WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education

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Will defend the dissertation

Date: April 6, 2020
Time: 2:00 P.M.
Location: Pullman, Cleveland 353

Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend.

INTERROGATING WOMEN’S GRASSROOTS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY OF OGOTUN MAT WEAVING CENTER IN OGOTUN-EKITI, NIGERIA

Chair: Pamela J. Bettis

Women's empowerment programs in Africa are mostly sponsored by international organizations and development agencies. However, there has been little, or no success recorded from such programs. African rural women remain poor, oppressed, marginalized and entrenched in gender inequality. This qualitative case study interrogates a grassroots women’s empowerment program in rural Nigeria. The researcher conducted twenty interviews, four focus groups and multiple observations to answer the overarching research question: What are the understandings and experiences of rural Nigerian women about empowerment? Findings include women's understandings of empowerment as money to care for and educate their children; a complex dynamic between national, regional and local government support or lack of support for women’s empowerment programs; a patriarchal culture that limited women's voice and choice in the empowerment programs. Recommendations focus on including the voice and choice of women in the design of rural grassroots empowerment programs for their sustainability. The researcher also found that these women were resilient in the face of gender injustice and had created their own small empowerment program.