



**NIGERIAN  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
JOURNAL**

UNIVERSITY OF BADA LIBRARY

**Volume 2  
ISSN 2360-7432  
June, 2014**

**NIGERIAN COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL**

**ISSN 2360-7432**

**JUNE, 2014**

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN LIBRARY

**Published by:  
Community Development Association  
of Nigeria (CDAN)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

1. Strategies for Ensuring Sustainable Participation of the Adults in Socio-Economic Development Programmes in Benin Municipality: Implications for Programme Planning and Implementation- Prince F.E.O. OMORUYI (Ph.D) and Sunday Eforma EHIANU 1
2. Poverty- Induced Environmental Degradation among Indigenous Women in Ondo State, Nigeria.- Oluwatoyin ALESE Ph.D 11
3. Community Capacity Building Approach to Improving Good Governance and Developmental Programmes at Local Government Institutions in Nigeria- Waliu N. BELLO, Ph.D 27
4. Effectiveness of Immunization Programme in Community Health Development in Selected Local Government Areas, Ogun State, Nigeria- E.A ADEWUYI, H.I KUYE & P.O.TITIOYE 37
5. Community Development as A Strategy For Management Environmental Disaster in Rural Nigeria- Samir HALLIRU, Abdulkadir ADAMU and Mohammed S.B. HASSAN 49
6. Road Infrastructure and Sustainable Community Development in Ajah-Lekki Area of Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria -Kofo ADEROGBA (Ph.D) 60
7. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Key Elements to Sustainable Rural Development in Nigeria -Dr. A. M. MOMOH and Uchechukwu Charles OSU 76
8. Capacity Building in the Context of Inclusive Education for Sustainable Development - Jonathan E. OGHENEKOHWO, Ph.D 93
9. Capacity Building and Skill Acquisition Programmes for Sustainable Community Development among the Corps Members in Ogun State - Abiodun Olufemi OLAWUNI, Ph.D 102
10. Attaining Sustainable Livelihood through Community Education and Rural Development in Nigeria- Deborah Yetunde ADEBOGA 114
11. Community Participation and Mobilization as Catalyst to Sustainable Environmental Disaster Management in Nigeria-Waliu N. BELLO, Ph.D 124
12. Micro Credit Scheme as Correlate of Poverty Alleviation among Traders in Ibadan Metropolitan City, Oyo State, Nigeria- I.Adekeye ABIONA, Ph. D & Olufemi Onweazu OKOJI, Ph. D 134



## GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: KEY ELEMENTS TO SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

**Dr. A. M. MOMOH**

Department of Adult Education  
Faculty of Education,  
University of Ibadan, Nigeria  
and

**Uchechukwu Charles OSU**

Department of Adult Education,  
Faculty of Education  
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

### ABSTRACT

*Women Empowerment and gender equality are key elements to sustainable rural development. Globally women empowerment has been a subject of discussion in both developed and developing countries when it comes to national and local development. This paper examined Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: Key Elements to Sustainable Rural development. The research was carried out in Akinyele Local Government Area in Oyo State. The target population for the study was rural women in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State. The purposive sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the 120 respondents. Questionnaire was designed to elicit responses from the subjects. The data collected were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation statistical tool. The findings show that there is a significant relationship between women empowerment, gender equality and sustainable rural development ( $r_{\text{tabulated}} = 0.178 < r_{\text{calculated}} = 0.301$  and  $p < 0.05$ , also Gender Equality and Sustainable Rural Development/Nation Building ( $r_{\text{tabulated}} = 0.424 < r_{\text{calculated}} = 0.501$  and  $P < 0.05$ .) In conclusion, this paper legitimises women's status and contributes immensely to the awareness of their major contributions in communities.*

**Key words:** Women Empowerment, gender equality, Sustainable Rural Development.

## INTRODUCTION

Women Empowerment and gender equality are key elements to sustainable rural development. Empowerment is a process of individual, social and national development. It is, generally, believed that the level of development in a particular country depends on the quality of the citizens. In Nigeria, there is the urgent need for the empowerment of citizens both male and female, in order to achieve the millennium development goals before 2015. Empowerment must be carried out at all level of government, most especially at the local level of government. Globally, women empowerment has been a subject of discussion in both developed and developing countries. Women empowerment and gender equality have, however, been viewed as the most important area of concentration when it comes to national and local development.

Empowerment have been said to be the bedrock of national development in Nigeria, especially, in the rural areas. Nigeria cannot maximize its natural and human resources without the adequate preparation for gender balance and women empowerment. For many years now in local communities in Nigeria, the female gender has been marginalized in terms of educational attainment, political participation and decision making that affects women. Gender refers to the identification of the sexes usually influenced by cultural factors like religion, politics social factors and education. In developmental discourses, gender, more

specially, refers to women or the female sex. Gender differentiation will therefore, involved a set of expectations of people's abilities and potentials days on their sex. According to Fafunwa (1974) as cited by Idowu (2011), the traditional roles of women in rural communities in Nigeria are mainly that of child bearing, housekeeping and the sustenance of agricultural activities. In fact, the evidence available showed that before the colonial administration in Nigeria, women in rural areas were generally accorded inferior status in the scheme of things. All her efforts were defined by and centered on her husband and children.

The traditional definition of women in relation to men has led to the gross underdevelopment of women in Nigeria. They bore the burden of food production for the entire population. They are also least benefited from the resources in their rural environment due to the limited or even no exposure, awareness and knowledge. ATRCW UPDATE (1989) noted that three quarters of the working hours of the world is utilized by women, half of the rural world's agricultural products are produced by women and in rural Nigeria 60-80 percent of the food crops are produced by Nigerian rural women. In terms of educational system, according to this source, rural women account for two thirds of the world's illiterate population. Before the United Nations world conference on rural women in 1975 and the subsequent



declaration of 1975-1985 as the decade for women, most Africa governments were really oblivious of the regressive effect of the backwardness of rural women on the overall national development.

Moreover, equality is a concept usually taken for granted, especially, in rural traditional communities when dealing with issues like age grade or other socio-cultural activities where they grouped equals together. In a democratic state like Nigeria, one of the cardinal principles is equality before the law which means that if A received a particular treatment before the law on a particular matter, B must receive the same treatment. Equality can also mean sameness, that is, one thing is the same as the other. Akinpelu (1981) as cited in Idowu (2011) noted that, if  $3 + 3 = 6$ , the sign of equity in the expression indicates that the figure on the right is perfectly the same as those on the left of the equation when put together. It is very doubtful whether this is applicable in human affairs, especially, when dealing with gender issues in which roles and expectations are assigned.

Women empowerment in Akinyele Local Government can be seen as the capacity of women to increase their self-reliant strategies through the inducement of education. The empowerment of Akinyele rural women has been recognized as a pre requisite for achieving effective and people-centered development and empowerment strategy.

In order to achieve equality through women empowerment in Akinyele local government, there is need to:

- a). increase the access of women in Akinyele to education, not just basic education but at the level that will enable them appropriate the resources in their environment and still contribute effectively to its development;
- b). improve on the quality of their achievement in relevant disciplines;
- c) encourage the women/girls to stay longer in school in order to acquire the necessary skills (retention/persistence); and
- d). accord those girls in similar treatment as much as possible in similar circumstance.

Simply put, empowering women in Akinyele Local Government through education implies that the women will be fully supported to join male counterparts in acquiring formal education and the appropriate skills that will enable them complete favourable in the job market or in the life market.

The United Nations Education and Cultural Association (UNECA) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFE, 2001), agree that education is necessary for the growth and development of every civilization. Nwaubani S.A. (2000) noted that tertiary and University education is the bedrock of women empowerment among the women and the best strategy to develop the potentials of the women is to expose them to quality education at the highest level



and sustainability in rural communities in their local areas in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the last few 10 years, there have been serious debates and discussion on empowerment at local or rural, both national and international levels. This is because the world has become a global market where the economic strength of one country depends largely on the other, thereby subjecting the world to economic interdependence. Despite all efforts made by the United Nations and other international and national organizations at promoting economic balance and sustainability in development activities in both Africa and Asia, empowerment is yet to manifest to its full capacity of social and economic transformation. Women in rural communities (both developed and developing countries) remain marginalized in terms of political, economic, and social participation. In Nigeria, these empowerment programmes have been limited to urban areas alone, therefore, more focus and attention should, however, be shifted from urban to rural empowerment, especially, for women emancipation in rural communities. The Nigerian economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS) has contributed a lot to women empowerment in rural communities. Nigeria has not been able to fully cover every part of the rural areas country in terms of rural women emancipation in some local communities. It is important to know that there are not enough empowerment programmes for men let alone women.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine women empowerment and gender equality as a veritable tool for sustainable rural development in Akinyele local government, Nigeria.

#### **Research Hypotheses**

- There is no significant relationship between women empowerment and gender equality and sustainable rural development in Akinyele Local Government.
- There is no significant relationship between women empowerment and nation building and sustainable rural development.
- There is no significant relationship between women gender equality and nation building and sustainable rural development.

### **Literature Review**

#### **The Concept of Women Empowerment**

Women have been described as mothers, sisters, wives, daughters, friends, confidants and the building blocks of a Nation. This means that women have critical role to play in Nation Building and Development Processes.

Of over 1.3 billion people who live in absolute poverty around the globe, 70 percent are women. For these women, poverty does not just mean scarcity and want. It means right denied, opportunities curtailed and voices silenced. Considering that women work two-thirds of the world's working hours, according to the United Nations Millennium Campaign to halve (stop) world poverty by the year 2015. The overwhelming majority of the



labour that sustains life – growing food, cooking, raising children, caring for the elderly, maintaining a house, hauling water – is done by women and this work is accorded low status and no pay. The ceaseless circle of labour rarely shows up in economic analysis of a society's production and value. Women earn only 10 percent of the world's income. Where women work for money, they may be limited to a set of jobs deemed suitable for women-invariably low-pay, low-status positions.

Karl (1995) remarks that long before the world became popular; women were speaking about gaining control over their lives, and participating in decisions that affected them in the home and community, and government and international development policies. The word (women empowerment) has entered the vocabulary of development agencies, and other "international organizations". In defining the term empowerment, Karl (1995) explains what the power connotes as:

- (i) Having control or gaining further control;
- ii) Having a say and being listened to;
- iii) Being able to define and create from a woman's perspective;
- iv) Being able to influence social choices and decisions affecting the whole society, and;
- v) Being recognized and respected as equal citizens and human beings with a contribution to make.

Women's empowerment could briefly be explained as the process of improving the human capital among women for effective

participation in sustainable development activities. This will make women become makers of development and history, not just receivers or objects of it.

Given that women were almost more than half of the world's population, their capacity building is crucial for holistic development. Women's empowerment could also be said to compromise building their capacity or making the best of the lives of women for governance and socio-economic advancement. It is obvious that access to functional literacy, information, credit facility, natural resources, productive skills and capital facilities constitute women empowerment.

Women own less than 1 percent of the world's property. Where laws or customs prevent women from owning land or other productive assets, from getting loans or credit, or from having the right to inheritance or to own their homes, they have no assets to leverage for economic stability and cannot invest in their own or their children's future. Women make up two-thirds of the estimated 876 million adults worldwide who cannot read or write; and girls make up 60 percent of the 77 million children not attending primary school. Education is among the most important drivers of human development: women who are educated have fewer children than those who are denied schooling (some studies correlate each additional year of education with a 10 percent drop in fertility).

They delay their first pregnancies, have healthier children (each additional year of schooling a woman has is



associated with a 5 to 10 percent decline in child deaths, according to the United Nations Population Fund) and are far more likely to send their own children to school. Yet where women do not have the discretionary income to invest in their own or their children's education, where girl's education is considered frivolous, and where girls are relied on to contribute labour to the household, they miss this unparalleled opportunity to develop their minds and spirits. Their countries suffer too: the World Bank estimates that nations in South Asia and Africa lose .5 to 1 percent growth in per-capita income per year compared to similar countries where children have greater access to quality, basic education. In many societies around the world, women never belong wholly to themselves; they are the property of others throughout their lives. Their physical well-being – health, security and bodily integrity – is often beyond their own control. Where women have no control over money, they cannot choose to get health care for themselves or their children, where a having a large number of children confers status on both men and women – indeed, where childbearing may be the only marker of value available to women – frequent pregnancy and labour can be deadly. Until women are accepted by men as equally human. Attempt to help women change their lives will necessarily always result in achievements that are limited in scope and longevity. Women alone cannot empower themselves, nor should we expect them to bear that burden. Men too

especially in their status as power holders in the family, community and formal government must act. Most recently, CARE has developed what we call the unifying framework to bring together the salient aspects of Poverty Eradication approaches. This framework is designed to help us with the thousands of CARE staffers around the globe and the people they serve consistently look beyond the immediate and most evident causes of poverty to three categories of causes that shape the lives of the poor. These are causes related to: basic material or human conditions; influence and social positions; and the structure of laws, norms and institutions that constitute the enabling environment in which an individual lives.

Studies on women empowerment have shown some definitional and interpretational similarities that are interesting to look into when trying to define women empowerment. Empowerment impose that an individual or a group hitherto lacked power or authority by circumstances, denial or default. The issue of women empowerment has become a part of popular debate (Olakunlehin and Ojo, 2006).

One of the similarities in the literature defining women empowerment is captured in the concept of women's decision making power as an indicator or women empowerment. Kabeer's (2001) dimension of resources, the dimension of decision-making agency reflects the capabilities women have to shape their live according to their own desire (Kabeer, 2001).



Another way in which empowerment is conceptualized is by referring to the importance of social inclusion (Malhora et al., 2002). Here, empowerment is to be obtained by the participation of women in the society and by, as Malhora, et al., 2002:4 states it: “the enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individuals and groups to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions which affect them.” Connected to the concept of social inclusion is the dimension of political and social awareness of women which explains part of the empowerment process.

Saraswathy et al (2008) opines that women empowerment is a process of women identifying their inner strength, opportunities for growth, and their role in reshaping their own destiny”. Also, women empowerment has frequently been termed a process of women gaining more access to a steady income and economic power or security (Malhotra et al., 2002).

Alcoff (1988), defines empowerment as access which women come to believe in their ability “to construct, we see as the continuing subordination of women by men in public and private spheres, supported by cultural messages of devaluation internalized, in varying degrees, by women. These messages form the basis women’s doubts about their power to shape their lives (Rowland-Serdar and Schwartz Shea, 1991).

## **Gender Equality and Sustainable Rural Development**

The World Health Organization data indicate that in Afganistan and Sierra Leone a woman’s lifetime chance of dying in childbirth is one in seven; in the United States it is one in 3, 418, and in Norway and Switzerland, one in 7,300. In any given year, 15 percent of all pregnant women will face a life threatening complication, and more than 500,000 – 99 percent of them in the developing world – will die. Some 130 million girls and women, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, have been subjected to genital cutting at the behest of their parents, and 2 million more face the blade every year, according to the United Nations Population Fund. Around the globe, home and community are not safe havens for a billion girls and women. At least one in three females on earth has been physically or sexually abused, often repeatedly and often has been physically or sexually abused, often repeatedly and often by a relative or acquaintance. *By the World Bank’s estimate, violence rivals cancer as a cause of morbidity and mortality for women of childbearing age.* Even within marriage, women may not be able to negotiate when and what type of sex to have, nor to protest their husbands’ multiple sex partners. Poverty and exclusion push some girls and women to engage in sex work, almost always the desperate, last choice of people without other choices. Further, the U.S. Department of State indicates that up to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders annually: 80 percent



of these are women and girls, and the majority is forced into the sex trade. And in the midst of conflict and natural disaster in countries around the world, women's risk of violence skyrockets. Systematic rape as a weapon of war has left millions of girls and women traumatized, forcibly impregnated, and/or HIV positive. These factors combined explain why today more women than men around the world are HIV positive. In sub Saharan Africa, more than twice as many young women as young men are living with HIV, according to the International Labour Organization.

In Lesotho, an old aged says, "A woman is the child of her father, her husband and her son." The constitution treats women as minors, incapable of making decisions... Within the law, households (that do not have a "permanent" male in them) do not exist, which makes women even more vulnerable. In Zambia, a Lenje man with many wives told CARE. "Women are like livestock," meaning many things. They can be bought and sold, as cattle can, and they are a productive asset, as cattle are. To this man, women were extremely important – his cattle certainly were – but they had the status of a commodity. In India, a CARE project working with adolescent girls noted that "they are often seen only as temporary people who will cease to be – at least for the father – once they have disappeared inside a marriage."

Which aspects of women's poverty, their lesser economic, legal and social status, are due to sex (the physical attributes and processes mandated by the cellular presence of XX or XY

chromosomes), and which to gender (The economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities that human societies have attached to being a woman or a man). Gender differences pattern our identities, attitudes, roles, relationships and resources more deeply and persistency than class, race or other social constructs. In all societies, including our own, sex and gender are so tightly linked that we have great difficulty disassociating them. Gender roles perpetuated over time and space are normalized; they come to seem as much the natural order as sex differences. Helping women and men uncover and uproot the profoundly unjust gender norms that keep so many women mired in poverty and benefit of dignity is surely CARE's most challenging undertaking to date.

Poor women become actors for change, able to analyze their own lives, make their own decisions and take their own actions. Women (and men) gain ability to act by building awareness, skills, knowledge, confidence and experience.

Structures change: Women and men, individually and collectively, challenge the routines, conventions, laws, family forms, kinship structures and taken for granted behaviours that shape their lives, the accepted forms of power and how these are perpetuated.

Relations change: Women and men form new relations with other social actors, form coalitions and develop mutual support in order to negotiate, be agents of change, alter structures and so realize rights, dignity and livelihood security.



Gender-based violence, which includes sexual, physical or psychological violence and harmful practices based on gender, is one of the most common human rights abuses in the world. It is also one of the least discussed and confronted issues

Before now, women are not given the chance to discover themselves and to be what they want to be. The general belief everywhere is that a woman's place is in her husband's home that is where they feel she can displace the entire God's given talents and that she has this belief that she cannot be useful in any other place but there. Most culture believed that training a woman was just a waste of time and resources and that's why when a woman is educated up to the primary level, she is asked to stop while her brother goes further to the higher institution. For example, NAFDAC, no one ever thought about its importance in our nation until a woman became the director. She was able to reveal the danger of fake drugs in our Nation. Ndi Okereke Onyuike of the Stock Market has been able to revolutionize the stock market for good. All these have been referenced in the case for the involvement of women in the leadership. We have to consider the issue of whether our men have satisfied our fundamental expectations of leadership. We have seen a leadership that cannot be said to be satisfactory, save one or two pop-ups of good ones like Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Anwar Sadat of Egypt Political perennialism (sit-tightest) abuse of power, violations of human rights, mismanagement of their economy, and

under development have been sordid realities of the past four decades when we have men in the saddle of power. The fact of an emerging spectrum of feminine leadership resources across the continent is no longer controvertible. Each country in Africa is birthing women professionals that possess requisite leadership potentials that can catapult the continent to the new heights. Gender equality presupposes giving a chance to a marginalized gender, in this case, women. The saddle of leadership is long overdue to be ceded to the feminine gender, *where we to eschew prejudice, bias chauvinism subjectivism and other less than wholesome oddities of the human nature, it would be obvious in no time how much progress would be made by this great continent in the area of good governance, infrastructural development, rule of law, economic stability and progress, health education e.g. Making concessions for the feminine gender to have a shot of leadership does not erode the leadership or leadership of men over them nor does it make a woman not to be a woman. Let the woman of Africa have chance at leadership so we can move forward. If you educate a woman, you educate a nation.*

The past three decades have witnessed a steadily increasing in awareness of the need to empower women through measures to increase social, economic and political equity, and broader access to fundamental human rights, improvement in nutrition, basic health and education. Along with awareness of the subordinate status of women has come the



concept of gender as an overarching socio-cultural variable, seen in relation to other factors, such as race, class, age and ethnicity. Gender is not synonymous with women, nor is it a zero-sum game implying loss for men; rather, it refers to both women and men, and to their status, relative to each other.

Gender equality refers to that stage of human social development at which the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals will not be determined by the fact of being born male or female, in other words, a stage when both men and women realize their full potential.

In recognition of the importance of establishing gender equality around the world, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was established as a separate fund within the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1984. At that time, the General Assembly instructed it to "ensure women's involvement with mainstream activities. The Platform of Action resulting from the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women expanded this concept, calling it "gender mainstreaming" i.e. the application of gender perspectives to all legal and social norms and standards, to all policy development, research, planning, advocacy, development, implementation and monitoring as a mandate for all member states.

In this way, the gender factor is no longer to be only a supplement to development but central to the practice of development. As a result of the Beijing conference and many years of work, more

than 100 countries announced new initiatives to improve the status of women. In 2000, Beijing conference further strengthened the application of the mainstreaming concept, and used it to highlight the need for more progress in reaching equality worldwide. In recent years, the Women Leaders Programme of the World Economic Forum has been focused on supporting the advancement of women to positions of leadership in society, and on promoting consideration of other issues affecting women's lives. Furthermore, for the past four years, the Forum's Global Competitiveness Reports have provided data on the qualitative aspects of women's participation in the workforce.

The advancement of women is an important strategic issue. Countries which do not capitalize on the full potential of one half of their societies are misallocating their human resources and compromising their competitive potential.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design to ascertain the impact of women empowerment and gender equality. This design was used because the researchers did not manipulate any of the variables of interest in the study. It also helped to determine the best channel to reach the target population in rural communities in Akinyele Local Government for the study.



## Population

The target population for this study is the rural women in Akinyele Local Government area of Oyo State.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting the rural communities in Akinyele Local Government area and all the participants. There are many rural wards and communities in the local government area. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting the following rural wards: Ikereku, Arulogun, Onidundu, Moniya, Ojoo, Ijaye and Iroko. 120 participants were used for the study; Ikereku-15 participants, Onidundu-15 participants, Arulogun-15 participants, Moniya-20 participants, Ijaye-20 participants, Ojoo-20 participants and Iroko-15 participants.

## Instrument

Primary information was collected through the use of structured questionnaire, interview and focus group

discussion (FGD) because most of the elderly rural women are illiterates.

## Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency count were used to summarize the selected socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Other statistical tools used in analyzing the data include Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

## Findings and Discussion

### Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between rural women empowerment and gender equality in Akinyele Local Government.

Where  $df = n - 2 = 120 - 2 = 118$ , 0.05 is standard  $r =$  Coefficient Correlation

Where  $P \leq 0.05$  - Sign. Relationship,

Where  $P \geq 0.05$  - No sign. Relationship

$r_{cal} =$  rcalculated

If the  $r_{tab} < r_{cal}$  = there is a significant relationship between the hypothesis.

The  $r_{tab} > r_{cal}$  = there is no significant relationship between the hypothesis

**Table 1: Correlation Analysis of Relationship between rural Women Empowerment and Gender Equality in Akinyele Local Government.**

	N	$\bar{X}$ mean	Df	$r_{tan}$	$r_{cal}$	$P_{value}$	Remark	Decision
Women Empowerment	120	20.06	11	0.17	0.50	0.001	Sig.	Reject Ho
Nation Building	120	17.30	8	8	1			



This table represents the correlation analysis between women empowerment and gender equality, testing for a significant relationship. This shows that  $r$ -tabulated 0.178 is less than  $r$ -calculated 0.501, therefore since the standard range of testing hypothesis is 0.01. Where  $P \leq 0.05$  – there is significant relationship and where  $P \geq 0.05$  – there is no significant relationship.

**Hypothesis 2:**

There is no significant relationship between women empowerment and nation building and sustainable rural development

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis between Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development**

	N	$\bar{X}$ mean	Df	$r_{tan}$	$r_{cal}$	P value	Remark	Decision
Women Empowerment	120	20.06	118	0.17	0.42	0.00	Sig.	Reject $H_0$
Nation Building	120	18.90						

This table above shows the correlation analysis between women empowerment and Sustainable Rural Development nation building. The analysis reveals that there is a significant relationship between women empowerment and sustainable rural development and nation building, because the  $r$ -tabulated is less than  $r$ -calculated therefore the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance (tabulated =

relationship. Since the  $r$ -tabulated is less than  $r$ -calculated, the null hypothesis is rejected; therefore, there is a significant relationship between women empowerment and gender equality. The null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance ( $r$ -tabulated = 0.178 <  $r$ -calculated = 0.501 and  $P < 0.05$ )

0.178 <  $r$ -calculated = 0.424 and  $P < 0.05$ . This means that there is a significant relationship between women empowerment and sustainable rural development and nation building.

**Hypothesis 3:** *There is no significant relationship between women gender equality and sustainable rural development nation building*

**Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Relationship between Gender Equality and Sustainable Rural Development in Nation Building**

	N	$\bar{X}$ mean	Df	$r_{tan}$	$r_{cal}$	P <sub>value</sub>	Remark	Decision
Women Empowerment	120	20.06	118	0.178	0.301	0.001	Sig.	Reject Ho
Nation Building	120	18.90						

This table shows the data correlation analysis testing for a significant relationship between Gender equality and Sustainable Rural Development in Nation Building. Our analysis indicates that the r-tabulated is less than the r-calculated therefore, the null hypothesis remains

rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between gender equality and Sustainable Rural Development in nation building. The null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance ( $r_{tabulated} = 0.301 < r_{calculated} = 0.501$  and  $P < 0.05$ ).

**Table 4: Means Score of Items based on Respondents**

ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN(X)	STD DEV.	REMARK
1	14(11.7%)	56(46.7%)	30(25%)	20(16.7%)	2.53	0.91	Agreed
2	18(15.0%)	58(48.3%)	33(27.5%)	11(9.2%)	2.69	0.84	Agreed
3	17(14.2%)	62(50.8%)	28(23.3%)	10(8.3%)	2.73	0.82	Agreed
4	29(24.2%)	73(60.8%)	12(10%)	4(3.3%)	2.07	0.69	Agreed
5	30(25.0%)	76(63.3%)	10(8.3%)	2(1.7%)	3.14	0.63	Agreed
6	51(42.5%)	64(45.0%)	12(10%)	1(0.8%)	3.13	0.69	Agreed
7	16(13.3%)	76(63.3%)	21(17.5%)	5(4.2%)	2.87	0.69	Agreed
8	14(11.7%)	77(64.2%)	23(19.2%)	4(3.3%)	2.88	0.66	Agreed
9	15(12.5%)	65(54.2%)	27(22.5%)	10(8.3%)	2.73	0.78	Agreed
10	12(10%)	70(58.3%)	34(28.3%)	3(2.5%)	2.76	0.66	Agreed
11	20(16.7%)	77(64.2%)	19(15.8%)	1(0.8%)	2.99	0.61	Agreed
12	36(30.0%)	73(60.8%)	8(6.7%)	2(1.7%)	3.20	0.63	Agreed
13	32(26.7%)	67(55.8%)	14(11.7%)	3(2.5%)	3.10	0.70	Agreed
14	13(10.8%)	57(47.5%)	36(30%)	12(10.0%)	2.60	0.82	Agreed
15	19(15.8%)	55(45.8%)	38(31.7%)	5(4.2%)	2.75	0.78	Agreed



16	19(15.8%)	46(38.3%)	43(35.8%)	10(8.3%)	2.63	0.86	Agreed
17	11(9.2%)	67(47.5%)	39(32.5%)	11(9.2%)	2.58	0.79	Agreed
18	17(14.2%)	72(60%)	25(20.8%)	2(1.7%)	2.90	0.65	Agreed
19	20(16.7%)	73(60.8%)	22(18.3%)	2(1.7%)	2.95	0.65	Agreed
20	24(20%)	63(62.5%)	27(22.5%)	5(4.2%)	2.89	0.77	Agreed

This table shows the mean score of the items based on response. After data analysis and interpretation, it was discovered that most of the respondents agreed that they are living comfortably in the area within their various communities because the mean score is 2.53 which is closer to 3, therefore, it can be concluded that major respondents agreed to item 1. In calculating the total number of respondents who SD, D, SA or Agree, the value is divided by the total number of questionnaire distributed. For example, in item 1, 14 respondents SA, 56 respondents A, 30 respondents SD, while only 20 D, calculating the percentages would be the total number of response from each item divided by total number of questionnaires  $14/120 \times 100 = 11.7\%$ . Using the same pattern of analysis, it was discovered that rural women in Akinyele Local Government are considered as second class citizens based on the mean value which is 2.69, the researchers realized that the respondents agreed that the plight of Akinyele Local Government rural women are decided by the ruling class using the mean score 2.73.

It was observed that the rural women in Akinyele Local Government are recognized politically, judging from the results of the mean score which is 3.07.

The observers also noticed that the respondents agreed that political parties in Akinyele Local Government recognized the impacts of rural women in the politics judging from the mean score 3.14. The respondents also agreed that rural women are powerful instruments in political parties campaigning and electioneering in the rural area with the mean score at 3.13. The respondents also agreed that the rural women of Akinyele Local Government contribute immensely to poverty alleviation in the rural areas with its mean score at 2.87

Furthermore, the respondents agreed that rural communities were liberated as a result of the untiring efforts of rural women in the local area with the mean score at 2.86. They also agreed that non-governmental organizations were formed by the rural women in the rural community of Akinyele Local Government with its mean score at 2.73. It was also agreed that women of Akinyele Local Government compete with rural men in all facets of human development with the mean score at 2.76. The respondents agreed that the Human and material development preoccupied the mind of all elite-rural women in the rural communities and wards of Akinyele Local Government with a mean score of 2.99.



The respondents agreed that rural women impacts were felt in Primary Health Care of the area with the mean score at 3.20. The respondents agreed that the rural communities in Akinyele Local Government appreciate the inputs of the rural women with the mean score of 3.10. The respondents agreed that the relevance of rural women-groups is noted at the national level with the mean score of 2.60. They also agreed that many rural women of Akinyele Local Government are politically inclined with a mean score of 2.75. The respondents agreed that rural women hold political offices with a mean score of 2.63.

The respondents also agreed that rural women of Akinyele Local Government who hold political offices perform better than their counterparts with the mean score of 2.58. The respondents further agreed that rural women are ready to engage in crucial decision making at all stages of governance judging from the mean score of 2.90. They agreed that there is a strong and cordial relationship among different rural women associations in the Local Government with the total mean score of 2.95.

Finally, it was agreed that the respondents are key factors in sustainable rural development and integration of nation building with a mean score of 2.89. It is important to know that rural women's empowerment and gender equality are key elements in sustaining rural development and nation building in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

This paper upholds women's status and contributes to the awareness of their major contributions in the communities. This study also significantly showed that women have been the unrecognized cornerstones of many rural economies, especially, those in the rural communities. Besides their works on the farm, women in are involved in various biological, social, cultural and economic activities that contribute significantly to the wellbeing of their households and communities.

In Akinyele Local Government, family members, generally, expect women to play multi-faceted roles based on their experience and these women have a sense of moral obligation to assume such roles. They are described as generous, patient, tolerant and committed to the wellbeing of family members, especially, young children and the environment. It was noted that women build and strengthen communities; stabilize the future of younger generation, and are excellent source of providing cultural identity and often assume responsibility for the children within their communities. Moreover, they pass on historical values and understand the community better and are best described relevant components to child and family welfare. Consequently, if community welfare is to be promoted, role of women should not be disregarded. Women's economic empowerment; political voice, participation and leadership; ending violence against women and girls; and engaging women and women's rights fully in national



development planning and budgeting and in peace and post-conflict processes are important. This is good for the quality of decision-making, and it is good for democratization. Attention to women's needs in recovery resources such as access to a departed spouse's land and property can help to speed economic recovery. Conflicts, like any crisis, produce a surge

of female-headed households. If these women have no livelihoods, they are pushed into low-reward, high-risk work, deepening their poverty. With some degree of economic security, they are faster to invest in child welfare and education, faster to build food security, and faster to rebuild rural economies.

## REFERENCE

Idowu B.A (2011): *"Impact of Women Empowerment and Gender Equality to Nation Building"*

Olakunlehin and Ojo, (2006): "Discourses on Women's Empowerment in Nigeria"

Kabeer, N. (2001): "Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment." In discussing women's Empowerment Theory and practice: Stockholm: Novum Grafiska AB.

Kabeer, Naila, Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals: A handbook for policy-makers and other stakeholders, 2003; see also UNIFEM, Progress of the World's Women 2005: Women, Work and Poverty.

Rowland-Serdar and Schwarts Shea, (1991). Gender and Equity Issues in Liquid Biofuels Production:

Minimizing the Risks to Maximize the Opportunities. FAO, 2008.

The United Nations entity for gender equity and the empowerment of women: women's political participation: information retrieved from Google on the 3/28/2011. 10:49 AM

Malhora et al., (2002). "Women's rights and the Millennium Development Goals Action Aid", (2008): Action Aids calculations using 2007 UN Millennium Development Goals Report, New York, 2007.

UNDP. "Innovative Approaches to Promotion Women's Economic Empowerment: Paper for the Partnership Meeting on the MDG3 Global Call to Action", 2008.

UNICEF, "Millennium Development Goals: 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women,"

<http://www.UNICEF.org/mdg/gender.html>  
ork: United Nations, 2007.

United Nations, "The Millennium Development Goals' Report 2008.

Women, Education and Empowerment: Pathways towards Autonomy edited by Carolyn Medel Anonuevo Report of the International Seminar held at UIE, Hamburg, 27 January – 2 February 1993, with contributions from: Namtip Aksornkool, Anita Dighe, Jenny Horsmann.

Women empowerment in Nigeria: Problems, prospects and implications for counseling by Dr. Yahaya, a. Lasiele Department of guidance and counseling University of Ilorin, Ilorin (1999).

"We are all humans": Identity and power in gender relations, Drink water, M. CARE 2005.

Nwaubani (2000), "Focus on Women and Development: Improving women's health and girl's education is key to reducing poverty".

World bank, (1993)." The benefits of education for women." Human Resources Development and Operational Policy Dissemination notes. No. 2 March.

World Bank, (2003). World development indicators. Washington.

World Bank, (2004). World development indicators. Washington.

World economic forum, (2004). The global competitiveness report, 2004 – 2005. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.