TITLE PAGE

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN ORGANISATIONS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.CASE STUDY: MBAISE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF IMO STATE.

BY

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty,and also my lovely parents Sir and Lady (Dr) A.G.I Avoaja for their love, paryers, support and encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

This project analysed the contributions of women organisations in the community development in mbaise Local Government Area in imo state.semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 120 randomly selected women from the chosen communities. Data analysis were achieved using simple descriptive statistics as percentages, frequency tables and ranking. Result of the study shows that women organisations for the purpose of community development in the study area are formed at different levels (community and village) and along different ties (religious,family and social). There was a remarkable high involvement rate of women organisations in the provision of infrastructural amenities as renovation/furnishing of town halls/equipment of village schools and churches, and provision of communal environmental sanitation services. other development programmes include those aimed at economic and educational empowerment of women and community youths such as;provision of grants/loans for enterprise development of women award of scholarships to children of the community,awarness creation on HIV/AIDS,family health and child care programmes,and other general health matters. It was recommended among others that existing women organisations in the community development should be encouraged by way of adequate recognition,training and funding by the local government authorities

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO: LITERTURE REVIEW

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY,CONCLUSION AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the study

It is a truism the adage that says; behind every successful man is a woman. Women have been regarded as fragile and should be subordinate to the man but they can play very important role for the betterment of the society. This fragile nature has proved her taking domineering influence on many occasions in the history of mankind. Across the country, women have created innovative, comprehensive programs to meet the needs of their communities. Women have established themselves as leaders in the community development process and acquire the skills that have brought positive changes to their communities. As effective builders of social capital, Christian women leaders play key roles in establishing and maintaining important relationships and networks in their communities.

They are facing the challenges of racial, culture, economic and political barriers that exist in the community development process and in many cases overcoming those barriers become their motivation. While their comprehensive approach has influenced the evolution of the community development field, Christian women's contributions have been neither widely acknowledged nor explicitly credited. The result of the Christian women groups in community development study provide deeper insights into women's thinking about

community development, the barriers they perceive to women's leadership and the kind of efforts that should be made to facilitate and promote their status and roles in the field. Christian women groups demonstrate variety of effective ways women create social capital that is central to the existence of healthy communities. In fact, the contributions of Christian women groups in community development projects can bring about significant positive changes. Thus, Christian's women groups have been proved to be one of the effective entry point for initiating activities or development projects in the community that are beneficiary to all the members of the community (Chiwendu, 1980). Therefore, for effective development to occur, their contributions need not be disputed.

1.2   Statement to the Problem

The cultural beliefs that the education of a woman ends in the kitchen, makes it almost impossible for males to see the immense contributions of women groups to the community development. For example, through picture books, girls are taught to have low aspirations because there are so few opportunities portrayed as available to them. It is believed that men's work is outside the home and women's work is inside the home. For example we see women at home washing dishes, cooking, cleaning, yell at the children, takes care of babies, and does the shopping, while men are store keepers, house builders, storytellers, monks, preachers, fishermen, policemen, fighters,

soldiers, adventurers, judges, farmers and pilots. They were also the king and the gods.

Within the traditional African society, women from almost all the ethnic group were excluded from performing certain activities, especially those that concern leadership and other hand and significant activities like construction works and clergy roles, these were considered as men's domain. The exclusion of women from some of these activities are due to the socio-cultural factors constraining them from participating in activities that were considered to be exclusively for men (William, 1973).

Furthermore gender inequality contributes to the low contribution of women to community development. Many a times, we hear the men ask, "Don't you know you are a woman? This question is due to the systematic

 gender bias in customs, beliefs and attitudes that confine women mostly to the domestic sphere and not in certain matters expected to be in the men's domain. Also, the economic and domestic workloads deprived women of time to contribute to community development.

Finally laws and customs also impede women's access to credit, productive inputs, employment, education, information and politics. These factors affect women's ability and incentives to contribute in economic and social development activities in the community. The purpose of this research is

to find out the contributions of Christian women's groups to community development, since it is believed that "what a man can do, a woman can do better". The challenges facing them in their bid to contribute will also be reviewed.

1.3 Research questions

1. What are the challenges facing the Christian women Groups in their contributions to community developments?

2. How do Christian Women Groups contribute to community development?

3. What are the ways in which Christian Women Groups could be encouraged to contribute to community development?

4. How do Christian Women Group generate their income for community development projects?

5. What are the objectives of Christian Women Groups?

1.4 Objectives of the study

This research work was an intensive field-based examination of the contributions of Christian Women Groups in community development activities. All its objectives include:

1. To find out the challenges facing the Christian Women Groups in their bid to contribute to community development.

2. To find out how Christian Women Groups contribute to community development.

3. To identify strategies for meaningful contribution of Christian Women Groups to community development.

4. To find out the extent Christian Women Groups generate their income for community development projects.

5. To find out the objectives of the Christian Women Groups.

1.5   Significance of the study

This study will be of help to future researchers in the area study. It will also add to the already existing knowledge on the contributions of Christian Women Groups to community development. The feminist will benefit from the study will help them advocate well on women rights and sexual equality.To politicians, it will help them to provide for their citizens the fact needs they have long waited for.

To policy that matches the rapid changes which exist in the community.Finally, to teachers, it will help them lay their hands on more materials to teach in respect of the topic in focus.

1.6   Definition of concepts

The basic concepts that will be defined in this research work includes: Christian, Community, Community development, Contribution, Development, and Group Women.

Christian: According to the Good News Bible, the word Christian was first used at Antioch to refer to those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts chapter 11:26(). Also, the Oxford Dictionary of Current English defined Christian as one following Christ teaching, believing in or following the religion of Christ, showing the associates qualities. It refers to the adherent of Christianity.

Community: Ezeh (1999), defined community as a place in which people live (village, cities, etc) or reflecting a population group bearing similar characteristics (rural dwellers, urban residents, order people; children and young adults, etc). Bensman (1994) defined community as a relatively small isolated center with a stable population, in which all economic and social services necessary to life can be maintained. Also Igbo and Anugwom (2001:20) defined community as a population which occupies a given area and shares similar system of rules and regulations to a group of people, residing in a given geographical location, who share the same culture, identity and ideology, who are interacting with each other.

Community development: according to the United Nation Organization (Ux10), community development is defined as the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of the governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural life of the people to integrate the community into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully in

National progress. Ezeh (1999) defined it as the various strategies and inter-positions through co-ordinate actions of the communities' members in order to usher in for the people Social and Economic development. It is an effort geared towards achieving the solution of community problem.

Contribution: According to the Oxford Dictionary of current English, contribution is the act of contributing. Contribution is derived from the word contribute, which means to give (time money, etc) towards a common purpose. In this context, contribution is referred to as the time money, support, material etc directed towards community development projects by the Christian Women Groups in mbaise.

Development: Ezeh (1999) sees development as when there is an upward movement from one position to another overtime especially where the movement is a positive one. It consists of the process of bringing out the capabilities of possibilities of a phenomenon to a more advanced or effective state.

According to Della (2000:370) development is the gradual growth of something so that it becomes advanced or bigger. In this research work, development would refer to the gradual increase in infrastructural foundations of a community for the wellbeing of the community members.

Groups: The word groups are used to refer to number of persons or things located close together. It refers to number of people working together. In this research work, groups will refer to the number of Christian Women, working together, to contribute meaningfully to the community development projects in their communities.

Women:The word "Women" is a plural word, meaning more than one woman. It refers to two adult t females, group of adult females and women groups' organization. According to Hornby (2000:1372), a Woman is referred to as adult female human beings. Also, the Oxford Dictionary of current English sees Woman as an adult human female, the female sex, wife or girl friend. But in this context, Women would refer to all the adult females in the Christian Churches under-study. It is usually used to refer to married Christian mothers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Overview of Women Organization

According to Vnaku (1998), woman organization is an association of Women who have come together for their own interest and that of their community. Women organization can be found in different levels or areas across the world. It can be found in the villages, towns or at the state and national levels.

For example in Imo State, there are numerous existing Woman organizations as possible that contributed effectively in terms of development. According to the leader of Imo State organization in the olden days, any women that reach the age of 20-30 years, is initiated to form women organization. Women co-operative society was established in mbaise by Imo State women organization, to run a health centre. The aims of these groups are to transform their rural communities.

According to Okolo (1992), we have uncountable Women organization,both local, national and international based For example; we have Women community development organization (WCDO), Women in community development(WICD), Black Christian women's organization (BCWO),Women-Led Community Development Organisations (WLCDO)),Catholic women organization (CWO),And many more. All these

groups have common aim of contributing to the development of their communities through their numerous activities. Through the infrastructure, comprising regional support organizations, networks, women's centers and local groups engage in a diverse range of valuable contribution to promoting equality, social and economic inclusion, peace-building and the development of their communities.

2.2   Women in community Development in Nigeria

For the past three decades,women have been major participants in community organisations Usman A.H. (1996).   In the 1960s and 70s community Women advocated for control of local services and neighborhood preservation. In the 1980s, they were among the few forces pursuing neighborhood preservation in the face of uncontrolled downtown growth. Religious congregations, particularly those formed by women have been an integral part of community development during the same period and his connection has clearly been a factor in attracting talented women to the field. Hundred of community development organization began life in church basement while national councils and local congregation have supplied millions of dollars, staff, services and on-going support. This spiritual dimension is usually among current social reform initiative. The faith-based legacy, stressing a holistic view of community revitalizing, is compatible with the approach many women embrace. The willingness of faith based grass roots

groups to accept women as leaders offers a valuable proving ground, and many women have gone to apply those lessons, and the resources of their organization to strengthen their communities.

For the past 20years, organization with strong Women's leadership has resisted the narrow definition of community development as construction of affordable housing and economic development Agency for International Development (1974). These organizations have always defined community development issues as those responding directly to the needs of Women, children, and families, even in the absence of funding for such broader concerns. Foundation and governments have only recently began to recognize the wisdom of the approach. The current emphasis in public policy initiative and foundations funding on comprehensive community initiative (CCIS) affirms the long term commitment of many Women-Led organizations and the role Women play as catalysis for social changes. Women build social capital through leadership, community participation, and network. There is a continuum of Women's leadership styles ranging from an inclusive, collective, "feminist" model to a more traditional- hierarchical model. .As in previous gender specific research in other fields, women community development leaders describe themselves as open, consultative and supportive of staff both in the community and within their organization they are committed to participation process, and internal democracy, many women reported a

preference for consensus-building and this approach to seeking peaceful resolution of issue contributes to a participating styles of leadership.

Women also focused on social change as a goal. The desire to create social change is at the core of much of women's community development work. Women's vision of change is broad aiming to change people's lives, deepen their personal investment in their neighborhoods and increase their access in resource to improve the quality of life in the community. Kurubo (1993), many women measure organizational success in terms of the health of their communities and empowerment of residents in additional to more traditional, quantifiable measures. Women have created a pattern of activities designed to create an environment where changes can happen in communities. Not every women-led organization offers arrange of comprehensive services, but they are all characterized by their degree of awareness of the interconnection between personal, social and economic issues affecting community residents.

2.3   The Contribution of Christian Women Groups to Community Development

Christian Women's organization by their very role and remit contribution first and foremost to community development by providing life changing   opportunities to women across the full range of ethnic and religious backgrounds ages sexual orientation, abilities and educational levels.

Meanwhile according to theTask force on Resourcing the Voluntary and community sector, community development can be defined as "empowering individuasl and groups to take issues that affect their lives and the communities in which they live.

TheTask Force acknowledges that to do this, people need to work together and "in partnership with other groups and statutory agencies"

The impact of Christian Women's Organization goes much further than the immediate benefit to their direct service users. For example, WSN states that women's centers are invariably at the heart of community development initiative within their communities such as economic and physical regeneration project as well as their participation on "a wider range of advisory bodies and partnerships".(WSN 2002).

Christian women Groups have gathered themselves into strong organization with different aims and objectives. The main objectives of social, economic, cultural, religious and political needs of their members and those who are less privilege in the society. They have contributed immensely towards community development. In another development, Christian women groups have emphasis so much in development programmes like road construction and maintenance, building of classroom blocks, church projects, civic centers, etc. With or without goverment involvement. They involve in an innovative project with the aim of promoting the living condition so individuals in the

communities. They set up training center in the community for male and female drop-outs and those who cannot do agricultural work are given the opportunity to become self-dependent. They teach woodwork, carpentry, tailoring, embroiling, hair dressing, electrical work and mechanics.

The important but other invisible contribution of Christian womens group in the economic and social development of their communities and plight of low income women has been well acknowledge and publicized by the United Nation Decade for Women (1976-1985). This shows that the contribution of Christian women groups in community development projects as housing, which not provide women with marketable skill income but also in a wilder context embraces health, childcare, better household management, and control of the environment combined with providing the opportunity for women to organize and negotiate for better control of their lives and develop their potential for community leadership (Fernado, 1987).

In the past, it was evident that women's activities were inhibited by formal organizations which tended to dominate by men but with the emergency of the involvement of women groups in community based information production and child care, it gives Christian women groups, the opportunity to associate with each other and articulate their concerns, develop new skills finally manage activities. Initially it could be safely assumed that the involvement of Christian women groups in community participation is a

national and automatic process with the result of achieving self-reliance of all the community members.

The Christian women groups contribute to the development of their communities by raising funds for the church and other community development projects. They believe that they are the financial back bone of the church. The money that they have raised has been used to finance revival meetings, to build churches, to pay for salaries to teachers in church owned schools, to finish the church and the ministers' house, to buy food for church functions and to help the poor, the sick and the bereaved in the community. In other words, the functional leadership of the church was de facto in the hands of the Christian women's organizations.

In their bid to contribute to the development of their community Christian women groups embark on praying for peace in time of war. They embark on praying and fasting, they became prayer warriors' in the fight against sickness and death in their families and in the community. They referred to the fighting groups as "our children" hence the intensive prayers for peace. During the apartheid era, they prayed about political violence and after two months, the violence stopped, because their prayer for peace was answered. Christian women leaders from various church organizations gathered together on several occasion to pray for peace especially when the elections were approaching. They prayed for peaceful elections and they believed that

God answered their prayers. And since there might not be any meaningful development during the time of war and political unrest, the Christian women groups through their prayers for peace, has contributed immensely to the development of their communities.

Little (1964), observe the prior to the development of formal social welfare system in West Africa, Women Voluntary organization took the major responsibility of catering for the needs of the sick, the poor, and the disabled in the society focusing in Nigeria, Little reported that women's groups has always play an important role in community development through village associations and councils.

Egboh (1987), reported that various women associations such as the Umuada, and the married wife association of various village groups in the Eastern part of the country, under took various aspects of community development. Egboh reported that the women organized various activities for the welfare of both the members of their natal and marital home and also organized peaceful relations among warning communities and in such a way maintained peace. He pointed out those women equally organized activities that could enhance their welfare such as dancing groups etc, were they could raise some resources for developmental projects that will be benefit to all.

Robison (2006:41) observed that women contribution in community development have improved in recent years and the number has continued to

improve. He pointed out that women, considering their passionate nature, are in the best position to effectively carry out community development initiatives. Robison categorically stated that in areas where men have failed to deliver the goods to the people in the community, women had succeeded, especially in the area of providing succor to the Motherless children as well as the disabled or physically challenged citizens in the society. This paper therefore acknowledges the activities and contributions of Christian women groups to the development of their communities.

2.4 Problems Encounter by Christian Women's Group in Community Development

Just like every other groups, the Christian Women Groups encounter various barriers in their bid to contribute to the development of their communities for example,

Lack of Fund: Christian women groups lack fund for day-to-day running of their organizational goals. This problem lead to the abandonment of some project. Because of lack of fund, local government and most communities are not able to undertake or complete undertaken projects. As a result of lack of fund, Christian Women groups has not been able to contribute to the extent they should have contributed to the development of their community.

The group finds it difficult to raise fund for a meaningful project, as a result of this, they contribute little to community development process.

Embezzlement of Funds: This is one of the problems facing various kinds of organization, and the Christian women groups is not an exception. This problem is more dishearten and discouraging people's moral is always low when the first contribution is not accounted for, due to mismanagement of funds. This disrupts the interest of people. Some projects have been suspended as a result of public embezzlement of funds. Because when the first attempt is not well accounted for, people tend to withdraw or contribute to such development or project.

Inflexible Work Schedules: This has posed a problem to a good number of Christian Women Groups. This is because, women who are primary care givers find it difficult to take positions such as executive director or community organizer, which often require extensive attendance at night meetings which is difficult for women caring for young children or elderly parents. In a situation where they have to attend a conference out of town, they have to schedule their time around their families, and this is usually not easy for them and in turn pose problems and barriers to their contributions to community development.

Illiteracy: The inability of many Christian women to pursue education has passed a lot of problem in their contribution to the development of Mbaise community.

Most of the citizens at rural areas are illiterates. Cultural traits skill persists because of illiteracy. It contributes to inadequate planning for development project. Many Christian women have overcome this barrier have done so by pursuing training or degrees to full specific gap in skills or by obtaining credentials but many others, they lack of conventional education as a major barrier. The reason for this illiteracy being the time they devote to raising families and the lack of good, affordable day care which lead to their inability to pursue education. And as education is one of the key factors to development, and some Christian women lack it, it poses a problem, because these women will contribute little or nothing to the development of their communities.

Limited Access to Political Network: Christian Women Groups do not feel they have adequate access to political leaders corporate executives, and other powerful groups that generally consist of men-women's access to power brokers does, however, it vary from city to city and region to region. Many women leaders testified that they do not have control over the money that they had raised. The male church leaders do control the money. This is as a result of limited access to political network or power in the church. This contributed to the problem encountered by the Christian Women Groups in community development.

Disunity: As well as known, there cannot be any meaningful development in the present of the disunity. No wonder the saying that "two cannot move,

except they agreed". The issue of disunity, is a problem that hinders the contribution of the Women Christian Groups to community development process. This is because, where there is disunity, the period of gathering together may be defeated. People have different opinions and read meanings into any suggestion made by the others. Such people may discuss for hours without achieving a point. Christian Women Groups, in the times of disunity, cannot contribute immensely to community development.

Land Disputes: Christian Women Groups at times experience land dispute as barriers to developmental projects. This might be as refusal of the land owners to give out or sell the land out for the project at hand. And if the land in question is located at a very good site for the project, the dispute might hinder the progress of such project and might lead to the delay or abandonment of such project. And the least but not the last problem encountered by Christian women groups in community development is the issue of:

Low Level of Community Participation: This is another issue Christian Women Groups in Mbaise, cannot do it all alone. This is because for any meaningful development to occur, all hands must be on deck. Many community Women cited issue related to personal, class and culture barriers to their participation in community development. They lack economy security, such as lack of child care, the lack of freedom to leave domestic responsibilities, and feelings of powerlessness. Family and other personal

issues has pose significant obstacles to their contributions and involvement in the community development process. These above mentioned problems and many more, are the problems and barriers encountered by the Christian Women Groups in community development in Imo state.

2.5   Review of Relevant Theories

Community development as a concept has various theories. However, this study will deal with some of them that are relevant to the research work. Hence, Jack Rothman's three model approach dependency and under-development theory, the socialist theory, and the system theory will be discussed.

Jack Rothman's Three Models Approach

Rothman (1974:25-32), observe three models which form the empirical ways of community organization practice otherwise known as practice variables. He Clearfield that, since these models are not necessary theories, they are better described rather than defined. These models are:

A.   Locality development model

B.   The social planning model

C.   The social action model

Locality Development Model

The presumptions of this model include the belief that community can change for better when there is abroad participation of a wide spectrum of people at the community level in terms of determining goals and actions. It also presumes that local community people are apathetic, indifferent, skeptical and that their attitude impede economic progress and therefore requires getting the people to participate collectively both in determining the goals and action. Such collective action then changes their apathy to activity skepticism to optimism, indifference to involvement. This approach maintains that as they participate, their individual personalities become transformed.

This model is one of those that believe in the concept of "energy displacement theory" which held that if enough recreational facilities or activities are provided for their young people, crime will be reduced. Locality development model proposes that as man tries to change his social conditions, he changes in the process.

The Social Planning Model

The social planning model makes a different set of assumption thus: that society or any local community is very complex and as a result of that, to change the environment requires expert planners who can exercise technical ability and who can manage change. The main aim of this approach is to establish, arrange and deliver goods and service to people who need them. "Social integration" is not the social conditions of people to modify the

equality amount and range of services provided for the community. The social planning model brings meaningful solution to substantive community problems. It gathers facts about identified problems and decides on the most rational way of providing solutions to them.

The Social Action Model

The model in its own assumptions holds that there is in every community a disadvantaged segment of the population that needs to be organized, perhaps in alliance with others to make an adequate demand to the larger community for increased resources or for treatment or more in accordance with social justice. This model seeks the redistribution of powers, resources and decisions making in the community. The models seek change in the basic policies in the big organization it tries to affect legal reforms relying on political agitation as a way of coping with powerful trends and developments. It is committed to the reduction of inequality, changing social conditions as pre-condition for individual change.

Dependency and Underdevelopment Theory

This theory was propounded by Gunder Frank as a result of this criticism of the modernization theory. Frank (1969) argues that what causes underdevelopment in third World Countries is the neo-imperialistic structure. He observed that the metropolitan-periphery relation in whom the third world

states are periphery of the metropolitan capitalist economies is what breeds underdevelopment. Thus, the structure is not conducive for third world countries because they are always dependent on the metropolitan capitalist. Frank argues that with the dependence countries, the metropolis have indigenous collaborates and those indigenous bourgeoisie further exploit the resources of their people and cause further underdevelopment of their people. He said that the metropolitan states could only develop when they saver or break their links with the metropolis. Even though, this theory has some significant implications for community development, it has been criticized on a number of grounds. Some modernization theorists argue that it is difficult for states to develop in isolation. Also, they argue that there are some third world countries that have developed within the capitalist or bit. Such as Singapore, Honk kong, Taiwam among others.

The Socialist Theory

Karl Marx is the major proponent of the socialist theory. The theory is sometimes referred to as Marxian perceptive. Max sees the socialist theory as the theory that will usher in development as opposed to capitalist form of development. Karl Max in (1979), believed that porvert and underdevelopment was generated by excessive acquisition of capital and it exploitative tendencies due to the fact that in the in the capitalist system, capital is owned by a few who use their position to impoverish the rest.

Whereas, in the socialist form of development, the state owns the instrument of production and there is no private ownership of means of production. Thus, the state regulates the economic and development is centrally planned, lane(1979).

The socialist theory is aimed at radically transforming the communities by providing the essential social services and welfare packages at relatively chapter prices and spreading it across to everyone. Thus, the state provides the essential needs of the people, and ensure that the people enjoy the good things of life without any exception. Essential welfare packages such as food, health, housing, good roads, employment etc. ate provided for almost all the citizens, lane (1979).

Meanwhile, the socialist theory has been criticized of stifling individual initiative by ensuring that no one acquire much profit and by so doing, the spirit of motivation is very low.

System Theory

Quade (1979) observed that system theory analysis "is not a method or technique, nor is it a fixed set of techniques; but a concept or a way of looking at a problem". Quade (1979) observed that objectives are often "multiple, conflicting and obscure" which make analysis even more essential. Successful analysis depends upon a continuous cycle or formulating the problem, selecting

objectives, building better need, etc. until constraints of time, man power and money compel a cut-off.

Warren (1977), observed that system theory has come to be used not only in the analysis of small groups and formal organization, but also in analysis of the less agglomeration allied communities which constitute the area of operation of many communities or organization workers.

System theory provides answers to certain vital question, such as the nature of the community, the wards, tension and boundary. It affords a means of grouping and analyzing the complex multi-structured network of social relationships involved in the community concept. System theory creates room for autonomy. It gives room for greater involvement and participation, as well as decision-making process in community development activities. Therefore, creating chance for meaningful changes to take place in the community.

2.6   Theoretical Framework

The aim of this project is to investigate and evaluate the contributions of Christian Women Groups in community development. The theoretical framework in use here is "system theory" and Jack Romans three model approach.

Quade (1979) recognizes that objectives are often "multiples conflicting and obscure", which makes analysis even more essential under the system

theory. Also, Jack Rothman observed three model, and the social action model. In locality development model, community can change for better where there is a broad participation of wide spectrum of people of the community level in terms of determining goals and action. This people in question, includes the Christian Women Groups, who participate in community development through their various contributions and activities.

Locality model presumes that local community people are apathetic, indifferent, skeptical and that their attitude impede economic progress and therefore requires getting the people to the participate collectively both in determining the gods and action. Such collective action then changes their apathy to activity, skepticism to optimism, indifference to involvement. This means that Christian Women Groups are encouraged to contribute to the development of their communities by empowering them, they will be fully involved and their contributes bring about meaningful development in the community.

The social planning model emphasized on the need for expert planners to bring about development due to the complexity of any local community. This model calls for "social integration" so as to modify the services provided for the community and brings meaningful solution to substantive community problems.

Finally the social action model observe that in every community a disadvantaged segment of the population exist, that need to be organized, Perhaps in alliance with others to make adequate demand to the larger community for increase resources or for treatment in accordance with social justice. This mode seeks the redistribution of powers,and decisions making in the community. And by so doing the Christian Women Groups among others will be empowered to participate and contribute positively to the development of their communities.

2.7   Research Hypothesis

1.   There is a relationship between the Christian Women Groups and challenges facing them in community development.

2.   There is a relationship between Christian Women Groups and their contribution to community development.

3.   There is a relationship between Christian Women Groups and the objectives of the groups.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter bothers on the entire processes the researchers has embarked on in gathering data for the research topic. These processes include:

3.1   Research Design

In the design of the study, the researcher used survey method according to Robin (1990:179) sample survey "have proved to be less costly, save time and is valid representation of the whole population.

Smith (1988:219), further explains that the survey research also examines effectively the sample about the population for which the sample is chosen.

Babbie (1975:259), recent Babbie is of the view that surveys are also excellent vehicles for the measurement of attitudes and orientation prevalent within a large population. It is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for the purpose of describing a population too large to observe directly. Survey method is therefore found the most appropriate in the study of the Christian Women Groups in Mbaise local Government Area of Imo state.

3.2   Area of the Study

This study was carried out in Mbaise local Government Area of Imo state. It is located within logical 0.6^o 52^oE and latitude 07° 24^oN, in Imo North Senatorial zone. Mbaise as a community in Mbaise local Government Area of Imo state, is made up of five major towns /communities namely:Agbaja,Ahiara,Ekwereagu,Ezinihitte, and Oke-ururu.

3.3   Study Population

The population of this research work is the entire members of Christians Women Groups in Mbaise. But 10% of this original proportion that made up our study population which is 12,000.

Meanwhile while the total population of Mbaise local Government Area is 309633. While the total number of male is 149,241, the women are 160,392. This figure is gotten from the 2006 National population census as seen is local Government Area of Mbaise at the population commission office.

3.4   Sample Size

The sample size constitutes the position of the entire population of study, which has been taken for this research work. The sample size for this study is 120 respondents. This figure was considered adequate considering the available resources and time to the researcher.

3.5   Sampling Procedure

The sample random sampling procedure and the availability sampling procedure was adopted in the research work. Mbaise as a community, is made up of five major towns namely: Agbaja, Ahiara, Ekwereagu, Ezinihitte and Oke-ururu. Each of these towns will be used as a cluster, and in each of the cluster, the researcher used availability method in the sample radon selection of the groups from where respondent were selected.

The sample random sampling procedure was considered appropriate in this study, because it gives every study population and equal chance of being selected.

3.6   Methods of Data Collection

The self-administered questionnaire was adopted here, using the closed ended question pattern. The questionnaire consist of two parts A and B. part A focused on the personnel demographic characteristic of the respondent, such as name, sex, age etc while part B bothers on substantive issues of the research work.

The questionnaires were filled out by the Christian women groups in Mbaise community, representing the sample size of the study.

3.7   Methods of Data Analysis

Based on the research work, the method of data analysis collected from the questionnaires was recorded on frequency table and analyzed using the

frequency distribution and percentages. The percentages was used to show the demographic statistic and formular of the responses using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 13, data collected were subjected to chi-square statistical analysis for testing the study hypothesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents results, analysis and discussion of findings. The results were presented in frequency distribution and chi-square tables according to the research questions.

4.1   Demographic Variables

Age	Frequency	Present
21-30	40	33.3
31.40	46	38.3
41-50	27	22.5
50 and above	7	5.8
Total	120	100.0

The above table presents the age distribution of participants of their last birthday. The highest percentage (38.30%) was recorded for participants that were within the age range of 31-40 years while the lowest percentage (5.8%) was recorded for participants within the age range of 50 above years.

4.2   Table 2: Religion Distribution of the Participant

Religious Group	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	105	87.5
Islam	1	8
African Traditional Religion	9	7.5
Protestant	5	4.2
Total	120	100.00

The above table shows the frequency distribution of participants' religion. The observation indicates that highest percentage of 875% were Christians, the next which is 7.5% have their belief in Africa traditional religion while the last category of 8% are Muslim women. Then from the above observation it can be categorically stated that vast majority of the participants were Christian women.

4.3   Marital Status

Table 3: Marital Status of Participants

Gender	Frequency Participant	Percentage
Married	91	75.8
Single	14	11.7
Widow	11	9.2
Divorce	4	3.3
Total	120	100.00

Table 3 shows the marital status of the participants. The highest percentage (75.8%) was the recorded number of participants of marital status as married, while the least percentage of 3.3% was the divorce women.

4.4   Table 4: Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
NCE	21	17.5
OND	35	29.2
HND	28	23.3
DEGREE	27	22.5
MASTERS DEGREE	9	7.5
TOTAL	120	100.0

The above table describes the distribution of participant based on their educational qualifications. The table showed that the highest percentage 29.20% fell in the category of participants that have OND degree, followed by 23.3% which are those with HND degree. The least percentage of 7.5% were those with masters degree.

4.5   Table 5: Occupation Distribution of Participants

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers	21	17.5
Farmers	9	7.5
Traders	35	29.9
Civil Servants	28	23.2
House Wives	27	22.5
Total	120	100.0

The above table describes the distribution of participants based on their occupations. The table showed that the highest percentage 29.2% fell in the category of participants that were traders, followed by 23.3% which were those that are civil servants, followed by 22.5% which are those that house wives the least percentage of 7.5% where those are farmers.

Research Question 1:what are the challenge facing the Christian women groups in their contributions to community development?

Table 1: Challenges facing the Christian women groups in their contributions to community development.

Challenges Facing Women Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
Problem of finance	1.6583	.47626
Lack of cooperation among members	1.4417	.49865
Land allocation	1.4000	.49195
Problem of leadership	1.4000	.49195
Lack of cooperation between member and society	1.5083	.50203
Lack of technical support from the government	1.3417	.47626

The above table displays the analysis of mean score of various challenges facing Christian women in caring out their roles in community development projects. The analysis indicates that the problem of finance with mean score of 1.6583 predominate, while lack of technical support from the government came last in the chart with the mean score of 1.3417.

Research Question 2: How do Christian women groups contribute to community Development

Ways of Contribution	Mean	Standard Deviation
Building of town hall	1.5333	.50098
Rural road construction	1.4417	.49867
Building of civil center	1.4417	.49867
Rural electrification	1.4000	.49195
Building of school	1.4000	.49195
Pipe borne water	1.5083	.50203
Hospital and market	1.4417	.49867

The above table shows the mean scores of various avenue Christian women use to contribute to community development project. It can be noticed from the analysis of the data that majority of Christian women prefer to contribute in building of town hall, which has a mean score of 1.5333.

Nevertheless, the least preference is both on the choice of rural electrification and building of school. Then it can be argued that these women looking at these two projects were perceived by the Christian women as a red government projects and as such, should not be left to the woman fold.

Research Question 3: What are the ways in which Christian women groups encouraged to contribute community development?

Table 3: Ways in which Christian women groups could be encourage to contribute to community development.

Ways of Encouragement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Women empowerment	1.5333	.50098
Financial support	1.4417	.49867
Co-operation	1.4417	.49867
Equal educational opportunity	1.5333	.50098
Creating enough time for women	1.4417	.49867
Socio-cultural inequality	1.4417	.49867

The above table shows the mean score of various ways in which Christian women could be encourage contributing to community development. The table indicates that both women empowerment and equal educational opportunity with mean score of 1.5333 respectively, are the highest in the table. While the least mean scores of 1.4417 were recorded for the four remaining factors in the study.

The important observation in the study is the fact that the two strong identified factors (women empowerment and equal educational opportunities) are good ingredients for women capacity building.

Research Question 4: How do Christian women groups generate their income for community development projects?

Table 4: Ways Christian women groups generate their income.

Ways of generating income	Mean	Standard Deviation
Community reserve fund	1.4874	.50195
Through lunching/ceremonies	1.5583	.49867
Regular contributions	1.4417	.49867
Loans and grant from bank	1.5333	.50098
Donations from outsides bodies	1.4417	.49867
Levies on member	14417	.49867

In the table above, the highest mean score of 1.5583 recorded for respondent who believe that it is through lunching that the Christian women generate income for community development, while donation from outside bodies and levies on members came last with the mean scores of 1.4417.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between the Christian women groups and challenges facing them in community development.

Observed	Expected
5	17.1
15	17.1
33	17.1
29	17.1
29	17.1
8	17.1
1	17.1
120	

DF = 5, P $\leq$ 0.05, $\times^2$ = 48.00, Significant level =000

The above table is a cross tribulations for the test of the hypothesis which states that there is a relationship between the Christian women groups and the challenges facing them in community development. Observation for the table indicates a chi-square value of 48.000 at degree of freedom 5 with significant level of 0.000. Since significant level is less than 0.5, it will be concluded that there is significant relationship between Christian women group and challenges facing them in community development.

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between the Christian women groups and their contribution to community development.

Chi-Square Tabulation

Observed	Expected
2	17.1
11	17.1
22	17.1
38	17.1
30	17.1
11	17.1
6	17.1
120	

DF =6, $P \leq 0.05$, $x^2 = 61.417$, Significant level =000

The above table was used t test the hypothesis which stated that there is a relationship between the Christian women group and their contribution to community development. Observation from the table indicates a chi-square

value of 61.417 at degree of freedom 6 with significant level of 0.00. Since significant level is less than 0.5, it will be concluded that there is a significant relationship between Christian women groups and their strategies for meaningful contributions to community development.

Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between Christian women groups and objectives of their group.

Chi-Square Tabulation

Observed	Expected
5	17.1
21	17.1
42	17.1
23	17.1
24	17.1
6	17.1
23	17.1
120	

DF = 5, P $\leq$ 0.5, x^2 = 48.000, Significant level =.000

The above table is a chi-square analysis testing the hypothesis which states that there is a relationship between Christian women groups and the objectives of their groups. The result shows no significance, since the chi-square value is 48.000 at degree of freedom 5 and the obtained significance level of .000 which is less than 0.5. Then it can be argued that there is a relationship between Christian women groups and the objectives of their group.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND LIMITATIONS OF

THE STUDY

5.1   Summary of Findings

The researcher having completed the research work on the contributions of Christian women groups to community development, observed that out of the 130 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 120 were collected and analyzed with the aid of five research questions. The researcher made use of frequency distribution and chi-square tables in analyzing the data collected.

Summary of findings in the demographic variable on section A are as follows:

Women are the only sex used and those between the age brackets of 31-40. Constitute the majority that completed the questionnaires. Also, Christianity was the major religion. In marital status, those married were the major group. In educational qualification. Those holding OND have highest number while majority are traders in occupation.

In section B, of the questionnaire, summary of findings are as follows

The researcher observed that financial problem constitute the major challenges facing the Christian women groups. Also, majority of Christian women prefer to contribute in building of town halls. While women empowerment and also equal educational opportunity serve as the major ways

of encouraging the Christian women groups to contribute meaningfully to community development.

Findings on income generations, shows that lunching/ceremonies is the major source of income for Christian women groups. Finally finding on the test of hypothesis shows that there is a significant relationship between Christian women groups and challenges facing them in community development. Also, relationship existed between them and their contributions to community development. Relationship also exist between them and their strategies for meaningful contributions to community development.

A significant relationship exists between them and their perception of strategies for income generation in community development. Also a significant relation exist between the Christian women groups and their group objectives. In each of the analysis, the significant level is less than 0.5 resulting to significant relationship in each case.

5.2   Recommendations

Community development is an important aspect in the general development of the masses. It makes sure that general development programmers' record high success, the following recommendations are made by the researcher based on the finding of this research work.

1. Since financial problem pose a challenge to the Christian women groups, government should provide them with financial aid, to make their efforts in community development a success.

2. Women, should be granted equal education opportunity with the opposite sex as well as be empowered, since these are the major ways they can be encouraged to contribute meaningfully to community development.

3. Christian women groups should embark more on lunching, ceremonies, since according to the finding this is the major source of their income for community development.

4. The issue of poverty and family engagement should be address as they constitute major factors that constrain Christian women from contributing to community development.

5. Christian women groups should endeavours to actively involve themselves in their community development initiatives, since active involvement, leads to maximum success.

6. Also, Christian women groups should make their interest in community development high. The finding recorded an average interest, but high interest is needed for meaningful interest.

7. Community development workers with the government should make more meaningful policies in favour of the Christian women groups to help them contribute to community development.

8. Christian women groups should try and create more time for themselves so as to participate actively in community development projects.

9. We can say that social work is people oriented. Therefore, the government should recognized and encourage the recognition of social work as a major instrument of people and the national development.

10. The training of social work should be given more support and the professional themselves must realize that their mandate of social reform involves change in the individual as well as change in the social environment.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion of this research work, the researcher wish to say that having completed the research on the contributions of Christian women groups to community development, it could be concluded that Christian women groups are trying in their efforts to contribute meaningfully to community development. But they could make their efforts to yield more dividends if the recommendations listed above are put into work.

Also, the fact remains that the issue of community development demands that all hands must be on desk. Therefore, the contributions of Christian women groups alone, will amount to little development, so, there is need for all those mentioned in the above recommendations to play their roles

effectively if the contributions of the Christians women groups is to be maximized.

5.4   Suggestion for Further Studies

This research work,is by no means exhustive as further studies can be carried out on:

1.   An entire state and not just a local government area.
2.   The research can be replicated as the role of women organisations in the political sector.

3.   The research can also be narrowed down to the role of a specific women organisation in community development**.**

5.5   Implication and Opportunities for Social Work Practice in the Study

The researcher foresees some implications and opportunities for social work practice in the contribution of Christian women groups to community. (Ekpo and Mamah, 1997) defined social work as a process that operates to assist individuals (as groups or as individuals and as members of group) in increasing their control over their own lives through making satisfying choices, coping satisfactory with the result of their choices and life events, and working to provide the societal changes that were made available to individuals and groups, the social resources and support necessary for the selection of making meaningful choices. And other six areas of social work practice are

social case work, social group work, community development, research, policy analysis and administration.

This being the case, the social workers can assist the Christian women groups in their contributions to community development by influencing the policies in the area of community development programmes that favours the Christian women groups. More than any other groups in the country, voluntary association and town unions expand a major portion of their efforts to achieve "good life" through interactions with agencies of the government. Elekwa (1995). Social workers act as link between the grass root and the government. Their experience in mobilization, facilitating and interacting with the Christian women groups, places them in a better position to identify and deal with the problem of the Christian women groups, like: how to raise money for their projects, better ways of tackling their most felt needs like gender inequality, educational inequality, etc.

Social workers can also organize seminar of family planning, methods in community development process, HIV/AIDS as worry of families etc. for Christian women groups in Mbaise to help them have four sights and know better ways of handling their problems. Social workers can also help them to choose better option in tackling their problems by working with them and not for them.

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SECTION A

INTRODUCTION

Please tick (✓) as appropriate.

(1) **Sex:** (a) Male ☐   (b) Female ☐

(2) **Age:** (a) 21-30 ☐   (b) 31-40 ☐

(c) 41-50 ☐   (d) 51 and above ☐

(3) **Educational Qualifications:** (a) NCE ☐   (b) OND ☐

(c) HND ☐   (d) Degree ☐

(4) **Occupation:** (a) Teacher ☐ (b) Student ☐ (c) Trader ☐

(d) Farmer ☐ (e) others, please specify _____

(5) **Religious Denomination:** (a) Christian ☐ (b) Islam ☐ (c) African Traditional Religion ☐   (d) Protestants ☐   (e) Others, specify _____

(6) **Marital Status :**(a) Married ☐ (b) Single ☐ (c) Widow ☐
(d) Divorced ☐

SECTION B

Please tick (✓) as appropriate and supply comment were necessary.

(7)   What are the challenges facing the Christian Women Organizations?

(a) Problem of Finance ☐   (b) Lack of co-operation among members ☐

(c) Problem of land allocation   (d) Problem of leadership ☐

(e) Problem of co-operation between members and society ☐

(f) Lack of technical support from government ☐

(8) How do Christian Women groups contribute to community development?

(a) Building of town hall ☐   (b) Rural Road Construction ☐

(c) Building of civic center ☐ (d) Rural Electrification ☐

(e) Building of schools ☐ (f) Pipe borne water ☐ (g) Hospitals and market ☐

(9) What are the ways Christian women groups could be encouraged to contribute to community development?

(a) Through Women Empowerment ☐   (b) Financial support ☐

(c) Co-operations ☐ (d) Equal educational opportunities ☐

(e) Creating enough time for women ☐   (f) Eradicating political, racial and socio-cultural inequalities ☐

(10) How do Christian Women generate their income for community development projects?

(a) Community reserve fund ☐   (b) Through launching/ceremonies ☐

(c) Regular contribution from members ☐   (d) Loans and grant from banks ☐

(e) Donations from outside bodies ☐   (f) Levies on members ☐

(11) To what extent do these objectives relate to your organization?

(a) To satisfy basic needs of rural people ☐   (b) To complement federal and state government effort in providing social amenities ☐

(c) To help only the members ☐ (d) To help the poor in the society ☐

(e) To maintain peace, progress and unity among members in the society ☐

(12) What do you think are the factors that constrain women from contributing to community development?

(a) Family engagement ☐   (b) Low education ☐

(c) Poverty ☐   (d) Women's body structure ☐

(13) How were you involved to the community development project?

(a) Actively involved ☐   (b) Financer ☐   (c) Project executor ☐

(d) Project initiator ☐   (e) others (please specify) ☐

(14) How would you rate Christian women participation, and or contributions to community development project?

(a) High ☐   (b) Average ☐   (c) Low ☐

(15) What is the attitude of towards community development initiatives in your community?

(a) Indifference ☐   (b) High interest ☐   (c) Low interest ☐

(d) Average interest ☐   (e) No opinion ☐

(16) Can the contribution of women to community development be improved?

(a) Yes ☐   (b) No ☐

(17) If your answer in the above question is yes, how?

(a) Equal educational opportunity ☐

(b) Supporting women financially ☐

(c) Allowing women more time ☐

(d) Through women empowerment ☐

(e) All of the above ☐   (f) Others, (please specify) _____

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of sociology

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Caritas University,

Enugu, Enugu State.

12/08/13.

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year student of the above named department in Caritas University. Currently conducting a research work on the Contributions of Women Organizations in Community Development in Imo State: A Study Of Mbaise Local Government Area.

I plead that you kindly supply the appropriate answer to each of the question below. The information supplied will be used for academic purpose only.

Please be assured that your anonymity will be maintained, as the information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Ihem-Avoaja Anne C.