

CULTURE AS DETERMINANT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper addresses the issue of whether culture is a determinant of entrepreneurial intentions as well as the effects of culture on entrepreneurial intention dimensions such as perceived desirability, feasibility and propensity to act upon opportunities. The population of the study constitute of all existing entrepreneurs in South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria who have been in venture creation for at least three years, which is infinite, because no easy ready statistics to ascertain the figure. The multi-stage stratified random sampling technique was adopted to get a sample size of 600, but 412 was finally used, being those who returned the research instrument. Questionnaire was the research instrument, while factor analysis and simple regression statistical methods were data analysis techniques. We found that culture is a foremost determinant of entrepreneurial intentions. Besides, the study found that culture positively affects the entrepreneurial intention. Given the findings, the study concluded that there is need for government intervention to assist financially and technically, existing entrepreneurs to break the boundary of locality occasioned by cultural inclinations. It is recommended that government should encourage entrepreneurs financially and also create the enabling environment that can enable them thrive since culture is a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention, particularly to existing entrepreneur. In addition, there is need to organize seminars and workshops on entrepreneurial intentions and development in order for them to understand the factors influencing venture creations as well as gaining superior insight into perceptions of feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities.

Keywords: Culture; Entrepreneurial intentions; Perceived desirability; Perceived feasibility; Perceived Propensity to Act

Introduction

In recent years, the concept of entrepreneurial intention has received considerable interests in management literature. The interest stems from the mammoth global economic and financial crisis that faced innovative and risk-taking enterprises in making businesses forward-looking, generating employments, advancing human welfare and realizing sustainability of

enterprises. Though, since mid-1980s, entrepreneurial intention has increasingly been considered as a vital tool for innovation and economic growth in developed and developing countries like Nigeria.

In spite of the global economic and financial crisis that rocked Nigeria, entrepreneurship still remains one of the imperatives for economic growth (Healy, 2015). Numerous studies have the conceivable intentions behind entrepreneurship development (see Kolvereid, Iakovleva & Kickul, 2008; Abzari & Safari, 2010; Bwisa & Ndolo, 2011; Anyadike, Emeh & Ukah, 2012; and Li & Wu, 2019); however, perception of what influences entrepreneurship intention is management literature still remains unclear. In the view of Bergmann (2009), entrepreneurial intention is influenced by numerous dynamics like social, regional, ethnic and culture, family status, societal perceptions, monetary returns, capabilities, education and motivations of the entrepreneur among others; all of which have impact on start-up decisions of the entrepreneur.

One of the fundamental thoughts advanced for entrepreneurial intentions among researchers is the kind of culture people imbibe from society, which is perceived to positively or negatively affect entrepreneurial intentions and afterwards in the creation of a new venture (Kgagara, 2011; Ali, Topping & Tariq, 2011; Anyadike, *et al*, 2012). Gassea and Tremblay (2011) assert that entrepreneurship intention is enthused by a combination of determinants relating to the entrepreneur and believed to be a common concept across culture, owing to disparities in beliefs, attitudes and perceptions people maintain on entrepreneurship as well as differences in their intention to create a venture.

Agaraonye (2015) sees entrepreneurial intention as a conscious state of mind that directs focus toward an intended entrepreneurial career and means of achieving it. Entrepreneurial intention is the use of opportunities and resources to receive socio-economic benefits (Ijaz, Yasin & Zafar, 2012; Ossai-Igwe, 2011). According to Hayton and Cacciotti (2014), entrepreneurial intention is the conscious state of mind of an entrepreneur in initiating a new venture, creating new core values in existing venture, which correlates to perceptions of feasibility, desirability and the propensity to act upon opportunities. Consequently, this study examines culture as determinants of entrepreneurial intentions in Nigeria; entrepreneurial intentions dynamics of the study include perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities available for entrepreneurs.

Review of Related Literature

Overview of Culture

The term culture has been defined in relations to shared values, beliefs and likely behaviors of people. Culture is the value and belief systems that influence the behavior of people in a given geographical setting (Chmielecki & Seliga, 2015; Hayton & Cacciotti, 2014) and makes them act or think differently from others. A broader conceptualization of culture is simply the way of life of people which is linked with customs, traditions, religions, language and attitude towards life (Agaraonye, 2015).

In the views of Hayton and Cacciotti (2014), culture refers to a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes members of one group from another with social and ethnic qualities exerting significant effects on the society. From a holistic perspective, culture is envisaged as a observable facts, since it is shared with individuals living in the same social environment or belonging to the same group; with mental construct influencing how people socialize within a particular culture and perceive event (Bwisa & Ndolo, 2011; and Chmielecki & Seliga, 2015). Basu and Altinay (2000) asserted that culture may be one of the reasons people's inclination towards entrepreneurship differs. The justification for this is that culture via its influence on belief, motive and behavior can increase or lessen institutional and economic impact on entrepreneurial activity and their intent to create one (Hayton & Cacciotti, 2014).

Culture surrounds entrepreneurial intention; forming their perceptions and influencing their actions and decisions to create new venture (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). According to Matsumoto (2007), culture influences all facets of entrepreneurial intention, including how entrepreneurs think, plan and become innovative. Hence, culture serves as a framework for entrepreneurs' action and behavioral patterns toward entrepreneurship (Chen, *et al*, 2015; Thornton, *et al*, 2011). Consequently, an understanding of cultural differences as it influences entrepreneurial intention is needed to grow new breeds of entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial Intentions Determinants

In management literature, entrepreneurship has been defined in diverse ways. Most definitions of entrepreneurship has been linked with innovative thinking and organizing economic and social mechanisms into practical

venture (Akpór-Robaro & Mamuzo, 2012). Entrepreneurship has been seen as the process of creating new venture and new organization (Khuong & An, 2016; and Chmielecki & Seliga, 2015). In management literature, several dynamics have been identified to influence entrepreneurial intentions – culture, ethnic, family status, monetary return, capabilities, education among others; however, this paper focused on culture as determinant of entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial intention refers to the mindset of an individual entrepreneur to create a new venture or add values to existing one. Several metrics have been linked with entrepreneurial intention measurement to include perceived feasibility, desirability, and the propensity to act upon opportunities (see Khuong & An, 2016; Taouab, 2014; Hayton & Cacciotti, 2014; Moriano, *et al*, 2011; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Kolvereid, Iakovleva & Kickul, 2008).

First, perceived feasibility refers to the personal belief about the likelihood of an entrepreneur to exhibit planned behavior, faculty of thoughts, physical, mental, passion, financial resources to personally control and execute actions (Khuong & An, 2016; Taouab, 2014; Liñán & Chen, 2009); it is the degree to which the individual entrepreneur feels capable of commencing an enterprise (Kolvereid, *et al*, 2008); *second*, perceived desirability is attractiveness of commencing an enterprise (Hayton & Cacciotti, 2014; Moriano, *et al*, 2011); *third*, perceived propensity to act is inclination (energy self-efficacy and risk-taking) to act entrepreneurially.

Perceived desirability, feasibility and propensity to act are fundamental and direct predictors of entrepreneurial intentions. These measures are similar to those used by prior researchers (see Li & Wu, 2019; Voda & Florea, 2019; Jwara & Hoque, 2018; Misoka Dimitrova & Mrsik, 2016; Ian & Honig, 2016; Khadhraoui, *et al*, 2018; Ozigbo, 2014; Remeikiene, Startiene & Dumciuvienė, 2013; and Sajjad, Shafi & Dad, 2012). In this paper, these dynamics (perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities) were employed as measures for entrepreneurial intentions.

Theoretical Foundation

This paper is anchored on Shapero and Sokol (1982) Entrepreneurial Event Paradigm (EEP); EEP proposes that the intention to initiate entrepreneurial career is based on two perceptions - perceived desirability and feasibility (Njengoue, *et al*, 2012; and Taouab, 2014). Impliedly, EEP posits that

entrepreneurial event is shaped by the attractiveness (desirability) and degree to which an entrepreneur feels capable (feasibility) of commencing a new venture (Kolvereid, *et al*, 2008).

In addition, the EEP focuses on dynamics that makes an entrepreneurial event such as venture creation happen, which are due to interacting situational and social-cultural factors (Elfving, Brännback & Carsrud, 2009). A critical precursor of entrepreneurial intention is 'propensity to act' upon perceived opportunities in the environment (Krueger, Schulte & Stamp, 2008). In EEP, intention to commence a venture is based on perceptions of desirability, feasibility and the propensity to act upon opportunities (Ali, Lu & Wang, 2012).

The relevance of EEP to this study is that individuals' perceptions of desirability, feasibility and propensity to act upon opportunities are strongly determined by entrepreneur culture, family status, amid others. EEP provides that entrepreneurs will decide to create a venture when entrepreneurial activity is perceived more feasible and desirable than other substitutes (Healy, 2015). More so, the entrepreneurial intention dynamics may have positive or negative effects on the entrepreneurs.

Prior Studies

Some recent empirical studies on determinants of entrepreneurial intentions were reviewed from 2012-2019. Liu and Wu (2019) assessed the moderating effects of team cooperation on entrepreneurial education, self-efficacy and passion using correlation and structural equation modeling analyses. Findings revealed that team cooperation mediates the relations between entrepreneurial education and intention in China

Essel, Adams and Amankwah (2019) examined the effects of entrepreneur and institutional characteristics on firm performance in Ghana using questionnaire and multivariate analysis. Findings showed that demographic (sex and education), institutional (bank investment and training services) and firm (artisan and craft industry) significantly affect firm performance.

Voda and Florea (2019) evaluated the relationships between locus of control, need for attainment and entrepreneurial intention of youth in Romania using multivariate and logistic regression. Findings indicated that locus of control, need for attainment and entrepreneurial education are major determinants of entrepreneurial intention.

Jwara and Hoque(2018)studied entrepreneurial intention among university students in South-Africa using chi-square test of statistics. The study found a positive relation between social factors and entrepreneurial intention while no relations was found between entrepreneurial intentions and current education and university life.

Davies, Chambers and Haugh(2017)explored the barrier to social enterprise growth in United Kingdom using descriptive analysis. The study finds that social enterprise barriers are linked with values differences, institutional norms and business models.

Ian and Honig (2016) ascertained the place of culture as it affects entrepreneurial intention in Spain via ordinary least square estimation tool. The study found that culture has significant effect on perceived behavioural control and attitude. In addition, subjective norm was found to be an insignificant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions.

Ozigbo (2014) studied the effects of selected socio-economic variables on entrepreneurship performance in Nigeria using Pearson correlation. Findings showed a positive and significant relation between entrepreneurship performance and the selected socio-economic variables.

Yurtkoru, Kuscu and Doganay (2014) investigated the impacts of contextual dynamics on entrepreneurial intention using regression and factor analysis. The contextual dynamics are relational, educational and structural supports. Finding show that structural and educational supports relate with entrepreneurial intention except relational support.

Remeikiene, Startiene and Dumciuviene (2013) examined the influence of entrepreneurial intention in promoting entrepreneurship among youths in Lithuania via descriptive statistics. The entrepreneurial intention dynamics include personality traits (self-efficacy, risk-taking, need for achievement, pro-activeness, attitude towards entrepreneurship, behavioural control and internal locus of control); findings showed that all the entrepreneurial intention dynamics are fundamental in promoting entrepreneurship in Lithuania.

Sajjad, Shafi and Dad (2012) evaluated the effects of culture on entrepreneurial intentions in Pakistan using descriptive tool. The entrepreneurial intention dynamics used are perceived feasibility,

desirability and experience; the study found that culture has significant effects on all entrepreneurial intention dynamics.

Methodology

The cross-sectional design was employed since the study seeks to obtain perceptions of varied people on culture and entrepreneurial intention. The study population is made up of all exiting entrepreneurs in South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria who have been in venture creation for at least 3years. Given the infinite nature of the study population, sampling procedure was adopted. In this regards, the multi-stage stratified random sampling technique was adopted in order to ensure ample representation of every members of the study population (South –East).

The first stage of sampling entails all five states in South-East-Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states grouped into two strata (high and low density area of existing entrepreneurs). The high density area of existing entrepreneurs (Abia and Anambra states, which are states with existing major international markets, like Onitsha and Aba markets) while low density area (Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states). In view of this, Anambra state was chosen from strata one while Enugu state from strata two; the second stage of sampling involves the use of LGAs of both states (Anambra and Enugu) and third stage of sampling is selecting LGAs using simple random sampling.

In view of this, six hundred (600) respondents were selected. The 600 subjects were divided into two (300 – Anambra and 300 – Enugu); however, four hundred and twelve (412) research subjects were the ones that finally returned the research instruments. Questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection designed on a 7-point scale of strongly attractive; attractive; partly attractive; undecided; completely not attractive; not attractive; and partly not attractive. Liñán and Chen (2009) suggest that multi-item scales are more reliable than single-item scale; thus,

The questionnaire contained two sections – bio-data of respondents and questions on culture and entrepreneurial intention dimensions (perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act). The variables of entrepreneurial intention dimensions are similar to those used by prior studies (Liu & Wu, 2019; Voda & Florea, 2019; Jwara & Hoque, 2018; Davies, *et al*, 2017; and Ian & Honig, 2016). The test retests method was used and Cronbach Alpha reliability test in assessing the reliability coefficient of questionnaire. Crobnach Alpha reliability coefficient yielded 0.77, which

according to Nunnally (1978) is considered reliable for a questionnaire since it is above 0.6.

The results obtained the study were analyzed using both descriptive (graphical representations and factor analysis) inferential (regression analysis). The regression model is given as:

$$\text{entreint} = f(\text{cultr}) \quad - \quad \text{eq. 1}$$

$$\text{percfeas} = f(\text{cultr}) \quad - \quad \text{eq. 2}$$

$$\text{percdears} = f(\text{cultr}) \quad - \quad \text{eq. 3}$$

$$\text{perproptac} = f(\text{cultr}) \quad - \quad \text{eq. 4}$$

Equations 1-4 were re-estimated in their explicit forms as represented in equations 5-7 as follows:

$$\text{percfeas}_i = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{cultr}_i + \mu_{it} \quad - \quad \text{eq. 5}$$

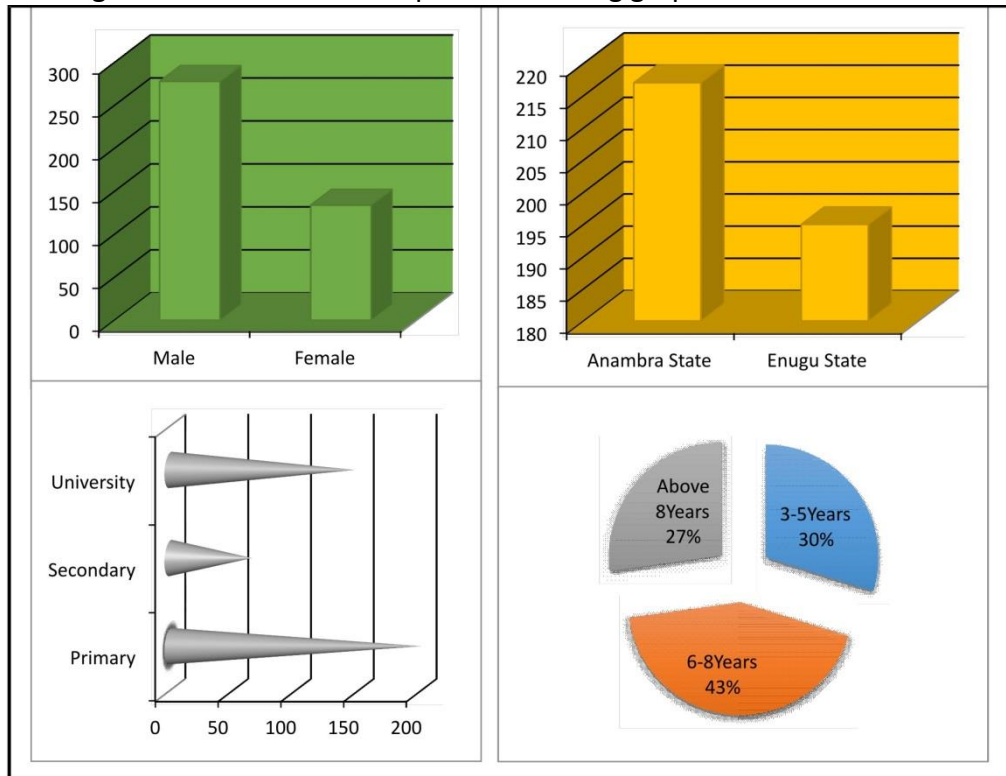
$$\text{percdears}_i = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{cultr}_i + \mu_{it} \quad - \quad \text{eq. 6}$$

$$\text{perproptac}_i = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{cultr}_i + \mu_{it} \quad - \quad \text{eq. 7}$$

Where: *percfeas* = perceived feasibility; *percdears* = perceived desirability; *perproptac* = perceived propensity to act; $\alpha_0 \beta_1$ =regression coefficients; *i*=individual existing entrepreneurs; and μ_{it} =error term.

Results and Discussions

The bio-data of respondents include gender, location, educational level and existing venture duration were presented using graphical illustrations.



Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Culture and Entrepreneurship Intentions

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.843
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square 221.43
	Degree of Freedom 408
	Significance .000

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin(KMO) statistics showed .843, which is greater than 0.05; this means that the research instrument is good enough for factor analysis. The Barlett's test of sphericity revealed that the test is statistical significant at $p=.000$, while the chi-square test (221.43), supports factorability of correlation matrix, and confirming its suitability for factor analysis.

Table 2: Eigenvalue of the Factors

Factor	Factor-1	Factor-2	Factor-3	Factor-4
Eigenvalue	1.0538	1.0397	1.1541	-0.1229

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

The eigenvalue are strongly linked with the fundamentals for assessing the factors predicting entrepreneurial intentions by existing entrepreneurs in Anambra and Enugu States. There were four (4) variables found with their eigenvalues; however, first 3-factors (factor-1, factor-2 and factor-3) were found using eigenvalue greater than one rule of thumb. The 3-factor with factor loading of 0.5 and above have been selected based on the suggestion of Hair (1998).

Table 3: Factor Loading Estimates

S/N	Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1	Culture	0.4448	-0.0960	-0.2098
2	Perceived Feasibility	0.4777	-0.2139	-0.0178
3	Perceived Desirability	0.4092	-0.0897	0.1909
4	Perceived Propensity to Act	0.3687	-0.0949	0.1904

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

In the factor loading estimates, it was shown that four (4) variables are strongly linked with some specific dynamics and this profoundly indicates the extent to which those variables load on the factors.

Table 4: Measuring Commonality

S/N	Variables	Uniqueness	Commonality $\Sigma(\text{loading})^2$ or $1(\text{-uniqueness})\%$
1	Culture	0.349	65.1%
2	Perceived Feasibility	0.296	70.4%
3	Perceived Desirability	0.488	51.2%
4	Perceived Propensity to Act	0.518	48.1%

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

The result in Table 4 suggests that culture is a major determinant of entrepreneurial intentions (perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act); however, perceived feasibility (70%) is highest commonality variable while perceived propensity to act upon opportunities (48%) is lowest commonality variable.

Table 5: Explained Variance

S/N	Factors	Proportion	Explained Variance
1	Factor 1	0.4349	0.878
2	Factor 2	0.2686	or
3	Factor 3	0.1745	87.8%

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

In Table 5, it was found that factors-1-3 have been explained about 88% of the total variance. Thus, culture is a major determinant of entrepreneurial intention.

Table 6: Regression Result of Culture and Entrepreneurial Intentions

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistics	Prob.
^a <i>percfeas</i>	0.991	0.744	7.260	0.000
^b <i>percdears</i>	0.805	0.631	12.12	0.000
^c <i>perproptac</i>	0.799	0.627	12.09	0.000
c	0.984	0.739	7.202	0.000
^a Obs.= 412	<i>F</i> (1, 411)= 37.25	<i>R</i> ² = 0.90	<i>R</i> ² Adj.= 0.82	
^a Obs.= 412	<i>F</i> (1, 411)= 28.45	<i>R</i> ² = 0.69	<i>R</i> ² Adj.= 0.63	
^c Obs.= 412	<i>F</i> (1, 411)= 21.73	<i>R</i> ² = 0.53	<i>R</i> ² Adj.= 0.48	

Source: Compiled by Researchers, 2020

Table 6 showed $R^2=.82$; $R^2=.63$; and $R^2=.48$; suggesting that there are few excluded variables affecting perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities. Besides, the result revealed that culture explains about 82%, 63% and 48% of the systematic variations in perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities respectively. The coefficients are carrying the right signs (positive); a clear indication that culture positively affects entrepreneurial intentions (perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities).

More so, the f-ratios ($a = 37.25$; $b=28.45$ and $c=21.73$) supports that a significant relations between culture and entrepreneurial intentions. The findings of the study corroborate with prior studies (Liu & Wu, 2019; Voda & Florea, 2019; Jwara & Hoque, 2018; and Ian & Honig, 2016) that entrepreneurial intentions is significantly influenced by diverse dynamics such as culture, family status, among others.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that culture is considered as a major determinant of entrepreneurial intentions. Also that culture explains the systematic variations in perceived feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunity.

Given the findings and conclusion, the study recommended that:

- i. government should encourage entrepreneurs financially and creating the enabling environment that can help them thrive since culture is a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention to existing entrepreneurs.
- ii. there is need to organize seminars/workshops on entrepreneurial intentions and development, particularly for existing entrepreneurs in order for them to understand the factors influencing venture creations as well as gaining superior insight into perceptions of feasibility, desirability and propensity to act upon opportunities.
- iii. Cultural needs can serve as a business opportunity for those that understand the cultural factor in business operations.

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