize, and sustain business ventures that generate employment, stimulate innovation, and facilitate wealth creation and distribution. Across the globe, women-led enterprises represent one of the fastest expanding aspects of entrepreneurial activity and have increasingly attracted the interest of scholars, policymakers, financial institutions, and development practitioners, given their significant contributions to economic progress (Kelley, 2017). Through active participation in entrepreneurship, women enhance job creation, improve national income, and contribute to poverty reduction as well as social inclusion (Rae, 2015). Despite these contributions, women's engagement in entrepreneurial activities remains comparatively lower than that of men, and evidence suggests that this disparity tends to deepen as countries advance economically (Elam, 2019; Ugwa et al., 2019).

Women's entrepreneurship is widely acknowledged as a catalyst for economic growth due to its substantial contributions to job creation, income generation, poverty alleviation, and the reduction of social insecurity (Chibiyayi & Shehu, 2018; Okonkwo & Okafor, 2020). By engaging in new ventures and supporting the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises, women entrepreneurs significantly influence national economies (Ayogu & Everistus, 2015; Onwuka et al., 2017). This reality has stimulated growing academic interest in examining the developmental impact of women's entrepreneurial activities. On a global scale, women's entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a critical dimension

of economic progress, underscoring the indispensable role women play in enhancing national competitiveness and fostering sustainable development (Haxhiu, 2015).

Rural women entrepreneurs are typically described as individual women or groups who initiate and manage business ventures within rural communities (Limbu & Bordoloi, 2015; Onwuka et al., 2017). In North-Eastern Nigeria, women's entrepreneurial activities are also evident in rural areas, where they make valuable contributions to national economic development. However, the concentration of women's entrepreneurship in Nigeria is more pronounced in urban centers and larger towns, where women are predominantly engaged in small-scale business operations (Limbu & Bordoloi, 2015). However, empirical evidence suggests that the growth trajectory of such businesses is relatively constrained, with many female entrepreneurs demonstrating limited aspirations for business expansion (Lawan, 2017; Okafor & Okonkwo, 2022). They not only generate employment opportunities for themselves and others but also introduce diverse perspectives in management, organizational practices, and the identification and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities (Lawali, Salisu, & Tukur, 2023). Despite these contributions, women continue to constitute a minority within the entrepreneurial sector. This underrepresentation reflects a form of market failure that limits both their entry into entrepreneurship and their ability to thrive as business owners. Addressing this gap requires deliberate policy interventions aimed at unlocking the full economic potential of women entrepreneurs.

Statement of Problem

Women entrepreneurship is widely regarded as a hallmark of national progress, as no sustainable development strategy can succeed without the active participation of women. Across both advanced and emerging economies, women entrepreneurs are central to driving economic growth and creating employment opportunities, thereby positioning themselves as vital contributors to national development. However, recent indicators

suggest that women entrepreneurship is losing its capacity to effectively drive economic advancement (Tootian, Bayanaty, & Jalali, 2022).

Female entrepreneurs encounter numerous challenges, including competition from well-established, male-dominated enterprises, inadequate financial support for business expansion, cultural and religious prejudices, and insufficient access to quality education and training. Furthermore, the neglect and under-recognition of women entrepreneurs by government institutions despite their potential as key drivers of economic development have contributed to reduced productivity and declining confidence among women to engage in entrepreneurial ventures. In contemporary Nigeria, these challenges have led to a gradual decline in women entrepreneurship, with adverse consequences for the nation's economic growth.

Although women entrepreneurship has become increasingly widespread, female entrepreneurs continue to encounter substantial structural barriers that restrict their business activities. Barriers to obtaining financial resources continue to be one of the most critical barriers, as evidence shows persistent disparities in loan approvals and venture capital funding between male- and female-owned enterprises. In addition, women frequently struggle to gain entry into markets, build business networks, and secure mentorship opportunities, factors that are essential for business growth and sustainability. These constraints are further reinforced by gender-based discrimination and societal biases, which restrict women's ability to fully realize and maximize their entrepreneurial potential (Özsungur, 2019).

Over the years, successive Nigerian administrations have implemented numerous entrepreneurial policies and programmes aimed at empowering women and strengthening their capacity to establish and expand business ventures. Prominent initiatives include the

Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS), the Universal Basic Primary Education (UBPE), the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Programme (GEWP), the Child Mortality (CM) initiative, as well as quota systems designed to increase women's participation in politics. Furthermore, through the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, several governments have allocated an estimated ₦150 billion specifically to support women entrepreneurs. The Federal Government has further supported women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through interventions such as the Youth Entrepreneurship Support Programme (YES-P) administered by the Bank of Industry, as well as ongoing deliberations on the revival of the Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN) initiative. Taken together, these programmes are designed to cultivate a vibrant entrepreneurial class that contributes to national economic development while promoting gender inclusivity.

Despite these commendable policy interventions, Nigerian women still remain at a disadvantage compared to men with respect to access to resources, opportunities, and asset ownership. Against this background, the present study investigates the nexus between women's entrepreneurial activities and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the relationship between women's entrepreneurship and economic growth in Anambra State. Specifically, the study aims to

i. Investigate the relationship between access to finance and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria.
ii. Determine the relationship between asset ownership and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Women Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurship encompasses the ownership and administration of business activities by women, involving the utilization of their entrepreneurial skills, creativity, and innovative ideas to create and grow successful ventures (Tende, 2016).The concept of women entrepreneurship encompasses a range of activities including starting new businesses, developing innovative products or services, and undertaking risk-taking initiatives in the business world, often in non-traditional or male-dominated industries. Brush (2020), defines women entrepreneurship as the process of identifying opportunities, mobilizing resources, and creating new value by women entrepreneurs through innovative venture creation and growth strategies. De Bruin, Brush, and Welter (2020) describe women's entrepreneurship as the active participation of women in venture creation processes, which encompass opportunity identification, resource mobilization, and the application of strategic approaches aimed at establishing and expanding viable business enterprises.

Women entrepreneurship has become increasingly prominent within business and economic scholarship, where it is recognized as a vital catalyst for global economic growth, innovation, and social transformation. Scholarly inquiry in this area has emphasized not only the opportunities that support women's entrepreneurial participation but also the enduring barriers that continue to constrain their progress. Findings from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) reveal that women's entrepreneurial participation has been on a steady rise worldwide. In 2022, an estimated 252 million women were either starting or managing businesses across 128 economies, with approximately 48 million new women entrepreneurs entering the global workforce each year. Over recent decades, the number of women establishing and pursuing entrepreneurial ventures has grown substantially. This growing momentum can be attributed to multiple factors, including

improved educational attainment among women, evolving cultural and societal norms, and the development of institutional frameworks and support mechanisms aimed at fostering women's entrepreneurial engagement.

According to Brush et al. (2019), it is essential to confront the unique obstacles encountered by women entrepreneurs, such as limited financial access, gender-related biases, and the difficulties of reconciling business demands with household responsibilities. Effectively overcoming these obstacles requires a comprehensive strategy that incorporates policy reforms, structured mentorship initiatives, and networking platforms specifically designed to support women in business, cooperative societies play a crucial role in advancing women's empowerment. Ezeokafor, Nwankwo, and Onuoha (2021) argue that the social and economic initiatives undertaken by women's cooperatives in Anambra State exert a significant positive impact on women's empowerment. According to Ethelmary, Oguejiofor, Francisca, and Umoru (2023), small and medium-sized enterprises should embrace entrepreneurial practices because they foster employment generation, economic empowerment, and the creation of opportunities that encourage young people and others to evolve as drivers of innovation and employment generation rather than as seekers of wage employment. Similarly, Klyver et al. (2020) highlight the positive contributions of women-led enterprises to economic growth and innovation. Supporting and empowering women to succeed as entrepreneurs not only enhances their individual economic standing but also advances broader national development and foster social progress. The socio-economic initiatives of women's cooperative societies in Anambra State have been shown to exert a substantial influence on women's empowerment.

2.1.2 Access to Finance

Access to finance remains a pivotal determinant of entrepreneurial success and business expansion, and it is particularly crucial for women entrepreneurs. However, despite notable

progress in financial inclusion, women continue to encounter considerable obstacles in obtaining adequate financial services and products. According to a study by Coleman (2018), women entrepreneurs often face difficulty accessing finance due to the lack of available credit. Financial institutions may perceive women as higher risk, leading to the denial of loan applications. A study by Klapper, Laeven, and Rajan (2019) shows that reducing the cost of financial services, such as fees and interest rates, can significantly improve women entrepreneurs' access to finance.

Berger, Easterly, Nunn, and Satyanath (2020) highlights the importance of enhancing accessibility to financial services for women entrepreneurs. Technological advancements, such as mobile banking and online financial services, have the potential to bridge this gap, particularly in remote or underserved areas. By leveraging technology, financial institutions can reach more women entrepreneurs, enabling them to access the financial services they need to thrive. According to ILO (2020), enhancing financial literacy is crucial for improving women entrepreneurs' access to finance. Financial education programs can empower women entrepreneurs to understand and utilize financial services effectively.

2.1.3 Asset Ownership

Asset ownership refers to the legal right of an individual or entity to possess material resources. Assets are significant because they generate financial benefits, enhance life opportunities, and strengthen social relations. Equitable distribution of assets is therefore essential for fostering inclusive economic development (Khan, 2019). Guaranteeing women’s access to property rights holds significant potential for reshaping gender relations, as it empowers them to protect themselves from poverty, food insecurity, and domestic violence (Panda & Agarwal, 2015). In the context of entrepreneurship, asset ownership is particularly critical, as it provides women with the capital and resources necessary to initiate and expand business ventures. Nonetheless, female entrepreneurs

often encounter distinct challenges in acquiring assets such as land, property, financial capital, and other productive resources. The absence of asset ownership thus constitutes a major obstacle for women seeking to establish or scale up their enterprises.

According to the World Bank (2014), women are considerably less likely than men to possess land or property, a gap that limits their capacity to leverage these assets as collateral in securing loans. Limited access to capital consequently hampers women entrepreneurs from making critical business investments, acquiring equipment, or hiring labor, thereby constraining their growth prospects. Kabeer (2018) highlights that reinforcing women's ownership and control of assets is fundamental to advancing their economic empowerment and elevating their social status. Securing land, property, and other productive resources enables women to increase their bargaining power within households and communities, ultimately granting them greater authority in both business and financial decision-making.

2.1.4 Economic Growth

Economic growth is often conceptualized as the rise in per capita gross domestic product (GDP) or other measures of aggregate income, usually represented by the annual rate of change in real GDP (John-Eke & Gabriel, 2023). It is also described as a quantifiable increase in the production of goods and services within a nation over a defined timeframe (Investors Words, 2010, as cited in Kpelai, 2013). Fundamentally, economic growth denotes the overall expansion in the volume of goods and services generated by an economy.

The active participation of women in entrepreneurial activities has been a significant contributor to the economic advancement of numerous nations, Nigeria inclusive. Women entrepreneurs generate employment, stimulate innovation, and foster productivity, thereby adding measurable value to the economy. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Income (GNI) remain central indicators of a nation's economic performance, both of which are enhanced by the level of entrepreneurial participation irrespective of gender.

The concept of growth is often defined as an increase in worker productivity (Ray, 2019). For Nigeria to achieve sustained growth, it must prioritize strategies that enhance productivity across sectors. This requires not only identifying how productivity can be improved but also determining the extent of such improvements necessary to meet national development goals. For instance, Nigeria once set the ambitious target of becoming one of the world's top twenty economies by 2020, a goal that demanded significant increases in productivity. Achieving such a target also required strategic choices regarding sectoral focus, particularly whether agriculture could serve as the primary driver of growth.

The notion of development, on the other hand, has been widely debated. Contemporary perspectives generally conceptualize development as both infrastructural advancement and social progress, most prominently in the fields of education and public health. Historically, economic development has been associated with shifts in production and employment structures, where growth in manufacturing and service industries often coincides with a decline in the agricultural sector. Consequently, many development strategies have emphasized rapid industrialization and urban-centered growth, frequently neglecting rural areas and agriculture.

Tornado and Smith (2016) contend that development was once narrowly defined in economic terms, with emphasis on swift growth in both total and per capita Gross National Income (GNI). The assumption was that such growth would "trickle down" to the broader population through job creation. However, experiences in Nigeria such as the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Program demonstrated that this trickle-down effect did not materialize as expected. Instead, widespread poverty persisted, with a large proportion of Nigerians engaged in subsistence farming.

Given that approximately 69% of Nigeria's population lives in poverty, with many reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods, enhancing farmers' incomes holds the potential to significantly reduce poverty and stimulate economic development. This underscores the

importance of agricultural development as a pathway to broader national progress. While GDP growth has often been used as a measure of both poverty reduction and development, the Nigerian case demonstrates that growth driven by agriculture can be a more inclusive and sustainable route to economic advancement.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Liberal feminist theory, pioneered by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1794, provides the theoretical underpinning for this research. The theory asserts that societal structures have long positioned men in more powerful and advantageous roles than women (Beasley, 1999). Hence, women's constrained competitiveness is explained by systemic discrimination rather than inherent limitations in competence. Kuteesa, Akpuokwe, and Udeh (2024) that eliminating barriers and ensuring equal access to resources would dissolve gender-based disparities in performance. Liberal feminism emphasizes that women's subordination in modern societies stems from unjust discrimination (Alison, 1983). Rather than advocating for special privileges, liberal feminists argue for equal treatment and the removal of sex-based discrimination in all spheres (Rosser, 2005). Feminism continues to attract divergent interpretations; nevertheless, there is broad consensus that its essence lies in affirming the equal value and merit of women and men (Adichie, 2015; McCann & Kim, 2013).

2.3 Empirical Review

Aladejebi (2023) investigated the constraints confronting female entrepreneurs in Southwest Nigeria, drawing data from enterprises located in six state capitals; Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Oshogbo, Akure, and Ado-Ekiti as well as additional urban centers to ensure a representative sample. Of the 720 questionnaires distributed, 502 were retrieved and analyzed using SPSS. The instrument covered two sections: respondents' demographic and business profiles, and their motivations alongside perceived challenges. Findings revealed that inadequate training, restricted access to start-up funding, and insufficient

family support constituted the most significant barriers to women's entrepreneurial advancement in the region.

Zoramawa, Umar, and Tukur (2023) explored determinants of women entrepreneurs' performance in North Eastern Nigeria through a descriptive survey involving 283 rural entrepreneurs from twelve local government areas across six states. Data, analyzed with descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, revealed that lack of finance, restricted movement, and high taxation were critical challenges, worsened by inadequate government support and the absence of grants and credit facilities. Furthermore, socio-cultural barriers ranging from negative community perceptions and domestic violence to illiteracy and poor awareness were found to impede entrepreneurial achievement. The study recommends multi-stakeholder collaboration among government, religious organizations, and private actors to promote an enabling climate for rural women in enterprise.

Amir-ud-Din, Naz, and Ali (2023) investigated the relationship between women's asset ownership and empowerment using Demographic and Health Survey data from 18 developing nations spanning South Asia, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa. The analysis revealed that women with asset ownership were 14% more likely to be empowered than those without assets (odds ratio: 1.14, 95% CI: 1.10–1.185). At the country level, significant positive associations were observed in nine countries, a negative effect in one, and no significant relationship in the remaining eight. The study highlights asset ownership as a crucial driver of women's empowerment and offers empirical support for designing gender-responsive policy frameworks.

Magambo and Nyamwesa (2022) explored the gender gap in asset ownership in Tanzania through an integrative review of seven studies conducted between 2017 and 2021. The

analysis revealed that women's ownership is constrained by limited knowledge, low income, entrenched cultural norms, weak enforcement of land laws, and symbolic forms of violence. The study stressed the relevance of adopting interventions that are responsive to specific challenges by policymakers and non-governmental organizations to address these barriers, while recommending further research comparing urban and rural contexts to capture location-specific dynamics. The findings offer important insights for advancing equitable asset ownership.

Akande and James (2022) explored the relationship between women's entrepreneurship development and poverty alleviation, focusing on SMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. Drawing on both primary and secondary data, the study focused on 1,396,777 active MSME entrepreneurs who had participated in entrepreneurship support programs. Descriptive findings showed that women's entrepreneurship initiatives and the income generated through them significantly enhanced entrepreneurial development. Findings from the regression model ($R^2 = 0.652$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.647$, $p = 0.001$) confirmed that women's entrepreneurship programs exert a significant and positive influence on poverty reduction. The study therefore inferred that women's engagement in entrepreneurship enhances poverty alleviation and called for expanded government support through increased program funding.

3. 0. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive survey design to explore the views of female SME owners in Anambra State, specifically in Awka South, Onitsha North, and Nnewi North. The population comprised 1,325 registered female entrepreneurs, from which a sample of 307 was drawn using Taro Yamane's formula at a 5% error margin and proportionately distributed across the study areas. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques ensured representativeness, supplemented by purposive sampling where appropriate. Data

collection combined primary sources—structured questionnaires, interviews, and observations—with secondary sources, including journals, books, theses, and institutional records. The questionnaire was based on a five-point Likert scale and included introductory, demographic, and research-related items. Expert review confirmed validity, while the test–retest method produced Cronbach's Alpha coefficients above 0.8, indicating reliability. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation using SPSS version 25 at a 0.05 significance level. A mean score of 3.0 served as the acceptance criterion for responses.

4. 0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

A total of 307 questionnaires were distributed, and 297 were duly completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 96.7%, which is considered adequate for achieving the study's objectives.

4. 1: Analysis of Data

Hypothesis One

H_{o1}: There is no statistically significant relationship between access to finance and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria

Table 4.1.1: Pearson's Correlation Between Access to Finance and Economic Growth.

		Access to finance	Economic growth
Access to finance	Pearson's Correlation	1	.573**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	297	297
Economic growth	Pearson's Correlation	.573**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	297	297
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Researcher's Computation 2025 /SPSS version 25

As shown in Table 4.1.1, the correlation analysis produced a coefficient of r = 0.573 with a p-value < 0.05, indicating a statistically significant positive association between access

to finance and economic growth. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming the relevance of financial access in driving economic growth in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two

H_{O2}: Asset ownership does not relate to economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria

Table 4.1. 2: Pearson's Correlation Between Asset Ownership **and** Economic Growth

		Asset ownership	**Economic growth**
Asset ownership	Pearson's Correlation	1	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	297	297
Economic growth	Pearson's Correlation	.611**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	297	297
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source: Researcher's Computation 2025 /SPSS version 25

As shown in Table 4.1.2, asset ownership is positively correlated with economic growth ($r = 0.611$, $p < 0.05$). The significance level warrants the rejection of the null hypothesis, establishing asset ownership as a key driver of economic growth in Anambra State.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The test of Hypothesis One revealed no significant relationship between cultural bias and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Aladejebi (2023), who examined the challenges confronting women entrepreneurs in the southwestern states of Nigeria and highlighted limited access to start-up capital as a critical impediment. Similarly, Zoramawa, Umar, and Tukur (2023) identified limited access to loans and finance, restricted mobility, and high taxation as major obstacles to women's entrepreneurial performance in North Eastern Nigeria, with rural women disproportionately affected.

Results from Hypothesis Two confirmed a significant positive link between asset ownership and economic growth in Anambra State. This finding supports Amir-ud-Din, Naz, and Ali (2023), who showed that asset-owning women across 18 developing countries

were more empowered than non-owners. Likewise, Magambo and Nyamwesa (2022) found that in Tanzania, low income, limited awareness, and cultural norms restrict women's asset ownership, thereby constraining their economic participation.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of data, the major findings are summarized below

i. There exists a significant positive relationship between access to finance and economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria.

ii. Asset ownership is significantly and positively associated with economic growth in Anambra State, Nigeria

5.2 Conclusion

Findings from the study confirm that women's entrepreneurship significantly enhances economic growth in Anambra State. Access to finance and ownership of assets emerged as key enablers of entrepreneurial success. However, persistent cultural expectations and gendered roles continue to constrain women's involvement in sectors with high growth potential, while discriminatory financial practices restrict their access to capital. Nonetheless, empowering women through targeted policies, enhanced financial inclusion, and increased asset ownership can maximize their economic potential and promote sustainable growth. Tackling these barriers is vital for achieving inclusive and equitable development in Anambra State.

5.3 Recommendations

The study proposed the following recommendations

i. Government agencies and financial institutions should develop gender-responsive loan programs with reduced collateral requirements and flexible

repayment options to enhance women's access to finance. Additionally, grants specifically targeted at women-led businesses should be prioritized.

ii. Legal reforms should be enacted to eliminate customs that disadvantage women from inheritance and property ownership such as land, real estate and business equipment.

REFERENCES

Adichie, C (2015). We should all be feminists, New York: Anchor Books

Akande O.O and James, M. T., (2022) Women Entrepreneurship Development and Poverty Alleviation: Experience from Nigeria Small and Medium Enterprises. *African Multidisciplinary Journal of development (AMJD) 11(3) 190-212*

Aladejebi, O. (2020). 21st Century Challenges Confronting Women Entrepreneurs in South-West Nigeria. *Archives of Business Research,* 8*(3), 261-280*

Alison, M. J. (1983). *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. Philosophy and society. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld Publishers.

Amir-ud-Din R, Naz L, Ali H (2023). Relationship between asset ownership and women's empowerment? Evidence from DHS data from 18 developing countries. *Journal of Demographic Economics* 1–22.

Ayogu, E, S. and Everistus, O. A (2015) Entrepreneurship and women participation in the global market: Implications for Nigeria. *African Journal of Entrepreneurship (AJE),* 1(1), 25–44.

Beasely, C. (1999). What is Feminism Anyway?: Understanding Contemporary Feminist Thought. Allen & Unwin, publishers.

Berger, D., Easterly, W., Nunn, N., and Satyanath, S. (2020). Commercial Imperialism? Political Influence and Trade during the Cold War. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 102(1), 110-127.

Brush, C.G, DeBruin A. and Welter, F. (2020). A Gender-Aware Framework for Women's Entrepreneurship, *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*1(1). 8 24www.emaraldinsight.com/1756-6266.htm.

Chibiyayi, G, I and Shehu, E. (2018) Stumbling block for women entrepreneurship in Nigeria: How risk attitude and lack of capital mitigates their need for

business expansion. *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences*, 36, 38–49.

Coleman, S. (2018) Constraints Faced Women Small Business Owners Evidence from the Data. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 7 (2), 151, 24,

Elam, A. (2019). The role of networking in the entrepreneurial empowerment of women in the Middle East and North Africa. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 11(2), 147-170.

Ethelmary, D., Oguejiofor, D. C., Francisca, E., and Umoru, L.A (2023), Small and Medium Scale Enterprises: An Economic Growth Mechanism in Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. *International journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation.* (6).

Ezeokafor, U. R., Nwankwo, F. O., Onuoha, O. C (2021). Effect of social and economic activities of cooperative Societies on women empowerment. *Journal of Global Economics and Business* 2(6), 103-121

Haxhiu, M, K (2015) Resource mobilization through business owners' networks: is gender an issue*?*. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 1(3), 226–252.

ILO (2020). Empowering Women through Financial Literacy: A Compilation of Good Practices. *International Labour Organization*

John-Eke, E. C., and Gabriel, J. M. O., (2023). Women's Entrepreneurial Competencies and Economic Development: A Review of Literature. *The International Journal Of Business & Management. 11(5)1-7*

Kabeer, N. (2018). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third Millennium Development Goal. Gender & Development, 13(1), 13-24

Kelly, E. (2017) Factors influencing women entrepreneurs' performance in SMEs. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, 12(2), 82–101.

Khan, O. (2019). Why Do Assets Matter? Assets Equality and Ethnicity: Building Towards Financial Inclusion.

Klapper, L., Laeven, L., and Rajan, R. (2019). Access to Finance in the Middle East and Central Asia. *World Bank Publications*.

Klyver, K. and Grant, S. (2020). Gender Differences in Entrepreneurial Networking and Participation. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 2(3), 213-227.

Kpelai, S. T. (2013). The Impact of Women Entrepreneurship on Economic Growth in Benue State, Nigeria. *Journal of Business and Management, 13* (1), 07-12.

Kuteesa, Akpuokwe, and Udeh (2024). Gender equity in education: Addressing challenges and promoting opportunities for social empowerment. International journal of applied research in social science 6(4). 631-641

Lawali, B. Z, S. U. and Tukur B. B. (2023). Analysis of the Factors Affecting the Performance and Success of Rural-Women Entrepreneurs: Evidence from North Eastern Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation In Social Science*. 7 (4) 312-322

Lawan, U., (2017). Female Entrepreneurship in Nigeria: An Investigation. A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the Robert Gordon University For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Limbu, T. R and Bordoloi, N. R (2015) Women empowerment and participation in economic activities: Indispensable tools for self-reliance and development of Nigerian society. *Educational Research and Review,* 7(1), 10–18.

Magambo, E. F.1 and Nyamwesa, A. M. (2022) Gender Gap in Asset Ownership: Tanzania State of Play. *African Journal of Applied Research* 8(1)351-361

McCann, C, and Kim, S. (2013). Feminist theory reader: Local and global perspectives, New York: Routledge

Okafor, O. E. and Okonkwo, C. J. (2022). Assessment of the Socio-Economic Effect on Violence Against Women Amidst Covid19 Pandemic in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. *International Organization of Scientific Research.* 09. (1). ISSN: 2348-019X.www.iosrjournals.org. DOI:10.9790/019X-09011729

Okonkwo, C. J. and Okafor, O. E. (2020). Covid-19 and Labour Migration: The Women Economics Dynamics. *Centre for Migration Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (CMS-NAU), Covid-19 Webinar and Online Publication Series*. July 2020. https://migrationstudies.unizik.edu.ng/download/covid-19-and-labour-migration-the-women-economics-dynamics/

Onwuka, F.N., Otaokpukpu, J.N. & Okonkwo, J.C. (2017). Effectiveness of Extension Services in Enhancing the Productivity, Income and Welfare of Women Farmers Cooperatives in Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State. *The (IIARD) International Journal of Economics and Business Management (IJEBM).* 3 (8). 86 – 100.

Özsungur, F. (2019). The effects of technology acceptance and use behaviour on women's entrepreneurship motivation factors. *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 13(3), 367-380.

Panda, P., & Agarwal, B. (2015). Marital violence, human development and women's property status in India. *World Development, 33*(5), 823-850.

Rae, H., (2015) Gender and network formation in rural Nicaragua: a village case study. *Feminist Economics*, 17(2), 31–61.

Ray, V. (*2019*). A theory of racialized organizations. American Sociological Review, 84(1), 26– 53.

Rosser S. V. (2005). Through the Lenses of Feminist Theory: Focus on Women and Information Technology. Frontiers: *A Journal of Women Studies. 26*(1), 1-23

Tende, S. B. A (2016). The Impact of Women Entrepreneurs towards National Development: Selected Study on Taraba State.

Tootian, S., Bayanaty, M., & Jalali, A. (2022). Identify The Dimensions and Components of Communication Technology In Order To Empower Women Entrepreneurs In Business. *An Approach to Business Management*, 2(4), 32-49.

Ugwa, M., Okonkwo, C. J; and Igwegbe D. O (2019). Influence of Culture on Women Entrepreneurship in Nigeria. *Forshen Hub International Journal of Economics and Business Management.* 1 (1)

World Bank. (2024). *Women, business and the law 2023*. World Bank Group

Zoramawa, L. B., Umar, S., and Tukur B. B. (2023). Analysis of the Factors Affecting the Performance and Success of Rural-Women Entrepreneurs: Evidence from North Eastern Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 7(42), 312- 322.