# CULTURAL PRACTICES AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP INCLINATIONS IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This study focused on cultural practices and women entrepreneurship inclinations in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study are to determine whether gender role of procreation and patriarchy dominant cultural belief affect women entrepreneurship in Ebonyi State. Descriptive survey design was employed and three communities in the rural part of Ebonyi State were selected. The areas are chosen because culture is more pronounced than in the urban part of the state. The communities selected are Eka –Awoke, Obegu Mgbom and Umudomi in Ikwo, Abakaliki and Onicha LGAs respectively. A total of 150 women were selected using the snowball sampling technique. Closed ended questionnaires were developed and used to gather data from the respondents. Data collected were presented in frequency table and analysed with percentages. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Correlation technique with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences, (SPSS) version 20.0. Findings indicate that gender role of procreation and patriarchy dominant cultural belief limits women entrepreneurship inclinations in Ebonyi State. Based on this finding it is recommended that Nigerian women especially those that wish to go into entrepreneurship should ensure they are well educated to overcome some cultural influence that limit female entrepreneurship.*

*Keywords: Cultural Practices, Women Entrepreneurship, Inclinations*

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Background of the Study

Human beings are social animals with an innate desire to conform to socially accepted norms and values. Over periods of time, some of these norms become standards that all members of the community are expected to adhere to. Deviance from these standards is seen as absurd, wrong, or frankly abnormal.

Ebonyi state like any other state is governed by a culture whose beliefs, customs, and a host of social practices have a powerful influence on community life. Some cultural practices impact negatively on the enjoyment of human rights in general and rights of women in particular.

Women entrepreneurs have been ignored to be supported on starting their venture in many emerging economics, due to the complex interaction of socio-cultural factors, religious, and family structures. Women face discrimination and gender inequalities owing to gender-biased power relations based on inequality and prejudice.

Culture is a social system that develops through social interactions and processes (Connell, 2020). It is believed that the lifestyles and ways of living of social members are associated with particular social groups in a given culture (Bradley, 2020). Within this context, it is argued that cultural aspect shapes how women are represented in society. The significance of culture in influencing women's life can be highlighted in several ways. First, women's daily activities are determined by their biological conditions. In this regard, women are expected to carry out tasks that are in line with the expectations of the society in which they live. Second, the element of power that exists in a culture has placed women at a disadvantaged position, particularly when men control most power resources. Third, women must confront the cultural belief that 'society is man-made', which forces them to fight for their rights. Finally, it is argued that in the presence of significant cultural influences such as patriarchal societies, women struggle for their social status (Roomi and Harrison, 2020). Therefore, the use of culture in explaining women's entrepreneurship is relevant after considering the cultural factors that govern women's social environment resulting in a complex social interaction for women.

The idea of male-gendered entrepreneurship serves as a challenge for women in business. Despite the fact that many business obstacles are shared by men and women entrepreneurs, the reality is that women are disadvantaged in the society in comparison to males which makes the challenges for women more comprehensive (Brush and Gatewood, 2018; Marlow, 2019). For example, while women entrepreneurs encounter gender-related challenges in running their businesses, men do not. Within this context, women entrepreneurs struggle in balancing responsibilities between family and business, which causes them to limit the time and mobility for business (Ahmad, 2021). In addition, women are perceived as less independent, gentle, and weak and this societal stigma has been tolerated as the status quo for a long time. However, these attributes contradict with the entrepreneurial values such as the need for women to be assertive. Furthermore, in some contexts, women are also expected to adhere to what society expects of them to have restricted mobility and perform women's traditional roles and seek their spouse's permission before acting. In this regard, it may be argued that while women are free to start a business, the success of their enterprise will be influenced by various socio-cultural factors.

It is observed by Selmat (2020) that most of the family properties are being reserved for men as a form of socio-cultural practice; and that explains discriminatory categorization that exists between men and women entrepreneurs which contributes to a large extent to the reason the male gender often has an upper hand over the female in meetings, presentations, negotiation, competition, etc. This implies that women entrepreneurs are at a disadvantage when compared with the men; and that adds negatively to the women's inferiority complex and lay negative implications on their entrepreneurial growth and activities (Okafor, 2020). In terms of exploiting

business opportunities, it is reckoned that the level of self-confidence possessed by women entrepreneurs towards business activities is a militating factor.

In terms of patriarchal expectations of women, women reported facing pressures from family expectations due to social roles as caregivers.

A similar trend is also noticed across the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries where only 2.2 per cent of women participating in the labour market were employers in 2011, down from 2.8 per cent in 2019" (Piacentini, 2020)."Cultural values limit women entrepreneurs to expose themselves to the business world (Mordi, 2020). This corroborates the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Project (2019) which reported that cultural norms regarding the role of woman in family and labour practices are perceived as major restricting factors for businesswomen in Malaysia.

The Nigerian nation has continued to adopt policies and programmes to improve the lives of women through various measures and activities with a focus on socio-economic and political development. However, even with the adoption of Article 42 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) that was adapted from the United Nations' principles of gender equality, which provides for equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the Nigerian state still struggles with different forms of gendered marginalisation issues against women in various aspect of the Nigerian society in business, in economy, and in politics (Eniola, 2018). In March 2022, the Nigerian senate failed to enact the bill of "gender and equal opportunity", which forbids the physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, economic, social, and cultural abuse or similar mistreatment or mishandling which interferes with the integrity of a female or male human being (Makinde, 2020). In a Nigerian study, Mordi, Simpson and Singh (2020) argued that women face challenges because of gender categorisation and cultural values rather than educational or mental abilities, and Nigerian women emerge as "particularly confident and resourceful in their entrepreneurial career. Therefore, since there is scholarly evidence that culture limits women entrepreneurship drive in Nigeria, this paper investigates the cultural practices that affect women entrepreneurship inclinations in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Women worldwide are eager to engage in business activities to support their husbands and other family members. However, the issue of culture has always been identified as an obstacle to this drive. Studies by Mordi (2020) and Hashim (2021) show that there is an agreement that culture has a greater impact on women entrepreneurs in developing countries and non-Western environments. To understand the influence of culture on society, it is important for researchers to understand the national culture that governs the society. These findings support the patriarchal society's image of women's subordination to men and the views that women are less independent, gentle and weak

In Nigeria, the Islamic culture are known for seeing the women as the property of the men hence they dance to dictates of their husbands including participation in business activities. In a study by Igwegbe (2021) on the influence of culture on women entrepreneurship in Nigeria, in Enugu state, it was discovered that cultural values have significant influence on the performance of women entrepreneurship in Nigeria and other sub-Sahara Africa. Enugu State is close to Ebonyi State and both have similar cultural practices. It is likely that cultural practices which affect women drive for business in Enugu State, may extend to Ebonyi State. So what we know is that there are cultural practices in Ebonyi State targeting women. This observed gap informs this study with a view to making recommendations on the elimination of cultural practices that limits women's participation in economic ventures, if any is observed.

## 3. Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions;
1. What is the influence of women's gender role of procreation on entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State?
2. Does a Partriachial dominant cultural belief affect women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State?

## 4. Objectives of the Study
The broad objectives of the study is to examine the cultural practices that affects women entrepreneurship inclinations in Ebonyi State, Nigeria
The specific objectives of the study include;
1. To find out the influence of women's gender role of procreation on entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State
2. To know whether Partrichical dominant cultural beliefs affect women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

## 5. Research Hypotheses
This study is guided by the following research hypotheses
1. $H_{01}$: There is no significant positive relationship between women's gender role of procreation and entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State
   $H_1$: There is a significant positive relationship between women's gender role of procreation and entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State
2. $H_{02}$: There is no significant positive relationship between Partrichical dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State
   $H_2$: There is a significant positive relationship between Partrichical dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

## 6. Scope and limitations of the study 2022
This study focused on women in Ebonyi State only. The major limitations of the study is the poor level of English comprehension among the women who constitute the subject of the study. However, with further illustration, the women were able to understand and attend to the questionnaires raised.

## 7. Review of Related Literature
### Concept of culture
The different concepts of culture by researchers have all in common a relatively wide view of culture with more or less abstract characteristic. It is based on this that Dhaskhayene and Anneli (2013) conclude that culture is a way of regarding and living a life that is shared by members of a social group and that is inherited from one generation to another. They further state that culture consists of ways to behave and value aspects of life and is derived from the social environment where people grew up. Haiyan and Eileen (2007) submit that culture can be conceptualized in three ways: The elitist view – culture implies superior power, the holistic view-culture implies the whole way of life, and the relativist view-culture is localized and may bear different behaviours in different regions or communities from the similar society or environment.

### Concept of Entrepreneurship
An entrepreneur is an individual who creates a new business, bearing most of the risks and enjoying most of the rewards. The entrepreneur is commonly seen as an innovator, a source of new ideas, goods, services, and business/or procedures. Entrepreneurs play a key role in any economy, using the skills and initiative necessary to anticipate needs and bringing good new ideas to market. Meanwhile entrepreneurship is the ability and readiness to develop, organize and run a business enterprise, along with any of its uncertainties in order to make a profit. The

most prominent example of entrepreneurship is the starting of new businesses. In businesses, entrepreneurship connected with land, labour, natural resources and capital can generate a profit. The entrepreneurial vision is defined by discovery and risk-taking and is an indispensable part of a nation's capacity to succeed in an ever-changing and more competitive global marketplace.

The concept of entrepreneurship is synonymous with business investment and wealth creation. Agbaeze (2007) sees entrepreneurship as the process of taking advantage of the need-gap to develop or, create wealth by assembling or investing the necessary resources, and assuming the associated psyche and financial risk, and receiving rewards in such an investment. Supporting this concept, Ndubuisi (2013) posits that entrepreneurship thrives on creating and adding value, investing capital and aggregating input resources, managing the risks of uncertainties, and managing the risks of uncertainties, and getting material and psychological satisfaction. He highlighted five importance of entrepreneurship which include;

Creation of Employment, innovation, impact on society and community development, increase standard of living, and support for research and development.

**Women and Entrepreneurship**
Nwigwe (2018) highlighted four different types of female entrepreneurs as conventional, innovative, domestic and radical. He postulates that conventional women entrepreneurs are highly committed to both entrepreneurship ideals and to the conventional gender role for women. The conventional female entrepreneurs accept the fact that they have to work long hours to fulfill both their domestic and entrepreneurial roles. In contrast, innovative entrepreneurs are committed to entrepreneurship ideals but not to the conventional gender roles. On the other hand, the domestic female entrepreneurs do not uphold entrepreneurship ideals but are committed to conventional gender roles. Radical businesswomen have low commitment to both entrepreneurship ideals and to conventional gender roles.

Okafor and Mordi (2009) posit that women entrepreneurs are simply women that participate in total entrepreneurial activities, who take risks involved in combining resources together in a unique way so as to take advantage of the opportunity identified in their immediate environment through production of goods and services. Kerka (2008) submits that the spectrum of women in entrepreneurship often ranges from home based business to micro, small and medium enterprises. He however, states that women entrepreneurs generally share the same motivations with their male counterparts. It has been observed that Nigeria is a highly patriarchal society, where men dominate in all sphere of women's live. Nwigwe (2018), states that, as in other male dominated societies, the social relations and activities of Nigerian women and men are governed by patriarchal system of socialization and cultural practices, which favour the interest of men against that of women. The evidence of socio-cultural influence on entrepreneurship is visible, from the point of entrepreneurship among women in Nigeria.

Ogundele (2008) is of the view that the role of men and women generally in different environment varies widely. In many societies, women do not enjoy parity with men as participants in the economy. The extents to which women are allowed to participate in economic activities affect their drive to go into entrepreneurship. Researchers have shown that values about family role for men and women affect entrepreneurial emergency of women as well as men. Values about family role determine how family unit divide responsibilities for the provision of economic well-being of the family unit. This as we know varies among cultures. In some cultures, the men are seen as the bread winner while the women are restricted to home keeping, where as in other cultures, the bread winner role is borne by both men and women.

It has been observed that in Nigeria, the socio-cultural system is gender discriminatory in terms of economic engagement. In the view of Adeleke (2007), the traditional belief about the position and role of women do not allow women to engage in serious economic activities and as a result places a limit on the entrepreneurial drive of women in Nigeria. It is believed in some quarters that the women's role is in the home and if a woman engages in activities outside the home, she

had gone against the culture and will be severely dealt with. Sequel to this, Nwigwe (2018) submits that most Nigerian women suffer a kind of displacement from economic activities as a result of cultural beliefs.

However, scholars like Onyenuga (2008) believe that the situation appears to have improved due to globalization and increased enlightenment and awareness as well as the challenges of economic realities of today face by the family unit. However, research has shown that the level of participation in entrepreneurial activities by Nigerian women in relation to men is still very low but the degree of disparity differs from tribes depending on the level of permissiveness allowed by the culture of each tribe

Previous research on women's entrepreneurship highlights that women's decision to start their own business was influenced by 'positive developments' or pull factors and a 'negative environment' or push factors (Ahmad, 2021). However, the influence of push factors on women entrepreneurs is more evident in the women's entrepreneurship literature. It is argued that women's involvement in business can be related to different types of disappointment that women face in the working environment. For example, women's dissatisfaction in the workplace involves concerns such as the glass ceiling, wage inequality of payment, and occupational segregation and discrimination (Van der Boon, 2020).

In addition, women are mostly employed in the service industry which provides them with a low income and this situation has also led women to start their own businesses (Schmidt and Parker, 2020). On another aspect, the financial distress faced by a household also becomes significant reasons that push women into business. In the past, men are the sole bread winner of the family. However, in some situations where the family's financial demands expand, there is a consideration for the spouses to work together to provide income for the family (Ihuoma and Terrumun, 2015). In this sense, creating jobs by establishing a business venture becomes relevant for women. Meanwhile, women entrepreneurs are also motivated by positive factors such as being supported by family and friends as well as the desire to achieve personal fulfilment (McGowan, 2020). However, in explaining what motivates women to start businesses, less attention is given on the influence of socio-cultural factors (Topimin, 2020), offering a rationale for researchers to investigate the topic.

Even though entrepreneurship has been demonstrated to be highly rewarding, it is argued that the process is "trickier" for women than it is for men (McGowan 2020). Within this context, women entrepreneurs are more likely to encounter various types of challenges that are rooted in their social environment. First and foremost, the idea of women as homemakers remains to be the greatest challenge for women entrepreneurs. It has long been debated that the gender divisions of labour within a household requires women to carry out domestic activities while performing productive works (Moser, 2020). The major effect of this practice is that women entrepreneurs struggle to balance their roles in business and at home. It is argued that the flexibility that an entrepreneurial career provides has caused women to 'devalue' their businesses as they only have a limited amount of time to devote to their businesses (Marlow, 2002: pg. 89).

**Influence of Culture on Women Entrepreneurs**

Men and women's responsibilities are defined in everyday life based on their biological positions, with a common understanding that women are associated with motherhood roles and that woman's roles should not get mixed up with those of men (Connell, 2020). The idea of men's roles and women's roles appears as natural and desirable in society (Hashim, 2021). According to the classical social learning theory, gender-appropriate behaviour begins during the learning process when a youngster imitates his or her parent's behaviour (Oakley, 2020). During the learning process, a daughter is expected to imitate the behaviour of her mother and will be awarded for doing so whereas a son will be imitating his father's behaviour. The idea of gender appropriate behaviour that was instilled in the daughter or son at home has a big impact on the decision made by the daughter or son once he or she interacts in a larger social setting

such as in selecting a field of study or future career. In the context of entrepreneurship, the significance of social influence via parents is crucial in influencing the entrepreneurial decision made by children (Chlosta, 2020). As such, there is a tendency that women's involvement in the current business is closely linked with the social learning process to which they were exposed to during childhood.

Max Weber in 1976 was the first to emphasize the influence of culture on entrepreneurship (Nwigwe, 2018). Weber famously submits that Protestantism encourages a culture that emphasizes individualism, achievement motivation, legitimating of entrepreneurial vocation, rationality, asceticism, and self-reliance. It is based on this premise that Hoftstede (1991) sees culture as a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. Sequel to this, Hoftstede (1991) equally sees culture as a collective phenomenon that is shaped by individuals' social environment, not their genes. He conceptualized culture as a set of shared values, beliefs and norms of a group or community. Based on this, Zakaria (2002) posits that these cultural values and norms will either converge or conflict with a society's ability to develop a strong entrepreneur orientation.

Hoftstede (1991) show that culture affects workplace values across a range of countries. In consonance, Berge (1991) in Nwigwe (2018) submits that any modernization in countries must include cultural transformation. As such, entrepreneurship develops from the bottom up such that culture gives rise to entrepreneurial potential. Studies have revealed that entrepreneurial engagement and business ownership among women in Nigeria shows that women of northern tribes involve less in entrepreneurial activities than those of their southern counterparts. According to Ahmed, (2012), the major reason for this is that the northern culture have it that a woman is not supposed to be seen moving freely outside. Generally, women entrepreneurs all over the world face various genders, social and culturally based barriers that can affect their intensity willingness and ability to start and grow a business. Issues such as property, matrimonial and inheritance, families and social roles, and cultural expectations and practices can be significant factors in women's entrepreneurial activities and business development. It is against this backdrop that this study is carried out to determine the influence of culture on the performance of women entrepreneurs. Sequel to this, the study hypothesized that cultural values have significant influence on the performance of women entrepreneurs.

## 8. Empirical Review

Agabeaze (2020) examined "influence of culture on women entrepreneurship in Nigeria, with a specific emphasis in Enugu state". Data for the study was collected from 163 selected female entrepreneurs in Enugu state by means of questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed with a non-parametric chi – square statistics. From the analysis of data and literature reviewed, it was discovered and concluded that cultural values have significant influence on the performance of women entrepreneurship in Nigeria and other sub-Sahara Africa.

Mordi (2020) explored "Socio-cultural elements in women's social environments influence their entrepreneurial activities". In-depth interviews with ten women entrepreneurs in the West Coast of Sabah were conducted. Although some cultural factors appear to assist women in pursuing their entrepreneurial activities, this study found that the factors also inhibit women entrepreneurs from realising their full business potential. The findings reveal that socio-cultural factors influence the business decisions made by women entrepreneurs. It becomes apparent that the concept of gender appropriate behaviour has given impact on women's businesses in several aspects: motivating factors, industry preferences and strong family commitment as well as patriarchal pressures on business. The study concludes that socio-cultural factors are critical to understanding of women's entrepreneurship, thus, adding to the body of knowledge about the impact of culture on women's entrepreneurship.

Hakim (2020) investigated the "Socio-cultural practices that have hampered women's progress in achieving their position in leadership, decision making in conflict resolutions in Garissa County of Zambia. Several research questions were formulated to guide the study. The target

population consisted of 100 respondents. Data was gathered by use of questionnaire and was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative data. The findings revealed that socio-cultural factors have a lot of influence on women's participation in decision making and conflict resolutions. Women usually consulted their male relatives since they felt that leadership role was a reserve for men in the society. The study also revealed that the society expected men to take decision making role and conflict resolutions with women only being left as spectators. This is because the community's culture had a role to play in allocating gender role. A traditionally ascribed role; that is in terms of gender, determines women's careers and progress.

Hashim (2021), evaluated "Impact of women's traditional economic activities on Women in Pakistan". About 480 women responded out of 600, which were selected using a snowball sampling technique from the entire three regions. The data was collected by conducting face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). About 68.33% respondents were illiterate, 47.71% were 31 to 40 years old, and 47.92% lived in a joint family system. Due to the strict Purdah (veil) culture, about 71.88% of the women's economic activities were confined indoors, such as stitching; embroidery; basket and candle making; preparing pickles, jams, and squash; dairy products; apiculture; sericulture; livestock; poultry; nursery raising; and some agriculture-related off-farm activities. It was reported that the major decisions in the household are made by the male members due to the strong patriarchal norms and values. The study concluded that many demographic social, cultural, religious, and economic factors negatively influence the women's productive potential.

### 9. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the five (5) Dimensional theory of Geert Hofstede proposed in 1990. Hostess's cultural dimensions theory is a framework for cross-cultural communication. It shows the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members, and how these values relate to behavior, using a structure derived from factor analysis. The original theory proposed four dimensions along which cultural values could be analysed:

A. Individualism-collectivism;

B. Uncertainty avoidance;

C. Power distance (strength of social hierarchy) and

D. Masculinity-femininity (task-orientation versus person-orientation). Independent research in Hong Kong led Hofstede to add a fifth dimension,

E. long-term orientation, to cover aspects of values not discussed in the original paradigm.

The theory assumes that at the universal level, we are born with a very perceptive mind to be ready in joining the first cultural group we see after birth (individualism-collectivism). Step by step, children become integrated into different in-groups such as family, school, workplace, etc., and learn to think of themselves as part of the "we" group, distinct from other people in society who belong to the "they" group (out-group). The tendency for humans to form different groups is because cultural diversity is a critical strategy to protect collective knowledge and heritage. It helps us recognize who belongs to our in-group, and thus defines who we can trust, who we can share our knowledge with, and who we can live and die for. Group is therefore a fundamental concern, universally significant in all human societies. With this concern, the entire human race also shares the same value that exhibits the relationship between each individual and his/her group.

Power is a fundamental concern because human groups everywhere are organized into a hierarchy. Decision makers are present in groups of any size and ethnicity (e.g. the head of a family, the chief of a tribe, or the rulers of a city state, etc.). The value attached to power is called Power Distance, defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of the society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. Universally, all people accept to a certain degree that we are not equal. No matter where you come from, you will always acknowledge that your tribal headperson, your managers, your parents, your teachers, and even someone who is older than you have a degree or two more power than you do.

Fear is the result of both strongly innate feeling and social learning. In general, we have several inborn fears, for example the fear of falling and the fear caused by loud noises. These fears are genetically coded in our body and it is a healthy emotion since it helps keep us from harm. Most other fears are learned from the culture of our life, what is good and what is bad, what is safe and what is dangerous. Our fear may have an object (fear of the dark) or no specific object. The latter is called Uncertainty. The best way to avoid Uncertainty is using rules. And thus, the value of Uncertainty Avoidance is basically about "how rules are imposed in a society in order to deal with ambiguity and the unknown". There are two types of rules: institutional rules focus on formal regulations, written laws, structured guidelines or organized procedures. Examples of institutional rules are everywhere around us, from the way we keep a work diary of appointments to how a legal case is proceeded. The second type of rules is social rule, which are informally agreed-upon codes of conducts or operation. In general, social rules are values, virtues, rules of morality and motives, such as "In what way you should communicate with a senior person" or "How tolerant you are towards a radical idea"…etc.

Long term orientation is a universal value that relates to how we see the influence of the past, presence and future in our life: How far we plan ahead; how quick we expect our result and rewards; how important is saving and spending, etc. At the collective level, time spectrum exerts different degree of influence in different societies, creating two orientations on this value dimension: short- and long-term Orientation. In a nutshell, a focus on the past and the present would lead more towards short-term Orientation, and a focus on the future will lead more towards long-term Orientation.

This study is most fitting for this study because it allows us to look at a wide range of cultures with a comparative perspective. It also points at value of a dominant culture within a nation. This theory has been widely used in several fields as a paradigm for research, particularly in cross-cultural studies of values as well as research on other aspects of culture, such as social beliefs.

## 10. METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was employed in this study. Three communities were selected in the rural part of Ebonyi State. The choice of the rural areas is because it is believed that culture is more pronounced in the rural areas than in the urban part of the State.

The communities selected are Eka –Awoke in Ikwo LGA, Obegu Mgbom in Abakaliki LGA and Umudomi in Onicha LGA. A total of 150 women were selected for the study. Specifically, 50 women were selected from each community using the snowball sampling technique.

Primary data was used through closed ended questionnaires to develop and used to gather data from the respondents. The questionnaire developed for the study was validated by the supervisor and his colleagues. Data collected were presented in frequency table and analysed with percentages. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Moment Correlation technique with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences, (SPSS) version 20.0.

## RESULTS

The data gathered from respondent response were presented as follows

**Table 1: Mean value of** women's gender role of procreation on entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State

| | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Gender role do not retard entrepreneurship drive among women | 20 | 13.3% |
| 2. Gender role retard entrepreneurship | | |

| | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| drive among women | 130 | 86.7% |
| Total | 150 | 100% |

**Source: Fieldwork, 2022.**

Information in table 2 indicate that 20(13.3%) of the women said that gender role do not retards entrepreneurship drive among them while larger proportion of the women numbering 130 (86.7%) said that gender role of procreation do affect their spirit of entrepreneurship among them.

**Table 2: Mean value of influence of dominant** Patriarchy culture on women's engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

| | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|
| 3. patriarchy culture has negative effect women's engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State | 24 | 16% |
| 4. patriarchy culture has negative effect women's engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State | 131 | 84% |
| Total | 150 | 100% |

**Source: Fieldwork, 2022.**

Information in table 3 indicate that 24(14.3%) of the women said that dominant patriarchy culture do not limits their engagement in economic ventures while vast majority, 131 (84%) of the women said that dominant patriarchy culture still dictate their ability to engage in economic activities.

**11. Test of Hypotheses**

Decision Rule: If the tabulated value of Pearson correlation statistics < than critical value, reject alternate and accept the null hypothesis and vice visa

**Hypothesis One**

$H_{01}$: There is no significant positive relationship between women's gender role of procreation and entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State

$H_1$: There is a significant positive relationship between women's gender role of procreation and entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State.

**Table 3: correlation between gender role of procreation and entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State.**

| | r-value | p-value |
|---|---|---|
| Gender role retards entrepreneurship drive among women | 0.00126 | 0.10900 |

SPSS Version 20.0

From the above table we observed that the value of Pearson r (0.00126) is less than p value of 0.10900 that indicated that a negative correlation existed between gender role and women entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State. It was also clear that as the p value or sig (2-Tailed) values are greater than 0.05 that indicated a significant correlation between gender role and women involvement in entrepreneurship activities. Thus it is accepted that gender role of procreation do prohibit women from entrepreneurship activities in Ebonyi State.

**Hypotheses Two**

$H_{02}$: There is no significant positive relationship between patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

H$_2$: There is a significant positive relationship between patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

**Table 4: correlation between** patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State

|  | r-value | p-value |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Partrichical dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State | 0.00106 | 0.10810 |

SPSS Version 20.0

From the table 4 we observed that the value of Pearson r (0.00106) is less than p value of 0.10810 that indicated that a negative correlation existed between Patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State. It was also clear that as the p value or sig (2-Tailed) values are greater than 0.05 that indicated a significant correlation between Patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State. Thus it is accepted that Patriarchy dominant cultural beliefs and women engagement in economic ventures in Ebonyi State.

## 12. Discussion of the findings

Several cultural and gender-related obstacles affect women entrepreneurs. In a patriarchal society, men as the primary income provider must be respected, resulting women to seek men's consent to engage in any activities, particularly outside the home, such as entrepreneurship activities. As such, it is not easy for women entrepreneurs to make the best judgments for their businesses as their decision is subject to their husband's permission. In addition, it is argued that patriarchal system provides women entrepreneurs with limited power in making business decisions. Since entrepreneurship requires women to be agile in the decision-making process, it is more likely that women entrepreneurs in a patriarchal society will be at a disadvantaged position in optimising their business potential. These arguments indicate patriarchal pressures on women entrepreneurs, which justifies exploring the influence of patriarchal systems on women's businesses.

Also, there is an agreement that culture has a greater impact on women entrepreneurs in developing countries and non-Western environments (Mordi, 2020). To understand the influence of culture on society, it is important for researchers to understand the national culture that governs the society. Generally, culture can be divided into two categories: collectivist and individualist. While individualist culture emphasises personal achievement, collectivist culture emphasises in-group goals. People who live in a collectivist culture give priority to family and work group goals over individual desires, thus, resulting to a harmonious relationship in society (Zawawi, 2020). The conduct of women's businesses in this study could be influenced by the collectivist society. This proves that culture limits women participation in economic activities.

However, this study agrees with that of zawawi that culture especially gender role of procreation and patriarchy cultural practices do hinder women entrepreneurship drive in Ebonyi State.

## 13. Conclusion

This study has shown that women in Ebonyi State are affected by culture in terms of establishing entrepreneurship. Though women strive these days to become bread winners for the family but culture should not be a barrier that influences their participation in economic ventures. This will aid in empowerment of women in economic activities. Based on our findings and conclusion, we recommend that government at different levels should ensure that

human right as they are enshrined in the constitution are enforced especially as it affects women.

## 14. Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

(1) Nigerian women especially those that wish to go into entrepreneurship should ensure they are well educated to overcome some cultural influence that does not promote female growth and development. This will help remove gender roles that influence women participation in economic activities among those who indicated that it affects them

(2) Finally we recommend that charitable organizations, donor agencies and government should dedicate special funds in form of grants for the development of female entrepreneurs and this will douse off patriarchy cultural domination in Ebonyi State.

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