



SPIRITUALITY, RELIGIOSITY, ENTREPRENEURIAL
MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE AMONG
NIGERIAN ENTREPRENEURS

BY

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ABSTRACT

Available evidence has shown that the several government policy interventions to promote entrepreneurship among the youths had not yielded much fruits in Nigeria. Thus, the perceived lack of entrepreneurial interest amongst youths has given reason for concern in view of the increased level of unemployment in the country. As such, until this date finding new explanations to what will trigger and sustains entrepreneurship amongst the youths remains the focus of the Nigerian Government. Although search for meaningful work (spirituality) and religious beliefs (religiosity) have been found to affect entrepreneurial behaviour in other parts of the world, yet there is precious little information available regarding spirituality and Islamic religiosity and their effects on entrepreneurial outcomes in developing countries. This study is an attempt to empirically examine the relationship between spirituality, Islamic religiosity and entrepreneur motivation and performance in the Nigerian context. The survey data used for this empirical research was drawn from total 556 Muslim entrepreneurs (i.e. 150 for pilot and 406 for main study respectively) across 19 states of Nigeria. Principal component analysis (i.e. PCA using SPSS version 18) and confirmatory factor analysis (i.e. CFA using AMOS version 20) were initially carried out to assess the dimensionality and construct validity of Entrepreneurs Spirituality, Religiosity, Motivation, and Performance. Thereafter, structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilised to test the seven hypotheses proposed. The study found that both entrepreneur spirituality and religiosity independently and collectively exert positive effects on entrepreneur motivation and entrepreneur performance. Similarly, the study found evidence in support of the mediating role of entrepreneur motivation in the relationship of entrepreneur spirituality/religiosity and performance. The findings of the study have several implications for theory, policy and practice. By answering call for additional research across different cultures, this research has made an important contribution to the spirituality literature through extending the building of entrepreneurship theory beyond the Western context. In addition, based on the findings of the study, integrating spiritual and religious values in entrepreneurship curricula may strengthen entrepreneurship interest among Nigerian university students whose mindset is normally focused on salaried employment.

ملخص البحث

تُظهر الأدلة المتاحة ان العديد من المعالجات الحكومية لم تُوثق ثمارها في تشجيع روح ريادة الاعمال بين الشباب في نيجيريا. وعليه، فان مما يدعو للقلق هو قلة الرغبة الريادية لدى الشباب في ظل ارتفاع معدلات البطالة في البلاد. علما ان الحكومة النيجيرية تسعى الى اليوم لايجاد بعض التفسيرات لما قد يحفز ويعزز ريادة الاعمال لدى الشباب. وعلى الرغم من وجود ادلة ان البحث عن عمل قيم (الروحانية) والمعتقدات الدينية (التدين) تؤثر على السلوكيات الريادية في بعض انحاء العالم ، الا انه لا توجد معلومات كافية حول تأثير الروحانية والتدين الاسلامي على المخرجات الريادية في الدول النامية. تسعى هذه الدراسة الى اختبار العلاقة بين الروحانية والتدين الاسلامي وبين دوافع الرياديين وادائهم على عينة مكونة من 556 رياضي مسلم في نيجيريا، حيث تكونت عينة الدراسة التجريبية 140 رياضي بينما تكونت عينة الدراسة الرئيسية 406 رياضي من 19 ولاية نيجيرية . وقد اجريت في البداية تحليل المكون الرئيسي (باستخدام SPSS نسخة 20) و تحليل العامل التوكيدي (باستخدام AMOS نسخة 20) لاختبار تعدد الابعاد وصدق الاداة لكل من الروحانية والتدين والتحفيز والاداء لدى الرياديين. بعد ذلك، تم استخدام نمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية لاختبار الفرضيات. حيث توصلت الدراسة الى ان كل من الروحانية والتدين لدى رواد الاعمال ، منفردين او مجتمعين، لهما تأثير ايجابي على تحفيزهم وادائهم. كما وجدت الدراسة ايضا ان تحفيز الرياديين لعب دور الوسيط في العلاقة بين الروحانية والتدين وبين الاداء. كما توصلت الدراسة الى مجموعة من التوصيات النظرية والعملية. وبالاجابة على دعوات بحث اضافية في ثقافات مختلفة ، فقد قامت الدراسة باسهامات هامة في ادبيات الروحانية من خلال الاضافة وبناء نظرية ريادة الاعمال في سياق غير السياق الغربي. كما انه وبناء على نتائج الدراسة ، فان دمج القيم الروحية والدينية في مناهج ريادة الاعمال من شأنه ان يغرس ويعزز الرغبة في ريادة الاعمال لدى طلاب الجامعات النيجيرية والذين عادة ما يكون تركيزهم على ايجاد وظائف ذات مردود محدود.

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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Signature

Date

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EFFECTS OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOSITY ON
ENTREPRENEURIAL MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE:
AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN NIGERIA

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL BACKGROUND

Entrepreneurship has become a global issue by being on the agenda of both developed and developing nations. This is in view of its salient contribution to job creation, income, innovation, economic growth and development which has been globally acknowledged and documented in literature (Okpara and Wynn, 2007). Consequent upon this, the concern of scholars and policy makers now is how to stimulate the volume and intensity of entrepreneurial activity (Turker and Selcuk, 2009). The first step in that direction is to investigate the motives behind choosing entrepreneurship as a career and the impact of such motives on entrepreneurial outcomes (Turker and Selcuk, 2009; Locke and Baum, 2007; Shane, Locke and Collins, 2003). Thus, the question of who becomes an entrepreneur and why have formed one of the central issues for entrepreneurship research (Shane et al., 2003).

1.1.1 Nigeria in perspective

Nigeria is the single largest geographical unit in West Africa and incidentally the most populous black nation, with a projected population of over 164 million in 2011 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012). With this population, the country has an internal market that has no rival within the African continent. Recently, the country re-based its GDP (for the year 2013) to USD 488 billion, making it the 26th biggest economy in the world. Apart from the advantage of high purchasing power which human endowment gives the country, it has one of the most highly trained workforces in

Africa (Mike, 2011). It occupies a land area of 923,768 square kilometres and lies entirely within the tropics, with substantial part being arable land with complimenting conditions that support agricultural activities. It therefore clear from the above that with its market potentials, trained workforce, Nigeria economy has all it takes to excel in so many respects (including entrepreneurship) and holds the potential to be the source of growth and prosperity for the whole region (Sanusi, 2010).

Despite these human and natural resources, the country has lost opportunities for growth and sustainable development (EDP 4). Nigeria is rated by the World Bank Group in 2014 to be amongst the extremely poor countries of the world with more than 66 percent of its population leaving below the poverty line. Similarly economic performance has been erratic and fallen short of expectation with less than 5 percent of SMEs survive beyond their first year of existence (Onugu, 2005). In addition, the country has one of the highest rates of unemployment in sub-Sahara Africa (Salami, 2011). With about 124 approved universities, 81 polytechnics and 63 colleges of education as at end of 2013, it can be said that whereas tertiary institutions have grown at multiple progression, jobs and employers have grown at arithmetic progression (Ajufo, 2013). This gap in Nigeria strategic approach to job creation has led to the supply of skilled graduates being higher than the demand in the economy thus further increasing unemployment. Musari (2009) corroborated this statement by saying that about 4.5 million enter the labour market every year without any hope of getting employment for life sustenance. The precarious situation has left the youths in a vicious cycle of poverty that daily erodes their self-confidence and bright future (Ajufo, 2013).

The National Youth Development Policy (2001) defines youth as people aged between 18 and 35. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) observed from the excerpts of

statistics obtained from the National Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics showed that Nigeria has a youth population of eighty (80) million representing 60 percent of the total population of the country. Sixty four (64) million of them are unemployed while one million six hundred thousand (1.6 million) are underemployed.

In Nigeria, accurate unemployment rates are difficult to access (EDP 2) and where they are available, the official figures are downplayed for political reasons. According to the statistic provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (2012), unemployment rate in 2011 stood at 23.9% at the national level. The statistics further revealed that the age groups (constituted by the youths) 15-24 and 25-44 had higher unemployment rates (37.7% and 22.4% respectively). Therefore, those in age bracket of 15 and 44 years account for 60.1 percent of the total unemployed persons in Nigeria. The data (as depicted by Table 1) below also showed that unemployment is on steady increase between 2007 and 2011. For instance unemployment rate for 2007 was 12.7%, 14.9% for 2008, 19.7% for 2009, 21.4% for 2010 and 23.9% for 2011. However, comparatively, within the corresponding period, only marginal number of the unemployed benefited from the entrepreneurship development programs organized by the government nationwide. For instance, the number of beneficiaries was 102,886, in 2009, 111,333 in 2009 and 136, 722 in 2011 respectively. The mismatch between unemployment and the number of people benefiting from the government's entrepreneurship programmes should be issue of concern to all stake holders in Nigeria. The question to ask is what effort the government is making to promote entrepreneurship culture amongst the youths. A review of entrepreneurship development efforts in Nigeria discussed below.

Table 1.1 Unemployment versus beneficiaries of EDP efforts

Year	Unemployment	Beneficiaries Of EDP efforts
2007	12,700,000	-
2008	14,900,000	103,148
2009	19,700,000	113,515
2010	21,400,000	-
2011	23,900,000	138,447

Source: Extracted from Social Statistic in Nigeria by the National Bureau of Statistics (2012)

1.1.2 Entrepreneurship Development Efforts in Nigeria

The role of entrepreneurs in the transformation of nations from low income, primary sector based societies into high-income service and technologically based societies is well acknowledged in the literature. As such, the Nigerian Government believes in the efficacy of entrepreneurship development to generate the need employment opportunities and generate economic growth and development. This explains why in the past forty-five years or so, the government has established various support institutions and relief measures specially structured to render assistance and succour to minimize the constraints, which entrepreneurship typically face (Anyadike et al. 2012). The support institutions established by the government range from specialized banks (designed to focus on the funding of Small and Medium Enterprises) to agencies and departments all meant to give a flip to the fortunes of Small and Medium Enterprises.

However, as noted by (Ebiringa, 2012), the role of government in entrepreneurship development in Nigeria became significant only after the Nigeria

civil war (1967-70). Since the mid 1980s there has been an increased commitment of government to entrepreneurship development especially after the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986. Added to this is the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and, the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

In addition to all these, the Federal Government of Nigeria in the late 80s introduced entrepreneurship education in the curricular of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of education. The major goal of entrepreneurship education is to promote creativity, innovation and self-employment among the citizens through the inculcation of entrepreneurial knowledge, competences and attitudes in the learners (Akudolu, 2010). Similarly, the Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) was also established with the objective of teaching and encouraging students of higher institutions (especially in science, engineering and technological (SET) to acquire entrepreneurial, innovative, and management skills, was established. The Centre's goal is to make the graduates self-employed, create job opportunities for others and to generate wealth.

The justification for the Federal Government's initiative for promoting entrepreneurship culture by tapping on the dynamism of the youth and building on their sterling qualities such as resourcefulness, initiative, energy and drive have the support of scholars (Schnurr and Newing, 1997; Bennell, 2000). As noted by Oladele, Akeke and Oladunjoye (2011), in Zambia and Ghana 25 and 40 percent of the enterprises are owned by the youths respectively. Similarly, research in South Africa suggests that the probability of self-employment among young people rises with age (Chigunta, 2001). Thus, with proper mentoring and provision of the needed resources

and enabling environment for business start-ups, the Nigerian youths can be equally economically engaged (Oladele et al. 2011)

Although many countries have been able to energise energize and transform their entrepreneurship sub-sector to achieve their developmental goals, the same cannot be said of Nigeria (Onugu, 2005). It is instructive to note that the several government policy interventions to promote entrepreneurship among the youths as a viable measure to check the raising graduate unemployment and reengineer the economy had not yielded much fruits (Anyadike et al. 2012& Ebiringa, 2012). This is because unemployment still persists, and business mortality rate is still high and consequently poverty level is on the increase. It will be of interest therefore to investigate new explanations that trigger and sustain entrepreneurship in people.

1.1.3 Background on Entrepreneurship Motivation

The study of what predicts and sustains entrepreneurship had been examined from various perspectives, yet the quest remains insatiable (Valliere, 2008). This, according to the author, is owing to the fact that it had been examined but with inconclusive results from various perspectives. Amongst such perspectives were entrepreneurial traits and psychology (McClelland, 1961; Shaver and Scott, 1991; Palich and Bagby, 1995), entrepreneurial behaviours (Gartner, 1989), and economics (Schumpeter, 1936; Von Mises, 1949; Eisenhauer, 1995). As such, until this date finding new explanations to what triggers and sustains entrepreneurship in some people and not in others remain an area of interest to scholars and policy makers (Drost, 2010; Valliere, 2008; Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Similarly, identifying new variables that drive successful entrepreneurship becomes desirable in view of consequent negative implications of small business failure on the stability and health of a nation's economy

and also on the individual entrepreneurs' themselves (Sriram, Mersha and Herron, 2006).

As observed by King Kauanui Thomas, Waters and Gilea (2010), the base of entrepreneurship literature on motivation had been on behaviour, intentions and contextual variables at the expense of spiritual perspective. For instance, previous studies relating to entrepreneurial motivation in developing countries had mainly concentrated on the situational and environmental factors (Benzing and Chu, 2009), challenge and achievement (Swierczek and Ha, 2003), personal satisfaction, growth and push factors (Benzing, Chu and Callanan, 2005). Other factors studied were independence/autonomy (Benzing, Chu and Szabo, 2005; Gray, Foster, and Howard, 2006), increased income (Bewayo, 1995; Chu, Benzing and McGee, 2007; Chu, Benzing and Kara, 2007). Consequent upon this, there had been recent call for deeper understanding of the 'entrepreneurial mind set' by exploring the deeper belief structures that drive entrepreneurs (King Kauanui, Thomas and Waters, 2005; Krueger, 2007). Thus, the new message emerging from the literature is that there may be other motives beyond the traditional motivational factors for predicting entrepreneurship (Carsrud and Brannback, 2011). The promising new appearances in entrepreneurship research are spirituality and religiosity. Thus, an examination of the role of spirituality and religiosity may likely provide a lesser-explored and potentially rewarding avenue of further research than the traditional motivational factors.

Spirituality and religiosity may be considered relatively new concepts in organization and management literature (Kendall, 2012), yet, they have been studied in psychology as individual experience, for over a century and are well developed (Zinnbauer, Pargament, and Scott, 1999; Sheep, 2006). For instance, many of the dimensions of workplace spirituality, such as holism and the integration of work with

self-identity, can be traced back through the psychological literature for many decades (Kendall, 2012, p. 3). Even within the organizational sciences, spirituality can be connected to several other established concepts such as person-organization fit (Sheep, 2006), transformational leadership, organizational citizenship behavior (Pawar, 2009), or culture (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2003).

Spirituality and religion have long been considered as important dimensions of human nature (Benjamin and Looby, 1998; Zinnbauer et al., 1999 in Kendall, 2012; Emmons, 1999). A growing base of literature suggests there are significant effects of spirituality and religiosity on people's lives (Emmons, 1999; King, 2007; King and Crowther, 2004; Saroglou, Delpierre and Dernelle, 2004). Spiritual and religious values are perceived to have substantial influence on human beings in the way they live, behave and work (Osman-Gani, Hashim and Ismail, 2012). Spirituality is frequently treated by scholars as an innate and intrinsic motive behind people's search for meaning and happiness in their work (Fry, 2003; Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2009; Dehler and Welsh, 1994). For instance, Jaeger (1994) and King-Kauanui et al. (2005) posit that the search for meaningful work was a key motivator in the self-employed. Particularly, according to King-Kauanui et al. more people were being attracted into entrepreneurship in a quest of what they missed so much in the workplace; "meaning and purpose" (p. 256). Proponents of workplace spirituality argue that an extreme focus on objectivity and logic in business have resulted in workers who are separated from each other, themselves, and the Divine (Kendall, 2012). As remarked by Cavanagh (1999, p. 186), "This alienation has left business people feeling dry, unfulfilled and unhappy". As such they move into entrepreneurship believing that it may provide them a source of more "personal meaning, purpose, and fulfillment" than

they could have got by working for some other people (King-Kauanui et al., 2005, p. 256).

Similarly, the belief systems or behaviour of millions of people in the world are being influenced by religion. This is manifested through its promotion of certain values and de-emphasising others (Rokeach, as cited in Ramasamy, Yeung and Au, 2010) and through establishment of rules and taboos (Sood and Nasu, 1995; Harell, 1986). In addition, religious commitment plays an important role in people's lives, through shaping their beliefs, knowledge and attitudes (Rehman and Shabbir, 2010). In strengthening this position, Dodd and Seaman (1998), argued that individual religion have positive effect on believers' entrepreneurial activity in three respects; influencing the decision to become entrepreneur, enterprise management and entrepreneur's contact networks. In line with the above contention, Gotsis and Korkezi (2009) drawing from literature observed that religion and its associated terms such as, religious experience, religious attitudes and intrinsic religiosity, and religious orientation were very critical factors in post-modern and post-industrial societies. This is because they proved to be positively associated with societal dynamics, higher level of economic activity and economic performance and growth. In addition, these variables also tend to have positive effects on entrepreneurial culture, attitudes and behaviour (Salimath and Cullen, 2010).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The mismatch between unemployment and the number of people benefiting from the government's entrepreneurship programmes has continued to remain an issue of public discourse amongst scholars and policy makers in Nigeria. The perceived lack of entrepreneurial culture, the comatose nature of small and medium sized enterprise,