

Impact of Women Education Programmes on Sustainable Community Development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State

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Abstract

The paper examined the impact of women education programmes on sustainable community development in Emohua local government area of Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated two (2) objectives, research questions and hypotheses to guide the study. The research design used is a descriptive survey research design. The population of this study consists all the members of registered Community Base Women Organization (CBWO) in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State, with a total population of 4,820 women. The multi-stage sampling procedure was used in the study with the sample size of 964 women. The instrument used for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at a significance level of 0.05. The study revealed that women participation in politics and women personal developments have positive and significant impacts on sustainable community development. The study recommends that educated and qualified women should be promoted into higher level skills and responsibilities in the occupational structure among others.

Keywords: *Women Education, Sustainable, Community Development, Participation*

Introduction

Development intervention often cites the education of women as its objective (Mosedale, 2015). In the 1970s, the concept of women's empowerment was introduced by Third World feminist and women's organizations. Specifically, these organizations used it to promote social justice and gender equality by transforming economic, social, and political systems on a national and international scale. The necessity of educating women is based on the recognition that women possess the capacity to make significant contributions to the process of development. In Nigeria, a patriarchal society, men have absolute control over the material resources within the household, including land and cash crops, as well as the labor of women and other household members. Husbands or other males in the home compel women who lack direct access to land, cash crops, or men's labor to provide these resources (Ineye-Briggs & Okwu, 2023; Adams & Castle, 2014).

The combination of women's educational attainment, poverty rates, and men's attitudes towards women has consistently hindered women's involvement in development. The level of education and economic circumstances of women largely determine their level of involvement in decision-making, whether it be within their families, communities, states, or at the national level. Typically, women bear a greater share of home maintenance and childcare chores than men, leading to an unequal burden.

Education necessitates an examination of women's subordinate status and the development of a more desirable alternative to current arrangements. Reducing the workload of household chores and child care, eliminating institutionalized discrimination, ensuring equal political representation, improving the economic standing of women, granting women the freedom to choose when to have children, and implementing measures to prevent male violence and domination over women can accomplish these goals (Molyneaux, 2015). Simply put, education necessitates the alteration of systems of subjugation through changes in legislation, property rights, and other establishments that uphold and sustain male supremacy. One way to achieve this is by enhancing the educational, political, and economic empowerment of women, enabling them to actively engage in development initiatives. The United Nations dedicated a decade to addressing women's empowerment and inclusion in socioeconomic and political matters in their own countries, recognizing the importance of women taking charge of their own lives. The primary objective was to enable women to cultivate their capabilities, make contributions to, and derive advantages from development on an equal footing with men (Ineye-Briggs, 2023; Nwile, 2022; United Nations, 2015).

Women should strive to educate themselves and obtain information and knowledge that will enable them to question and challenge societal conventions, values, and behavioral patterns. Women require an education that empowers them to comprehend and navigate the world, as well as to excel in the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and mathematics. This education should enable women to take control of their lives and shape their own futures. They want education that will enable them to develop the essential analytical abilities to comprehend the rapidly evolving aspects of life, empowering them with the self-assurance and resilience to reject conditions of indignity and inhumanity. The ideal kind of education should empower women to establish resilient collectives, enabling them to assert greater autonomy and overcome societal constraints, thus amplifying their voices and increasing their visibility.

Women require an education that not only aids them in obtaining new skills and information but also enables them to develop and reinforce values such as justice, equality, honesty, truthfulness, and solidarity. Additionally, it should generate or unleash energy in women, empowering them to act with determination and bravery in their diverse battles at various levels. Education should facilitate the cultivation of a critical and inquisitive mindset in women, as well as foster a scientific methodology for comprehending the truths that exist in their surroundings.

Women's Education and Political Participation

Women's political involvement encompasses the equal ability of women to engage in all phases and areas of political life and the decision-making process alongside men. It seems apparent that there should be a considerable correlation between formal education and political engagement for both women and men. According to Verba (2018), American sociologists who have extensively

studied the elements that influence the political engagement of women and men in the USA find that education is a particularly strong indicator of political participation. The authors outline many direct and indirect impacts that formal education has on political engagement. This has a direct impact on the acquisition of knowledge and communication skills that are valuable for engaging in public debates, as well as receiving direct instruction in political analysis through courses that focus on current events. The numerous indirect effects of voluntary engagement in school government, clubs, sports, and school newspapers include the advantages of early apprenticeship for politics. These arenas allow young individuals to demonstrate leadership, develop civic skills such as cooperation and negotiation, and acquire bureaucratic and organizational skills that are valuable for political involvement. Education amplifies various factors that contribute to political engagement, such as the ability to secure well-paying jobs that offer the necessary resources and connections for political involvement, as well as the opportunity to participate in non-political groups like charitable organizations or religious institutions, which can serve as a source of recruitment for political activities (Ibid., 2019).

Personal Development: Through counseling, women's education enables them to gain self-awareness and self-understanding, allowing them to identify and comprehend their challenges, limitations, and potential. Teachers instruct women in several tactics, empowering them to independently select the most effective ones for problem-solving. Education empowers women to express their own thoughts and opinions. Education enables women to advance to greater levels of expertise and accountability within the occupational hierarchy. Education empowers women to excel as wives, mothers, employees, and leaders in their communities. It enhances their personal value and contribution to both their community and the nation at large (Mackinnan, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

The education system in Nigeria restricts women, who make up over half of the population, from fully realizing their potential as distinct and significant persons who deserve respect. A modern nation and community require people who can actively engage in public affairs, possess the ability to exercise their rights, and fulfill their responsibilities efficiently. It is both absurd and perplexing when political leaders discuss national freedom while over half of the populace (particularly women) remains trapped in a state of illiteracy.

Nigerian women are making significant contributions to the nation's progress; however, their full potential appears to be hindered by several obstacles. Gender disparities persist in the realms of education, work, and financial prospects (Deekor & Ekwems, 2022). We manage resources, ensure individual safety, and actively participate in the advancement of activities. This can be attributed to persistent limitations, such as the unfavorable economic situation faced by Nigerian women, insufficient legislation and regulations to protect women's rights, unequal opportunities for education, restricted access to land, and a lack of assertiveness among women. The degree of education, economic level, and men's perspective on the importance of women's involvement in development are considered influential variables in women's participation in development processes. The underrepresentation of women in political participation is significant.

The lack of adequate representation of Nigerian women in educational, economic, and political initiatives may result in a significant hindrance to growth, highlighting the necessity of empowering women. Municipal, state, national, and international levels have implemented numerous programs. These programs and projects have the goal of expanding women's opportunities to receive education, promoting women's active involvement in business and politics, and reassessing legislation concerning women's legal standing. These initiatives are coordinated by women themselves as well as governmental and non-governmental groups. They include microcredit facilities, educational programs, skill acquisition, political involvement, and other associated activities. This research examines the impact of women education programmes on sustainable community development in Emohua local government area of Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of women education programmes on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Determine the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the conduct of the study:

1. What is the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. What is the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The research will formulate the following null hypotheses that will guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of women exco and members on the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of women exco and members on the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey gathers and analyzes data from a sample of individuals or products, believed to be representative of the entire group (Dambo & Kayii, 2022). The population for this study comprises all the individuals who are members of the registered Community Base Women Organization (CBWO) in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. The population is 4,820 women who are members of Community-Based Women Organizations (CBWO), which are women organizations that have been officially registered within the communities of the research area. These organizations focus on addressing the specific needs of their members and the wider community. This study employed a multi-stage sampling

approach. In the first stage, we employed a random sample strategy to select four localities within the study area. In the second stage, we utilized a proportionate sample technique to select 20% of the population from each of the Community Based Women Associations (CBWAS) included in the study. The study selected a sample size of 964 women from the Emohua Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The researcher specifically designed a self-structured questionnaire for data collection in this study. The questionnaire was designed with a four-point rating system, where participants could indicate their level of agreement using the following options: strongly agree (SA) with a rating of 4, agree (A) with a rating of 3, disagree (D) with a rating of 2, and strongly disagree (SD) with a rating of 1. The acquired data were analyzed using a weighted mean and standard deviation to address the research inquiries. The criterion decision rule states that a mean score equal to or greater than 2.50 is considered acceptable, whereas a mean score less than 2.50 is considered unacceptable and therefore rejected. We evaluated the null hypotheses using a z-test statistical instrument with a significance level of 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation analysis on the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Women ECOS = 80		Members = 320			
		Mean \bar{x}	SD	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Mean \bar{x}	SD
1.	Women have held key position in politics because of their level of education, thereby enhancing sustainable community development.	2.89	0.85	Agree	2.95	0.86	Agree
2.	Communities achieve peace and progress when women are in politics thereby enhancing community development.	2.86	0.83	Agree	2.86	0.84	Agree
3.	Women's increase in education enhances their participation in politics thereby promoting sustainable community development.	2.78	0.83	Agree	2.91	0.85	Agree

4.	Women’s level of education enhances their representation in formal politics which enhance sustainable community development.	2.83	0.84	Agree	2.82	0.84	Agree
5.	Women’s level of education increases their interest in politics thereby promoting sustainable community development.	2.86	0.84	Agree	2.86	0.84	Agree
Grand Total		2.84	0.84		2.88	0.85	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that the respondents acknowledged the notion that women have occupied influential roles in politics due to their educational attainment, hence contributing to the promotion of long-lasting communal development. The survey reaffirmed that the respondents shared the belief that communities can attain peace and progress through the active participation of women in politics, which in turn promotes communal development. The investigation also revealed that the respondents acknowledged the correlation between women's educational advancement and their active involvement in politics, which in turn contributes to the promotion of sustainable community development. The survey revealed a consensus among the respondents that women's educational attainment positively correlates with their participation in official politics, hence contributing to sustainable community development. The analysis indicated that the respondents acknowledged the correlation between women's educational attainment and their inclination towards politics, which in turn contributes to the advancement of sustainable community development.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation analysis on impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Women ECOS = 80			Members = 320		
		Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks
6.	Women education helps them to know and understand themselves better thereby enhancing sustainable community development.	2.86	0.84	Agree	2.91	0.85	Agree

7.	Education qualifies women for promoting into higher levels of skill and responsibility in the occupational structure thereby enhancing community development.	2.83	0.84	Agree	2.95	0.86	Agree
8.	Women education promotes their well-being and provide women with techniques of social mobilization which enhance community development	2.97	0.86	Agree	2.98	0.86	Agree
9.	Education has makes the women to be successful wives, mothers and workers thereby enhancing community development.	2.94	0.86	Agree	2.99	0.86	Agree
10.	Women education has given the women better participation in the society and community thereby enhancing sustainable community development.	2.92	0.85	Agree	3.00	0.87	Agree
Grand Total		2.90	0.85		2.97	0.86	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data analysis in Table 2 revealed a consensus among the respondents about the belief that women's education contributes to their self-awareness and understanding, hence promoting sustainable community development. The investigation also revealed that the respondents acknowledged the fact that education enables women to advance to greater levels of expertise and responsibility in the occupational hierarchy, thereby contributing to community development. The survey also observed that the respondents agreed that women's education increases their well-being and equips women with strategies for social mobilization, hence enhancing community development. The investigation also found that the respondents acknowledged the correlation between education and the ability of women to succeed as wives, mothers, and workers, hence contributing to community development. The survey confirmed that the respondents agreed that women's education had led to increased participation of women in society and the community, hence promoting sustainable community development.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Women Exco and Members on the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of Women Exco and Members on the impact of women participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Status	N	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
EXCO	80	2.84	0.84				
				398	1.29	1.96	Accepted
Members	200	2.88	0.85				

The analysis of Table 3 indicates that the calculated z-score of 1.29 is smaller than the critical z-score of 1.96. Hence, the computed z-ratio lacks statistical significance at a significance level of 0.05, as it is smaller than the provided critical value of the z-ratio. Hypothesis 1 is accepted, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in the average evaluation of Women Exco and Members about the impact of women's engagement in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Women Exco and Members on the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of significant difference in the mean rating of Women Exco and Members on the impact of women personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The analysis of Table 4 shows that the calculated z-score of 1.24 is smaller than the critical z-

Status	N	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
EXCO	80	2.90	0.85				
				398	1.24	1.96	Accepted
Members	200	2.97	0.86				

score of 1.96. Hence, the computed z-ratio is not statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05, as it is smaller than the provided critical value of the z-ratio. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in the average evaluation of Women Exco and Members about the impact of women's personal development on sustainable community development in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State..

Discussion of Findings

The findings regarding research question 1, which investigates the impact of women's participation in politics on sustainable community development in Emohua local government

area of Rivers State, indicate that such participation has a positive effect on sustainable community development in that area. This discovery aligns with the research conducted by Teigeler (2015), which found that women's high level of education has enabled them to occupy important roles in politics, leading to the promotion of sustainable community development. The survey confirmed that the respondents shared the belief that communities experience peace and growth when women participate in politics, therefore promoting community development. The investigation also revealed that the respondents acknowledged the correlation between women's educational advancement and their increased involvement in politics, which in turn contributes to the promotion of sustainable community development. The survey revealed a consensus among the respondents on the positive correlation between women's educational attainment and their representation in formal politics, ultimately leading to sustainable community development. The analysis indicated that the participants acknowledged the correlation between women's educational attainment and their inclination towards politics, which in turn contributes to the advancement of sustainable community development.

The study conducted in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State investigated the impact of women's personal development on sustainable community development. The findings revealed that women's personal development has a significant influence on the sustainable development of the community. This study aligns with Minn's (2010) findings, which acknowledge that women's education enables them to gain self-awareness and a deeper understanding of themselves, hence promoting sustainable community development. The investigation also revealed that the respondents acknowledged the notion that education equips women with the necessary qualifications to advance to greater levels of expertise and responsibility within the occupational hierarchy, therefore contributing to the progress of the community. The survey also observed that the respondents agreed that women's education increases their welfare and equips women with strategies for social mobilization, hence enhancing community development. The analysis also found that the respondents acknowledged the correlation between education and the ability of women to succeed as wives, mothers, and workers, hence promoting community development. The survey confirmed that the respondents shared the belief that women's education has resulted in increased participation of women in society and the community, hence promoting sustainable community development.

Conclusion

The concept of sustainable development is primarily viewed as an educational subject. Adult education, in its various educational formats, has the ability to empower women to influence and safeguard the future. Crucially, it can cultivate in individuals (specifically women) the capacity to engage and investigate the complete progression of community and national development. Essentially, it is crucial to view women's tasks as extending beyond home responsibilities. To empower women, it is necessary to provide them with expanded educational options, including adult education. This is important for their personal fulfillment, as women play a significant part in the productive sectors of the economy. This study concluded that the involvement of women in politics and their personal growth had a beneficial and noteworthy influence on the sustained development of the community in Emohua local government area of Rivers State. The significance

of women's education in fostering community and national development is also emphasized. Additionally, suggestions are presented for deliberation.

Recommendations

1. Educated and qualified women should be promoted into higher level skills and responsibilities in the occupational structure.
2. Systematic efforts should be made to ensure women's full integration and participation into the community national development process.

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