

**HISTORY OF OGBOMOSO BAPTIST WOMEN MISSIONARY UNION'S
ENTERPRISE IN OGBOMOSOLAND BETWEEN 1991 AND 2015.**

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ABSTRACT

Ogbomosoland is noted to be a haven for the Baptist in Nigeria. The land has been adjudged to be the Jerusalem of the Baptist and third largest concentration of the Baptist in the World. However, most historical writings and documentations in the activities of the people of Ogbomoso in spreading the gospel of Baptist denomination within and outside Ogbomoso had majorly been credited to men, glossing over the contributions of women. Thus, the study among other things focused on the role of women in the Baptist enterprise of the land. The study critically examined women's effort from time in memorial in the transformation process of their areas. It highlights the critical roles that women played and still playing in the transformation and development of their societies, especially religion development. The study employed a cross examination of facts and based it evidence and conclusion on primary sources such as archival documents, diaries and the use of surviving oral tradition as well as secondary sources such as textbooks, articles, journals et cetera. From the study, it is clear that women could not be whisked away in the developmental process and transformation of any society. The study showed that, the position of Ogbomoso Baptist Women, in the evolution and growth of Baptist denomination in Ogbomosoland, was not a passive and supportive but dynamic and constructive. Notwithstanding, the study observed that, traditions, class, political powerlessness as well as religion tenets remain significant barriers to the activities of women like the Baptist Women of Ogbomosoland in the development of religion of their areas. To this end, suggestions and recommendation were made to advance the course of women like the Ogbomoso Baptist Women in the overall development of Christian religion in the land and Nigeria in general. Among these include; concerted efforts and actions should be taken toward the advancement of Christian women as well as improving education and health facilities that are not gender minded or biased so as to make them acquired skills that could make them good mothers and role models for future mothers for the advancement of God's kingdom.

5.2 Conclusion

It is clearly seen from the study that, the role of women in the transformatory process of nation or society or group of any kinds could not be whisked away. Women could be described as the pillar and catalyst for any meaningful change and development of the society. Though they are besieged with many challenges and inhibitions from time immemorial, the history of development and growth of human kind and its endeavour are not and could not be completed without a better place for women in the historical, religious socio economic development and transformation of the world. Women at times even outshine where men are unable to make a head-way. Therefore, as found out in this study, to neglect them in the historic religions as well as other writings of development of the world is to obliterate world's historical development.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the evidence(s), inference, and conclusion from the study. The recommendations are made so that christian women of particularly of the Baptist could further advance their course of Christianity in the society and Ogbomoso in particular. They are also made so that women's efforts can be fully harnessed and thereby follow the path of their male counterparts. These recommendations in the opinion of the writer, would remove some of the bottle necks and constraints that are hampering the effectiveness of Christian women in the advancement of God's work especially of the Baptist denomination. .

i. There is need for concerted efforts and action to be initiated for the advancement of women in Christianity. Religious organizations like the NBC should demonstrate commitment to removing impediments and socio cultural obstacles against women in religious participation.

ii. There is need to improve women's ability to take advantage of incentives through reforms that are institutional so as to enhance economic efficiency and empowerment that would make women to be financially stable to pursue God's business vigorously more than before. This could be done through seminars and enlightenment programmes that could afford women of opportunity to take the advantage of credit facilities by the government and other stakeholders.

iii. Baptist women must rise up to the task in playing good role model for the young women to be motivated and acquire necessary skills that would make them to be godly women and future mothers for the advancement of God's Kingdom. As opined by Ayegboyin²¹³, Baptist women should step up further in the training of women in marriage counseling through the establishment of counseling centers for women and girls. This would go a long way in solving some of the problems that women complain about, as it would be better understood and dealt with by women as they are more adapt at being of practical help to those in need.

iv. Services such as day care centres and nurseries for working mothers of the conference should be provided. This would help the working mothers as well as helping the Baptist denomination in brooding future leader for the future advancement of Christ's Kingdom.

v. There is need for the women religious organization like the BWMU to see to the health services of its members and the children. Training should be organized to train mothers to be nurses of their own children so as to reduce the incident of sickness in children and mortality rate. This would enhance better health for the masses. The BWMU of the Ogbomoso Conference with the help of the Church, association an even conference can embark on mobile medical programmes. This, if

²¹³ See Ayegoyin, *op. cit* 282-283

put in place would allow for regular rounds of administration of preventive medicine, pre-natal advice and care especially in the rural areas.

vi. It is also recommended that, adult literacy programmes that would afford many of the women to have basic education in reading and writing should be promoted by the BWMU leaders in the Church, Association and the Conference level. To this end, the “Iyawo School” of the old of the WMU must be revitalized in Churches, Association and Conference. The problem of illiteracy has been found to be a major hindrance to the WMU programmes and the use of their literatures which are mission oriented