

GENDERED ROLES AND RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BENUE STATE- NIGERIA



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Abstract

Development, be it rural or urban has the antecedents for human well fare and societal advancement. For the past two decades, studies have established that entrepreneurship has been found to be a prime mover of social and economic lives and welfare of individuals, groups and the society, and gender roles are at the center of every sphere of development. This paper sets to investigate how acceptable is entrepreneurship in rural areas of Benue state, and which gender is more active in establishing business ventures in rural areas. Simple percentages were used in determining this, t-test was used to test the hypothesis that says that “men are more likely to establish private businesses in Benue rural areas than women”. The conclusions drawn however, proved otherwise.

Key concepts: Gendered Roles, Rural Entrepreneurship, Socio-economic Development

Elsewhere in the global north and south (developed and less developed countries), rural development issues and poverty reduction are often synonymous with entrepreneurship. Improvement of livelihoods is a central component of rural development and rural entrepreneurship seems to be a veritable tool for rural development, which aims at improving living conditions of the rural people, curtail excess poverty and population influx from rural to urban areas, minimize the gap in rural gender segregation. Issues of development, be it rural or urban, are coloured by

gender dynamics, and gender segregation is more pronounced in rural areas and it affects socio-economic development efforts and strategies.

The main objective of this paper is to ascertain whether gender affects participation in rural entrepreneurship. The following questions are used to guide the study:

- 1) Socio-demographic characteristics
- 2) Does education affect gender participation in rural entrepreneurship?
- 3) Are men more successful in business than women in your community?
- 4) What are the factors that are responsible for men's success and women's failure?
- 5) How can women be helped to fully participate in rural entrepreneurship?

Clarification of Concepts

Gendered Roles

These are a society's shared beliefs that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified sex or gender. They refer to the pattern of masculine and feminine roles and behaviour of individuals as defined by cultures and largely determined by individuals' upbringing and environment. They are public image of being a particular gender that individuals present to others. A gender sex role is a social position encompassing a range of behaviours and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, and or appropriate for particular genders such as dressing, temperament, occupation/economy, norms and interconnectedness and these are influenced by cultural shifts and trends.

Gender roles are motivated by the women's rights' movements and other movements, they have begun to change as a result of the changing economic, social, political as well as religious landscapes; manifesting in women entering the work place, pulpit, elective positions and gender changing roles generally, with impacts on the rural socio-economic development. Gender roles are cultural and personal. They determine how males and females should think, speak, dress and interact, within the context of a group and society (Janssens, 2018). World Health Organisation (2015) defines gendered roles as "socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender roles often come from role-modelling parents, peers, teachers and other significant figures in one's life. Over the years, gender roles have continued to change and have a significant impact on the institutions of marriage, religion, economy, politics and the whole society (Gochman 2013), prompting the study in the acceptability of rural entrepreneurship and which gender is more prone to establishing private business ventures in rural areas of Benue.

Entrepreneurship is a process through which individuals or groups invest into fund-raising activities and production of goods and services with the aim of making a profit. It is the process of bearing the risk of bringing together factors of production to create wealth and better the lives of stakeholders, dependents and the host communities (Dimasi, 2008). **Rural entrepreneurship**, technically speaking, is not different from

entrepreneurship. Rural entrepreneurship is the process of exploiting the untapped potentials of the rural areas to bring about growth and development of the rural economy and improve the rural condition of living of the rural dwellers mainly and people generally. According to Maity (2017), **rural entrepreneurship** is so coined because it has its roots in non-urban areas but has a lot of potentials to drive various endeavours in business, agriculture, industry, etc. It contributes to the economic development of regions, communities and national economies through the following ways:

- Creating employment, due to intensive labour and thus, provide solution to the growing rural unemployment and income generation
- It could reduce migration and bridge urban-rural disparities as well as usher in modern infrastructural facilities, dispel the concentration of industrial units in urban areas and promote regional growth and development
- It has the potential to promote artistic and craft technology in the rural economy. A large section of the bearers of traditional heritage and culture live in rural communities and entrepreneurship will facilitate the growth of artefact market and creativity
- Rural entrepreneurship will address social ills like over-dependence on relatives for social support, child marriage, women empowerment and reduce illiteracy levels. It will also help to protect and preserve traditional handicrafts and other aspect of material culture.

Okeke and Eme (2014) highlight some pro-development entrepreneurial functions such as identification of investment opportunities, formation and nurturing of enterprises, assembling and coordinating of resources (human and material), invention, innovation, risk bearing, decision-making, etc. These functions, according to them, are not left only for entrepreneurs in the urban areas but also for the rural entrepreneurs. Rural entrepreneurs are individuals who find investment opportunities in the rural areas. The strategic role rural entrepreneurship could play in rural development appears to have caught the attention of policymakers and development experts. Nwankwo and Okeke (2017), quoting Petrin (1994) notes that institutions and individuals promoting rural development now see entrepreneurship as a strategic development intervention that could accelerate the rural development process. In their words:

Development agencies see rural entrepreneurship as an enormous employment potential, politicians see it as the key strategy to prevent rural unrest, and farmers see it as an instrument for improving farm earnings while women see it as an employment possibility near their homes which provide autonomy, independence and a reduced need for social support.

Clearly, entrepreneurship is seen as a vehicle for improving the quality of life for individuals, families and communities as well as to sustaining a healthy economy and environment. He stresses that to accelerate economic development in rural areas, it

is necessary to increase the training of entrepreneurs who will take risks and engage in the uncertainties of new venture creation.

Sherief (2008) is equally emphatic about a possible role rural entrepreneurship could play in rural development. He notes in particular that entrepreneurial orientation in rural areas is based on stimulating local entrepreneurial talent and subsequent growth of indigenous companies which in turn, would create jobs and add economic value to a region and at the same time, keep scarce resources within the community. Indeed, this optimism is anchored on studies conducted by Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean and Food and Agricultural Organisation ((ECLAC and FAO 2004) in the Latin American and Caribbean region which have shown that rural enterprises can be an important modernising agent for small agriculture. Thus, government have supported this process by creating incentives for agro-industry to invest in such regions. And since women make up more than 50% of the rural labour force, it is imperative that they are considered major stakeholders and their views must be enshrined into the rural scheme of things as a framework for rural development.

Socio-Economic Development

Socio-economic development is the process of promoting and sustaining the standard of living of the people in a society which is accomplished by increase in human and non-human capital, physical and non-physical stocks through improved technology. It is measured by both social and economic indicators such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy levels, infrastructural provision, employment ratios, health care, clean and near-sources of water, sanitation, etc. Socio-economic development incorporates public concerns in developing social policy and economic initiatives to bring about sustained increase in the wellbeing of individuals, groups, families, communities and society at large.

It also brings about changes in less-tangible factors such as personal dignity and self-worth, freedom of association, safety and freedom from fear of physical harm, extent of participation in community life in terms of social, political, economic and gender dynamics. The lives of the people can be impacted through positive changes in laws and justice system administration, positive methods of utilizing and sustaining the physical environment and the ecological changes (Kinyanjui and Misoro 2013).

However, according to Ojo and Ifedayo (2014), all kinds of exclusions are perpetrated in Nigeria and they affect the rural population more, especially the female gender. Balanced development that will promote socio-economic wellbeing of all and sundry requires the government to remove barriers against social minorities like women and orphans, improve on rural education to encourage basic capabilities as prerequisite to overall development, provide easy access to water and so on. The basic objective of any form of development should focus on expanding human capabilities for self-reliance irrespective of gender and this has been neglected for decades in Nigeria.

The relationship between these key concepts is that, the rural areas are disadvantaged in terms of socio-economic development, often due to misapplication of available resources including the side-lining of roles and participation of the critical human capital that is the female gender. There is need to advocate the adoption of entrepreneurship that has “dual human faces” as a veritable and encompassing strategy to mobilize all the rural resources for effective utilization to promote social welfare and participation in the scheme of things of the rural communities for the benefit of all people.

Hypothesis

The study is set to test the hypothesis that says that “men are more likely to establish private businesses in Benue rural areas than women”

Methodology

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design to gather data about entrepreneurship activities and socio-economic development of the rural people in Benue State.

Benue State is one of the states that make up the North-Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. The choice of Benue State for the study is because: the state is basically a rural and an agrarian based economy with a few functional industries located in the state capital Makurdi and in the few urban centers. This situation creates the need for private business ventures, even in the semi-urban and rural areas of the state to stimulate socio-economic development.

Secondly, Benue state is rated as agriculturally endowed hence it is referred to as the “Food Basket of the Nation”. The varieties of agricultural crops that are cultivated in large quantities in the state create a ready foundation for agricultural and rural entrepreneurship. These crops range from yams, rice, groundnut, sweet potatoes, cassava, Bambara nuts, and mangoes of different varieties, citrus/orange Orchards, millet and corn, among others. This makes the state suitable for agribusiness ventures for entrepreneurs in the rural areas. Thirdly, fishing and local crafts such as the local textile and wood work constitute another area of rural entrepreneurship business in Benue State. Out of the 23 local government areas of the state, only Makurdi, Oturkpo and Gboko that are urban and semi urban areas; the rest are rural local governments and the study is rural based in nature.

Benue State lies east of the lower River Niger and south of River Benue. The State was created out of the then Benue-Plateau State in 1976. (NPC, 2006; Genyi, 2010).The population of Benue State was 4,219,244 as at 2006 census. Going by the UN approved annual growth rate of 3.5%, by 2018, the estimated population of Benue State stands at 5,942,263 (NPC/BNS Webs, 2006, 2016) with a density of 95 persons per sq. km in the southern parts (and part of zone B,) and 250 persons per square km in the north (Zone A, and some parts of zone B). The study targeted the rural population of

Benue State, who are 18 years and above, who are presently out of school, both males and females, either married or unmarried, and are engaged in organizations/associations for the purpose of entrepreneurship and or business ventures for self-help and rural socio-economic development.

The sample size for this study is approximately 1,110 which was determined statistically, using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula, cited in Emaikwu (2014). The multistage sampling technique was purposively (deliberate selection of the desired and particular members of the public with desired characteristics) used to select LGAs, communities, members of the public as well as registered associations' leadership and Ministry/agencies' officials overseeing rural development and those carrying out entrepreneurship activities in the selected rural-based local government areas of Kwande in zone A; Tarka in zone B and Ohimini, in zone C.

In each of the three local governments areas selected, the systematic random sampling method was used to select council wards where associations exist. From Kwande local government, there are 15 wards; five wards with good number of business ventures were selected, using ballot papers tagged with 'selected' or 'not selected', those with 'selected' became the participating wards. Tarka local government has 10 wards; three (with good number of business ventures) were similarly selected while in Ohimini there are 12 council wards, out of which four were selected, based on those with notable associations and business ventures. In this way, the sample size of 1,110 respondents was achieved proportionally from the 3 local government areas as follows: Kwande 692, Tarka 221 and Ohimini 197. This is presented in the Table below:

Table 1: Population Sample Allocation and Proportions

<i>LGAs</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Proportion (%)</i>	<i>Sample Allocation</i>
<i>Kwande</i>	<i>347,346</i>	<i>62.4</i>	<i>692</i>
<i>Ohimini</i>	<i>98,739</i>	<i>17.7</i>	<i>197</i>
<i>Tarka</i>	<i>110,745</i>	<i>19.9</i>	<i>221</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>556,830</i>	<i>100.00</i>	<i>1,110</i>

Source: Field survey (2018)

The determined sample size of 1,110 was allocated according to proportions from the 3 local government areas selected for the study, which are Kwande, Ohimini and Tarka. This shows that the Taro Yamane formula was appropriate for determining the sample size for this study.

The **major instruments** for data collection for this study were **multiple choice questionnaires**-in order to accommodate respondents' preferences and the in-depth Interview guide. The questionnaire is made up of two major sections A and B. section A has to do with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, while section B is on the substantive issues of the study. Descriptive and inferential statistical

tools were used to analyze and present the data collected. Descriptive statistics like percentages were presented in tables to summarize and interpret the data. Inferential statistics were used to test hypotheses and answer research questions.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to execute the t-test statistical analysis. In-depth interview themes were also designed to elicit in-depth information and views of participants, covering all aspects of rural entrepreneurship including gender and socio-economic development in Benue state. The selected communities in each local government were merged and six sessions of interview were administered, with the assistance of six research assistants (Teachers in those communities), the researcher was the moderator in each session with two research assistants.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This sub-section focused on the presentation and analysis of socio-demographic data of the respondents such as age, gender, Local Government Area, level of education, marital status and occupation.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by their Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-23	32	2.8
24-29	178	16.1
30-35	454	40.9
36-41	327	29.5
42 and Above	119	10.7
Total	1,110	100
Gender		
Male	442	39.8
Female	668	60.2
Total	1,110	100
LGA		
Kwande	692	62.5
Tarka	321	19.9
Ohimini	197	17.6
Total	1,110	100

Level of Education		
Primary School	596	53.7
Secondary School	356	32.1
NCE/ND	113	9.3
HND/Degree and Above	55	4.9
Total	1,110	100
Marital Status		
Single	311	28.0
Married	625	58.4
Divorced/Separated	42	3.8
Widowed	132	11.9
Total	1,110	100
Occupation		
Trading Business	174	15.7
Farming	721	65.0
Civil Servant	23	2.1
Artisan	36	3.2
Others	155	13.9
Total	1,110	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2018*

Table 2 above shows the distribution of respondents by their socio-demographic characteristics, out of a total of 1,110 respondents drawn for the study, 2.8% of them were between the age brackets of 18-23 years, indicating that many of them are still in schools, and depending on relatives for social support, as seen in the negligible percentage on the table as engaging in fund raising activities. 16.1% of the respondents were within the range age range of 24-29 years, 40.9% respondents were between 30-35 years old, 29.5% of them between the age bracket of 36-41 years while 10.7% were from 42 years and above. Thus, majority of the respondents were of the youthful population. In in-depth interview, respondents were asked the reasons for youth dominance in business, they were of the views that:

Some of them took over family businesses from their parents who have become too feeble to operate, others said in local parlance that “youths are the happening group” (due to their physical strength, mental agility, dexterity and hyperactivity), others said it’s because of lack of government employment, still others said the youths have quest for financial freedom and desire for good things of life.

On the basis of gender, the study shows that 60.2 % of respondents are female while the remaining 39.8 percent are male. This means that female respondents dominate in business ventures in the study area due to existential peculiarities.

In in-depth interview,

Some men rather sarcastically opined that they have been taken care of the women since creation, so it’s time the women took over (amid laughter). Some women

however are of the view that, they have their personal and social needs that men normally don't appreciate, so they need to raise their own funds to satisfy those needs, such as personal effects, church donations, associations' levies, weddings and even labour levies. Other categories of women are widows, spinsters, single mothers and divorcees, who must do business to fend for their families. Some men are of the view that, the nature of the economy these days is more female friendly, because women are better traders due to their patience and persuasive nature.

One particular lady who claimed her husband abandoned her during in-depth interview stated that:

Look at me now, i have six children, all females and my husband abandoned me for another woman in search of male children. It is this baking that i learnt from the church association (catholic women organization) that is helping me take care of myself and my children's needs. Sometimes i make wedding and birthday cakes for our Members and their children. I also farm for subsistence and i operate a mini quiosk in front of my house.

The table also shows that 62.5% of the respondents were from Kwande LGA, 19.9% of them were drawn from Tarka LGA while 17.6% were from Ohimini LGA. The number of respondents was based on the proportion of the population drawn from each LGA. Thus, majority of the respondents were drawn from Kwande LGA. Tarka LGA is next to Kwande in terms of the proportion of respondents drawn, while the least number of respondents were drawn from Ohimini LGA.

On the basis of educational attainment, the table shows that 53.7% of the respondents attained primary school education as highest level of education, 32.1% of them attained secondary education as highest level of education, and 9.3% respondents have ND/NCE as highest level of education, while 4.9% of the respondents have acquired HND/degree certificates. This shows that, education is not necessarily a determining factor in participating in rural entrepreneurship schemes in Benue State. Some of the respondents interviewed averred that

Educated people tend to focus on the search for white-collar jobs in cities or local government headquarters. They also explained that, these days, it's those with handiwork that are making it in their communities because even the supplies that use to come from employed relatives hardly come now. All we hear is "government is not paying". So everyone is now trying to better their lives, except those who are bewitched. Even retirees are learning handiwork now because pension no longer comes.

The table also reveals that 28.0% of the respondents are single, 58.4% of them are married, and 3.8% are divorced and or separated while 11.9% are widowed. Thus, majority of the respondents are married, indicating that people who are married tend to engage themselves in entrepreneurship to augment family resources. The table also reveals that 15.7% of the respondents are involved in trading business, 65.0% engage in farming and farming related schemes (processing produce), 2.1% of the respondents are Civil Servants who are doing business to fill the gap of delayed/non-payment of

salaries; and 3.2% of them are artisans while the remaining 13.9% of the respondents are involved in other ventures like operating barbing/hair dressing salons, motor cycle hiring and others.

Gender Roles and Rural Entrepreneurship

Table 3: Determining which Gender is More Successful in Business in Rural Areas in Benue

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	386	34.8
No	572	51.6
Don't know	301	27.1

Source: *Field Survey, 2018.*

On table 3, the information sought is to find out if men are more successful in business than women. The table reveals that 34.8% of the respondents accepted that men are more successful in business than women, 51.6% of them refuted the notion that men are more successful than women in business while 27.1% do not know which of the gender is more successful in business. For them, whoever that is averse to poverty and has the capital can embark on a business to alleviate their families. One of female respondents is of the views that gone are those days when things depended on men.

I come from a polygamous home, and our mothers took the responsibility of bringing us up. We learnt to do things to take care of ourselves. When I got married to my husband, I still help him in providing for our family. I do many things to raise money. The good thing is that we women in this community are trying; we don't fold our arms and wait for men. I know some men that depend on their wives for everything (laughs). Poverty respects no gender, women go everywhere trading or doing one thing or the other to make ends meet (ID, female respondent: grain seller/vice chair the grain/cereals association)

Table 4: Factors Hampering Women Success in Business

Response	Frequency (1,110)	Percentage
Women lack business finance	190	17.1
Men are better business managers than women	71	30.1
Women have too many chores to do business	170	72.0
Husbands don't allow wives to do business	116	49.2
Women are encumbered with care giving in homes	203	86.0
Total	750	

Source: *Field Survey, 2018.*

Based on factors determining men’s potential to be more successful in business than women, Table 4 shows that 17.1% of the respondents who earlier averred that men are more successful than women in business stress that it is because women lack business finance. In the views of 30.1% of the respondents, men are better business managers than women, 72.0% observed that women have too many chores to do and cannot concentrate on business, 49.2% stress that husbands don’t allow wives to do business while the majority 86.0% of the respondents assert that women are encumbered with care giving in homes which interfere with their business endeavours. In an in-depth interview however, a female respondent opined that certain notions about women’s inability to operate business are outdated. She asserted that:

Some people have branded women as weak in all spheres of life, and it should not be so. Things have changed drastically as regard women participation in issues of life. I have experienced situation where women are very good and perform excellently in their chosen careers. There are better female business managers than men in so many instances and I don’t like it when they are described as ‘lacking business finance, too much household chores and family concerns to do business’, etc. I know women who fend for their families, occupation and other callings. For me, time has come for women to be assessed according to what they are able to do, than assessing them on preconceived notions of the ancient times. Incidentally, in this community, many of the enterprises are initiated and run by women and they are doing well, they pay their workers and apprentices regularly, and their businesses are expanding. They fend for families including their husbands, they pay bills in the home, schools and extended family needs, churches, associations, etc (IDI, female respondent: sachet water company owner).

Another reaction from a man:

Truly, it’s no longer fitting to say that men are better business managers than women. This notion is outdated. I am saying so because I don’t want to call names of men who started businesses here and such business collapsed before anyone could know. For me, women are more careful in doing business and they fare better. Men don’t know how to separate business from relationship which is a good reason for business to die. Women are not like that. If I were the one doing this work (research), I would say that women are better business and home managers than men (laughs)....

Table 5: Assisting Women to Embrace Rural Entrepreneurship

Multiple Responses	Frequency (n= 1,110)	%
Encourage formation of women associations	1103	99.5
Grant soft loans/credit	1105	99.6
Initiate women programmes and projects	478	43.1

Introduce implements that will reduce drudgery	186	16.8
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Source: *Field Survey, 2018.*

Table 5 shows that 99.5% of the respondents observe that women should be encouraged to form associations to pool their resources and experiences together to alleviate their sufferings and strengthen their business acumen, 99.6% suggest that soft loans should be granted to women by financial bodies, 43.1% of the respondents suggest that women programmes and projects should be initiated while 16.8% of the respondents suggest that implements that will reduce women drudgery should be introduced. Thus majority of the respondents advocate for women to embrace entrepreneurship more. However, soft loans should be granted to them and women should be encouraged to form women associations to pool their resources and experiences for self-advancement.

In IDI, a male respondent is of the few that:

To me, I feel that what women really require to advance in business is loans on soft terms and even grants. If they have enough money every business related challenges will be addressed. There are already all kinds of associations in this community, but each of them seem to be experiencing financial challenges ranging from wages, electricity, water, cost of transportation, preservation and other unforeseen issues that money could easily settled (IDI, male respondents: panel beater).

From the foregoing, the test results proved contrary to the hypothesis that stated that men are more viable in private business in rural areas than women. It has also been established that, poverty is ravaging the rural areas of Nigeria due the age long practice of placing the urban areas over and above the rural areas in terms of provision of amenities, social services and inputs that would enhance the lives and endeavours of the rural populace. From the interview responses, women seem to be better business operators than men. They are however limited by care giving responsibilities, lack the capacity to raise investment capital. Some are under the control of husbands who for one reason or other, do not allow their wives free hand to do business as well encumbrances by home keeping and chores.

Another issue hampering rural socio-economic development that has affected the whole population is the characters of emerging political leaders in Nigeria as well as their styles of governance.

These have, to say the least, hampered the achievement of socio-economic development aspirations of all Nigerians. Corrupt practices and its attendant consequences are particularly weighing heavily against the establishment of social infrastructural amenities and national political building-blocks that could ignite, generate, propel as well as sustain broad development in Nigeria(Oluwole and Others 2014).

The concept of ‘social contract’ has been reduced to ‘stomach infrastructure’, compromising the rural poor, especially women with cubes of magi...confusing them to vote leaders other than their choice, who forget all about them as soon as elections are over; perpetuating their impoverishment and backwardness.

Conclusion

This study set out to appraise the acceptability of entrepreneurship as a veritable tool for rural development and ascertain if gender roles segregation really affect entrepreneurial participation in Benue rural areas. The hypothesis which stated that “men are more likely to establish private businesses in Benue rural areas than women” was however refuted by the respondents.

Recommendations

Having established that entrepreneurship is a prime mover of rural social and economic lives of the rural dwellers and that gender no longer necessarily explains the participation and establishment of business ventures in Benue rural areas. That other factors like lack of start-ups, women drudgery, absence of incentives like loans/credit, lack of coordination and mobilization of rural associations, etc, explain the low adoption of entrepreneurship as a rural development strategy. The following recommendations are prescribed.

1. Government agencies should collaborate with rural associations for effective resources mobilization and utilization for effective participation in entrepreneurship since entrepreneurship schemes have impacted positively on the socio-economic conditions of rural dwellers where they have been embraced.
2. Stakeholders in entrepreneurship development like Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental agencies should embark on social mobilization and gender value reorientation to encourage rural dwellers to change their perceptions about men dominance in social development and promote other fund raising activities and facilities that will help reduce women drudgery and the exiting segregation for more effective rural development.
3. Rural entrepreneurship development in Benue State should target all and sundry irrespective of gender. Evidence already exist that all genders are viable in entrepreneurship, soft loans should be given out as a way of encouraging rural dwellers irrespective of gender to pull out of the shackles of poverty, stagnation, and embrace ways of raising funds for self-development among the youths, instead of continuously searching for non-existing white-collar jobs. They should set-up their business ventures to create jobs that will even employ relatives and friends, in order to spread the values of financial independence and poverty reduction.
4. Benue State Government should be active in its intervention in rural entrepreneurship by providing more grants and training to participants in diversified ventures to help them invest more profitably in entrepreneurship and gain more wealth

since single-ownership entrepreneurial ventures are more likely to lead to increased wealth in rural areas of Benue State than Government jobs.

5. Benue State Government should empower the Ministry of Women and Social Development to provide start-up capital for potential women entrepreneurs to acquire the necessary facilities like factories, electricity, light machines and encourage enterprises to absorb trainees as well as create more awareness on the gains of entrepreneurship to encourage participation in the rural areas of Benue State through television shows, exhibition and agricultural shows

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