



The Impact of Socio-Cultural Environment on Entrepreneurial Emergence: An Empirical Analysis of Nigeria Society

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Abstract

The paper presents an analytical and evaluative study of the impact of socio-cultural environment on entrepreneurial emergence. The study uses as reference case, the socio-cultural characteristics of Nigerian society and their role in the emergence of entrepreneurs in Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted and data collected through the instruments of questionnaire and personal interview. The study revealed that the Nigerian socio-cultural characteristics, in some ways, have provided impetus for entrepreneurial emergence among Nigerians, but in some other ways, have enormously hindered the emergence of entrepreneurs. This disproves the general notion that the Nigerian society absolutely does not provide opportunities for entrepreneurial emergence. The paper concludes that, in general, socio-cultural environment significantly impact on entrepreneurial emergence in society. Beyond the negative or adverse socio-economic circumstances of individuals, the culture and value system of a people is a great determinant of the desire and capacity of people becoming entrepreneurs. The paper therefore, recommends that certain traditions and values in society which have remained barriers to people particularly women becoming entrepreneurs must be dropped or modified to pave way for the emergence of entrepreneurs among men and women in Nigeria and other societies.

Key words: Impact; Entrepreneurial emergence; Socio-cultural environment; Value re-engineering and re-orientation

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INTRODUCTION

The economic realities of many nations with experiences of economic hardship, unemployment and poverty in much recent time has made the role of entrepreneurs much more recognized and the need for entrepreneurship development has been very greatly emphasized in all nations, particularly in the developing world. However, it is obvious that in spite of the emphasis and effort by all nations to turn out entrepreneurs in their mass, entrepreneurial motivation have never been the same for all countries. Great disparities exist among nations and even among sub-societies in nations, in terms of entrepreneurial emergence. Consequently, entrepreneurial motivation has been related to environmental factors.

Indeed, the quest for the causal factors for the emergence of entrepreneurs have been at the front burner of entrepreneurial thoughts and theories, in recent time, as entrepreneurship continued to gain popularity as a means of wealth creation and economic growth and development. Simply, entrepreneurial emergence has been linked to environmental influence and impact. The disparities among nations in developing entrepreneurial societies have also been attributed to environmental differences between societies both in time and space. It is against this background that this paper examines the impact of environment on the emergence and behaviour of entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

The Nigerian society and environment have been widely and greatly discussed with regard to entrepreneurship. The common view is that entrepreneurship situation in Nigeria is greatly affected by the environment. Specifically, it is argued that the Nigerian environment has great influence and impact on the emergence of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial behaviour. This view, however, has relied greatly on conjecture, with no empirical evidence to support it. Also, the concept of environment has been narrowed in most cases to infrastructures of physical and economic/financial nature which are based on political and national economic decisions by government. This accounts for the reason that government is often blamed for low entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria.

Essentially, the concept of environment is much more than economic, political and physical conditions of a nation. It includes the socio-cultural characteristics of the people. This very important aspect of the environment is often neglected or overlooked when environmental issues are discussed in relation to entrepreneurship development. Consequently, very often, the influence and impact of environment on entrepreneurship is linked to physical and economic structures and conditions only, without considering the role of socio-cultural forces.

Furthermore, the view on the influence of environment on entrepreneurship is lopsided or one dimensional, focusing on only the negative impact on entrepreneurship. The possible positive effects and influence which environment can have on entrepreneurial emergence have never been explored.

This paper, therefore, attempts to present an empirical analysis of the Nigerian socio-cultural environment and critically examine its influence/impact on the emergence of entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Concept of Socio-Cultural Environment

Socio-cultural environment broadly, refers to forces of influence from interactional relationship among people which affect their attitude, behaviour and disposition. That is, all elements, conditions and influences which shape the personality of an individual and potentially affect its behaviour, decisions and activities. In other words, the social-cultural environment consists primarily of man created intangible elements which affect people behaviour, relationship, perception and way of life, and their survival and existence. Such elements include beliefs, values, attitudes and life styles of persons as developed from cultural, religious, educational and ethnic conditioning (Adeleke *et al.*, 2003). Essentially, people grow up within some cultural setting and social beliefs and values which define and shape the way and manner in which they live. In the context of

entrepreneurship, the social-cultural environment can be defined as consisting of all the elements of the social system which positively or negatively affect and influence entrepreneurial emergence, behaviour and performance, and entrepreneurship development in general. All such elements which condition the values, thinking and action of an individual with respect to entrepreneurship comprise the social-cultural environment of entrepreneurship, and the entrepreneur.

1.2 Concept of Entrepreneurial Emergence

Entrepreneurial emergence relates to actual ownership of a business venture by an individual. It has to do with the translation of ideas and values to a functional and working business venture. It is the transition from unemployment or salary employment/job to self employment, i.e. becoming an owner of a business. In other words, an entrepreneur has emerged when an individual becomes an owner-manager of a business enterprise i.e.. He starts to operate and manage a business of his own, such that rather than earn salary. He earns profit, rather than receives salaries from others, and pays salaries to others. A number of factors inhibit the desire of many to own their businesses in practical terms. However, the view expressed by many in the literature is that entrepreneurial emergence can be enhanced through mentoring, behaviour modification and conditioning, learning and value orientation. These help to create the necessary entrepreneurial personality. In this regard, the social system is assigned a major role as the source from which these conditions are derived.

1.3 Socio-Cultural Theories of Entrepreneurial Emergence

The socio-cultural theories consider entrepreneurship as a role and its development as a function of the form of society and characteristics of culture of the society (Awe, 2007). These theories tried to explain the social and cultural characteristic which motivates people to become or not to become entrepreneurs. One of the first of such theories was propounded by Max Weber. The Weberian theory posited that the emergence and behaviour of entrepreneur is determined by culture. In Weber's view, culture has great impact on the attitude and behaviour of individuals and their disposition to life. This is because the individual draws his values from the social values, mores and institutional framework within which he lives (Van de Ven, 1993). Culture is a determinant of the nature of decisions to be made in life, including the decision to be or not to be entrepreneur. He cited Value system as an element of culture which directly influences the behaviour of individuals towards being entrepreneurs. Such value characteristics as hardwork, thrift and an ascetic life of self denial are all prescription for entrepreneurship. Essentially, the point of Weber's theory is that socio-cultural environment whether from political dimension or cultural/religious dimension would affect the development

of entrepreneurial attitude and behaviour/character by establishing values that either enhance or inhibit entrepreneurship spirit and drive.

Furthermore, other theorists have emphasized family background and orientation as well as educational development of individuals as relevant socio-cultural factors which affect entrepreneurial emergence. Proponents of this perspective hold strongly the role of the family in developing the entrepreneurial character. It is believed that the home atmosphere of a family can provide a great deal of nurturing and support for development of entrepreneurial personality or character (Kuratko, 1989). The family background of an individual is a strong influence on his values and character and therefore serves as a strong source of influence whether he would be an entrepreneur or not.

From the perspective of educational development, it is argued that education creates awareness and new orientation and knowledge and therefore makes the individual to think in the direction of entrepreneurship. It is contended that societies with educated population would produce more entrepreneurs than societies with less educated people (Block & Stumpf, 1992; Kuratko & Lafollette, 1986; Kuratko, 1989). They therefore, call for increased educational development in society to enhance entrepreneurial emergence and growth.

However in contrast to the above view, certain researchers have argued against educational development as a source of entrepreneurs. In their view, the acquisition of high level education inhabits the creative and challenging nature of entrepreneurship (Shapero, 1975). The argument against educational development as a source of entrepreneurial development and emergence appears to be valid because from observation of business ownership, most business ventures are not owned by people with high formal education. At best majority of them with formal education are first degree holder and are not first class graduates. The reason is obvious. Highly educated individuals are too rational in thinking, to be comfortable with the risk of failure in owning their business.

Again, educational development makes people to be conscious of their status or to have a sense of status, and to develop some kind of pride which does not allow them to engage in certain kind of business ventures, and most often ashamed to start on very small scale as they could afford. They are therefore more comfortable with paid employment either with government establishment or with established private organization. Formally educated individuals are usually hunted by the fear of the unknown when they take up self employment considering the vagaries of business environment. They prefer a bird in hand to a million in the bush. They want to be at the ivory tower of a paid employment rather than owning a business themselves, with all the risk and problems that are involved. It is for these reasons that most of the small

scale businesses are owned by people with no or little educational background.

The theory of entrepreneurial emergence is also linked to displacement factors. This school of thought is based on effects of group dynamics. It holds that group dynamics generate certain displacements that drive an individual into an entrepreneurial venture, and that many entrepreneurs are products of displacements of one type or the other. Two major types of displacement identified in the socio-cultural environment include cultural displacement and economic displacement (Ronstadt, 1984). Cultural displacement is the preclusion from certain jobs or professional fields as a result of cultural factors such as ethnic background, religion, race and sex (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 1989; Ronstadt, 1984). When individuals face discrimination due to these factors and are prevented from being engaged in certain fields, they are forced to exercise the only alternative open to them, that is, to turn towards entrepreneurial venture. Economic displacement is concerned with the economic variations of recession and depression (Kuratko & Hodgetts, 1989; Ronstadt, 1984). Essentially, economic displacement is caused by the various changes that tend to affect the economy, negatively, and therefore the economic status of the individual by way of job loss (retrenchment), capital shrinkage and new economic situations that are positive or favourable and supportive of business ventures. Any of these can serve as foundation for entrepreneurial pursuit or emergence.

The displacement school of thought is apparently true for most entrepreneurs in many societies. Many people who have become entrepreneurs are so due to displacement circumstances particularly due to unavailability of jobs or job loss in the case of those who were engaged before their predicament.

Gilad and Levine (1986) summarized the socio-cultural factors which affect entrepreneurial emergence into two categories of closely related factors, viz, the Pull factors and the Push factors. Gilad and Levine argued that people turn entrepreneurs as result of either pull factors or as result of push factors. In other words, two groups of entrepreneurs exist, i.e. those who were pulled into starting up a business and those who were pushed into it. Pull factors are positive factors and provide positive motives for setting up business (Gilad & Levine, 1986). Entrepreneurs in this category have objectives which are self oriented, enabling them to fulfill personal ambitions rather than solely financial gain. They are in business to demonstrate their personal capabilities to others and to gain independence and "be their own boss" (Boer, Thomas, & Webster, 1997). On the contrary, the push factors are negative factors and therefore provide negative motive for starting a business (Gilad & Levine, 1986). Entrepreneurs in the push category are individuals who have negative experiences in their economic life and are

push into owning a business as a means of escape and protection (Boer *et al.*, 1997). For example, protection from unemployment by individuals who are unable to find jobs or appropriate jobs, low income position, or dependence nature of salary employment.

Some analysts of the “pull” and “push” factors dichotomy have observed that the “pull” entrepreneurs are less successful than the “push” entrepreneurs. This is perhaps because “push” entrepreneurs often place their personal remuneration above the longer term survival of the enterprise. Therefore, they are more susceptible to closing the business down rather than compromising their lifestyles if the business is not providing expected monetary reward. This observation is supported by the research of Hamilton (1987) who identified that individuals in the involuntary “push” business exhibit a higher rate of failure and employment growth than those in the voluntary “pull” business (Boer *et al.*, 1997).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Data Collection

In furtherance of the objective of the paper, primary and secondary data sources were combined to measure the variables for the study. A field survey of business owners and members of the public was conducted through questionnaire and personal interview to generate the primary data input, to determine the influence/impact of social and cultural environment on their motivation and decision to own business. The questionnaire is designed to elicit information on the specific conditions which fuelled their desire to own their business, and on the other hand, which discouraged would be entrepreneurs or members of the public from becoming entrepreneurs (business owners). The essence of such information is to determine how much of entrepreneurial emergence in Nigeria and in different tribal/ethnic groups can be explained by the various social and cultural factors expounded in the literature as determinants of entrepreneurial emergence.

Using the simple random sampling method, 1500 questionnaires were administered to business owners and non business owners located in Lagos state. The choice of Lagos state was based on its cosmopolitan nature. The questionnaire was administered to the public at worship centers (Churches and Mosques). This was to avoid pre-knowledge of who owned a business or did not, as well as other components of the respondents’ background. 1200 usable questionnaires were returned from across the different tribes in Nigeria. The 1200 usable questionnaires returned represent 80% of the total questionnaires

administered. The respondents were classified into business owners and non business owners consisting 42.03% and 57.92% respectively of the returned questionnaires. The questionnaire is technically structured into two parts, by the nature of questions. Some questions addressed business owners’ views and opinions while some addressed non business owners’ views. The pilot survey questionnaire was administered to 100 business and non business owners of different tribes located in Mowe and Ibafo in Ogun state, near Lagos.

The conceptual approach that is used for this study is the traditional framework of socio-cultural analysis based on commonly perceived factors which consist social and cultural environment of entrepreneurship/business. These include values, norms, traditions and social conditions which affect the individual. Specific cultural factors considered are, value for economic independence, value for material achievement (materialism), and recognition for contribution to society, and family tradition and values. While social-factors include unemployment, work experience, family pressure, inspiration from friends, displacements, and vocational demand. The major assumption in this approach is that these factors singularly or jointly affect the individual’s decisions about his economic endeavours.

The summary of the data generated from the field survey is presented in Tables 1, 2 & 3, according to responses to each of the items in the questionnaire. In each table, the figures shown in each column or row indicate the number of respondents under each specification.

Entrepreneurial emergence was measured by the ratio of business establishments in each of five year periods between 1980 and 2009, to total business establishment in the entire period of 1980 to 2009. The measure of entrepreneurial emergence indicates how business establishment by individuals is motivated and influenced by changes and factors in the socio-cultural environment, that is, how much entrepreneurial emergence (new business ownership) adjusted to socio-cultural changes in each of the five year periods. The adjustment level is determined by the arithmetic difference between the number of businesses in the preceding period and the current period, to give the number of new businesses established in each period. The level of adjustment is regarded as the impact level which was classified into four, “Never” “Low” “Moderate” and “High”.

2.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data in the Tables 1-3 below represent responses on each of the items specified. These were analyzed table by table.

Table 1
Respondent Entrepreneurs' Background Data

S/N	Respondent category	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Sex:		
	Male	580	48.33
	Female	620	51.67
2	Marital Status:		
	Married	508	42.33
	Single	392	32.67
	Divorced/Widowed/Separated	300	25.00
3	Age:		
	18 – 25	66	5.50
	26 – 35	193	16.08
	36 – 45	398	33.17
	46 – 55	424	35.33
	Above 55	119	9.92
4	Tribe/Ethnicity:		
	Yoruba	371	30.92
	Hausa and affiliate tribes	142	11.83
	Ibo	382	31.83
	Others(South – South)	305	25.42
5	Educational Background:		
	None	74	6.17
	Primary School Certificate	234	19.50
	WASC/SSC/GCE	322	26.83
	NCE/OND	188	15.67
	1 st Degree/HND	155	12.92
	Master Degree	97	8.08
	Professional Certificate	66	5.50
	1 st Degree/HND and Professional	48	4.00
	Master Degree, Professional and more	16	1.33

Source: Field Survey

Table 2
Respondent's Entrepreneurship Motivational Factors

S/N	Motivational factors category	No. of respondents	Percent
1	Cultural influence on business ownership:		
	Positive	108	21.39
	Negative	93	18.42
2	Cultural factors:		
	Value for economic independence	415	82.18
	Value for material achievement	219	43.37
	Recognition for contribution to society	81	16.04
3	Social factors:		
	Unemployment	498	98.61
	Negative previous work experience	145	28.71
	Pressure from family	21	4.16
	Inspiration from friends	96	19.01
	Result of vocational training	323	63.96
4	Business ownership by parents:		
	YES	107	21.19
	NO	392	77.62
5	Influence of business ownership by parents:		
	YES	37	7.33
	NO	287	56.83

Source: Field Survey

Table 3
Respondent Entrepreneurs' Business Data

S/N	Response classification	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Year of Establishment:		
	1980 -1985	65	12.87
	1986 -1991	109	21.58
	1992 -1997	95	18.81
	1998 -2003	114	22.75
	2004 -2009	122	24.16
2	Source of Initial Capital:		
	Personal savings	257	
	Bank loan	41	50.89
	Assistance from friends & family	98	8.12
	Loans from Private Individuals	102	19.41
	Cooperative society	-	20.20
3	Form of Ownership:		
	Sole proprietorship	442	87.52
	Partnership	17	3.37
	Company	39	7.72
4	Business Activities:		
	Manufacturing/Processing	11	2.18
	Fabrication/Construction	34	6.73
	Agriculture	9	1.78
	Commerce (Trading)	217	42.97
	Services	98	19.41
5	Hospitality/Entertainment/Fashion	136	26.93
	Current worth of business:		
	Below #200,000	132	26.14
	#200,000 - #500,000	107	21.19
	#500,000 - #1000,000	112	22.18
	#1m - #5m	93	18.42
	Above #5m	36	7.13

Source: Field Survey

Analysis of data on respondents' background in Table 1 was carried out on four items: Sex (gender), marital status, tribe/ethnicity and educational background. The sex (gender) distribution showed that, of the total respondents, 580 (48.33%) were males and 620 (51.67%) were females. The analysis revealed that 243 (41.90%) male respondents, owned businesses while 337 (58.10%) did not. The female business owners were 262 (42.25%) and those who are not business owners were 358 (57.74%).

The analysis of marital status showed that 92 (35.11%) female business owners (entrepreneurs), were married and supposedly living with their husbands. 55 (20.99%) of the female entrepreneurs were single and 115 (43.89%) were either divorced, widowed or separated; for the female non business owners, 115 (32.12%) were married, 156 (43.58%) were single and 87 (24.30%) were divorced, widowed or separated. The analysis of male marital status was not considered because we assumed that male marital status does not affect males' business ownership or economic engagement.

The tribal distribution of entrepreneurs showed that there were more people from the Ibo ethnic group who owned businesses among the four categories of tribes, with 200 (16.67%) out of the total 1200 respondents. This is followed by the Yoruba ethnic group with 124 (10.33%)

responses; and then the South-South group of tribes, 117 (9.75%) responses. The Hausa/Fulani scored the least number of responses, with only 64 (5.33%) respondents. The analysis of business owners by gender among the tribes/ethnics showed the following distribution: 49 (4.08%) males and 75 (6.25%) females for Yoruba; 34 (2.83%) males and 30 (2.50%) females for Hausa/Fulani; 102 (8.50%) males and 98 (8.17%) females for Ibo; and 58 (4.83%) males and 59 (4.92%) females for South-South tribes. Respondent gender analysis of non-business owners among the tribes indicated 121 (10.08%) males and 126 (10.50%) females for Yoruba; 26 (2.17%) males and 52 (4.33%) females for Hausa/Fulani; 89 (7.42%) males and 93 (7.75%) females for Ibo; and 101 (8.42%) males and 87 (7.25%) females for South-South tribes.

The analysis of the data on respondents' educational background in general is shown in the table, with holders of WASC/SSC being largest in number with 26.83% response score. While Primary school certificate holders is next with 19.50% response score, and 15.67% and 12.92% response score for NCE/OND and first degree/HND holders respectively. However, the analysis of the distribution among business owners and tribes indicated that bulk of the business owners fall between Primary school leavers and NCE/OND holders constituting 65.94%

of total business owners. The 1st degree and HND holders constituted 22.77% while holders of Masters Degree and/or equivalent professional certificates made 11.29%. The tribal distribution of educational background of business owners showed that 68.55% of Yoruba business owners are in the lowest category, 22.58% in the middle category and only 8.87% in the upper category; 56.25% of Hausa and affiliate tribes are in the lowest category, 32.81% in the middle category and only 10.94% in the upper category; 68% of Ibo business owners are in the lowest category, 23.50% in the middle category and only 8.5% in the upper category; and 64.96% of South-South tribes business owners are in the lowest category, 16.24% in the middle category and 18.80% in the upper category. The data shows a declining order of the number of business owners (entrepreneurs) with higher educational qualifications both in general terms and within the tribes, except for the south/south where business owners with upper educational background are more than those in the middle category.

Analysis of the factors which motivated the various business owners to owning businesses was carried out in Table 2. A combination of factors was stated. However eight factors were most indicated. Three of them were cultural factors, viz, value for economic independence with 82.18% response, value for material (financial) achievement with 43.37% and recognition for contribution to society with 16.04% response; and five of them were social factors, viz, unemployment with 98.61% response, negative work experience with 28.71% response, and result of vocational training, inspiration friends and family pressure with 63.96%, 19.01% and 4.16% responses respectively. These factors were generally indicated among the various tribes as the major socio-cultural factors influencing entrepreneurial emergence. However, ranking the factors based on percentage response for each factor, unemployment, value for economic independence, incidence of vocational training were ranked highest in that order, followed by value for material achievement, negative previous work experience, inspiration from friends, recognition for contribution to society, and family pressure respectively.

The responses to the question of business ownership by respondents' parents, indicated that 77.62% respondents had parents who did not own businesses while only 21.19% had parents who owned businesses. On the question of whether respondent desire to own business was influenced by the ownership of business by his/her parents, 56.83% of the total business owners responses was positive and only 7.33% negative.

Analysis of entrepreneurs business data in Table 3 was carried out on four items, viz, year of business establishment, source of initial capital, form of ownership, and types business activities. The year of establishment data indicated that over the period of 30 years between

1980 and 2009, there was more business establishment in the period 2004-2009 with 24.16% score followed by 1998-2003, 1986-1991, 1980-1985 and 1992-1997 respectively. The distribution showed an increasing level of business establishment over the period, except for the period between 1992 and 1997 where there was a drop over the preceding period. The analysis of business activities which entrepreneurs were engaged in, revealed that there were more concentration in the soft business activities such as commerce (trading), services, and hospitality/entertainment/fashion with response scores of 42.97%, 19.41% and 26.93% respectively than the heavier activities such as manufacturing/processing, fabrication/construction and Agriculture with response scores of 2.18%, 6.73% and 1.78% respectively.

The data analysis of sources of initial capital indicates that majority of entrepreneurs generated their initial capital from their personal savings, with a score of 50.89%, while the analysis of the form of business ownership indicated 87.52% response score for sole proprietorship, and 3.37% and 7.72% for partnerships and companies respectively, of the total business owners respondents.

In addition to the above statistics, total respondents' responses to the question of whether or not the Nigerian society in general has characteristics and values that are negative or positive to the ownership and operation of business, revealed negative responses of 693 (57.75%) and positive responses of 278 (23.16%). For negative responses the following elements were cited as elements with negative effect: Fraud/Insincerity, Bribery/Corruption, Distrust and Desire for foreign products (homophobia syndrome). For the positive responses the elements cited as constituting negative effect include: Extravagance, Ostentatious life style, Dynamic tastes and preferences (strong desire for new things, Strong desire for varieties, and Progressive consumption behaviour (keeping abreast with time and the Joneses).

3. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This gender distribution of business ownership suggests that in absolute terms there are more female business owners (entrepreneurs) than males, but in relative terms the distribution suggests that more males emerge as entrepreneurs than females. The absolute result can be attributed to the fact that in societies generally, there are more females than males and expectedly, should produce more entrepreneurs absolutely. The relative situation is explained by the socio-cultural expectation for the woman particularly in terms of her family role and association with the public. These tend to limit her business ownership (entrepreneurship) desire. The analysis also revealed that the male non business owners were either unemployed or engaged in paid jobs. While the female non business owners were either full house wives or were

engaged in paid jobs, with 98 (27.37%) of them as full house wives. The relatively small number of married women in business reflects the socio-cultural limitations for women in terms of economic activities.

The tribal distribution of entrepreneurs in the study is instructive. It reflects the influence and impact of each tribal culture and values on entrepreneurship. Inference from the analysis is that there are more entrepreneurs among the Ibos than can be found in any other tribe in Nigeria. Apparently the Ibo culture is more favourable to entrepreneurial emergence than any other culture. Aside from unemployment and desire for economic independence which almost every entrepreneur cited as motivating factors, the desire for material achievement and pressure from family were cited mainly by the Ibo business owners. The Hausa/Fulani tribes coming least in the ranking is understandable considering the insignificant level of involvement by their women in business ownership because of the restriction from public appearance placed on them by their culture and dominant religion, Islam. The results also show that there are more married women business owners in Yoruba than in Ibo and the South-South. This is not unconnected with the fact that the traditional cultures of the Ibo tribe and the South-South tribes (particularly, in Delta and Bayelsa) are somewhat restrictive on women external activities. The Yoruba culture is relatively more permissive for women. It allows women a large external space to operate, and this has given them an opportunity to be business owners as they would desire.

The analysis of the data on respondents' educational background is also instructive. The distribution shows a declining order of the number of entrepreneurs (business owners) with higher educational qualifications. For all tribes bulk of the business owners are in the lower level of educational background, while the highest qualification holders constitute the least of business owners. The Yorubas and Ibos have the highest of number of business owners with the lower level educational background. This pattern of distribution of entrepreneurs by educational background/qualification suggests that with higher qualification, people become less interested in establishing their own businesses based on the fact that they have large opportunity space to be engaged in existing business organizations with attractive salary income. The insignificant proportion of people with higher educational qualifications in business across tribes confirms the proposition that higher education is a de-motivational factor for entrepreneurial emergence. Higher education may enhance business operations but not necessarily entrepreneurial emergence except in societies where unemployment is high. Essentially the findings reveal that education has impact on entrepreneurial emergence. While entrepreneurial emergence is positively influenced by low level education, it is negatively influenced by higher education level.

A number of social and cultural factors have been shown as motivational factors for entrepreneurial emergence. Some of these factors are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. One point to note is that, the three cultural factors stated by respondents are all value based. In other words, they are a function of the value that is attached to such elements in a given society and by individuals. The point of interest is that although some of these factors represent negative culture and social features in themselves, their influence on entrepreneurial emergence is nevertheless positive. Such factors as inordinate value for material achievement, unemployment and negative work experience provide impetus for taking action rather than just being a thinking entrepreneur. Essentially, the findings suggest that some negative environmental factors can exert positive influence on people to establish businesses of their own.

Analysis of the impact of parental background on business owners' entrepreneurial motivation shows very low indication that entrepreneurs are motivated by the fact that their parents own businesses. This is reflected in the low response of 7.33% on the influence of parents' business on entrepreneurs' interest and motivation to own his/her business. Evidently, there is no significant relationship between entrepreneurs parents business ownership and their entrepreneurial emergence. In other words, there is no correlation between parents' background and entrepreneurial emergence of their children. This is buttressed by the fact that 77.62% of the business owners respondents indicated that their parents never owned businesses, as well as the absence of response by respondents about family tradition/culture specified in the questionnaire, as a motivational factor for the emergence of entrepreneurs.

This distribution of business establishment is also instructive. It shows a level of influence of socio-cultural environment on entrepreneurial emergence. Evidently, it reflects the progression in positive change in socio-cultural values of Nigerians toward entrepreneurship, occasioned by changing economic realities over time. Since the 1990s the Nigerian society has been groaning under unemployment condition, a social phenomenon which has changed the orientation of Nigerians and caused many people, particularly the youth to see the need to be self employed, become creative and establish businesses for themselves. Not only that the unemployment situation has been worsening yearly but also, cultural characteristics and values are changing drastically. Interestingly, the period 1986-1991 was the SAP period with government policy emphasis on self reliant and economic independence both for the nation and individuals. This was particularly exigent in the face of the challenge of the emerging unemployment situation at the period. It was considered by government that entrepreneurial engagement was the only way out of the situation and policy measures were

designed to encourage individuals into entrepreneurship as a means to shift the Nigerian culture and society from the traditional orientation of seeking white collar jobs which never exist. Since then many people have become entrepreneurs. Although findings from the analysis did not show any significant impact of the socio-cultural changes on the level of entrepreneurial emergence over the period considering the low level of periodic adjustment of entrepreneurial emergence, based on the volume of new business establishment in each period over its preceding period, there is nevertheless, an incremental adjustment of business establishment periodically. This implies that changes in the Nigerian social and cultural environment have enhanced the establishment of businesses.

The findings on the analysis of respondent business owners source of initial capital and area of business activities also provided insight into the impact of socio-cultural environment on business establishment in Nigeria. The revelation from the study is that it is difficult to raise money from the Nigerian society. One possible reason for such difficulty is wide spread distrust among Nigerians towards social contract and lack of commitment to agreement whether business or otherwise as well as the fraudulent culture of Nigerians. A dearth of external sources of finance for entrepreneurs also suggests the negative risk attitude of Nigerian which affects the willingness of both informal and formal lenders. This feature of distrust and high level of risk aversion in the Nigerian culture and social system is also reflected in the distribution of the form of business ownership where bulk of businesses are sole proprietorship with 87.52% response score, of the total business owners respondents, leaving partnerships and companies with only 3.37% and 7.72% respectively. This characteristic has prevented poor people pulling resources together to establish businesses on partnership. There is no doubt that the number of partnership businesses is very insignificant in Nigerian society. This pattern of interest in business areas by entrepreneurs may not be unconnected with the low level of risk tolerance characterizing the behaviour of the average Nigerian. This has not only affected the motivation of the potential entrepreneurs to engage in the heavy business activities but also has affected negatively the willingness of fund providers to lend for investment in such businesses with long term gestation and high/large risk level.

In order to ascertain the validity of responses to the questionnaire instrument, on the motivational factors for business ownership, an interview of a sample of business owners among the respondents was conducted as to why they were in business. The findings generated from the interview were largely in agreement with the findings from the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire. All the interviewees stated largely similar reasons, consisting of different socio-cultural factors.

Many male business owners stated reasons ranging

from unemployment, negative work experience, the need to earn good income for themselves and their families, to the need to overcome poverty as well as inspiration from friends. While some of them, majorly artisans and professionals stated they were in business to practice their vocation or profession. Some revealed that the desire and need to make it fast financially (quick money) which to them can be achieved only through business engagement is their motivating factor. A number of them indicated they were in business to enjoy the respect and recognition accorded business owners in society. Few of them were nevertheless undecided as to their reasons for being in business, stating that it was design by nature, to be so.

On the part of the females, many of the married business owners stated they were in business to support their spouses income for the family and to be relatively self reliant. The majority of single woman stated they entered business as a result of unemployment, and the need for self dependence. Some others were undecided why they were in business, stating that they were in business because they just wanted to be business owners to keep them busy. While a few others suggested they were in business because of the opportunity for quick money making it provides, compared to salaried employment. The interview responses from the divorced, widowed and women who were separated from their spouses revealed that they were in business to take on the role of bread winners for their families and effectively cater for their children; to overcome unemployment problems; and to avoid dependence on others (friends and relatives) for survival.

The interview responses from the non business owners, males and females revealed that for the males, many gained good paying jobs immediately after leaving school; some would not cope or be subjected to the rigours and risk of failure associated with business ownership and operation, while some preferred moderate but sure and regular income by salary to high but irregular and uncertain income from business ownership, while a few others gave the reason of lack of funds or capital. For the females, reasons similar to those of their male counterparts were advanced, ranging from immediate employment after leaving school, avoidance of the rigours and risk of business to uncertainty and irregularity of income, and lack of required start up capital. In addition to these reasons, a few of them stated that they were not in business because their spouses did not approve of it, i.e. it is their spouses' desire they be full house wives to effectively cater for the home and train their children.

The interview responses also revealed that while many of the female non business owners had spouses who were gainfully engaged, with high income whether as employees or as business owners (i.e. middle and top level income earners), many of the female business owners had spouses who earn little or no income, i.e.. They were either unemployed or they earned very low income from their economic engagement.

By and large, the totality of the factors indicated as entrepreneurial motivational factors lend support for the validity of the “Push-Pull” theory of entrepreneurial emergence. While some of the factors indicated fall into “Pull” category, majority of them are “Push” factors, and these apparently score highest number of responses among respondent entrepreneurs. This implies that the Nigerian entrepreneur is confronted more with “Push” factors than “Pull” factors. In effect, the Nigerian socio-cultural environment rather than pull people, it pushes them into entrepreneurship. This is a condition that can be interpreted in socio-cultural and economic development studies as negative phenomenon.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed primarily that socio-cultural environment has impact on entrepreneurial emergence in a society. The findings confirm opinions in the theory of social behaviour that socio-cultural values and circumstances of a people would influence their behaviour and decisions as a people and as individuals, not only in terms of their social lives, but also in their economic lives, and this includes their decisions about entrepreneurship. An individual, although is a unique personality, he is nevertheless a product of his society. He is subject to the values and influences of his society. In other words socio-cultural environment has significant impact in shaping individual values which directly influence his decisions and actions in all endeavours.

The study findings largely support the argument by Akpor-Robaro (2012) in his theoretical analysis of the Nigerian socio-cultural environment with respect to entrepreneurial emergence, that the socio-cultural environment of Nigeria is characterized by a myriad of features which in some cases have provided impetus for entrepreneurial emergence and in other cases acted as limitation to emergence of entrepreneurs. The evidence of the role and impact of socio-cultural environment of Nigeria on entrepreneurship is shown from the findings of the analysis of the socio-cultural conditions and circumstances of people of the different ethnic groups in Nigeria vis-à-vis their level of interest and participation in entrepreneurial endeavours. The evidence of socio-cultural impact on entrepreneurship is also provided in the gender analysis of entrepreneurial emergence both in absolute and comparative terms. Furthermore, inter-temporal analysis of in changes in values and social circumstances of Nigerians vis-à-vis the level of entrepreneurship in Nigeria in different periods, also revealed the influence of socio-cultural factors on entrepreneurs.

Interestingly, evidence from the study has shown that contrary to popular opinion that the Nigeria socio-cultural environment only exert negative influence on entrepreneurial emergence, a number of the socio-cultural factors, although may be negative phenomena in

themselves, they nevertheless provide the push for people to become entrepreneurs and thus providing positive influence on entrepreneurial emergence. Also instructive to note is the fact that in the Nigerian socio-cultural environment there are more negative factors pushing people into entrepreneurship than positive factors pulling people into entrepreneurship. In other words, the Nigerian potential entrepreneur is confronted more with “Push” factors than “Pull” factors. This implies that majority of entrepreneurs in Nigeria are “Push” entrepreneurs and therefore suffer from problems implied in “Push” influence or which attend “Push” factors in terms of entrepreneurial behaviour as suggested in the “Push-Pull” theory of entrepreneurial emergence. The evidence from the analysis on entrepreneurship growth in recent years indicates that people are beginning to take advantage of the “Push” factors i.e. converting the weaknesses in the Nigerian society to advantages and opportunities to launch themselves into entrepreneurship. Instead of being held down by such negative situations, people are being tasked in their intellect and competitive and creative abilities.

Obviously, there has been an apparent problem of lethargy among African people with respect to entrepreneurship, caused by the dictates of their cultures, which have before now kept them as non industrialized societies. This situation is greatly improving with new realities and changing values in many societies. This is evidenced by the new entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerians in the last ten years. The evidence from Nigeria is instructive to other societies particularly of Africa which have been disadvantaged in their socio-cultural values and circumstances as they affect on entrepreneurship development.

The empirical evidence on the impact of socio-cultural environment on entrepreneurship lends credence to the theoretical argument for the need for Nigerians to have new values and orientation favourable to entrepreneurship and emergence of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, there is also the need to manage the current socio-cultural environment based on its silver content such that the weaknesses and negative factors are converted to opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures and business ownership, as posited by Akpor-Robaro (2012). In furtherance of this, the recommendations of Akpor-Robaro (2012) from the perspective of a theoretical analysis are also germane. “An overhaul of the Nigerian socio-cultural system and a reengineering of its societal values be undertaken to get people out of the traditional ties, negative attitudes and behavioural pattern, to develop a new set of positive values that attract and facilitate entrepreneurial emergence by Nigerians irrespective of gender”. To achieve this, the following specific steps must be taken:

- * “ Individuals, families and ethnic groups must engage in thorough self examination and assessment to ascertain and determine the relevance of existing values and socio cultural

system to their economic progress and wellbeing, and select and retain only those values that are capable of helping society to achieve its economic progress and development goals through the enhancement of entrepreneurial emergence, and discontinue with values that do not allow individuals to actualize their potentials and explore opportunities for profitable economic engagement” (Akpor-Robaro, 2012).

- * “Government on its part must set an agenda for a positively changing social behaviour and Societal expectation. It must come to terms with the new world order of values and the trend around the world, and be committed to enthroning societal values and behaviour that are consistent with requirements for economic progress and independence for individuals. There cannot be any meaningful social reengineering and value reorientation without the committed involvement of government and leaders of thought in society” (Akpor-Robaro, 2012).
- * “Government must evolve comprehensive enlightenment programmes to enable people know the new values, appreciate their essence, cherish them and key into them, and habitually act on them. This can be achieved through the establishment of socio-cultural orientation and change agencies that consist of sociologists and psychologists who can design and implement relevant and effective value reengineering and reorientation programmes that can usher in and inculcate in individuals and groups a new set of desirable values” (Akpor-Robaro, 2012).

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