

## Women Entrepreneurial Skills in Maize Processing and Value Addition in Ogun State, Nigeria

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**Abstract :** Maize is a common staple food for human consumption and livestock feeds. It provides employment and means of livelihood for women in both rural areas and urban centres in Nigeria. However, the entrepreneurial skills of women engaged in its processing and value addition has not been fully enhanced. This study was therefore carried out to investigate rural women entrepreneurial skills in maize processing and value addition in Ogun State, Nigeria. Snow ball sampling technique was used in the selection of 70 respondents for this study. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and chi-square. Results revealed that majority (50.0%) of the respondents were 31 - 40 years of age and 60% of the respondents had spent 6 - 10 years in maize processing. The respondents have great entrepreneurial skills in popcorn (85.7%), corn cake (80.0%), corn balls (64.3%) and kokoro (52.9%) making. The majority of the respondents accessed information and entrepreneurial skills through fellow processors (88.6%) and friends and neighbours (62.9%). Major constraints to maize processing and value addition were scarcity of raw materials during off season periods (95.7%), ineffective preservation methods (88.6%), lack of modern processing equipment (82.9%), and high cost of processing machines (72.9%). Result of chi-square showed that there is significant association between personal characteristics of the respondents and entrepreneurial skills of the women at  $p < 0.05$ . It is hereby recommended that subsidized processing equipment should be made available to the maize processors in the study area by the government and NGOs.

**Keywords :** women, entrepreneurial skills, maize processing, value addition

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