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Igbo Women: *The Force of Society's Economy in the 1900s*

By Chukwunwike Ossai

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FEATURE
IMAGE

Igbo market women

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IGBO WOMEN

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Before European invaders came to change how buying and selling worked in Igbo land, women, particularly Ndi-Ahia in places like Aboh, Ahaba, Onicha has prepared well for both far and near business.

They know more about trade, and they are much in the market, they sell crop harvests, hand-made clothes, and many more things they could make. Market was not just a place for buying and selling of goods and services, it was also a place where people share ideas on what they sell and celebrate on important things.

Amongst all other places Igbo Women are more experienced on how to sell goods and they know much as regards to trading compared to other regions, connecting different towns, like River Niger and even the Northern Nigeria. In Ibagwa Nsukka, the women of Aku make alot of money from kolanut trade with Igala people, and they'll bring back various items like beans, pepper, and fish (Dry fish).

The reason why the women of Onicha know more about trade connections and have their way around it is the Omu, who is their leader in the market as well, the King (Obi) and his chief ministers are protected the women. This made them more successful in the market and build more big connections, and power.

Through these trades, Igbo Women became more independent, respectable and gained political power. Some of the Women, particularly the wealthy ones from a strong families, joined the trade through their family connections to protect their business.

When the Europeans came to open trade posts in Oguta and Onicha,

women were the first big customers, making money and refused the men to be part of their business. Their boldness showed how Igbo Women are capable to guide their economic power and social rights, making them real winners of Igbo trade and culture.

Chuku, G. (2004). Igbo women and economic transformation in southeastern Nigeria, 1900-1960.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chukwunwike Ossai

An enthusiast in tech with deep passion for studying and showcasing the vibrant cultural heritage of southern Nigeria . Combining my skill with my obsession towards African history and traditions to create contributions that impacts the digital space.



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