

**Empowering Female Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Economic Development in Sub  
Sahara Africa: Challenges and Prospects within the Nigerian Economy**

**Inyene Nkanta, Paschal Anosike and Janet Firth**

**University of the West of Scotland, Scotland and University of Wolverhampton,  
England, United Kingdom**

**Abstract**

**Purpose** – The purpose of this study is to explore the prospects and challenges female entrepreneurs face in Nigeria and develop an empirical informed framework to analyse female entrepreneurship empowerment that will aid women in contributing more to economic development.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data was collected through a semi-structured virtual interview with Twenty purposively sampled female entrepreneurs in Nigeria who have been in business for five years and above to understand their entrepreneurial journey.

**Findings** – The study findings showed that many Nigerian female entrepreneurs are not conversant with the sector they started a business in, and they yearn for adequate social and human capital to empower more women for business success. The impact of networking, mentorship, mindset shift, persistence, innovation, entrepreneurship education, and management skills are strategies and processes that women in Nigeria can use in overcoming barriers to sustain profitable business ventures and is the key to empowering more innovative and creative female entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

**Originality/value** –This study provides an original perspective in developing a structured social and human capital framework such as networking opportunities for women, entrepreneurial education, training, and mentoring programs to empower female entrepreneurs to overcome barriers to business success.

**Keywords** Female entrepreneurship, SSA, Nigeria, Economic development, social and human capital.

**Paper type** Research paper