The Contribution of Female Entrepreneurship to the Socio-Economic Activities of Nigeria

Sintiki Magaji Akpojiyovwi[1], Isah Alhaji Lawal[2] & Esther Dupe Mathew[3]
[1 &2]Department of Business Administration, Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna, Nigeria [3]Department of Office Technology & Management, Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna, Nigeria
Corresponding Author's Email: uniqueauwal2010@gmail.com
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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of female entrepreneurship on economic activities in Nigeria. Its core objectives were to examine the motivating factors behind women's entry into entrepreneurship and to determine the extent to which their business activities drive economic advancement. The theoretical basis was developed through a systematic review of existing scholarly works on the topic. A survey research design was adopted. The study population comprised 2,520 female entrepreneurs drawn from south-east Nigeria, with a sample size of 553 computed using Freund and Williams' formula. Proportional allocation using Bowler's method was applied to distribute respondents across five south-eastern states, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. Data were gathered through structured questionnaires administered to the selected respondents. Face validity was used to confirm the content validity of the instrument, while reliability was established through the test-retest approach. Analytical tools including Pearson Correlation, Kendall's Tau, Spearman Rho, and multiple regression analysis were employed in data analysis. Findings revealed that limited access to capital significantly impedes female entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The motivational drivers propelling women into business ownership demonstrated a meaningful positive connection with economic growth. Government support, while positive, did not yield statistically significant effects on wealth creation. The study concluded that a positive relationship exists between female entrepreneurship and economic advancement. It therefore recommends that government should actively facilitate access to affordable financing for women entrepreneurs by directing deposit money banks to extend interest-free loans to qualifying female-owned enterprises.

Keywords: Female entrepreneurship, venture creation, wealth generation, access to credit, economic growth and activities

1. Introduction

Nigeria's educational institutions, universities, polytechnics, and monotechnics, have largely produced graduates who remain dependent on formal employment rather than becoming generators of their own economic opportunities. As a result, a significant proportion of graduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions remain jobless, largely because their training emphasises theoretical knowledge at the expense of practical, self-sustaining competencies. This reality underscores the urgent need for women, who constitute over 40 percent of the national population, to engage in productive economic activities rather than remain on the margins of the labour market (Galbraith, 2019). Accordingly, entrepreneurship education within Nigerian higher institutions has become increasingly relevant, mirroring practices in more economically advanced nations. Such education fosters national economic growth through job creation, market development, industrialisation, and overall productivity improvements (Jahanshahi, 2019).

Africa harbours significant untapped potential in its female population. An increase in women establishing new businesses is widely regarded as a catalyst for sustained growth and inclusive development (GEM, 2020). Beyond their economic contributions, women perform a wide range of societal roles, from unpaid domestic and caregiving responsibilities to active involvement in income-generating activities at the community level (UNIDO, 2021).

Jeminiwa (2022) argues that women are central to economic growth and development, given their dominance in the non-monetised sector, subsistence farming, child-rearing, and household management, as well as their active participation in the formal economy through trade and wages.

The Abuja Declaration on Participatory Development affirms that genuine and lasting development can only be realised through the full and active participation of women. It is widely acknowledged that women account for up to 65 percent of the total population (Iheduru, 2012; Asiwaju, 2018). Excluding them from development frameworks amounts to a significant squandering of human capital.

The challenges confronting female entrepreneurs in Nigeria have attracted limited scholarly and policy attention (Brush, 2022). There remains a shortage of systematic knowledge regarding their representation among micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) owners, the risks they encounter, the networking avenues available to them, and their competitive strengths. In the Nigerian context, women occupy a pivotal position in both economic and socio-cultural activities. Against this background, the present study seeks to: (i) explore the relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic activities, and (ii) assess the degree to which women's entrepreneurial activities shape Nigeria's developmental trajectory.

The study is guided by the following specific objectives:

- To examine the motivational factors driving female entrepreneurs and their linkage to economic activities in Nigeria.
- To assess the impact of new ventures by female entrepreneurs on environmental sustainability and the socio-economic development of Nigeria.
- To evaluate the government's role in supporting female-led enterprises for wealth generation in Nigeria.
- To identify the barriers confronting female entrepreneurs in Nigeria and propose viable solutions alongside policy recommendations to advance female entrepreneurship.

The following hypotheses are put forward for empirical validation:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria.

H_1: There is a significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic activities in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

This section synthesises scholarly work relevant to the research and provides an overview of previous studies on female entrepreneurship and economic activities in Nigeria. The operating environment, both internal and external, can either support or undermine entrepreneurial decision-making (Okunade, 2021). Equally important are the entrepreneur's motivations, creative capabilities, educational background, and networking skills. Motives ranging from financial reward, personal achievement, and learning (Gboyega, 2023) to business growth and social advancement (Porter & Welter, 2024) have been identified as pivotal drivers of entrepreneurial success. Morris and Adelman (2025) further established that social capital, along with access to collaborative networks, can significantly shape the performance of female-owned enterprises.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Concept of Female Entrepreneurship

Women constitute over 50 percent of Nigeria's population, yet only approximately 35 percent of them are actively engaged in entrepreneurship, whether through micro, small, medium, or large-scale enterprises (Odoemere, 2021). These enterprises tend to embody the flexibility and innovation that are central to feminist business philosophy (Obi, 2023). Ogunleye (2024) noted that despite their numerical dominance, women remain significantly underrepresented in business policy-making and manpower development processes. However, the shifting socio-economic landscape in Nigeria has triggered notable progress, including increased female representation in key positions within government ministries, departments, agencies, and parastatals.

The traditional structure of the Nigerian family has evolved considerably, with women now occupying more functional and active roles in society (Ariyo, 2022). Obi (2023) attributes this transformation partly to the rapid urbanisation that drew women into mainstream economic and commercial activities. In the south-eastern study area, where cultural expectations traditionally assigned the role of breadwinner to men, there has been a perceptible shift. Women are increasingly assuming de facto headship of households across Igbo, Ijaw, Middle-Belt, and Yoruba communities, with many actively engaged in entrepreneurship and business management to sustain their families (Obi, 2023).

Given the multiple responsibilities women shoulder, as mothers, wives, and financial providers, it is important to cultivate an enabling environment that supports their participation in economic development. Greater attention must be given to advancing Female Entrepreneurship Development (FED) by addressing the structural and contextual barriers that women face. Gender-informed knowledge will underpin the design and implementation of targeted programmes to monitor and address the challenges of women entrepreneurs across developing economies. Researchers such as Kerta (2023) and Das (2025) have emphasised the psychological and economic dimensions of entrepreneurial development, while comparatively fewer studies have examined the environmental factors bearing on women's business participation, a gap that remains particularly pronounced in the Nigerian context.

Concept of Economic Development

Economic development encompasses qualitative progress within an economy, embracing technological innovation and diffusion, structural transformation from agriculture to industry, and meaningful improvements in living standards (Leff, 2020). It is characterised by sustained growth in per capita real income, structural reforms that promote more equitable income distribution, and a measurable rise in personal welfare. Such growth must be accompanied by tangible improvements in quality of life, including better nutrition, housing, healthcare, reduced infant mortality, enhanced fertility outcomes, improved literacy rates, and a gradual shift from rural to urban living patterns.

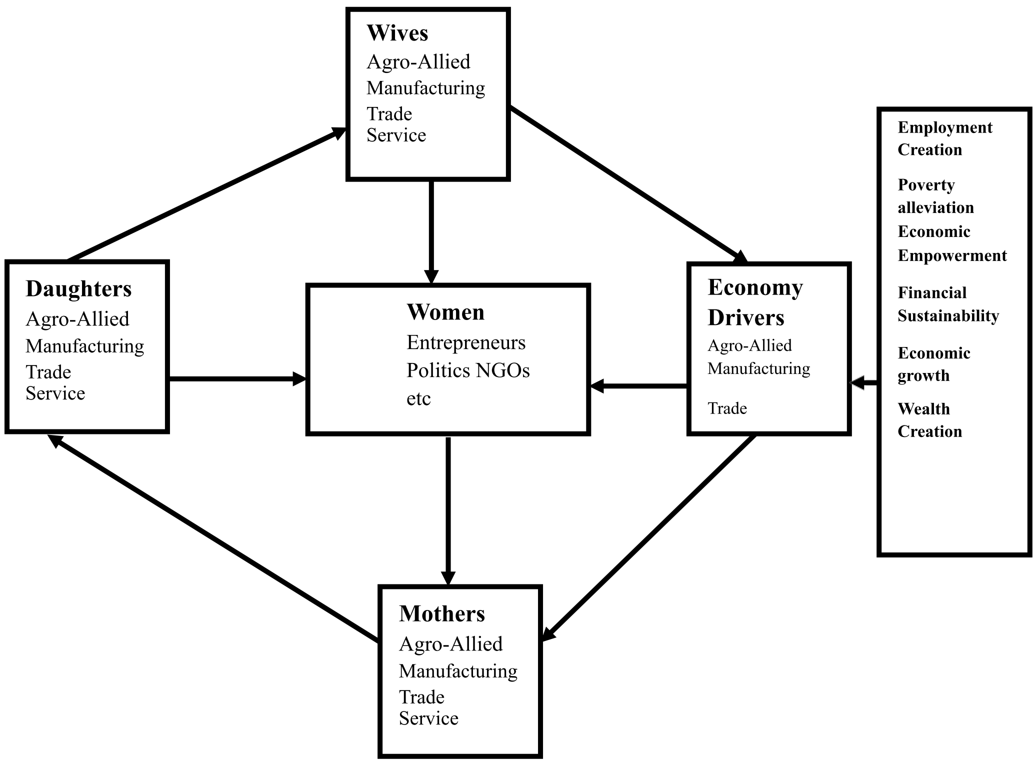
Female Entrepreneurship and Economic Development

In recent decades, the role of women entrepreneurs in driving economic development has come to occupy centre stage in development discourse. The shift in focus, from questions of gender equity to the recognition of women's productive contributions to economic growth, reflects a broader global reorientation in development thinking.

An extensive body of research (Brush, 2022; Hugo, 2022; Zapeda, 2023; Gboyega, 2023) has consistently demonstrated that development strategies that marginalise women are fundamentally flawed. When women participate fully in the economy, the benefits are immediate and far-reaching: families become healthier, nutritional standards improve, and household incomes, savings, and reinvestment rates rise. No developing nation can afford to disregard women's current and prospective economic contributions, nor their central role in shaping the health and welfare outcomes of the next generation. Evidence consistently shows that communities and nations with higher female status experience faster improvements in quality of life for all their members.

The economic objectives of entrepreneurs, wealth creation and social vitality, are pursued by female entrepreneurs through collective strategies in both rural and urban settings, channelling combined efforts towards broader development goals. Teamwork (Reich, 2021), networking (Johannission & Nilsson, 2022), and managerial competence (Penrose, 2023) serve as effective strategies for mobilising resources, building business contacts, and identifying collaborative opportunities. Such business networks enable female entrepreneurs to locate partners and investors, facilitating sustainable business growth.

Figure 2.1: The Multi-facets Roles of Female in Economic Development



Source: Thomson (2024).

The diagram above illustrates the multifaceted contributions of women entrepreneurs to the nation's economic development. It demonstrates that women operate simultaneously in several capacities, as daughters, mothers, wives, and key drivers of economic activity. As Kpohazounde (2025) observes, women entrepreneurs must constantly navigate and reconcile these multiple identities to manage their businesses effectively. In so doing, they frequently encounter social and institutional barriers that impede their entrepreneurial aspirations.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is rooted in the implementation intention model, which is employed to explain the nexus between female entrepreneurship and economic activities, and the specific roles women entrepreneurs assume in advancing that development.

Implementation Intention Model

The implementation intention model, originally proposed by Golwitzer (1999), centres on the cognitive act of linking an anticipated situational cue to a purposeful, goal-directed response. The model posits a psychological connection between specific environmental triggers, perceived as critical situations, and the behavioural responses directed at achieving predetermined goals. Sheeran (2025) distinguishes between goal intentions, which specify the desired outcome, and implementation intentions, which prescribe the specific behaviour to be executed in a particular context to achieve that outcome.

In practice, when a critical situation (X) arises, it prompts a goal-directed behavioural response (Y) that leads to goal attainment (Z). Forming an implementation intention requires the individual to identify both a context-specific response that will advance goal achievement and the anticipated cue that will trigger that response (Souitaris, 2021). The model asserts that the cognitive linkage established through implementation intentions enhances the likelihood of goal realisation, operating through psychological mechanisms associated with both the anticipated situation and the intended behaviour.

Fig. 2.2: Implementation Intention Model (Adapted)

Critical Situation (X) → Behavioural Response or Action (Y) → Goal Attainmen t (Z)

Source: Sheeran (2025).

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

Current Studies on Female Entrepreneurship Skills

Agbogidi (2021) examined the entrepreneurial skills necessary for small and medium-scale enterprise success among auto-mechanics students in Nigerian technical colleges. The study employed a descriptive survey design and established that competency in automobile repair requires a comprehensive suite of skills, spanning management, financial management, marketing, and communication. While the study addressed communication, marketing, financial management, and managerial skills, the current research expands the scope to encompass a broader range of entrepreneurial competencies.

Eziama (2022) conducted a study on the entrepreneurial skill requirements of women running small enterprises in Imo State. The research aimed to determine which specific skills, managerial, interpersonal, marketing, financial management, and accounting, are most needed by women entrepreneurs in that context. Using a descriptive survey design, the study found that all five skill categories are indispensable for small enterprise success in Imo State. A notable distinction from the present study is geographical scope: while Eziama's work was confined to Imo State, the current study encompasses all five states of the south-east geopolitical zone, providing broader coverage and more generalisable insights.

Anyakoha (2024) investigated the enhancement of entrepreneurship skills among operators of home economics-related businesses and its implications for economic development. A structured 42-item questionnaire was administered to respondents, with data analysed using mean and standard deviation. The study identified sixteen personal and sixteen management-related skills, including the ability to assess and accept risk, take responsibility for decisions, maintain appropriate business records, and interpret financial statements. While Anyakoha's study centred on home economics entrepreneurs, the present research targets a wider objective, leveraging female entrepreneurship to stimulate national economic development.

Olarewaju (2024) explored the motivational underpinnings of women's decisions to start businesses, arguing that motivation is a fundamental psychological mechanism that drives individuals, whether employees, supervisors, or aspiring business owners, to pursue organisational and personal goals. He contended that a desire for self-sufficiency is among the most powerful motivators for women entrepreneurs. Drawing on a sample of 350 female business owners in Lagos State and using a Likert-scale questionnaire and t-test analysis, Olarewaju identified four primary motivations for female entrepreneurship: the desire for creativity, the pursuit of financial independence, the ambition to be one's own employer, and the drive for innovation.

Major Gaps in the Literature

The prevailing trend in empirical studies on female entrepreneurship is to document positive outcomes. Among the studies examined in this review, only two reported adverse effects associated with female entrepreneurship. Methodological shortcomings were detected across the studies that yielded positive findings. Selection criteria for this review required studies to employ an ex-ante/ex-post control group design with sample sizes exceeding n = 100. Notably, perceived behavioural control emerged as the single variable with consistent influence across all groups in the present study, displaying stronger effects than those observed in the control group.

The literature offers several explanations for why some studies report negligible or negative entrepreneurship effects. First, most prior studies adopted methodological designs, ex-ante/ex-post control groups with larger, longitudinal samples, that substantially address the limitations identified in earlier research, enabling this study to make a methodological contribution to the field. Second, in keeping with the standards advocated by Souitaris (2021), this paper provides transparent documentation of the entrepreneurship programmes under examination.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a survey research design as the primary investigative method. Non-probability purposive sampling was employed to select the states forming the research coverage area in south-east Nigeria, comprising Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States. The study population was derived from official records obtained from the membership directories of several regulatory and promotional bodies, including the Nigerian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), the Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), the Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI), the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). It was acknowledged that certain enterprises may operate informally and thus remain uncaptured in official records. A total of 2,520 female-owned SMEs were identified and extracted from the available databases.

The sample size was determined using the standard statistical formula below:

$n = z^2(pq) / e^2$

(1)

Where:
n = sample size

z = confidence level

p = proportion of positive responses

q = proportion of negative

responses e = margin of error

A pilot study was conducted to generate values for p and q. One hundred questionnaires were distributed, of which 90 ($p = 0.9$) yielded positive responses and 10 ($q = 0.1$) yielded negative responses. For a two-tailed test, the z-value was 1.96. The allowable error of 5% (0.05) was halved to 0.025 for the two-tailed test. Substituting these values into equation (1):

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.9) (0.1)}{(0.025)^2}$$

$$= \frac{(3.8416) (0.9) (0.1)}{(0.025)^2}$$

$$= 0.345744 / 0.0000625$$

$$n = 553 \text{ entrepreneurs}$$

A sample of 553 female entrepreneurs was thus obtained. This total was proportionally distributed across the five states using Bowler's proportional allocation formula (Ogbuoshi, 2026):

$$nh = Nh \times n / N$$

Where:

nh = Sample size for each stratum

Nh = Stratum population

n = Total sample size

N = Total SME population

The stratification and allocation of the 2,520 female owned SMEs are as follow:

Table 3.1: Proportional Distribution of SMEs across South-East Nigeria

State	Population (SMEs)	Allocation
Abia	502	101
Anambra	705	155
Ebonyi	282	62
Enugu	571	125
Imo	460	101
Total	2520	553

Sources: Field Survey, 2026.

The primary source of data utilised for this study was obtained through validated questionnaire administered on the female entrepreneurs using the revised Likert's 5 points rating scale shown thus.

	SA	A	D	SD	UD
Grade Point	5	4	3	2	1
Range	4.5-5.0	3.5-4.4	2.5-3.4	1.5-2.4	0.5-1.4

Data were presented in tabular format and subjected to quantitative analysis to address the "how many?" questions embedded in the study, thereby facilitating the systematic measurement of relationships among variables. STATA software (version 12) was used to compute descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values, alongside a correlation matrix to test for multicollinearity. Panel data multiple regression analysis was also applied to determine the net impact of female entrepreneurship on Nigeria's economic development.

4. Results and Discussion

Out of the 553 female entrepreneurs targeted for the study, 520 were successfully reached. Of this number, 499 (representing a valid response rate of 95.96 percent) returned usable questionnaires.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Respondents' Views on the Factors Motivating Female Entrepreneurs and Economic Activities in Nigeria

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Drive for independence (desire to be self-employed)	499	1.00	5.00	4.2906	1.19644
Desire for a flexible work arrangement	499	1.00	5.00	4.2545	1.26323
Aspiration to provide financial support to family	499	1.00	5.00	4.4349	1.10369
Challenges in securing formal employment	499	1.00	5.00	4.4649	1.07746
Frustration with paid employment (career dissatisfaction)	499	1.00	5.00	4.3607	1.12392
Pursuing higher income (desire for financial success)	499	1.00	5.00	4.4088	1.15000
Need for greater occupational security	499	1.00	5.00	4.4930	1.04778

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics reflecting respondents' perceptions of the factors motivating women to venture into entrepreneurship and its linkage to economic development in south-east Nigeria. The measures reported include mean, standard deviation, and the minimum and maximum values. The majority of respondents affirmed the significance of all listed motivational factors in encouraging women to establish businesses and their positive relationship with economic development in the south-east. Key drivers identified include: the desire for independence; the need for work schedule flexibility; the intention to supplement family income; the difficulty in securing formal employment; dissatisfaction with salaried work; the ambition for higher earnings; and the pursuit of greater job security.

Table 2: Respondents' Views on the Impact of New Female-Led Ventures on Environmental Sustainability and Nigeria's Socio-Economic Activities

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Growth in per capita income contributes to environmental sustainability	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Creation of employment opportunities enhances environmental sustainability	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Wealth generation supports a sustainable environment	499	1.00	5.00	4.1102	1.24098
Improvement in products and services positively influences environmental sustainability	499	1.00	5.00	4.3607	1.12392
Economic expansion broadens environmental sustainability	499	1.00	5.00	3.8597	1.24037
Increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reinforces environmental sustainability	499	1.00	5.00	3.8257	1.25617

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on respondents' assessments of how new female-led enterprises affect environmental sustainability and the broader socio-economic development of Nigeria. The instruments used include mean and standard deviation, minimum and maximum values. Most respondents affirmed the positive influence of female entrepreneurial activity on environmental sustainability and socio-economic development. Specifically, the contributions identified include improvements in per capita income, creation of jobs, wealth generation, enhancement of product and service quality, economic expansion, and growth in GDP, all of which collectively strengthen Nigeria's development landscape.

Table 3: Respondents' Views on Government's Role in Promoting Female Entrepreneurs for Wealth Creation in Nigeria

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Delivery of education and skills training programmes	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Provision of financial support and assistance	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Facilitation of networking among female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Dissemination of relevant business information	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Connecting entrepreneurs with mentors and role models	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707
Development and provision of infrastructure	499	1.00	5.00	4.6573	.86707

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026.

Table 3 presents respondents' perceptions of how government supports female entrepreneurs in their wealth-creation efforts. All respondents confirmed that the provision of education and training, financial support, infrastructural development, business information dissemination, peer networking facilitation, and access to mentors and motivational role models are critical government interventions in advancing wealth creation among female entrepreneurs in south-east Nigeria.

Table 4: Respondents' Views on the Challenges Facing Female Entrepreneurs in Nigeria

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Restricted access to finance constrains female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.2104	1.31938
Work-family conflict negatively affects female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.1323	1.28262
Insufficient family support undermines female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.2044	1.28878
Lack of mentorship and government support harms female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.3287	1.21412
Limited access to information technology restricts female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.2946	1.13514
Inadequate infrastructure constrains female entrepreneurship	499	1.00	5.00	4.3607	1.12392
Exclusion from policy processes impedes female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.2685	1.17198
Absence of female role models is detrimental to female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.3086	1.13759
Childcare responsibilities adversely impact female entrepreneurs	499	1.00	5.00	4.2886	1.20611

Source: Researcher's computation, 2026.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of respondents' assessments of the obstacles confronting female entrepreneurs in south-east Nigeria. A substantial portion of respondents identified restricted access to finance, work-life conflicts, and inadequate family support as major barriers. Similarly, limited digital access and the absence of mentorship and government backing were seen as harmful to entrepreneurial performance. Infrastructure gaps, exclusion from trade policy input, a dearth of female role models, and the pressures of childcare were also cited as significant impediments to female entrepreneurship.

Test of Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria.

Table 4.7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.877[a]	.769	.751	.31616

a. Predictors: (Constant).

The R² and Adjusted R² values of 0.769 and 0.751, respectively, indicate that the independent variables collectively explain 77 percent of the variance in the dependent variable (EDEV), with the remaining 23 percent attributable to factors beyond the scope of this study. The regression model demonstrated a good fit, with an F-statistic of 4.278 and an F-significance of 0.000, both exceeding the critical values at the 1 percent significance level with a 99 percent confidence interval. This confirms that the combined influence of the explanatory variables on the dependent variable is statistically significant. It is therefore concluded that female entrepreneurship has a significant and measurable relationship with economic activities in Nigeria.

ANOVA[b]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	154.004	36	4.278	42.797	.000[a]
Residual	46.180	462	.100		
Total	200.184	498			

a. Predictors: (Constant),

b. Dependent Variable: There is significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria

The ANOVA results confirm that the calculated F-value (42.797) exceeds the F-tabulated value (3.84) at the 5 percent level of significance. Based on this finding, the decision rule was invoked to reject the null hypothesis, leading to the conclusion that there is a statistically significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic activities in Nigeria.

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.807	.149		12.142	.000
Availability of lecture halls for entrepreneurship teaching and learning	-.015	.087	-.025	-.176	.860
Presence of entrepreneurial labs and equipment in institutions	-.001	.050	-.002	-.020	.984
ICT services at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development	.000	.069	.000	.001	.999
Availability of student seating during lectures	-.006	.079	-.011	-.079	.937
Exposure of students to practical entrepreneurship in the institution	.000	.068	.000	-.007	.995
Drive for independence (to be one's own employer)	.003	.079	.006	.037	.971
Desire for flexible working hours	-.008	.052	-.016	-.159	.874
Desire to provide financial support to family	.018	.136	.031	.130	.897
Inability to secure employment	.001	.104	.001	.006	.995
Disillusionment with paid employment (career dissatisfaction)	-.004	.056	-.008	-.081	.936
Pursuit of higher income (wealth aspiration)	.005	.070	.009	.068	.946
Desire for enhanced job security	-.003	.060	-.005	-.050	.960
Restricted access to financing affects business sustainability	.005	.081	.011	.066	.947
Work-life conflict impairs business performance	.007	.049	.015	.149	.881
Inadequate family support undermines business sustainability	.006	.048	.013	.130	.896
Absence of mentorship and government backing harms business sustainability	-.006	.081	-.011	-.068	.946
Poor ICT access undermines business sustainability	-.001	.071	-.002	-.018	.986
Exclusion from trade policy formulation hampers business sustainability	-.002	.064	-.004	-.037	.971
Absence of female role models adversely affects business sustainability	-.002	.032	-.004	-.067	.947

Childcare responsibilities negatively impact business sustainability	.008	.044	.016	.186	.853
Reduction of unemployment as a contribution of female entrepreneurs to economic development	.021	.060	.037	.351	.725
Female entrepreneurs' contribution to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	.001	.072	.002	.018	.985
Contribution of female-led businesses to improved social standards	-.001	.048	-.002	-.029	.977
Poverty reduction as a contribution of female entrepreneurs to the economy	-.022	.017	-.043	-1.269	.205
Female entrepreneurs' businesses contribute to financial sustainability	-.018	.017	-.032	-1.025	.306
Creation of employment opportunities drives environmental sustainability	.648	.058	.886	11.269	.000
Wealth generation promotes a sustainable environment	-.008	.021	-.016	-.384	.701
Improvement in product and service quality positively influences environmental sustainability	-.060	.074	-.106	-.814	.416
Economic expansion contributes to environmental sustainability	.183	.032	.358	5.727	.000
Growth in GDP fosters environmental sustainability	-.005	.039	-.011	-.135	.893
Availability of credit facilities	-.040	.043	-.078	-.932	.352
Job creation outcomes	-.070	.036	-.137	-1.964	.050
Enhanced productivity levels	.014	.051	.027	.278	.781
Revenue and sales growth	-.042	.041	-.083	-1.036	.301
Introduction of new innovations	.013	.023	.025	.562	.574
Capacity to anticipate and adapt to future changes	.021	.020	.043	1.073	.284

a. DV: There is significant relationship between female entrepreneurship and economic development in Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The principal findings of the study can be summarised as follows: The desire for flexible working arrangements, the need to supplement household income, and the aspiration for self-reliance are the primary motivators propelling women into entrepreneurship. Reducing unemployment, alleviating poverty, and contributing to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth represent the most significant economic contributions of female entrepreneurs. The creation of employment, the refinement of products and services, and the generation of wealth constitute the core effects of new female-led ventures. Meanwhile, limited access to financing, inadequate family support, and the pressures of childcare responsibilities remain the foremost challenges facing female entrepreneurs in Nigeria. The finding reinforces the role of micro-credit schemes in extending economic opportunity to vulnerable female entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Lawal, 2026). Female entrepreneurs require strong marketing capabilities to effectively position and promote their products and services. This is consistent with the findings of Ajayi (2022), whose research demonstrated that promotional strategies are among the most effective tools, with marketing initiatives showing positive associations with service quality outcomes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the linkage between female entrepreneurship and economic activities in Nigeria. The weight of evidence supports the conclusion that a robust positive relationship exists between the two variables. The following recommendations are advanced:

- The Nigerian government should actively expand commercial opportunities for female entrepreneurs by organising dedicated female trade fairs and providing logistical and financial support to ensure women's meaningful participation in such events.
- The tax regime should be rationalised, with targeted reductions in the tax burden on female-owned businesses by the federal government, particularly with regard to Value Added Tax (VAT) and multiple taxation. Female entrepreneurs should also be encouraged to transition their businesses from sole proprietorships and partnerships to joint stock companies in order to benefit from economies of scale.
- Both state and federal governments should facilitate female entrepreneurs' access to soft loans and credit lines by directing deposit money banks to offer concessionary interest-free financing for viable female-owned enterprise proposals.

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