

**FAMILY ENTREPRENEURIAL BACKGROUND AND JOB-SEEKERS'
INVOLVEMENT IN ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN CALABAR
METROPOLIS OF CROSS RIVE R STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The study examined family entrepreneurial background and job-seekers' involvement in entrepreneurial activities in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the aim of this study, one hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Literature was reviewed accordingly. Survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of two hundred (200) respondents was used for the study. The selection was done through the simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face validation by experts in research and statistics. The reliability estimate of the instrument was established through split-half reliability method. Independent t-test analysis was adopted to test the study hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance and the result of the analysis revealed that family entrepreneurial background significantly influences job-seekers' involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Based on the results and findings of the study, it was recommended that there should be a restructuring of our educational curriculum in order to accommodate entrepreneurship education which should be made compulsory at all levels of education.

Key words: Family, entrepreneurial background, job seekers' involvement, entrepreneurial activities

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a human activity which plays a major role in any country's economic development. It is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully. Indeed, the importance of entrepreneurship activities in a developing country like Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. currently, entrepreneurship is a widely discussed topic in Nigeria and the role of entrepreneurs has increasingly been promoted by the government. Entrepreneurship potentials include the creation of positive multiplier effects on the

whole economy through employment generation, capacity building, improved standard of living and general economic growth (Shittu & Dosunmu, 2014).

In Nigeria, people struggle to look for jobs and money to set up their business. Self-employment here is seen as a strategic solution not only to create jobs for young people but also contribute significantly to the country's socio-economic development. To this end, Bowen and Clereq (2008) noted that entrepreneurship is critically important for the economic prosperity of nations. Similarly, Goetz, Fleming and Rupasingha (2012), while recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship pointed out that self-employment has a significant positive economic impact not only on wage and salary scale but also on per capita income growth and poverty reduction.

Elsewhere, entrepreneurship has led to employment generation, economic growth and sustainable development (Anyadike, Emeh & Ukah, 2012). At this juncture, it becomes very necessary that priority be given to study the factors that influence job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities in Calabar metropolis of Cross River State. This is with a view to promoting better policies and programmes aimed at redirecting our emphasis on entrepreneurial development.

This study will undoubtedly limit itself to one major Factor. That is, the family entrepreneurial background and job-seekers' involvement in entrepreneurial activities in Calabar metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. Talking about entrepreneurial background and job-seekers' involvement in entrepreneurial activities, Enoh and Bamanja (2003) observed that it is in the family that a growing child forms his initial world view. It therefore goes without saying that children of entrepreneur parents, inadvertently learn the factors involved in running a business venture and consider establishing a new organization as they grow up. Corroborating this assertion, Nguyen (2018) stated that being raised in a family that is entrepreneurial in nature significantly impact on individuals' intention to start their own business.

Mueller (2006), on his part posited that parental role modeling is the most significant familial factor on entrepreneurial involvement of children in entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, Birley and Westhead (2004) pointed out that having parents who are entrepreneurs as role models is a very significant factor in starting one's business. In a related development, Sandberg and Hofer (2007), confirmed that the children of entrepreneurs learn the factors involved in running a business and consider establishing a new organization as a natural choice option.

Aligning themselves with the foregoing, Laspita, Breugst, Heblich and Patzelt (2012) posited that, the relationship between parents and grandparents with entrepreneurial experience breeds structural and communication patterns that are capable of promoting strong preference for entrepreneurship in the grandchildren. Similarly, Alsos, Carter, and Ljunggren (2011) indicated that a family business has a role to play in enhancing the development of entrepreneurship among family members. This position was no doubt adopted by McElwee and Al-Riyami (2003) when they stated that children who grew up

with entrepreneur parents had a greater tendency to choose a self-employed career. This was confirmed by Isangedighi (2007) when he noted that, of all levels of interactions, the most enduring, long lasting and of greatest consequence are the interactions within the family. The effects of these interactions are that children of entrepreneur parents impressively acquire the skills and knowledge of entrepreneurship which would eventually stimulate them to establish their own business when they grow up.

Arising from the foregoing, Carr and Sequeira (2007) disclosed that through the process of socialization of children, intergenerational influence on entrepreneur intentions take place due to the exposure of children to entrepreneurship experience in the family. This position was supported by Chandhary (2017) when he confirmed that self-employed family background will have a positive relationship with entrepreneurship. This view puts him on the same page with Papadaki, Chami and Branch (2002) who noted that, in a family, entrepreneurial parents form a role model and create management know-how for the individual children who eventually become entrepreneurs.

Again, Shittu and Dosunmu (2014) acknowledged that the family plays a big role in influencing the intention of the child to start a business. This is because children every now and then interact with their parents and this interaction to a very large extent influences their world view. In their study on family entrepreneurial background and children's interest in entrepreneurship, they discovered that out of the 200 children that constituted their sample, only 110 respecting 55 percent (with entrepreneurial background) had interest and were involved in entrepreneurial activities. The remaining 90 representing 45 percent (without entrepreneurial background) had no interest and were not involved in entrepreneurial activities.

Similarly, Fairlie and Robb (2007) in their study indicated that family history plays a key role in the involvement of family members in entrepreneurial activities. They discovered from their findings that out of 300 children that constituted their sample only 180 representing 60 percent (with family entrepreneurial history) were involved in entrepreneurial activities. The remaining 120 children representing 40 percent (without family entrepreneurial history) were not involved in the entrepreneurial activities. What this means is that the entrepreneurs of business tended to have a self-employed mother or power in their family history. Indeed, this whole phenomenon of people's involvement in entrepreneurship is a function of their family entrepreneurial background.

However, Peterman and Kennedy (2003) on their part opined that an indirect relationship exist between family entrepreneurial background and one's involvement in entrepreneurial activities. They pointed out that, the intention to start a new business is directly influenced by prior exposure to entrepreneurship. Similarly, Aldrich and Cliff (2003) noted that the emerging trends in households' composition and the emerging antecedents of these compositional transformations make the role of family entrepreneurial background a relevant subject of discussion. They further pointed out that, with specific emphasis on a developing country like Nigeria, experience shows that there is a decline in parents' involvement in children socialization process as well as

intergenerational contacts. Women employment rate is increasing while little time and effort is devoted to credible household upbringing. Furthermore, an increasing proportion of children now work for their own daily survival from discretionary income earnings. Consequent upon this, there is a reduction in perceived risks, the level of discussions and the perception of adequate start-up resource availability, especially at the family level.

In another development, Zhang, Wong and Soh (2003) posited that one of the key roles the family plays in venture creation decision making is that it serves as a source of financial and human resources. The family provides the initial start-up capital and offers the necessary support for a venture to be established. This position was aptly supported when Renzulli, Aldrich and Moody (2000) confirmed that another key role the family plays in venture creation decision making is that it is a source of information and credible values. In this case, the family provides family members with the relevant information necessary for the establishment of a venture. The family does not stop at that but goes further to inculcate the necessary values that would assist family members succeed in their business venture. Aligning themselves with the preceding views, Pruett, Shinnar, Toney, Liopis and Fox (2009) posited that the family serves as a source of role model. Here, you find children of entrepreneurial parents eventually becoming entrepreneurs themselves. This is because they draw inspiration from the family entrepreneurial background.

Statement of the problem

The dynamics of Nigeria's economy have changed in the last few decades with some states such as those of the South-east and South-west dominating the entrepreneurial space. Interestingly, this has made these states major contributors to the economic development of the country besides oil. Domestic entrepreneurship today contributes a large extent to the economic and social development of a country through creation of employment opportunities. Little wonder then, that Cross River State which is being regarded as a civil service state in recent times started experiencing an upsurge in entrepreneurial activities with Calabar metropolis being central in the picture. This development has in no small measure agitated the minds of educational planners, psychologist, economists, researchers and others as to what could be responsible. Various attempts have been made to identify the root cause of this upsurge, all ended in fiasco. Granted that it is in the family that a growing child forms his initial world view, it become very pertinent to isolate this factor first for investigation. Therefore, this study was undertaken to find out if family entrepreneurial background could be responsible for job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The study investigated the influence of family entrepreneurial background on job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities in Calabar metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research question

To what extent does family entrepreneurial background influence job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities?

Research hypothesis

One null hypothesis was raised to guide the study. That is: Family entrepreneurial background does not significantly influence job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities,

Methodology

The research design for the study was Survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to make inference and generalization of the population by selecting and studying the sample for the study. Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State was the research area for the study. The area comprises two (2) local government areas namely Calabar municipality and Calabar south. The population of the study comprised all *N-power* graduates in Calabar metropolis (Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Areas of Cross River state, Nigeria). There are a total number of 2,915 *N-power* graduates in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. The researcher adopted a simple random sampling technique to select 200 respondents for the study. The instrument that was used was Family Entrepreneurial Background and Job-seekers Involvement in Entrepreneurial Activities Questionnaire (FEBJIEAQ). Copies of the questionnaire were face validated by two research experts in University of Calabar. To establish the reliability of the instrument, a trial testing was done using twenty (20) respondents' who were not included in the real study. The data generated was analysed to establish its internal consistency using the split-half reliability method. The reliability estimate of the instrument was found to be 0.85 which was high enough.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis one

There is no significant influence of family entrepreneurial background on Job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The independent variable in this hypothesis is family entrepreneurial background, while the dependent variable is job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Independent t-test analysis was used to test this hypothesis. The result of analysis is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Independent t-test analysis of the influence of family entrepreneurial background on job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities (N = 200)

Family entrepreneurial background	N	X	SD	t-value
Family with entrepreneurial background	118	18.53	2.03	7.894
Family without entrepreneurial background	82	16.11	2.01	

* Significant at .05 level, critical $t = 1.96$, df = 198.

The result of analysis as presented In Table 1 reveals that the calculated t-value of 7.89 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 198 degree of freedom. The result of the analysis is significant since the calculated value is higher than the critical value, with this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant influence of family entrepreneurial background on job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities.

Discussion of findings

The result of this study revealed that there is a significant influence of family entrepreneurial background on job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the view of Fairlie and Robb (2007) who noted that family history plays a key role in the involvement of family members in entrepreneurial activities. They discovered from their findings that out of the 300 children that constituted their sample 180 representing 60 percent with family entrepreneurial history were involved in entrepreneurial activities. The remaining 120 children representing 40 percent without family entrepreneurial history were not involved in entrepreneurial activities. What this means is that the entrepreneurs of business tended to have a self-employed mother or father in their family history. Indeed, this whole phenomenon of people's involvement in entrepreneurship is a function of their family entrepreneurial background.

Similarly, the findings of this study supported that of McElwee and Al-Riyami (2003) who stated that children who grew up with entrepreneur parents have a greater tendency to choose a self-employed career than those who grew up with non-entrepreneurial parents. This is because of their daily involvement and interaction with parents. Of course, they take part in one way or the other, either holding brief or running errands for parents. This way, they would undoubtedly appreciate what entrepreneurship means and would want to establish theirs when they grow up.

It is also pertinent to note that having parents who are entrepreneurs as role models is a very significant factor in starting one's business. A family business has a role to play in enhancing the development of entrepreneurs among family members. Therefore, children who grew up with entrepreneur parents have a greater tendency to choose a self-employed career. It is true that of all levels of interactions, the most enduring, long lasting and of greatest consequence are the interactions within the family. The effects of these interactions are that children of entrepreneur parents impressively acquire the skills

and knowledge of entrepreneurship which would eventually stimulate them to establish their own business when they grow up.

Conclusion

Based on the result of the study it concluded that family entrepreneurial background significantly influenced job-seekers involvement in entrepreneurial activities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that:

1. There should be a restructuring of our educational curriculum in order to accommodate entrepreneurship education which should be made compulsory at all levels of education, This would make our young graduates become employers of labour rather than roam the streets for employment.
2. Parents should on their part try to establish a business outfit as this would enhance their children entrepreneurial background.
3. Parents should endeavor to attach their wards to one entrepreneurial outfit during holidays so as to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in them early enough.
4. Industrial attachment/training programmes should be made compulsory to all tertiary education students irrespective of their area of specialization.

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