

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The history of Hometown Associations in Igboland, as documented in literature is as old as the history of Igboland itself. So also is the long history of Self-help development by these hometown associations (HTAs) in the South Eastern Nigeria, and the practice has been the subject of numerous studies. These include Abbot (2002), Anugwuom (2003), Anyanwu, (1992, 1999), Barkan, McNulty and Ayeni (1991), Harneit-Sievers (2006), Honey and Okafor,(1998) Osuji, (1990). But the bulk of these studies have not focused on feminist issues among the Igbos, such as their contributions to socio-economic development through hometown associations. Yet, Igbo women were among the first to gain the attention of researchers as a group distinct from men, (Amadiume, 1989). According to her, the recognition came after the Aba women riots in 1929 against the British colonial government. Consequently, Igbo women were universally recognized as the most militant of women. It is therefore not surprising that Leith- Ross (1939, p.337) describing the uniqueness of Igbo women said,

‘...by their number, their industry, their ambitions, their independence, are bound to play a leading part in the development of their country...’ She further applied these adjectives to describe them ‘...their startling energy, their power of organization and of leadership, their practical common sense and quick apprehension of reality... ’

These descriptions summarise the vigorous approach and zeal with which Igbo women have, over the years, mobilized self-help development to their various hometowns through their Hometown Associations. However, this zeal has been described by Odoemene (2008), as part of the deliberate efforts by the Igbo women to regain their ‘lost glory’ as past colonial policies had considerably diminished the women’s status. Consequently, evidence from Igbo societies shows that the women developed effective self-help and mutual protective associations such as women’s interest groups, dance groups, lineage, age set among others. Also, through various associations such as Umuada, age-grades, town unions and many others, the women, have been embarking on self-help projects in their various communities.

Odoemene argued further that the fact that little or no data exists on Igbo women (re)venturing into the public sphere is a function of their not being reported and is largely due to neglect of *women affairs* by mainstream scholarship, rather than their not occurring.

For a long time, self-help efforts were associated with the 'traditional' nature of communities, especially where these were rural communities. Even when they involved groups formed by supposedly modernized urban dwellers, they were still seen as a function of pristine and primordial attachments. This was more so when the targets of community development for urban-based groups were and remain hometowns or villages.

With more researches, however, it came to be known that although self-help initiatives have deep cultural roots, and in fact represent an integral part of enduring autochthonous social formations, the activities of the various self-help hometown development associations in most cities and villages in Nigeria, are emergent responses to the challenges of development, which government alone cannot meet. According to Haynes (1997), these associations constitute a part of the varied responses "to a lack of development and empowerment at grassroots level". Indeed, by virtue of their roles and functions in such areas as the award of scholarships, provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure such as roads, markets, water, rural electricity, primary healthcare centres and schools, hometown associations have been described, with justification, as shadow states (Honey and Okafor, 1998).

Political sociologist, Ekeh (1975), was one of the first Nigerian scholars to draw attention to the developmental activities of the "primordial public" which existed alongside the "civic public" whose core is the state. According to Ekeh, in addition to serving as adaptive mechanisms for 'disarticulated' urban dwellers who have problems coping with the exigencies of living in the city, the various ethnic associations that made up the primordial public evolved to, as it were, fill the gaps left by the inadequacies of the government provisions in the development terrain. The impetus for these groups was the competitive nature of modernization, which motivated members of the community to do things for themselves and their hometowns so as not to be left behind by other communities.

This impetus is vividly articulated by the perceptive title of Southall's 1988 article: "What else is development other than helping your own home town?" Within the context of recent conceptual frameworks, ethnic self-help organizations, being

voluntary and non-governmental, belong to the domain of civil society (Ekeh, 1992; and Osaghae, 2005).

From the perspective of scholarly concerns in the field of Adult education in general and community development in particular, the impact of self-help organizations for community development cannot be overemphasized (Osuji, 1983 and Anyanwu, 1992). To stress this point, the Community Education Network of the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE) declared in 1994 thus:

As the state relinquishes responsibility for meeting the basic needs of her citizenry people are organizing themselves with the view of taking collective action to meet their developmental needs. Consequently new forms of people organizations are emerging, managed and driven by the people themselves.

HTAs serve as critical intermediaries for many non-literate urban and rural dwellers in the development process. They also serve to link urban and rural development, as the self-help groups that take responsibility for developing the community at the rural level, are mostly based in the towns and cities. Finally, for women in particular, they provide the necessary empowerment to make participation in the development process meaningful and beneficial (Ottenberg, 1959; Osaghae, 1999 and Mbanefoh, 1999). Studies in Asia and Africa have reported not only an increase in women's self-help groups, but also how the common perceptions and impulses toward collective action, promotion of savings and use of pooled resources to meet the needs of members, have enhanced their ability to participate in the development process, (ECA, 2004; Sudan, 2005, and Palanithural, 2005). Indeed a correlation has been found between women's participation in governance and decision making and service delivery for livelihood security of ordinary peoples. More specifically, a World Bank study relates high incidence of corruption and poverty to low levels of women's participation and concludes that economic development without women empowerment can only increase tension and friction within society (World Bank, 2001).

Hence, the need to assess the crucial impact of the Igbo women's grassroots initiatives on the socio-economic development of their communities and to look into the challenges they encountered in the process. Such initiatives, and participation in rural development are critical factors in understanding the policy and dynamics of any developing rural society, as development in such context almost always depends

on changes in the cooperation of women and men whose activities take place at the village and community level.

Also, this research sought to find out, what are the drivers of these HTAs that have become the hallmark of almost all communities in Igbo speaking areas of South – Eastern Nigeria? Is their participation in such associations due to the male dominance of their society? Is it a strategy to assert themselves, to protect and promote their rights? Is it a clamour for freedom of association and pursuit of economic empowerment thereby enhancing women’s empowerment? Is the object simply to have an organized strategy of contributing to the development of their hometowns? Or do they join and participate in HTAs for other reasons such as future material rewards, political opportunities, cultural commitment, and ethnic identity? Or is it for social integration and recognition? Or is it electoral support? Do they participate just to replicate what they have enjoyed in the cities in their hometowns so that they would not miss much when they eventually retire home? To enhance the potential roles of hometown associations in community development, this study tried to find answers to these questions among others.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In general, ethnic self-help associations have not been fully appreciated in development studies, in spite of the acclaimed actual and potential roles they play in community development. It is, therefore, not surprising that the women dimensions of self-help community development particularly, the roles of women’s organizations, have also been largely neglected. Women have not only participated actively in community development, their involvement has also increased in importance over the last few decades. This is because, like other segments of the society, women have had to fall back on the creative genius of self-help activities to cope with the challenges of declining economic opportunities, increased poverty and government’s failure to satisfy basic needs of human security. The efforts of Igbo women of the Southeastern Nigeria, whose culture and traditions are supportive of active roles in community development, have been quite notable in this regard. They have used hometown associations and other voluntary self help groups to confront their developmental challenges.

It is against this background that this study assessed the participation of Igbo women in community development and the transformation of the socio-economic

conditions of their home communities through their hometown associations that are based in Ibadan.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to assess the participation of Ibadan-based Igbo women's HTAs in community development. This is with a view to identifying those factors that enhance their success and deriving lessons for community development from their operations.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the extent to which demographic factors such as marital status, income, level of education, age, occupation, location and religion affiliations, influence the participation of Igbo women in HTAs.
- ii. assess the general perception of Igbo women on the effectiveness of HTAs in promoting socio-economic development and sense of identity in Igbo land.
- iii. examine the levels and forms of their participation in HTAs and their development activities.
- iv. analyse the differences in the perceptions of rural and urban women on the effectiveness of HTAs in community development.
- v. find out the extent to which these women's HTAs influence the mobilization of women participation in community development in Igboland.
- vi. identify the extent to which these associations empower women in their socio-economic and political spheres.
- vii. find out the contributions of HTAs to community development in the study areas.
- viii. examine the changing context of Igbo women's associations in terms of the annual "August Meetings" and the increasing relevance of these associations in community development.
- ix. suggest salient recommendations towards increasing women's participation in community development through HTA activities.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

- RQ1:** To what extent do demographic factors such as marital status, level of income, level of education, age, location, occupation, and religious affiliations influence the participation of Igbo women in HTAs?
- RQ2:** What is the general perception of the Igbo women on the effectiveness of HTAs in promoting socio-economic development and sense of identity in Igbo land?
- RQ3:** What forms and levels do Igbo women's participation in HTAs take?
- RQ4:** To what extent do Igbo women respond to the challenges brought about by government's inability to provide adequate basic infrastructural needs?

1.5 Significance of the study

Despite the acclaimed importance of HTAs in community development, their significance has generally been under-appreciated. This study therefore seeks to rectify this shortcoming especially in the light of recent developments such as economic decline and state failure that have increased the importance of HTAs, community development associations and ethnic unions as development agents. The activities of the various organizations have strengthened their significance as they have introduced new patterns of self-help development that need to be studied and fed into the poverty reduction policy process. The study promises to enhance the recognition of HTAs as formidable agents of community development within the context of social transformation which has challenged development scholars and practitioners to rethink conventional wisdoms and formulate new perspectives that are people-based, participatory and bottom-up rather than top-down.

The research will also complement the work of other researchers in the field of Social Sciences and Anthropology that are drawing attention to the increased importance of indigenous civil societies in social transformation. Equally important is the gender dimension of community development. The study hopes to create awareness on the enormity of women's contributions to community development through HTAs which have so far been largely neglected. In addition to focusing attention on gender roles in development discourse and providing a window to the development process for women in the urban and rural areas, the study will be

beneficial to women's organizations. It will further enhance understanding of their emancipation and participation in decision-making and governance processes through their associations.

The findings of the study will also be useful to policy-makers on women and women's empowerment, in terms of government's supportive role and assistance. In fact, it will contribute to the successful formulation and implementation of poverty reduction and rural development programmes, since people's initiatives and self-help activities are basic tools for the success of such programmes. It will also be useful to Adult and community development educators, the Nigerian ethnic groups, scholars and students; as well as the state and local governments, as they will find these hometown associations ready and effective agents of development. Above all, the significance of the study lies in the primacy it gives to women's empowerment and participation in the socio-economic development process in Nigeria.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study assessed the self-help development activities of Igbo women's HTAs based in Ibadan (capital of Oyo State in South-Western Nigeria) whose origins are from Anambra and Imo states. The choice of Igbo women was informed by two factors. First, they are universally recognized as the most militant of women, with startling energy and power of organization, which reflect in the high development of traditions of self-help among the Igbo in general. The second is that Igbo social formations are well gendered with elaborate matrilineal descent in many cases. Accordingly, women have traditionally played significant roles in the social and economic lives of the Igbo, especially in the area of communal self help. Anambra and Imo states have also been chosen because they are the two oldest states in the South-Eastern Nigeria.

The period between 1900 and 2000 is important to this study because, this is the period that the nation witnessed the culmination of economic decline and assumed state failures that challenged ordinary people to expand self-help activities. Although the associations are based in Ibadan, the study extends farther into the hometowns, which are the primary targets of community development.

To this end, the study was delimited to six selected women's HTAs from Anambra and Imo states based in Ibadan Oyo state, Nigeria. These HTAs include the following:

Table 1.1: The Ibadan based Imo state HTAS and Anambra state HTAS

Ibadan - based Imo state HTAs	Ibadan- based Anambra State HTAs
i. Oboama Women’s Association	Amichi Women’s Association
ii. Nguru Women’s Association	Ukpor Improvement Union, (women’s wing)
iii. Ahiazu Women’s Association	Unubi Development Association,

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms used in this study are operationally defined as follows for the purpose of this study.

Hometown Association (HTA): These are voluntary associations formed by people from the same ethnic locale, typically a village, clan, town, or local government area but also the wider and more inclusive ethnic group (which in this case is Igbo).

Community Development: For the purpose of this study, community development is approached as a movement, and defined as that which fosters the arousal of a sense of cohesion and cooperation on the part of people for the progress of their community.

Woman: In this study, refers to an adult female who is married or widowed.

Urban Women: As used in this study, they are women who live in cities outside their hometown.

Rural women: Women who reside in small relatively homogenous population, marked by low density, face-to-face or personalised relations, primary economic activities such as farming and other agricultural activities, traditional values and cultural identity.

Ethnic Self-Help Associations: Same as Hometown Associations.

Shadow state: A nongovernmental organisation that discharges functions normally associated with the state, in situations where the state fails to perform.

Shadow State functions: These are activities that specifically have to do with the production or supply of public and social goods and services by self-help organizations as opposed to government.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): These are voluntary organizations whose formation, objectives and activities are not determined or controlled by government, even where such organizations are statutorily registered with government.

Participation: Participation implies the active involvement in, and contribution of women to the activities of hometown associations and, through them, community development.

Empowerment: The extent to which membership of an HTA enhances the capacities and abilities of women to cope with and possibly overcome the challenges of daily existence and survival.

August Meeting: A general forum that takes place annually all over Igbo land in the month of August that brings together representatives of the various women's hometown associations (home and abroad) to take stock and plan community development activities.

Self-help: This implies the ability of people, in this case, women, to help themselves in identifying their own needs and mobilizing their own resources to meet such needs through their own efforts.

Gender: In this study, it refers to observed unique and peculiar factors in a person or persons brought about by the nature of the person or persons' sexes.

1.8 Overview of the Study Areas

The Igbo are the dominant group of the former Eastern region who today, are to be found mainly in five states: Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo. Although there are other Igbo groups in River state (this includes the Ikwere, an Igbo speaking group in River state) and Delta state, where the old Western Igbo are now located. To a large extent, the Igbo ethnic group is a 20th century creation which emerged within the

context of the Nigerian state and was enabled by the regionalization of the country's politics (cf Dike, 1956:5-7; Coleman, 1958:333-340).

With an area covering about 15,800 square miles (Ibewuiké, 2006:35), all Igbo sub-ethnic groups speak a common language, with varied dialects (Uchendu, 1993:5) and similar traditions and customs (Ogbalu, 1973; Ifemesia, 1979; Afigbo, 1981; Ejiofor, 1981). Okafor (2004:86) puts the population of the Igbo ethnic group at over twenty-five million. This study focused on two main sub-ethnic groups namely Mbaise in Imo state and Nnewi South in Anambra state. Imo and Anambra states were created in 1976 out of the old East Central state.

Anambra State

The original Anambra State was created in 1976 when the then East Central State was split into Anambra and Imo States. The original Anambra comprised the present Anambra and Enugu States (including the Abakaliki part of present-day Ebonyi State) with Enugu as its capital. Following the states creation exercise of August 1991, Enugu State was excised, leaving Anambra State as presently constituted, with Awka as its capital. The State has a total land area of 4,416 sq km, situated on a generally low elevation on the eastern side of the River Niger, and shares boundaries with Kogi, Enugu, Imo, Abia, Rivers, and Delta states. According to the National Population Bureau, (NPB), the 2006 census, Anambra state has a population of 4,182,032. Of this, 2,007,641 are males while the females are 2,007,391.

The creation of the present Anambra State resulted mainly from the desire to spread the gains of economic development and address the problem of north-south geopolitical dichotomy in the former Anambra State. Before now, there were agitations that the indigenes of the present Anambra State, dominated the state public services because of their highly developed manpower and that there was a high concentration of infrastructural facilities and industrialization in the part that is now Enugu State.

Administratively, the state consists of 21 local government areas spread over three senatorial districts, namely: Anambra North, comprising Awka North and South, Njikoka, Dunukofia, Anaocha, and Idemili North and South Local Government Areas (LGAs); Anambra Central, made up of Onitsha North and South, Ogbaru, Oyi, Ayamelum, and Anambra East and West LGAs; and Anambra South consisting of Orumba North and South, Aguata, Ihiala, Ekwusigo, and Nnewi North and South LGAs. *Nnewi South* which is one of the two sub-ethnic groups of this study, is a local

government area in Anambra state, its population is approximately 1 million (1,000,000). Ukpok is the headquarters of Nnewi South. Other towns that make up the local government include Amichi, Ekwulumili, Azigbo, Unubi, Osumenyi and Uthuh others are Ezinifite, Akwaihedi, Ogbodi and Ebenator.

Table 1.2: The Senatorial Districts and local government areas of Anambra State

District	Local government
Anambra North	Awka North, Awka south, Njikoka, Dunukofia, Anaocha, Idemili, North, Idemili South
Anambra Central	Onitsha North, Onitsha South, Ogbaru, Oyi, Ayamelum, Anambra East, and Anambra West
Anambra South	Orumba North, Orumba South, Aguata, Ihiala, Ekwusigo, Nnewi North and Nnewi South.

Imo State

Imo state and the old Anambra states were created in 1976 out of the old East Central State. Imo covers an area of 7,453 square kilometers and has a population of 3,934,899 made up of 2,032,286 males and 1,902,613 females (2006 census figures). The state is bounded on the North by Anambra state, on the East by Abia State, on the West by Delta State, and on the South by Rivers state. Imo state consists of 27 local government area which are divided into three Senatorial districts, namely, Imo North, Imo West and Imo East.

Mbaise, the second sub-ethnic group of this study, is a colonial creation which is made up of five communities which were brought together by the British colonial administration under the then Owerri Division. But today, Mbaise is made up of three local government areas: Ahiazu, Aboh-Mbaise, and Ezinihitte. The entire Mbaise population is estimated at about 423,000. (NPC,1991).

Table 1.3: The Senatorial Districts and local government areas of Imo State

District	Local Government Areas
Imo North	Ehime-Mbano, Ihite-Uboma, Isiala-Mbano, Obowo, Okigwe, Onuimo
Imo West	Ideato North, Ideato South, Isu, Nkwerre, Orlu, Orsu, Oru, Oguta, Ohaji/Egbrma, Oru-West, Oru-East, Njaba, Nwangele.
Imo East	Aboh Mbaise, Ahiazu Mbaise, Ezihinite Mbaise, Ngor-Okpala. Ikeduru, Mbaitoli, Owerri-North, Owerri-West.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, a review of relevant literature and theories was done with a view to locating the study within appropriate perspectives and providing the framework for analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The chapter ends with a review of some approaches to community development. Some of the key theoretical and conceptual questions addressed were: Why and how are people central to the development process? Why are ethnic associations, of which HTAs are a variant, important platforms of mobilization? What are the impediments to inclusive participation in the development process by women, and how can they be overcome?

2.1 Literature Review

The purpose of this section is to review the literature on HTAs along the lines of the changing and expanded scholarly concern with the subject. It discusses the various roles that have been associated with HTAs by different scholars with a view to locating their roles as agents of community development in a general and comparative way. This will further reinforce the theoretical insights to be discussed later.

The concept of Hometown Associations (HTAs)

Scholarly interest in the activities of Hometown Associations (HTAs) in Africa in general and Nigeria, in particular has a long history. Until the early 1990s when some consensus on meaning was reached, it was used in the past to mean different things. While some saw them as organisations for urban migrants, others perceived them as agents of development. But none of these gave a clear meaning of the term. This ambiguity arose from lack of standard name for hometown associations where the terms 'improvement union' 'progressive union' or 'town union' were used to mean hometown association. But increasingly, scholars have finally elected to use a less ambiguous and self-explanatory term for them: hometown association or HTAs (Abbot, 2002).

To have a better understanding of HTAs, it is perhaps necessary to distinguish between hometown association and ethnic union. They are both similar types of organization. The hometown association is smaller of the two and is focussed toward a particular (home) town: it unites those people who trace their origin to that town and

are committed to its advancement. While HTAs are seen as harmless and admirable, ethnic unions are perceived with suspicion and threat. (Abbot 2002).

HTAs were originally studied by anthropologists and sociologists as products and facilitators of social change in the rapidly changing milieu of urbanisation, rural-urban migration, entry into the modern economic sector, increasing literacy, and so on (Gugler and Flanagan, 1978; Gugler, 1991). Later they came to be seen as agents of associational ethnicity in urban areas, which upheld the traditional African value of everyone being his or her brother's keeper. This led to a shift in focus, from HTAs as agents of social change to that of community developers, in view of the self-help activities they engaged in.

This shift in focus and the attendant investigation of the important roles of HTAs in the lives of ordinary urban dwellers attracted the attention of scholars from several other disciplines, including Community Development. In recent times, the increased profile of traditional organisations, of which HTAs are important examples, and the concern with issues of (self) governance, civil society autonomy, and mobilisation, has attracted even greater attention to their activities as agents of alternative and complementary services and development to those provided by government.

2.2 The concept of HTAs as agents of Social Change

Perhaps the oldest perspective within which HTAs were studied was the social change perspective (Amin, 1974; Banton, 1957; Epstein, 1958; Gugler & Flanagan, 1977; Imoagene, 1967a, 1967b, 1968; Little, 1957, 1965, 1974; Mabogunje, 1968; Smock, 1967). The main concern here was to examine how, from the colonial period, Africans were able to cope with and adapt to the phenomenal changes involved in the transition from traditional to modern society. In many cases, the transition was earth-breaking and revolutionary. Even such supposedly simple conversions from traditional religion to Christianity brought dilemmas over contradictory values on matters as fundamental as marriage, food culture and inter-personal relations. Such conversions obviously needed mechanisms that could serve as 'shock absorbers', and minimally help the cross-pressured individual to cope with the tensions and dilemmas.

Generally, however, the focus was less on individual level adaptation and more on the macro and all-inclusive and systemic processes of change involved in urbanisation, rural-urban migration, movement away from subsistence farming and

unskilled labour to wage and skilled labour in the modern sector, increased literacy, and so on (Adepoju, 1974; Caldwell, 1969).

These required new attitudes and orientations, as well as new identities and changes in social, political and economic relations. Most of the studies within this perspective identified the urban centre (town, city) as the hub of social change. How were (traditional) Africans and new migrants to the city learning to cope with the 'new world' and its different demands from those they were used to? Some of the studies, such as Kenneth Little's *African Women in Towns* (1973) focused on particular segments of the population such as women, but by and large, the concern was with how urban dwellers, as a whole, who came mostly from rural and traditional backgrounds, were managing to cope with the wind of change.

This concern led to the scholarly 'discovery' of the famous "tribal unions" which were formed in the cities by people from the same ethnic localities, several of whom resided in proximate neighbourhoods because of the ethnic patterns of urban residency in African cities in general. *Sabon gari* or strangers' quarters where non-indigenes were kept in most northern cities and a few southern cities like Abeokuta and Ibadan are the best examples of such patterns in Nigeria (Olusanya, 1967). But by and large, people who originally came from the same localities tended to reside in the same neighbourhoods. Such patterns of urban residency provided an enabling environment for the formation of tribal unions.

The tribal unions ranged widely in scope of membership from HTAs which were the most exclusive of the unions, to the more inclusive pan-ethnic unions like the Ibibio State Union, Ibo State Union, Urhobo Progressive Union, and Edo National Union. Several studies found that these unions were not simply the manifestations of the well-known African values of togetherness and solidarity as one would assume, or even instances of what Cohen (1969) regarded as the return to traditional forms of organisation through "detrribalisation", but were formed to facilitate the adaptation of most urban dwellers to the uncertainties of social change.

This was the thesis of the *social adjustment/adaptation school* of HTAs, whose proponents argued that for most new-comers to the city as well as old-dwellers still reeling under the weight of tensions generated by the clash of cultures, attitudes, demands, values and so on, membership of, and participation in, tribal unions provided a useful adjustment mechanism. The unions were especially said to be useful in the areas of helping new-comers to secure accommodation and employment or, in the

absence of these, coping with the stress of not being accommodated or employed, in providing the much-needed psychological fillip in times of need, such as bereavement, loss of job, and post-war rehabilitation, (as it was in the case of the Igbo women).

In addition, by promoting the preservation of 'home' cultures, customs, traditions, languages, and religious practices, through linkages with the home base, as well as furthering the constitutive interests of members of the group in their relations with members of the host community and other out-groups, the unions helped members to resolve identity problems. Despite the important insights into the evolution and activities of the so-called tribal unions, the adaptation school has been criticised on account of a number of flaws. Only two of these will suffice for our purpose. First, some studies such as Barnes on voluntary associations in Lagos (1975) have found that the presumed importance of membership of these unions was exaggerated, and that membership was generally far lower than adherents of the school led us to believe. Part of the suggestion here was that many of the migrants considered 'strangers' found other adaptive mechanisms apart from the unions. A corollary to this, and the methodological lesson, is that the importance of tribal unions to urban dwellers is an empirical matter and that membership is not as inevitable or involuntary as adherents of the adaptation school seem to assume.

Secondly, the social change school championed by Imoagene, Mabogunje, Smock, Little and others has been criticised for assuming that migrants to the city continually need adjustment. This neglects the categories of "settlers", that is, migrants who have found (semi) permanent homes in the city, as well as second and later generation migrants who were born and bred in the cities. Most of the dwellers in these categories have become properly adjusted to their areas of domicile and are less of the strangers assumed in the school.

2.3 The concept of HTAs as agents of Community Development

In a seminal contribution to the sociology of colonialism in Africa, Ekeh (1983, also 1975) gave an alternative perspective of the evolution and dynamics of HTAs and other primordial organisations. He regarded them as excellent examples of the category of social formations that resulted from colonialism, which he called *emergent social structures*. By emergent social structures Ekeh meant social formations which were neither imported from the colonial metropole (*migrated structures*) nor indigenous to African society, but rather evolved to provide the public goods and services by the colonial

authorities and, after them, the post-independence authorities, failed to provide or where they did, in a most unsatisfactory manner (also Hamer, 1981).

In the post-independence period, the role of these formations has been heightened by the fact that:

To a very significant extent, local governance - the actual process of rendering collective decisions about the management of a locality - is left to indigenous institutions of associational life. (Honey & Okafor, 1998:4)

These included the provision of education through building of schools, appointments of teachers, and awards of scholarships, provision of health centres and dispensaries. Others were the provision of recreational facilities, establishment of cottage industries, and building of basic infrastructure such as construction of earth roads and postal agencies (Southall, 1988).

A study of the Fiditi Progressive Union listed the following infrastructural projects embarked upon by the union: primary health care centre, grammar school, road development, post office building, potable water supply, community hospital, public library, construction of market, electrification, and construction of the Fiditi town hall (Agunbiade, 1998). While it is generally true that most HTAs desired to provide these goods and services, it is equally true that not many of them could do so, as the factors of size, resources, and access to government patronage served to limit their ambitions.

Why would HTAs be interested in providing such expensive goods and services or what has been described as development planning? The major reason is that these goods represent some of the greatest benefits of modernisation and, as such are crucial to the development of ethnic groups, home towns and localities which are in competition with others to maximise the benefits of modernisation (Adepoju, 1974). Thus, one area of concern was educational advancement which was seen as the *open sesame* to social mobility and group ascendancy and power.

Many of the earliest HTAs either established or contributed largely to the establishment of primary and secondary schools. For example, the Urhobo Progressive Union established Urhobo College, and the Edo National Union established Edo

National College. These unions also awarded scholarships to brilliant sons and daughters to attend university in Nigeria and abroad. Other areas of concern included provision of electricity and potable water. Today, the building of post offices and police posts has been added to the list. Governments at the federal, state and local levels even mobilise and encourage so-called community development associations to undertake these tasks for the ostensible reason of dwindling resources available to government. In some cases, governments use the strategy of counterpart funding to induce such HTA-based development ventures.

The names adopted by the various unions – ‘progressive union’, ‘development association’, ‘improvement association’, ‘welfare union’, and so on, tell the whole story. A major point of difference between the adaptation perspective and Ekeh's perspective is that while the former restricts the activities of the unions to towns and cities, the latter extends their activities to the (rural) ethnic home areas which are the major beneficiaries of these goods and services, although individual members benefit directly from the ‘welfare’ functions of the unions. The distinctive mark of the public goods and services provided by HTAs and other so-called tribal unions is that they are funded through self-help efforts, that is, through the financial and material contributions of members and well wishers. This is not to deny the tendency of well-connected unions to rely more and more on government support and patronage for the execution of projects, but the point remains that the initiatives and execution of projects are of a self-help nature and many inclusive HTAs continue to rely on self-help contributions.

2.4 The concept of HTAs as shadow states and socio-economic development

A complementary and more recent perspective within which the activities of HTAs have been studied is that of shadow state. Hometown Associations or town unions have been described as *shadow states* because they provide alternative (or complementary) goods and services to those provided by the state, and their functions are referred to as *shadow state functions*. Simply stated, a shadow state is an "expression of civil association acting in place of government when governmental institutions fail to produce what the people want" (Osaghae, 1998; Wolch, 1989). This characterisation makes HTAs variants of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), whose defining elements are autonomy of organisation from state/government and, in

developing countries, provision of shadow state goods to complement the goods provided inadequately by the state (Haynes, 1997).

In recent times, the importance of shadow state functions performed by HTAs and other new-style NGOs has increased all over Africa. The reason for this is the decline in the capacity of governments to deliver the goods and services which traditionally belong to them, due to diminishing resources, huge foreign debts, and violent conflicts, including civil war. In the case of severe and prolonged conflicts, government as it is usually known has ceased to exist. The consequence is the emergence of NGOs in many African countries. Foreign and international NGOs have come to dominate or in fact, taken over the delivery of essential services, especially in the areas of healthcare, education and, in some cases, infrastructural development (cf. Hearn, 1998).

Although NGOs have not taken over from government in Nigeria, the way they have done in a number of other less fortunate African countries, the increased importance of NGOs vis-a-vis government cannot be denied. In fact, government has come to acknowledge the role of HTAs and other NGOs as agents of development, especially at the grassroots. Thus, as part of the rural and community development programme of the General Ibrahim Babangida administration (1985-1993), HTAs were designated community development associations, and integrated into the overall scheme of development as agents for the mobilisation of local financial capital (such as in the operation of community banks and local credit and cooperative societies).

Similar trends exist in other African countries. The cases of Tanzania and Kenya where local voluntary associations have become major actors in the building of schools and hospitals amongst others are particularly notable in this regard. In the case of Kenya, the government has fully integrated the *Harambee* or self-help scheme into its development planning programme. The emphasis in the *Harambee* strategy is on "the need for cost sharing between the people and the government" (Haynes, 1997), while Winans and Haugerud (1977) believe that the high rate of participation in *Harambee* groups is a means of expressing resentment at the national political leadership's failure to provide for the expectations of a higher standard of living.

What has facilitated the rise of NGOs across Africa and the Third World is the growing emphasis on private initiatives in the delivery of essential services by the World Bank/IMF and other important donor agencies who believe the government is too inefficient and corrupt to be trusted with donor funds. Funds therefore are

channelled through the NGOs. In the case of HTAs and other local or indigenous associations, the major sources of funds remain self-help efforts which, the World Bank (1989:6) argues, should be put to more productive use. According to the Bank, "Local non-governmental associations can be drawn into the development effort as intermediaries to promote grassroots activities. Credit unions and informal savings and loan associations...could retail credit to farmers and micro-enterprises".

The World Bank also recognised the vast contributions and potentials of local associations in the areas of employment generation, adult literacy and poverty alleviation. It cited the case of *Undugu* or brotherhood, a private local group in Kenya that is "helping urban youth...to find gainful employment through training and helping communities to alleviate poverty and provide low cost housing" (World Bank, 1989:59; also 2000). These relate to the welfare of members and, in some cases, other "brothers" or "sisters" of the ethnic community or home town. In the absence of social security expected to be provided by the modern state as a welfare state, the HTAs move in to mobilise social and financial resources to assist members in difficult circumstances, such as unemployed and retrenched workers, those who are 'self-employed' in the informal sector, as well as the bereaved, especially widows and orphans.

The assistance takes on a variety of forms. The commonest of these include the allocation of 'bereavement benefits' to widows, widowers and other bereaved members. Scholarship awards and other forms of financial support to children of deceased members, organisation of local or indigenous savings and loans schemes (*esusu*), and the establishment of self-help cottage industries and other small-scale business enterprises run by members who thereby acquire special skills and knowledge. The advancement of credit to poor and illiterate urban dwellers who, because they lack collaterals and other requirements for access to bank loans and credit, is a major instrument of empowerment.

Welfare packages are usually aimed at attracting new members as different HTAs have to compete for the membership of the few people from the ethnic locality or hometown. This is true of Ibadan, which is the focus area of this study. Here, the several Bini, Esan, Etsako, Igbo and Efik associations compete for membership, and those with the most encompassing welfare packages command the largest membership and enjoy the highest social status. There is another tendency, which should be noted. This is that the more ethnically inclusive HTAs which have a diversified home town

tend to focus more on welfare functions and responsibilities to members than those more home town specific associations which pay greater attention to home town community development. In fact, where ethnically broad-based HTAs engage in community development, this tends to be concentrated in the immediate urban locale. A comparison of the activities of the specifically hometown HTAs (Ijebu-Jesa Union, Egbe Omo Ilu Okuku, Asaba Development Association, Iyakpi Progressive Union, Agila Development Association, etc) and those of the supra-ethnic HTAs (Igbo and Yoruba unions in Kano) in the volume edited by Honey & Okafor (1998) shows this very clearly (also see Osaghae, 1994). The same is true of the supra-ethnic HTA to be studied in this research work.

A closely related point is that the size of the HTA is also a crucial determinant of whether the focus will be on community, that is, home town development, or the welfare of members. In general, associations with few members tend to concentrate on welfare, while those with more members place emphasis on community development (Abbot, 2000). The dangers of possible over-simplification should however be recognised here, for there are other important or intervening factors such as the financial capability and educational level of members. For example, a small association of relatively well-off members can do much more in the area of community development than large organisations of mostly poor members.

From all that has been discussed, the contributions of the shadow state perspective of HTAs cannot be underestimated. For Harneit-Sievers, the Igbo paradigm of self-help development clearly demonstrates that shadow state functions committed to community development are integral to the development of identity and construction of belongingness. It is especially helpful not only in explaining the origins of HTAs, but also their sustenance and relevance. This is in spite of the tendency to exaggerate the roles and functions of HTAs, whether as forms of indigenous/traditional social organisation or modern-day NGOs. The perspective also points to the ways in which HTAs can help to empower members.

2.5 The concept of HTAs as agents of empowerment

Not much attention had been paid to the ability of the HTAs to enhance the capacity of the individual to develop himself or herself. In essence, the suggestion is that HTAs can empower the individual, the way Mbanefoh (1998) has argued that

membership of the Eziowelle Improvement Union, a women's HTA, has empowered its members.

The underlying premise of empowerment in these associations lies in the traditional African norm of organic solidarity, which assumes that individuals cannot actualise themselves or become powerful individually; this is possible only when they act within the community or group. This notion is expressed in such trite sayings found in African proverbs as “Gidigidi bu ugwu Eze” in Igbo (unity is strength) or Irepo dun” in Yoruba (unity is strength) "united we stand, divided we fall", “Akugbe o re tin” in Bini (unity is strength), "it takes all the fingers to wash the pot clean", and so on.

The concept of empowerment is often used in relation to the emancipation and upliftment of people in the vulnerable, weak, disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded categories who are dominated for these reasons, and are at the receiving end of power relations in society. These categories include women, children/youth, the unemployed and urban poor, particularly those in slums, and rural dwellers. The largest proportion of members of HTAs comes from these categories, especially those of women and the urban poor. While empowerment is more synonymous with capacity building, emancipation from male dominance can be understood under the contest of freedom from socio-cultural and political restraints imposed by the male dominated society.

Focus shall be on women because their structural disempowerment all over Africa is well known. Despite the fact that they are the managers of household resources, principal producers of food and custodians of family welfare, women face several traditional, legal, social and economic constraints, which diminish their status and place them as second-class citizens. To emancipate them, the World Bank (1989:60) believes that

Future development strategies should favour women. Government and donors should help women's groups to contribute more fully to economic and social development through training and access to credit and by giving them equal status in their dealings with formal institutions.

What the World Bank omits is the role of local voluntary associations in the process of empowering women, largely through self-help efforts. It is for these reasons that DAWN, A women’s group known as Development Alternatives with Women for a

New Era (DAWN) championed the course to resolve the problem of women's exclusion from access to and control over national and international resources (Snyder and Tadesse, 1995). DAWN's view of society was from the vantage point of the poor and oppressed women. It then emphasized mobilization and consciousness raising, with women's organizations especially grassroots groups as the harbingers of empowerment. Women's access to productive resources such as land, credit, education and training through participation in autonomous women's groups to create self-reliance and ensure that targeted measures reach women was stressed. (Ibid, p.14).

It is not as if many of these associations have women's empowerment as a cardinal or primary objective. Rather, the associations provide women a pedestal on which to wage the struggle for emancipation with their male counterparts and strengthen their capacity to be relatively autonomous managers of their lives. As Mbanefoh (1998:106) puts it, "such associations provide women with a collective voice to counter balance men's power...Within the process of achieving empowerment, it calls for participation in (a) male dominated society". Haynes (1997:120) also notes that "The point is that almost everywhere in the world, women's empowerment is essential to achieve wider female access to decision-making and resources" But these empowerment aspects of HTAs, as we have noted, have been neglected. Even Little (1973) whose primary focus was African Women in towns, is guilty of this.

Yet, the fact that HTAs are harbingers of empowerment for vulnerable categories of urban dwellers is fairly obvious. In the earlier discussion of the welfare functions of HTAs, the point was made that HTAs empower members in particular and the hometown or ethnic locality at large through the learning of skills, credit and loans schemes, skill development or acquisition, and enlightenment. Even "learning on the job", as it were, for individual members and those who serve in the executive committees of HTAs, has an important way of enhancing the capacity of members to confront and deal with day-to-day challenges and problems. For example, calculations involved in savings and loans schemes, service as treasurer (a position usually reserved for women), reading of minutes of meetings and knowledge of procedures of meetings, and familiarity with the use of the (association's) constitution, all contribute to increasing the awareness and confidence of members.

Another major area of empowerment is the identity-enhancing function of HTAs. The anonymity and cultural mix of urban centres tend to *de-root* and

depersonalise the unwary dweller. Many, especially children and youths, end up losing their identities. The experience of those who subscribe to HTAs and other local associations is that they serve as stabilising and restoration agents. They do these through the emphasis they give to cultural assertiveness and revival, including linguistic, ritualistic and customary observances, and their representational roles on behalf of members of the ethnic group in the city and in the process helping to mediate disputes between their members and those of the host community and other groups. This function has been highlighted in a study of the Igbo “migrant settlers” in Kano (Osaghae, 1994, 1998).

2.6 The concept of Women’s Empowerment

Empowerment entails enabling people to understand the reality of their environment, reflect on the factors shaping that environment and taking steps to effect changes to improve the situation. It is a process that encompasses people deciding where they are now, where they want to go, and developing and implementing plans to reach their goals.

The above is a prerequisite to women subordination and setting strategies towards a positive change. The concept of women empowerment is the outcome of critiques and debates generated by the women movement throughout the world and the third world Feminist. It can be traced to the interaction between feminist and the concept of “popular education” developed in Latin American in the 1970s (Walter 1991 as quoted by Mbacham, 2001). The latter had its roots in Feire’s theory of “Concentration” and Gramscian thought, which stresses the need for participatory mechanisms in institutions and society to create a more equitable and non-exploitative system (Forgacs 1988; Freire 1973 as quoted by Mbacham, 2001).

The feminist analysis and popular education prioritized gender subordination and the social construction of gender thereby evolving a distinct approach of their goals in the following terms:

*...to unambiguously take the standpoint of women; and ...
demonstrate to women and men how gender is constructed
socially... and can be changed through the lived
experience of the participants, how women and men are
generated through class, race, religion, culture, e.t.c...
investigate collectively how class, race gender intersect in*

order to deepen collective understanding about these relationships.

...to build collective and alternative vision for gender relations ... and ... Deepen collective analysis for the context and position of women ... locally, nationally, regionally and globally to develop analytically tools to evaluate the effects of certain development strategies interests to bring about in their personal and organizational lives ... to help women develop the skills to assert themselves and to challenge oppressive behaviour. To build a democratic community and worker organization and a strong civil society that can pressurize for change. (Walter 1991 as quoted by Mbacham, 2001 p. 93)

In the 1980s, the feminist critiques frowned at intervention that failed to address the underlying structural factors that perpetuate the oppression and exploitation of poor women and failed to make significant impact in the status of women. (Moser, 1989). The approaches made no distinction between the “conditions” and ‘position’ of women. (Young, 1988). Young defines “condition” as the material state in which poor women live such as, low wages, poor nutrition, and lack of access to health care, education and training while “position” is the social and economic status of women as compared with that of men. He argued that, the focus on improving the daily conditions of women’s existence curtailed women’s awareness of, and readiness to act against the less visible but powerful undertaking structures of subordination and inequality (Mbacham, 2001).

Empowerment is both entrusted with the result of that process. Batliwala (1994) described it as the process of challenging existing power relation, and of gaining greater control over the source of power. However, Sharma 1991-1992 posits that empowerment as a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces, which marginalize women and other disadvantaged section in a given context.

Women’s empowerment is entrusted with the goal of challenging patriarchal ideology, to transform structure and institution that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality, to enable poor women gain access to and control

of both material and informational resources. In this wise the process of empowerment must address all relevant structures and resources of power. The causes of women's inferior status is rooted in history, religion, culture, the psychology of the self, in laws and legal systems, and in political institutions and social attitudes. Solutions must penetrate all inadequacies if the status and material conditions of women will effect a change. (Schuler and Kadirgamar - Rajasingham, 1992, as quoted by Mbacham, 2001).

With the above explanation, empowerment implies an increase in the consciousness more than a forced change of power in which there was a destruction of previous structure and values. The empowerment of women does not disempower men it further enhances the empowerment and liberation of men.

The emergence of Women's Hometown Associations has in no small measure, empowered the women and legitimized their contributions to societal development.

2.7 The concept Women's Political Empowerment

The participation of women in politics has been fraught with lots of difficulties, especially, in Africa. It is beset with antipathy because of the effect of patriarchy and colonization. (Ezumah, 2002). The pre-colonial Nigeria was a patriarchal society but women political leadership was not severely constrained as it came to be under colonialism and the post-colonial era (Aiyede, 2005). The colonial era ushered in the English Common Law which emphasised men's control over women.

The Boer and British authorities legislated a customary code that treated women as perpetual minors to a patriarchal chief dominated authority in South Africa (Mamdani M, 2002) and most local authorities were composed entirely of men. The struggle for independence in Nigeria was given a fillip by women who resisted discriminatory taxation by the colonial government and political marginalization typified in the Aba riot of 1929, and the Yoruba women's revolts in Abeokuta 1948 to protest women oppression by the Alake and his male dominated native council (Sunday, 1981 as quoted by Aiyede, 2005).

Historically, Igbo people had been predisposed to democratic and egalitarian social arrangements, which accorded the women a degree of autonomy. In the pre-colonial society, governance and administration of the communities were not exclusive affairs of men, even though the men were at the apex of the system which Okonjo referred to as 'dual political system'. Women's participation in the Igbo

socio-political organisation and public sphere was largely ensured through the 'dual-sex' political system which allowed women and men to carry out their responsibilities without infringing on the other's 'territory'(Okonjo, 1976:45) and having distinct lives of their own. Hence, through this system, which was commonly acceptable to the entire community, women were actively involved in all the socio-political activities of their communities (Uchendu, 1993). But this was limited in terms of individual participation, but as a group, the Igbo women played important roles in the Igbo political system through its kinship institutions, Umuada, age grades, secret and title societies (Afigbo, 1972;Agare-Houessou-Adin, 1998) .The dual sex political system was meant to maintain checks and balances of gender power but this was upturned by the colonial system, resulting to inferiorization of women in Igbo land.

At independence, women did not fare well in politics because of the prevalence of "masculine model" of political life under democratic rule and military dictatorship characterized by violence, fraud, undue influence of money and ethnic violence raised the cost of women participation to frightening levels (Aiyede, 2005). The absence of well-developed educational system for women leadership in general, and the reorientation of young women to politics is not helping matters. The electoral system is fraudulent and women candidates have limited access to political networks and limited finance.

However, women organizations and groups have become increasingly active since the 1990s as great strides have been made through the decade for women, the celebrated International Women's Conference in Cairo in 1988 and Beijing 1995, as well as women issues by local NGOs, governments and international development agencies. Also worthy of note is the effort of the Women in Nigeria (WIN), an umbrella women's group that is actively involved in political debates. The impact of women activism was also shown in the outlawing of sexual discrimination in customary and Islamic law, the increasing membership of women in political parties and the persistence of gender issues at every level of discourse on power (Aiyede, 2005). The international community encourages countries to keep at least 30% of seats in national parliaments reserved for women as a stepping stone till a time when women will hold fully half the world's position of leadership (Caldwell, 2006). It is believed that when women are well represented on governing bodies, the overall quality of governance would rise and the levels of corruption would sink (UN's Millenium project Report,

2005) .Women hold some socio-political influence and have become active actors and agents in the Igbo public .

2.8 Approaches to community development

At this juncture, it is necessary to properly situate this study by examining the approaches to community development, and the extent to which they fit into this framework. Community Development is basically approached from different standpoints, namely the functional approaches, operational approaches and the structural approaches. (Anyanwu, 1992) But two of these major approaches will be discussed in view of their relatedness to this study. They are the Functional approaches and the Operational approaches.

The various approaches have been operationalized by many developing nations including Nigeria, in their rural development programmes which had not recorded much success due to what critics identified as lack of finance, poor administrative framework and insufficient supply of skilled and experienced field-workers. Osuji (1998) attributed the failure of such approaches to the fact that planners and administrators had not considered self-help side by side with economic, personnel and administrative resources. Successful formulation and implementation of rural development programmes depend to a large extent, on peoples' initiatives and self-help activities. Equally important in development programmes, is the approach through which they are executed. These approaches can mutually reinforce the self-help activities of the hometown associations.

Functional Approach

The functional approach emphasises the specific functions of the three main actors in community development which are the participants, (community members), the professionals (Change agents), as well as government agencies and foreign donors. This approach stresses the need for greater participation of community members in whatever programmes they have designed to improve their welfare. In which case, they learn new skills, develop new attitudes and acquire new knowledge to enable them function more effectively for the solution of their problems.

The professionals or the change agents operate as a guide for community members in achieving their goals. They are responsible for constructing learning experiences for the achievement of valuable results (Anyanwu 1992). They are also the

link between the participants (community members) and the government. Their task is to make communities interested and active in developing themselves, in funding and choosing targets, in making decisions and plans and implementing them.

The government's function consists of the provision of services and resources that complement the efforts of the people. The resources may sometimes be inadequate, but would have to be managed by the people in the effort to solve their problems. Government is expected to promote a social process by which the local people can define and solve the problems they face as a community.

Operational Approaches

These are classified into six sub-divisions as follows.

1. The Matching Grant approach in which a community embarks on a project initiated funded and supervised by the community members themselves with government providing the technical, financial and managerial support as a supplement.
2. Directive approach is the type in which the government or outside agent provides human and material resources for the planning and execution of a project for a community. The people are not involved in the whole process of planning and execution of the project. The non-involvement of the people in their own project does not give them the pride of ownership of such facilities. The tendency therefore is for the people to neglect such facilities and strive to embark on their own project that would suit their purpose and give them pride of ownership. These they achieve, through community organisations such as hometown associations.
3. Non-directive Approach is that in which people decide their own need and map out strategies to achieve their goals. This approach elicits enthusiasm and wholehearted participation of the community members. When they execute a project, they are not obliged to report to government if they do not consider it necessary. This is often true of communities that have suffered neglect in the distribution of social amenities. Several communities in Igboland have been developed through the communal efforts of the various hometown associations who are motivated by the competitive nature of modernization as they would not want to be left behind by other communities.

4. The sectoral Approach: In this approach, various development programmes are usually undertaken separately by different agencies, professionals or government ministries without any coordinating machinery. This approach has been criticized for its expensive nature and vulnerability to role conflict. But with proper planning, the latter problem can be taken care of with each ministry taking care of specific sector with the aim of achieving a particular result.
5. The Integrated Approach: This approach suggests that a development programme must be comprehensive rather than selective. This should include provisions for socio-economic, cultural and political development with effective coordination of all human and material resources available in the community.
6. Multiple Approach: In this approach, development activities are handled by a team of experts who provide a variety of services such as education, health, recreation and other services to deal with the totality of community problems. In other words, in establishing a particular facility for a community, an expert would be supported by other experts in different fields, and provide complementary facilities that would make the main facility more meaningful and effective. Approaches to community development in Anambra and Imo are based on non-directive self help efforts at the community level, while the multi-purpose approach is used at the government level.

The various approaches are geared towards the development of the community and can result in the improvements in its structure, function or culture. These conventional approaches as observed by Abiona (2003) would gradually be changed to focus on people as the ultimate target of development. Thus, the development activities of the hometown associations can mutually reinforce these approaches in their interplay for fostering community improvement.

Against this backdrop, it is important to mention other factors which are crucial for success to occur in community development programme. Batten et al (1975) identified the following:

- (1) That a number of people are dissatisfied with things as they are, and would agree on something which they all feel as a specific want.
- (2) That they realize that these want is likely to remain unmet unless they do something about it themselves.

- (3) That they have access to significant resources to be able to achieve what they want to achieve. This implies that they have (or can get):
 - (a) Enough knowledge to enable them to make a wise decision about what to do and how best to do it
 - (b) Enough resources of knowledge, skill, and equipment actually to do it, and
 - (c) A sufficiently strong incentive to keep them together while they carry the project through.

2.9 Indigenous Socio-Political Organisation in Igboland.

An important feature of the indigenous social landscape is the proliferation of age grades. These age grades are primarily organized according to the duties which members of the community may be called upon to perform.

More significantly the existence of traditional women's groups which function in ways similar to the age-grades. Foremost amongst these is the *Umuada* which is an umbrella sorority union of all married daughters of a particular community. However, unmarried but aging daughters of the community also belong to *Umuada* in some areas. The *Umuadas* are harbingers of development in their communities as they usually prod their brothers into involvement in development projects which they see as beneficial in their husband's community. In some cases, they observe such initiatives and encourage a replication of such in their communities of origin. In addition to this, they contribute financially to development projects as well as run credit and contributory schemes for members. This among others spurred Okonjo (1976) to describe it as a union with significant socio-political relevance geared towards achieving desirable objectives. This insight into indigenous Igbo socio-political organisation is significant to this study because it shows why self-help community development has taken deep roots in the area, as the village council, the age grade, and *Umuada* among others centered on the development of the communities. This provides a backdrop to a consideration of self-help community development amongst the Igbo, to which we now turn.

2.1.10 Self-Help Community Development in Igbo Land and the evolution of Ethnic Unions

The Nigerian traditional society, like other African societies, met some of their social and economic needs through group participation. Hence, community development activities began in Igbo land as far back as the pre-colonial days. Stressing the importance of self-help community development in traditional African society, Fafunwa (1974) noted that:

”Age groups are generally engaged in communal work. They may help other members of the group in clearing, planting or harvesting or help the community at large in road building or the Chief in performing a given task or assignment”.

Indeed many communities have through various forms of traditional education sought to instil in the various age groups, the spirit of self-help and self-reliance. Through their organised groups, people have constructed village squares, cleared community roads, path-ways and places of worship, built community markets and worked on their traditional rulers’ farms through cooperative efforts. In many communities, days were specially set aside for clearing pathways and community squares, or communal harvesting of palm fruits to raise funds for community development projects and enable the members of the community jointly pay their taxes.

The constituent units of each autonomous village jealously guard their autonomy and, in particular, their rights to equal shares in the obligations and benefits accruing from the level above them, including equal representation in the elders’ council, the age grades and the Hometown Associations.

For instance, if a town decides to build a town hall, the funds and obligations required would be shared equally among the segments of the town and the number of autonomous villages and each village will in turn share it among its constituent kindred groups. The same system is used for sharing benefits including political positions such as councillorship. The segmentary system operates irrespective of the size of each unit, so that a village with a few inhabitants will contribute equally to costs, and partake equally of the benefits of projects as one with many.

According to Osuji (1975), the colonial administrators did not find it difficult to mobilize communities for self-help projects, due to the deeply entrenched culture of self-help. There was a gradual departure from mere clearing of roads and pathways to building of culverts and small bridges. There was also an enthusiastic response to

literacy education, building of schools, cottage industries and hospitals, health centres, dispensaries, formation of co-operative societies, building of churches and community halls, provision of pipe-borne water and electricity. Consequently, this period witnessed a rapid development of some projects in various communities. Some of the more notable projects, as listed by the Imo State Community Development Office (Imo State, 1977), included the following.

- (1) Establishment of Literacy centre at Owerri in 1951
- (2) Owerri Girls' Secondary School, 1956
- (3) Ihioma Girls' Secondary School, Ihioma, orlu, 1956.
- (4) Okigwe Boys' Secondary school, Okigwe, 1956
- (5) Awo-Omamma Community Secondary School, Awo-Omamma, built in 1958
- (6) Imerienwe Community Secondary school, Imerienwe, built in 1958
- (7) Mbaise secondary School, Mbaise, built in 1958
- (8) Awo-Omamma Community Hospital, Awo-omama, 1959

After independence, self-help projects continued in various communities. Various strategies were employed by the new rulers to motivate and sustain the interest of the people in social and economic growth. However, the civil war of 1967 which lasted three years, disrupted the healthy rivalry among the communities in their developmental efforts.

At the end of the war, people returned to find out that their homes, schools, churches, markets, shrines, hospitals and dispensaries had been ravaged by the war. Atata (1987), describing the post-war situation, said that as the people continued to watch their properties being destroyed, they became overwhelmed and apathetic to further self-help development in their communities. According to Atata, some decided not to engage in community development efforts any more, while many regretted the time and money they had invested in previous community development projects. Osuji (1975) captured the post-war situation thus:

At the end of the civil war, the [then East Central] state government was faced with some dilemma in its efforts to reconstruct the area. First it was confronted with psychological handicaps among the citizens which affected its power capability, in that it had little or no domestic support.

The lethargy towards community development remained till 1976 when Imo was carved out as a state from the East Central State. The local government election conducted after the creation of Imo state provided the impetus for rekindling self-help development. The elected councillors suggested to the people how they could source for material help or technical advice in addition to what they could generate among themselves. The councillors motivated the people through public enlightenment campaigns and the provision of 'seed' money for community projects. This positively imparted on the people and they were once again motivated to embark on development projects. Various communities began to establish associations for mutual assistance to construct roads, establish churches and markets and by the end of 1978, over 159 autonomous communities in Imo State had embarked on various community development projects such as growing of food crops, cash crops, resettlement schemes, building of roads including bridges, civic centres, and health institutions. They also included market development, Agro-industries, Cottage industries, livestock, communal education projects, rural water supply and other miscellaneous projects. According to a report by the Imo State Ministry Of Local Government and Social Development there was a keen competition among the various communities in development activities. Community development activities in Igbo land have since continued to increase to the extent that, communities now embark on new projects every year.

2.1.11 Evolution of Igbo Ethnic Unions

The Igbo as earlier stated have a long history of associational ethnicity. In fact, the Igbo state Union which was formed in 1923 was the second major ethnic Union in Nigeria, That union was based in Lagos and had branches all over the country. Like other migrants, the Igbo in Ibadan maintained close links with 'home' where they took wives, built houses and continued to partake in major customary practices. The first Igbo ethnic union (later known as Mbaise Development Union, MDU) that emerged in Ibadan after the civil war, and the inaugural meeting which was held at St Gabriel catholic School Mokola on the 8th day of April 1973, with Mr. I.U. Anyanwu presiding, was attended by the first eight registered members. The population later increased to 44 by July that same year. Registration fee was then One Naira (₦1.00). And in 1992, Igbo Community Development Association was inaugurated and Chief Nwaodika was elected president and Evangelist S.F.N Amanze secretary.

Ethnic unions were formed primarily to meet the welfare needs of members and to make adaptation of new migrants easier. Nzimiro (1965) has described the central union as a classic example of a welfare association as each member was encouraged to assist unemployed ones in securing jobs. The ethnic unions were also involved in developing their hometowns as they executed different projects at home, through major contributions. The associations also served to maintain the links of migrants with their home communities, fulfil important social and welfare functions (credit, emergency assistance) and also channelled significant resources back home.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that Igbo women have steadfastly engaged in what can be described as competitive self help efforts towards the transformation of their various hometowns. These they did, by joining forces together with other women from the same kindred, clan or hometown in ‘development unions’, ‘progressive unions’ and the like. The women in Diaspora return home annually as delegates of their development unions to strategize with other women on development projects at a forum now known as August Meeting Assembly.

2.1.12 Theoretical Framework

The study was done within the framework of two related theories, namely, **Liberal Feminism and Social development theory**. Insights provided by these theories help to explain the centrality of development to human society and why social groups and communities, including ethnic groups and women devote a lot of attention to involvement in the process. Each of these theories will be discussed and a composite framework will be formulated to guide the study.

2.1.13 Liberal Feminism

The evolution in gender discourse has been punctuated by a number of shifts such as a focus on women –specific projects to mainstreaming women/gender at the programme and policy level; and more significantly, from a reliance on “top-down” planning to a growing emphasis on “bottom up” or “participatory” development strategies signifying the growing politicization of the development agenda.

Like other gender perspectives of development, Liberal Feminism is concerned with mainstreaming women’s roles in the development process, using women themselves. To borrow the language of the Institute of Development’s (IDS), citizen engagement School, this involves a movement away from ‘invited spaces’ of

development to self-determined 'organic spaces' where the emphasis is on the articulation and defense of women's rights in the development process. Focus is on self-help initiatives within the larger framework of state-led and non state-led development. There is also the question of inclusive citizenship, which has brought issues of women's equality, rights and participation into focus. The key concern here has been to identify the factors that hinder effective participation by women. The notion of participation has never been entirely free of charges of being manipulative or tyrannical. Critics juxtapose the emancipatory projects of social justice that guided the social movements of the 1970s, within the community development movements where there were clear intentions on the part of central governments to control rural populations, and argue that participation is rarely ideologically neutral especially when it is invited by government and policymakers. By contrast, when participation is more organic, self-determined and autonomous, it is more likely to produce outcomes desired by the mobilizing groups (Gaventa, 2000; Cornwall and Coelho, 2006).

Approaches to participation have also differed on how participation is to be linked to development. While it is generally agreed that development will be meaningless if it is not about the people, the question of how people participate has been a critical theoretical issue. Should participation be a top-down process in which the people through groups that represent their corporate interests get 'invited' to fit into already determined policies and programmes? Or should it be built from organic and self-determined spaces that enable people make their own decisions and have a say in their own development? The problem with invited participation which has become more popular with attempts to legitimize reforms and resolve the process ownership question is that, it tends to be selective, discriminatory, bureaucratic and sometimes symbolic. This is because government's choices of those to invite have generally been detrimental to the interests of vulnerable and marginalized groups, especially women. It is partly to remedy this situation that some countries have found it necessary to allocate representatives and participatory quotas to women at the highest levels of decision making such as ministerial appointments, but the vast majority of ordinary women continued to be left out of the process.

This makes bottom-up participation, which emphasizes autonomy and self determination, a more significant link to development. This is because, as claimed by the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development (1990) from the perspective of empowerment of the people, the aim of participation is to effectively in-

volve them in creating the structures and designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all and making it possible for them to share equitably in their benefits.

In view of the enormous contributions made by women to their various communities and the subordination and discrimination being suffered by them, their attainment of equal rights opportunities in social, economic and political spheres must become a central feature of a democratic and participatory framework of development. This to a large extent is characteristic of Igbo women's hometown associations. The relevance of this theory to this research lies in the fact that Liberal Feminism affords women ample space for empowerment, although in the final analysis, this has to be related to the policy agenda on women's participation in development.

Against this background, the development of women's roles as captured by the Liberal feminist perspective may be summarized as follows:

That women's disadvantages stem from stereotyped expectations held by men and internalized by women and promoted through various 'agencies of socialization'. (Connell 1987:34; Hondageneu-Sotelo, 1994). The movement also advocates equal employment opportunities for women, thus paying particular attention to women's productive labour rather than social welfare and productive concerns. Again, if there is going to be an enabling environment for women in development, there must be a critique of the neo-liberal theory's macroeconomic policy as a of studies concluded that the expansion of women's participation in informal sector activities and self-help development efforts, has been because of lack of alternatives and increasing poverty caused by structural adjustment and globalization. Diane Elson and other feminist economists call for the integration of gender issues into macro-economic analysis. Elson argues that social reproduction becomes an inseparable element, not only to women's contribution to the economy, but also how ignoring attention to women's needs and empowerment lead to inefficient economy. (Elson, 1998 a. b 1999 as cited by Mayoux, 2001 p.23). The recommendations of the Beijing declaration are being formalized here for making gender analysis central to development indicators.

Women in Development (WID)

The term 'women in development' was coined in the early seventies by a Washington based network of female development professionals (Tinker, 1990:30). On the basis of their own experiences they began to challenge the trickle down theories of development arguing that modernization was impacting differently on men and

women. And that instead of improving women's right and status, the development process seemed to be worsening their position.

WID is associated with a wide range of activities concerning women in the development domain which donor agencies, government and NGOs have become involved since the seventies. The WID advocates adopted a strategy of 'relevance' instead of demands for women to the concerns of development planners and policy makers. The strategy also entailed a more controversial implication, one that emphasized what development needs from women over what women need from development. In other words, WID emphasized that focus should shift from what women need to what women can contribute to development.

Gender and Development (GAD)

The shift in the women discourse from WID to GAD was part of the continuities in the perspectives on women/gender and development that link early WID perspectives of the seventies to the analysis of gender and structural adjustment perspective held by some recent neo-classical economists. GAD is a strand of feminist thinking within economics that challenges the appropriation of the concept of efficiency by neo-classical economics and broadens the discourse efficiency to argue for human and sustainable development.

Gender lobbies in Non-Governmental Organisations grassroots activism like the Self Employed Women's Association in India (SEWA) and some international donor agencies, drawing on the work of feminist academics, further developed analytical frameworks and policies for empowerment. The grassroots activism was, however, paralleled by an increasing theoretical and academic scepticism about the informal sector by writers inspired by Marxist. Studies highlighted the inter linkages between the formal and informal sectors, in terms of the ability of large-scale entrepreneurs to sidestep regulation through putting-out system and splitting enterprises into small units. It also highlighted the mobility of small-scale entrepreneurs between employment and enterprise, and consequently the importance of labour conditions in providing the skills and resources for entrepreneurship (Mayoux, 2001 p. 19).

This theory, contrast with the neo-liberal theory in various ways. There is a focus on women's rights as individual autonomous agents. Gender subordination affects all aspects of women's lives and is embedded at many different mutually reinforcing levels, such as individual consciousness, the household, work, legislation, state structures and international economic and political systems. Entrepreneurial

development contributes to a process of empowerment through enhancing women's productive role and enabling them to challenge inequality within the household. It also serves as a useful entry for wider mobilization. Women's empowerment cannot rely solely on self-help or entrepreneurial strategies, alone but requires direct materials and organizational support in bringing about necessary changes at many interlinked levels.

In view of problems facing individual women, there is an emphasis on collectivity in production, purchase of raw materials and marketing. This does not only address economic needs, but also leads to a wider social political empowerment which will in turn enhance the social-economic status of women. Interventions to support women in tackling inequality at the household level are seen as essential to any enterprise strategies, rather than a separate issue to be addressed through other means. Critiques have argued against support for feminist movement in favour of less contentious practical interventions.

This theory is adaptive despite, its shortcomings, because of its attention to women's economic, social and political empowerment issues, especially its "gender transformative" stance.

Within these various movements lay the basis for theoretical elaborations of the roles of women in development process. The rest of this chapter will now focus on these elaborations as they evolved over the years and critically review the literature.

Social Development Theory

The Social development theory emerged as a result of the gap in the previous top-down development theories which paid little attention to human factor in development including the agency roles of groups and communities. The Social development theory bridged this gap, by focusing attention on human needs and well-being, as well as those related to infrastructure (road, water, electricity, housing, urbanization community development, health care, literacy, human rights, employment and security championed by specialized agencies of the United Nations such as UNESCO and UNDP (Ghai, 1977). The theory paved the way for the micro-systemic variables of development that included the roles of non-governmental agencies, although the state and government remained the key reference points. It emphasized grassroots development, poverty alleviation and self-reliance.

The theory also emphasized the involvement of a broad mass of the population in the choice; execution and evaluation of programmes and projects. Development planners and socio-economic experts, who challenged the modernization view that capital was the main agent for development, have emphasized the importance of labour and a people-centered development (Hyden, 1994). This underscored the relevance of civil society (such as hometown associations) in socio-economic development.

The economic decline of the late 1970s and 1980, the end of the Cold- War, and the emergence of the World Bank, IMF, donors, and new international development partners with their reforms agenda as major actors in the development arena, marked a new chapter in the development discourse. The neo-liberal perspective which has emerged as the dominant school of thought has similar precepts to those of modernization in locating underdevelopment as largely caused by internal factors and emphasizing the role of economic growth and foreign actors in ensuring development. But unlike modernization, social development theory pays more attention to the micro-systemic variables under the rubric of poverty reduction, service delivery and good governance, as it does to micro-systemic variables (economic recovery, democracy) and assigns a greater role to the non-state and private sectors in the development process (World Bank, 1981).

The declining role of the state in particular, has been conducive to the rise of the non-governmental sector and a major plank of neo-liberalism has been to optimize the opportunities for complimentary roles. Thus, bottom-up rather than top-down participation, mobilization and accountability have been emphasized and have demonstrably underscored the truism that development is about people and what they can do for themselves: “Development is something that people must do for themselves. If people are the end of development, they are also necessarily its agents and means” (Ake, 1996:125).

However, much as development theories have had powerful influences on the economy, society and politics of countries, one major criticism from the perspective of this thesis is that their strategies generally did not take cognizance of the gender dimensions of development. This is because Society was assumed to be homogeneous or patrilineal whole, whose dynamics are largely outside women’s control. Yet several studies have shown that women not only contribute to their own progress and to the well-being of their families, but play important roles in the overall development process (Snyder and Tadese 1995:6). Such insights are possible only when development is

approached as a bottom-up and participatory process, which is emphasized in the new perspectives of development rather than as a top-down process as was assumed in development theories for a long time. The Social development theory is relevant to this study as it helps to understand that the declining role of the state is a consequence of the top-down development approach which has been conducive to the rise of non-governmental sector and the civil societies such as HTAs to do things for themselves and by themselves. This study is set within the bottom-up participatory framework as it strengthens the gender perspective of development by showing how and why women get involved in community development through voluntary associations as in this case, HTAs.

2.1.14 Empirical Studies

Francis and Akinwumi (2000) in their comparative study on State, Community and Local Development in Nigeria, assessed the performance of community based organisations in the face of government neglect and inefficiency. They found out through the communities studied that women's organisations ranked second highest among the relevant and effective organisations affecting them. The study showed that the organisations that were most relevant to the development of their communities were, in order of importance, age grades, women organisations, town union, religious organisations and co-operatives.

This ranking reflects the respective contributions which these institutions have made to their community, and further confirms the relevance of women's organisations and HTAs to community development especially in the provision of capital for farming and food processing equipment through the esusu (rotational credit) system.

Equally significant is the study on the historical sociology of 'August Meeting among Igbo women in Nigeria, by Akachi Odoeme (2008) who carefully articulated the significant venturing of Igbo women into public realm and spheres, which were hitherto considered the exclusive of men, through community development initiatives.

The study confirmed that the women raised funds during August meetings to undertake projects such as wells or boreholes in communities that lack pipe-borne water, construct roads, rehabilitate dilapidated hospital/maternity centers, community/town halls, schools and or libraries or build new ones. They also embark on electrification projects, endow scholarships for indigent children of fellow members, and put in place skill acquisition centres for the jobless and less privileged.

It was also found out in the study that the women associations engaged in micro-finance ventures, thrift collection and management, organisation of seminars and workshops aimed at improving womanhood, reproductive health as well as conflict management and peace-building. They also organise Small-scale farming and industry with experts among the women's groups playing the leading role. This tallies with the findings of this study that women's HTAs play enormous roles in empowering their members in particular and developing their community through similar strategies.

In the same vein, Fadeyi (1996) found out in a study that women who participated in income generating programmes benefited economically because they were able to improve and increase their income. She also confirmed that one of the ways women empowered themselves in the traditional setting, was through belonging to an association, membership of which is automatic through their occupation or vocation, age group, locality affiliation or residence. Sako (1999) corroborates this in her Manual on Women Empowerment and Advancement, where she recommended that the formation of self-help women associations would serve as a prospective cover for women's economic interest and their advancement.

Similarly, in a study on the effectiveness of micro-credit as an instrument for improving the socio-economic conditions of beneficiaries in South-Western Nigeria, Olajide (2004) found out that there was a significant relationship between micro-credit scheme and socio-economic development of its beneficiaries. These findings confirmed that micro-credit schemes have positive effect on the socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries as their living conditions improved through access to education, good water and social amenities. With the scheme, the burdens of loan servicing from conventional institutions were also removed. Again, these confirm that the socio-economic empowerment roles of the HTAs have significant effects on the earning capacities of the women and their living conditions.

Odoeme's study also revealed that majority of members of Women's Hometown Associations, especially those who are rural based, were not "literate" which seriously limited their capacity to perform optimally. This to a large extent corroborated the findings of this study which revealed that most participants in HTAs have low educational background as evident in primary certificate holders, 52.1% while degree holders accounted for 4.2%.

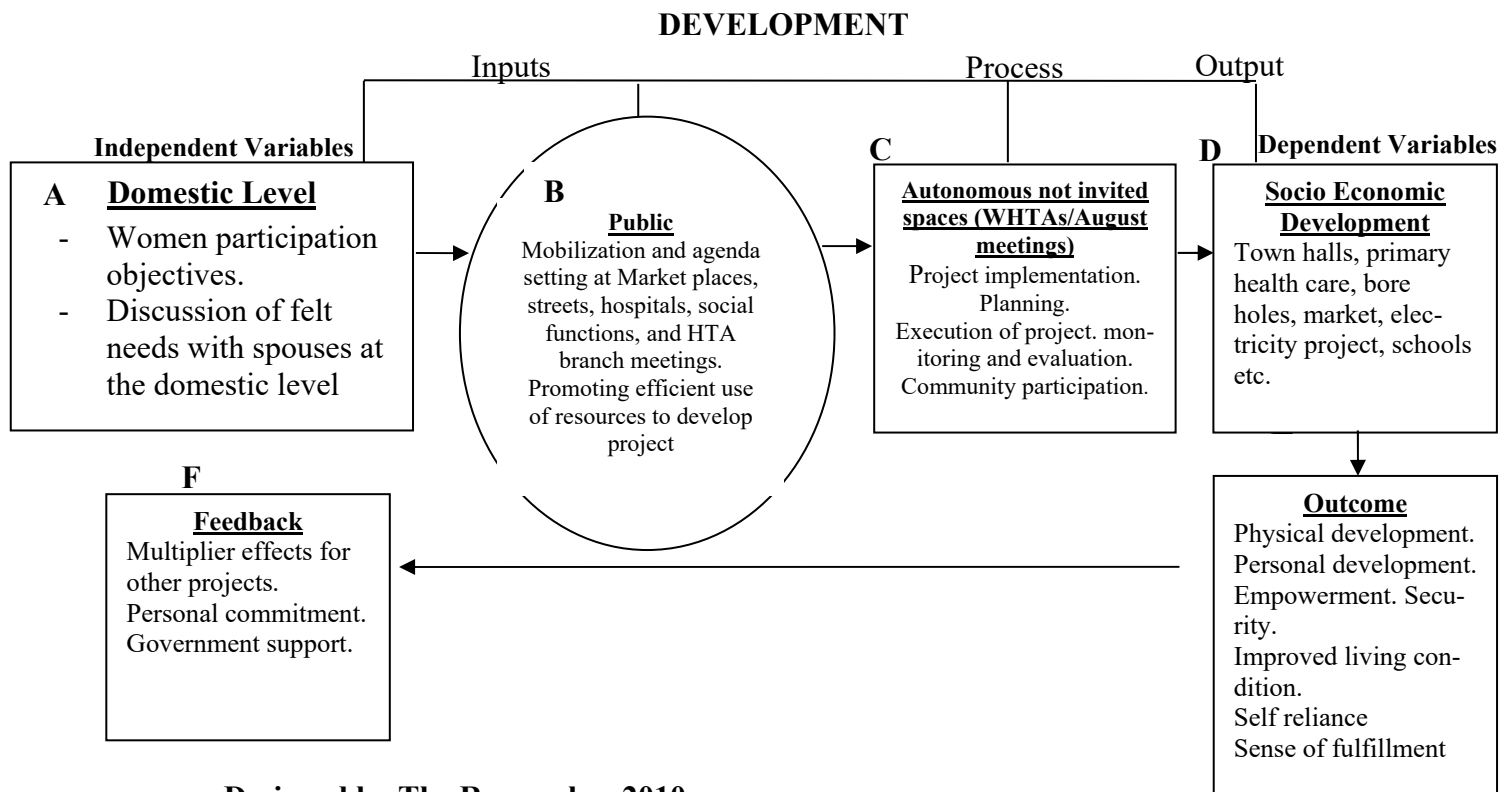
Similarly, Egenti's (2001) study on the influence of citizen participation in self-help projects on the welfare of people in Imo state, Nigeria, revealed that illiteracy is an impediment. The finding of the study revealed that functional literacy significantly correlated with socio-economic development of the nation and community of the recipients. This findings also agree with Rogers et al (1986) and Schurnan et al (1987) who had in different studies shown that literacy attainment is associated with a willingness to consider and adopt innovations; that is, the capacity to incorporate change in both attitudes and behaviour which are pre-requisite for development. Furthermore, several studies have shown that the acquisition of literacy skills have an impact on the productivity of the recipients.

Based on these findings, it has been confirmed that the literate respondents contribute more meaningfully to social and economic development that leads to the improvement in the welfare of the people at the grassroots level. Isenman (1979) who asserts that literacy has significant demographic effects had linked literacy status with improved health practices in Sri Lanka and had shown that infant mortality was lowest in the areas where literacy was highest. In the same vein, Hicks (1979) submits that level of literacy explained the variation in life expectancy across countries more than such variations as caloric intake and protein consumption, the accessibility of clean water, and the number of doctors per capital or the overall measure of the gross national product.

More findings however revealed that there was no significant difference between the attitude of the literate and illiterate respondents towards effective participation in self-help projects for improved welfare of the people in Imo State. But, the findings established further that there was a significant difference between the contribution of the literate and illiterate respondents.

This implies that the literate respondents contributed more meaningfully to rural development in the course of participating in self-help projects than the illiterate respondents. This finding tallies with Lerner (1958) who asserts that literacy is indeed the basic personal skill that underlies the whole modernization process. The study further confirmed Clammer (1978) view on the effect of literacy on the recipients'. He found out that a significant relationship exists between being literate and social change that included the decline of traditional customs, changes in social status, agricultural and domestic innovation and on the evolution of new occupation, dress, moral, attitude and cognitive change which had corresponding effects on the efforts and attitude of literate person towards effective participation in self-help projects for improved quality of life of the community members.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY



2.1.15 Explanation of the study model

As shown in figure 1, this model is to make the point that contrary to the notion that women are passive in the development terrain, the actual process underlying public development begins from domestic levels. Also that women's participation in community development is triggered off at the domestic level among women, especially as a result of the sense of deprivation or the challenges they may face in the course of their daily activities.

The model strengthens the point made in the gender discourse by Women In Development (WID) that emphasis should shift from what women need, to what women can contribute to development.

Box A : This represents the **independent variable** –the participation of women in community development. According to this model, the first point of entry for women's participation and contribution is the domestic front, which represents the main strand of invisible input. Contrary to the belief that women's efforts towards development are passive and invisible especially when it comes to executing development projects, the actual process underlying public development begins from domestic and quasi-domestic levels. Issues affecting women and children as well as the needs of the

community such as maternity centres, pipe-borne water, market stalls, schools etc are mostly discussed at home with their spouses, at market places, on the farm, on the streets and other general places of informal meetings. The women are initiators of the ideas because they are the dispersers of those amenities such as health centres, market stalls, water project among others. This is because they are more affected as they are the ones that bear the hardship of walking a long distance to access these basic amenities. In a patriarchal society where men wield power in the domains of development including superintending the developmental initiatives of HTAs, and where women often have to ‘negotiate’ spaces and agenda setting, the importance of this invisible and informal input cannot be overemphasized.

Box B: This is **the inputs** box which shows the process through which the goals are achieved. When the women form common ideas, they meet at such places as social functions, market places, street /neighbourhood meetings, age grade and HTAs branch meetings where the development issues are articulated and placed on formal political agenda of the annual August Meeting.

Box C: Autonomous ‘not-invited’ Spaces’. This is a higher level of input and the most visible (and formal) point of entry and agenda actualization which include umbrella national HTAs and various grassroots associations. For Igbo women certainly, August meetings have become the most important visible points of entry because it is the autonomous and ‘not-invited’ space for women to participate in development through their own efforts as against the ‘invited spaces’ or top down model in which women’s (as in citizens) participation is determined and defined by government.

The more formal and conspicuous involvement and contributions of Igbo women in Ibadan to hometown development have been channeled through the various home-based social group and associations – age grades, associations of first daughters, church societies, national umbrella HTAs whose annual meetings are attended by delegates from branches all over the country. Of these, the August meetings have become the most important because they have come to be accepted by the various actors and development stakeholders at the hometown level (men’s organizations, traditional authorities, church) as the fulcrum or women’s involvement in hometown development.

Box D: This box represents the **dependent variable** which is community development in terms of socio-economic development such as health care centres, bore-hole project, electrification project, road project, school , market stalls among others.

Box E: This represents **the Output**. It shows the impact of the output. In other words how the outcome of the women's participation has produced empowerment, physical development, improved standard of living, self-reliance, cohesiveness, improved sanitation and self-actualization. When participation is more organic, self-determined and autonomous, it is more likely to produce outcomes desired by the mobilizing groups.

Box F: The **feedback** box shows how the success of the project implementation induces a multiplier effect on the affected community. The achieved goal, that is the outcome encourages the community to embark on more self-help projects and attracts more personal commitment towards the maintenance of the existing projects, which they see as their own rather than those imposed on them.

This agenda-setting role of the women and their input to development prove the powerful influence they can have on the initiation and implementation of projects.

This is very remarkable considering the patriarchal structures and ideology of the society, which question the competence of women in development terrain. But the point that is often overlooked is the powerful influence which the women bring to bear on the decision making process of the male dominated HTAs who have the authority to implement the ideas, sometimes having to do with the government. Their power (Complemented with men's authority) to strategize influence and initiate projects by women is to a large extent a major contribution to development.

2.1.16 Appraisal of Literature Review and Theories

The foregoing review of the literature shows that the role of HTAs in the overall development process is well entrenched in African social formations. They have not only served as agents of self-help community development, they have also complemented the efforts of government in the provision of public goods by government through shadow state activities. Perhaps most importantly, they served to empower members and stabilise individuals and communities during periods of crisis such as those that followed economic recession and lack of provision of basic infrastructure by government. Although some of the various perspectives generally focus on the gender dimensions of development through HTAS, there is enough in the

literature – such as the concept of women empowerment, women’s political empowerment, the articulations and advocacy of DAWN, World Bank and authors like Haynes and Snyder and Tadese – to build upon. This is especially true of the perspectives that emphasize the empowerment functions of autonomous women’s groups like HTAs. This provides the basis and necessity for a study of women’s self-determined contributions to development. On the conceptual framework, the study examined the following relevant concepts: The concept of HTAs, HTAs as agent of social change, HTAs as agent of Community Development, HTAs as shadow states and socio-economic development, HTAs as agents of empowerment and Approaches to community development.

The theories and the literature reviewed, cumulatively support this conclusion that development is multi-dimensional, participatory and from a gender perspective, competitive and contested. They also indicate that even where Women are relegated and marginalized from the process, a lot depends on how they organize and become conscious of the need to be relevant. This is the essence of development as empowerment, which involves active participation as the key platform. Without participation, empowerment is unlikely and without empowerment, development space is constricted. This is the main thesis that runs through the study, which takes women’s HTAs as the platform for self-help participatory development.

Therefore, the gap in knowledge from previous researches which this study is trying to bridge is that community development studies had been lagging behind without the involvement of women. In other words, previous studies have not done justice to the participation of women in community development through Hometown associations, particularly in Igboland.

2.1.17 Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

- H₀₁:** Women’s socio-demographic factors will not significantly predict their participation in home town associations.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the perception of rural and urban women on the need to participate in women’s HTAs in Igbo land.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried women on the need to join HTAs.

- H₀₄:** There is no significant difference in the perception of urban and rural women on HTA as a tool for women's empowerment and emancipation.
- H₀₅:** There is no significant relationship between the perception of rural and urban women on the effectiveness of HTAs and August Meeting in community development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study. It was considered appropriate for this study because it falls within the empirical research design which is devised to collect specific types of information providing more precision and flexibility than other techniques as they produce a firm basis for social impact assessment of development factors when desired in future. With this, the researcher was able to obtain factual information on the variables of the study and to describe, draw inferences and make generalization on women's participation in Hometown associations and community development.

3.2 Population

The population of the study comprised members of six selected Ibadan-based women's Hometown Associations that had their origins from Nnewi South local government, Anambra state and Mbaise communities in Imo state, as well as their counterparts in their hometowns. Their participation was assessed from the normal activities of these associations in Ibadan and their hometowns in the South-east.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the study. This procedure involved four different stages.

Stage i: The purposive sampling technique was used to select Imo and Anambra states being the two oldest states in the South Eastern state.

Stage ii: The 'fishbowl' sampling technique was employed to select three women's hometown associations each from Imo and Anambra states.

Stage iii: The total enumeration technique was adopted to select 238 urban members of the six selected HTAs as respondents for the study.

Stage iv : Also the stratified random technique was again used to select 2862 rural members of the six selected HTAs used for this study.

Altogether, a total of 3,100 respondents were used for the study. (see table 3.1 below)

Table 3.1: Population and sample size selected for the study

S/N	States/Selected HTAs	Population	Sample Size	Total
i	<u>Anambra South LG</u> Amichi Women's Ass.	33	33	480
	Ukpor Improvement Union	50	50	400
ii	Unubi Devt. Union	35	35	382
i	<u>Imo East (Mbaise)</u> Oboama's Women's Ass. (EzihiniteMbaise)	60	60	400
	Nguru Women's Association (AbohMbaise)	30	30	800
iii	Ahiazu Women's Association (Ahiazu Mbaise)	30	30	400
	Total 6	238	238	2,862

Source: field survey, Dec. 2005

3.4 Research Instruments

The main instruments used for data collection were three sets of questionnaires: 'Women Hometown Associations (WHTA) Inventory', 'Women's Perception of HTA Scale (WPHTA)' Scale' and Women's Hometown Associations and Community Development (WHTAs CD) scale. These were complemented with 16 sessions of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and six Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) The 'WHTA Inventory' which is Women's hometown Associations Inventory drew information on demographic features of the subjects. Nine items were used to ask

questions on age, sex, income, educational category, marital status, and occupation of the respondents.

The second one tagged, ‘Women’s Participation in Hometown Associations Scale’ (WPHTA scale) elicited information from respondents on their perception of HTAs, their level of participation in them, and the effects of participation on their well-being as well as the level of development attained in their home communities through self help efforts of the hometown associations.

The third one tagged ‘WHTAs and Community Development’ (WHTACD scale) drew information on the community development activities of the women’s hometown associations at the grassroots.

This was drawn on a four point rating scale namely: Strongly Agree (SA) 4, Agree (A) 3, Disagree (D) 2, Strongly Disagree (SD)1.

3.5 Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussions were organised in the communities for members and principal officers of HTAs to gather information on the impact of the women’s hometown associations on their communities. This method enabled the researcher to get first hand information on individual and corporate contributions of the women’s hometown associations to community development. The participants at the group discussions were selected with the assistance of contact persons who were indigenes of the communities.

Table 3.2: Schedule of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Sessions

Centre	No. of visits	Dates visited		No of respondents	
		1 st visit	2 nd visit	1 st visit	2 nd visit
Mokola Ibadan	2	26/6/05	31/8/05	10	6
Onireke ”	2	12/6/2005	14/9/2005	10	6
Aboh Mbaise, Imo	2	3/8/2005	2/12/2005	10	8
Ahiazu Mbaise, Imo	2	3/8/2005	2/12/2005	10	5
Ezinhitte Mbaise, Imo	2	3/8/2005	2/12/2005	10	6
Ukpor, Anambra	2	4/8/2005	3/12/2005	10	6
Unubi, Anambra	2	4/8/2005	3/12/2005	10	5
Amichi, Anambra	2	4/8/2005	3/12/2005	10	5

3.6 Key Informant Interview

This instrument elicited information from leaders of the women's associations and their male counterparts in Ibadan and Igboland. There were thirteen items for this category of informants and they were designed to draw information on their community development activities, their strategies, their challenges and their successes.

3.7 Secondary Source

Information from Secondary sources was derived from books, journals, periodicals mimeographs, newspapers and official statistics, archives at Ibadan corporate bodies, organisations and other relevant documents including constitutions of the associations, minutes of the meetings, financial statements and annual reports.

3.8 Validity of Instruments

To ensure that the questionnaires had face and content validity, the items on the questionnaires were drawn to reflect the objectives of the study. They were then vetted by the researcher's supervisor and other academics in the Faculty of Education. Their criticisms and corrections were relied upon in the amendment of the questionnaire before it was considered valid for data collection.

3.9 Reliability of Instruments

A pilot test was done before the fieldwork was finally carried out. This involved administering the questionnaire to thirty respondents from HTAs which were not part of the study group, and the data were analysed to ensure that the instrument measured the variables it was designed to measure. Necessary corrections were subsequently effected to make the questionnaires more user-friendly and field-ready. Responses from the test were analysed using Cronbach alpha reliability statistics to verify the reliability. The Cronbach coefficient for each of the questionnaire is as follows:

- (i) Reliability Coefficient for WHTAs =0.83
- (ii) Reliability Coefficient for WPHTA Scale = 0.79,
- (iii) Reliability Coefficient for WHTAs and CD Scale= 0.68

The three instruments used were considered reliable as the reliability coefficient which is very close to 1 connotes a strong correlation between two variables.

3.10 Administration of Instrument/Collection of data

The questionnaires were administered to the respondents with a view to eliciting information on the level of women's involvement in community development, the effects of this on their quality of life and their motivating factors. Six research assistants were recruited and trained on the subject matter and method of data collection. The research assistants were also introduced to the concepts of the study, the goals and objective and how to spot-check an interview session. They were drawn from Awka in Anambra state and Owerri in Imo state and as such were very familiar with the terrain and language was not a barrier. The Researcher also got assistance from the Department of Community Development of the Directorate of Social Development, Youths and sports in the area of useful data from their records. In administering the questionnaires, the Researcher and the assistants made extensive use of Moser's Method, otherwise known as 'captive audience situation'. In other words, the questionnaires were administered to groups of individuals assembled in the same place. The women were 'captured' at their meeting places on Sundays, at market place and sometimes, after church service. The women leaders were however met in their homes on appointment. The advantages of this method are two folds, namely that it affords the researcher the opportunity to explain to the respondents any point in the questionnaire which needs clarification. The other advantage is that most of the questionnaires were completed and retrieved without much delay.

In all, a total of 3,100 questionnaires were administered, of which 2130 were returned, representing a response rate of 69 percent. Of these, 1080 respondents were from Anambra state and 950 from Imo state, while 218 were urban based and 1,922 rural based.

Oral interviews and discussions were held with women leaders in the urban and rural areas of study as well as male Igbo leaders in Ibadan. It was necessary to interview the male leaders because they were the pioneers of the hometown associations before the emergence of the women wings, and as such they were in a position to give oral history of community development and self-help efforts of their hometown associations. Notes were taken and some of the interviews were recorded on audio-tape.

A total of 16 focus group discussions were held with two each for the six town unions in their hometowns and two each for the two states representatives in Ibadan.

One hundred and twenty seven (127) women whose age ranged between 25 and 60 participated in the discussions. Similarly 4 key informants Interviews (KII) were held: 2 interviews for male Igbo leaders and 2 for female leaders. The FGD sessions were carried out with a guide developed by the researcher. The guide consisted of sub themes relating to the objectives of the study. Each FGD session was facilitated by the researcher with an assistant taking the note. Each session was recorded on tape with the consent of the participants. While the notes provided a quick feedback on participants' opinions on the issues, tape recording helped to capture every word and complemented the notes taken.

The combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods in this study enriched the data collected, in that they provided the opportunity for better understanding of the participatory development efforts of women in their various communities through hometown associations.

3.1.1 Method of Data analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics of Chi-square, t-test and multiple regressions, while the quality data were content analysed.

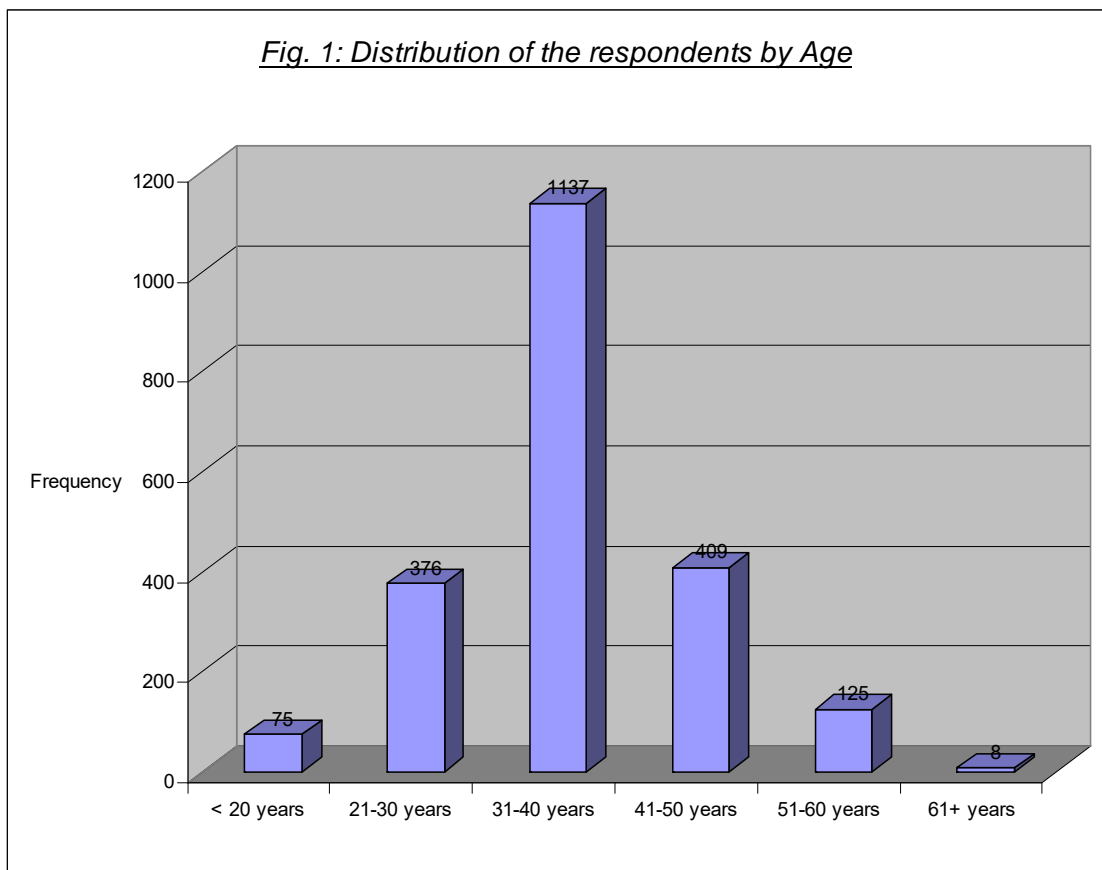
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents data analysis and discussions of the findings arising from the data generated from the sampled respondents. The results are therefore presented under various headings, highlighting answers to the research questions and testing of the hypotheses.

4.1.1 The Socio-demographic Characteristics of Women Who participate in HTAs

Chart 4.1.1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Age



The demographic characteristics of respondents are essential factors in determining their disposition to participation in community development activities in the selected Igbo communities. The chart (4.1.1) above shows that out of the 2130 respondents, majority of them fell within the age range of 31-40 years representing 53.4%, followed by respondents in the age group of 41-50 years, constituting 19.2% and then 21-30 representing 17.6%. These are women who could be said to have come of age in terms

of experience and commitment to development through socio-cultural activities in their various communities. The implication of this is that women who participate in Hometown Associations have great responsibilities towards their families and their communities and as such have great need for co-operative actions and social networking such as HTAs for their support.

Marital Status of Respondents

Chart 4.1.2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Marital Status

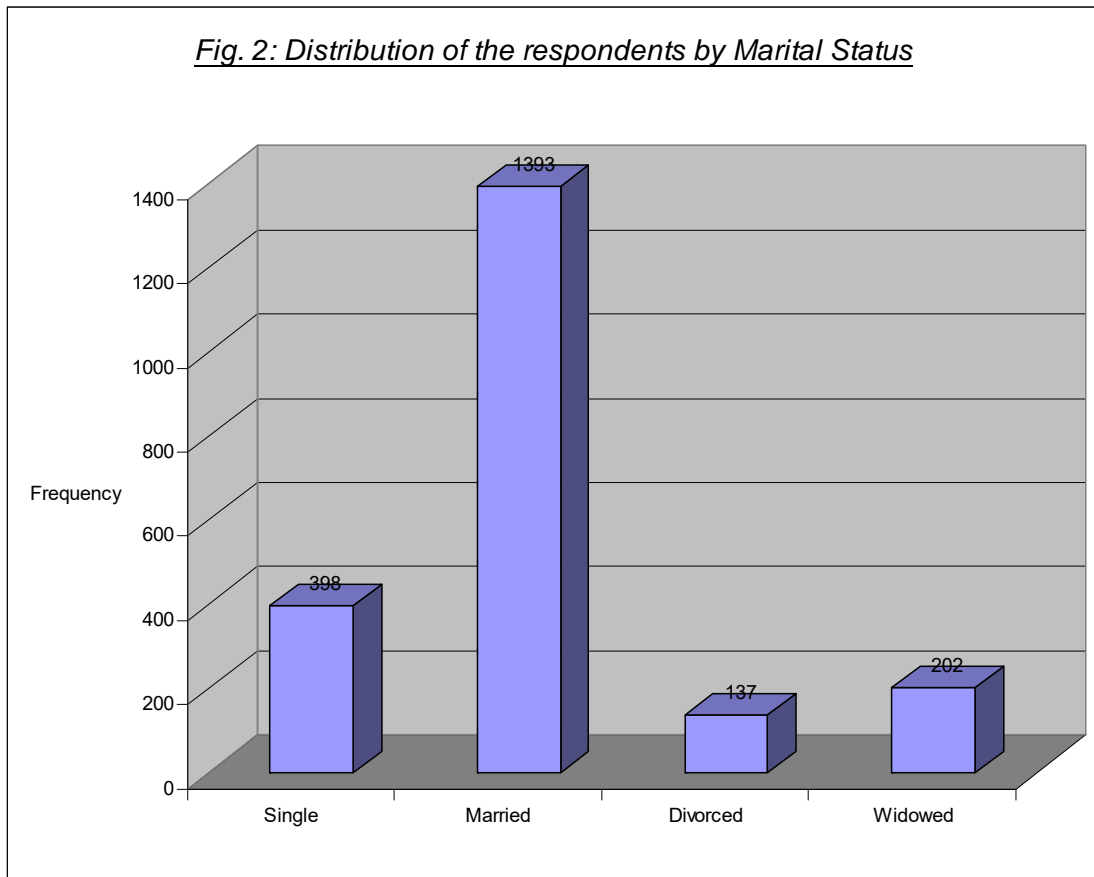
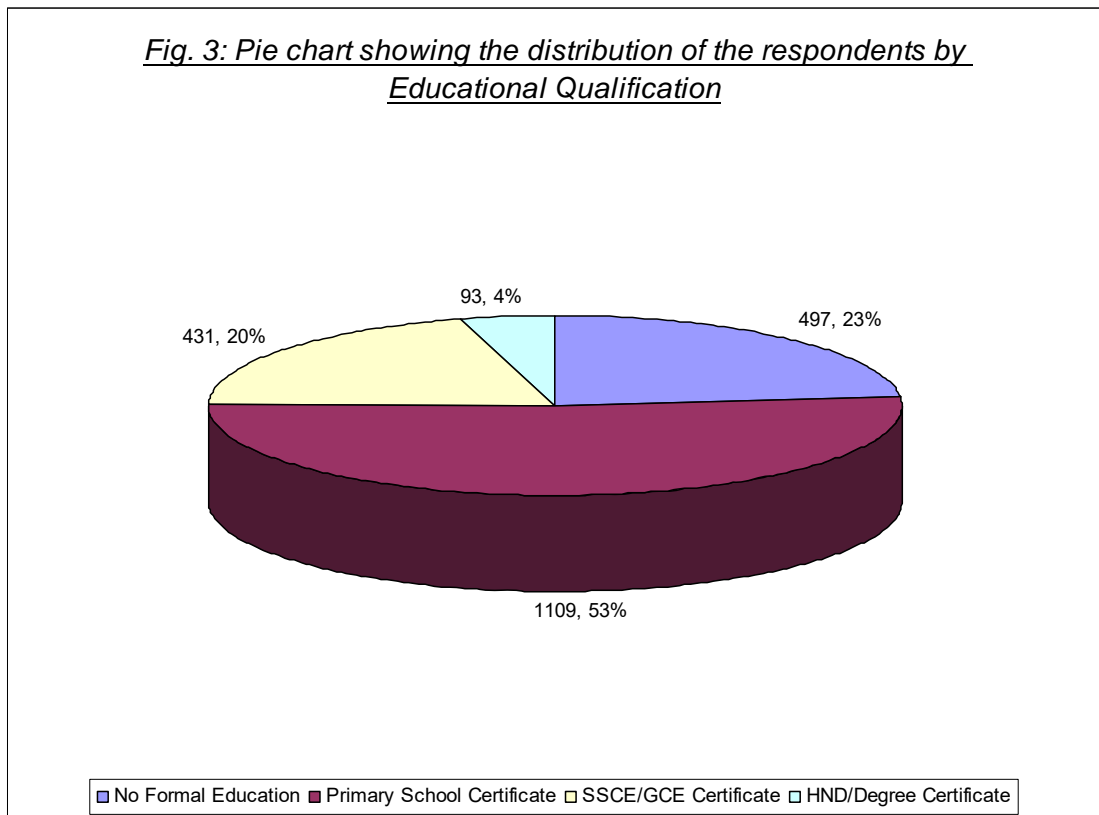


Chart 4.1.2 shows that 65.4% of the respondents were married while 18.7% were single. The remaining respondents were either divorced (6.4%) or widowed (9.5%). The implication of this is that hometown associations are a socio-cultural group with a large number of responsible women on account of their marital status. Also, the result implies that the hometown associations could be said to be constituted by women with high social responsibilities. In fact, the point of becoming a member of a hometown association is marriage. This is because the Igbo women are expected to belong to their husbands' hometown unions and contribute towards the development of the town through their HTAs.

Educational Qualification of Respondents

Chart 4.1.3: **Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Educational Qualification**



The educational qualifications of the respondents presented in chart 4.1.3 indicates that majority of the respondents (52.1%) had low educational background as evident in the Primary School Certificate holders, followed by those without formal education representing 23.4% while 20.2% of the respondents attained secondary school education. The remaining 4.2% had post secondary education and degree certificates.

This implies that since only 23.4% of the respondents have no formal education, and the larger percentage are literate, they therefore would be able to represent their communities on issues relating to hometown associations and their contributions to development in their communities. Although, the respondents are not stack illiterates and can function with their low level of education, their capacity to perform optimally, especially, in this age is limited. High literacy level could positively affect their attitudes toward participation in HTAs and their self-help programmes.

Religious background of Respondents

Chart4.1.4: **Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Religious Background**

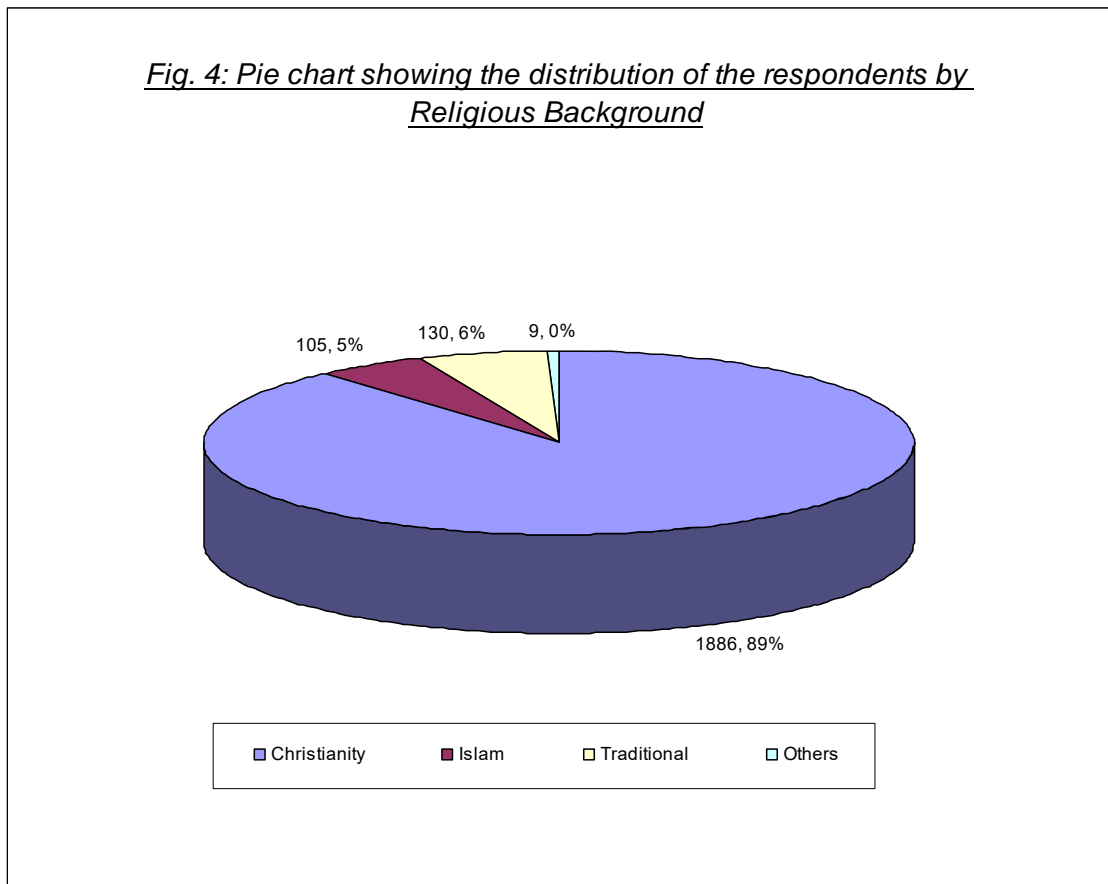
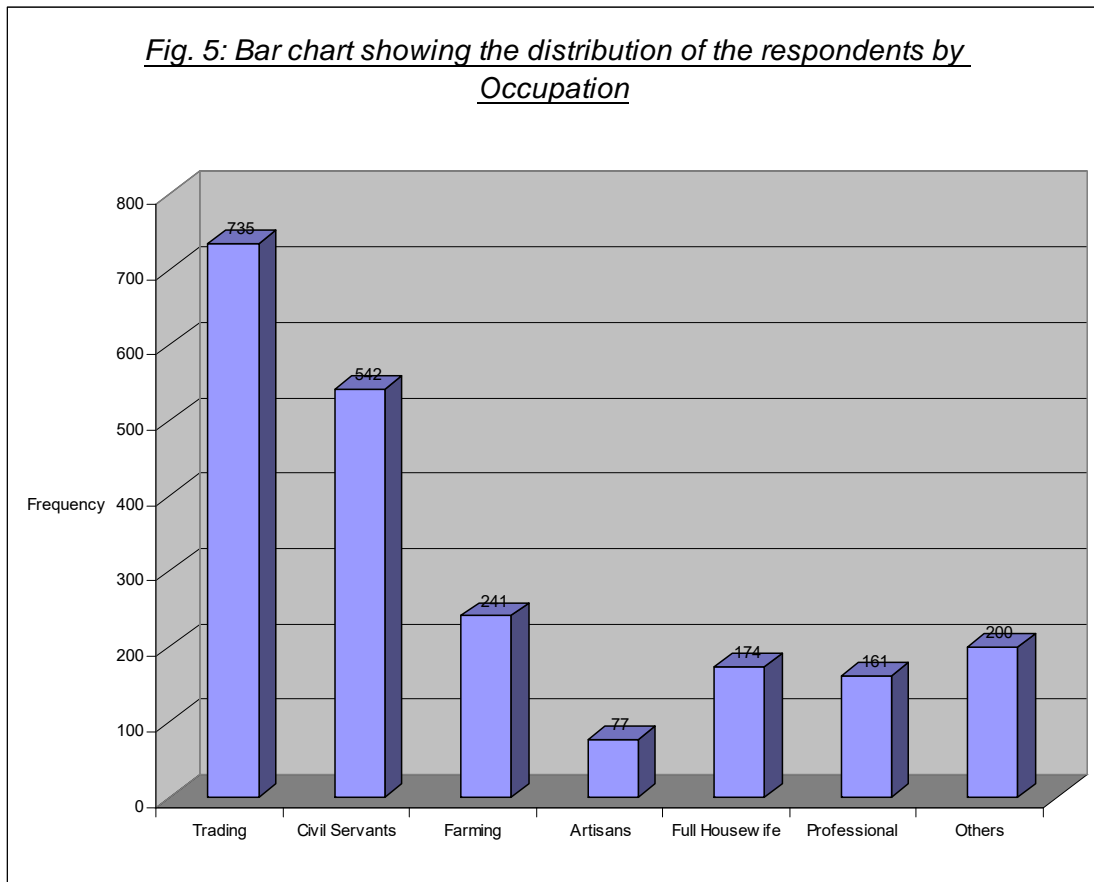


Chart 4.1.4 above shows the religious background of the women sampled in the study. The result indicates that there were more Christians (88.5%) than all other religious affiliations put together. Traditional religion accounts for 6.1% of the total respondents while Islam represents 4.9%, the remaining 4% indicated that they practice other religions. Evidently, Christianity is the predominant religion in the study area. The implication of this is seen in the emergence of women's community development associations, from the annual church harvest thanksgiving and bazaar which witnessed massive home return at Christmas. This later metamorphosed into what is known today as 'August Meeting' through which many HTAs channel their community development efforts.

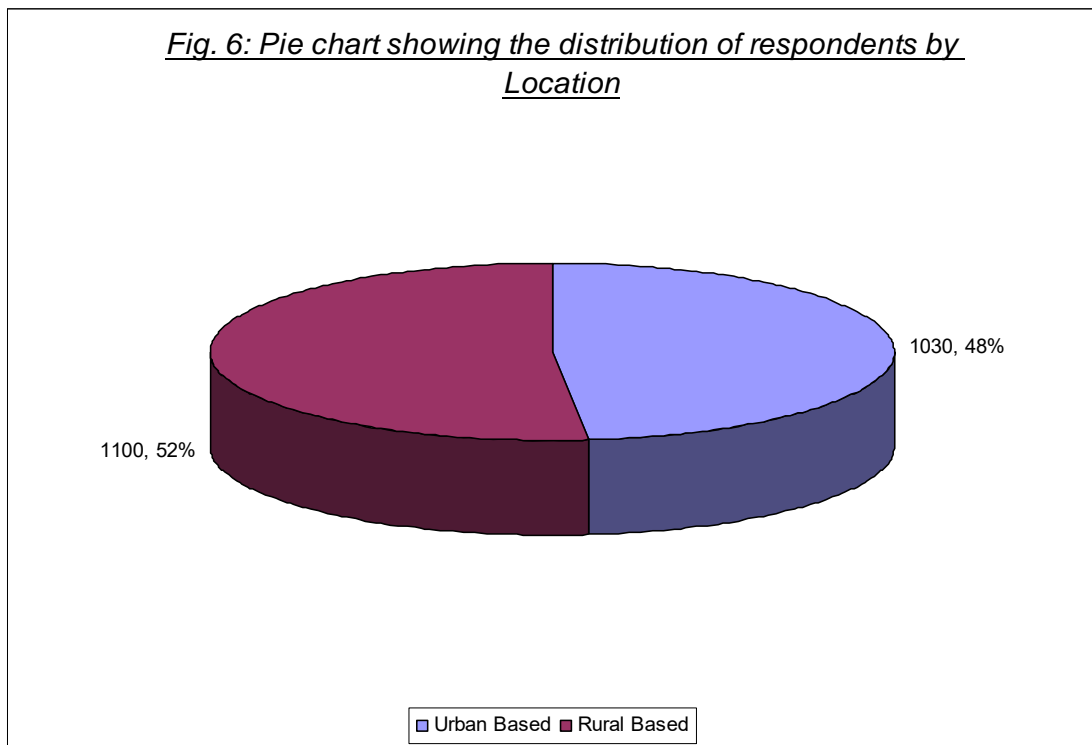
4.1.5. Respondents' Occupation

Showing percentage distribution of respondents' occupation



The occupation of the respondents is shown in Chart 4.1.5 above. The result indicates that most of the women were traders (34.50%), Civil Servants (25.4%) while 11.3% represented farmers. One hundred and seventy-four (174) respondents representing 8.2% were full-time housewives while professionals were 161 representing 7.6%. The remaining 9.4% engaged in other means of livelihood. This result is consistent with the age- long occupational characteristics of the people, especially women from the study area whose entrepreneurial orientations are well known. Perhaps, this could also account for their interest in participating in home town association on account of the solidarity and affiliation they gained through commercial activities and co-operative action. This also shows that many participants of HTAs belong to low income group whose source for cooperative support for empowerment which they often get from participating in HTAs.

4.1.6 Respondents' Location



The location of the respondents for the study presented in diagram 6 above shows a relatively equal location representation of participants from the urban and rural areas. In other words, there is the elimination of negative skewness or bias in participants represented in the study. Most respondents from the two locations are participants in hometown associations in their different locations. This points to the fact that Igbo women, whether home or in diaspora, attach much importance to HTAs for diverse reasons, ranging from empowerment, ethnic identity, socio-political among others.

Table 4.1.7: Regression Analysis on the Independent Predictors on Igbo women's participation in hometown associations in rural and urban communities

Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	P	Sig	R	R square	Adj. R	Std Error of Est.
Regression	1792.976	7	256.139	50.402	<0.05	0.000	0.378	0.143	0.140	2.25431
Residual	10783.822	2122	5.082							
Total	12576.798	2129								

Significant at (F = 50.40; P<0.05)

Table 4.1.8: Table of Coefficient showing relative effects of independent variables (Age, Education, State, Occupation, Income, Location and Marital Status) on Participation

Model	Unstandardized Co-efficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	16.600	.369		45.094	.000
Age	-2.605E-	.060	-.010	-.434	.664
Education	02	.060	-.190	-7.594	.000
State	-.458	.101	-.114	-5.181	.000
Occupation	-.522	.025	-.008	-4.013	.000
Income	-9.867E-	.040	.109	4.441	.000
Location	02	.096	.002	.083	.934
marital Status	.176	.102	-.031	-1.460	.144
	7.968E-03				
	-.149				

The result above shows the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on the dependent: Age ($\beta = -.010, P >.05$), Education ($\beta = -.190, P <.05$), State ($\beta = -.114, P <.05$), Occupation ($\beta = -.008, P <.05$), Income ($\beta = .109, P <.05$), Location ($\beta = .002, P >.05$), Marital Status ($\beta = -.031, P >.05$).

It is shown in the above table that while Education, State, Occupation and Income are significant, others like Age, Location and Marital Status are not.

Interpretation and Discussion of Findings

In table 4.1.7, the summary of the regression analysis of the independent predictors (demographic factors) on the participation of rural and urban women in hometown association shows that, there is significant prediction ($R = 0.378$; $R\text{ Square} = 0.143$; $P < 0.05$). The socio-demographic factors significantly and jointly predicted women's participation in hometown association. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication is that socio-demographic factors like age, religious affiliation, marital status, level of income and education cumulatively affect participation of women in Hometown associations and their developmental activities.

Age and Participation

The first variable which is age shows that women between 31 and 50 are more active in HTAs activities, suggesting that women in that age bracket have great responsibility towards their families and their communities and as such depend on social networking such as HTAs for support.

Religion and Participation

The second variable which is religion established that Christianity accounted for 88.5%, followed by traditional religion 6.1% and then Islam 4.9%. The result indicates that Christianity is a predominant religion of the people in the study areas. This, to a large extent explains the reason for the wide acceptance of the annual August meeting assembly, which originated from the church. But since developmental activities are the hallmark of hometown associations, religion is not a hindrance to participation. In line with this, Hull (1981) confirmed that although culture may influence participation of culture-based projects, there is no evidence to really ascertain that religion as a component of culture plays any significant role in who participates in community development projects. Thus while it is possible for marital status, educational background and age to be determining factors in participating in HTA activities religion has not been found to have any significant influence.

Marital Status and Participation

The third variable is marital status. Table 4.2 above shows that married women represent the largest group of participants, accounting for 65%. This implies that hometown associations are constituted by women relatively high social responsibilities. The point of entry into membership of HTAs for most women is when they get married. They join their husband's hometown association as a symbol of acceptance into her husband's kinship. This is mandatory for all married women, even when they already belong to their own hometown union and other associations such as first daughters association, married daughters association among others.

This study also shows that marital status is a significant factor on the need to participate in hometown associations as the number of married women exceeded those of widows and single women participants. This implies that married women have higher stakes in what the HTAs offer in terms of welfare, financial support and sometimes scholarship to their children. By virtue of their marriage, the women automatically belong to their husband's hometown associations and this guarantees their integration and acceptance into their husband's kinship. HTAs therefore provide a wider recognition of the married women by the kinsmen of their husbands. Analysing this trend, Ofondu (1997) noted that such meetings were organized on the basis of kin-group... and served the twin purposes of integration and identity for women married into a particular clan or kindred.

This is consistent with Ofondu's (1997) observation that the corporate organization of women married into a particular community is an age-long practice in South-eastern Nigeria. Such meetings, he explained further, were organized on the basis of the kin-group...and served the twin purposes of integration and identity for women married into a particular clan or kindred. Since married women have more social responsibilities and family obligations to meet, they therefore take solace in hometown associations for support and as Snyder (1991) puts it, they are catalyzed into action to ensure the survival of their households and communities. This action includes organizing themselves for wide ranging purposes including mutual savings, co-operative farming and marketing as well as other activities which are embedded in the town unions.

Level of Education and Participation

The study revealed that women who had primary and secondary education participated more in HTAs activities than those with post-secondary education. Highly educated women are less likely to participate in HTAs and their community development efforts when one considers the fact that, in general, women's (and men's) voluntary associations are class-based and HTAs are not different. Highly educated men and women form and belong to more exclusive elitist associations and leave the more grassroots organizations to the 'masses'. Their involvement at such levels is more often than not instrumentalist, and comes about when they need grassroots support to advance their individual and constitutive interests, as is the case at election times. Ordinary people, the masses, on the other hand, attach a great deal of importance to communal self-help initiatives and efforts because when the state fails them, as frequently happens, unlike the elites who have several other options open to them, they have only the "economy of affection" to turn to. The premium placed on the mobilization of local capital, including the collaborations and resource pooling in August meetings, and the uses to which they have been put, are explicable in this light.

While the larger percentage of the women have basic literacy education (52%) with at least primary school leaving certificate, those with HND and degrees are in the minority (4.2.%) as shown in Table 4.3. This suggests that highly educated women are generally more class conscious and belong to other exclusive and elitist associations such as social clubs, professional associations, Rotary club and so on. The result of this complex involvement in organisations as Trager (ibid) observed, is an overlapping and extensive web of social connections. This in effect leaves little or no room for involvement in hometown meetings. Their involvement in the grassroots associations is more often than not, instrumentalist, especially when they need grassroots support to advance their individual and constitutive interests, as in the case at election times. The less educated and the illiterates on the other hand, attach a great deal of importance to communal self help initiatives because when the state fails them, as frequently happens, unlike the elites, who have other options open to them, they have only the 'economy of affection' to turn to.

Level of Income and Participation of Igbo Women in HTAs

Women with higher income level as shown in this study, participated more in HTA activities than those with low income level. What is interesting here is that women with low incomes were less active, not because they were not interested in the perceived benefits, but because they cannot afford to pay dues and meet other financial obligations (in some cases, women in this category were denied financial support during bereavement or other occasions). The importance of income level brings us to a consideration of the quality of participation. The fact that 71 per cent of the sampled population belonged to at least one HTA and 37 per cent to more than one, implied that the associations have a healthy capital base to draw from and that those belonging to more than one could further enrich the associations with useful comparative insights. Nevertheless, the capital bases available to and mobilized by individual HTAs were never large enough to cater for the large community development projects that involved infrastructural provision and maintenance. This is what made August meetings a necessary platform for collaboration that involved pooled resources and coordinate action.

Trager (2001) observed that women with fewer financial resources were less likely to participate in hometown activities while they are living outside but when they do, they participate in more limited ways, having neither the financial resources nor the status of community leaders. Also in her study of Igbo women, Allen, (1990) confirmed this fact when she stated that most of the women engaged in petty trading and small scale farming as well as other micro-enterprises at home and as such their level of income is low. Hence they are not economically buoyant enough to contribute to projects; even when they manage to pay their levies, they cannot make extra financial pledges like their fellow women with higher level of income, who not only donate huge sums of money to development funds but also attract contributions from their friends from other communities. To narrow this unequal financial participation therefore, the women embark on communal harvesting and sale of their product and the proceeds contributed towards community development projects.

It is therefore not surprising that the result on Table 4.5 showing occupation variable indicates that most of the women are traders (34.5%), Civil Servants (25.4%) and farmers, which is the third highest (11.3%). This result is consistent with the age-long occupational characteristics of Igbo women. The solidarity gained through

commercial activities is partly responsible for the women’s capacities for co-operative action which are part of the reason for identifying them as the ‘backbone of rural development’.

RQ₂: What is the general perception of Igbo women on the effectiveness of the HTAs in promoting socio-economic development and sense of identity in Igbo land.

Table 4.1.9: Showing how Igbo women perceive the women’s HTAs.

	Variable	SA	A	D	SD
1	I joined the Association for Social Security	663 (31.1%)	881 (41.4%)	379 (17.8%)	207 (9.7%)
2	I joined for Ethnic Identity & belongingness	792 (37.2%)	675 (31.7%)	280 (13.1%)	383 (18.0%)
3	I Joined because it is cultural based and helps me to identify with my marital community	516 (24.2%)	546 (25.6%)	635 (29.8%)	433 (20.3%)
4	I joined because it fosters development in the communities	375 (17.6%)	979 (46.0%)	462 (21.7%)	314 (14.7%)

		No	Yes
1	I am aware of women’s hometown association?	227 (10.7%)	1903 (89.3%)
2	I consider the associations monthly dues high	1165 (54.7%)	965 (45.3%)
3	Do you see women’s HTA development activities as a challenge to men?	1781 (83.6%)	349 (16.4%)
4	HTAs bring development to the home communities	223 (8.2%)	1907 (91.8%)

Interpretation and Discussion

The table above shows how women perceive the activities of hometown associations which was assessed from their level of awareness. Three questions were asked to elicit information on HTAs to which they answered either “Yes” or “No”. The questions were: I am aware of women’s hometown associations; I consider the associations monthly due high; I see women’s HTAs development activities as a challenge to men. 89% of the respondents were aware of the activities of HTA, majority of the women (54.7%) do not consider the monthly dues too high, while over 16% of the women see HTAs as a platform to challenge the men who in the past had a lukewarm attitude to

development projects, a situation that gave rise to abandoned projects and alleged embezzlement of funds.

The key variable of participation was measured empirically as membership of HTA, level of involvement in association activities, frequency of attendance at August meetings, and the extent of involvement in allied development programmes and meetings. Empowerment was operationalized as the extent to which membership of HTAs enhanced the capacities and abilities of women to cope with, and possibly overcome the challenges of daily existence and survival. The questions that elicited responses on empowerment included the following: purpose of joining HTA, overall benefit of membership, extent of HTA involvement in development projects, extent to which living conditions have improved since joining HTA, and the extent to which the HTA has a role in poverty alleviation.

To this end, urban-based women have more positive and proactive attitudes toward HTAs as tools or agents of empowerment and development than rural women. One possible reason for this is that because urban centers are more developed than rural areas, poor women – and migrants or non-indigenes – at that, are more aware of competitive modernization and the disadvantages that keep them down, and as such, they develop a more acute sense of relative deprivation and are therefore the more likely to fall back on traditions of self-help to address the challenges of developing their hometowns. This is especially when they live in communities where they see people doing a lot for themselves (the popularity of *esusu*, a traditional Yoruba savings custom, among migrant communities in the southwest of Nigeria is a case in point). A similar impetus can be generated in the rural areas when the levels of ‘blocked’ development and relative deprivation are raised.

Also, the importance commonly attached to August meetings as a veritable tool of development by women in the urban and rural areas alike is clearly, a significant acceptance by the rural folks of the decisive roles that women in towns and cities can and do play in hometown development, largely on account of the greater awareness they have of developmental issues and the local capital they are able to mobilize.

We may now return to the questions raised in chapter one and attempt to answer them in the light of the findings from this study. First, is Igbo women’s participation in such associations a response to male dominance of their society? The answer is mixed because, in their own right, women have traditionally organized and mobilized self-help development, including political action such as the Aba women’s

revolt of 1929. These activities have usually complemented those by male associations though, from time to time, elements of rivalry creep in. In the specific case of Ibadan, we found that women's HTAs evolved from male-dominated HTAs and that the women have had to take up some of the projects abandoned by the men. But even so, the women's HTAs still form an integral part of the umbrella HTAs which are still largely controlled by men. Second, is it therefore a strategy for women to assert themselves, protect and promote their rights and interests? Again, the answer from this study is yes, because the HTAs and August meetings have afforded women the spaces for autonomous action. The associations have also served as vehicles of economic empowerment and emancipation. There is abundant evidence in Ibadan and the hometowns that the activities of the HTAs have contributed to the transformation of the socioeconomic conditions of members and their communities. Finally, in terms of the factors that underlie the successes or failure of the community development efforts of women's HTAs, we have found that although income, marital status and education are crucial factors, a lot depends on the ability to collaborate with other women's associations. The August meetings that now provide the platform for collaborative community development clearly demonstrates this.

Their awareness of hometown associations corroborates Mba's (1982) earlier findings of high political consciousness of Igbo women that results in a strong commitment to community well-being and development (also Amadiume, 1987). Anyanwu (1999) also found that women have traditionally played significant roles in the social and economic lives of the Igbo especially in the area of communal self-help. The challenge for women to harness their resources as a collectivity in order to play effective roles in their communities led to the emergence of community based women's associations on the same scale as exclusive male town unions. These associations are the hallmark of most communities in Igbo speaking areas of South-Eastern Nigeria. Therefore most Igbo women are knowledgeable in hometown association matters and their activities. Moreover, such associations provide them with a collective voice to counterbalance men's power in a male-dominated society (Mbanefoh, 1998). As majority of the women perceive HTAs as a platform for empowerment and emancipation, ethnic identity, integration into marital hometown and community development, a few however perceive women's HTAs and their activities as a challenge to men. This was confirmed by some respondents in the study areas, who revealed that the women's associations had taken up and completed some

abandoned projects by men and that these actions had served as a wake-up call for the men. They however said that the associations were not meant to spite the men, moreso that the said development activities were executed in their husbands' home communities.

HTAs and Sense of Identity

Following the responses from the field, it became clear that HTAs foster a sense of identity and social security for Igbo women, hence their participation. The implication of this is that, for the Igbo women in Diaspora such as in Ibadan, HTAs serve as a platform for adjustment and adaptation especially for new comers and for old dwellers who are still trying to cope with tensions arising from clash of culture, attitudes demands and social values. This agrees with the social adjustment and adaptation theory that ethnic unions emerge in urban areas in response to the needs of newcomers to the city who are trying to adapt to a new and often alienating environment.

For old dwellers, still trying to cope with the clash of culture, attitudes demands and values, participation in hometown association provided a useful adjustment mechanism. And for ethnic/ identity and belongingness, the women are still able to preserve home cultures and customs, traditions and language through interactions with their group members in HTAs.

As shown in the table above, four questions were posed to find out how HTAs motivate participation and foster a sense of identity for Igbo women. 72% of the respondents said they joined the HTA for social security, 68% for ethnic and identity and belongingness, 50% joined for the two reasons above, while 63% agreed that they joined for reasons other than those mentioned above. The implication of this is that, for the Igbo women in Diaspora such as in Ibadan, HTAs serve as a platform for social adjustment and adaptation especially for new comers and for old dwellers who are still trying to cope with tensions arising from clash of culture, attitudes demands and social values. This agrees with the social adjustment and adaptation theory that ethnic unions emerge in urban areas in response to the needs of newcomers to the city who are trying to adapt to a new and often alienating environment. For old dwellers, still trying to cope with the clash of culture, attitudes demands and values, participation in hometown association provided a useful adjustment mechanism. And for ethnic/ iden-

tity and belongingness, the women are still able to preserve home cultures and customs, traditions and language through interactions with their group members in HTAs.

RQ₃: What forms and level do Igbo women’s participation in HTAs take?

Table 4.1.10: The forms and levels of Igbo women’s participation in HTAs

	Variable		NO	YES	
1	I belong to one of them	-	607 (28.5%)	1523 (71.5%)	-
2	I belong to more than one of the Associations	-	1334 (62.6%)	796 (37.4%)	-
3	I joined the Associations over five years ago	-	819 (38.5%)	1311 (61.5%)	-
4	I do not believe in them	-	1040 (48.8%)	1090 (51.2%)	-
5	Women with Low Income find it difficult to participate in Community Development Prog.	454 (21.3%)	788 (37.0%)	570 (26.8%)	318 (14.9%)
6	Women participate equally in Community Development	-	300 (14.%)	1830 (85.9%)	-
7	Traditional role of women is a barrier to their activities involvement		719 (33.8%)	1411 (66.2%)	-

Interpretation and discussion

Seven questions were asked to measure the quality or the level of women’s participation in HTA activities. The quality of participation here is determined by the percentage of women who belong to hometown associations (71%) and those who belong to more than one association (37%), representing more than half of the population of women that belong to one HTA. The implication of this is that there is a solid social capital for the associations. This is because those who belong to multiple HTAs bring to bear, their experience and useful ideas from other associations that further improve the socio-capital state of their communities. The questions as shown in the table above, also reveals shows that their participation dates back to a period not

less than five years suggesting that they have contributed to development activities for a fairly long time and have enough knowledge of HTA activities.

Also, the result confirms that most Igbo women believe strongly in HTAs as a force to reckon with and as a platform for fulfillment whether at a personal or societal level (Ofondu, 1999). However, the table also shows inequality in women's participation in HTAs. This unequal participation can be understood when variables such as low income status, old age and religious belief are taken into consideration. It stands to reason that a woman with low income would have difficulty paying her dues regularly talk less of pledging some money during fund raising activities as their rich counterparts would do.

According to Honey and Okafor, (1998) a small association of relatively well-off members can do much more in the area of community development than large organizations of mostly poor members. Similarly, old age could hinder active participation in terms of meeting attendance and other forms of mobility required in the activities of hometown associations. In the same vein, religious beliefs could restrain adherents from actively participating in HTA activities as such women only pay their dues regularly towards development projects without attending meetings. But as regards their role as women constituting a barrier to their participation in the activities of the HTAs, the table shows that women participate well in HTA activities without hindrances from their roles as women.

Although some of these findings fall outside the purview of the hypotheses tested, they nevertheless reinforce the findings elicited by the hypotheses and provide the context for interpreting and understanding them. They also help to answer other questions germane to this study, including (i) the nature of the self-help community development initiatives engaged in by the Igbo women's associations in Ibadan and the extent to which these have enhanced the individual and corporate empowerment of the women; (ii) an elaboration of specific hometown projects privileged by the interface and other initiatives; and (iii) the dynamics of the interface between the Ibadan-based associations and the home town-based interventions and projects, especially the feedback from August meetings and relations with other branches. The discussions in this section are organized along these lines.

Community Development Initiatives by Igbo Women's HTAs in Ibadan

Although the hometown remains the main focus of development initiatives by HTAs, members find it necessary to engage in various self-help activities in their base (town

of domicile) that promote their immediate interests and help to solve day-to-day problems. Understandably, therefore, most of the activities are related to the welfare of members and their families though studies have found that, depending on such factors as length of stay of members in the towns, income levels, pattern of non-indigene residency and extent of integration into 'foreign land', HTAs may also embark on community development projects 'abroad' such as (town hall, recreation centre, primary/secondary schools, cooperatives). For the Igbo in particular, this has been found to be true for HTAs in large urban centres like Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Port-Harcourt and Jos, where in fact traditional forms of ethnic organization have been recreated (see for example Osaghae, 1994; Abbot, 2002). The major activities of the Igbo women's associations in Ibadan have to do with the promotion of members' welfare, as summarized in activities of selected HTA branches in the tables below. (see appendix 5.0)

The tables show that (mostly) interest-free credit from esusu (collective savings by members of the associations) is the most important activity. Members use the credit for trading, paying children's school fees and meeting emergency expenses associated with bereavement, home travel and indebtedness. Another activity involves the financial support (donation) given to members who lose family members, put to bed, or have important social functions like marriages and naming ceremonies. This is in addition to solidarity visits and presence at funerals and other ceremonies, which is compulsory for all members. Next is financial support (also donation) in the form of scholarships to children of members who have demonstrated brilliance but cannot afford 'exorbitant' school fees. This has however been at the primary and secondary school levels and so far, no women's HTA has been able to support any member's child in an institution of higher learning. The HTAs also help to resolve disputes and conflicts involving members. In a society where access to justice is expensive and generally unavailable to poor and 'ordinary' people, this is a very important function for people living far away from their cultural environments. In addition, the women are taught elementary principles of trading and entrepreneurship (including inculcating the culture of saving) and exposed to awareness and enlightenment programmes on voter/civic education, HIV/AIDS and disease control.

The foregoing profile of activities 'abroad', that is, the urban centers where HTAs are organized, shows that Igbo women's HTAs in Ibadan are typical of small scale HTAs that dot Nigeria's socioeconomic landscape. These HTAs generally lack

the orientation (they look toward the development of the hometown and continue to regard themselves as foreigners ‘abroad’) and capacity (size, resources) necessary to engage in larger and more concrete community development projects in their towns of domicile as well as their hometowns. This is especially more so that they are formed by low-income women who are mostly illiterate and into petty trading. These factors help to explain the prevalence of collaborative efforts amongst HTAs that led to the emergence of August meetings. As it were, most HTAs are generally unable to execute major community development projects like rural electricity, cottage industries and bore-hole water projects alone, but do so through collaboration with other HTAs from the same localities. The August meetings have emerged as the most important platform for collaboration and collaborative action.

This does not however reduce the utility and importance of the small scale HTAs because the individual welfare needs they satisfy serve to empower the women in critical and challenging spheres of human security. The involvement of these associations in dispute/conflict resolution and the exposure of members to enlightenment and awareness programmes also enhance their capacities to be good citizens and better prepared to face the challenges of living in a foreign land. Leaders of the HTA branches in Ibadan believe that if these needs are not satisfied, their members cannot have the “rest of mind” to partake in and attend August meetings or become involved in hometown-based development initiatives and activities. The larger implication of the profile of the sampled HTAs is that the involvement of women in self-help community development is concentrated in the hometown area. It was also found that most of the women associations contributed to the development of their communities in three different ways namely infrastructural development, organizational co-operative venture and conflict resolution. The table in appendix 5.10 below shows the three tiers of development efforts by the different women associations in their home communities.

RQ4 To what extent do Igbo women respond to the challenges brought about by government’s inadequate provision of basic infrastructural needs ?

Table 4.2.1: Showing how Igbo women respond to the challenges brought about by government’s inadequate provision of basic infrastructural needs.

	Variable	SA	A	D	D
1	I have not been able to have cope with rising costs of living	979 (46.0%)	979 (46.0%)	375 (17.6%)	314 (14.7%)
2	I cannot cope with the growing in-security of life and property	516 (24.2%)	546 (225.6%)	433 (20.3%)	362 (17.0%)
3	I am not satisfied with the poor health care provision	627 (29.4%)	579 (27.2%)	471 (22.1%)	453 (21.3%)
4	Communities and ordinary people now cater more for their own needs rather than wait for government	908 (42.2%)	695 (32.6%)	165 (7.7%)	462 (21.7%)
5	Women now have to work harder to support their families and communities	546 (25.6)	516 (24.2%)	362 (17.0%)	433 (20.3%)
6	Membership of HTAs have helped in these areas	912 (42.8%)	581 (27.3%)	329 (15.2%)	308 (14.5%)

The data above shows that majority of the respondents (84.5%) joined HTAs for reasons ranging from financial support, capacity building and the purpose of meeting their personal needs. This point to the fact that the women find solace in their hometown associations to cushion the effects of hardship brought about by state failure or inadequate provision of basic needs and lack of job opportunities. It then goes to suggest that welfare incentives are a major drive in the HTA activities and as long as these needs are met, the membership and the activities of HTAs will continue to be vibrant. Supporting this result, the Community Education Network of the African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE)1994, noted that “As the state relinquishes responsibility for meeting the basic needs of her citizenry, people are organizing themselves with the view of taking collective action to meet their development need. Consequently, new forms of organizations are emerging, managed and driven by the people themselves” Some other scholars have also observed that the activities of the various self- help hometown associations in most cities and

villages in Nigeria are emergent responses to the challenges of development which government alone can meet. Haynes (1997) observed that these associations constitute a part of the varied responses to “a lack of development and empowerment at grassroots level”

Although the development referred to here by the AALAE may mean community development, but findings have also shown that the sustainability of participation in such organizations greatly depends on the benefits derived from them. In other words, participation in HTA activities will increase or dwindle, depending on what the women stand to gain personally from them. Such benefits include financial support, improved living condition, Social security and empowerment among others.

4.0 Testing of Research Hypotheses

H₀₃ There is no significant difference in the perception of married and unmarried women on the need to join HTAs

Table 4.2.2: T-test Analysis showing the significant difference between the perception of married and unmarried women on the need to join hometown association and their marital status

Perception on the need to join HTAs	N	Mean	Std Dev.	Crit-t	Cal-t	DF	P
Married	176	47.7060	7.7811	1.96	14.550	1789	.000
Unmarried	194	53.3123	6.4650				

Significant Result (Crit- t=1.96,Cal.t=14.550, df= 1789,P,<.05 level of significance)

Interpretation and Discussion

The result of the contingency analysis in table 4.2.1 shows that a significant difference exists between the perception of married and unmarried women on the need to join or participate in hometown associations (crit- t = 1.96, Cal.t =14.550, df=1789, P,<.05) Thus, the null hypothesis three above is rejected as the result indicates a significant difference in their perceptions.

The result shows that marital status is a significant factor in determining the need for a woman to participate in the activities of hometown associations, with married women being more likely to participate in them. One probable reason for this is the fact that married women have higher stakes in what the HTAs offer in terms of welfare, including the possibility of scholarships to children in school, naming/burial/marriage ceremony support, on the one hand, and general community development on the other. Also by virtue of their married status, they automatically have to belong to a hometown association for the purpose of integration and acceptance into their husband's kindred.

H₀₄ There is no significant difference in the perception of rural and urban women on HTA as a tool for women's empowerment and emancipation.

Table 4.2.3: Showing T-test Analysis on the Difference in the perception of Rural and Urban Women on HTA as a tool for Women's empowerment and emancipation

Women	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-cal	DF	t-crit = 1.96	Sig.
Urban	17.8136	1.76455	16.844	2128	138.200	<.000
Rural	16.1368	2.79737				

Interpretation and Discussion

The result of the t-test analysis shown in table 4.11 indicates that, significant difference exist in the perception of rural and urban women on HTA as a tool for women's empowerment and emancipation (t-crit=1.96, t-cal = 16.844; P<0.05). Thus, women in urban centers have a more positive perception of HTA as a variable tool for their empowerment (x = 17.8136) than rural women (x = 16.1368). From this result, it becomes empirically evident that significant difference exists in their perception on the usefulness of the HTA as a means for women empowerment and emancipation. It indicates that urban women are more proactive towards the HTAs as tool for empowerment than the rural women. One possible reason for this is that the urban women are more aware of benefits derived from modernization and therefore more eager to transfer as it were, the modern infrastructure which they enjoy in the cities to their hometowns which they would eventually retire to at the end of their sojourn 'abroad'. Little, K (2007) also ascribed this zealous action of urban dwellers to their

eagerness to enhance the welfare of those who remained in their hometowns. The urban women, to a large extent are major sources of funds, ideas, leadership and the networks through which the communities look to for support. The wealth and status achieved by the urban women in the cities is enhanced by participating in their hometown activities and projects. Against this background, Tragger (ibid) also argued that the proactive actions of the urban elites are sometimes motivated by the expected reward of recognition and chieftaincy titles by the community. For the urban women who are interested in politics and public offices, participation in hometown association is very vital for grassroots support. However, rural women who are often the prime beneficiaries of the hometown association activities perceive their empowerment by HTAs differently. Their participation in HTAs gives them a sense of ownership on projects executed by HTAs such as agro-industrial projects and cottage industries which enable them to convert their farm products into finished or semi-finished products and provide job opportunities for their children. In other words, HTAs provide them access to resources such as technology and income to lessen their burdens and increase their productivity. Apart from these, the rural women make themselves available for mobilization by the urban women towards fulfilling their aspiration for empowerment and improved standard of living. They also perceive their empowerment in their capacity for co-operative action and their ability to organize themselves for various purposes such as mutual savings and loans system, co-operative farming and marketing among others.

As empowerment has been operationalized in this study as the extent to which the HTAs enhance the material capacities and abilities of women to cope with and overcome the challenges of daily living, the result on table above shows that the respondents attest to improved quality of life since joining HTA. This implies that as members avail themselves of the self-help activities such as credit facilities, skill acquisition and capacity building programmes, to mention a few, the women are able to improve their standard of living and economic well-being. According to Okeyo (1990), because women are known to spend more of their earnings on family needs under the dire economic circumstances than men do, their incomes are more critical than ever to family survivor. It therefore stands to reason that the women chose to support themselves and family through their participation in Hometown associations. The women HTAs' large capacities for co-operative action were a large part of the reason for identifying them as the 'backbone of rural development' as they

organize themselves for wide ranging purposes such as savings and loan system, co-operative farming and marketing, nursery centres, etc. Members are sometimes helped by HTAs to secure employment or accommodation, thereby providing the much needed help, as at when necessary.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship in the perception of rural and urban women on the effectiveness of HTAs at august meeting promoting development.

Table 4.2.4: Showing the perception of rural and urban women on the role ‘August meeting’ as a relevant tool for community development in Igbo land

	Variable	SA	A	D	SD
1	It is the rallying point for all HTAs’ development planning and execution	1011 (47.5%)	524 (24.6%)	342 (16.1%)	253 (11.9%)
2	It has embarked on over five projects in the past ten years	921 (43.2%)	455 (21.4%)	447 (21.0%)	307 (14.4%)
3	August meeting assembly has helped in actualizing the efforts of HTAs in community development	501 (23.5%)	813 (38.2%)	385 (18.1%)	431 (20.2%)
4	August meetings should continue to hold.	626 (29.4%)	730 (34.3%)	585 (27.5%)	189 (8.9%)

Table 4.2.5: 2 x 2 χ^2 Contingency Analysis on the relationship between the perception of rural and urban women on the effectiveness of HTAs and ‘August meeting’ in community development

	Development		Total	χ^2 Calculated	DF	χ^2 Critical	P
	Low	High					
Urban	350 34.0%	680 66.0%	1030 100%	0.105	1	3.841	P > 0.05
Rural	383 34.8%	717 65.2%	1100 100%				
Total	733 34.4%	1397 65.6%	2130 100%				

Not Significant (χ^2 Cal= .165; χ^2 Crit = 3.841P > 0.05)

Interpretation and Discussion

According to table 4.11 above, majority of the respondents agreed that August meeting had been a rallying point for all the HTAs through which many development projects had been planned and executed. To this effect, it is the consensus of the respondents that 'August meeting should continue to hold as it is helping them in actualizing their community development efforts.

The result of the $2 \times 2\chi^2$ Contingency analysis shown in table 4.12 above shows that, there is no significant difference between the perception of rural and urban women on the effectiveness August meeting and promotion of community development activities in Igboland ($\chi^2 = .165$; $P < 0.359$). August Meeting is perceived by the rural women as a community-day celebration, where their felt-needs are identified, goals set and their self-chosen projects planned and executed. The urban women's perception transcends beyond that. As Gugler (1978) found in his restudy of Igbo migrants to Enugu, there continues to be an enduring commitment to the home community as both structural constraint and cultural loyalties combine to continue to place emphasis on hometown. The urban women need the security of a home base to which they can return therefore, occasions like August meetings, are leading to a reemphasis on these connections. In a sense, August Meeting helps to reduce the sense of separation between the urban women and the rural women. The women therefore explore the great potentials of the coalition between them and the grassroots women to set priorities and plan activities as well as exert pressure on government to meet these needs. They also serve as intermediaries between the local community and all levels of government with such lobbying efforts observed at August Meetings where appeals are made to the government to come to the aid of the community.

Further, August meeting assembly which is a coalition between the rural and urban women, is seen by the women as a rallying point for HTAs' development planning and execution. They also see its relevance in helping the various HTAs to actualize their community development efforts by pooling the resources of the HTAs and strategizing towards achieving their common goals. There was also a consensus that August meetings should continue to thrive. This implies that the HTAs in general and the communities in particular, benefit a lot from the annual home-coming of the HTAs to the general assembly (August Meeting) in the hometown, in view of the numerical strength and the larger resources that would enable them to execute their projects. Moreover, it is at the forum that more aggressive fund raising activities are

launched to supplement the contributions from the various HTAs to embark on large projects. To this end, Snyder (1995) declared that the coalitions between grassroots women and city women (such as the August meeting), hold great potentials for exerting pressure on governments to meet the immediate needs of the rural women. Equally important is her observation that, such annual meetings lessen the sense of separation between the city women and the grassroots women.

Igbo Women's 'Home and Abroad' Associations (August Meetings Assembly), an age-long practice in South-eastern Nigeria, is the corporate organization of women who hailed from a particular community. Such organizations were based in the kin-group, so it was more or less a kindred meeting (see Ofondu, 1997). These meetings which mostly revolve around some token equitable contribution on pre-determined intervals served the twin purposes of integration and identity for women from a particular clan or kindred.

However, the increased importance of women and their effective status in African societies has gradually changed the orientation and scope of such meetings. It might be important to emphasize that apart from the global attention now generally enjoyed by women, transformational realities of urbanization (especially with regards to urban dwelling by women), industrialization and the increasing prominence of women in socio-economic pursuits have called attention to the need for a more focused role for women in society. The challenge was for women to harness their resources as a collectivity in order to be able to play effective roles in their communities and help less endowed or privileged ones actualize their potentials. These led to the emergence of community-based women's associations on the same scale as the exclusive male town unions. This association is the hallmark of almost all communities in the Igbo-speaking areas of South-Eastern Nigeria. This form of women's association sometimes called 'meeting', which became popular in the last two decades, encompassed the kindred or clan meetings which inevitably became sub-units or cells of the community based associations.

The associations exhibit similar organizational principles to town unions after which they are tailored. The meeting or association comprises women from the community whether resident at home or 'abroad' (including women married into the community), and usually operates as an umbrella organization of all kindred or clan women's meetings. The women who reside outside the confines of the community

belong to the 'abroad' unit of the association but unlike town unions, are organized outside the home community on the basis of their clans or kindred rather than mere branches. This is a major difference between the women's association and the town union. During the general meetings or annual mass return of the association, the 'abroad' women affiliate themselves to their kindred or clan units thereby becoming integrated with the home-based women of their kindred. The clan or kindred cell also functions as the basic unit of mobilization and sanction of the women and is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that all women in the kindred act strictly in line with the desires of the community-wide body. Even during general meetings, each kindred has its own canopy or sitting area and all canopies or seats face the central table or area where the elected officers of the association sit. This sitting arrangement facilitates detection of disorder and fosters consensus building since the affirmation of the constituent cells is sought one after the other in the initiation of projects and programmes.

Women's associations in most parts of Igboland, usually witness a mass return of women home and abroad meeting in August every year. This date of meeting which has led to the rechristening of the women's associations to 'August meetings' was chosen in view of the yearly traditional 'calendar of activities. For instance, the period lying between the cessation of one farming season and the onset of another one in the dry season is August. This is considered conducive for meetings because of the anticipated 'August break' in rainfall and the temporary suspension of farm work. Also important is the significant role of the Catholic Church in South eastern Nigeria in the origin of the August meetings. Indeed, the church originally devised the strategy to get across to women both at home and 'abroad' in order to prepare adequately for the annual thanksgiving and bazaar activity of the church at Christmas time. The effectiveness of this strategy in church development activities and the active roles played by the women encouraged other women to participate in the activities. This later culminated in an association of all married women in the community and those living outside the community.

The meeting of the women in August takes between two and four consecutive days within which all issues affecting the women and the communities at large are discussed. It is important for every married woman in the community to return for such meetings. Failure to do so usually attracts a monetary fine. The women, in most communities, also meet during the Christmas break but the Christmas meeting which is

a meant to be a follow-up on initiatives already on ground and set the agenda for the next August meeting, is usually not as important as the August meeting. Each kindred or clan women's association usually slots in their own meetings a day or two before the general meeting. Such meetings are meant to build solidarity and consensus before the community wide meeting.

The leadership of the association is chosen through voting bordering sometimes on a consensus. In some communities, the principal offices are rotated among the constituent clans or kindred. Other officers are chosen on the floor of the meeting. The President is at the apex of the association and the kindred are led by chairpersons or cell leaders who are usually elected from the entire membership.

The developmental activities of the women's association are geared towards the upliftment of the socio-economic status of the community including infrastructural provision, environmental sanitation, security and peace as well as ensuring that married women comport themselves properly and that men do not oppress their wives unduly in the family. The women's associations are effective and almost militant in project and programme implementation thereby ensuring progress and sustainability. The associations acquire funds through levies paid by members and occasional fund-raising or launching ceremonies. August Meeting assembly enjoys the goodwill and support of members of the Igbo community in view of the perceived effectiveness and relevance to the community. Sources from Imo revealed that the idea of August Meeting began in Anambra and Women in Imo followed suit a few years after. The study further revealed that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of urban and rural women on the role of the August meeting as a tool for promoting community development.

Qualitative Data (Focus Group Discussion and key informant interviews, (KII)

A total of 16 Focus group discussions were held with the respondents in Ibadan and those in their hometowns (Mbaise and Nnewi south). A total of 127 females whose ages ranged between 25 and 60 participated. Discussants comprised the executives and ordinary members of the associations. Interview guides were used for the FGD with each group comprising ten respondents per discussion with the researcher as the moderator. Six Key informant interviews (KIIs) were held for 2 male Igbo leaders and 4 female executive members of HTAs from the two states.

The results were analysed qualitatively with the transcription of the recorded interviews and discussions. They were analysed under 4 distinct themes, namely;

1. Knowledge of HTAs
2. Participation in HTAs
3. Motivating Factors
4. Empowerment
5. Challenge to men

Issues raised in each group dealt with the purpose of joining HTA, identification of development projects and programmes, their perceptions of August Meetings as well as the assessment of HTAs as a pivot for community development by women. The findings are summarized below.

Knowledge of HTAs

The responses of the participants revealed that they had a good knowledge of hometown associations and they were asked to identify some of the associations and their development projects. The question was asked to elicit information on the various self-help projects by women and to determine their level of awareness of HTAs and their development activities.

A woman leader, Mrs. J.U. Ekwuru who spoke on behalf of her group, said that;

The main development project we discussed at this year's 'August meeting', was the establishment of a computer training centre to train our women on computer operations and programming to create employment opportunities for them so that they can be empowered.

Corroborating this, other participants said that the project site was at Ngwu where they acquired a building for that purpose and that plans were under way to incorporate a communication unit at the complex. To this effect they said they acquired some computers through appeal fund.

Other projects lined up, according to the women, were the procurement and installation of a palm kernel cracking machine and a cassava processing machine.

Again Mrs. Ekwuru explained:

All these were joint efforts with our fellow women who are living in Ibadan, Lagos and other parts of the country.

FGD participants at Aboh Mbaise

At Ahiazu, a group discussion with the Leaders of Lude Home and Abroad association, where Mrs. Cecilia Ntiwunka, the President General and Chief Mrs. D.U. Osondu the Patron, as well as other members of the association, disclosed the main issue of development discussed at the recent August meeting. Mrs. Ntiwunka explained:

“We discussed how we will build a Nursery and primary School project with a Civic hall attachment which would be of immense benefit to all of us in the community when completed. Work on the building project has reached lintel level and will be completed within a short period”.

FGD participants at Ahiazu

At another discussion group which included among others, the Leader of Oboama Women Association Ezi-west, Ezihinite Local Government Area, Mrs. Florence Onuoha, participants highlighted some of the activities of their association and the development efforts of women in the community. In the words of Mrs. Onuoha:

The main issue of development we are discussing at the moment is the building of a health post (centre) because our people are in dire need of health facilities in this community.

According to the women leaders, Oboama Autonomous Community has 11 villages whose indigenes are joining forces towards the execution of some project.

Like the Aboh Mbaise women, their spokesperson of the Oboama community Mrs Osuagwu disclosed that;

We have also established a business centre at Aboh Urban for typing, photo copying and

other related businesses. We have also built lock-up stores at Oboama Motor Park and have embarked on the provision of Uniform for every member of Oboama Women Association to symbolise unity and identification among our members at home and abroad, as well as to eliminate class consciousness among our women.

FGD participant Ezinihitte

Similarly, the focus group discussions and interviews held with women in the three communities of Nnewi South local government revealed that the women had engaged in various development projects and activities. According to an executive member of the women HTA in that community, Mrs. L.A. Ezinwa;

We have been contributing in collaboration with other associations to renovate and maintain existing structures such as schools, churches, bank and roads. We also embarked on new projects such as daycare centres for the less privileged and abandoned babies, an orchard for adequate supply of fruits for commercial purposes, and job opportunity for the women and children. Also we established an oil palm processing mill for commercial purpose and for the benefit of the women.

FGD at Amichi

Discussions with women at **Unubi and Ukpör** communities revealed the enormity of the collaborative efforts of women HTAs in those communities which have resulted in self-help projects. The response of one of the participants Madam Nneka Obi sums it up;

FGD participant at Ukpör

Responding to the question on the level of knowledge and participation in HTAs and their development activities, all the participants corroborated a statement made by Mrs. Tina Ikechukwu who said:

I belong to my husband's hometown association just like many other married women here. It is a tradition we inherited. Once you are married you must belong to your husband's town association. So, many of us are in town associations. Just as I contribute to the development of my husband's village, my brothers' wives are also doing same to my own village. My association has built a maternity centre and other projects for this community. Many other women associations have done a lot to develop our community.

FGD participant Ahiazu, Mbaise

Another participant Adanne Emeka responded thus;

Almost everybody know (sic) hometown association now, Even small pickin wey dem born yesterday sabi am. Na so we grow up meet am.

She then listed a number of executed projects by women within the community, which to a large extent shows that she has a considerable knowledge of women HTAs and their activities.

FGD participant at Amichi, Nnewi South

Stressing the point about the wide knowledge of and participation in HTAs by every Igbo woman, a participant Mrs. Chiamaka Udechukwu response summarized the submission of other participants;

A woman does not have a home until she gets married, when she is married she belongs to her husband and as such must belong to her husband's hometown association and attend their August meeting. Other women who are married to her father's family would belong there and contribute to their community development just as you are contributing to your husband's community development.

KII participant Aboh Mbaise

Mrs Alice Anyanwu an executive member of one of the hometowns in Aboh had this to say;

We have been participating hometown associations and have been bringing development. Like our own now, I can say that most of the time we go to meetings for us to bring development.(sic) When we started, the first thing we did was that we made sure that our secondary school in our town was improved ,then we built health centre to take care of the women in the village and the children .Now we are building a hall with a supermarket for our women to use to buy and sell.(sic)

FGD participants at Ibadan

The responses above revealed that they have a good knowledge of hometown associations and are to a large extent, active in them. This corroborated the results from the analysed quantitative data in which 89% of the respondents in the FGD said they were aware of the activities of HTAs. This is also reinforced by Mbanefoh (1998) that most Igbo women are knowledgeable in hometown association matters and their activities, as such associations provide them with a collective voice to counter-balance men's power in male-dominated society.

Most of the respondents in the FGD agreed to be members of one or more associations. This response is also true of the analysed quantitative data above and is supported by Tragger's (2001) submission that many women are active both in their own hometown and in that of their husband, thus multiplying the number of connections and organisations in which they participate. The implication of the multiple participation in HTAs is that the women are endowed with useful idea and experience which they bring to bear on the development of their communities. According to the women, active participation in terms of attending meetings is not as mandatory as the payment of dues and levies towards development projects.

Motivating Factors:

FGD at Ibadan, revealed that migrant women were more predisposed to the activities of their HTAs for the purpose of ethnic identity and belongingness, welfare and social security as well as development of their hometowns. One of the participants, Mrs Ngozi Nwolise explained;

Through our town union, we are able to help one another with financial and security when the need arises and more importantly, we contribute to the execution of projects in our hometowns.

FGD participant at Ibadan

Another respondent, Mrs Beatrice Osuji had this to say on the factors that motivate her participation in HTA.

I see town meeting as a way to protect myself and my marriage. It protects my prestige as a married woman. Most of the time if a couple has a problem and they make it known to us, we try to settle it for them. So that is how we try to keep our marriage. Apart from that, when our town men and women just arrive in Ibadan, some of us will help them to find accommodation, or jobs and show them find spaces in the market where they can trade.

KII participant at Ibadan

These findings support the earlier quantitative data and reinforced the finding that hometown associations provide a useful adjustment and adaptation mechanism especially for women who sojourn outside their hometowns.

According to them, there are a few women who do not attend meetings on religious grounds and some other reasons, but who nevertheless remit project dues to their kinsmen at home who in turn pay on their behalf towards community projects.

According to a pioneer member and leader of Mbaise Development Union (the umbrella union for all Mbaise hometown associations in Ibadan, Chief S.F.N. Amanze,

An indigene who does not belong to our town union or who belong but did not meet his or her financial

obligations to the association will be neglected by the association at critical times. For instance, we will not take part in the burial of such a person at death

.KII Participant at Ibadan

Another view from a female leader, Mrs Ezinwa, on the issue of non participation by some deviants goes thus;

If any woman decides not to join because her church is against it, there will be no penalty, but she will not partake in any good thing that the women enjoy, but we cannot stop them from enjoying any development project we bring to the community like water or electricity, because it is meant for all. But if she has a problem in her marriage, we will not intervene nor plead for her as a group.

KII participant at Ibadan

On whether the women participate equally in community development projects, the discussants said that the women were levied equally regardless of their status and level of income. Although during fund raising ceremonies, the wealthy ones among the women contribute more through donations and pledges. Joy Igbanugo had this to say;

Yes, we all pay our dues equally, whether you are rich or poor. That is why we encourage our women to work or trade, so that they can meet up. But sometimes our husbands assist us in paying our dues and levies. So we all pay equally. At times some of us make pledges and some use their connections to bring big people that would give us heavy donations.

Participant FGD Nnewi South

Asked if the traditional role of women is a barrier to active involvement in community development, it was the consensus of all the discussants that their gender role does not constitute any hindrance to their participation. Mrs. Joan Onuoha stated thus;

That we are women does not have anything to do with our participation in hometown association and its development projects. The men have their own roles and we play ours too. As women, we know what our needs are and we are able to mobilize our fellow women to realize our goals.

FGD participants at Ukpok, Nnewi South

Motivating Factors: The Urban and the rural respondents identified empowerment as the key motivating factor that has encouraged and sustained them in their hometown association activities.

They explained further;

Many of us get loans without collaterals to trade with, and sometimes to pay our children's school fees. The association gives financial and moral support when a member has a social function such as weddings, graduation, and burial among others. The associations sometimes protect the women from domestic violence from our husbands and resolve conflicts in the home of members.

FGD at Ibadan, Nnewi South and Mbaise

On political empowerment and enlightenment on current issues, one of the discussants had this to say;

Last year, our association was ten years and before we celebrated our anniversary, we informed all these top women like president's wife, Governors' wife, our own village woman is the vice governor (sic) of Imo state, they all came and encouraged us well and made us know what is going on in Nigeria, and exposed us to politics so that we would not lack back (sic)

FGD at Ezinhitte, Mbaise

The HTAs are therefore perceived as supportive pillars more so that the economic activities of the associations such as the establishment of business centres,

shopping malls and daycare centres, oil mills, among others, have created job opportunities for women at home and their young school leavers. In addition to this is fact that most of them are beneficiaries of the skill acquisition programmes organized by the HTAs especially during the August meeting Assembly.

Challenge to Men: The discussants were asked if the women's development activities were seen as a challenge to the men. This response sums it all.

Most of the HTAs actually started out with self-help activities to promote our immediate interests, but we were later spurred into development projects because the men were very slow in executing projects, we were told that the men embezzled the money. We had to complete some of the abandoned projects like the town hall, so that we can have a place for our meetings instead of renting canopies all the time for that purpose, some of Such projects including town halls, school building renovation and market stalls were later completed by the women. Seeing the spate of women's activity, the men are now more active and they see the women as a force to reckon with.

KII participant at Ibadan

On whether the HTAs should remain an All-women affair, this is what a respondent had to say.

Yes it should remain an all-women affair because it helps us to direct our affairs without the men's interference any time we need their support we do not hesitate to approach them and when they need our help they do come to us too.

FGD participant at Amichi.

Responding to the question on whether participation in HTAs and August Meeting makes them free from their husband's control, here is what a woman leader responded to this:

No, that does not make you a care-free (sic) woman, we are responsible women and mothers, when we go to August Meetings we behave like the mothers that we are, after all, our husbands gave us the permission to go in the

first place. And the meetings are held in our husbands' villages so no woman can afford to misbehave, and if anyone does, other women will call her to order immediately.

KII participant at Ibadan

Challenges being faced by HTAs: All the FGDs and KII conducted at the various communities revealed some challenges being encountered by the various HTAs. The statement by a woman leader below summarizes it all.

'Some doesn't want to attend meetings and some doesn't want to pay their dues or contribute toward development. Some use church to cover up as if what we are asking them to do is sinful. Some don't attend because they are very educated or too rich, they cannot mix with us, but when they need our support they remember us'

KII participant at Ibadan

An overview of the HTAs

Mbaise Women in Ibadan

Mbaise Development Union (MDU) is an umbrella association of the various town unions of sons and daughters of Mbaise. They meet on the last Sunday of the month at Saint Gabriel's Secondary School Mokola, Ibadan, in Oyo state from January to November. Officially inaugurated in April 1973, MDU is aimed at fostering unity among the Igbos, provide financial and moral support as well as giving interest free loans and scholarships to members and their wards. The MDU women's wing emerged in Ibadan in the year 1991, with 65 financial members in their nominal roll. By 2008, it was led by Mrs. Justina Nwanguma with Mrs. Justina Osuagwu as Secretary.

Important as this Union may be to individual members, no one can belong to it without being a bona -fide member of his or her town or clan association or Umuada (association of first daughters). Therefore the three local government areas in Mbaise namely ;Aboh, Ahiazu and Ezihinite, are well represented in MDU. Since the MDU in its macro form would not serve the purpose for this study, the focus was on the town and clan associations within the umbrella group. This is because they are the ones that

are actively involved in hometown community development, while at the macro level they are more concerned with welfare support. However the women had embarked on a fund raising programme to acquire a bus that will convey members to meetings venue at subsidized rate and to be put to commercial use in order to generate funds for the Union. The MDU women's wing suffered a setback in the year 2006 after a protracted feud which began in 2004, following a disagreement between the men's wing and the women's wing over certain decisions by the women which did not go down well with the men. This eventually led to the fallout of a faction which is now known as Mbaise United. A selected women's HTAs is focused on in this study because they are all similar in their mode of operations.

Ezihinite Onye-aghala Nwanneya women's Union in Ibadan is one of the various town unions at the local government level. It is led by Mrs. Ngozi Njoku. Monthly meetings are held on third Sundays to discuss welfare issues that affect members and to contribute their monthly dues as well as compulsory savings that are turned in to members at the end of the year.

The group does not give loans to members as is characteristic of hometown associations, rather, distressed members are referred to MDU for financial assistance. Financial support is enjoyed by members only during house warming, naming ceremony or loss of spouse. When a member loses her husband, the Union donates money through what it calls "*burial purse*" (funds) towards her feeding and basic needs, as well as give her moral support during her widowhood rites. In the case of the death of a member, her children are given financial support to cushion the effect of the loss of their mother till such children are stabilized. The women also intervene in cases of domestic violence against their members, although this is not a frequent occurrence.

At this level, emphasis is placed more on welfare of members than on community development; as a member retorted, "Our greatest fear is dying while sojourning abroad, we depend on our kinsmen to take our remains home and give our immediate family the necessary help during bereavement". This is not to say that they are more interested in welfare activities than community development activities. The latter is equally viewed and pursued with so much vigor that each member goes back to the village every year especially in the month of August to attend August Meeting where strategies for development projects are mapped out and financial contributions are made towards identified needs of the their communities.

For instance, women from Oboama (Oboama Women's Union, OWA) one of the sub-groups in Ezihinite town, have representatives from different parts of the country who come home every August to deliberate and review development activities for Oboama. Women from other ethnic groups who are married to Oboama men also belong to OWA just as every daughter of Oboama is expected to belong to her husband's kinsmen.

OWA came into existence in 1999 with the primary objective of empowering the women of Oboama to contribute to the development of their community. The first project that was embarked upon by the women was the establishment of a business centre in Oboama community to facilitate computer work and communication. One of the women is employed to manage the business on behalf of the union while three executive members are assigned the responsibility of monitoring and taking stock. Proceeds from the business go into the union's account and payment of salaries to the manager of the business centre.

This was followed by the building of two additional classes to the only existing Oboama secondary school in 1999. OWA also contributed financially to the building of a church hall project in 2004. To this end a levy of N500 was imposed on each member. The population of the Oboama Women's Union is about 4,000 including those in Diaspora.

August Meeting Activities of Oboama women

Oboama women began in 1999. The 2008 August meeting of Oboama took place on the 11th of August. The meeting commences annually with two (days) deliberations of all the executives, home and abroad, with the village heads in attendance, to identify the needs of the community, decide the ones to embark on, agree on the levy, and discuss matters arising and to map out strategies towards achieving their goals.

This is then followed by a formal opening with a church mass that would include nominal roll calls and special prayers for deceased members in the past year. Day three would feature skill acquisition activities such as sewing, tie and dye, baking etc, by experts for the women to be self reliant. On the fourth day, Medical experts give talks on healthy living, breastfeeding, immunization and other related topics. The fifth day also features talks on farming skills and improved seedlings by Agricultural Extension Workers. Then on the 6th day, there is a march past, novel football match,

funfair and dance. The August meeting is then rounded up on the 7th day with a thanksgiving service in the church. Finally, there would be a meeting at the National leader's house to review the activities of the past week, to see how much was expended, how much was realized and what to do with remnants of the materials that were used for all the activities. The leftovers which are usually drinks, raw food items etc, are shared among the various leaders. Also, daughters (women) who have distinguished themselves in community service and development are given awards at this meeting and such honoured women are expected to reciprocate by donating some money in appreciation. The highlight of the activities included what was referred to as a cleansing programme which was aimed at ridding the community of social ills and putting a check on culprits. The women embarked on prayer and fasting as well as motivational talks by guest speakers and religious leaders. This was necessitated by the reports on cases of adultery, substance abuse and robbery which had become a source of worry to indigenes. Culprits were invited and rebuked while some fled the village.

Another thorny issue was that of women who do not participate in community development activities and hometown associations, on religious ground. According to a spokesperson, such deviant women would be barred from buying any corporate farm produce which are sold by the women and proceeds used for development projects. The HTAs also invited the church leaders of such non-participating members to the activities of the town association and were confronted with the issue of non-participation in the development of the community by their members. The church leaders having interacted with them and impressed by the activities of the home town associations agreed to look into the issue.

Nnewi South Development Association (Women's wing) In Ibadan

The indigenes of Nnewi South came together to form this group in Ibadan in the sixties, when many were trying to *start life afresh* and saw the need to support one another through a common force. Over the years, the group has grown into an umbrella association for other smaller groups representing the different wards and villages in Nnewi south local government area, some of which are Amichi, Ukpor and Unubi Development Associations. Each of the associations has its women's wing. Each woman's wing has a population of over two hundred members.

Their development activities have been quite impressive. Apart from the welfare package and soft loan facilities aimed at empowering members, the women

had contributed large sums of money towards development and renovation of new and old structures in their various towns and villages. The Amichi women in Ibadan under the leadership of Mrs. Christiana Ezinwa, for example, contributed about one million Naira towards the expansion of St. Phillips Anglican Church, Eziama Amichi. They were also building a church hall in the community in addition to purchasing three plots of land to fence the same church. By 2008, the plan of action in Ibadan included among other things, the acquisition of a piece of land to build a multipurpose hall for the use of the association and other commercial purposes in the Oyo state capital.

OTHER FINDINGS

The Challenges that confront women HTAs community development efforts

There are several problems that confront the women HTAs that tend to have negative effects on their efforts at community development. From the findings in this thesis, there are several factors that differentiate women for instance, literacy; there is a world of difference between the perceptions of women who are educated and the uneducated.

Similarly, income differentials also separate the women into relatively rich and the relatively poor. Then of course, the urban-rural dichotomy that also separates them. These divisions have an impact on their abilities to co-operate on community development efforts. For instance, the more educated women and the higher income bracket women tend to have notions that do not necessarily address what the poor and the rural women consider to be most important. This study found out that the more educated women, for instance preferred to build physical infrastructures, whereas the needs of the poor women are for scholarships and other forms of welfare. The other thing is that community development without poverty alleviation is not complete so, whereas those women at the lower income bracket would desire things like short loans and basic capital to begin business those at the higher bracket have other priorities.

By and large, that differentiation becomes in itself a hindrance especially when this is related to the origins of August meetings themselves, the Catholics who were the primary drivers of August meetings tend to have a domineering influence in those meetings. From oral interviews and group discussions, it became obvious that the non-catholic women among them sometimes have misgivings about the domination of catholic women in the affairs of these hometown associations.

One also finds out that there is stiff rivalry and competitions that reduce the co-operative efforts of the women and this happens at three levels.

The first is that, there are the component hometown associations, the clans and the village associations, among others, that form larger HTAs. Where there is a majority of people from a village or clan over others, there have been problems over what project of community development should be embarked upon in the various villages. The tendency being that those whose villages or clans dominate insist on having the lion share of the projects.

Then of course, there is the inter-personal level where there are women who compete fiercely to lead these associations. It is unbelievable the extent to which it sometimes degenerate, as meetings have had to end unceremoniously because the women who are rivals are not able to agree as they should. That was the kind of thing that was observed at some meetings in Ibadan, during the period of this study. Also when these women mobilize support they do so in ways that also divide the meetings between supporters of one woman against supporters of the other woman.

Then of course, there are issues of accountability. When money has been raised through self-help efforts, allegations have been made that some of the money has been spent in less than accountable ways and these have been a problem, especially as some of the women who lead them have self righteous attitudes towards the way they should manage these public funds.

With accountability also comes transparency in terms of how public funds are managed. When some women are delegated to go from Ibadan to hometowns for August meetings, there have been several complaints about how they come back to retire the money they were given. In the case of Ibadan the extension of the rivalries and conflicts in the men's associations to the women's associations have had a long history of very acute competition for the Eze Ndigbo, and that has had some kind of negative impact on the women's associations. For instance the internal politicking over power has sometimes led to elections being kept on hold for years.

Also worthy of note is the element of fashion craze among some of the women especially during August meetings. This general assembly of city and the rural affords the high income bracket women to show off their wealth. In desperation to live up to this standard, some women pressurize their husbands so much, that some men now prevent their wives from attending August meetings. This has given rise to an image issue in some quarters as some seem to have branded August meeting a bad influence

on women. This is more so that active participants are vibrant and sometimes militants on their associational activities.

However, in identifying possible steps to be taken to reverse this trend, first is that community development efforts of these women associations can be strengthened by ensuring greater accountability and transparency.

There is a need to look at the relationship between the women's associations and the men's associations so that some kind of synergy can be created. There is also a need to study how local and state government can integrate community development associations and HTAs into the policy making and policy implementation structures.

Added to these is the fact that the various poverty reduction strategies including NAPEP and other organs that have been designed to accomplish the millennium development goals (MDGs) need to be harmonized with HTAs so that they can be part of that process.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter presents the conclusions of the study. It begins with a discussion of the major findings, followed by policy implications and conclusions. Next, are the recommendations, limitations of the study, and finally, suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary

This study sought to assess the participation of Igbo women's Hometown associations in community development, empowerment programmes and infrastructural provisions in their hometowns. It also sought to deepen the knowledge of how HTAs serve as agents of empowerment for the women as well as the factors that influence the nature and effectiveness of their participation in the development of their hometowns. The study was premised on the dictum 'what else is development other than helping your own hometown', which aptly summarizes the traditional trajectory of (self-help) development found in most parts of Africa, and took the case of women from the Igbo ethnic group that have not only the most widely acknowledged history of self-help community development, but also of women's participation in the development process. In all, six study areas namely; Ukpok, Unubi and Amichi in Anambra state and Aboh, Ezihinite and Ahiazu in Imo state were selected.

The analysis of the data revealed a number of interesting general characteristics that may be briefly highlighted. First, as several similar studies have found, self-help organizations are well grounded in Igbo culture and traditions, and tend to attract large memberships. Thus about 90 per cent of the respondents sampled claimed to be aware of the existence (and importance) of HTAs, and 71 per cent of them belonged to at least one HTA and another 37 per cent belonged to more than one HTA. Even more significantly, almost all the respondents who belonged to HTAs had been members for five years or longer. Most agreed that they joined the associations for social security, ethnic identity and belongingness, while others joined for reasons other than these. The study was also interested in the positive and negative correlates that could either enhance or inhibit participation. These included support or opposition of spouse, illiteracy, status/class, age, income, religion and marital status.

Major highlights of the result show that:

- i. There is a significant difference in the perception of rural and urban -based women in their participation in HTAs as urban based women were more positively disposed towards women's participation in HTAs;
- ii. Marital status, that is whether a woman is married or not, is a significant factor in the perception of the need to join and participate in the activities of hometown association, with married women being the more likely to join and participate in HTAs;
- iii. Women in urban areas have a more positive perception of HTAs as agents of women's empowerment and emancipation;
- iv. There is no significant relationship in the perceptions of urban and rural women on the role of August meetings as a tool for promoting community development;
- v. Socio-demographic factors like age, religious affiliation, marital status, education, and geographical location cumulatively affect the participation of women in HTAs and their developmental activities.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings of this thesis have validated and reinforced some of the conventional wisdoms on the roles of HTAs in general and women's HTAs in particular in community development. But, at the same time, the study has also shown that contrary to the conclusion reached by some studies, self-help community development initiatives involving aggrieved, marginalized, vulnerable and impoverished segments of the population – in this case ordinary urban-based women – are more proactive and complementary than confrontational or parallel.

5.3 Policy implication

This thesis has demonstrated how Igbo women acting autonomously and in their constitutive and communal interests, have organized and mobilized to meet the challenges of development in the face of rising poverty and declining state ability and capacity to meet its obligations to citizens. 'August meetings' that took roots in the 1990s have become the main strategy of women's contributions to self-empowerment and community development.

The study also identified the creative and innovative uses to which HTAs and ‘tribal unions’ have been put since they first appeared in major cities in the colonial period. From being agents of social adjustment and adaptation by migrants to cities, these voluntary organizations have become critical mobilizers and drivers of self-help development. Moreover, the study shows that, contrary to the arguments advanced by studies on relations between civil society (community-based and traditional associations, non-governmental organizations) and the state in Africa (see for example Haynes, 1997), the mobilization of aggrieved, marginalized, neglected and impoverished segments of the population that organize action groups does not always follow the anti-state or exit trajectory. This is so, even when, as we found in this study, government is unable to function as it should and groups have to play roles traditionally assigned to government. This shows that most ordinary people recognize the failings and limitations of government-directed development and are willing to complement its efforts through self-help interventions. It is the resilience inherent in this attitude that was simply amplified in the 1990s to offset the effects of increased state decline.

In another breadth, they have learnt over the years not to depend too much on government. In the case of the Igbo, the devastations of slave trade, which were possible because they had no strong states to protect the people and, more recently, the civil war, have strengthened greater reliance on self-help efforts. For ordinary women in towns, there is the added fact they have always faced the reality of coping with life’s challenges through their own efforts and those of their families. This fact was also important in the evolution of August meetings, which takes the self-reliance inclinations to a new corporate level.

The study has therefore established the fact that community development by Igbo women’s HTAs as being described in the various communities under study have become a democratic tool that provides citizens with the key to maintaining their active cooperation in programmes for social and economic betterment. Through their August Meetings and democratic organizations, they acquire knowledge of the process of solving problems. Also they are able to diagnose the potentialities and constraints for social and economic projects. They are able to formulate concrete plans and goals and to create appropriate institutional structures for implementing and managing as well as ensuring meaningful participation for community members.

On the whole, the findings of the thesis has implications for inclusion of women and gender roles in community development policies and programmes because the new patterns of involvement represent robust articulations of reciprocal citizenship rights and duties.

5.4 Recommendations

As this study has established the actual and potential contributions that women can make to the development process in general and community development in particular, the major recommendations from it are as follows:

- i. Conditions should be set for the full participation of women in development by providing access to resources such as education, technology and income through women's solidarity groups like the HTAs. Igbo women have the one of most solidarity groups in Nigeria and this team spirit can be enhanced and the common experience can prevail over their differences, thereby fulfilling their aspiration for empowerment and improved standard of living for the Igbo women in particular and the Nigerian women in general.
- ii. There is an urgent need to formally recognize the roles of women in community development, especially, at this time when government's involvement in the whole process has continued to witness a steady decline.
- iii. As much as possible, government should recognize and respect the autonomous spaces of self-help organizations, especially those organized by women, which all along suffered marginalization and relegation.
- iv. Women HTAs and August meetings should be seen as representing the opening of new participatory and empowering spaces for poor women and new patterns of activism through which they are claiming and exercising their citizenship.
- v. Nonetheless, viewed as agents of decentralization, creative ways should be explored for integrating women's community development initiatives and August meetings into structures of local governance. Governments at the local level should use the HTAs as a device to reach out to local people in the villages to help them become more active participants in the life of the nation and also acquire local initiative and resources to achieve increased production and higher standard of living.

- vi. Now that women's development initiatives have become widely acknowledged and legitimized, community development practitioners in the southeast of Nigeria should seek ways of extending the roles of women's HTAs and August meetings into areas like disease control, especially HIV/AIDS and malaria control.
- vii. Similarly, agencies like the electoral commission, population commission, service provisioning NGOs, and conflict management practitioners should seek ways of integrating women's HTA structures into their agendas.
- viii. To enhance the contributions of women to the development process, the access of organized bodies like HTAs and August meetings to micro-credit and other poverty alleviation schemes should be expanded.
- ix. More studies should be conducted to interrogate how the roles of women's HTAs can be extended to other spheres of human security and development from which women have been traditionally excluded. The nature of the contributions by the Igbo women studied here suggests that the roles of women and women's groups in the development process should be the main focus rather than the exception. In particular, the fact that through the HTAs and August meetings the women have not narrowed their focus to issues that concern women only means that they have a lot to contribute in the various spheres of development.

5.5 Limitations of the study

In view of the limited resources and logistics, it was difficult to stay in the study areas for as long as the researcher had intended, in order to assess more projects and attend the annual August meetings in the various zones, hence only two of such gatherings were attended, one in Imo state and the other in Anambra. Also, there was the problem of the respondents failing to complete some parts of the questionnaire, coupled with the fact that some questionnaires were not returned. The problem of language, which required translations to Igbo language in many cases, slowed down the interview sessions, and the filling of the questionnaires. So where pidgin or proper English could not be used to communicate with the non-literates among them, an interpreter was used. Another limitation was the difficulty in accessing most recent and up-to-date literature. But thankfully, a Thesis Writing Grant by The Council for the Development of Social Science Research In Africa, (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal,

helped to reduce this problem. However, these hindrances did not in any way affect the validity of the study.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

Although this study has set the research agenda for addressing most of the issues germane to the new patterns of women's contributions to community development among the Igbo of Nigeria as they relate to HTAs and August meetings including, most importantly, the factors that affect individual and corporate participation, the fact that the patterns of involvement are new and evolving means that a lot more needs to be done in future studies. This is, especially in the realm of participatory action research. The objective, of course, is to ensure that the benefits of the new approaches by women can be fully harnessed and optimized.

By and large, what this thesis has shown and for which more work would be required is that whereas there is a vibrant social, political, economical and cultural life at the grassroots level, government itself has not looked into ways of harnessing those efforts so that self-help can also be a complement to the state as was stated in the concept of HTAs as alternate state structures in this thesis. It is against this background that the following themes/areas are suggested for further study.

The interface between the new patterns of women's active involvement and articulations of full and equal citizenship;

- .Relations between women's grassroots organizations and local and international NGOs and how the partnerships may be enhanced and consolidated;
- The key governance issues including internal and external contestations and conflicts within the HTAs and August meetings and between them and other grassroots and community development actors and stakeholders (traditional rulers, male-dominated umbrella HTAs, other traditional associations, etc), how these presently affect their overall effectiveness, and how they may be managed and overcome;
- The extension of the roles of women's HTAs and August meetings to other important spheres of human security like formal and informal adult education,

food security, disease control, good governance monitoring, poverty alleviation and conflict management.

- Investigate the women HTAs' traditional conflict management strategies which have helped to sustain cohesion and stability among the Igbo women with a view to adapting them with modern conflict resolution approaches, especially with the seeming failure of conventional mechanisms and instrumentalism.

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**The Participation of Ibadan-based Igbo Women's Hometown
Association in Community Development (1990-2000)**

**Department of Adult Education
University of Ibadan
Ibadan.**

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to assess the participation of Igbo women's hometown associations in community development especially in some Igbo communities. Your cooperation in answering the questions as honestly as possible would be highly appreciated. The information elicited will go a long way in assisting the researcher in her study. Your privacy is guaranteed.

Thank you for your cooperation

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (WHTAs)

Please circle the appropriate answer

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: Below 2 20 - 31 31 – 40 41-50 51-60 above 61
3. Marital status: Single Married Divorced Widowed
4. Level of Education
 No formal Education
 Up to Primary
 Up to Secondary
 Tertiary others.....
5. Number of Children: None one Two Three Four
6. Religion Christianity Muslim
 Traditional Other (specify).....
7. State of Origin: Local Government:
8. Occupation: Trading
 Civil Servant
 Farming
 Artisan

Housewife
Professional
Other (specify)

9. Monthly Income

Below

~~₦~~2000

~~₦~~2000 - ~~₦~~4999

~~₦~~5000 - ~~₦~~8999

~~₦~~9000 - ~~₦~~13000

~~₦~~13000

SECTION B : WOMEN’S PERCEPTION OF HTAs (WPHTAs)

		No	Yes
10.	I am aware of women’s hometown association		
11.	I consider the association monthly dues high		
12.	Do you see women’ HTAs development activities as a challenge to men?		
13.	I belong to one of the HTAs		
14.	I belong more than one of the HTAs		
15.	I joined the association over five years ago		
16.	I do not believe in them		

SECTION C: WOMEN’S HTAs AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (WHTAs CD)

		SA	A	D	SD
17.	Women participate equally in hometown community Development				
18.	Women with low income find it difficult to participate in community Development programmes				
19.	All women participate equally in community development programmes				
20.	Traditional roles of women is a barrier to involvement in community Development				
21.	I joined the association (s) for social security				
22.	I joined for financial support				
23.	I joined for all the above				
24.	I joined for other reasons				
25.	I have benefited from my association (s)				
26.	My living condition has improved since I joined the association				
27.	I don’t see any need for continued membership				
28.	I do encourage others to join my hometown association (s)				
29.	I attend meetings regular				

30.	I joined for ethnic identity and belongingness				
31.	I consider the association monthly dues high				
32.	I cannot pay dues and levies on time				
33.	My spouse does not oppose my involvements in the association's activities				
34.	My association has executed one development projects				
35.	It has embarked on over five projects in the past ten years				
36.	Each project lasted for one year and above				
37.	Women do not participate equally in hometown community development				
38.	Illiterates are exempted from participation				
39.	You have to be literate to be part of hometown association				
40.	No woman is exempted from participation				
41.	Hometown association has a role to play in alleviating poverty				
42.	The richer a woman is, the greater her participation in community development				
43.	Women with low income find it difficult to participate in community development programmes				
44.	Unmarried also participate in hometown association projects				
45.	Hometown association should continue to rely on self help resources and government should not be involved				
46.	August meeting is a rallying point for all HTAs community development activities				
47.	August meeting has helped in actualizing the efforts of HTAs in community development				
48.	August meeting makes a lot of difference in HTAs community development activities				
49.	August meetings should be allowed to continue				
50.	It is a rallying point for all HTAs development planning and executions				

GUIDE FOR FDGs AND KIIs

1. When did August meetings begin?
2. What is the purpose of the meeting?
3. How regularly do the meetings hold?
4. How many projects have you embarked on since you joined the HTAs?
5. How do you determine the project to embark on?
6. What is the organisation structure of August meetings?
7. Have you received opposition from any quarters (Husband, Traditional ruler, Men's group's etc? Please specify
8. What more do you expect from the August meetings?
9. What problems face the meetings?
10. Should the meetings remain an all-women's affair?
11. Give reasons for your answer.
12. Does participation make you free from your husband control and domination?
13. Is it a strategy for women to assist, promote and protect their rights and interest?
14. Who is the head of your town union?
15. How do you elect your leaders?
16. Was there a written constitution at the inception?
17. How many branches do you have outside your hometown?
18. How active are they in their contribution to home community projects?
19. Can you list the number of project you have executed or embarked on?
20. How do you make decisions?
21. What are your areas of conflict?
22. How do you resolve conflict?
23. What are the challenges facing the hometown associations?
24. What suggestions would you offer towards enhancing the roles of the women's hometowns associations and the 'August meeting' in particular in community development?

APPENDIX

Table 5.1.1: Development activities of women's hometown associations in Imo and Anambra

	WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS	INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT	CO-OPERATIVE VENTURES	TRADITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION
1.	Ndom Edieze Woman group, Mbutu	Borehole project at Mbutu in 2003	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
2.	Obiwumotu women's Association enyiogugu	Electrification project at Enyiogugu in 2001	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
3.	Udokamana Women Union	Lock-up stores at Orié Ovum Market in 1988	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
4.	Umuebi Udokamma Fed. Union, Amuzu	Oil mill at Aboh Mbaise	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
5	Umueme Uvuru Ladies Association	Procurement of Palm Kernel cracking machine	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
6.	Enyiogugu women's Association	Lock up store at Enyiogugu market	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Mediate in conflicts among members and resolve disputes among members and their spouses
7.	Obiwotmotu Opunuche women's group	Built Community hall in 2004	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/ resurrection
8.	Out Umunwanyi Akwete Umuga-	Built a civil Hall in 2002	Monthly Savings and credit	Conflict management/ resur-

	nagu		loan scheme	rection	
9.	Udokamma Umueme women association	Helped the men to build open shades at Orié Ogusugwu market	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
10.	Oganihu Egbelu women's association	Built a skill acquisition outré in Orié Ovuru	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
11.	Obiwumotu women Union Obibi Ngunu	Collaborated with men to build an oil mill near Nguru Secondary School Aluato	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
12.	Obodo Ahiara Women Development Association	Bought and Installed gari processing machine in 2000	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
13.	Lude women association Ahiara	Bought milling machine to help farmers in Lude	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
14.	Umugwa Home and Abroad Unoin Umuokrika	Constructed Umugwa village square in 2004	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
15.	Nnauambia Development Union	Bought chairs and benches for 'town school'	Monthly Savings and credit loan scheme	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
16.	Ogbe Home and Abroad	Built a civic centre at Ogbe	The women purchased land for large scale cassava farming	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
17.	Umunomo Home and Abroad association	Bull an ultra modern town hall at Umunomo	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
18.	Otulu Progressive Women Association	Contributed of Eke Ahiara market, Aguneze	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
19.	Otulu Progressive Women Association	Contributed towards the electrification of Otulu Community	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
20.	Nzuko Umuwanyí Ezololo Okpokume Mpam Ekwenu	Bought water reticulation accessories for the Okpokume water project in 2003	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
21.	Ogbenneisi Women self help entrepreneur group	Provision of pipe borne water to various villages in Ogbe in 2004	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection
22.	Umuokrika Women's Association Ahiazu	Scholarship award to indigent pupils in 2004	---	Conflict management/rection	man-resurrection

23.	Amuma Women Progressive Association	Ultra Modern civil centre at Amumana	---	Conflict management/ resurrection	man-resurrection
24.	Owutu women Development Association	executed Owutu Water project	---	Conflict management/ resurrection	man-resurrection
25.	Ife Women Development Association	Executed Ife water Scheme	---	Conflict management/ resurrection	man-resurrection
26.	Obizi women progressive Association	Built and furnished the Obizi civil centre	---	Conflict management/ resurrection	man-resurrection
27.	Oboama Women Association Ezihinite	Established a business centre at Aboh Urban to provide employment opportunity for many	---	Conflict management/ resurrection	man-resurrection
28.	Cassava Farmers women's association, Ezihinite	Procurement of grinding mill at Itu (Ezihinite)	Embarked on large scale production of cassava through the procurement of new improved varieties of cassava	Controls arbitrary pricing of cassava, regulates trade pattern and mediates in conflicts among members	
29.	Ihite rural women co-operative Union	Established a cloth weaving centre at Orié Ihite market	Provides loans to members and buys materials in bulk to sell to members at subsidized rate and sometimes on credit.	''	
30.	Itu Women in Agriculture	Purchased land for large scale cultivation of cassava and production of other agricultural products. They also installed garri processing machine	This enables women who cannot afford land for farming for co-operative farming	''	

Nnewi South Local Government

	Women's Association	Infrastructural Deut	Co-operative Ventures	Traditional Conflict Resolution
1	Amichi Women's Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Central School (CCS) Renovation And Maintenance • Amichi Orchard Built In 1996 • Motherless Babies Home/Day Care Centre • Contributed Towards Establishing A Community Bank In 1994 	<p>Monthly savings scheme</p> <p>Revenue generated from the sale of fruits from the orchard. This produces job opportunities for members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settles disputes among members. • Mediates in their members marital problems to ensure the marital stability of their members.
2	Eziama Women's Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established An Oil Mill At Eziama Contributed Towards Establishing A Community Bank • Expansion of St. Phillips Anglican Church 	Initiated an effective means of processing palm produce for commercial purpose among the women	”
3	Unubi Development Union Women's wing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of access roads • Renovated principal is a house in Girls Sec. Sch. • Construction of bridge and culverts • Electrification of Unubi community contributed towards building • U.D.U. SUB office • Market complex commercial in 1995 • Modern shopping complex • Unubi Health centre 		
4	Chikwado Age Grade	Built the community post office		
5	Young star	Built Unubi commu-		

	social club	nity library in January 2006		
6	Catholic Women's Organisation	Collaborated in building a social movement Hall now used as a secondary school		
7	Ukpor Development Union	Constructed the first bore hole in Unubi		
8	Young star social club	Amichi modern Post Office		
9	Ukpor women's association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated with man to build a Post Office • contributed towards building the Ukpor Community Bank • contributed towards buildings the Ukpor town Hall in 1963 • contributed towards Building additional two blocks or additional two blocks or classrooms for the central school, Ukpor • contributed toward equipping the school's science laboratory and maintenance of the classrooms in the school. • Contributed towards building the St. Mary's Catholic Church Ukpor centre 	They engage in different co-operative ventures ranging from loan scheme corporate sale of farm produce, bulk purchase of foodstuff to be sold at subsidized rates to members, bulk purchase of seedlings sold at subsidized rates as well as sharing of foods items at festive periods	
10	Eziama women's association	Establishment or an oil palm processing mill		

Table 5.1.2 Autonomous Associations & Projects Executed in Mbaise, Imo State

1. Aboh Mbaise

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Akpetu/Egbelu	a. Borehole at Umuokel b. Purchase of 500KVA transformers c. Provision of Civic centre	Umuokele Improvement Union Umuokele Improvement Union Umuokele Improvement Union	1996-97 2000 1985	H.R.H Peter A. Uduhinnwa
2.	Amasaa Uvuru	a. Borehole at Akuwa, Umughara e.t.c b. Development of orie Uvuru motor park c. Provision of transformer	Provided by the various improvement unions By Uvuru development union By Uvuru development Union		H.R.H Eze Michael Injoku Eze Uzu
3.	Amuzu	a. Electricity supply b. Rehabilitation Schools c. Development Banks through agriculture Production	Amuzu improvement union Amuzu improvement union Amuzu improvement union	1990 1999 1980	H.R.H Eze G.I Elugwaronu Igwe Uzu 1
4.	Amuzu Nwenkwo	Provision of Borehole Electricity supply	Amuzu Nwenkwo Elites club Amuzu Aut. Community	1993	H.R.H. Eze Celestine A. Alozie Ebo Ugo 1
5.	Amaaisi/Ndigbo Uvuru	Provision of borehole at Ahia-Afor	Amaissi development union Amaissi development Union Obinwanne age grade Amaissi	1987	H.R.H. Eze Ujunwa Azorji
6.	Amuzu Nweafor	Provision of borehole at Ahia-Afor Electrification project Construction of Amuzu Nweafor Civic centre	Amuzu Nweafor Dev. Union Amuzu Nweafor Dev. Union	1983-88 1985	H.R.H Eze Nathaniel B. Adiale Afor 1
7.	Egbeluna Umuhu	Provision of health centre Provision of transformer Umuokele borehole project	Started by community & Local Govt. Egbeluna Umuhu improvement union Egbeluna Umuhu improvement union	2003	H.R.H Eze Nicholas E Ugwu Ebikoro
8.	Enyiogugu	Enyiogugu rural road network Renovation of community primary school	Enyiogugu development union Enyiogugu development union		H.R.H Eze Dr. Leo Nnaji (JP) Enyi I
9.	Ezizaragu - Enyiogugu	Construction of civic centre Provision 500KVA transformer	Nzuko Ezizaragu - Enyiogugu Nzuko Ezizaragu - Enyiogugu		H.R.H Eze B.F Emenyeonu Agu I

10.	Lorji	provision of lockup shops at Eze-Ukwu erection of Lorji health center provision of borehole	Lorji development union Counterpart Fundly between ;ocal government and community		H.R.H Eze Major (RTD) J.N Unegbu (KSO) Oji I
11.	Lorji Nwekeukwu	Provision of two 500KVA transformers Lorji Nwekeukwu	Lorji Nwekeukwu town union Lorji Nwekeukwu town	In progress	H.R.H Eze D.O Nwigwe Eze Udo III
12.	Mbutu	Ndimbara road rehabilitation Mbutu Civic Centre Mbutu rural electrification project	Mbutu improvement union Mbutu improvement union Mbutu improvement union	1991 In progress	H.R.H Eze D.O. Nwigwe Eze Udo III
13.	Mbutu Nworie	Renovation of community primary school Provision of borehole at Orié market	Mbutu Nworie improvement union- Lagos Branch Mbutu Nworie improvement union	2004	H.R.H Eze Micheal N. Okpara Ube Oha I
14.	Mbutu Nwenkwo	Mbutu Nwenkwo rural electrification project Mbutu Nwenkwo water scheme	Mbutu Nwenkwo improvement Union Mbutu Nwenkwo improvement Union	1997-2001 2003-2004	HRH Eze Stephen U. Ugochukwu Eze di Oha Nma I
15.	Ngum Nweke	Supply of equipment to Eke Ngum health centre Rehabilitation of Eke Ngum water scheme	U.S.A based indigenes Ngum Nweke development union		H. R .H Eze E.D. Osugwu Duru ji Aku Oba I
16.	Ngum Nwonie	Ngum Nwonie electricity project Ngum Nwonie civic centre	Ngum Nwonie development union Ngum Nwonie development union		HRH Eze Evarest Ikeriagwo Ishi Ngwu
17.	Ngum Nweafor	Completion of water scheme at afor Completion of Ahiato health centre	Ngum Nweafor development union Ngum Nweafor development union		HRH Eze D.O.Anyanwu Out Obi I
18.	Ngum Nwekeoha	Rehabilitation of Eke Ngum market Supply of equipment to Eke Ngum health centre	Ngum Nwekeoha development union Ngum Nwekeoha development union		HRH Eze Ambrose .O. Watum Ocha-Eze Udo IV
19.	Nri Ukwu Amano	Provision of civic centre Provision of a 500KVA Transformer	Nri Ukwu Amano community Home & Abroad meeting of Nri Ukwu Amano		HRH Eze Ephraim C. Iroanya Eze agu Na Ugo
20.	Obetiti	Renovation of Obetiti primary school Construction of Obetiti civic centre	Obetiti development union Obetiti devt union		HRH Eze Reginald Anoti Amandi- Obo
21.	Ogbor Na Umuchalu	Re-roofing of community primary school. Construction of Ogbor Na Umuchalu town hall	Home & Abroad women of Ogbor Na Umuchalu Ogbor Na Umuchalu improvement union	In progress 1980-81	HRH Eze Engr. Godson Adiukwu

22.	Olaelem	Olaelem water project Construction of Olaelem town hall	Olaelem develop- ment union Olaelem develop- ment union	1998 2004- 2005	HRH Eze Isaac N. Ibegbalem Akpu Obi
23.	Umunneato	Installation of two transformers Provision of open stalls at Eke Ngum	Ezurezu Umunneato community Ezurezu Umunneato community		HRH Eze leo Nwokocha
24.	Uvuru Ike Di Na Iri	Water boreholes at Akuwa & Egbelu Development of Orie Uvuru motor park	Uvuru Ike Di Na Iri youths association		HRH Eze R.U Mbalalewe
25.	Umunokwu- Lagwa	Provision of civic cen- tre			HRH Eze Alexan- der Iwu-Olakwu I
26.	Umuhu	Flood and erosion con- trol Completion of Umuhu health centre Water Reticulation	Umuhu improve- ment union (manual) Umuhu improve- ment union (manual)	Aug 2004	HRH Eze Alex I.F Ike Uhuru I
27.	Nguru Nwenkwo	Oboama borehole pro- ject Renovation of ogwu na Eziola primary school	Oboama develop- ment union Ogwu na Eziola development union	1998 2000	HRH Eze Demian Njoku- Ekwueme II
28.	Lagwa	Renovation of Nkwo Lagwa lockup shops Lagwa water project	Lagwa youths Asso- ciation Lagwa development union	2003- 2004	NO Eze Yet
29.	Ibeku	Ibeku rural electrifica- tion project	Ibeku improvement union	On-going	HRH Eze Onyekachi Ukpabi Eku Obaji I

Source: field survey, 2005-6.

2. Ezihinite

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Oboama	Oboama electrification programme Oboama civic hall	Oboama development union Oboama development union		Eze J.N.Amaefule AladimmaII
2.	Umunama	Umunama community secondary school Umunama civic hall	World bank through Local Economic Empowerment mgt project (LEEMP) Umunama improvement union	2003 1985	Eze J.C Ogu Nnamoha II
3.	Ife	Ife electricity project Provision of 500KVA transformer	World bank under LEEMP Ife development union	2004 1999	Eze S.A.Alia Ihe I
4.	Owutu	Owutu people's assembly hall	Owutu development union		Eze EDG Nwogu-Utuu I
5.	Oko	Provision of borehole Umuchoko civic hall	Umuchoko development union Umuchoko development union		Eze Nnanna Nwosu
6.	Umueze	Umueze-Udo rural road net-work Provision of transformers	Umueze youth's association (manual) Umueze development union	1990	Eze Jonathan Anyanwu Ezerukwu I
7.	Akpodim	Rehabilitation of Akpodim community school	Akpodim improvement union Lagos branch		Eze Denis Onwubiko-Adim I
8.	Ihitte	Provision of (2) 500KVA transformers Construction of Ihitte civic centre	Ihitte development union Ihitte development union		Eze N.N.Anyanwu Okpodudu I
9.	Amagbor	Amagbor health centre Amagbor Palm plantation Amagbor rural electrification scheme	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP Amagbor improvement union	2003	Eze M.Orji Dimgba I
10.	Nneise	Erection of culverts Provision of 300KVA transformer	Nneise development union Nneise development union		Eze Kenise Odis
11.	Ezebgogu	Ezebgogu erosion control project Rehabilitation of Ezebgogu health centre	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP	2003 2004	Eze S.O.Uwaegbu Ogbogu II

12.	Okpofe	Okpofe electricity project	Counterpart funding (Local govt. & Community)		Eze E.M.C Anyanka (Late)
13.	Amumara	Provision of water borehole Provision of palm oil processing plant Construction of Amumara civic centre	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP Amumara improvement union	2004 2004	Eze O.B. Nwokocha Umara III
14.	Ezuala Amumara	Maintenance of Ezuala community primary school Provision of Ezuala town hall	Ezuala development union Ezuala development union		Eze C.U.S Onunekwu Alaoma I
15.	Owoahia Eziudo	Provision of Bakery industry Expansion of Nkwo Owoahia market	World bank under LEEMP Owoahia people's assembly	2003	Eze Desmond Oguguo Mmiri na ezoro Oha I
16.	Umuore Eziudo	Umuore borehole project Umuore road maintenance project	Umuore development union Umuore youths association (manual)		Eze Mich. Abii Eze udo I
17.	Obizi	Obizi rural electrification project Construction of Obizi civic centre	Obizi improvement union Obizi improvement union		None yet
18.	Obokwu	Obokwu rural electrification project Construction of Obokwu civic centre	Obokwu development union Obokwu development union	1993-95	Eze C.A Osuagwu Obo I of Obokwu
19.	Udo	Erection of Culverts Udo water Scheme	Udo elites club Counterpart funding (Community & Local govt.)	1999-2000 In-progress	Eze M.C Ukaeje Udo Abia IV
20.	Onicha Nweke	Construction of civic centre Renovation of Community primary school	Onicha Nweke development union Onicha Nweke development union		Eze L.U Okeahialam Ezeoha I
21.	Onicha Nweonie	Onicha Nweonie borehole project	World bank under LEEMP	2004	Eze Nicholas Uwakwe-Okubaniyi I
22.	Onicha Nweafor	Borehole project Onicha Nweafor civic centre	World bank under LEEMP Onicha Nweafor improvement union	2004	Eze A.U Nwanguma Ozirioha I

23.	Onicha Nwenkwo	Provision of health centre Provision of 300KVA transformer	Started by Community & completed by Local Govt. Onicha Nwenkwo improvement union	1986 2001	Eze A.A. Eze Nkwo I
24.	Itu	Itu water project Itu rural electrification scheme	World bank under LEEMP Itu development union		Eze L.N Dingba Ofoire I of Itu.

Source: field survey, 2005-6.

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Eziama	Oparanadim Health Centre (Abandoned) Oparanadim Electricity project	Oparanadim development union Oparanadim development union	1990 till date 1986-1990	HRN Eze Alfred E.C Nwigwe
2.	Umuhuocha	Umuhuocha water project Umuhuocha Town hall Umuhuocha Electrification project	Counterpart funding (State & Community) Umuhuocha development union Umuhuocha development union	1985-87	HRH Eze Alilionu B.I
3.	Okrikanweke	Santa shoes industry Ekeokwe Rural electrification programme Okrikanweke water project	Eze Alloy Nwokodikwa & Co. Okrikanweke development union Okrikanweke development union	1978-80	HRH Eze Aloy A.O Nwokodikwa
4.	Ogbe	Umuoma water project Umuokewa Ogbe water project Umulolo Town hall Ogbe rural electrification project	Nigeria distilleries Limited Cath. Diocese of Fairbanks Northern Alaska USA Umulolo town union Ogbe progressive union	1998 2000 In progress 1980-83	HRH Eze Anyanwu D.O
5.	Ogbenneissi	Ogbenneissi health centre Renovation of nkwo-Ikoro market Ogbenneissi water scheme	Counterpart funding (Community & Local govt.) Ogbenneissi devt. Union Ogbenneissi devt. Union		HRH Eze Barnabas Mmadinobi

6.	Ogbor	Ogbor civic centre Installation of 300KVA Transfor- mar Ogbor Fish pond (Abandoned)	Ogbor Development union Ogbor Development union Ogbor Development union	1985	HRH Eze Celestine Okafor
7.	Nnarambia	Renovation of com- munity primary school Nnarambia water scheme	Nnarambia improve- ment union Nnarambia improve- ment union		HRH Eze Desmond Onyekwere
8.	Umuchieze	Umuchieze civic hall Erection of culverts Altramodern women acquisition centre	Chief P.C Onuoha (Ikemba) Umuchieze community Umuchieze develop- ment union (women wing)	1990 1991	HRH Eze Dr. Enyenbe Onuoha
9.	Akabor	Akabor water project Akabor civic centre Installation of 300KVA transformer	Counterpart funding (State & Community) Akabor development union Akabor development union	1986-90 2001	HRH Eze Eke D.C
10.	Aguneze	Renovation of Afor- Ajala central market Aguneze regional water scheme	Aguneze development union Aguneze development union		HRH Eze Festus Ibe
11.	Otulu	Otulu water project Maintenance of group school Otulu	Otulu improvement union Otulu improvement union		HRH Eze Finian .O. Chukwu
12.	Umumbiri	Civic Hall Umumbiri Umumbiri electrifica- tion project	Umumbiri develop- ment union Umumbiri develop- ment union		HRH Eze Godwin .O. Obasi
13.	Ihitteforukwu	Renovation of 6 classroom block Ihitteforukwu elec- trification project Ihitteforukwu civic centre	Ihitteforukwu devt. Union Ihitteforukwu devt. Union Ihitteforukwu devt. Union	2001 1987-90 2004	HRH Eze Isdore Obasi
14.	Okri- kama/Umungwa	Umungwa water pro- ject Okrikama borehole scheme	Umungwa improve- ment union Lagos Okrikama development union	2001 1999	HRH Eze Joseph Onyekwere
15.	Oru	Afor- Oru water pro- ject Oru electrification project Construction of cul- verts at afor-oru	Oru development union Oru development union Oru youths association	1980 Jan-Feb 05	HRH Eze Josephat Ole- ka

16.	Lude	Lude rural electrification project Construction of Nkwo Lude civic centre	Lude improvement union Lude improvement union		HRH Eze Jude Anyamele
17.	Amano Obohia	Construction of community primary school Rehabilitation of Amono civic hall	Amano Obohia devt. Union Amano Obohia devt. Union		HRH Eze Longinus C. Okoro
18.	Obodo-Ahiara	Maintenance of health centre Obodo Ahiara Electrification programme	Obodo Ahiara devet. Union Obodo Ahiara devet. union		HRH Eze Okoroan-yanwu D.E
19.	Obodo-Ujichi	Obodo Ujichi rural road network scheme Rural electrification project Obodo-Ujichi civic centre	Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union	1980 1990-93 1985	HRH Eze Onyegahialam I.O
20.	Nnemere Mpam	Provision of 500KVA Transformer Umuogazi-Ehime Erosion Control	Nnemere Mpam devt. union Lagos Branch Nnemere Mpam devt. union		HRH Eze I.Onu
21.	Amuzi	Garri/Palm produce processing machine Uhi health centre	Oganihu women group Amuzi Counterpart funding (Local govt. & Community)	Abandoned 1995	HRH Eze Pius Unanka
22.	Ogwuama	Purchase of 500KVA Transformer Ogwuama water scheme Ogwuama civic centre	Ogwuama improvement union Ogwuama improvement union Ogwuama improvement union	2001 1999 1985	HRH Eze Sabinus Nwaneche
23.	Okrika Nwenkwo	Umuokirika town hall Procurement of two 500KVA Transformer Okrika Nwenkwo Revolving Loan	Umuokirika Elites (USA branch) Umuokirika development union Umuokirika Elites (Home branch)	1987 1990 Continues	HRH Eze Stanley P.A.Iwu
24.	Mpam	Renovation of Afor uzzi market Mpam water scheme Okponkume electrification project Okponkume civic centre	Uzzi improvement union Mpam improvement union Okponkume improvement union Okponkume improvement union	1990 1986-88 1991-94 2003	H.R.H Eze Francis .S. Ogpke

Table 5.1 Autonomous Associations & Projects Executed in Mbaise, Imo State

2. Aboh Mbaise

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Akpetu/Egbelu	d. Borehole at Umuokel e. Purchase of 500KVA transformers f. Provision of Civic centre	Umuokele Improvement Union Umuokele Improvement Union Umuokele Improvement Union	1996-97 2000 1985	H.R.H Peter A. Uduhinnwa
2.	Amasaa Uvuru	d. Borehole at Akuwa, Umughara e.t.c e. Development of orie Uvuru motor park f. Provision of transformer	Provided by the various improvement unions By Uvuru development union By Uvuru development Union		H.R.H Eze Michael Injoku Eze Uzu
3.	Amuzu	d. Electricity supply e. Rehabilitation Schools f. Development Banks through agriculture Production	Amuzu improvement union Amuzu improvement union Amuzu improvement union	1990 1999 1980	H.R.H Eze G.I Elugwaronu Igwe Uzu 1
4.	Amuzu Nwenkwo	Provision of Borehole Electricity supply	Amuzu Nwenkwo Elites club Amuzu Aut. Community	1993	H.R.H. Eze Celestine A. Alozie Ebo Ugo 1
5.	Amaaisi/Ndigbo Uvuru	Provision of borehole at Ahia-Afor	Amaissi development union Amaissi development Union Obinwanne age grade Amaissi	1987	H.R.H. Eze Ujunwa Azorji
6.	Amuzu Nweafor	Provision of borehole at Ahia-Afor Electrification project Construction of Amuzu Nweafor Civic centre	Amuzu Nweafor Dev. Union Amuzu Nweafor Dev. Union	1983-88 1985	H.R.H Eze Nathaniel B. Adiale Afor 1
7.	Egbeluna Umuhu	Provision of health centre Provision of transformer Umuokele borehole project	Started by community & Local Govt. Egbeluna Umuhu improvement union Egbeluna Umuhu improvement union	2003	H.R.H Eze Nicholas E Ugwu Ebikoro
8.	Enyiogugu	Enyiogugu rural road network Renovation of community primary school	Enyiogugu development union Enyiogugu development union		H.R.H Eze Dr. Leo Nnaji (JP) Enyi I
9.	Ezizaragu - Enyiogugu	Construction of civic centre	Nzuko Ezizaragu - Enyiogugu		H.R.H Eze B.F Emenyeonu

		Provision 500KVA transformer	Nzuko Ezigaragu - Enyiogugu		Agu I
10.	Lorji	provision of lockup shops at Eze-Ukwu erection of Lorji health center provision of borehole	Lorji development union Counterpart Fundly between ;ocal government and community		H.R.H Eze Major (RTD) J.N Unegbu (KSO) Oji I
11.	Lorji Nwekeukwu	Provision of two 500KVA transformers Lorji Nwekeukwu	Lorji Nwekeukwu town union Lorji Nwekeukwu town	In progress	H.R.H Eze D.O Nwigwe Eze Udo III
12.	Mbutu	Ndimbara road rehabilitation Mbutu Civic Centre Mbutu rural electrification project	Mbutu improvement union Mbutu improvement union Mbutu improvement union	1991 In progress	H.R.H Eze D.O. Nwigwe Eze Udo III
13.	Mbutu Nworie	Renovation of community primary school Provision of borehole at Orié market	Mbutu Nworie improvement union- Lagos Branch Mbutu Nworie improvement union	2004	H.R.H Eze Micheal N. Okpara Ube Oha I
14.	Mbutu Nwenkwo	Mbutu Nwenkwo rural electrification project Mbutu Nwenkwo water scheme	Mbutu Nwenkwo improvement Union Mbutu Nwenkwo improvement Union	1997-2001 2003-2004	HRH Eze Stephen U. Ugochukwu Eze di Oha Nma I
15.	Ngum Nweke	Supply of equipment to Eke Ngum health centre Rehabilitation of Eke Ngum water scheme	U.S.A based indigenes Ngum Nweke development union		H. R .H Eze E.D. Osugwu Duru ji Aku Oba I
16.	Ngum Nworie	Ngum Nworie electricity project Ngum Nworie civic centre	Ngum Nworie development union Ngum Nworie development union		HRH Eze Evarest Ikeriagwo Ishi Ngwu
17.	Ngum Nweafor	Completion of water scheme at afor Completion of Ahiato health centre	Ngum Nweafor development union Ngum Nweafor development union		HRH Eze D.O.Anyanwu Out Obi I
18.	Ngum Nwekeoha	Rehabilitation of Eke Ngum market Supply of equipment to Eke Ngum health centre	Ngum Nwekeoha development union Ngum Nwekeoha development union		HRH Eze Ambrose .O. Watum Ocha-Eze Udo IV
19.	Nri Ukwu Amano	Provision of civic centre Provision of a 500KVA Transformer	Nri Ukwu Amano community Home & Abroad meeting of Nri Ukwu Amano		HRH Eze Ephraim C. Iroanya Eze agu Na Ugo
20.	Obetiti	Renovation of Obetiti primary school Construction of Obetiti civic centre	Obetiti development union Obetiti devt union		HRH Eze Reginald Anoti Amandi- Obo

21.	Ogbor Na Umuchalu	Re-roofing of community primary school. Construction of Ogbor Na Umuchalu town hall	Home & Abroad women of Ogbor Na Umuchalu Ogbor Na Umuchalu improvement union	In progress 1980-81	HRH Eze Engr. Godson Adiukwu
22.	Olaelem	Olaelem water project Construction of Olaelem town hall	Olaelem development union Olaelem development union	1998 2004-2005	HRH Eze Isaac N. Ibegbalem Akpu Obi
23.	Umunneato	Installation of two transformers Provision of open stalls at Eke Ngum	Ezurezu Umunneato community Ezurezu Umunneato community		HRH Eze leo Nwokocha
24.	Uvuru Ike Di Na Iri	Water boreholes at Akuwa & Egbelu Development of Orié Uvuru motor park	Uvuru Ike Di Na Iri youths association		HRH Eze R.U Mbalalewe
25.	Umunokwu-Lagwa	Provision of civic centre			HRH Eze Alexander Iwu-Olakwu I
26.	Umuhu	Flood and erosion control Completion of Umuhu health centre Water Reticulation	Umuhu improvement union (manual) Umuhu improvement union (manual)	Aug 2004	HRH Eze Alex I.F Ike Uhuru I
27.	Nguru Nwenkwo	Oboama borehole project Renovation of ogwu na Eziola primary school	Oboama development union Ogwu na Eziala development union	1998 2000	HRH Eze Demian Njoku-Ekwueme II
28.	Lagwa	Renovation of Nkwo Lagwa lockup shops Lagwa water project	Lagwa youths Association Lagwa development union	2003-2004	NO Eze Yet
29.	Ibeku	Ibeku rural electrification project	Ibeku improvement union	On-going	HRH Eze Onyekachi Ukpabi Eku Obaji I

Source: field survey, 2005-6.

2. Ezihinite

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Oboama	Oboama electrification programme Oboama civic hall	Oboama development union Oboama development union		Eze J.N.Amaefule AladimmaII
2.	Umunama	Umunama community secondary school Umunama civic hall	World bank through Local Economic Empowerment mgt project (LEEMP) Umunama improvement union	2003 1985	Eze J.C Ogu Nnamoha II
3.	Ife	Ife electricity project Provision of 500KVA transformer	World bank under LEEMP Ife development union	2004 1999	Eze S.A.Alia Ihe I
4.	Owutu	Owutu people's assembly hall	Owutu development union		Eze EDG Nwogu-Utuu I
5.	Oko	Provision of borehole Umuchoko civic hall	Umuchoko development union Umuchoko development union		Eze Nnanna Nwosu
6.	Umueze	Umueze-Udo rural road net-work Provision of transformers	Umueze youth's association (manual) Umueze development union	1990	Eze Jonathan Anyanwu Ezerukwu I
7.	Akpodim	Rehabilitation of Akpodim community school	Akpodim improvement union Lagos branch		Eze Denis Onwubiko-Adim I
8.	Ihitte	Provision of (2) 500KVA transformers Construction of Ihitte civic centre	Ihitte development union Ihitte development union		Eze N.N.Anyanwu Okpodudu I
9.	Amagbor	Amagbor health centre Amagbor Palm plantation Amagbor rural electrification scheme	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP Amagbor improvement union	2003	Eze M.Orji Dimgba I
10.	Nneise	Erection of culverts Provision of 300KVA transformer	Nneise development union Nneise development union		Eze Kenise Odis
11.	Ezebgogu	Ezebgogu erosion control project Rehabilitation of Ezebgogu health centre	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP	2003 2004	Eze S.O.Uwaegbu Ogbogu II

12.	Okpofe	Okpofe electricity project	Counterpart funding (Local govt. & Community)		Eze E.M.C Anyanka (Late)
13.	Amumara	Provision of water borehole Provision of palm oil processing plant Construction of Amumara civic centre	World bank under LEEMP World bank under LEEMP Amumara improvement union	2004 2004	Eze O.B. Nwokocho Umara III
14.	Ezuala Amumara	Maintenance of Ezuala community primary school Provision of Ezuala town hall	Ezuala development union Ezuala development union		Eze C.U.S Onunekwu Alaoma I
15.	Owoahia Eziudo	Provision of Bakery industry Expansion of Nkwo Owoahia market	World bank under LEEMP Owoahia people's assembly	2003	Eze Desmond Oguguo Mmiri na ezoro Oha I
16.	Umuore Eziudo	Umuore borehole project Umuore road maintenance project	Umuore development union Umuore youths association (manual)		Eze Mich. Abii Eze udo I
17.	Obizi	Obizi rural electrification project Construction of Obizi civic centre	Obizi improvement union Obizi improvement union		None yet
18.	Obokwu	Obokwu rural electrification project Construction of Obokwu civic centre	Obokwu development union Obokwu development union	1993-95	Eze C.A Osuagwu Obo I of Obokwu
19.	Udo	Erection of Culverts Udo water Scheme	Udo elites club Counterpart funding (Community & Local govt.)	1999-2000 In-progress	Eze M.C Ukaeje Udo Abia IV
20.	Onicha Nweke	Construction of civic centre Renovation of Community primary school	Onicha Nweke development union Onicha Nweke development union		Eze L.U Okeahialam Ezeoha I
21.	Onicha Nweonie	Onicha Nweonie borehole project	World bank under LEEMP	2004	Eze Nicholas Uwakwe-Okubaniyi I
22.	Onicha Nweafor	Borehole project Onicha Nweafor civic centre	World bank under LEEMP Onicha Nweafor improvement union	2004	Eze A.U Nwanguma Ozirioha I

23.	Onicha Nwenkwo	Provision of health centre Provision of 300KVA transformer	Started by Community & completed by Local Govt. Onicha Nwenkwo improvement union	1986 2001	Eze A.A. Eze Nkwo I
24.	Itu	Itu water project Itu rural electrification scheme	World bank under LEEMP Itu development union		Eze L.N Dingba Ofoire I of Itu.

Source: field survey, 2005-6.

S/N	NAME OF AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY	NAME OF PROJECTS	ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE	YEAR OF EXEC.	NAME OF EZE
1.	Eziama	Oparanadim Health Centre (Abandoned) Oparanadim Electricity project	Oparanadim development union Oparanadim development union	1990 till date 1986-1990	HRN Eze Alfred E.C Nwigwe
2.	Umuhuochoa	Umuhuochoa water project Umuhuochoa Town hall Umuhuochoa Electrification project	Counterpart funding (State & Community) Umuhuochoa development union Umuhuochoa development union	1985-87	HRH Eze Alilionu B.I
3.	Okrikanweke	Santa shoes industry Ekeokwe Rural electrification programme Okrikanweke water project	Eze Alloy Nwokodikwa & Co. Okrikanweke development union Okrikanweke development union	1978-80	HRH Eze Aloy A.O Nwokodikwa
4.	Ogbe	Umuoma water project Umuokewa Ogbe water project Umulolo Town hall Ogbe rural electrification project	Nigeria distilleries Limited Cath. Diocese of Fairbanks Northern Alaska USA Umulolo town union Ogbe progressive union	1998 2000 In progress 1980-83	HRH Eze Anyanwu D.O
5.	Ogbenneissi	Ogbenneissi health centre Renovation of nkwo-Ikoro market Ogbenneissi water scheme	Counterpart funding (Community & Local govt.) Ogbenneissi devt. Union Ogbenneissi devt. Union		HRH Eze Barnabas Mmadinobi

6.	Ogbor	Ogbor civic centre Installation of 300KVA Transfor- mar Ogbor Fish pond (Abandoned)	Ogbor Development union Ogbor Development union Ogbor Development union	1985	HRH Eze Celestine Okafor
7.	Nnarambia	Renovation of com- munity primary school Nnarambia water scheme	Nnarambia improve- ment union Nnarambia improve- ment union		HRH Eze Desmond Onyekwere
8.	Umuchieze	Umuchieze civic hall Erection of culverts Altramodern women acquisition centre	Chief P.C Onuoha (Ikemba) Umuchieze community Umuchieze develop- ment union (women wing)	1990 1991	HRH Eze Dr. Enyenbe Onuoha
9.	Akabor	Akabor water project Akabor civic centre Installation of 300KVA transformer	Counterpart funding (State & Community) Akabor development union Akabor development union	1986-90 2001	HRH Eze Eke D.C
10.	Aguneze	Renovation of Afor- Ajala central market Aguneze regional water scheme	Aguneze development union Aguneze development union		HRH Eze Festus Ibe
11.	Otulu	Otulu water project Maintenance of group school Otulu	Otulu improvement union Otulu improvement union		HRH Eze Finian .O. Chukwu
12.	Umumbiri	Civic Hall Umumbiri Umumbiri electrifica- tion project	Umumbiri develop- ment union Umumbiri develop- ment union		HRH Eze Godwin .O. Obasi
13.	Ihitteforukwu	Renovation of 6 classroom block Ihitteforukwu elec- trification project Ihitteforukwu civic centre	Ihitteforukwu devt. Union Ihitteforukwu devt. Union Ihitteforukwu devt. Union	2001 1987-90 2004	HRH Eze Isdore Obasi
14.	Okri- kama/Umungwa	Umungwa water pro- ject Okrikama borehole scheme	Umungwa improve- ment union Lagos Okrikama development union	2001 1999	HRH Eze Joseph Onyekwere
15.	Oru	Afor- Oru water pro- ject Oru electrification project Construction of cul- verts at afor-oru	Oru development union Oru development union Oru youths association	1980 Jan-Feb 05	HRH Eze Josephat Ole- ka

16.	Lude	Lude rural electrification project Construction of Nkwo Lude civic centre	Lude improvement union Lude improvement union		HRH Eze Jude Anyamele
17.	Amano Obohia	Construction of community primary school Rehabilitation of Amono civic hall	Amano Obohia devt. Union Amano Obohia devt. Union		HRH Eze Longinus C. Okoro
18.	Obodo-Ahiara	Maintenance of health centre Obodo Ahiara Electrification programme	Obodo Ahiara devet. Union Obodo Ahiara devet. union		HRH Eze Okoroan-yanwu D.E
19.	Obodo-Ujichi	Obodo Ujichi rural road network scheme Rural electrification project Obodo-Ujichi civic centre	Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union Obodo-Ujichi devet. Union	1980 1990-93 1985	HRH Eze Onyegahialam I.O
20.	Nnemere Mpam	Provision of 500KVA Transformer Umuogazi-Ehime Erosion Control	Nnemere Mpam devt. union Lagos Branch Nnemere Mpam devt. union		HRH Eze I.Onu
21.	Amuzi	Garri/Palm produce processing machine Uhi health centre	Oganihu women group Amuzi Counterpart funding (Local govt. & Community)	Abandoned 1995	HRH Eze Pius Unanka
22.	Ogwuama	Purchase of 500KVA Transformer Ogwuama water scheme Ogwuama civic centre	Ogwuama improvement union Ogwuama improvement union Ogwuama improvement union	2001 1999 1985	HRH Eze Sabinus Nwaneche
23.	Okrika Nwenkwo	Umuokirika town hall Procurement of two 500KVA Transformer Okrika Nwenkwo Revolving Loan	Umuokirika Elites (USA branch) Umuokirika development union Umuokirika Elites (Home branch)	1987 1990 Continues	HRH Eze Stanley P.A.Iwu
24.	Mpam	Renovation of Afor uzzi market Mpam water scheme Okponkume electrification project Okponkume civic centre	Uzzi improvement union Mpam improvement union Okponkume improvement union Okponkume improvement union	1990 1986-88 1991-94 2003	H.R.H Eze Francis .S. Ogpke

Fig 1.2 Map of Nigeria



Fig. 1.1 Map of Nigeria

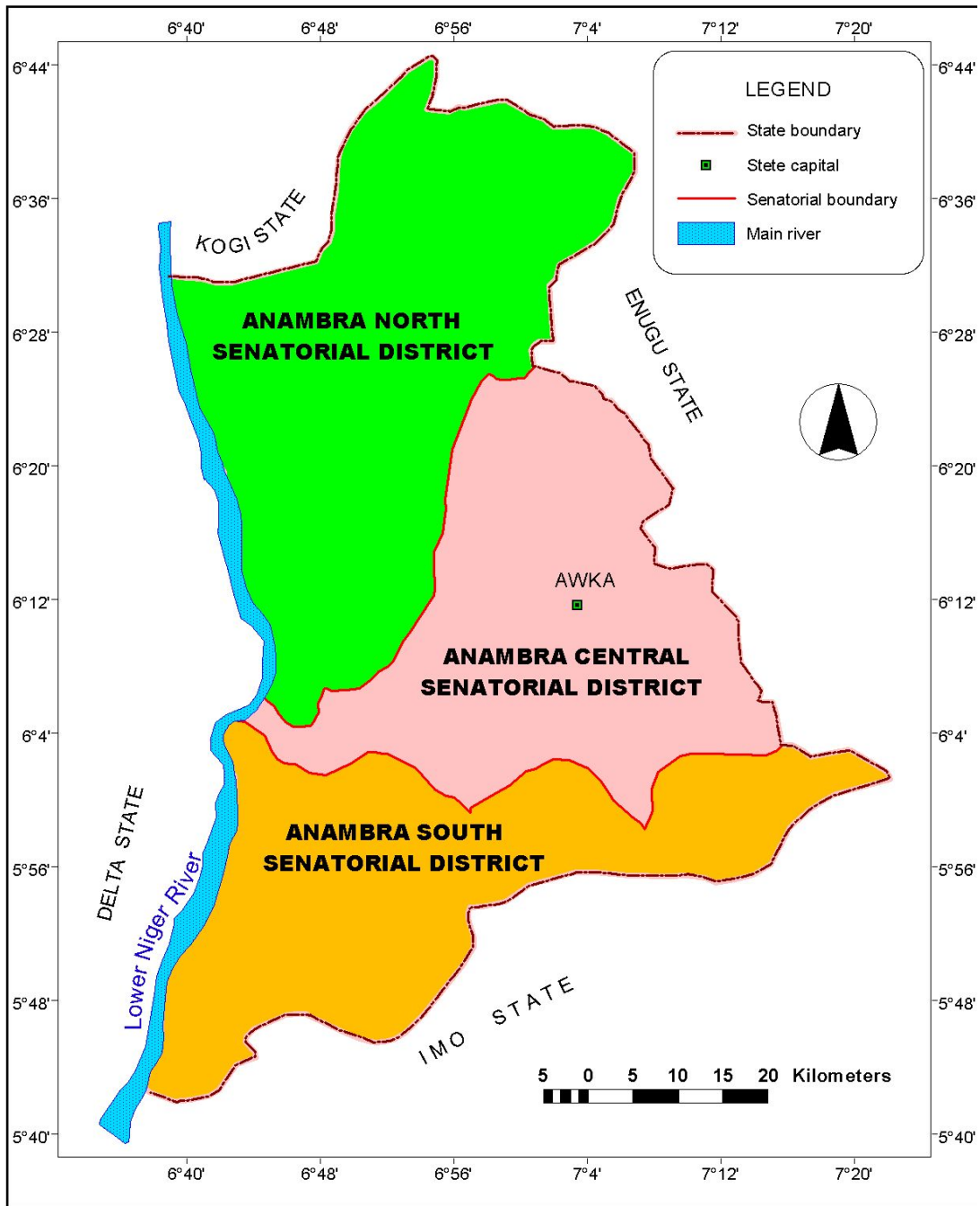


Fig. 1.2 :Map of Anambra State showing the three Senatorial Districts

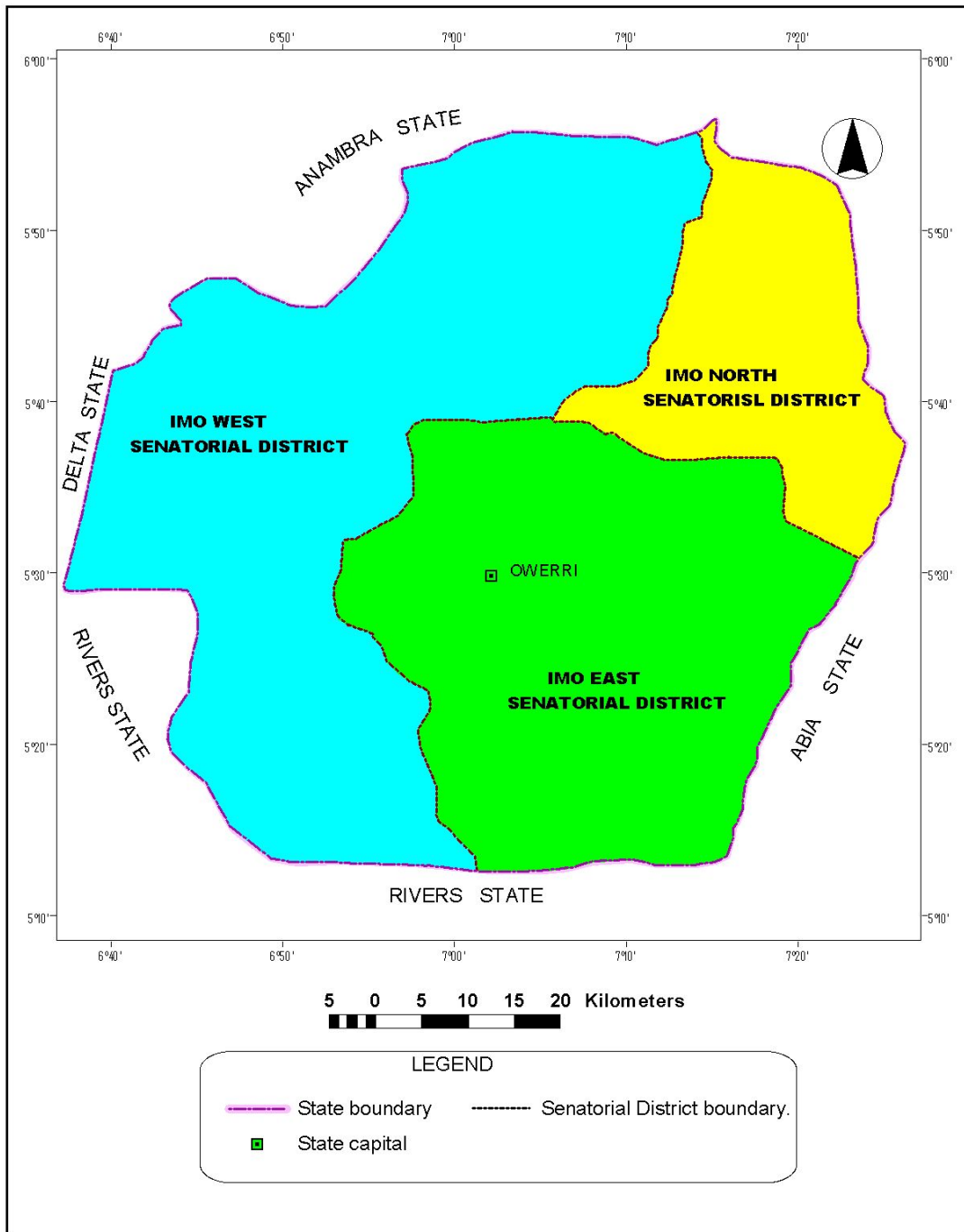


Fig. 1.3 : Map of Imo State showing the three Senatorial

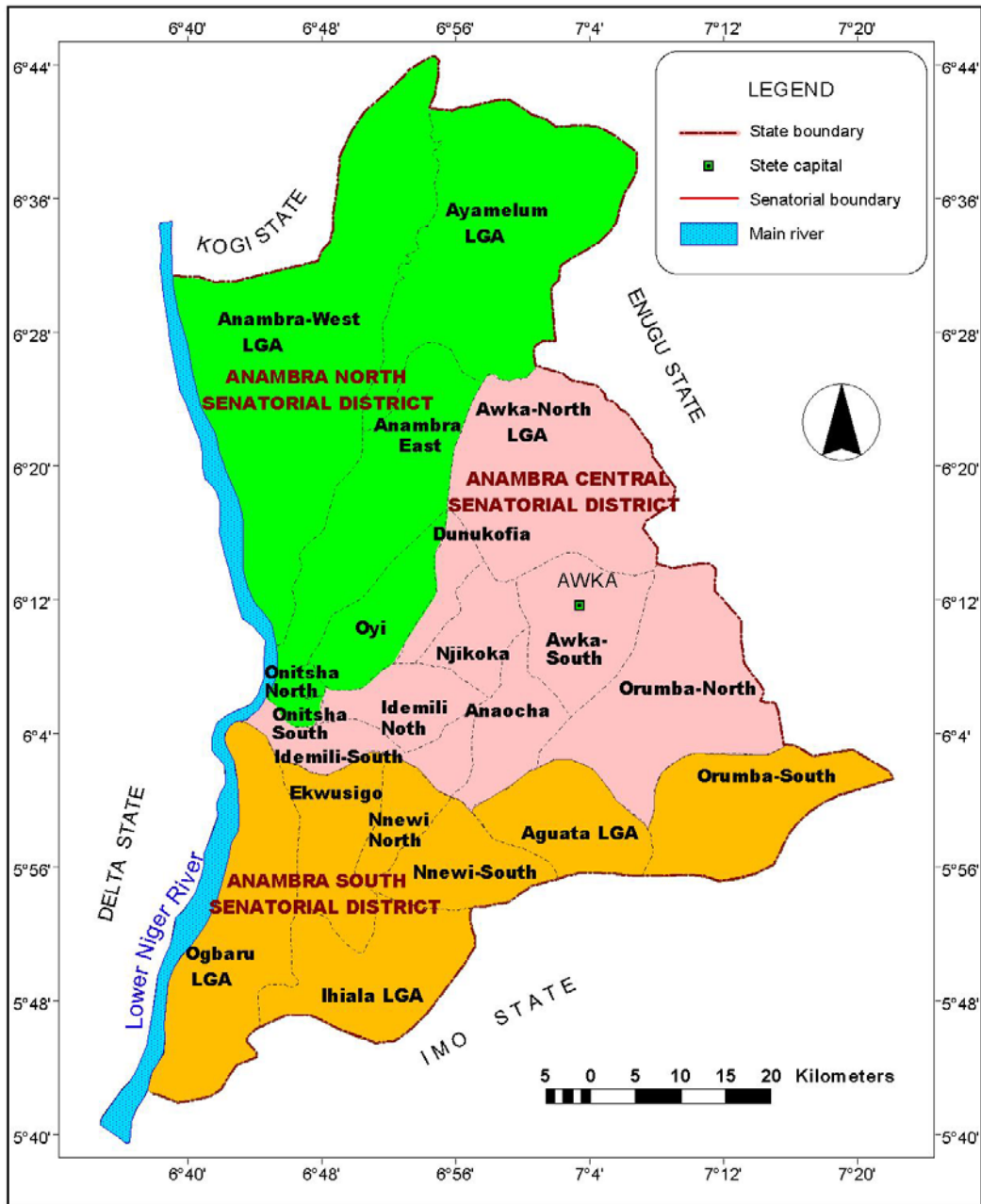


Fig. 1.4 : Map of Anambra State showing Local Government Areas in the three Senatorial Districts



Imo Indigenes reliving their Culture in Ibadan at The 2009 Imo Day Celebration



Ukpor Development Association (Women's Wing)



Nursery School At Ezihinite donated by women HTA's in the community



Unubi Development Association (Women's Wing)



Amichi Women's Association



Post Office at Unubi by the women's wing of the Unubi development union



Community Development Official, Miss Orji



Electrification Project at Otulu by Otulu progressive women's association



Gari Processing Project by executed by Obodo Ahiara women development association



Motherless babies home and day Care and Nursery project executed by Amuchi women's organization



Ukpor Town Hall – A collaborative efforts of women HTAs in Ukpor



Mbaise Women at the end of their celebrations to mark Imo day



U.D.U Secretariat, Unubi executed by women organizations in Unubi



Multipurpose Shopping Centre at Amichi executed by women organizations Amichi



Borehole Water Project at Aboh, Mbaise donated by women HTAs in Aboh, Mbaise.



Mrs Ikechukwu (right) the leader of the women's wing, Ukpok Development Union Ibadan branch and another member



The Researcher (arrowed) in a discussion with the executive members of the Ukpok Development Union Ibadan branch, women's wing