



## ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION ACTIVITIES ON CREATION OF JOBS OPPORTUNITIES IN ARCHITECTURE

**Okokon Godwint**

Department of Marketing, Akwa Ibom State polytechnic

*Received: 25.02.2025 | Accepted: 30.03.2025 | Published: 25.04.2025*

### ABSTRACT

*This study was sought to find out the female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation as correlate to female entrepreneur's activities and creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities. Research design can be described as an outline, a general arrangement or plan from which something may be made. The survey method was utilized for this study. The study area of the work is Ikot Abasi Local Government Area. The population of the study consisted all the populace of Ikot Abasi local government area of Akwa Ibom State. The sample size was statistically determined using "Taro Yamane" formula for finite population and a sample of 120 female entrepreneurs was used for the study. The Source data of the research are of two kinds; primary and secondary data. The researcher used a letter of introduction and permission to gain access into the study area and for data collection while the collected data was analyzed using appropriate statistical technique such as descriptive statistics and Pearson product moment correlation analysis. Test of significance was at 0.025 alpha level. Based on the findings, the study concluded that, there are various forms and causes of poverty in the study area, the different poverty alleviation measures in the study area was also seen influencing creation of employment and skills acquisitions of the populaces and the factors affecting the implementation of poverty alleviation measures in Ikot Abasi. According to the study the following recommendation was made Entrepreneurship skill acquisition programme should be pursued with vigor, as the study revealed that lack of it is the most important cause of poverty in the society. A man/woman with an income yielding skill is capable of liberating he/herself and the family from the scourge of poverty.*

**KEYWORDS:** Entrepreneurial, Skills, Poverty, Alleviation, Creation of Jobs and Opportunities

### INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is believed to be an important mechanism of economic growth and development. Their role is to promote prosperity by creating new jobs, reducing unemployment and increase economic growth and development of a region. They also increase productivity by bringing new innovation and speed up structural changes by forcing existing business to reform and increase competition Baron (2007). According to Drucker

(1985) entrepreneurship is perceptiveness to change and the entrepreneur as one, who always search for change, respond to and exploit it as an opportunity. Drucker noted that entrepreneurship is a practical behaviour. It is a discipline and like any discipline, it can be learned. More than a billion people, live in extreme poverty (Collier, 2007). Both scholars and policymakers have proposed that entrepreneurship is an effective means for economic development and poverty alleviation in impoverished and lower income regions of the world.

Hill and McGowan (1999) opined that, entrepreneurship is seen as a process which involves the effort of an individual (or individuals) in identifying viable business opportunities in an environment and obtaining and managing the resources needed to exploit those opportunities. Similarly, Timmons and Spinelli (2004) see entrepreneurship as the function of being creative and responsive within and to the environment. He stated further that entrepreneurship activity is a destabilizing force, which starts the process of “creative destruction” which is the essence of economic development. According to Ogundele (2005) entrepreneurship can be defined as the processes of emergence, behavior and performance of entrepreneurs. He notes that a focus on entrepreneurship is a focus on the processes involved in the initiation of a new organization, the behavior of such organization and its performance in terms of profit made.

### **Statement of the problem**

Nigeria is ravaged, not with war this time, but poverty. In the 60s, when our economy was purely based on agriculture, our poverty level was measured by the absence of food in our homes. And of course, there was no poverty for there was always food as our farmers had nothing else to do than to produce enough food for themselves and others around them. No one was hungry. Everybody had enough to eat and sell to the extent that much of our agricultural products were even exported to other African, American and European countries. The discovery of oil and solid minerals changed what used to be an agricultural country to an oil rich nation. Our agricultural sector was then neglected because of our newly discovered natural resources and so poverty assumes a proportion that only the poor could see.

### **Objectives of the study**

To examine the roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities

To examine the effect of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities.

### **Research questions**

- ❖ What are the roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities
- ❖ What is the effect of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities

### **Hypothesis**

- ❖ There is no significant effect of the roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities.

## **Overview of Female Entrepreneurs Skills and Poverty Alleviation Activities in Nigeria**

Entrepreneurship is an idea or vision which a woman can explore and optimize for profit in business. This would also help her to create new jobs and economic empowerment among her fellow beings. Across the globe, generations of women from different backgrounds show very encouraging sign of entrepreneurial spirit. It is believed that at all levels; there is the need to provide an environment in which this spirit may flourish (Kumar et al., 2013). Over 200 million women are employed across all industrial sectors, with half of this number in developing countries (Gem report, 2007). Women entrepreneurs are forced to take entrepreneurship in the absence of any other means of contributing to family income (Delmar, 2000). Most times, family support and encouragements are the highest facilitating factors which help women to aspire entrepreneurship (Pillai and Anna, 1990). Women's reasons for starting business are not always driven by positive factors, but also driven by negative circumstances such as low family income, poverty, lack of employment opportunities and dissatisfaction with a current job or the need for a flexible work (Robinson, 2001).

The number of female entrepreneurs is increasing as is their importance in society. This is true around the world that is undergoing transition economies, where it has resulted in reflective and dramatic economic, political and social changes (Ramadani et al., 2013). Tambunan (2009) opined that in Asian developing countries SMEs are gaining overwhelming importance; more than 95% of all firms in all sectors on average per country. The study also depicted the fact that representation of women entrepreneurs in this region is relatively low due to factors like low level of education, lack of capital and cultural or religious constraints; whereas women comprise half of human resources. They have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality is as central to a more holistic approach towards establishing new patterns and process of development that are sustainable. Lipi (2009) also found out that the contribution of women and their role in the family as well as in the economic development and social transformation are pivotal. Women constitute 90 per cent of total marginal workers in India. Rural women who are engaged in agriculture form 78 percent of all women in regular work (Prabha, 2009). Women who are mostly rural based, play a vital role in farm and home system; thereby contributing substantially in the physical aspect of farming, livestock management, post-harvest and allied activities.

## **Causes of Poverty in Rural Community in Nigeria**

There is no standard definition of poverty because of its multi-dimensional nature. Poverty is commonly defined as a situation of low income or low consumption. It can also be viewed as a situation in which individuals are unable to meet the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, education, security and health. Ajakaiye and Adeyeye (2000) conceptualize poverty as a function of education, health, child mortality and other demographic variables. Poverty to them is the availability or otherwise of the above parameters. In a nut shell poverty can be seen as a situation in which an individual is unable because of economic, social, political and psychological incapacitation, to provide himself and his family the barest basic necessities of life.

Obadan (1997) identified some factors as the causes of poverty among which are; inadequate access to employment opportunities, inadequate physical assets, inadequate access to markets, destruction of natural resources, lack of power to participate in design of development programmes and inadequate access to assistance for those living at the margin. On the consequences of poverty, Aku et. al (1997) opined that there is general loss of confidence in a society stricken by poverty and this renders government policies ineffective. Poverty also

results in increasing the fragility and vulnerability of members of society to external influences. Furthermore, poverty makes production remain largely subsistence due to lack of capital needed for expansion. Labour becomes intensive and marginal productivity remains low.

There is no one cause or determinant of poverty. On the contrary, combination of several complex factors contributes to poverty. They include low or negative economic growth, inappropriate macroeconomic policies, deficiencies in the labour market resulting in limited job growth, low productivity and low wages in the informal sector, and a lag in human resource development. Other factors which have contributed to a decline in living standards and are structural causes or determinants of poverty include increase in crime and violence, environmental degradation, retrenchment of workers, a fall in the real value of safety nets, and changes in family structures (Ogwumike, 2002). These are examined below:

**Low economic growth performance:** Growth of the economy is a must for poverty reduction. In developing countries such as Nigeria growth that is employment generating and with export base is desirable in order to achieve growth that is poverty reducing with equity. Although the economic performance of countries in the World has generally been highly volatile since the early 1980s, on the whole, growth rates have been low or negative, with overall declines in several countries. This is due in part to external shocks such as adverse changes in several countries' terms of trade, changes in global demand for exports and changes in global interest rates on developing countries external debt. All these are probably responsible for the increase in poverty level in various countries of the world. Extensive evidence links the importance of economic growth to poverty reduction (World Bank 1990). For example, in Indonesia and Thailand poverty was reduced by between 30 and 40 percent during a twenty-year period in which annual growth rates were approximately 3 percent (investments in the social sectors also contributed). Accordingly, of a sample of countries, those that reduced poverty the least (for example, India and Sri Lanka) had growth rates of less than 1 percent. Growth can reduce poverty through rising employment, increased labour productivity and higher real wages it generates.

**Macroeconomic Shocks and Policy Failure:** This has been a major cause of poverty in several countries of the world. As many economies in the world faced macroeconomic disequilibrium, mostly in the balance of payments due to expansive aggregate demand policies, terms-of-trade shocks, and natural disasters, it become necessary to undertake major policy reforms. In the process such economies became vulnerable to poverty. Macro- economic shocks and policy failure account for poverty largely because they constrain the poor from using their greatest asset "labour". Also, monetary policies that adversely affect cost and access to credit by the poor, fiscal policy which results in retrenchment, lay-off and factor Substitution; exchange rate policy which raises the domestic cost of production in an import dependent production system will affect the poor negatively.

However, an exchange rate policy which boosts exports particularly those in which the poor are predominantly engaged (for example agriculture) will help reduce poverty. The urban poor, as a result of policy failure, are vulnerable to job losses resulting from job-cut-backs in the public sectors or from the decline of industries adversely affected by shifts in relative prices. They also lose from the removal of food subsidies and other welfare packages. Further, devaluation produced both negative and positive effects on equity and poverty incidence. On the negative side higher production costs of import, especially in import dependent economy usually result in declining capacity utilization rate in manufacturing and lay-off and retrenchment in the private sector all worsening poverty.

**Labour Markets Deficiencies:** The poor's most abundant resource is their labour, a virile labour market is important to reducing poverty and income inequality. In most countries of the world the majority of poor households participate in the labour market in one way or another, and thus poverty is a problem of low wages (in the informal sector), low labour returns to rural self-employment activities, underemployment, and in some cases, protracted unemployment. These problems are affected in different ways by deficiencies in labour market. The majority of the labour force work as paid employees in the private informal sector, followed by employees in the public sector. When there are deficiencies in labour market, the poor are affected by limited job growth and absorption capacity in the formal sector. Also, relatively high labour costs in the formal sector that lead to over expansion of a low-productivity informal sector, thus putting downward pressure on wages in the informal sector (where many of the poor work), and limited opportunities for unskilled youth to acquire job training and skills can perpetuate a cycle of poverty.

**Migration:** Migration rates do reduce poverty especially when the majority of individuals who migrate are skilled workers. On the other hand, individuals who emigrate vacate jobs in labour markets. Thus, migration drains on skills. It reduces the pace of economic growth and thus slows the process of overall job creation and affects the long-run development potential in a country. **Unemployment and underemployment:** Employment is a key determinant of poverty. Gainful employment is important for individual to earn income and escape from "income" poverty. While generally in countries of the world the non poor suffer from transitional or involuntary unemployment, the poor are faced with problems of structural unemployment due to lack of skills or extremely low educational levels, medical problems, geographical isolation (which affects some of the rural poor in general and the urban poor due to marginalisation of persons living in high- crime neighbourhood) and in some countries, discrimination based on race or other attributes.

**Human Resource Development:** This is germane to human capital development and capability to escape from poverty. Continued investment in human capital with improvements in efficiency is necessary to sustain reduction in poverty changes in the labour market. Investment in people can boost the living standards of households by expanding opportunities, raising productivity, attracting capital investment, and increasing earning power: In addition, providing additional educational opportunities for adolescents may prevent some youths from becoming involved with gangs, drugs and violence, given the evidence linking the perpetrators of crime with school dropouts.

## **Female Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Rural Development**

Rural development is concerned with the improvement of the living standards of over 70 percent of the population of the country living in rural areas. To make the process sustainable involves the participation of all segments of the population and requires the development of skills, capacity and institutions to ensure effective use of resources and enhanced productivity. In this regard the involvement of women is crucial to the achievement of sustainable rural development in the country.

Women entrepreneurship is necessary for sustainable rural development because, despite the fact that women make up more than 50 percent of Nigerian population, they encounter many constraints when trying to take part in the transformation process. Rural areas tend to be more traditional in regard to the gender issue. In rural areas, the gender issue is usually a much stronger hindering factor to potential female entrepreneurs than it is in urban areas, their self-esteem and managerial skills being lower when compared to urban women and access to external financial resources more difficult than in urban areas. Therefore, special



programmes of assistance (technical and financial) to overcome these constraints should be developed and designed to meet the needs of rural women in order to be able to take an active part in entrepreneurial restructuring of their communities, to start to develop their own ventures, to expand their already existing business, or to function as social entrepreneurs since their number today is still below the potential one.

Women entrepreneurship involves women empowerment which according to Olawamimo, (2011) means “raising the awareness and consciousness of women towards act and laws that are detrimental to their progress and survival, it means giving women the authority and legal power to participate without any hindrance”. (Lamidi, 2006) affirms this when he noted that it is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation in decision making process, control and transformation actions, so as to enable them perform better towards improving themselves, their families and society as a whole. In whatever perspective one looks at it, women empowerment entails strengthening their existing skills and capacities, equal access to participation and decision making in social, political and economic life of the society. It also means equal access of women to health care, quality education, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office among others. Women empowerment will therefore lead to the sustainable development of the rural areas in the following ways: Providing the women the opportunity to participate and contribute to the health and well-being of their families. Illiteracy is associated with poor nutrition which make family members vulnerable to diseases and unproductive.

An empowered woman guarantees enhanced family health which makes the process of developing the rural areas realistic, sustainable and rapid. Again empowerment instills in women the competence and technological capabilities that are critical assets normally employed in developing the rural areas. This makes women to produce effectively to increase the income and the well-being of their families, all of which are great factors for enhancing the productivity in the rural areas. Women empowerment will also expand their frontiers since it equips them with the skills and competence to work in all spheres of the economy. This also makes women active agent of rural development through agriculture, trade and industry. Women empowerment is generally agreed to be the appropriate strategy and tactics for enhancing the participation of women in politics, governance and decision making. It also gives women the guts to compete with men in election and political appointments. This will again sustain freedom and respect and earn them equal treatment with men. For sustainable rural development, women’s participation in politics and governance must be achieved.

## **Methodology Research Design**

The design can be described as an outline, a general arrangement or plan from which something may be made. The survey method was utilized for this study.

### **Area of study**

The study area of work is Ikot Abasi Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Population of the study**

The population of the consisted of all the female farmers in Ikot Abasi local government area of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Sample size**

The sample size was statistically determined using “Taro Yamane” formula for finite population to select 120 female entrepreneurs for the study.

### Method of data collection

The researcher used a letter of introduction and permission to gain access into the study area.

### Method of Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed using appropriate statistical technique such as descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis for the study.

### Test of Hypothesis Hypothesis One

There is no significant effect of the roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities. To test the hypothesis. Chi-square analysis was performed on the data (see table 1).

**Table 1**

**Chi-square analysis of the effect of roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities**

O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
88	82.33	5.67	11.34	7.26
16	62.27	-46.27	-92.54	-0.68
8	88.76	-80.76	-161.52	-0.54
8	78.87	-70.87	-141.74	-0.55
				5.48

Table 1 shows the calculated  $X^2$ -value as (5.48) This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.48) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. The calculated  $X^2$ -value (5.48) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.48). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant effect of roles of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities.

### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant effect of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities. To test the hypothesis chi-square analysis was performed on the data (see table 2).

**Table 2**

**Chi-square analysis of the effect of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities**

O	E	O-E	(O-E) <sup>2</sup>	(O-E) <sup>2</sup> /E
91	84.68	6.32	12.64	6.69
23	66.34	-43.34	-86.68	-0.76
4	61.76	-57.76	-115.52	-0.53
4	75.5	-71.5	-143	-0.53
				4.87

Table 2 shows the calculated  $X^2$ -value as (4.87) This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.48) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. The calculated  $X^2$ -value (4.87) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.48). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant effect of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation activities on creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities.

## Discussion of the findings

The result of the data analysis in table 1 was significant due to the fact that the obtained X<sup>2</sup>-value (5.48) was greater than the critical X<sup>2</sup>-value (3.48) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. This implies that there is significant impact of significant impact of female entrepreneurial skills and poverty alleviation in rural communities. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

The result of the data analysis in table 2 was significant due to the fact that the obtained X<sup>2</sup>-value (4.87) was greater than the critical X<sup>2</sup>-value (3.48) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. This implies that there is significant impact of female entrepreneur's activities and creation of jobs opportunities in rural communities. The significance of the result caused the null hypothesis to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

## Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and findings, it is concluded that, there are various forms of female entrepreneurial activities in poverty alleviation activities in the study area, the different poverty alleviation measures in the study area was also seen influencing creation of employment and skills acquisitions of the populaces and the factors affecting the implementation of poverty alleviation measures in Ikot Abasi.

## Recommendations

- ❖ Entrepreneurship skill acquisition programme targeted at alleviating poverty should be directed more at the male segmented of the society. The reason is because, as the finding of the research suggest, men are generally seen as the bread winner of the family, and this reason propelled the men to succeed most often in entrepreneurship skill acquisition than their female counterpart. This is not to say that the women should be ignored completely in any scheme directed at poverty, as there is an increasing awareness among the women folk, that there is need for them to help in providing for the family and hence the slogan „ what a man can do, a woman can do better.
- ❖ Entrepreneurship skill acquisition programme should be pursued with vigor, as the study revealed that lack of it is the most important cause of poverty in the society. A man/woman with an income yielding skill is capable of liberating he/herself and the family from the scourge of poverty.
- ❖ The government should realize that society looks unto them to initiate skill acquisition programme. We the fact that skill acquisition programme can help alleviate poverty which is believed to be the major causes of most the social vices in the society, any effort aimed at alleviating poverty should be pursued with vigor by the government. Fighting the social vices is seen as attacking the symptoms while alleviating poverty through any means is seen as attacking the cause of the social vices.

## References

1. Ajakaiye, J. and Adeyeye, G. (2000) Perception of Capacity Building among Youths Involved in Vocational Skills Development. Journal of Social and Development Sciences Vol. 3 No. 6. 214-221. International Open Journal of Economics Vol. 1, No. 2, August



2013, PP: 14-23 Available online at <http://acascipub.com/Journals.php> 23.

2. Aku, J. Olisa, M. S. & Obiukwu, J.I. (1997) The Affluence of Poverty: A Critical Evaluation of Nigeria Poverty Reduction Programmes. *Journal of Economic and Social Research* Vol. 3 June, 2002
3. Baron, G. (2007) Perspective of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria. Report of the Conference on Empowerment, Gendering and Social Change in Africa and African in Diaspora. *Echo*, No. 19.4th Terms 1819
4. Collier, H. (2007) Non-formal Education Programmes and Poverty Reduction among Young Adults in Southern District, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Development Psychology* Vol.1 No1
5. Delmar, Y. (2000) Poverty in Africa. Belhaven Press, London.
6. Hill, I. and McGowan, S. (1999) Entrepreneurship Training and Education as Strategic Tools for Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria. *America International Journal of Contemporary Research* Vol. 2 No.1. 148-156
7. Kumar, O. Nzeneri, I.S. and Adekola, G., (2013) Indigenous and Sustainable Development In Africa: The Nigeria Case. Being a Paper Presented at the Fifth World Archeological Congress, Washington D.C., USA.
8. Lamidi, E.I (2006) Women Still Wallow in Poverty, UNFPA Report, THISDAY Newspaper, Tuesday, 29th October.
9. Obadan, E.O (1997) A Study of Youth Empowerment Scheme Of Niger State, Nigeria in Poverty Alleviation. *AU J.T.*, Vol.13 No.1. 47-52
10. Ogundele, X.V (2005) Vocational Skill Acquisition as a Tool for Poverty Alleviation and Unemployment Reduction in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State. Unpublished B.Sc Project, Department of Economics, Kogi State University Anyigba, Nigeria.
11. Ogwumike, J. (2002) Growth and Development. Macmillan Press, London Sixth Edition.
12. Olawamimo, U. (2011) Education as a strategy for empowering women for Sustainable Development. B.Ed. Project (Unpublished) Department of Adult Education and Extra Mural Studies, University of Nigeria, Ughelli.
13. Pillai, P. and Anna, D. (1990) Rural Development in Nigeria, Dynamics and Strategies. Awka: Mekslink Publishers.
14. Prabha, R. (2009) Adult Education and African Development in the Context of Globalization. DVV. Bonn. No. 65.
15. Ramadani, N.M., Omeje, L., Ofuebe, C. AND Obicheta, T.N. (2013) Adult Education: Principles and Programme Design. (Enlarged edition). Ekumax Company Ltd. 8 Awka Road, Onitsha Nigeria.
16. Robinson, (2001) Contributions of Adult Education Programmes to the Economic Development of Delta State. Adult Education in Nigeria. Vol. II. The Journal of the Nigerian National Council for Adult
17. World Bank (1990) The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh Post-Literacy and Continuing Education or human development project. Appraisal Document. January 25, 1999. Report No. 20914-BD. Washington DC.