



Determinants of acceptance of *Ijarah -wa-iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja municipal area council

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Abstract

Participation of women entrepreneurs is very crucial to achieving economic growth and development for a nation, as such provision of adequate and reliable sources of financing is of utmost importance. Although attempts were made by the government at various levels aimed at improving and sustaining women entrepreneurs in Nigeria yet they remain at the tail end in terms of their participation in economic activities. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to explore the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in financing Small and medium Scale women entrepreneur in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design using primary data in order to achieve the stated objectives. The result obtained from analyzing 187 retrieved completed questionnaires, shows that, *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* is compatible with the entrepreneurs from both religious i.e., Muslim and non-Muslim, all the three factors namely awareness, benefits and religions inclination significantly influence the patronage of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* product as mode of financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs. Hence, the study recommends that, there should be a mass enlightenment campaign by Islamic financial institutions especially Jaiz Bank Plc in conjunction with SMEs women leaders on the existence and benefits of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as ethical financing product through the radio station, TV channels, newspaper outlets, journals, as well as, social media. The study also recommends the building of more branches of Islamic banks and establishment of new banks to ensure easy access to Islamic financial services by the public.

Keywords: *Ijarah-wa-iqtina*, Entrepreneur, Small and Medium Scale

Introduction

The participation of small and medium women entrepreneurs in the economic activities of any given society is very crucial to the economic growth and development of the nation. The roles of entrepreneurship as the key to economic growth especially the small-scale entrepreneurs who successfully exploit the commercial opportunities on a small scale cannot be under estimated (Garga and Bagga, 2017) ^[27]. For a country to attain sustainable growth and development it must tackle poverty, especially among women, to enable them to improve the quality of their life.

Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria are major contributors to economic growth through employment generation. The contributions of women to economic growth and development have been significant across the globe including Africa. The last official 2006 census showed that Nigeria had a population estimate of 140,431,790 million people (National Bureau of Statistics, 2008; National population Commission, 2009) ^[35]; however, as at 2013, population figure was estimated at 174 million (Population Reference Bureau, 2013) ^[47].

Statistics have shown that women constitute about 50% of the Nigerian population and out of this only about 10% of them are engaged in entrepreneurial activity in the form of micro, small, medium and large enterprises (Odoemene, 2013) ^[41]. Therefore, despite the population of women in Nigeria they play insignificant role in entrepreneurial activities and contribute less to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Among notable barriers hindering women enterprises are capital inadequacy, unavailability of the required infrastructure, shortage of manpower, lack of access to finance and high cost of doing business among others.

In recognition of these constraints and in order to ensure the realization of the potential benefits of viable SMEs in the economy, the Central Bank of Nigeria has come up with a number of intervention programmes (Afolabi, 2013) ^[7]. The government implements a number of measures to address the problems bedeviling SMEs, particularly lack of access to external funds, by establishing specialized institutions, such as the Bank of Industry. The Bank avails SMEs with a variety of schemes, like the \$500 million Nigerian Small Growing Business Scheme Loan (NSBLS), N5 billion Micro and Medium Enterprises Business Development Fund on behalf of Dangote Foundation, the Micro and Medium Enterprises Development Fund amounting to N3 billion on behalf of nine State Governments and the N50 million pilot fund on behalf of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (Ufot, Reuben & Michael, 2014) ^[55].

Other schemes were equally established in the past, such as the Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Schemes (SMIEIS), the World Bank 1 and 2, National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) and various financing initiatives by the National Directorate for Employment (NDE) (Olaniyi, Echabi & Alfarisi, 2013). Understanding the significance of SMEs and their role in economic development and job creation and the growing demand of Abuja municipal Area Council entrepreneurs for SMEs financing, the Abuja Municipal Area Council obtained a two-billion-naira loan from CBN and in turn distributed as interest free loans to SMEs (CBN, 2015) ^[21]. Microfinance Banks (MFBs) disbursed the loan to the beneficiaries where over 15,000 micro, small and medium enterprises formed into cooperative groups across the seven Area councils of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja approved by the CBN benefited from the loan.

However, high cost of rent, lack of collateral, risk exposure, family ties, politics among others are other problems of women entrepreneurs that relegate them to low entrepreneurial activities in the (FCT) and subsequently hinder their engagement in large scale entrepreneurial activities in the Federal Capital Territory. If they were adequately financed, more economic opportunities will be flowing into the community which will improve the living standards of the women, this prompted this study in order to explore the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs with the aim of discovering an alternative source of financing, which is interest free and consistent with *Shariah* principles.

The study specifically focuses on the potential of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council. Though there are many financing products offered by Islamic Banks, this study looks at *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* and focuses on small and medium scale women entrepreneurs within FCT. Therefore, the study was limited to only small and medium scale women

that are registered with Abuja Municipal Area Council. Although small and medium women enterprises play a significant role in the society in terms of job creation and family support and contribute to the economic development, yet most of them are incapacitated to engage in entrepreneurial activities due to problems, ranging from high cost of rent, inadequate sources of finance, lack of collateral security and poor infrastructural facilities among others (AMAC, 2019).

Startup capital and finance in general remains part of the major impediments to women entrepreneurs has to be overcome (AMAC, 2019). Sources of finance for women entrepreneurs in (FCT) mostly come from personal savings, family and friends, equity, government and NGOs. These sources of finance are yet to produce any positive result for the women entrepreneurs in their struggle to actualize their entrepreneurial dreams.

Moreover, Government at various levels-initiated programs and policies so as to avail women and make them actively participate in entrepreneurship activities, yet impediments associated with implementation affected the realization of the objective of the programs.

Thambiah and Jun (2015) ^[54] investigated the factors that affect the participation of women entrepreneurs in Islamic microfinance in Malaysia the result shows a significant relationship between knowledge, influence of family and friends, accessibility to funds and success of women in entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, Houque and Sultana (2014) ^[30] examined the Islamic verses as well as *Shari'ah* provisions regarding women entrepreneurship in the context of Bangladesh and found that there is no religious barrier for women to become entrepreneurs as it is permitted in Islam. Balogun et al, (2014) ^[17] examined Islamic Finance as an alternative source of financing for women entrepreneurs and found that, finance remains a major impediment to women entrepreneurs' business performance. They recommend that Islamic Finance should introduce more financing products such as *Ijara*, *Murabaha* and *Musharaka* to avail women entrepreneurs with alternative sources of finance. All the above studies were in the area of women entrepreneurs but still there is the need to conduct this research, because none of the studies explored the potentials of *Ijarah* in financing women entrepreneurs.

This study explored the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council. This study will help to explore an alternative means of financing that adhere to *Shariah* principles.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to explore the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The Specific objectives are;

- i) To assess whether awareness has significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.
- ii) To examine whether perceived benefits have significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.
- iii) To investigate whether religious inclination has significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in

financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council

Hypotheses of the Study

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses are formulated in null form to serve as guide:

H₀₁: Awareness has no significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H₀₂: Perceived benefits has no significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H₀₃: Religious inclination has no significant effect on acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-Iqtina* in financing small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

Empirical Literature Review

Shajahan (2017)^[52] examined how Islamic microfinance can play a significant role in enhancing women entrepreneurship to attain sustainable development in Bangladesh. He concluded that, though women in Bangladesh have shown signs of economic involvement, they are yet targeting of violence and assaults. Therefore, the study recommended that, to enhance gender equity and women participation, women empowerment seems vital, he suggested that, Islamic microfinance can serve better, as it provides more than finance and even customize their financial needs with its different types of mode of finance that will ensure growth in equity and reduce the debt burden for women entrepreneurs. Bako (2015)^[15] assesses the potentials of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in financing tricycle operation in Kano using a multiple regression model from a sample of 311 respondents. The study found myriad of problems associated with conventional mode financing arrangements prior to *ijarah-wa-iqtina*. It was also established that religious inclinations of respondents have strong influence on potential benefits from switching to *ijarah-wa-iqtina*. The paper recommends that Islamic financial institutions and well-to-do business persons in Kano metropolis on the need to promote both formal and non-formal Islamic finance among tricycles operators via *ijarah-wa-iqtina*.

Balogun, (2014)^[17] shows that finance remains a major impediment to women entrepreneurs in starting up and sustaining their business in the Sokoto metropolis. Most of the startup capital for women entrepreneurs came from personal saving, family and friends. He found that Islamic Finance has a role to play in financing women entrepreneurs in Sokoto through its micro finance products such as *Mudarabah*, *Musharakah*, *Murabahah*, *Ijarah* and *Wakalah*. Hence, he recommended that Islamic banks in Nigeria should take advantage of this Mische area of women entrepreneurs and explore the opportunities untapped by making finance accessible to them through their Islamic finance products, such as *Ijarah*.

Moreover, Maryam (2013) in her study investigated capital access strategies and enterprise growth among selected women entrepreneurs in Sokoto Metropolis, Nigeria. Variables examined by the study included enterprise growth, capital access, bank loan, personal savings, relatives and friends, equity financing,

Government financing and non-government financing. Her findings show that there is a positive correlation between capital access and business growth. Most women entrepreneurs source their capital mainly from personal savings, family and friends which is one of the reasons for their inability to achieve large scale production in their business enterprises. Government financing has the strongest influence in achieving business growth. Women entrepreneurs with more access to sources of finance have higher chances for their business growth and the tendency to attain large economics of scale in the long run. Therefore, the study recommended that women entrepreneurs in Sokoto should explore more sources of financing their enterprises so as to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams of large-scale production. He recommended that financial institutions should introduce a micro credit program specially targeting women within Sokoto state so as to real the untapped potentials of this niche area.

Leyla & Nezameddin (2011) in their study on women entrepreneurship in Iran found that the government played a significant role in financing women entrepreneurs. They concluded that gender discrimination in respect of social as well as economic aspects was a major drawback for women entrepreneurs. Educated youth among women do not perceive social factors as a drawback for women entrepreneurs. By examined gender inequalities, level of education, human resources and finance as variables of the study. Syed (2011)^[51] in his study examined demography, motivation, business challenges, financing, and perception as he investigated the characteristics of women entrepreneurs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He found that start-up capital mostly came from personal savings, friends and family and also the motivation to start business is based on the past experience of women entrepreneurs.

John & Samia (2010) investigated the influence of Islam on female entrepreneurship in a conservative Muslim context in Bahrain. They examined variables such as age, *hijab*, Islamic banks, networking, level of education, business type, growth aspiration, and human capital as the factors affecting female entrepreneur. They found that the entrepreneurs with higher levels of human capital such as education and business experience, are more likely to secure funding from Islamic banks. They recommend that the Islamic Bank should lower its requirements to allow women with low capital to improve their entrepreneurial ambitions.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and therefore, a cross sectional data is collected through questionnaire in order to collect relevant information from the targeted respondents of the study with a view to exploring the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* among small and medium women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of all the registered members of women entrepreneur associations in Abuja Municipal Area Council. According Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC, 2023), the forum has a total a number of one thousand two hundred and thirteen (1213) registered women entrepreneurs.

Table 1: Population of the Study

S/No	Name of Market	Number of women Entrepreneurs
1	Wuse Market	175
2	Utako Market Ultra-modern market	220
3	Garki international market	310
4	Gudu market	289
5	Karmo market	219
	Total	1213

Source: AMAC, 2023

Sample Size

The sample size represents the portion of the population to be studied; it is also a subgroup representing total population in order to make conclusions on the population. The sample size of the study is 191 small and medium scale women enterprises selected in line with Krejci and Morgan (1970) table for determining sampling size.

Table 2: Summary of Sample Size Proportion Distribution

S/No	Name of Market	Number of women Entrepreneurs	Proportion of sample size
1	Wuse Market	175	28
2	Utako Market Ultra-modern market	220	35
3	Garki international market	310	49
4	Gudu market	289	45
5	Karmo market	219	34
	Total	1213	191

Source: AMAC 2023

Sampling Technique

The target population of this study are registered small and medium scale women entrepreneurs and purposive sampling technique is used to select the target respondents and distribution of questionnaire is proportionally based on the target population in each of the study area, the rationale for choosing purposive sampling was due to the nature of study area that happen to be markets places which constitute different type of participant, hence in order to select the target respondents of the study purposely some criteria have to be consider i.e. the respondent must be women and in the class of small and medium scale entrepreneurs.

Sources and Method of Data Collection

The study used primary source of data through a structured questionnaire using close-ended and five Likert scale questions, the structured questionnaire was designed to find answers to the questions mentioned at the beginning of the study, hence It is divided into two sections; Section I comprises of demographic information of the respondent, Section II: measured the latent constructs of the study namely Acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as the dependent variable and followed by independent variables vis-a-vis Awareness, Perceived benefits and religious inclination respectively, the collection of data last from the month of July and August 2019 and was directly administered after explaining the purpose of the study on which the questionnaire is designed

Validity of the Instruments

Validity is defined as "whether an instrument measures what it was designed to measure" (Jamaludeen, 2012). The study adopted content validity because it measures the degree to

which the sample of the items represents the content to measure i.e., the dependent variable Acceptance of *Ijarah-wa- Iqtina* and independents variables Awareness, perceived benefits and religious inclination. Three experts are asked to examine the questionnaire and provide feedback for revision in order to avoid double barrel question and ambiguity, to establish the content validity of the instruments, the researcher clearly defined the conceptual framework. Two experts at International Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance (IIIBF), Bayero University Kano and one from Jaiz Bank Plc were given the first draft to rate the relevance of each of the items relating to the variables under study for necessary comments and suggestions.

Reliability of the Instruments

Praveen, *et al.*, (2008) ^[48] describes the reliability of the scale as to how free it is from random error. There are two frequently used indicators of the scale's reliability; test-retest reliability and internal consistency (Praveen, *et al.*, 2008; Jamaluddeen, 2012) ^[48]. Repeatability can be assessed using a test-retest method which involves administering the same scale or measures to the same respondents at two separate times in order to test for stability in the model (Ahmad, 2011) ^[10]. If the measure is stable over the period, the result of the test-retest should be similar and that was achieved through pilot study, however the study used internal consistency approach through Cronbach Alpha.

Normality Test

Data screening from outliers and transformation techniques are used to ensure that data have been correctly entered and that the distributions of variables are normal. The results may be biased or even invalid if the variable departs significantly from its normal distribution. The assumption of normality is a pre-requisite for many inferential statistical techniques. Thus, it is important that the data is normally distributed. This study employs statistical analysis and observation on the skewness and kurtosis of the data to assess the normality distribution i.e., the yard stick is from -3 to +3.

Techniques for Data Analyses

This study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Data analysis for this study employed the multiple regression using the ordinary least square (OLS) as in Previous studies conducted by Bako (2015) ^[15], Salisu (2016) and Shajahan (2017) ^[52], descriptive statistical techniques used tables, frequencies, and percentages as well as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the demographical variable of the respondents while inferential statistics was used to determine the influence of independent variables (awareness, relative advantage and religious inclination) on the dependent variable (acceptance of *Ijarah* among women entrepreneurs), the study used SPSS version 22.0 to analyse the data.

Model Specification

The following models are used in explaining the relationships between (Awareness, Benefits and religious inclination) and acceptance of *ijarah*. Previous study conducted by Bako (2015) ^[15].

The regression model is presented in the form:

$$(Y) = F(X) \quad (1)$$

$$(Y_t) = F(AWR_t, BNF_t, RIC_t) \quad (2)$$

$$(APT_t) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AWR_t + \beta_2 BNF_t + \beta_3 RIC_t + e_t \quad (3)$$

Where:

APT_t = Acceptance of *Ijarah* at time t

AWR_t = Awareness at time t .

BNF_t = Perceived Benefits at time t .

RIC_t = Religious Inclination at time t .

β_0 = Intercepts/ autonomous variable. It depicts the degree of the dependent variable even without the existence of independent variables.

β_1 , β_2 and β_3 = are parameter estimates or coefficient of independent variables, it depicts the degree of acceptance of *Ijarah* by applying the independent variables (AWR , BNF and RIC).

e_t = the error term or other possible factors that could influence dependent variable that are not captured in the model.

Data presentation and Analysis.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis section comprises of the demographic variables of the study's respondents.

Demographic Description of the Respondents

The survey questionnaire required the respondents to answer six demographic questions reflecting their gender, age group, marital status, level of education, religion, years spend in the business and patronizing Islamic bank. The five markets where data was collected, one hundred and eighty-seven (187) respondents responded out of one hundred and ninety-one (191). This represented 98% which is high enough to produce valid and reliable results in the study. This section summarises the general frequency distribution of respondents on different demographic items as shown in Tables 3.

Table 3: Socio-Demographic Information

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentage
AGE Range	18-29	75	40.1
	30-59	89	47.6
	60 and above	23	12.3
	Total	187	100.0
Marital Status	Single	42	22.5
	Married	101	54
	Widow	44	23.5
	Total	187	100.0
Level of Education	Primary	66	35.3
	Secondary	30	16
	Tertiary	77	41.2
	other	14	7.5
	Total	187	100.0
Religion	Islam	136	72.7
	Christianity	51	27.3
	Total	187	100.0
Years Spend in the Business	1-4 years	52	27.8
	5-8 years	64	34.2
	9 years and above	71	38
	Total	187	100.0
Are you patronizing Islamic bank?	Yes	34	18
	No	153	82
	Total	187	100.0

Source: Computed from field Survey Data (2023)

The descriptive summary displayed in Table 3 shows that there are 75 (40.1%) respondent aged 18-29 years, 89 (47.6%) 30-59 years; 23 (12.3%) 60 years and above who have responded to the study instrument. 42 (22.5%) of the respondents are single; 101 (54%) are married; 44 (23.5%) are widows. Consequently, on the level of education, 66 (35.3%) hold the primary certificate as at the time of the study, 30(16%) acquired secondary certificate, 77 (41.2%) obtained Tertiary Certificate; 14 (7.5%) obtained others Certificate. Also, majority practice Islam as their religion i.e., 136 (72.7%), while 51(27.3%) of the respondents were practices Christianity. The respondents under study were asked for how long they started their business and 52 (27.8%) said 1-4 years, 64 (34.2%) 5-8 years, and 71(38%) 9 years and above. Furthermore, 34(18%) patronize Islamic Banking, while 153(82%) did not.

Pre-Estimation Test

Preliminary analysis is used to address the reliability of data

and normality of the data. This is the process of examining the data before further analysis i.e., inferential statistics can be conducted. This process will provide assurance that the data to be examined are of good quality for further analysis (Sekaran, 2013). The process begins by checking reliability of data and then checking of the data distributions with respect to normality.

Reliability Test

The results indicate that the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for all variables are all above 0.6. Generally, Sekaran (2006) stated that reliability of less than 0.6 is considered to be good, while the closer the reliability coefficient to 1.0, the better. Table 5.2 indicates that, the internal consistency reliability of the variables used in this study is above the yard stick of 0.6 as indicated on Table 4.2.

Table 4: Result of the Reliability Statistics of the variable of the Study

Variables	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Acceptance of <i>Ijarah</i>	4	0.612
Awareness	7	0.872
Perceived Benefits	6	0.756
Religious inclination	6	0.721

Source: Computed from field Survey Data (2023)

Normality Test

Table 4 shows the summary of the normality test for the constructs used in the study. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov significant value should be less than 0.05, which indicates the data is normally distributed (Hair et al., 2006). Based on the normality test results, all the variable significant value is less than 0.05 i.e., indicating normally distribution.

In addition to that, further analyses show the skewness and kurtosis of the distribution support the normality distribution of the data as both values fall within the range of -1 to +1. Values falling outside this range indicate a non-normal distribution of data (Hair et al., 2006). Based on the Table 4.3 below, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Table 5: Test of Normality

Kolmogorov-Smirnov					
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Acceptance of <i>Ijarah</i>	0.072	187	0.064	-0.497	0.257
Awareness	0.061	187	0.026	-0.332	-0.397
Perceived Benefits	0.099	187	0.000	-0.371	0.252
Religious inclination	0.088	187	0.000	-0.506	0.414

Source: Computed from field Survey Data (2023)

Result of Analysis

In this study multiple regression is used to analysed the influence of three independents variable namely Awareness, Perceived benefits and Religion inclination on one dependent

variable acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina*. This section presents the statistics test used to test the hypotheses of the study that were earlier formulated in chapter one. Therefore, hypotheses are recalled before testing.

Table 6: Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	6.837E-17	0.038		.000	1.000		
Awareness	0.651	0.039	0.651	16.69	0.021	0.906	1.104
Perceived Benefits	0.325	0.041	0.325	7.93	0.001	0.823	1.216
Religious Inclination	0.527	0.042	0.527	12.55	0.001	0.786	1.272

Source: Computed from field Survey Data (2023)

The result in Table 6 indicates that when awareness goes up by 1 unit, acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* goes up by 0.65 units, this signifies that one percent effort increase in awareness by relevant stakeholders (i.e., though the use of media houses among others) will lead to 65% increase in acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as means of finance among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja municipal council at a significant level (P-value=0.021).

Also perceived benefit of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* goes up by 1, acceptance goes up by 0.33 units, this signifies that one percent increase in perceived benefit will lead to 33% increase in acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as means of finance among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja municipal at a significant level (P-value=0.001).

In case of one-unit increase in religious inclination, acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* goes up by 0.53 units, this signifies that one percent increase in religious inclination will lead to 53% increase in acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as means of finance among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja municipal at a significant level (P-value=0.001).

Test of Hypothesis One

The hypothesis of this study was formulated as: Awareness

has no significant effect on *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* acceptance in financing tenancy among women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal area council. The result in Table 6 shows that a significant regression model was found ($\beta=0.651$, $P=0.021$) and this signifies that Awareness significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 65% at significant value of <0.05 , hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted and conclude that awareness has significant effect on the acceptance/potentials of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in Abuja Municipal Council Area. This is consistent with the findings of Thambia and Jun (2015) [54], Bako (2015) [15], Houque and Sultana (2014) [30] as well as Balogun *et al.*, (2014) [17].

Test of Hypothesis Two

The hypothesis of this study was formulated as: A Perceived benefit has no significant effect on *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* acceptance in financing tenancy among women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal area council. The result in Table 6 shows that a significant regression model was found ($\beta=0.325$, $P=0.001$) and this signifies that Awareness significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 33% at significant value of <0.05 , hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted and

conclude that perceived benefits have significant effect on the acceptance of *Ijarah-iqtina* in Abuja Municipal Council Area. This is consistent with the findings of Bako (2015)^[15], John & Samia (2010), Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30] as well as Balogun *et al*, (2014)^[17].

Test of Hypothesis Three

The hypothesis of this study was formulated as: Religion inclination has no significant effect on *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* acceptance/potentials in financing tenancy among women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal area council. The result in Table 6 shows that a significant regression model was found ($\beta=0.527$, $P=0.001$) and this signifies that religion inclination significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 53% at significant value of <0.05 , hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted and conclude that religion inclination has significant effect on the acceptance/potentials of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* in Abuja Municipal Council Area. This is consistent with the findings of Thambia and Jun (2015)^[54], Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30], Bako (2015)^[15] as well as Balogun *et al*, (2014)^[17].

Regression Model Summary

Table 7: Regression Model Summary

Model		
R Square		0.612
Adjusted R Square		0.598
Std. Error of the Estimate		0.434
Change Statistics	R Square Change	0.612
	F Change	165.324
	Sig. F Change	0.000
Durbin-Watson		1.769

Source: Computed from field Survey Data (2023)

- Predictors (Constant): Awareness, Benefits, Religious Inclination
- Dependent Variable: Acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina*

The results in Table 7 of the R squared indicate that it is estimated that the predictors of the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* explain ($0.612 = 60$ percent) of its variance. In other words, the error variance of acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* is approximately ($0.4 = 40$ percent), this signifies that awareness, perceived benefit and religious inclination influences the acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* by 60 percent while other 40 percent changes in acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* is cause by other variables that are not stated in the model which are represented by error term and also the F statistics is significant, hence it can be concluded that the model of the study fit and desirable, this is consistent with the findings of Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30], Balogun *et al*, (2014), Thambia and Jun (2015)^[54] as well as Bako (2015)^[15].

Discussion of Results

The result of the study reveals a significant relationship ($\beta=0.651$, $P=0.021$) between awareness and acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina*. This signifies that Awareness significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 65% in Abuja Municipal Council Area. This is consistent with the findings of Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30], Balogun *et al*, (2014)^[17], Thambia and Jun (2015)^[54] as well as Bako (2015)^[15].

The finding of the study also reveals a significant relationship between perceived benefit and *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* acceptance ($\beta=0.325$, $P=0.001$). This signifies that awareness significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 33% in financing tenancy among women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal area council. This is consistent with the findings of John and Samia (2010), Balogun *et al*, (2014)^[17], Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30] as well as Bako (2015)^[15].

The finding of the study also reveals that the relationship between religion inclination and *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* acceptance/potentials was found ($\beta=0.527$, $P=0.001$) and this signifies that religion inclination significantly and positively influence acceptance of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* at 53% in Abuja Municipal Council Area. This is consistent with the findings of Houque and Sultana (2014)^[30], Balogun *et al*, (2014)^[17], Thambia and Jun (2015)^[54] and Bako (2015)^[15].

Conclusions

In the light of the summary of major findings of the study, the following recommendations are drawn:

- Awareness enhances acceptance of *Ijarah-Wa-Iqtina* among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.
- Perceived benefits enhance acceptance of *Ijarah-Wa-Iqtina* among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.
- Religious inclination enhances acceptance of *Ijarah-Wa-Iqtina* among small and medium scale women entrepreneurs in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proffered:

- There should be a mass campaign to be organized by Islamic financial institutions especially Jaiz Bank Plc in conjunction with small and medium scale women entrepreneurs to enlighten women entrepreneurs about the benefits and the existence of *Ijarah-wa-iqtina* as ethical financing product in Abuja Municipal Area Council. This can be achieved through the use of radio station, TV channels, newspapers outlets, journals, as well as, social media platforms.
- There is the need to establish more branches of Islamic banks to enhance easy access to their services by customers. There should also be excellent and quality service delivery, as well as, strong affirmation to Islamic principles of non interest ethical mode of financing to help easily draw the attention of small and medium scale women entrepreneurs to consider it as an ethical mode of financing.
- Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) should collaborate with both religious and traditional leaders from different faiths and ethnic groups in order to engage in public enlightenment. This would help in educating the public on the fact that Islamic banking products and services are meant for all customers not only the Muslims.

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