

**IMPACT OF CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA-EFINA FINANCIAL INCLUSION  
PROGRAMME ON THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN BENEFICIARIES IN  
SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA**

By

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**Abstract**

The study ascertained the impact of impact of central bank of Nigeria-EFINA financial inclusion programme on the wellbeing of women beneficiaries in Southwestern Nigeria. Specifically, we evaluated the socio-economic characteristics of women beneficiaries, the constraint associated with respondents in accessing different actors in the financial inclusion program and the impact of the CBN-EFINA Financial Inclusion Program on the respondents' well-being. A descriptive survey design was used to achieve our objectives. Two hundred and forty (240) questionnaires were distributed to respondents, out of which two hundred (200) were fully completed and used for the analysis. From our findings, majority of the respondents were in their active age, and were involved in trading as a business venture. The respondents were low income earners, there were more respondents at the bottom of pyramids. Most of the respondents could afford to open a bank account and also had access to seamless savings in their bank accounts. The study concluded that the CBN EFINA Financial inclusion program had positive impacts on the respondents' well-being. It was recommended that women should be encouraged to open accounts with financial institutions, also there should be presence of banks in the unbanked areas so as to increase women' financial inclusion.

**Keywords:** Central Bank, Financial Inclusion, Well-being, Women Beneficiaries

**INTRODUCTION**

Financial inclusion, according to Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access (EFInA) (2013), is the provision of a wide range of high-quality financial products, including savings, credit, insurance, payments, and pensions, that are pertinent, appropriate, and within the means of the entire adult population, particularly the low-income sectors of the economy.

According to the Financial Access Initiative (FAI), 2.5 billion adults, or little over half of the world's population, do not use official financial services to save money or borrow money. Nearly 2.2 billion adults, or 62% of the world's adult population, reside in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. A little over 800 million people survive

on less than \$5 a day. Nigeria is hardly an exception, with a high rate of those who lack access to financial services estimated at 46.3% in 2010. (EFInA, 2010 in Paul, 2013). There are a variety of factors at play in Nigeria that contribute to the prevalence of unbanked people and restricted access to financial services, particularly among rural residents.

The eagerly anticipated 2017 data set, Global Findex, which was just released by the World Bank, shows that the financial inclusion agenda is still growing. The number of adults without bank accounts decreased from a startling 49% in 2011 to a more encouraging 31% in 2017, thanks to a variety of national and international players (World Bank, 2018). Despite tremendous improvement, there is still a gender difference in the financial system's

ability to access basic accounts, with 72% of males having access and only 65% of women having an account. This gender gap has not altered since 2011. Men account for 65% of consumers globally, manage 80% of loan volume, and handle 75% of deposits, according to recent data based on 18 nations (Global Banking Alliance for Women, 2018). Numerous obstacles prevent women from using and accessing financial services. These include, among other things, a lack of identification to confirm identity, a dearth of normally required collateral, mobility issues, and a lack of financial awareness. When creating inclusive financial services, financial institutions must take into account the various strategies that have been proven to be effective in removing these obstacles. Positive steps include gathering sex-disaggregated data to create gender-smart products and customized value propositions that are tailored to women's needs, training staff to provide knowledge and design-friendly ecosystems, giving women financial education and training, and enhancing women's networks.

Saving can have a good impact on women's empowerment (Holloway, Niazi, and Rouse. 2017; Trivelli and de los Rios, 2014), household welfare, and other facets of women's lives, according to the evidence (Karlan and Kendall. 2016). According to studies (Morduch, 1999), even low-income women are ready to save money when offered attractive interest rates, accessible financial services, and flexible accounts. Convenience is often preferred over interest rates (Trivelli & Montenegro 2011).

It is against this backdrop that this study was set to examine the impact of Central Bank of Nigeria-EFInA Financial Inclusion Programme on the Wellbeing of Women Beneficiaries in Southwestern Nigeria. The study therefore ascertained the socio-economic characteristics of women in the study area, examined the constraint associated with respondents in accessing different actors

in the financial inclusion program and determined the impact of the CBN-EFInA Financial Inclusion Program on the respondents' well-being.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ekiti and Ondo States, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised of all women beneficiaries in both Ekiti and Ondo States of Extramile Africa (a Financial Inclusion Company). The list of these once underserved, unbanked, unbankable, unreached and lastmiles women which constituted the sampling frame, was obtained from the Extramile Africa in collaboration with EFInA financial inclusion programme \$2,000,000 grant work that spanned between 2019-2021.

### Population and Sample

A multistage sampling procedure was used for this study. The first stage involved the random selection of two states (Ekiti and Ondo States) in SouthWest Nigeria and all the senatorial districts in the two states. The second stage involved the random selection of two local government areas (L.G.A) from each of the senatorial districts making a total of twelve local government areas and one community was selected from each L.G.A selected, to make twelve communities. In the third stage, twenty (20) respondents were selected randomly from each of the selected communities, making a total of two hundred and forty (240) respondents in all, out of which two hundred (200) were fully completed and used for the analysis.

### Instruments of Data Collection

Data for this study was obtained from primary sources which constitute information obtained from the use of quantitative (structured interview schedules and questionnaire).

### Data Presentation, Results and Discussion

#### Age of the Respondents

As shown in the table 1, 45.0% of the respondents were within the age range of 41-60 years, 41.0% were within the age range of 15-40 years while 14.0% were 60 years and above. This implies that the respondents were active and in their productive age.

Table 1: Ages of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-40	82	41.0
41-60	90	45.0
>60	28	14.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### Educational Level of Respondents

The study received responses from respondents with different level of education as shown in the table 2. The findings showed that 40.0% of the respondents completed secondary education, 37.0% completed tertiary education and 23.0% completed primary education. This implies that the respondents were literate and had one form of education or the other.

Table 2: Education Level of Respondents

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary Education Completed	46	23.0
Secondary Education Completed	80	40.0
Tertiary Education Completed	74	37.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### Respondents' Marital Status

The results in Table 3 showed that 50.0% of the respondents were married, 29.5% were widowed, 15.0% were separated while 5.5% were single. The larger percentage of the total respondents being married is a reflection of the strong moral value attached to marriage institution in the study area.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents according to Marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	11	5.5
Married	100	50.0
Separated	30	15.0
Widow	59	29.5

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### Respondents' Household Size

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents by household size. It was revealed that the Household size of between four and six persons accounted for 61.0%, household size of between 1 and three persons accounted for 27.5%, while the least percentage (11.5%) had household size of 7 persons and above.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents according to Household' Size

Household' Size	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	55	27.5
4-6	122	61.0
7and above	23	11.5

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### Distribution of Respondents on Business Ventures

The result in Table 5 below shows that 43.5% of the respondents were into trading, 37.5% were into farming as occupation, 15.0% were into cottage processing while 4.0% were offering one service or the others to the people.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents according to Business Ventures

Business ventures	Frequency	Percentage
Trading	87	43.5
farming	75	37.5
Cottage Processing	30	15.0
Servicing	8	4.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### Distribution of Respondents by Income Level

Table 6 presents the income distributions of respondents. 46.0% of the respondents earn

N5,000 - N20,000 monthly, while 20.0% N21,000 – N40,000 monthly and 18.5% earn N41,000 - N60,000, while 14.0% N61,000 - N100,000 and 1.5% above N100,000 monthly. This implies that the respondents were low income earners. There were more respondents at the bottom of pyramids

**Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Income Level**

Income Level	Frequency	Percentage
5,000 – 20,000	92	46.0
21,000 – 40,000	40	20.0
41,000 – 60,000	37	18.5
61,000 – 100,000	28	14.0
100,000 and above	3	1.5

Source: Field Survey, 2023

#### **Impact of CBN-EFInA Financial Inclusion Program on Respondents' Well-Being**

Results regarding the well-being of the respondents as indicated in Table 7 shows that 40.0% can afford to open a bank account, 38.5% had access to seamless savings in their bank accounts. As indicated by the respondents, 37.0% participated in formal cooperative and community engagements, 20.0% had access to seamless financial transactions through their group heads which facilitates payment of their children's school fees, house rents and good food, while 15.0% and 10.0% had access to micro-credit for the establishment/expansion of micro businesses within their domain and access to financial literacy through community engagement driven by financial activators respectively.

**Table 7: Impact of CBN-EFInA Financial Inclusion Program on Respondents' Well-Being\***

Well-Being Domain	Frequency	Percentage
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Can afford to open a bank account	80	40.0
Access to seamless savings in their bank accounts	77	38.5
Participation in formal cooperative and community engagements	74	37.0
Access to micro-credit for the establishment/expansion of micro businesses within their domain	30	15.0
Access to financial literacy through community engagement driven by financial activators	20	10.0
Access to seamless financial transactions through their group heads which facilitates payment of their children's school fees, house rents and good food	40	20.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

\*Multiple responses exist

#### **Constraint Associated With Respondents in Accessing Different Actors in The Financial Inclusion Program**

As shown in Table 8, 34.5% of the respondents indicated inadequate income as a constraint militating against financial inclusion. This is as supported by the findings of the access to financial services in Nigeria survey 2014 by Enhancing Financial Innovation and Access (EFInA) and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) report of 2013. Moreover, 27.5% of the respondents indicated cost of financial services as one of the constraints to financial inclusion. Furthermore, 24.0% indicated

financial illiteracy as one the constraints militating against their financial inclusion.

**Table 8: Constraint Associated With Respondents in Accessing Different Actors in the Financial Inclusion Program**

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate income	69	34.5
Identification confirmation	28	14.0
Cost of Financial Services	55	27.5
Financial Illiteracy	48	24.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that most of the respondents were literate who understood financial literacy, moreover, the respondents were low income earners. In addition, the CBN EFINA Financial inclusion program had positive impacts on the respondents' well-being.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were therefore made:

1. Women should be encouraged to open accounts with financial institutions
2. Women should be enlightened more on financial inclusion, thereby improving their usage of financial institutions.
3. There should be presence of banks in the unbanked areas so as to increase women' financial inclusion
4. Improvement of financial literacy and capabilities and supply leading strategies to create jobs and incomes.

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