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Motivation to become an entrepreneur: a study of Nigerian women's decisions

Document Information:

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Abstract:

Purpose – The paper aims to draw on rational choice theory (RCT) to explore factors underpinning the decision by female entrepreneurs in Nigeria to enter self-employment.

Design/methodology/approach – A survey research design involving the use of questionnaire and structured interviews to obtain primary data was adopted. Primary data pertain to 300 female entrepreneurs currently engaged in their businesses in three states within the south-west of the country. A model developed from reviewed literature and multivariate logistic regression analysis was used to analyse data.


Findings – Findings suggest the significance of “educational” and “family” capital, an “internal” orientation to social recognition as well as an “external” environment characterised by deregulation of the economy. Results broadly conform to RCT theory postulates of rational behaviour.

Research limitations/implications – Inter-regional variances could not be addressed since the data are analysed in aggregate. Analysis of disaggregate data are required to study these differences and also those at the inter-sector (manufacturing/services, etc.) levels.

Practical implications – Results from the study indicate that the government measures such as de-regulation which may as yet be in small measures have started to work and that these should be continued. The government can go a step further and identify entrepreneurs with characteristics described in this paper and provide them with the requisite help to get them started on the entrepreneurship route.

Originality/value – The study makes a theoretical contribution by applying the lens of rational choice to this specific context. It also makes an original empirical contribution by focussing on an under-researched group by examining the influence of personal, social, market and environmental factors on the probability of females becoming entrepreneurs.

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