

**EVALUATION OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN WOMEN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

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ABSTRACT

Women entrepreneurship in economic development of any nation has been documented for its significant contribution. This means that the neglect of women in the development process constitutes a human waste. The increased role of women in economic development had spurred the government in developing policies on women development. However, several studies have discovered that women performance was still low specifically in the small and micro scale industries. Problems like low productivity, high rates of business failures, and no access to credit among others had hindered their growth. In light of this, the study examined the policy implementation of the two programs created to mobilize women on entrepreneurship development. It attempted to determine if the programs have succeeded in empowering women economically. It also aimed to uncover the possible implementation gap problems and determine the extent of which these gaps have affected the effectiveness of the policy implementation.

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. The subjects of the study who were members of the programs were selected by random sampling method. A total of one hundred fifty respondents were interviewed with the aid of predetermined question. The questionnaire was designed to ferret information using the Women Equality Empowerment Framework. This was to determine the level of development impacted by the programs. Statements were developed to operationalized development into welfare, access, conscientization, participation, and control. These were measured by a 5-point scale method. The variables were described and highlighted using descriptive analysis.

The results showed that despite some constraints in the implementation due to implementation gap, there was an average impact of the programs on women development. Welfare like housing, clothing and food were average. Access to land was also average, but access to credit, services were low. However, the respondents had high access to their own labor. It was further revealed that the programs had impacted highly on the ability of the respondents to relate themselves with the society and that their participations to group activities had increased. Although a high result was revealed in conscientization level, their low level of control over the resources might affect their involvement because of a gap that exists between efforts and rewards. It is therefore imperative that overcoming gender inequality must be a high priority in policy development concerning women.

INTRODUCTION

One of the key factors in determining the success of development is the status and position of women in the society. This means that the neglect of women in the development process of any country constitutes a human resource waste. In this premise, it will be a disservice for any country to ignore its women population in its development efforts. The task before any government, therefore, should be that of moving steadily and firmly in the direction of economic development by involving women. Faleye (1999) stressed that women's development is not nearly about reducing poverty by increasing productivity, but also about women's liberation and empowerment.

True development means the development in the three categories of a woman. These are individual, social, and economic development (Rodney, 1972). Individual development means increased skills and capability, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well being. Increasing capacity connotes social development, while economic development is determined by the increased capacity of the members of a society in dealing with their environment. This emphasis means that development at the individual stage subsumes both the social and economic categories of development. Development is dynamic and therefore assumes a continuous transformation process and a movement towards better and improved conditions, locally and internationally.

In Africa, women constitute about 50 percent of the population and account for about 60 to 80 percent of the agricultural production. Therefore, for a meaningful development to take place, women development must not be overlooked. In Nigeria, women actively played a meaningful role in the industrialization process of the country. The role of women in social and economic development specifically in the small and micro enterprises was found to be primal in

the economic development of their communities. Their potentials have spurred the government in devising policies to stimulate the industrial sector specifically in the development of indigenous technology. Accordingly, the government has developed trade and industrial policies that will foster industrial development and increase production of manufactured goods in the country. Majority of these policies were created for the informal sector. For instance, the government has formulated policies introducing the Better Life Program (BLP) to improve the conditions of the rural women and the Family Support Program (FSP) to improve the fortune of the family and the condition of women in general.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Better Life Program came into existence in 1987 and later launched in all states and local areas of the nation aimed at mobilizing women for resource productivity. The primal objective of this program was to sensitize the government and indeed private organizations to the useful role that women could play in national development. The declaration of International Year of the Family by the United Nation in 1994, as a result of global economic and social upheaval, gave insight into the conception of the Family Support Program, which was predominantly in favor of women whether they are in the rural or in the urban area. This program aimed to improve and sustain family cohesion through promotion of social and economic well being of the Nigerian family. These programs were introduced with the purpose of stimulating and motivating women towards achieving a better life and higher standard of life and good family life of women specifically the entrepreneurs in the small and micro scale industries. In line with these programs, the policy is supported with other fiscal and monetary policies geared to making efficient use of resources, mobilizing domestic savings for investment, and utilization of raw materials among others.

However, observation showed that the fortune of women in Nigeria has not been considerably improved in spite of these programs. According to Aina (1993), there have been complaints about the implementation of the two projects. Ogolo (1997) in her study concluded that the BLP and FSP programs had not really accomplished much. She referred to the program as merely publicity –grabbing gimmick, which is better known for its manner than for its matter. This was predicated by Faleye (1999) in his study. Faleye pointed out the weaknesses in the programs. He revealed that the rural women and the family unit did not feel the impact of the programs despite the propaganda through mass media. This is not to say that nothing positive came out of the program. Aina (1993) reported an increase in the number of women cooperatives from 413 at the inception of BLP to 9, 422 by 1991. Ogolo (1997) also highlighted the social awareness among rural women through intensive public enlightenment campaigns organized by the programs.

Several studies discovered further that women engaged in the small and micro scale of the industrial sector were still striving to grow and were still bombarded with problems. These problems include high rates of business failures, low productivity; and no access to capital, credit, and labor among others. It was also noted that the policies introducing economic enhancement programs were gender-blind. It was also observed that women were not explicitly included in the programs. Although it was evident that women were found to have been engaged in small scale business, a lot of constraints have hindered their economic participation. In light of this, the study investigated and evaluated the implementation of the programs to determine their impact on women entrepreneurship development, that is, how far the programs have succeeded in achieving their primal objectives of empowering the women involved in the programs, both economically and socially. It attempted to uncover the possible implementation gap problems

and determine the extent of which these gaps have affected the effectiveness of the policy implementation.

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Policy implementation is mainly the activities that are carried out in the light of established policies. Egonmwan (1991) was of the view that implementation refers to the process of converting inputs such as financial, material, technical, human into outputs – goods and services. He further described it as the stage where the earlier preparation and designs, plans and analyses are tested in the harsh light of reality. Policy implementation has been described as one major problem confronting developing countries such as Nigeria. The implementation problem in developing countries is the problem of a widening gap between intentions and results. A manifestation of implementation gap is the phenomenon of the rich getting richer while the poor are getting poorer in spite of avowed stated policy goal of elimination of poverty and equality of access to the basic needs of life. Implementation gap also manifests in the widening of the distance between stated policy goal and the realization of such planned goals. (Egonmwan 1991).

Boserup (1970) opined that development programs in developing countries tended not to be effectual or productive because planners had failed to understand gender inequalities. Development can be viewed as empowerment, the liberation of women. Development is not complete without the reduction of poverty through increasing productivity. However, to achieve a high level of empowerment, structural inequality in the society should be addressed. Therefore, for the empowerment of women, there must be women's collective mobilization to overcome particular instances of institutionalized gender discrimination.

Empowerment is a process aimed at consolidating, maintaining or changing the nature and distribution of power in a particular cultural context. The process is rarely linear because it

takes twists and turns. It includes both resistance and consent, and ebbs and flows as groups with different relations to the structures and sources of power come into conflict (Morgen and Bookman, 1988). Smith (1996) considers empowerment to be a process that can only begin in a climate in which there are high expectations and where everyone feels respected and valued and where people will offer their best at all times. The concept of empowerment ranges from encouraging people to play a more active role in their work through involving them in taking responsibility to enabling them to make more and bigger decisions without having to refer to someone higher in position. Similarly, empowerment is seen as an expansion of freedom of choice and actions which means an increase in one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affect one's life (World Bank, 2003). In other words, focusing on how women have to be empowered economically and socially, policy implementation must stem from the framework on the Women's Equality and Empowerment Framework (WEEF), which looks at all levels of equality from the perspectives of welfare, access, conscientization, participation, and control (Ostrom, 1974).

Women's Equality and Empowerment are ladders of equality identifying the five levels of empowerment for women to advance towards equal status with men. The higher the levels of equality automatically mean high levels of development and empowerment. The lowest level is the welfare level, while the highest is the control level. Welfare is the level of material resources that females have relative to males in such areas like nutritional status, food supply, and income. Women are seen here more as passive recipients of welfare benefits. The gender gap can be identified through the disparity between males and females on indicators of nutritional status, mortality rates among others. Women's empowerment cannot highly take place at this level because an attempt to improve welfare level will entail access to resources. Access is the

restricted access to the resources of production available in the society results in women's lower level of productivity. These include land, credit, labor, and services. Empowerment means that women are made aware of the differential situation and encouraged to take actions for gaining access to their fair and equal share of the various resources made available within the household and within the wider system of state provision. When there is an attempt by women to overcome the obstacles to access, it means that they have confronted the systematic discrimination, which can be addressed only through the empowerment process to conscientization.

Conscientization refers to the gender gap as a belief gap. The belief that women's lower socio-economic position, and the traditional gender division of labor is a part of natural order. So empowering women, therefore, implies the sensitization to such beliefs and practices and their rejection. It also means that women's subordination is not part of the natural order of things but is imposed by a system of discrimination, which is socially constructed and which can be altered. The realization by women that their problems do not derive so much from their own personal inadequacies, but rather by institutionalized discrimination against women and girls helps to bridge the gender gap caused by inequality.

Participation refers to the participation of women in various positions. However, women participation in the developing countries is very marginal. In terms of gender gap, women's participation is the visible and obvious phenomenon. Participation means that women equally with men, are actively involved in the development process. This includes equal participation in the decision making process as well as in development projects; particularly the projects that affected their direct community. This could mean that women would be adequately represented in a development project in the area of needs assessment, project planning, management, implementation, and evaluation. Equality of participation means involving women from the

community affected by the project and involving them in the same proportion in decision making as their proportion in the community at large. the need to effectively involve the target beneficiaries in the direct projects can be likened to the belief of the public choice theorists which give room for polycentric structure of administration by which people will be able to contribute to decisions that affect their lives.

Control means a balance of power between men and women, so that neither is in a position to dominate. It means that women have power alongside man to influence their destiny and that of the society. Women's increased participation at the decision making level can only be said to lead to their increased development and empowerment if such participation enables them to achieve increased control over factors of production, access to resources and the distribution of benefits. In a situation where the wife makes the effort but the husband collects the benefits, there is a serious gender gap between effort and reward.

Following the above premise, at what level can one say then that a woman is empowered. Using the analytic framework for evaluation, the issue of women empowerment from the perspective of the process overcoming gender inequality through the 5 levels (ladders) of equality would show that the lowest level of women empowerment is attained when equality gap between man and woman is bridged at the level of welfare. Access, which is the next level, implies access to land, loan facilities, labor services, opportunities, and to use own labor. In this case, there is no doubt that empowerment will improve or better still, guarantee better and steady income. In conscientization, the woman is being conscious of her environment, which cannot be done without the individual socializing with the people in the environment. In the participation level, women equally with men, are actively involved in the development process and when there is increased control over the factors of production and when there is a balance of power between

women and men, so that neither a position of dominance. This level of empowerment enables women to actualize themselves. Self-actualization produces such satisfaction as power, prestige, status, and self-confidence. It is at this level at which women feel fulfilled.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Osun-State, Nigeria. The state comprised three Senatorial Districts, namely Osum East, Osun West, and Osun Central. The subjects of the study were selected from each of the senatorial districts using the random sampling technique. The selected communities were Ile-Ogbo Iperindo, and Ilobu. One hundred and fifty women respondents that participated in the programs were identified in the three communities with the assistance of officials from the Ministry of Information and Women Affairs in the state that were stationed in the various local government as project officers.

The study used both primary and secondary sources of data. Structured interview with the aid of predetermined set of questions (questionnaires) were used to collect the pertinent primary information. The interview schedule was supported by focus group discussion among the selected fifty women groups that participated in the two programs using the double sampling technique. There were three focus group discussions held in each of the three communities. Selection of groups was based on age and education level. The focus group discussion was carried out before the interview schedule as an interactive measure apart from eliciting deeper issues relevant to the variables of the study.

The dependent variable development of women entrepreneurs was operationalized using women's equality and empowerment framework from the perspectives of welfare, access, conscientization, participation and control. Statements were developed in each category addressing the objectives of the programs to measure success of implementation employing the

5-point scaling method. The independent variables, which were the two programs were measured using the objectives set for the policies by Liker scale method. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe and highlight the variables of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The results in Table 1 show that majority (42%) of the respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age. About 23 percent were above 50 years of age and about 17 percent were between 40 and 49 years. The results also show that majority (89%) of the respondents were married and about 51 percent of them had more than four children, while 26 percent had 3 children. The data can be inferred that the respondents are still at the working age and the married status of the respondents connotes high level of responsibility. Having more than 4 children indicates the necessity of having additional income. This explains the need in participating in the program. The data also revealed that 37 percent had attained higher than secondary level of education, while primary was the lowest level attained by the respondents, which shows that the programs were not left to the illiterates along, neither left in the hands of those with only certificates.

Assessment of Programs on Welfare

The programs aim was to enhance the economic standards of women entrepreneurs in the small and micro scale industries and empower them economically. The results in Table 2 revealed that the programs had averagely impacted their welfare with a grand mean score of 3.329. Furthermore, the programs had made positive impact on the women health care with an average mean score of 3.840. The data also showed that nutritional status, clothing, and housing were affected averagely with mean scores of 3.380, 3.480, and 3.013 respectively. It was further

revealed that income had low mean score (2.933). In fact, it was revealed that 19 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not feel the impact of the programs on their income at all. Also, about 13 percent indicated the same in housing that the programs did not have impact at all.

Assessment of Programs on Access

Facilities refer to land, credit, labor, services and utilization of own labor. The results in Table 3 showed that the respondents had an average access to facilities with a grand mean score of 3.136. The results further showed that the respondents had high access to own labor (4.020), and average access on service (3.140). The access to land (2.78), credit (2.860), and labor (2.880) were revealed to have quite a bit impacted by the programs. These are important resources in the process of production and the absence of these resources has a significant effect on the capacity of the women to contribute economically. It was revealed that 19 percent of the respondents had the opinion that credit facility did not affect their capacity to contribute economically. The results can also be inferred that if these facilities are available to them, they could positively contribute socially and economically, hence they have the access to their own labor. However, the lack of access by some of the respondents was due to the low level in some of the variables in the welfare level of development like the housing and the income.

Assessment of Programs on Conscientization

The data in Table 4 revealed that there was high awareness of the respondents about their environment. This was indicated by the grand mean score of 4.038. This result indicated that the programs had high (4.267) influence on the improvement of their attitude toward self. The respondents were also conscious on the beliefs and practices injurious to their development as well as the understanding on the negative beliefs and practices women indicated by almost high

mean scores of 3.297 and 3.920 respectively. It can be inferred from these results that the programs had sensitized and improved their level of awareness about their selves and that of the environment, which are significant to the development of personality. Once women have the realization of their problems especially the discrimination against women, this will help the bridge the gender gap caused by inequality. The results can be inferred that there would be a high level of development among women once the programs are modified specifically on variables that concern overcoming gender inequality, hence development starts from the personality of an individual.

Assessment of Programs on Participation

The data revealed the participation of women was enhanced indicated by the grand mean score of 4.028, which is high. The participation of women means involving themselves into any development process in the community. It could be in decision making or in development projects. Their involvement has to do with the extent of encouragement by their male counterparts like the husband or the father. The support of the male figure in the family influences their participation. This was shown in Table 5, indicating a high (4.000) encouragement by the husband. Hence the evaluation scale used indicates that once conscientization level is high, the understanding of environment is also high. If this happens, there is gender equality at home. This means that the women would be able to gain the understanding of the husbands, which indicates that men are not impediment to their participation. This would likely build self-confidence among women to face the challenges of the environment.

Assessment of Programs on Control

Development will not take place, neither empowerment through policies and programs if one has no control over resources. An empowerment that is devoid of control cannot be tagged real empowerment. The study revealed that control over possession was averagely (3.396) influenced as shown in Table 6. The control over their labor recorded an average mean score of 3.407. Certainly, even if respondents have high access over their own labor but do not have control over it, development will not take place. Equality of control means a balance of power between man and a woman, so that neither is in a position to dominate. It means women have power alongside man to influence their destiny and that of the society. There is increased in development and empowerment if such participation enables them to achieved increased control over the factors of production, access to resources and the distribution of benefits.

Constrains of Policy Implementation.

In the focus group discussion held, it was revealed that sound policies were formulated but failed at the level of implementation. Problems like inadequate definition of goals, over-ambitious policy goals, choice of inappropriate organizational structure in implementation of policies, lack of continuity in commitment to policy, lack of monitoring process, inadequate manpower planning, and non-inclusion of the target groups in the determination of policy were revealed to have contributed to failure of the policy implementation. Corruption was also revealed to be one of these problems.

Inadequate definition of goals makes a policy to lack clarity, internal consistency and compatibility with other policy goals. The successful implementation of a poly bedeviled with inadequacies becomes problematic. Over ambitious policy goals in policy formulation are muddled in ideological context that may confuse the actual problems involved in implementing them. Due to scope and comprehensiveness such policies may experience implementation

bottlenecks arising from any or combination of the lack of appropriate technology for implementation; inadequate human and material resources; over-stretching of available resources for maximum visibility and impact at the end of which nothing concrete may be achieved. The lack of continuity in commitment to policy, usually when there is instability in government, it results in unstable priorities particularly in Nigeria; where change of executive power always resulted to change of priorities and objectives. A serious problem is that of bribery and corruption which has contributed greatly to the failure of policy implementation. When huge amounts of money will get stolen by officers in charge of implementation, the problem is bound to arise.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Although the programs had some constraints in the implementation due to implementation gap arising from problems like in adequate monitoring process, inadequate manpower planning, corruption and non inclusion of target groups in the determination of projects to be established for them, the two programs have succeeded averagely in empowering women in all the five areas under the equality/empowerment framework. The women that participated in the programs were empowered economically because they were able to control their financial resources thus strengthening their income standing.

. The programs have impacted more on their involvement in many activities and had exposed them to the environment, which have great magnitude of changing their abilities to understand their selves as well as their relations to the society. The programs had improved women to develop positive attitude forwards themselves. They had been sensitized to the injurious beliefs and practices against the development of women. In spite of the inadequacies the programs have succeeded in achieving their objective primarily to sensitize women

economically. However, despite the high conscientization level of the women, their average control level over the resources could significantly retard their motivation in engaging themselves to group and societal issues around them because of a gap that exists between efforts and rewards. It is therefore imperative that any aim of developing policy addressing women, there exist a need to significantly consider overcoming gender inequality so that women will have power alongside men to influence their society.

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Table 1: Distribution of respondents on demographic characteristics

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age:	Below 30	22	14.7
	30 – 39	64	42.7
	40 – 49	32	21.3
	Above 50	32	21.3
Total		150	100.0
Marital Status:	Single	4	2.6
	Married	133	88.7
	Divorced	6	4.0
	Widow	7	4.7
Total		150	100.0
Number of children:	One	3	2.0
	Two	25	16.6
	Three	46	30.7
	More than four	76	50.7
Total		150	100.0
Educational level:	Primary	35	23.3
	Modern	31	20.7
	Secondary	28	18.7
	Others	56	37.3
Total		150	100.0

Source: Survey 2004

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the perceived impact of the programs on welfare

Scores	5		4		3		2		1		Mean Score
	Very High		High		Average		Quite a Bit		Not at All		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Food intake	12	8.0	79	52.7	21	14.0	30	20.0	8	5.3	3.380
Clothing	20	13.3	67	44.7	31	20.7	29	19.3	3	2.0	3.480
Housing	15	6.0	45	30.0	36	24.0	35	23.3	19	12.7	3.013
Income	9	6.0	51	34.0	40	26.7	21	14.0	29	19.3	2.993
Health	43	28.7	54	36.0	42	28.0	8	5.3	3	2.0	3.840
Grand mean score											3.341

Source = Field 2004

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the perceived impact of the programs on access

Score	5		4		3		2		1		Mean Score
Variables	Very High		High		Average		Quite a Bit		Not at All		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Improved Access to land	19	12.6	25	16.7	26	17.3	64	42.7	16	10.7	2.780
Improved Access to credit facilities	1	0.7	56	44.0	22	14.6	33	22.0	28	18.7	2.860
Improved Access to labor	7	4.7	45	34.0	27	18.0	43	31.3	18	12.0	2.880
Improved Access to services	21	14.0	48	32.0	28	18.7	37	24.6	16	10.7	3.140
Improved opportunities to utilize own labor for own benefit.	49	32.7	39	26.0	28	18.7	24	16.0	10	6.6	4.020
Grand Mean Score											3.136

Source: Survey 2005

Table 4: Distribution of respondents on the perceived impact of the programs on conscientization

Score	5		4		3		2		1		Mean Score
Variables	Very high		High		Average		Quite a Bit		Not at All		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Being conscious of the beliefs and practices injurious to development.	50	33.3	54	36.0	34	22.7	9	6.0	3	2.0	3.927
Rejection of the negative beliefs and practices against women.	55	36.7	42	28.0	43	28.7	6	4.0	4	2.6	3.920
Improvement of attitude to self.	78	52.0	45	30.0	19	12.7	5	3.3	3	2.0	4.267
Grand mean score											4.038

Source: Survey 2005

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the perceived impact of the programs on participation

Score	5		4		3		2		1		Mean Score
Variables	Very High	F %	High	F %	Average	F %	Quite a Bit	F %	Not at All	F %	
To what extent have the programmes encouraged your economic participation.	70	46.6	40	26.7	33	22.1	4	2.6	3	2.0	4.133
To what extent did you enjoy the support of your husband as regards to economic participation	60	40.0	44	29.3	34	22.7	10	6.7	2	1.3	4.000
To what extent did you enjoy your father's support as regards to economic participation.	43	28.7	42	28.0	52	34.6	7	7.4	6	4.0	3.272
Since your participation in the BLP and FSP projects, to what extent have you taken part in community activities.	70	46.6	51	34.0	27	18.0	1	0.7	1	0.7	4.253
Grand Mean Score											3.914

Source: Survey 2004

Table 6: Distribution of respondents on the perceived impact of the programs on control

Score	5		4		3		2		1		Mean Score
	Very High		High		Average		Quite a Bit		Not at All		
Statements	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
To what extent does your husband not control your labor.	22	14.7	55	36.7	45	30.0	18	12.0	10	6.6	3.407
To what extent has your cash income increased lately as a result of BLP & FSP projects.	19	12.7	60	40.0	35	23.3	27	18.0	9	6.0	3.353
To what extent does your husband not control your increased finance.	17	11.4	54	36.0	36	24.0	32	21.3	11	7.3	3.227
To what extent has your standard of living and that of your children improved as a result of increased cash income.	21	14.0	78	52.0	30	20.0	14	9.3	7	4.7	3.613
To what extent do you feel not dominated by your husband	22	14.7	42	28.0	64	42.7	11	7.3	11	7.3	3.400 3.380
											3.396

Source: Field 2004