

Gender and Entrepreneurial Skills Development among Selected SMEs in Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study's main goal was to investigate the relationship between gender and the development of entrepreneurial capabilities. The specific goals are to establish a link between gender diversity and managerial skill development in selected SME, to investigate the link between age diversity and managerial skill development in selected SME, and to examine the relationship between age diversity and managerial skill development in selected SME. Primary data was used and 526 questionnaires were distributed to the registered small and medium business owners. The first data gathered from their various responses were analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistical methods and ANOVA and multivariate analysis. The results show that R2 is adequate at 0.642, implying that there is a gentle linear relationship between organizational productivity and the independent variables with the remaining 39.45 percent accounted for by non-research model factors, such as, the presence of white noise. Judging from the result obtained, it concluded that gender discrimination also determines the productivity of SMES. The study suggests that in order to reduce gender discrepancies while still benefitting enormously throughout the overall gender pool, both genders are normally and equally capable of executing a powerful position and a job inside the SME firm, humankind must be informed.

Key Word: Gender, entrepreneur, inequalities, ethnic, age, SME(s).

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I. Introduction

In 1950's, the problems associated with gender discrimination were highlighted and considered the most vital issue. Around 1980's & 1990's, great importance was given to female issues in organisation where males were dominating. Gender diversity existing in various areas of management ranging from differences in wages, salary, promotion, participation, higher cognitive process etc. Many of the staff are plagued by the discriminatory issues & problems on gender bases (Suvijnac, 2018). The study of differences between males and females has been researched for an aged time, and plenty of stereotypes about both genders have developed. Since the desegregation of the workforce, the commonly accepted stereotypes are being strongly questioned within the work environment. Despite the fact that, in a comparative discipline, the study of gender differences and the workplace is garnering greater attention with each passing year (Powell, 2008). Many factors have contributed to the recognition that this field of research has obtained. It seems to be the dearth of the event of concrete generalizations about the gender together within the workforce, and also the various contradictions which will be found across studies is another factor. Perhaps the most factor is just the plain increase within the number of females within the workforce Gender is a critical aspect of modern-day vocabulary and is clearly stated because the link between women and men, societies and cultures regulate what masculinity and or feminism is all about and consequently, the way power is distributed and utilized by both genders are different. For us to move toward a more equal future, we need to deconstruct the complexity and multi-layered realities of gender in our society. (2008) (Powell). Women in society are often marginalized and relegated to the completion of their reproductive work. In formal organizations, women are most typically assigned to roles such as secretaries, assist assistants, and support workers, which do not allow them to challenge preconceptions. Most times companies are mostly gender biased, but often times the wish of exhibiting discrimination and sensitivity towards one sex becomes fanatically biased against another gender (Lei Lai, 2007).

II. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Clarification

Gender Diversity

Despite evidence showing that women will soon frame over 50 percent of the workforce, there's overwhelming evidence showing that women not only earn lesser than men but even have fewer numbers in leadership positions within the workforce (Ortiz & Roscigno, 2009). There are other reasons for this gender discrepancy among high-ranking positions (Sandberg, 2013). These reasons include the reinforcement of traditional gender stereotypes within the workplace, moreover as discrimination supported gender, all of which limit the positions women have available to them. From the 1970s to the 1990s, a widely-used research strategy to look at gender was to supply study participants with an inventory of descriptors and to own them mark off those characteristics they related to certain groups (Komaki, 2007). Men were generally depicted as "self-confident, desirous of responsibility, industrious, assertive, and logical" (leadership qualities), whereas women were depicted as curious, helpful, intuitive, creative, understanding, and neat (Komaki, 2007).

Gender discrimination

A major leading approach to appraise tenacious gender inequality in position that distillate on work conditions and work experiences (Mercer 1990). This motivation taps into the involvements of stigmatization, they are found to pose pressures to self-image (Mercer 1990). Further research recommends that stressful work environment have the ability to jeopardize and alter careers and development and thus, strengthen gender inequalities among work force (Cortina and Magley 2003). Another work recently quoted reasons for continuing gender disparities and inconsistency within the workforce is that the conception that girls are not really motivated and dedicated to their careers (Budig and Hodges 2010). Some suggest that preconceived ideas cause women to be given fewer hard assignments than men, hindering women's career progression and advancement (Hagan and Kay 2007).

Entrepreneurial Skills Development

The term entrepreneurship was derived from a Latin language, *prehendere* and *apprehension*. Entrepreneurship may be defined as a primary or secondary system of an organisational structure, developing new ideas, from conception of innovative ideas to the creation of an entity. In a similar spirit, entrepreneurship has been designed to support the many types of soft and hard skills that have been extensively researched in the literature. Entrepreneurship skills are the target of study within the next section and therefore the basis for building the abilities development model (Kinkus, 2007). The soft skills could also be precise because the behavioral knowledge and skills needed for the utilization of stiff skills and knowledge in an enterprise (Rainsbury, Hodges, Burchell, & Lay (2002). Soft talents, according to James and James (2004), are a compilation of a person's abilities and abilities. Some other authors classify the soft skills such as: 1) interpersonal skills; 2) personal and social skills; and 3) cognitive skills (Muzio, Fisher, Thomas & Peters (2007). Davis (1993) recounts the abilities and behaviors of effective managers, emphasizing the importance of soft skills in managing entrepreneurial initiatives. He states that "the importance of the long run must be in leadership skills, network acquaintances, maintaining business relationships-Social and relational skills so as to determine personal associations.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

Theory Status Characteristics

The theory of Status characteristics are those uncompromising dissimilarities associated with extensively communal rank principles conferring diverse heights of capability and price to those persons through dissimilar standards of their individual character. In line with status characteristics theory, in different scenarios, the classifications players make patterns of unsatisfactory influence, status, and inspiration within the contact. It usually happens though a procedure of status generalisation, by which players who own esteemed municipal of a representative value are projected to give more towards the goal of the group.

Glass Ceiling Theory

It has been proved severally that there's a caption which denotes an imperceptible barrier that naturally stops women/female gender from becoming managers in organisational hierarchy (Daily, et.al, 1999; Wirth, 2004; Wall Street Journal, 1986). Women are the energy for economic processes, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit. The evidence shows that the entry of women into the labor market after the mid-twentieth century drove emerging economies around the world (eiu.com.,2012). Cook and Glass (2015) also posit that female sex participate immensely in business and corporations and yet they represent a fewer or no rank or level in organisational hierarchy.

Post-modern Feminism, Race/Ethnicity and Queer Theory

In specializing in if errors amid the social classification procedure will add to the failure or lessening in progressions of favoritism, preconception, and discernment and to the schemes of change and social stratification that they uphold, this theory replicates some significant comprehensive phrases articulated by a numerous body of scholars. Such varied traditions as functionalist actions of race and ethnicity and queer theory posits the probable influence of eradicating social categorization entirely (Lorber 1994; Risman 1999).

2.3 Empirical Literatures

Oladejo, Ojo and Adeoye (2012) examined the gender gap and its implication on management practice within the Nigeria banking sector. Various literatures were examined in order to determine the impact of the gender gap in the banking sector. Both primary and secondary data were employed in the study. Chi-square technique was wont to test the study hypotheses. The study's findings found that female bank executives have positive attitudes of their salary and promotion rules, resulting in high job satisfaction, while their male counterparts hold favorable opinions about pay and promotion policies. Eleje & Oshinowo (2017) examined the role of men in promoting or hindering the work culture that drives gender equality within the sector. The findings revealed that the achievement of gender equality in senior/executive management positions within this sector is strongly predicated on organisational work culture. Fapohunda (2013). a hunt of Gender Based Differences in Workplace Values. According to recent statistics, men and women have relatively different priorities in their employment, but they share core views about what they consider to be very important. Understanding what both genders appreciate in an exceedingly work that is vital to making efficient approaches to human capacity and ideas initiatives. Plickert and Sterlin (2017) Gender Still Matters: Impact of Workforce Discrimination on Employment Schedules of Youth in Professional fields. The study employed a time series review data from a national representative U.S. panel study of lawyers, we examine how work timetables, comparing full-time to part-time work, differ by personal character and work environment features. The results of the Logistic regression analysis show that job timetables significantly vary by determinant factors such as gender, parental role, and knowledge of workforce discrimination. We find that, although all parents experience varieties of discrimination, there are still major differences in work schedules between mothers and fathers. Abbassi and Ujan (2011) look at the issue of gender discrimination in the workplace and how it affects employee happiness, motivation, dedication, and excitement, as well as stress levels. 526 males and females from lower, middle, and better category employees of public and private health and education departments in Hyderabad and Jamshoro districts completed a closed-ended questionnaire. The independent samples t test was used to assess gender discrimination in the workplace. The analysis shows that females were discriminated quite males in camera organisations. Thus, the statistics suggest that women are discriminated against more than men in the photography industry than in the public sector. The Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient was used to examine the effects of gender discrimination on contentment and motivation, commitment and excitement, and stress level. The findings reveal that gender discrimination reduces employee satisfaction and motivation, as well as dedication and passion, and raises employee strain.

III. Methodology

Primary data was used and 526 questionnaires were distributed to the registered small and medium business owners. Data were analyzed using the descriptive and inferential statistical methods and ANOVA and multivariate analysis.

3.1 Model Specification and Estimation Technique

The model was adopted from the work of (Ibe, 2013) will be used to achieve objective 1, 2 and 3. The function for this study is given as:

$$Y = f(b_0 + b_1 + b_2 + b_3 + e)$$

To be estimated as:

$$XYZ = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + e \dots \dots \dots (i)$$

Where: XYZ= Entrepreneur skills development----- dependent variables

b₀, b₁, b₂, b₃, b₄; ----- parameters;

X₁ X₂ and X₃; ----- independent variables;

X₁ =Gender Diversity (GD);

X₂ = Age Diversity (AD);

X₃ = Ethnic Diversity (ED),

IV. Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Interpretation of Regression Results

According to the research model summary in Table 3.2, the coefficient of determination or coefficient of correlation (R) gives a positive value of 0.605; this means that there's a direct correlation between the dependent variables (Entrepreneur skills development) and therefore the independent variables (Gender Diversity, Age Diversity and Ethnic Diversity). This means that the organisational productivity is measured by the coefficient may be explained by any changes within these independent variables as specified above. The coefficient of multiple determination (R²) may be a portion of the whole variation within the variable that's explained by the variation within the independent variables. From the results obtained, R² is adequate to 0.642; this means that there's a light linear relationship between the organisational productivity and therefore the independent variables (Gender Diversity, Age Diversity and Ethnic Diversity), while the remaining 39.45% is accounted for by some factors not laid out in the research model i.e., the presence of racket, error term or variate.

Table 4.1: Model Summary
Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.605 ^a	.642	.684	3.28240	1.70

Source: Author's Computation (2021)

a. Predictors: (Constant), GEN_DIV, AGE_DIV, ETH_DIV

b. Dependent Variable: ENT_SKILLS_DEV

4.2 Analysis of Variance

Table 4.2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.777	3	15.944	1.480	.212 ^b
	Residual	1454.509	135	10.774		
	Total	1518.286	139			

Source: Author's Computation, (2021)

a. Dependent Variable: ENT_SKILLS_DEV

b. Predictors: (Constant), GEN_DIV, AGE_DIV, ETH_DIV ANOVA was used to determine if there are a causal linear connection among the measures in line with the explanatory variables. The F test is employed to check the significance of a model by comparing the F-calculated with the F- tabulated. The test is conducted on a tailed test. The hypothesis for the test is formulated as: H₀: there's no overall significance within the research model H₁: there's overall significance within the research model Decision Rule: If F-calculated > F-tabulated, accept H₁ and reject H₀ and if F-cal < F-tab, accept H₀ and reject H₁, at 10% significance level (obtained from statistical table).

Table 4.3: Summary of F-test

F-calculated	F-tabulated	H ₀	H ₁	Remark
20.571	2.45	Reject	Accept	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2021 (See Author's Computation in the Appendix).

From the table above, the F-calculated gives a value greater than the F- tabulated. Hence, we reject H₀ (null hypothesis) and Accept H₁ (alternative hypothesis). Thus, it signifies that the overall research model for this study is statistically significant.

4.4 Interpretation of Coefficients

Table 4.4: Multiple Regression Coefficients
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(C)constant	11.680	3.326	3.512	.001	
	GEN_DIV	.123	.105	.099	1.169	.024
	AGE_DIV	.163	.112	.130	1.446	.015
	ETH_DIV	.041	.130	.028	.318	.075

Source: Field Survey, 2021

a. Dependent Variable: ENT_SKILLS_DEV

From the Table 3.4, all the parameters have their coefficients shows a figure but unitary i.e. The constant parameter also shows the next positively value associated with the variable quantity. The constant coefficient gives a positive value of 11.680 implying that if all explanatory variables are at zero level, that is, when held constant within the short run, the variable quantity (organisational productivity) will increase by 11.680. Gender diversity gives a positive value of 0.123, implying increase in activities which will develop staffs also will increase the productivity of the SME. The coefficient old diversity also shows a positive value of 0.163, implying that continuous review of gender-based recruitment of staffs will contributes and can increase the productivity of SME'S in Ekiti State. The last variable also shows a positive value of 0.041, this suggests that increases in ethnic diversity also increase the SME productivity.

4.5 Test for the Significance of Parameters (T-test)

The T test could be a two tailed test want to test the statistical significance of parameters. The condition for statistical significance is that T-calculated must be greater than T-tabulated. The T-tabulated as obtained from the tabular array is 2.000, or when their respective probability value attached with the T-cal is a smaller amount than 0.05 at significant level Table 4.6 revealed that everyone the explanatory variables are statistically significant because their respective Probability value but 5% at significant level, it may be concluded that each one the questions constructed are significant enough to underpin the research hypothesis.

Table 4.5: Summary of T-test

Variables	T calculated	Probability Value	Remark
Constant	3.512	.001	Significant
GEN_DIV	1.169	.024	Significant
AGE_DIV	1.446	.015	Significant
ETH_DIV	.318	.075	Significant

Source: Author's Computation (2021)

V. Summary of Findings

The study assessed the connection between gender and organisational productivity at the managerial level in selected SME. The research findings showed that there have been more male respondents than female respondents and it also indicated that majority of the respondents are BSC/HND, response supported the position of the corporate reveals that majorly are managers. The research model adopted during this study specified entrepreneur skills development as variable quantity. The independent variables within the study age diversity, gender diversity and ethnic diversity. The parametric statistic (R) with a price of 0.602 showed a direct correlation between variable and therefore the independent variables. The coefficient of multiple determination (R²) with a price of roughly 0.642 showed that each one the independent variables explained up to 64% of total variation within the improvement within the entrepreneur skills development measured by the influence of gender (gender diversity, age diversity and ethnic diversity), while the remaining 39.5% was accounted for by factors not per the research model. The test for autocorrelation showed that there's no conclusion on whether there's the presence or absence of autocorrelation or serial correlation within the research model. The F-test showed that the model was statistically significant in capturing the link between entrepreneur skills development as variable and also the independent variables within the study are gender diversity, age diversity and ethnic diversity. The results of the multivariate analysis showed that everyone the regression parameters were positively associated with the variable. The T-test indicated that each one the independent variables are statistically significant in explaining the extent of productivity of the SME'S.

VI. Conclusion

The crux of this treatise is to assess the connection between gender and entrepreneur skills development at the managerial level in selected SMEs. Judging from the result obtained, it is concluded that gender discrimination also determines the productivity of SMES. The various perceptions of the sexes may stem primarily from the discrepancy within the salary levels of the genders. Education and skill contributed a good deal to the gender gap in Nigeria. Educational attainment seems to be a vital variable in determining the satisfaction with pay managers within the SME industry. Eventually, the research can be ready to be tied together to draw some specific conclusions about the genders. In the end, we would actually find that we aren't really that different. On the opposite hand, we may find some real differences. Either way, the knowledge will help men and women close within the workplace and make our workforce stronger.

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