

Original Article

“ŪMUADA” Rural Organization and Grassroot Development of Anambra State, Nigeria

Ojiagu Nkechi Cordelia¹, Nzewi Hope², Ngozi³, Emejulu Gerald Amara⁴

^{1,3} Department Of Cooperative Economics And Management, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

^{2,4} Department Of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

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Abstract - The study investigated “Ūmuada” Rural Organization and Grassroot development of Anambra State, Nigeria. The objectives of this study are to determine the extent of the relationship between “Ūmuada” advocacy and women empowerment in the development of Anambra state and to ascertain the nature of the relationship between “Ūmuada” advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra state. A descriptive survey research design was employed, and data were analyzed with mean and standard deviation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the formulated hypotheses at a 5% (per cent) level of significance. Findings revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship existing between “Ūmuada” advocacy and women empowerment while “Ūmuada” advisory services and widow-care promotion have no statistically backed relationship. It is recommended that the government at all levels and other development agencies need to collaborate with “Ūmuada” associations for high-level women mobilization and development initiatives. Again, the State Ministry of Women Affairs can collaborate with the Sociology/Anthropology Department in the state tertiary institutions on consultancy services to develop appropriate resourceful measures to educate “Ūmuada” associations on the elimination of violence (nightmares) from widows during funerals and reorient other values.

Keywords - Ūmuada, rural organization, grassroots development, Anambra State.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural women organizations are women’s groupings that are locally based mostly on lineage, marriage, craft, trade, and religion. These women associations make society more responsive to the needs of all people. Thus, women in Anambra State, Nigeria, occupy a preponderant position in the socio-political, legal, and economic development

arrangement of the society. Women in Igbo culture have become the sine-qua-non and powerful part of society (Okoro, 2013). Women have many forums designed to present and protect their interests. The most important of these female forums is “Ūmuada”. Ūmuada-Ndigo – daughters of the community; a union of sisters of one particular kindred; daughters of the ancients; women married either in their town or at other towns; women born in a particular town; married or unmarried; native daughters of the soil, has been an immemorial institution and prevails almost everywhere in Igbo societies (Ogbalu, 2007; Okodo, 2006).

Ūmuada connotes many daughters in a social group, and play important roles through their leaders in the recommendation of abolition or modification of customs, taboos, nature, and performance of festivals, rituals and observances pertaining to women, to the governing authorities and in recent times have ventured into widow care, women empowerment; peacekeeping in families, communities and towns’ infrastructure, morale-building of youths and infrastructure development. “Out-Ūmuada” is and remains a functional forum for females and constitutes an essential instrument of an organized system of government in Igboland (Anyakoha, 2018).

Anambra women's voices are heard from this organization and, through it, participate in governance at various levels of the community. Women in the state are no longer a theme of subordination rather are givers and builders of culture within the society; enterprising; intelligent; resourceful, and matchless as homemakers and community capacity builders (Akachi, 2010 & Nwoye, 2009). This implies that Ūmuada has the great potential necessary to evolve a new economic order to accelerate social and political development and, consequently, transform the society into a better one (Amali, 2007).



A. Statement of the Problem

Women's roles often are not adequately represented in the decision-making process relative to the issues of grassroots development at local and state levels. Poor performance of the economy exerts on women and children, which are most times vulnerable to such conditions. There are rural-urban gaps in terms of infrastructure, women empowerment, widow-care issues, resource distribution, human resource development, and employment opportunities. Government empowerment programs and policies such as Women Fund for Economic Empowerment (WOFEE), International Women's Right Action Watch (IWRAN), NEEDS, and YOUWIN did not yield much-anticipated results due to neglect, poor implementation, cultural practices, and social impediments. Consequently, measuring Umụada's grassroots initiatives become imperative with the aim of identifying their communal capacities. It is still unclear the influences of Umụada on grassroots development such as widow-care, women members' empowerment, education promotion of certain groups, infrastructure development, and peacekeeping. Little information is available on this front, partly owing to a little attention received from government records and the inconclusiveness of previous studies on gender issues.

In order to operationalize the variables, the study is based on two major constructs, namely: Umụada Initiatives/performance and the grassroots development climate. This implies that the grassroots development climate is a function of Umụada performance. The grassroots development is measured by indicators and variables such as members' education, promotion of members (women empowerment); educational promotion of youths; widow-care (welfare and health), and political participation of members. Furthermore, Umụada initiatives can be operationalized into indicators and variables given as consolidation action, advocacy, advisory, dialogue, and life promotion.

B. Objective of the Study

The overall aim of the study is to explore the relationship between Umụada initiatives and grassroots development in Anambra State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the extent of the relationship between "Umụada" advocacy and women empowerment in the development of Anambra State.
2. Ascertain the nature of the relationship between "Umụada" advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra State.

C. Hypotheses of the Study

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between "Umụada" advocacy and women's empowerment in the development of Anambra State.
- H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between "Umụada" advocacy and women empowerment in the development of Anambra State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between "Umụada" advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra State.
- H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between "Umụada" advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra State.

II. A. Conceptual and Theoretical Reviews

a) Umụada Ndigbo

Okoro (2013) refers to Umụada as the exogamous union of daughters married away to other villages but retain their ties with their communities of birth. Umụada is the collectivity of all daughters of a particular clan, village, town, or state, whether old, young, single, married, separated, or divorced (Ene, 2007). Umụada association, is the inalienable right of every daughter of a particular place, without exception to belong. The membership of this forum is the absolute right of all women born of the male lineage. Membership of the group is conferred patrilineally, that is, from the father's side of the family. The Umụada association maintains order, promotes life, and brings consolidation, joy, and solidarity among themselves and to the village and community (Dine, 1983 in Odoemene, 2011). Umụada Ndigbo gathers to ensure patterns and regularities, serve as judges and enforcers, settle conflicts in their families, righting some wrongs in the society, especially at the local level. Conversely, the Umụada Ndigbo have curtailed or trimmed the menace and cruelty of wicked brothers-in-law; sisters-in-law; mothers-in-law, fathers-in-law; and recalcitrant widows (Ezennaya, 2013).

b) Grassroot Development

Grassroot development is the restructuring of the rural economy in order to grow it from a dependent peasant and largely agricultural economy of life at the local level. It is about improving the standard and living conditions of the rural people (Odo, 2014). Grassroot development is viewed as a self-generating process of socio-economic and political development in which the rural inhabitants themselves are actively involved and share in the cost and benefits of development. The essential elements of grassroots development include poverty reduction, rising incomes, increase in health and nutritious status of the people, provision of qualitative and quantitative basic education, improved agricultural activities, provision of infrastructural facilities, amongst others. It aims at improving the welfare of the masses. (authors' conceptualization, 2018).

Grassroot development relates to the desire backed by action to transform the rural economy with a view to improving the quality of life of the rural population. (Nwobi, 2017). Traditional settings (Local institutions) such as town unions, age-grade, women groups (Umudada), and youth organizations play a significant role in grassroots development ranging from manufacturing, craft, physically demanding tasks, sanitation, peacekeeping, fundraising for local infrastructure and construction of feeder roads and empowerment efforts.

The keyword in grassroots development is changing at the community level. Change can be measured by assessing changes in services, the provision of new services, or by replacing existing policies or incorporating new policies. (Abu & Klessen, 2004).

c) Rural Women Organization (RWO)

Rural women organizations are an association of women who have come together for their own interests and that of their community. Rural women organizations can be found in villages, communities, and towns. Rural women organizations have contributed greatly to achieving grassroots development, promoting development, and encouraging progress among members, which will help reduce or eliminate poverty. (Ikenze, 2015). Thus rural women organizations play a significant role in the socio-economic life of the society. These women are poised to contribute immensely to rural transformation, development of women, and fulfilment of their economic potentials (Okello, 2007). It should be recalled that rural women are the backbone of sustainable livelihoods and provide food security for their families and communities. It is estimated that rural women represent up to 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries and that approximately one-quarter of the world's population is comprised of rural women whose livelihoods are sustained by agriculture and natural resources. As such, rural women are knowledge-holding experts with visionary and practical development solutions to ensure food security, conserve natural resources, and counter widespread inequality. Organizing to improve their circumstances, these women are agents of change working to build productive and vibrant rural communities. These organizations are frontlines of short-and long-term structural challenges, which are essential actors in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of development commitments (Bohrer, 2015).

d) Umudada Initiatives

The initiative involves a new plan for dealing with a particular purpose, or more succinctly, the initiative is a network of curious and committed souls co-creating communities marked by a sense of belonging, stewardship, and willingness to act for the common good of a group. The need for grassroots development by Umudada emerges as a result of the poor economic performance of members and the

general populace in the rural area. Today the Umudada has a paradigm shift from their point of overturning to a humanitarian and progressive society. It is viewed today as a self-help strategy for grassroots development. This entails that Umudais involved in initiating discussions on projects that will affect living conditions of members, children, and youths for overall development such as engagement in an income-generating enterprise; encourage widows to engage in other micro-enterprises; engage in thrift savings; investment of monies collected in ceremonies on viable ventures, modify the widowhood practices, advisory, and advocacy services; discouragement of heterosexual relationships outside matrimony, and encourage members to participate in political activities (Anyakoha, 2008).

There are today the economic, social dimensions of Umudada as a local institution. It now provides an institutional means whereby members group themselves into self-help units, contributing immensely to productive activities of members which spread beyond to touch other lives. Socially, Umudada promotes social integration and provides an opportunity for participatory democracy through an invitation of resource persons towards human development and are more sensitive to needs of members in areas of health, children and youth education, and savings to credit services. Umudada initiatives enable a large number of women to become inventive in their daily life and speak out on their local needs and interest. It affords women to be directly and actively involved in their local community and a real springboard for women's participation in decision-making.

e) Skill Development (Empowerment)

Umudaskill development exposure embraces all formal and informal training processes intended to create the enabling environment to facilitate the development of relevant entrepreneurial skills, attitudes, orientations, experiences, and values for successful grassroots development. This is due to the fact that women constitute the majority of the world's poor, therefore meeting grassroots development requires addressing women and their skill empowerment because women who are economically empowered contribute more to their families, societies, and national economy (Magaji, 2004). Skill development of members involves more on a practical basis so as to encourage job creation, involving the process of discovery which constitutes the heart of entrepreneurship (Yasemin, Joseph & Steven, 2005). Skill is synonymous with ability, competence, and talent, which is important for economic progress. Cooney (2012) conceptualizes skill as a personal quality with three key features: productive, expandable, and social.

An informal education initiative of Umudada to members involves acquiring skills in areas of sewing, confectionaries, artisan works, which promote social change and meaning to

life. Skill empowerment of members is the key element in the matrix of social revival in all fields of national development.

f) Widow Care Promotion

A widow is a woman who has lost her spouse or partner by death and usually has not remarried. Widowhood has long been recognized as a hazard for women. Statistically, women are more likely to be widowed and far less likely to remarry. Out of the bereaved spouses in the world, women are more in number and are forced to cope with major life decisions when they are in their most vulnerable situations. The death of a spouse may trigger changes in daily routines such as those associated with finance and other family necessities, thus, brings about changes in social participation (Wells & Kendig, 1997). Reports on widows are statistically absent from many developing countries and are rarely mentioned in the multitude of reports on women's poverty, development, health, or human rights (Harman, 2015).

Widows' depreciation has for too long been comprehensively ignored, yet the conditions that many widows are forced to live in out of economic necessity or social norms qualify as a humanitarian emergency and as a significant human rights violation. Such conditions include segregation, harassment, extortion, sexual assault, and murder on a large scale; extreme poverty, starvation, rape, armed conflict, seizure of their homes and possessions, and social exclusion. Most times, children of the widows often have to endure extreme poverty, child labour, prostitution, or enforced labour or are used as bargaining chips to strip widows of their economic assets and rights. Collectively, and through no fault of their own, they have little hope of reversing a life of ever-diminishing options (Harma, 2015). Forcing collective realization of the severity of deprivation faced by widows and their children is, therefore, the purpose of *Umụada* to arise.

g) Umụada Advisory Services.

Women tend to be relationship-focused and are often able to draw stakeholders from many different areas to work together. Young women need mentors to help develop their careers, proffer different perspectives in problem-solving strategies, and provide new opportunities for growth. Most times, women are faced with complex factors in their homes and personal life, which intersect and overlap to put them in control of making economic choices. *Umụada* advisory services can help establish different networks and close the information gap on new ideas on businesses, skills, knowledge, and new technologies that are relevant and accessible. Gaining new skills and confidence to keep improving women's decision-making power, which can affect overall family well-being. Therefore, the advisory services by *Umụada* can take the form of educating and engaging – being able to listen, empathize, teach, and coach. Women naturally gravitate toward these methods. *Umụada*

advisory role is on the premise that every woman can determine her own future.

h) Umụada Advocacy

Community advocates are those individuals or groups that have a vested interest in the development and redevelopment of a neighbourhood, which *Umụada* is one of such groups. Advocates are concerned about the health and welfare of the community. Not only concerned, but they are also active. They often know the problem areas and have a good understanding of the improvement activities needed (<http://www.msue.msu.edu>) *Umụada* advocacy in all forms seeks to ensure that members, particularly those who are most vulnerable, are able to have their voice heard on issues that are important to them. They defend and safeguard their rights, have their views, and wish genuinely considered when decisions are made about their lives. No wonder where *Umụada*'s presence is felt, their advocacy role promotes equality, social justice, social inclusion, and human rights. Their advocacy aims to make things happen in the most direct and empowering ways possible. *Umụada* advocacy includes changing local policies and practices, creating services, and developing partnerships with the vulnerable. Thus *Umụada* advocacy means they are the liaison between the group and the families and communities.

Umụada advocacy is a process of supporting and enabling members (people) to:

- Express their voices and concerns
- Access information and services
- Defend and promote their rights and responsibilities
- Explore choices and options (excerpts from SEAP, 2019)

B. Empirical Review

Prior studies on Rural Women Organizations and Grassroot development in Igboland among scholars presented varied perspectives and findings.

Okoro (2013) investigated Women and Peace Initiative in Igbo traditional society: A viable option for peacebuilding in Africa using a historical, socio-political, and cultural approach. The findings from the study indicated that the major cause of the conflict upsurge in Africa is the dislodgement of women from the public sphere and the abandonment of their divine role. Also, certain social values and norms have been violated.

Anyakoha (2008) studied Extending the frontiers of the Age-long Powers of Women on Southeast Nigeria for Grassroot Development. The researcher adopted the use of questionnaires and focused discussion on collecting quantitative and qualitative data. The findings included the various ways through which *Umụada* still exercise their power in selected socio-cultural activities, namely in

funerals, widowhood rites, traditional marriage ceremonies, and conflict resolution.

Arogo, Ohanaka, Diekedie, Ephrain-Emmanuel, and Apiakise (2017) undertook the impact of Umụada Group (The Powerful Daughters) In Umuorah-Umuohiri. A phenomenological research design was adopted for the study. Oral interviews using a structured interview schedule were used as a method for data collection. The study revealed that the Umụada group of women in the study area were resourceful and had a strong impact on certain issues pertaining to the village, including settling inter and intra-communal disputes, ensuring law and orders as well as community development.

Egbufoama (2009) analyzed towards a new face; A reassessment of essentials of the Umụada group of the Igbo race. Using the analytical exploration method concluded that a “Corrigenda” call is necessary, wherein Umụada should redress those values that make them who they are and what they are by putting in more time in service than in self-aggrandizement and gratification.

C. Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Social Action Theory by Max Weber. Social action theory seeks to understand how individuals determine and negotiate between their personal desires and the social pressures that largely determine and orient their actions. Social action theory is seen as a community-oriented model that is used to increase the problem-solving ability of the entire community through achieving concrete changes towards social justice. That is, individuals within communities come together to redress the imbalance of powers and privileges between a disadvantaged group and society at large. Social action theory also tries to understand the relationship between social structures and the individuals whose behaviour and actions produce them. The social action theory applies key concepts, which are; agents and agency, social structures, social actions, social determinism, institutions and individuals, and traditions.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study in order to elicit information from a large number of respondents and describe their characteristics.

B. Area of Study

The area of study is Anambra State, which is the Igbo ethnic heartland, and one of the 36 States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. There are 21 Local Government Areas in Anambra state. The seat of administration is in Akwa. The boundaries are formed by Kogi state to the North, Imo State and River State to the South, Enugu State to the East, and Delta State to the West. The major urban areas in the state include Awka, Nnewi, and Onitsha. Awka is the craft

industrial centre of Nri hegemony, Nnewi is the “Japan” of Africa, while Onitsha town is the city on the Niger with a river port and a commercial centre. The economy of Anambra State is characterized by production activities in agriculture, manufacturing, and commercial activities. Administratively, Anambra State is made of three senatorial zones, Anambra North, Anambra Central, and Anambra South, with seven local governments in each zone.

C. Population of the Study

The study population is infinite owing to the fact that the population cannot be ascertained since Umụada Ndigbo in Anambra State is made up of both married and unmarried daughters (members) (Field study, 2019).

D. Sampling Technique and Sample Determination

Sequel to the infinite nature of the population, the purposive sampling technique was applied to arrive at one hundred and fifty members, which were adjudged a fair sample to enable elicit the needed information. Thereafter, fifty respondents were drawn from each of the three senatorial zones used to give the desired sample size of 150.

E. Source of Data

The questionnaire was employed to access the primary data, which were used for data analysis.

F. Validity of Research Instrument

Content validity was used to validate the structured questionnaire instrument.

G. Reliability of Research Instrument

Cronbach Alpha technique was used on the instrument to check for internal consistency. A coefficient of 0.620 was obtained, as shown in Table 3.1

Table 1. Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach Alpha	N of Items
0.620	10

Source: Field Survey, 2020. Computation: SPSS Ver. 20.

H. Method of Data Analysis

The primary data collected for the study were analyzed using frequency distribution and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PP MCC). However, out of 150 copies of a questionnaire distributed, 90 copies were returned. PPMCC was adopted in the analysis of the data so as to determine the extent of the relationship existing among the variables of the study.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean and standard deviation were employed to analyze the data. We used a 5-point Likert scale to weigh the extent of agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items. The response options and weights assigned were: Very

highly (5 points); Highly (4 points); Maybe (3 points); May not (2 points) and Cannot Be (1 point). Table 4.1 provides the descriptive statistics of all variables from where results on analysis were obtained accordingly.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Umuada Initiatives and Grassroot Development

	In	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistics	Statistics	Statistics
	90	4.0667	1.45185
Length of group Formation	90	2.4111	.61616
Tenure of Leaders	90	2.2000	1.24702
Organs of management	90	1.7444	.96641
Selection of Leaders	90	2.1000	1.16165
Frequency of meeting	90	3.6667	1.34916
Objectives of Umuada	90	3.1222	2.12966
Sources of fundraising	90	4.0222	1.02746
Women sociopolitical integration	90	4.2667	.93376
Women rights protecting / advocacy	90	3.8778	1.12007
Women literacy programme	90	4.0556	1.03165
Widow care promotion	90	3.6667	1.23616
Member empowerment initiative	90	3.--3667	1.19409
Support of community projects	90	3.9778	1.13155
Family advisory services	90	3.0889	1.27768
Youth empowerment scheme	90	3.1556	1.29746
Funding of members' businesses			

Management Structure of Umuada Ndigbo

The study sorts to find out the management structure of the Umuada Ndigbo. The result presented in Table 4.2 shows that Umuada group has formal management. The organs of management include the position of chairlady (5.8%), which is the most popular nomenclature or otherwise called the president (24.4%); financial secretary (6.7%); treasurer (4.4%); secretary (2.2%) and the management committee (3.3%). The standard deviation and mean of (1.24702 and 2.2000) respectively further reveal no uniformity in Umuada, organs of management, indicating that groups executive meetings as deemed suitable on the premise that there must exist a chairlady/president. Selection of leadership is by-election (51.1%), and most Umuada groups in the study area have existed for 16 years and above with (68.9%) rating. The members also indicated that the tenureship of their leaders ranges between 2-3 years (48.9%) and 4-5 years (44.4%) and with a standard Deviation and mean values of (0.61616 and 2.4111) show a strong negative response on the variable, which implies that tenure of leadership varies among groups. The frequency for the meeting is majorly once a month (42.2%) but the standard deviation and mean of (1.16165 and 2.1000) display further negative responses on the variable indicating there are possibilities of change in the convention as relates to urgent matters since values in the data set are further away from the mean.

Table 3. Management Structure of UmuadaNdigbo

Item	Frequency (n=90)	Percentage (%)
Organ of Management		
President	22	24.4
Chairlady	53	58.9
Secretary	2	2.2
Treasurer	4	4.4
Financial Secretary	6	6.7
Management Committee	3	3.3
Selection of Leaders		
Leadership by election	46	51.1
Decision by Voting	27	30.0
Leadership by appointment	14	15.6
Promoters as leaders	1	1.1
Representation by Proxy	1	1.1
Oldest member	1	1.1
Length of Group Formation		
1-3 years	7	7.8
4-6 years	14	15.6
7-10 years	7	7.8
16 years of above	62	68.9
Tenureship of Leaders		
1 year	5	5.6
2-3 years	44	48.9
4-5 years	40	44.4
Oldest members	1	1.1
Frequency of Meeting		
Once a month	38	42.2
Once in 3 months	23	25.6
Once in 6months	11	12.2
Once a year	18	2.0

Source: Field Survey, January-February, 2020

Objectives and Sources of fund for Umuada

The result from Table 4.3 displays that the members agree that Umuada in various communities of the study area aim majorly at Peace Keeping (51.1%) confirming the work of (Anyakoha, 2008) and customs modification (15.6%), also a standard deviation and mean of (1.34916 and 3.6667) signifies a near cluster in opinion. The sources of funds of Umuada are mainly from Dues (31.1%) and members donation (25.6%). However, there exists a very low opinion of members on the variable with a standard deviation and mean of (2.12966 and 3.1222) respectively, indicating a possibility of external sources of fund available to Umuada.

Table 4. Objectives and Sources of Fund for Umuada

Item	Frequency (n=90)	Percentage (%)
Objectives		
Customs abolition	7	7.8
Customs modification	14	15.6
Village Festivals Review	7	7.8
Peace Keeping	46	51.1
Infrastructure Development	6	6.7
Youth morale building	10	11.1

Sources of fund		
Registration fee	18	20.0
Dues	28	31.1
Members donation	23	25.6
Support from First Lady	8	8.9
Support from NGO's	1	1.1
Support from donors	4	4.4
Any other (hiring, catering services)	8	8.9
Total	90	100

Sources: Field Survey, January-February, 2020.

Facilitation of Grassroot Development Initiatives

The facilitation of grassroots development initiatives by Umuada was sought through five-point Likert-scale rating opinions of members. The variables for the grassroots development initiatives comprised the extent of their opinions on Umuadas' pursuit on the following: women socio-political integration; women rights protection/advocacy; women literacy program; widow-care promotion; members skill development; support of community projects; family advisory/advocacy services; youth empowerment scheme and funding of members' business. Table 4.4 displays the opinions of the women, which do not differ greatly in that Umuada Ndigbo in Anambra State is on the move for a shift in paradigm towards the development of members, youths, and communities. Results indicate that they are very highly involved in women's rights production/advocacy (56%) and with a standard deviation and mean of (0.93376 and 4.2667), respectively, since the statistical data set is close to the mean.

Table 5. Distribution on Facilitation of Grassroot Development Initiatives Through Umuada

Item	Frequency (n=90)	Percentage (%)
Women Socio-political Integration		
Cannot be	2	2.2
May not	6	6.7
May be	16	17.8
Highly	30	33.3
Very highly	36	40.0
Total	90	100.0
Women Rights Protection/advocacy		
Cannot be	2	2.2
May not	3	3.3
May be	9	10.0
Highly	31	34.4
Very highly	45	50.0
Total	90	100.0
Women Literacy Programme		
Cannot be	4	4.4
May not	5	5.6
May be	23	25.6
Highly	24	26.7
Very highly	34	37.8
Total	90	100.0
Widow-care Promotion		
Cannot be	2	2.2
May not	6	6.7
May be	15	16.7

Highly	29	32.2
Very highly	38	42.2
Total	90	100.0

Item	fFrequency (n=90)	Percentage (%)
<i>Members' empowerment initiative (skill development)</i>		
Cannot be	7	7.8
May not	9	10.0
May be	19	21.1
Highly	27	30.0
Very highly	28	31.1
Total	90	100.0
<i>Support of Community Projects</i>		
Cannot be	7	7.8
May not	16	17.8
May be	20	22.2
Highly	31	34.4
Very highly	16	17.8
Total	90	100.0
<i>Family Advisory/Advocacy Services</i>		
Cannot be	3	3.3
May not	10	11.1
May be	10	11.1
Highly	30	33.3
Very highly	37	41.1
Total	90	100.0
<i>Youth Empowerment Scheme</i>		
Cannot be	13	14.4
May not	17	18.9
May be	22	24.4
Highly	25	27.8
Very highly	13	14.4
Total	90	100.0
<i>Funding of Members Businesses</i>		
Cannot be	14	15.6
May not	14	15.6
May be	19	21.1
Highly	30	33.3
Very Highly	13	14.4
Total	90	100.0

Source: Field Survey, January-February, 2020

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between “Umụada” advocacy and women's empowerment in the development of Anambra State.

H_{a1}: There is a significant relationship between “Umụada” advocacy and women empowerment in the development of Anambra state.

Table 4.5 shows the details of correlation analysis carried out to determine the extent of the relationship between “Umụada” advocacy and women empowerment in the development of Anambra State. The result indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables. This is because the correlation coefficient obtained was .292 while the P-value was .005, which is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed); hence the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

The implication is that as “Umụada” advocacy increases, women's empowerment increases.

Table 4.5: Correlation output for “Umụada” advocacy and women empowerment

		Women pro advocacy	Memberemp initiative
Women pro advocacy Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Pearson	1	.292 **
			.005
		90	90
Memberemp initiative correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Pearson	.292**.005	1
		90	90

^{**} correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between “Umụada” advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra state.

H_{a2}: There is a significant relationship between “Umụada” advisory services and widow-care promotion in the development of Anambra State.

Table 4.6 reveals the result of the correlation analysis on “Umụada” advisory services and widow-care promotion. The result shows weak evidence against the null hypothesis and that the relationship between the variables studied is not statistically significant and independent of each other. This is due to the coefficient obtained(.117), while the P-value was .274, which is greater than the level of significance used (P-value > 0.005). Thus the null hypothesis was retained.

The implication of the result fits accurately to the reality of Umụada’s activities during widow-care rites, which often result in humiliation for the widow. The findings are consistent with Anyakoha (2008), who acknowledged that Umụada still exercises its power in selected socio-cultural activities.

Table 4.6: Correlation output for “Umụada” advisory services and widow-care promotion

		Women pro advocacy	Member mp initiative
Family advisory services Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N		1	.117
			.274
		90	90
Widow care Promo Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N		.117	1
		.274	
		90	90

Source: Field Survey, January-February, 2020

V. A. Conclusion and Development Implication

It is evident from the results that the Umụada associations are development agents which enable members to gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices. In addition, Umụada activities call for revalidation of values.

B. Recommendations

- The government at all levels (Local, state, and federal) and other development agencies need to collaborate with the “Umụada” forum for high-level women mobilization and development initiatives since there are capabilities within the association.

- The Ministry of Women Affairs in Anambra state can organize with Sociology/Anthropology Departments in tertiary institutions for consultancy services and develop appropriate resourceful measures to educate “Umuada” associations on the elimination of violence (nightmares) for widows during funerals and reorient other values.

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