

# Pentecostalism and Women Development in the Redeemed Christian Church of God: A Model for National Development

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.71066>

Received: 27 August 2023; Revised: 13 September 2023; Accepted: 23 September 2023; Published: 22 October 2023

## ABSTRACT

This article investigates the impact of Pentecostalism on women's advancement within the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and its implications for broader societal progress. In recent decades, women in the RCCG have taken on more active roles and leadership responsibilities. The study examines historical and theological factors empowering women in the church, fostering personal growth and participation in various spheres. Pentecostalism's emphasis on spiritual gifts, and inclusion, enables women to challenge gender norms and pursue leadership within the church and society. Success stories of women excelling in academics, entrepreneurship, and community development emerge from RCCG's policies, teachings, and grassroots initiatives, offering potential contributions to national development. Challenges faced by the RCCG's approach to women's development are acknowledged, including reconciling traditional cultural expectations with progressive values. The study used case studies, questionnaires, and interview to illuminate women's experiences in the RCCG and document transforming journey in the personal, familiar, and societal spheres. The study sheds light on potential obstacles and strategies for inclusive and sustainable development. Through case studies, questionnaires, and interviews, the research illuminates women's experiences and transformative journeys within the RCCG, concluding with lessons for policymakers to promote women's participation in societal development. In summary, this study contributes valuable insights to achieving inclusive and sustainable national development by understanding Pentecostalism's impact on women's growth in the RCCG. It emphasizes the potential for positive social change through women's empowerment.

**Keywords:** Pentecostalism, Women, Development, RCCG, National development.

## INTRODUCTION

The position of women in religious organizations around the world has been substantially changed by Pentecostalism, a vibrant and quickly expanding movement within Christianity. In particular, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), a well-known Pentecostal denomination, has become a forerunner in encouraging women's empowerment both inside and beyond the church (Adabembe, 2019). With a focus on how this paradigm acts as a potent accelerator for national development, this study examines the significant relationship between Pentecostalism and women's growth within the RCCG.

Pentecostalism is a global Christian movement; it is a universal phenomenon that is made up of about 23% of the total number of Christians globally (Bankole, 2019). Pentecostal churches are known for their growing members and their emphasis on receiving the Holy Spirit via baptism rather than just being converted. Pentecostalism is fast becoming a movement in Sub-Saharan Africa, and African Pentecostalism has African initiatives, that have contributed immensely to the growth and development of Pentecostalism globally (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005). More so that the Pew Research center on global Christianity reports that, approximately eight out of ten of the world's Pentecostals reside in sub-Saharan Africa which is about 44% of the population (Pew Research center, 2011).

Furthermore, the World Christian Database of (2006) gives the population of Pentecostals in Africa as 12% this is about 890 million people (Pew Research,2006). Meanwhile, Cox (1996), argued that Pentecostalism is reshaping religion in the 21st century, this reshaping is due to so many innovations that this kind of Christianity has brought to the Christian community as a whole especially in the area of human capital development and the inclusion of women in leadership positions within the church.

Echeta (2019) sees Pentecostalism in Nigeria as a form of Christianity that has brought comfort to the poor and the marginalized. The scholar believes that this is one of the reasons it has outgrown mainstream churches in Nigeria. Meanwhile, despite the patriarchal social construction of some African societies, women are still allowed to play important roles. Thus, in Traditional African society, women contribute to their families and the society at large. A Yoruba adage confirms this when it says; *Ko se mani lobinrin* meaning that women are vital. Therefore women are recognized as those who run the family affairs. Adabembe (2019), reiterates that women contribute to the social, economic and religious development of African society. Economically, women have an extensive understanding of how to cultivate the land, use natural resources and preserve its conservation. This is because they spend most of their time either with the family or in the field (Ojo, 2001).

Meanwhile, Christianity developed from male-dominated or patriarchal societies that placed men in positions of authority in all spheres of life. More so, that the bible seems to be written by men, for men and about men (Okoli, & Okwusa, 2020). In the Jewish culture, the status of women is portrayed clearly by the fact that women could not be counted to make up a quorum for public worship likewise; Priesthood and leadership positions were mainly men's affairs (Fatokun, 2006). Nevertheless, there were women leaders still in Jewish societies, for example, Miriam, the first Prophetess in the Bible, was an able leader in Israel. Equally, for Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt through empathy and tolerance was not unconnected to his mother, Jochebed, and Miriam, his sister, who joined hands to train him. Similarly, Esther, an orphan, was also a woman leader in the Bible, she was brave and beautiful thus, Israelites were protected from obliteration by her diplomacy and actions.

Likewise, Deborah equally was gifted with the gift of prophecy she used this gift for the benefit and development of her nation. She was a Judge and a prophetess in Israel whose reign recorded a tremendous development for her people because her reign witnessed the conquering of the nation's enemies. Fortunately, Deborah's inspired heroic confidence and awakened the hope of freedom in Israel; she was the fifth Judge in Israel who was raised by God to deliver his people from bondage. All these examples indicate that women were relevant in the biblical epoch despite the patriarch structure of that period.

This article therefore explores the numerous ways that the RCCG's model for women's inclusion and development has impacted societal change on a larger scale, gender equality, and economic development. It investigates the possibility of this paradigm to serve as a guide for national development policies by drawing comparisons between the empowerment of women within religious organizations and their effect on the country as a whole.

Moreover, the article discovers amazing tales of women from biblical world and also in our contemporary world especially in RCCG who have broken down boundaries, improved their communities, and turned into beacons of hope and progress in their churches, societies and the nation at large . Through this article, the outstanding strides made by the RCCG in empowering women were revealed. It concludes by arguing that Pentecostalism's model for women's growth in the RCCG serves as a compelling paradigm for achieving national development and gender equity in a fast-changing global environment.

## CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

### Pentecostalism

It is imperative to give a conceptual definition of Pentecostalism before linking it to women's development

in Nigeria. Scholars such as Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005; Ojo, 2019; & Bankole, 2014) have given diverse meanings and all these meanings are tending towards the same path. The Hebrew feast of Weeks, also known as the Shabuoth in the Old Testament, is the source of the word Pentecostalism. In Greek, “Pentecost” means the fiftieth day. Moreover, Pentecostalism can be understood in two ways; Firstly, it is a kind of Christian life that has to do with the feast of Pentecost and Christ’s gifts of the Spirit. Secondly, it is the charismatic ministries of the Holy Spirit manifested on the day of Pentecost in the book of Acts of Apostles and listed by Paul in the book of 1Cor. 12:14. Ogunlusi (2019) affirmed that “they are called Pentecostalism because the Holy Spirit began these manifestations in the church on the day of Pentecost. They include speaking in tongues, healing, miracles, and discernment of spirits, prophecy wisdom and understanding.”

## **Development**

Scholars such as,(Gboyega 2003; Thomas, 2004 and Abuiyada, 2018) have argued that development is a set of ideas that frames and shapes reality and power relations. While (Gboyega 2003) contends that all initiatives to better the circumstances of human existence in all dimensions fall under the umbrella of development. Meanwhile, whenever development is taking place, changes in structural and historical factors are taking place. Development therefore, is a state of being developed, stable, advance or growth through progressive changes. The kind of transformation and progressive change can be seen in the socio-cultural, political and economy of the nation. Development in (Abuiyada, 2018), view is a step towards challenging complex goals like the abolition of poverty, the creation of employment, the preaching against inequality, and the protection of human rights. Consequently, development aims to enhance human knowledge and productivity, which will in turn lead to the overall development of the entire nation. It is a combination of factors of production aimed at raising the income level and the standard of living of citizens of a country. Thus, development is much more a matter of liberation as seen in Pentecostal churches where women are liberated from the patriarchal structure of the church.

## **National Development (ND)**

This section provides an overall insight into national development; this would in turn provide enough understanding on how the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) can be a model of national development. Meanwhile, accelerated changes in religion, economic, administrative, social, political, cultural, and industrial conditions are what constitute national development. In addition, it’s a country’s ability to improve its citizens’ standard of living as a whole by ensuring that everyone has access to the resources they need to make a living. Significantly, some economic education experts (Obasuyi, et. al., 2020; Rao et. al., 2017) have affirmed that education is an integral part of economic growth, earnings and living standard.

National development according to the United Nations Decade report (2021-2030) involves growth and change in social, cultural, and economic, qualitative as well as quantitative. The question now is why all the national development plans (NDP) has since independence failed in Nigeria. The answer to this question is not far-fetched; women have not been adequately involved in these developmental plans and agendas. They have been subjugated and marginalized in socio-political and developmental plans in Nigeria (Okoli, & Okwusa, 2020).

## **Women Development (WD)**

Women are the set of human beings that belong to the female gender. Their roles are multifaceted, they are the homemakers, caretakers, mothers, and farmers, and they equally see to the smooth running of their families and sometimes the society as a whole (Ojo,2001). In traditional African society, women act as *Iyalaje*, *Iyalode*, and *Iyaloja* because they are serial entrepreneurs. Women’s development and empowerment has become important issue in economic and national development in our contemporary society

(Mosedale, 2005). Moreover, Kabeer 2007, argues that, empowering women is prioritizing their needs and listening to them in order to improve their economic, political, and social standing. It is noteworthy that, women's development and empowerment have always been included in the National Development Plan in Nigeria; the National Development plan aims to build a nation that is full of opportunity for all citizens (Lawal, 2017). Therefore, it can be claimed that women's empowerment plays a crucial role in the growth of a nation as a whole.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This segment of the work is about the overall issues relating to Pentecostalism and Women's Development in the Redeemed Christian Church of God: A Model for National Development in Nigeria. The section reviews women in the church in the Old Testament, New Testament, and women in the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Gender equality and women empowerment in RCCG is emphasized. The section therefore, concludes with the understanding that, RCCG being a church that has grown in the nip and bound as a result of gender equality, women empowerment and development should be a model for Nigeria in an attempt to achieve overall development.

### Women in the Church

Jesus' interactions with women during the New Testament era demonstrated his ardour, love, and concern for them. The first believers and disciples of Jesus included women. In biblical times, a sizable number of women, including Mary Magdalene, Saint Joana, Susanna, Mary, and Martha, belonged to this group of women.

The apostles in the early Church imitated Jesus' treatment of women, and as a result, women had a significant role in early Church activities. In the early Church, women served the Apostles with their own resources. During this time, they both held positions of official spiritual influence within the Church. At this time, women had significant leadership positions in church leadership, often on an equal footing with men who held those positions. This concept was undoubtedly appropriated by the Pentecostal Churches, which may be why Pentecostal Churches assign women distinct responsibilities in the modern Church (Adabembe, 2019).

In orthodox churches, men play dominant roles, while women are marginalized and relegated to the background in some administrative structures in the church; equally, women in these churches are sometimes looked down on as less spiritual than men (Ojo, 2001). This is apparent in the Methodist and Anglican Churches, where women are only allowed to function as Lay Readers (Jegade, 2012). Meanwhile, some Pentecostal Churches followed the example of Jesus in dealing with women and also borrowed the idea of the early Church whereby women were prominent in the activities of the Church. Giving women roles to play in the Pentecostal Churches has led to the production of great women Church planters, General Overseers, prophetesses, lady evangelists, pastors, teachers and many others (Adabembe, 2019).

Most Church founders' wives have supported their husbands' involvement in church ministries. Several of these women were mentioned by Fatokun (2006), including the late Pastor (Mrs.) Bimbo Odukoya of the Fountain of Life Bible Church in Lagos, the Rev. (Dr.) Mrs. Funke Nelson Adetuberu of My Faith Ministry International Churches, and the Rev. (Mrs.) Deola Ojo of Grace Family Church in Ibadan. Bishop (Mrs.) Margaret Benson-Idahosa's ascent to full leadership following the death of her husband Benson Idahosa in 1984 marks a milestone for women in ministry in Nigeria, as the Church continued to thrive under her direction (Fatokun, 2006).

Additionally, Pastor (Mrs.) Funke Adejumo of the Agape Church and Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God are also outstanding helpmates to their husbands. Furthermore, the late

Mrs. Abiodun Kumuyi was a founder and author of *Christian Women Mirror*, a publication that aims to develop godly women and is released monthly to instruct women in homemaking and leadership roles in the Church and society at large. Even though Deeper Life Bible Church does not allow women to hold leadership positions, the late Mrs. Abiodun Kumuyi nonetheless made a significant contribution to the advancement of women, the Church, and society at large through her *Christian Mirror Magazine*. Up until her passing in 2005, Pastor (Mrs.) Bimbo Odukoya was a well-known televangelist, author, and marriage counselor. She co-led Fountain of Life Bible Church with her husband, Pastor Taiwo Odukoya, who passed away in August 2023. Pastor Bimbo made a significant difference in many lives and served as an inspiration to young girls and boys.

### **Key Factors and Milestones that Contributed to the Rise of Pentecostalism in the RCCG.**

Reverend Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi established the RCCG in 1952. The church gradually expanded over the years after beginning as a modest prayer gathering in a small living room (Adeboye, 2011). Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye, known as Daddy G.O. (General Overseer), took over as head of the RCCG in 1981 after the death of Reverend Akindayomi. The church has witnessed a notable growth and transformation since the inception of Pastor Adeboye as the General Overseer of the Church.

Meanwhile embracing Pentecostalism under Pastor Adeboye's direction was a huge change. He placed a strong emphasis on the supernatural, the efficacy of prayer, and the experience of the Holy Spirit all of which are fundamental tenets of Pentecostalism. However, speaking in tongues, divine healing, and the significance of spiritual gifts were among the Pentecostal doctrines that the RCCG's emphasis. Many people looking for a dynamic kind of Christianity found these charismatic activities appealing.

Moreover, under Pastor Adeboye's direction, the RCCG adopted a fervent evangelistic strategy, planning massive crusades and events both in Nigeria and abroad. The Pentecostal message and the church's impact were greatly boosted by these events, which drew sizable crowds. The RCCG efficiently disseminated its message through media and technology. Meanwhile, Pentecostal movement relied heavily on radio, television, and online media to reach a larger audience and recruit new followers. The RCCG began an ambitious global expansion has rose in number and popularity in Nigeria and abroad. The RCCG presently has thousands of branches and millions of members worldwide, and it has it is branches in over 190 countries (Adeboye, 2011).

The organizational structure of the RCCG is created to support quick growth and effective management. A defined mission and vision, along with a focus on excellent leadership at all levels, helped the church see widespread development. People from many backgrounds especially women were drawn to the RCCG because of its emphasis on inclusivity and a friendly environment, which helped to create a sense of belonging and community inside the church.

The RCCG's dedication to social outreach and generosity, including its participation in educational, medical, and humanitarian initiatives, won the public's trust and support, further boosting its standing and influence. One could argue that the Redeemed Christian Church of God's visionary leadership, strong emphasis on Pentecostal doctrines and practices, effective use of media and technology, global expansion, and dedication to inclusive of women into leadership positions within the church and charitable endeavors are all factors that contributed to the growth and development of the church. Lastly, the RCCG's influence on people, communities, and cultures all over the world as it expands is evidence of the Pentecostal movement's ability to reform religious organizations.

### **Women in the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG).**

At the time of the RCCG's establishment in Nigeria, women's involvement was limited, with the only known ministry carried out by Mrs. Esther Akindayomi, the founder's wife who had received training as an

*agbebi*, a local midwife (Asonzeh 2003).

Moreover Mrs. Akindayomi used her skills to provide support during childbirth for pregnant women. This act not only contributed to her husband's ministry but also served as a means to attract and retain people, especially women, within the Church (Asonzeh 2003).

Though, this state of affairs persisted until the passing of Rev. Akindayomi on November 2nd, 1980. Afterward, Pastor E.A. Adeboye, who succeeded Rev. Josiah Akindayomi as the church's leader, introduced several innovations that brought women to the forefront in the church's activities (Adeboye, 2011 ). As the General Overseer, he instilled a global consciousness concerning the eradication of patriarchal structures that had historically marginalized women across all aspects of life, including within the Church itself, thereby promoting gender equality within the RCCG community (Asonzeh 2003).

Pastor (Mrs.) Folu Adeboye, was instrumental in empowering women in the church by instilling in them the confidence that they could perform any task just as well as men, if not better. Consequently, women in the RCCG have excelled at taking on leadership roles, and progressive stance. Thus, the church is now home to women who hold a variety of positions, including deaconesses, assistant pastors, and full pastors at different parishes, areas, zones, province, and regional levels.

Moreover, further important factor in the general growth and development of RCCG in all areas has been the inclusive attitude to women's leadership. As a result of their coordinated efforts, RCCG has even been acknowledged as the Pentecostal church in Nigeria with the quickest rate of growth (Adeboye, 2011). More so, that (Adeboye 2011) identified four unique phases of RCCG evolution as follows; The first phase, lasted from 1952 to 1980, was when Rev. Josiah Akindayomi, the church's founder, was in charge. After then, there was a transitional era lasting from 1981 to 1989, followed by a growth phase lasting from 1989 to 2009, and finally, an expansion phase lasting from 2009 up until the present. It was during this later stage that the church saw exceptional development and international expansion.

Meanwhile, the development of the church is not unconnected with RCCG's mission statement and the position of responsibilities it has given to women in the church. Thus, the church has experienced extraordinary growth, expansion, and accomplishments. Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye made tremendous efforts to advance gender equality within the Church after taking over the RCCG following the founder's demise. One noteworthy accomplishment was the beginning of the ordination of women into the priesthood. Consequently, under his leadership, the RCCG experienced spectacular development, growing from a mere 40 branches in 1980 to a stunning presence in 198 nations throughout the continents of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East by 2011 (Adeboye, 2011). According to information found on the RCCG's official website, as of 2021, there were approximately 9,938,617 members. Pastor Adeboye's leadership ushered in transformative changes that empowered women within the church. Among his innovative initiatives were the elimination of patriarchal structures that had previously marginalized women and the introduction of opportunities for women's ordination and leadership roles, bringing them to the forefront in the RCCG community (Adabembe, 2019).

## METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed-methods approach that included questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation. The study was carried out in the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The choice of Ekiti State as the focus of this study was justified by the researcher taking into account a number of variables. First, the Redemption Camp, the RCCG headquarters, is situated in South West Nigeria and Ekiti state is one of the 6 states in this region. Equally there are 11 provinces of the church in the State. In addition, the RCCG has female pastors who have advanced from the parish level to the position of Assistant Provincial Pastor in Ekiti State Nigeria. 200 respondents from the church were chosen

to participate in the study; 188 questionnaires were distributed, and 169 of them were retrieved, yielding a response rate of 89.9%. Interviews with 12 female pastors from the church were conducted; they were semi-structured and lasted up to 20 minutes each. Quantitative data was supplemented with interview responses.

### **Challenges and Criticisms of Women Inclusion into Leadership Position in RCCG**

It is critical to recognize that the RCCG's initiatives to support women's development reflect a significant advancement in the fight for gender equality within religious institutions despite some obstacles and criticisms being faced by the mission. The discussion here is basically on the interview conducted and analysis of questionnaire.

1. Resistance from more conventional and conservative forces in the church and in society at large is one of the main difficulties the RCCG has faced in incorporating women into leadership position. Pastor Mrs Adeoye a Regional prayer champion coordinator in RGCCG, in an interview give a comprehensive discussion of some people within and outside the church who held beliefs that women should only play conventional roles and refrain from holding positions of authority within and outside the church. Initiatives for women's empowerment inside the church are oftentimes hampered by opposition from these set of people.
2. Limited Access to Leadership Positions: Pastor Mrs Omoteye a wife to a Zonal Pastor confirmed that, RCCG has made steps to empower women and promote their involvement in leadership positions, but some branches are still hesitant to fully accept these changes due to cultural and sometimes scriptural related issues. According to her some women, in particular regions are still having troubles getting leadership roles as a result of this, thus, their ability to participate in decision-making and have an impact on church policies are limited.
3. Balancing Family and Ministry: Mrs Omolaja, a nurse with a teaching hospital and wife to a parish pastor was of the view that, women in leadership roles within the RCCG may experience more difficulties juggling their obligations to their families, professions and their ministry activities. Talking from her personal experience, she concludes that, the demands of pastoral and leadership jobs can occasionally cause conflicts between personal and professional obligations.
4. Preconceptions and prejudice: In the RCCG, female leaders may run into prejudices and preconceptions from both inside and outside the church. Mr. Aina, a member of the RCCG, confirmed that he left his formal parish of the church when the female pastor was transferred there. It has been affirmed that questions about women's capacity and ability to lead effectively have been asked. Equally, there has been scepticism about women's spiritual authority.
5. Inadequate Resources: Although the RCCG may be committed to uplifting women, some branches or regions may run into resource issues when putting in place comprehensive programs for women's development. In order to guarantee the accomplishment and sustainability of such efforts, sufficient financing and support are required.
6. Cultural and societal norms: The RCCG works in a variety of cultural settings, and societal expectations sometimes affect how the church views women's advancement. Deeply rooted cultural traditions is one of the obstruct to the advancement of gender equality in the church examples abound in this category. Pastor Mrs Adeoye a regional prayer coordinator who was already an assistance pastor was forced to wait for her husband's ordination to the position of a pastor before her promotion to full pastor. Equally, Pastor Mrs Atomeji who was the first female Area Pastor in Ekiti Province was denied her promotion for many years before she became an Assistance Provincial Pastor recently.
7. Interpretation of the Bible: In encouraging women's growth within the RCCG, theological interpretations of certain biblical texts has been a subject of disagreement and contention within and outside the church Mrs Oluwadaisi a member of Christ Apostolic Church quoted some bible passages to against women ordination and leadership in the church (1 Timothy 2: 1-15, 1 Corinthians 14:35). The degree of support for women in ministry and leadership roles has been be influenced by various readings of biblical passages that deal with gender roles and leadership.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the Factors Facilitating the Inclusion of Women into Administrative Positions in RCCG

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		N	%	N	%
1	Pastor Adeboye introduced women inclusion to leadership roles in RCCG	168	99	1	0.5
2	Women have styles of evangelising and achieving their aims easily	143	84	26	15.4
3.	Women are more involved in Churches growth and development	121	72	48	28.4
4.	Women Pastors easily influence their followers	98	58	71	42
5.	Women serves as Ministry helpers to their Pastor’s husbands	161	95.2	8	5

Table 1: It illustrates the elements that made it easier for women to hold administrative positions in RCCG. Out of 169 respondents, 168 representing 99 percent agreed that pastor Adeboye, the general overseer of the RCCG, introduced women to leadership posts in the church. Only one respondent representing 0.5 percent disagreed. 143 respondents, or 84 percent, agreed that women had different evangelizing approaches and can easily accomplish their goals, whereas 26 respondents, or 15.4 percent, disagreed. Additionally, 48 respondents, or 28.4% of the sample, disagreed with the statement that women are increasingly active in the growth and development of the Church, while 121 respondents, or 72% of the sample, agreed. In addition, 98 respondents, or 58 percent of the sample, believed that female pastors have little trouble convincing their congregates, while 71 respondents, or 42 percent, disagreed. In conclusion, 161 respondents, or 95.2%, agreed that women assist their pastors’ husbands in their ministries, whereas 8 respondents, or 5%, disagreed.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the Attitudes and Responses of Women to the Administrative Positions in RCCG

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Women Pastors are more severe in discipline than their male counterparts	96	57	73	43
2.	Women Pastors nurse their members than their male counterparts	103	61	66	39
3.	Women are uniquely superior to men in certain areas of church leadership in R.C.C.G	41	24	128	76
4.	Women are in leadership training in the church	128	76	41	24

Table 2: The attitudes and reactions of women to administrative posts in RCCG are highlighted. Out of 169 respondents, 69 (or 57% of the total) agreed that female pastors are more strict in their disciplinary methods than their male counterparts, while 73 (or 43% of the total) disagreed. In addition, 103 respondents, or 61 percent of the sample, agreed that female pastors are more likely to tend to their flocks than their male counterparts, while 66 respondents, or 39 percent, disagreed. Furthermore, 128 respondents (or 76 percent) disagreed with the statement that women in R.C.C.G. are inherently superior to men in certain areas of church leadership, while 41 respondents (or 24 percent) agreed with it. In conclusion, 128 respondents, or 76%, agreed that women are receiving leadership training in the church, while 41 respondents, or 24%, disagreed.



Table 3: Frequency and percentage analysis of the Impact of women development in RCCG

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Women are encouraged to attend Bible colleges and school of disciples	168	99	1	0.5
2.	Women are enhanced in I.C.T	91	54	78	46
3.	Entrepreneur/vocational training are organised for women in the Church	157	93	12	7.1
4.	Young ladies are encouraged and supported to get adequate education	98	58	71	42

Table 3: Shows the effects of female leadership in RCCG. A total of 169 people responded, and 168 of them, or 99 percent of the total, agreed that RCCG women are encouraged to enroll in Bible colleges and schools for disciples. Only one person, or 0.5 percent of the total, disagreed. Whereas 78 respondents, or 46% of the sample, disagreed, 91 respondents, or 54% of the sample, agreed that women are enhancing in I.C.T. in the church. Additionally, while 12 respondents, or 7.1% of the total, disagreed, 157 respondents, or 93% of the total, agreed that the Church organizes entrepreneurial and vocational training for women. In conclusion, 98 respondents, or 58 percent, agreed that girls should be encouraged to be educated degree, while 71 respondents, or 42 percent, disagreed.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the Challenges Facing Women pastors and ministers in RCCG

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Women Pastors are not given roles to play like their male colleagues in RCCG	72	43	97	57
2.	Women Pastors are still subjugated in RCCG	42	25	127	75
3.	Recognition is not given to women Pastors in RCCG	42	25	127	75
4.	Women Pastors are not getting promotion like their male colleagues	50	30	119	70

Table 4: It highlights the specific difficulties faced by female administrators in RCCG. In the RCCG, women pastors are not given the same roles to play as their male colleagues, according to 72 of the 169 respondents, or 43% of the total. However, 97 respondents, or 57% of the total, disagreed. Additionally, 127 respondents, or 75% of the sample, disagreed, while 42 respondents, or 25% of the sample, agreed that women pastors still face discrimination in the RCCG. In addition, while 127 respondents, or 75% of the sample, disagreed, 42 respondents, or 25% of the sample, agreed that women pastors in the RCCG do not receive recognition. Finally, 119 people, or 70%, disagreed with the statement that women pastors do not receive promotions like their male colleagues, while 50 people, or 30%, agreed.

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of the Women development as Agents of National development

S/N	Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Women if when developed like their male colleagues we bring the needed development in Nigeria	72	43	97	57
2.	Nigeria as a country is lagged behind as a result of subjugation of women	98	58	71	42
3.	Recognition are not given to women in political arenas in Nigeria	127	75	42	25
4.	Nigerian women are not involved in decision making	98	58	71	42

Table 5: Reveals women development as an agents of national development Out of 169 respondents, 72 representing 43 percent of the respondents agreed that if women are developed they we bring the needed development to Nigeria, while 97 representing 57 percent disagreed. 98 of the respondents agreed that, Nigeria as a country is lagged behind as a result of subjugation of women, 71 representing 42 percent of the respondents disagreed. 127 representing 75 percent of the respondents agreed that, recognition is not given to women in political arenas in Nigeria while 42 representing 25 percent agreed. Finally, 98 representing 58 percent agreed that Nigerian women are not involved in decision making process while 71 representing 42 percent of the respondents disagreed.

## FINDINGS

The RCCG model for women's development has the potential to have a substantial impact on the growth of the nation. The RCCG serves as a role model for other religious organizations and society at large by empowering women within the church, fostering gender equality, and promoting values that contribute to societal well-being. Meanwhile, supporting women's empowerment can be means of achieving a more developed and equitable country in this ways;

1. **Women's Empowerment as Change Agents:** The RCCG paradigm acknowledges women as capable change agents in the church and in society. The church serves as an example of how women's empowerment may result in good changes within the community by giving women the chance to assume leadership positions and actively engage in decision-making processes. Women can also be empowered at the national level, where they can play significant roles in governance, policymaking, and socioeconomic growth.
2. **Increasing Women's socioeconomic position:** The RCCG's efforts to empower women inside the church have a direct impact on women's socioeconomic position through education, skill development, and mentorship. Women are more able to contribute to the economy and society, and as a result, they play crucial roles in the growth of the country as a whole. Women who are educated and empowered on the economic front can raise the standard of living for their families, which benefits the country as a whole. Examples abound of RCCG's women who from leadership position in the Church are presently contributing to the development of their society by empowering other women. For example, Mrs Ojo Stella, the women coordinator of RCCG City of God parish has empowered many women especially widows in skills accusation programs and small scale businesses.
3. **Promoting Gender Equality:** The RCCG places a strong emphasis on the advancement of women, which helps to create a welcoming environment for all genders. When this paradigm is used, it strongly conveys the value of inclusivity and gender parity. Such ideals can affect societal norms and promote a more gender-equal society where women have equal opportunities to participate in all spheres of the economy. It is discovered in this work that, RCCG women have equal opportunities with their male counterparts in the church. There are women Parish, Area, Zone and Provincial Pastors.
4. **Social Impact and Community Development:** The RCCG's strategy for women's advancement extends outside of the confines of the church. Women who are empowered are more likely to participate in social and community development projects. As change agents, they tackle problems like healthcare, education, poverty, and social welfare. As they focus on issues facing the most vulnerable groups, these grassroots initiatives can greatly contribute to national development. There are omen in this category in the church pastor Mrs Aina has been coordinating women to contribute to Community Social Responsibility, pastor Mrs Viavao Atomeji is in charge of Community Social Responsibility (CSR) of province 2 in Ekiti she has joined hands with other women to mend roads, provide portable water for rural areas, and paid hospital bills.
5. **Role Models and Inspiration:** The RCCG serves as a source of inspiration for young girls and women by highlighting and recognizing women in positions of leadership and other significant roles. Women

are more likely to strive for excellence and follow their aspirations if they see other women breaking down obstacles and succeeding. Women who are empowered and inspired will probably contribute more to society as a whole, which will advance the country as a whole. For instance, Dr. Pastor (Mrs) Fajobi Funke has been an inspiration and mentor to many women in Ekiti Provinces of RCCG, she is a lecturer, politician and a Zonal pastor who encourages women to reach their potentials within and outside the church.

6. Family and Values: The RCCG model places a strong emphasis on the significance of family and relationships. The ideals of the next generation are significantly shaped by women in their roles as mothers and careers. When women are given more authority in the church and society, they can teach good values in their offspring and families, having a positive knock-on effect that benefits the future of the country. Meanwhile, the wife of the General Overseer Pastor Mrs Folu Adeboye emphasizes that the wives of pastors and female ministers should be responsible for caring and teaching the children in the church, by so doing they instill morals, and good values into these children which would eventually impact the larger society. .

Conclusively, The Redeemed Christian Church of God's philosophy on women's emancipation is a powerful force for societal progress and a glimmer of hope for gender equality. Through the transforming approach of Pentecostalism, the RCCG has destroyed traditional gender stereotypes, encouraging women to take on leadership roles, embrace their spiritual gifts, and actively take part in the church's mission and social welfare initiatives. Due to its extensive consequences, the RCCG model has the potential to spur national growth by promoting inclusive leadership and decision-making. RCCG as a church creates a diverse and talented workforce that may promote innovation and economic prosperity of an individual and the nation at large.

Recommendations: It is obvious that empowering women in Nigeria and around the world is the key to a better future as we celebrate the RCCG's tremendous accomplishments. Therefore, Nigerian leaders should study the RCCG's strategy for women's empowerment, which is one of the elements that has helped the church to expand and flourish, and adapt it for the transformative growth and development of the country. A conducive environment should be created by the government for the advancement of women. This entails providing them with the same opportunity as their male counterparts in elective and appointment roles.

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