

Assessment of Cultural Influences on Entrepreneurial Activities of Small Manufacturing Firms in Nnewi, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the assessment of cultural influences on entrepreneurial activities of small manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study adopted the survey method with emphasis on small manufacturing firms in Nnewi. 98 manufacturing firms were sampled. The study results agreed that cultural influences affect SME's/entrepreneur's ability to succeed and survive. There is need to emphasize the educational and leadership factors by encouraging the age-long individuality of igbo man. Generally, just as other cited authors have sounded a note of warning, the significance of the relationship between factors of entrepreneurial success and the cultural environment should be applied with caution.

Keywords: Contextual; Cultural Influences; Entrepreneurial; SMEs; Education; Prior Knowledge; Leadership Factor; Nature; Communication; Afia Olu; Ikwu Aru; Nnewi; Nigeria

JEL Classification: L32

Background to the Study

It is common knowledge amongst scholars and policy makers that SMEs are vital components of the drive toward attaining sustainable growth and development for any country. In western economies a large proportion of income and outputs are the consequence of the existence and survival of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). More recently they have come to realize also that these SMEs are setup, grown and sustained by entrepreneurs who are the driving force behind the SMEs development, survival and dynamism. In line with this, countries such as United States of America, United Kingdom, Malaysia, India, China, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Sweden, Brazil and a host of others have continued to emphasize the importance of

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entrepreneurship development (Lucky & Olusegun, 2012; Nwite, 2014; Okwu, Obiakor & Obiwuru, 2013) The emphasis now is on measures that will encourage the emergence of entrepreneurs who provide, grow and sustain SMEs in the country.

Idemobi (2005) has cited various authors who have called for research works in the area of Nigerian management system, like Damachi (1978); Andah (1982) Ejiofor (1984); and Akpala (1984); whose calls, he said, though answered by Iyanda (1985), was insufficient and which was a call to action which was also reechoed by Ewurum (1991) some years later. Since then other studies have been conducted that gave useful materials especially in the present area of interest like that of Mazonde and Carmichael (2016); Lucky and Olusegun (2012); Gómez-Araujo and Bayon (2017); Okwu, Obiakor and Obiwuru, (2013) in the area of cultural influence in respect of entrepreneurship, some which have already been cited above. In addition, some of these studies have been conducted on cross cultural basis which have provided reinforcement for the contextual theory and its applicability in all areas of management both within and outside the country.

In areas of management education, like entrepreneurship, possible explanation and solution have been proposed. Greenberg, Mckone-Sweet, and Wilson (2011) have observed that even to a large extent in developed countries as is dominant in yet to be developed countries like Nigeria, the lack of indebt knowledge and understanding of social context and perspective, have caused management education to primarily focus on the maximization of profit. They have, therefore, proposed that what is required is focusing education and research on understanding self- and social contexts and more importantly encourage the application of same in local environments, encouraging actions to be guided by this paradigm shift. The word 'entrepreneur', according to Sonowal, (2008) for instance, has not been generally used in the study of tribal and peasant societies, mainly because the concept itself arose in the context of western, capitalist and industrialized economy. Nigerian scholars have come to realize this and have devoted studies in this direction.

To this end, the work of Madichie, Nkamnebe and Idemobi (2008) comes easily and timely into focus. The study focused on the neglected African indigenous cultures in order to investigate and establish the nature of cultural determinants of entrepreneurial emergence in Africa. This study had emphasis on Sub-Sahara Africa and narrowing down on our area of interest, which is Nnewi. Some variables have been identified by them as being responsible for the entrepreneurial emergence in this area. This present work therefore is an attempt to apply identified variables to investigate this phenomenon in light of the strong positive relationship entrepreneurial activities have with SMEs.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria today with the unfriendly, erratic and frustrating business environment that exists, SMEs are finding it difficult to start, survive or grow. In different parts of the country the average rate of failure is very high. Yet evidence from previous studies have pointed out that in spite of this unrelenting environment, the SMEs in Nnewi are painting, albeit, a different and opposite picture of successes. In fact, these SMEs are emerging and surviving, even one would be tempted to say, flourishing. This sustainability of the SMEs has been ascribed majorly to the entrepreneurial environment of Nnewi and its people, amongst other things. The possible variables that have determined or have been responsible for this entrepreneurial spirit, transformed into success, have been recognized by previous studies. In other studies, outside our area of focus, four of these variables have been applied in a study by Debanjan and Niladri (2015) that is in the Indian cultural context. These variables include education, prior knowledge, communication and leadership. Presently there arises the need for an investigation into the nature of cultural influences on these four factors which have come to play on entrepreneurial activities of SMEs with special focus on small manufacturing firms in the Nigerian context. The basic concern for this present work is to find constructs or model(s) that link these culturally influenced variables to the small manufacturing firm's entrepreneurial activities that in turn affect the rate of success, survival and existence that have engendered this "Nnewi phenomenon" in Anambra State Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study is to assess the nature of the cultural influences on the entrepreneurial activities of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises (SMMEs) in Nnewi. The specific objectives are;

1. To ascertain the nature of the relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festivals of Nnewi and the education factor of entrepreneurs of SMEs.
2. To examine the nature of the relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festivals of Nnewi and prior knowledge of the entrepreneur,
3. To ascertain the nature of the relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festivals of Nnewi and the entrepreneur's communication factor in Nnewi.
4. Examine the nature of the relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festivals of Nnewi and entrepreneur's leadership factor.
5. To construct a model to link cultural influences and the entrepreneurial activities of small and medium manufacturing enterprises in Nnewi.

6. To recommend the best cultural practices for the promotion of small and medium manufacturing enterprises in Nnewi.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to address the research questions;

Ho₁ There is no significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and the education factor of entrepreneurs of SMEs

Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and prior knowledge of the entrepreneur,

Ho₃ There is no significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and communication factor of the SMEs entrepreneurs in Nnewi.

Ho₄ There is no significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and leadership factor of SMEs entrepreneurs is not significant.

Ho₅ It is not possible to construct a model to link cultural influences and the entrepreneurial activities of small and medium manufacturing enterprises in Nnewi

Ho₆ There is no significant recommendation on the best cultural practices for the promotion of small and medium enterprises in Nnewi.

The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of importance in academics because it will further advance knowledge in the area of entrepreneurial development in Nigeria in general and the Nnewi town in particular. It will open opportunities for studies of contextual application of entrepreneurial concepts, theories and assist in the development of principles in the long run in the area of entrepreneurial activities in none western cultures of the world in general and the African setting in particular. The model developed will assist in the understanding the linkage between cultural and entrepreneurial development so urgently needed by the society.

Scope of the Study

The study is an attempt to investigate the nature of relationship between the influence of culture and the activities of the small manufacturers in Nnewi Town with focus on Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Nnewi North as a local government comprises of four autonomous communities: Otolo, Uruagu, Umudim and Nnewi-Ichi. The local government is located east of Niger River, and about 22

kilometers south east of Onitsha in Anambra State. The study will also focus on the effects of Afia Olu and Ikwu Aru festival of Nnewi on the success of small and medium enterprise in Nnewi North LGA. (Afia-Olu, also known as Ifejioku) is the new yam festival which revolves around drama and rituals especially religious ones. These entrepreneurs influenced by the culture have been identified as the catalyst that lead ultimately to the dynamism observed and the propagating of sustainable SMEs sector in general and small manufacturing firms in particular in Nnewi, Anambra State Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

From economic theory it has been established that, for any country to grow and develop all the four factors of production would have to be employed in such a way that optimal result would be achieved. This employment of the resources would have to be initiated by entrepreneurs being the forth factor who is also the manager and employer of the other resources. According to Tachibana (2014) in market economies, entrepreneurs are primary driving force of economic growth as they find and realize new businesses. From theories of development and for economic development to be attained, all sectors of the economy must be active, productive and part of the process of growth and change. In their own course of development, the developed and emerging countries have found a trend that highlights the crucial role that the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have and must continue to play. SMEs are defined differently in different countries but the bases for categorization are size of workforce, capital base and turnover. In Malaysia, Libya, UK, Australia the number of employees range from 5 to 50 for small, up to 250 for medium scale enterprises (Lucky & Olusegun, 2012). The money equivalent differs because of their being categorized in local national currencies but this can be overcome by conversion into a common denomination like Dollars. In Nigeria as compiled by Lucky and Olusegun (2012) the employee ranges from 5 and up to 50 workers, with minimum capital outlay of ₦5000. 00 and not exceeding ₦5,000,000. 00 and whose turnover not exceeding ₦ 25,000,000. 00 annually.

These SMEs have been emerging because of people now are recognized as “entrepreneurs”. These types of people have the goal of setting up new businesses from the need gaps they identified in the market. They strive to fill the gaps with products from their organization. In this way new SMEs are born. They go further to ensure that the new businesses stay afloat by being creative and innovative over time. Therefore, the interest of any developing nation today is surely to maximize entrepreneurship among its people (Bula, 2012). In Nigeria, it has always been recognized that economic development requires growth with structural and technological change (Ajakaiye, 2002). These structural changes would have been accompanied by increased activities in the manufacturing sector of the economy. It

was also recognized that this change came to developed countries through the encouragement of small and medium scale businesses as it will be evident shortly.

According to Bennett (2015) culture is a concept rooted in anthropology and sociology, where it is a key term in explaining the existence and nature of social order. Selamat (2011) stated that socio-cultural environment refers to rules, shared values, beliefs, norms and code of conduct that is culturally rooted. Aluko (2003) goes further to state that ample evidence suggests that Nigerian culture in general, emphasizes low individualism and high collectivism, but specifically Igbo culture as a whole is receptive to change and is achievement oriented. In addition, the tendency towards individualism, the excessive self-seeking competition is balanced by a strong loyalty to the group. So, something(s) also are required to explain the dynamism of the Nnewi culture, that is part of the Igbo community, that may explain or would have encouraged the high entrepreneurial development rate in the area. This makes the review of relevant theoretical literature and results of empirical studies pertinent.

Theoretical Framework

Theory drives the evolution of scholarship in an academic discipline, shapes the academic discuss by delineating a field's boundaries, the core questions to be examined and preferred research methods (Zahra, 2007). According to Ejiofor (1981) there exists a gap between theory and practice in management and until this gap is addressed, management development programmes would continue to achieve only sub-optimal results. To solve problems generally, one must know the nature and what the causes of these problems are.

Lucky and Olusegun (2012) have noted that both entrepreneurship and small business have the same goals, and both have been noted for their contributions towards employment creation, economic growth, economic development and economic transformation. They have also cited numerous authors who support his assertion that factors such as: environment, culture, location, individual characteristics, firm characteristics etc all affect both SMEs and entrepreneurship development. So, a situation where the entrepreneur is an owner of a small business then one would be considering the same phenomenon. So not much marked distinct discussions of either will be embarked upon and note must be taken that the discussions that follow assume that the SMEs in this paper refer to a business owner who is engaged in both entrepreneurship and a small business.

In entrepreneurial studies two approaches have been used to carry out research. The first is the trait-based approach and the second is the Cognitive approach. Under the first approach, McClelland (1965) had laid the background works for the discussion on entrepreneurship traits. It was Brochhaus and Horitz (1986) that narrowed the

number of traits to four major personality traits that can be ascribable to an individual. Hossain (2006). further itemized and enlarged these four traits into more as follows:

- 1) Self-confidence; Confidence, independence, individuality, optimism.
- 2) Task-result oriented; Need for achievement, profit-oriented, persistence, perseverance, determination, hard work, drive, energy, and initiatives.
- 3) Risk-taker Risk-taking ability, likes challenges.
- 4) Leadership Leadership Behavior, Gets along with others, Responsive to suggestions, criticisms.
- 5) Originality Innovative, Creative, Flexible (openness of mind), Resourceful, Versatile, Knowledgeable.
- 6) Future-oriented Foresight, Perceptive

Singh and Rahman (2013) revealed that there is a significant relationship between successful entrepreneurs' score on trait variables and their level of success. However, warned that researchers have to be careful about making generalizations by taking of relationship between trait variables and success of entrepreneurs as linear. In an attempt to overcome the shortcomings of trait theories, the second theory has been put forward. According to Sánchez, Carballo and Gutiérrez (2011) the cognitive approach to entrepreneurship is a response to the limitations of the trait approach and it has as its objective to explain entrepreneurial behaviour through studies of cognitive elements such as scripts, self-efficacy, cognitive styles and heuristics. Having noted this but keeping in mind the approach used by most authors, this cognitive theory approach will not be applied.

Going forward, Ejiofor (1981) has offered a list of five factors which in isolation or in combination can cause a gap between theory and practice; the nature of the theories, nature of management process, the separation of the theory from the practitioner, the motives of the practitioner and the environmental constraints. The principles are either incomplete or are at cross purposes with each other and their limitations may not be clearly stated. Then there is the problem of time and human nature which at best pitches the manager into a situation where he or she has to deal with it in futuristic terms. The next problem would stem from the fact that both the theorists (academics) and the practitioners (manager) live and work in different settings. Then there come into focus the motives and the attitude of the practitioner which stem from personal objectives. Finally, and this is the one this study is strongly concerned with, is that even with the best of motives and the willingness to apply the theories, the environmental factors may still hinder the application or distort the outcome adversely. This brings us to the issue of contextual theories which advocate giving attention to the background and circumstances of the practitioner before

theories are applied or even postulated and made principles (not laws). In fact, Greenberg et al. (2011) have stated that the lack of deep understanding of social context and perspective is at the heart of recent criticisms of management education where economic and profit maximization take centre stage.

Abimbola, *et al* (2011) has stated that the argument in sociology that individuals affect and are affected by the social structure has been taken to bear on the study of entrepreneurship. Zahra, (2007) has postulated that theory-based research can contribute greatly to our understanding of complex entrepreneurial phenomena and the challenges that face entrepreneurs in their efforts to conceive develop and manage their new organizations. According to Mahmood, Basharat and Bashir (2012) leadership is a process in which one individual influence others toward the attainment of group/organizational goals. Mahmood, Basharat and Bashir (2012) have also differentiated management as a function (planning, organizing, controlling, directing, leading, monitoring, staffing, communicating and coordinating etc.) to carry out and leadership which is relationship (selecting talent, motivating, coaching and building trust etc.) between leader and followers. Furthermore, considering the theories connected with entrepreneurship, Greenberg, Mckone-Sweet, and Wilson (2011), have stated that at the heart of entrepreneurial leadership resides a person's deep understanding of him or herself, the context in which activities of that individual are undertaken as well as the network of relationships of that person. Zahra (2007) has pointed out that a mismatch of theory and context can result in false leads and inconclusive findings which may lead in turn to encourage authors to question the utility of their chosen theories, and lead to call for further studies and invite confusion about the relationships of interest.

Empirical Review

In terms of SMEs, according to OECD, (2000), they make-up the largest proportion of business and play tremendous roles in wealth creation, employment generation, provision of goods and services, creating a better standard of living in addition to contributing to a large extent to the Gross domestic products of countries that encourage them to start and grow. Specifically, in Ireland, Korea, Japan, USA, Germany, UK, France, Mexico, the percentage of all the enterprises that were SMEs ranged approximately between 80% for the US to 99% for UK and Mexico between the years 2004 to 2006 (Lunati, 2010). These countries mentioned here are either presently ranked developed or emerging countries. In Nigeria,

Djankov et al, (2007) have found that family characteristics have the strongest influence on becoming an entrepreneur. In contrast, success as an entrepreneur is primarily determined by the individual's smartness and higher education in the family. Entrepreneurs are not more self-confident than non-entrepreneurs; and

overconfidence is bad for business success. Michalewska- Pawlak (2010) carried out a unique study in none socialist Poland which restored private ownership and free market mechanism. This could be said to be a study of a 'virgin society' starting to learn from the scratch. This study explored social and cultural context of entrepreneurship development in polish rural areas, its system of values, morality, attitudes and social influence that can stimulate or limit rural entrepreneurship and observed that rural entrepreneurship in Poland is strongly supported by family and neighbourhood relationships and the peasant tradition of "working in private farm" learned from many years of ownership and farm management. Their finding supports the view that culture, in particular their communal ownership mentality has affected the rate of entrepreneurial development. Also, the results of the study by Okafor, and Mordi, (2010) show that entrepreneurial development can be linked with the psychological traits of an entrepreneur who is subject to environmental factors that affect the enterprise. Another relevant study by Forkuoh, Appienti, and Osei (2012), in the African context, that is, in Ghana went as far as identifying negative and positive cultural influences and recommending modernization of traditional cultural practices that have negative impact on businesses to meet the current trend in the international business communities, and also help document and improve those practices that have positive impact on small businesses.

However, from recent empirical studies, it has been observed by several academics that the environment that the entrepreneurial activity is to occur in none European environments has been assumed and treated in practice as those conditions found in developed European countries. This runs contrary to the warning given by Zahra (2007). That is why, according to Sonowal, (2008) the word 'entrepreneur' has not been generally used in the study of tribal and peasant societies mainly because the concept itself arose in the context of western, capitalist and industrialized economy. This carried the implied "fact" that entrepreneurs never existed in cultures other than the developed European countries. So in the context of the African setting of this study's interest, Nnewi; Madichie, Nkamnebe and Idemobi (2008) have identified critical aspects of Nnewi cultural traits that propels *zeal and managerial performance*. These they have itemized as individualism, innovativeness, trust, intimacy and openness in the workplace, submissive apprenticeship as well perseverance. Also, they suggested that the industrious cultural attributes found in the Nnewi community amongst its people were directly ascribable to the town's two major festivals the "Afiá Olu" and "Ikwu Aru" festivals. Djankov et al, (2007) have found that family characteristics have the strongest influence on becoming an entrepreneur. In contrast, success as an entrepreneur is primarily determined by the individual's smartness and higher education in the family. The study by Debanjan and Niladri (2015) aimed to measure micro entrepreneurial success in terms of socio-cultural and skill related factors of Indian micro entrepreneurs using a set of four determinants like- education, prior experience, communication and leadership skills

of micro-entrepreneurs. The result of that study suggests that entrepreneurs having higher education, effective communication skill, and possessing leadership skill are likely to become more successful in running their enterprise. However, these four determinants have been found to have differing levels of influence on the entrepreneurial success. To proceed in this study and keeping in mind the importance of the four factors and the need to be able to apply these in the context of this present study we will deeply lean on the study of Debanjan and Niladri (2015). In line with this we review the four factors as defined by them.

Education: According to Debanjan and Niladri (2015) the education of an entrepreneur has been used in a number of previous studies as one of the key factors that affect firm's performance and success and furthermore that education helps entrepreneurs making good judgments, best use of information, exploit opportunities well; all contributing to firm growth, development and success.

Prior Working Experience: Experience gives specific knowledge and skills to entrepreneurs. Experience from past and present work can offer both general and specific knowledge and skills, including management, teamwork, sales, cooperation and industrialization. (Debanjan & Niladri, 2015)

Leadership Skill: Leadership is often defined as a process through which power is used to direct and coordinate the activities of group members to meet a goal (Yukl & Van, 1992; Yukl, 2006). Leadership essentially involves a relationship of mutual loyalty between a leader and a group of followers in reaching of a collective goal. (Debanjan & Niladri, 2015)

Communication Skill: according to Debanjan and Niladri (2015) communication is also viewed as an all-important skill of entrepreneurs. According to Montagno *et al.* (1986), suggested that communication concept must be regarded as a multidimensional which has some aspects that are regarded as important like an entrepreneur should be able to discuss, explain, market and sell their good or service. It is also important to be able to interact effectively.

The next task is to find a measure of success. Masuo *et al.* (2001) said that small business success is normally specified in terms of economic or financial measures which include return on assets, profits, sales, employees and survival rates; and no financial measures, such as customer satisfaction, personal development and personal realization. This study will use one of these measures of success which is survival rate.

In terms of SMEs, according to OECD, (2000), they make-up the largest proportion of business and play tremendous roles in wealth creation, employment generation, provision of goods and services, creating a better standard of living in addition to contributing to a large extent to the Gross domestic products of countries that encourage them to start and grow. Specifically, in Ireland, Korea, Japan, USA,

Germany, UK, France, Mexico, the percentage of all the enterprises that were SMEs ranged approximately between 80% for the US to 99% for UK and Mexico between the years 2004 to 2006 (Lunati, 2010). These countries mentioned here are either presently ranked developed or emerging countries. In Nigeria,

Conceptual Framework

Based on the foregoing the following diagram was developed in order to assist the researchers in getting a clear picture of the variables concerned and the actions required.

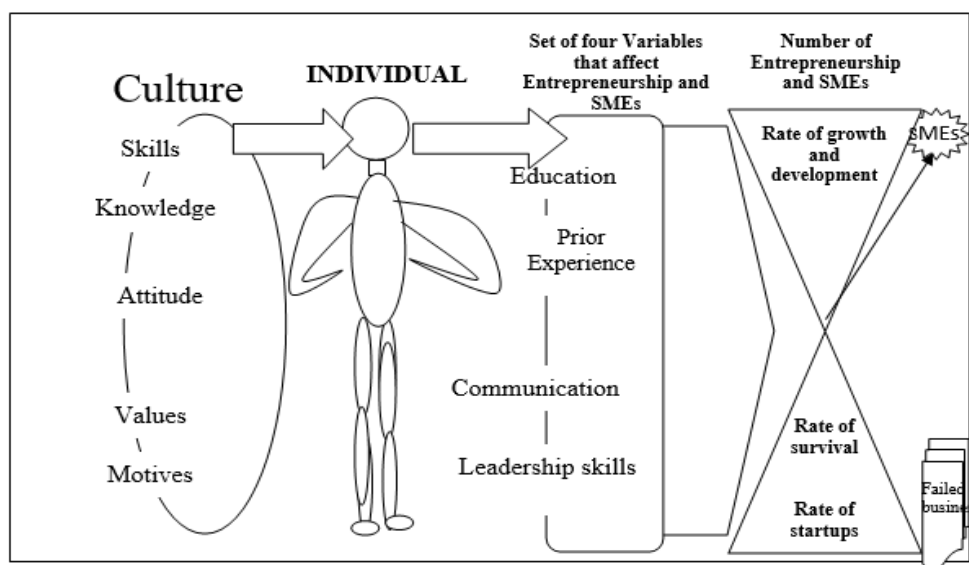


Figure 1. Model of cultural influences, the individual and the entrepreneurial/SMEs environment

Source: Adapted and modified using Aderonke, J. (2014) Culture determinants and family business succession in Jos metropolis, Plateau State Nigeria, Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences (JETEMS) 5(5):379-390.

The figure depicts the flow of cultural influences that shape the entrepreneur and which in turn makes available the entrepreneurs education, prior experience, ability to communicate and the entrepreneurial leadership qualities that go to impact on SMEs. If the influences are conducive the SMEs will all things being equal increase and become sustainable, while if these influences are not conducive then business failures will tend to be the order of the day! The study can therefore proceed from here.

Methodology

Data and Methodology

The population for this study includes the SMEs registered within Nnewi North LGA and they number 130. The simple random sampling procedure was adopted to select the microenterprises for collecting. A sample size of 98 of the finite population of 130 microenterprises was computed at 5% confidence interval, allowing 95% level of precision with the use of Taro Yamane statistical method of sample size determination. A primary survey was conducted by administering a questionnaire to the owners of the sample enterprises 98 in Nnewi by randomly selecting them from the list of registered companies. The questionnaire was administered to them through face to-face interviews after initial visits and taking prior appointments for specific days and times. The researchers also witnessed the Afiolu festival of 2015 to aid understanding of the phenomenon first hand.

Survey Instrument

A questionnaire was constructed to meet the research objectives addressed in the study. The questionnaire contains 35 questions on demographic, socio-cultural and entrepreneurial trait related issues. A set of four dimensions, namely, education, prior experience, communication and leadership skills of an entrepreneur were identified from prior research works and preliminary interviews with experts these were made prominent features of the questionnaire. The response to each question was supposed to reflect the degree of cultural influence of a trait of an entrepreneur that lead to micro entrepreneurial success. The questions ranged from five response categories ranging from “very low” to “very high”, and yes or no dichotomy type questions.

Validity was established using samples of the questionnaire developed after thorough literature review and same was issued to 8 academics from two Nigerian universities; so content validity was evaluated through qualitative judgment to ensure the validity of the developed instrument. Furthermore, the reliability of the developed questionnaire was tested by deploying the statistical test Alpha-Cronbach’s coefficient to the responses received from 20 respondents selected randomly in a pilot study. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was found to be 0. 877 (well over the .70 minimum acceptable levels) which is considered as a good sign of reliability of the questionnaire as indicated by Santosh, (1999). The present study performs multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between the factor’s education, prior experience, communication and leadership skills and micro entrepreneurial success using specific sub variables for each of these four factors. For hypotheses HO1 to HO4 Pearsons Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to generate values and their significance. statistics and significance given, direction and significance level were used to determine whether a relationship exist, how significant it is and so on. SPSS was used to collate, synthesis, analysis and

interpret data generated. Test of significance at .05 level using Pearson's values and significance were then applied to hypotheses Ho₁, Ho₂, Ho₃ and Ho₄.

The statistical tool used for the analysis in respect of Ho₅ was the conventional general linear model in the following general forms:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 \quad \text{for simple regression case}$$

Or

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_n x_n + \varepsilon_1 \quad \text{for the multiple regression type}$$

The following regression model adopted from previous related studies (Forkuoh, Appienti & Osei, 2012; Okafor & Mordi, 2010; Aghajani, Shababi & Fattahi, 2012) was adapted for the purposes of this study:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_j$$

Where x_j represents (Education, Prior experience; Communication and Leadership respectively)

For testing each of the Hypotheses Ho₁ through Ho₄

To test Ho₅ the following model was adapted from the general form used by cited authors:

$$\text{Entrepreneurial Success} = \alpha + \beta_1 (\text{Education}) + \beta_2 (\text{Prior experience}) + \beta_3 (\text{Communication}) + \beta_4 (\text{Leadership}) + \varepsilon_1$$

Thus, the four factors - education, prior experience, communication and leadership skills are considered as independent variables and micro entrepreneurial success (measured as chance of success/survival of enterprises as dependent on a 5-point rating scale) as the dependent variable as used in a similar study by Debanjan and Niladri (2015) that is Very low(1), low(2), moderate(3), high(4), very high(5). These were used to test hypothesis Ho₅.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

Data collected in this section are presented in tables, these also formed the bases for the test of the hypotheses and discussions were then made possible. Descriptive statistics generated in the form of frequency and percentages tables in simple and cross tabulation forms, were used to analyze the quantitative information gathered from respondents for clarity and ease of use and interpretation of garnered information.

Questionnaire requested items from respondents	Responses	Frequency	percentage
Gender	Male	58	64.4
	Female	32	35.6
Educational qualification	No education	0	0
	WASC/Technical	68	75.6
	OND/Technical	7	7.8
	Dip	10	11.1
	HND/BSc. or equivalent	5	5.6
	Post graduate degree		
Apprenticeship undergone	Yes	73.3	73.3
	No	26.7	26.7
Description of business	Trading	6	6.7
	Manufacturing	79	87.8
	Construction	1	1.1
	Trading and Manufacturing	4	4.4
No of employee	1-5 persons	68	75.6
	Above 5 up to 10	4	4.4
	Above 10 up to 20	1	1.1
	Above 20 up to 50	16	17.8
	Above 50 up to 250	1	1.1
How many apprentices in firm	1-5 persons	54	60
	Above 5 to 10	1	1.1
	Above 10 to 20	29	32.2
	Above 20	5	5.6
	None	1	1.1
Length of live of company	1-5years	32	35.6
	Above 5 up to 10	18	20
	Above 10 up to 20	28	31.1
	Above 20	12	13.3
How long has entrepreneur been in business	1-5years	44	48.9
	Above 5 up to 10	12	13.3
	Above 10 up to 20	28	31.1
	20	6	6.7

	Above 20		
hether firm is inherited	Yes	20	22. 2
	No	70	77. 8
firm a family business	Yes	26	28. 9
	No	64	71. 1
Place of origin	Otolo	12	13. 3
	Uruagu	8	22. 2
	Umudim	42	46. 7
	Nnewi-ichi	14	15. 6
	None of the above	14	15. 6

Source: 2018 field survey

The number of questionnaires administered was 98 while 90 were recovered and accepted as valid. This represented a return rate of 92% high than the studies cited earlier and which is within acceptable rate of return. A majority were male, who were indigenes of the study area. A majority of the male were West African School certificate (WASC) holders. The females where generally more educated possessing in some instances Post graduate degrees. As can be seen below

Table 1.1. Cross Tabulation of Gender and Educational Qualification

		Educational qualification				Total
		WASC/Technical Certification	OND/Technical Diploma	HND/B. Sc. or Equivalent	Postgraduate degree	
Gender	Male	58	0	0	0	58
	Female	10	7	10	5	32
Total		68	7	10	5	90

Source: 2018 field survey

The females are more likely to be managers and entrepreneurs as the firms they own or work for are not new one and are unlikely to start new ones as can be seen from the table below

Table 1.2. Cross tabulation of gender and the age of the firm

		How long has your company been in existence?				Total
		1-5 years	Above 5 up to 10	Above 10 up to 20	Above 20	
Gender	Male	32	18	8	0	58
	Female	0	0	20	12	32
Total		32	18	28	12	90

Source: 2018 field survey

The table 1. 3: below contains the data that were used for the test of hypotheses:

Table 1.3. Descriptive Data for Hypothesis Testing

Questionnaire requested items from respondents	Responses	Frequency	percentage
Nnewi culture ensures that a business leader has all the training that is required for success	Sd	10	11. 1
	D	8	8. 9
	U	15	16. 7
	A	41	45. 6
	SA	16	17. 8
Personal participation in Afiolu Festival	Sd	16	17. 8
	D	18	20
	U	11	12. 2
	A	25	27. 8
	SA	20	22. 2
Afiolu Festival plays a big role in my success as an SME owner	Sd	33	36. 7
	D	19	21. 1
	U	15	16. 7
	A	7	7. 8
	SA	16	17. 8
Nnewi culture ensures that an entrepreneur becomes a leader (leadership)	Sd	15	16. 7
	D	14	15. 6
	U	11	12. 2
	A	34	37. 8
	SA	16	17. 8
Communication of important theme is encouraged by	Sd	8	8. 9
	D	8	8. 9
	U	15	16. 7
	A	42	46. 7

Nnewi culture (communication)	SA	17	18.9
Entrepreneurial activities are likely to be learned or educated through mentoring (Education)	Sd	2	2.2
	D	6	10.0
	U	9	11.1
	A	42	32.2
	SA	31	44.4
The prior knowledge of and interaction with entrepreneurs in Nnewi contribute to success (prior Knowledge)	Sd	2	2.2
	D	14	15.6
	U	13	14.4
	A	35	38.9
	SA	26	28.9

Source: 2018 field survey

The independent variables that were previously obtained from empirical studies were leadership, communication, education, and prior knowledge; while the dependent variable entrepreneurial success was represented by the length of time the business had been in existence. These are contained in the table 1. 3 above These were used to run regression analysis with the aim of obtaining a linear model for all the variables with the aim of infusing all in one equation to determine the effects of combining all the independent variables on the dependent variable and also look at the effects of each factor on the success measure and establishing if there were relationships, the type, magnitude and direction of those relationships between the dependent variable and the four independent variables. Also, ANOVA was performed to further assist in verifying the results of the regression analysis. The tables below were obtained from the analysis:

Table 1.4. Cross tabulation of Participation in Festival and the Four Factors

Variables		Educational qualification	The prior knowledge	Communication	Leadership
I participate in or observe the Afiolu festival every year N=90	Pearson Correlation	-.735**	.924**	.910**	.960**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000

The analysed data in table 1. 4 enabled the H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} and H_{04} to be tested. The table is displaying the outcomes of the Pearson's Product Moment correlation and its coefficients and their significances. The R lies between -1: 0: 1. The further away

from zero the more correlated they are or the stronger the relationship. Negative or positive signs on the value would tell the direction of that relationship so.

Form the table 1. 4 H_{01} , e Value -. 735 indicates that there is a strong negative relationship between the variables and in this case the significance . 05 with the sig computed at . 000 (i. e > . 05) the relationship is significant. Therefore, we can safely say that there is s negative significant relationship between cultural influences on the education variable. We reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and the education factor of entrepreneurs of SMEs. Next, we test H_{01} and again form the table 1. 4, Value . 924 indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between the variables and in this case at the significance level of . 05 with the sig computed at . 000 (i. e > . 05 or considering that it was a two tailed test it is still significant) the relationship is significant. Therefore, we can safely say that there is positive significant relationship between cultural influences on the prior knowledge variable. We reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and the prioir knowledge factor of entrepreneurs of SMEs. The value for the other two variable are the same as that of prior knowledge and we can state thus for each of the remaining hypotheses.

H_{01} We reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant relationship between the Afia Olu, Ikwu Aru, other festival of Nnewi and the education factor of entrepreneurs of SMEs;

H_{02} Reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant positive relationship between cultural influences and the prior knowledge of the entrepreneurs in SME in Nnewi;

H_{03} Reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant positive relationship between cultural influences and the communication factor of the entrepreneurs in SME in Nnewi;

H_{04} Reject the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant positive relationship between cultural influences and the leadership factor of the entrepreneurs in SME in Nnewi.

The next was to to test the fifth hypothesis H_{05} and it was conducted as follows:

Testing of hypothesis: H_{05} . The following tables were used and were derived from data analysed from descriptive tables 1. 0 and 1. 3 above, this resulted in the following tables 1. 5, 1. 6 and 1. 7 below

Table 1. 5. ANOVA Model and Variables F-values and Significance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.882	4	20.220	115.037	.000 ^a
	Residual	14.941	85	.176		
	Total	95.822	89			

- a. Predictors: (constant), leadership, communication, education, prior knowledge
- b. Dependent variable: How long have been business been in existence?

Table 1. 6. Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.919 ^a	.844	.837	.419	.844	115.037	4	85	.000	.400

- a. Predictors: (constant), leadership, communication, education, prior knowledge
- b. Dependent variable: How long have been business been in existence?

Table 1. 7. Coefficients First itiration

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
		1	(Constant)	4.529			.220		20.630	.000
	√Leadership	-.795	.119	-1.048	-6.679	.000	-1.031	-.558	.075	13.419
	√Communication	.268	.148	.299	1.803	.075	-.027	.563	.067	15.023
	√Education	-.364	.131	-.336	-2.788	.007	-.623	-.104	.126	→7.928
	Prior knowledge	.138	.160	.146	.861	.392	-.181	.456	.063	x15.782

- a. Dependent variable: How long has business been in existence?

The multiple R value was .919 that is 91.9%, furthermore F-value of 115.037 with associated at significance level was .000. This result was indicative of a good fit of the data into the linear regression model. The F-value was significant then it means that there is a statistical linear relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. From the table of coefficients the following linear model is represented thus

$$\text{Entrepreneurial Success} = 4.529 + (-.364) \text{ Education} + .138 \text{ (Prior experience)} + .268 \text{ (Communication)} + (-.795) \text{ (Leadership)} + \epsilon$$

Equation 1

It is also worthy of note that all the B coefficients had negative values except communication. However, going forward with this equation would be misleading and misrepresentation of the true relationship because the VIF and the tolerance are important consideration in order to eliminate double counter and loading of factor in

other words to avoid multi-collinearity. The rule according to Burns and Burns (2002) states that a VIF of 10 and above is indicative of possible existence of multi-collinearity and looking at the table 4 above only one of the factors pass this test. The solution would be to go through a process of elimination of one of the variables and run the regression again until all factors have met this criterion. In this case from table 1. 7 the outgoing variable is prior knowledge with the highest VIF value. The following equations were the result of this iteration process and the final equation represents the nearest to meeting the criterion and therefore was adopted.

From Iteration number 2

$$\text{Entrepreneurial Success} = 4.567 + (-.736) \text{ Education} + .280(\text{Communication}) + (-.303)\text{Education} + \epsilon \text{-----equation 2}$$

From Iteration number 3

$$\text{Entrepreneurial Success} = 4.563 + (-.589) \text{ leadership} + (-.172)\text{Education} + \epsilon 1 \text{ ---equation 3}$$

The last equation and its analysis was a product of the following tables obtained from

Table 1.8. Model: Summary^b for 3rd Iteration

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.914 ^a	.836	.832	.425	.836	221.903	2	87	.000	.287

Table 1.9. ANOVA^b for Final Iteration

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.117	2	40.058	221.903	.000 ^a
	Residual	15.705	87	.181		
	Total	95.822	89			

Table 1.10. Coefficients for Last Iteration

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.563	.218		20.935	.000	4.129	4.996		
	Leadership	-.589	.061	-.777	-9.725	.000	-.710	-.469	.295	3.387
	Education	-.172	.086	-.159	-1.990	.050	-.344	.000	.295	3.387

a. Dependent Variable: How long have been in business?

Form table 1. 8 The multiple R value was . 914 that is 91. 4% of the changes in the dependent variable could be attributable to the two independent variables, not too

different from the first case, furthermore F-value of 221.903 with associated significance at .05 level was $f_{sig} .000$. This result was indicative of a good fit of the data also into the final linear regression model. The F-value was significant therefore it indicates that there exists a statistical linear relationship between the two predictors and the dependent variable. The coefficients were -.589 and -.172 for leadership and education respectively. The negative signs on both variables indicated negative relationships. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis that stated that it is not possible to construct a model to link cultural influences and the entrepreneurial activities of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Nnewi and state that

H_{05} That it is possible to construct a model to link cultural influences and the entrepreneurial activities of Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Nnewi

Though this model would in fact exclude two of the variables earlier included because of double counting that would occur if this were to be ignored. This led us to the next section which is the discussion of the findings.

Discussion

This section must be started by pointing out the revelations of the analysis of data and the test of hypothesis H_{05} . The first striking thing is that cultural influences are at work on the entrepreneur in Nnewi just as they are in other places, some positive and some negative. The result of this study are in conformity with the other studies like that of Aderonke (2014) in respect of culture determinants and family business succession, Okafor and Mordi, (2010) in Nigeria Djankov et al, (2007) quest for evidence in Brazil about what makes a Successful Entrepreneur, Michalewska-Pawlak (2012) in Poland, Forkuoh, Appienti, and Osei (2012) and their own quest in Ghana, The Hypothesis H_{01} through H_{04} had all shown that a positive or a negative relationship could exist. These go to support the studies like those of Madichie, Nkamnebe and Idemobi (2008) that have in our own context tried to establish that cultural environment and factors come to play in African context. This is not only to know that they are there but to also encourage elimination of "bad" cultural environments and factors but to take maximum advantage of the areas of the cultural influences that can yield positive results for the African countries, in general and Nigeria in particular.

However in the case of Nnewi and this is very interesting when the same variables were put together in order to obtain a predictive model using the general linear model and remodeling it to suit the context of the study, it became apparent with the use of methods of eliminating loading and double counting, that two of the four factors that were put forward as determinants before the model could be complete had to be removed using an iterative process as prescribed by Burns and Burns (2002). All the variables were significantly related to the dependent variable (success of the

entrepreneur) from the Pearson product method coefficients obtained. When the results so obtained are applied as a result of the strength of the relationships one would have ordinarily come to the conclusion that: that was that. However, when the multiple regression was used on the same data to test hypothesis Ho₅ it was found that strong negative correlations exist between all the variables, some in large magnitudes and others to lesser degrees. It was evident that VIF values obtained were well over the maximum of 10 except one of the variables. This gave some variables the potential of either boosting the ability of the influence of one of the other variables to be more negative, positive or altogether become insignificant. This points to the need for caution therefore at this stage of the development of entrepreneurship in Nigeria and the African continent and developing countries while trying to establish firm relationship(s) between cultural influences and the entrepreneur. Clearly in the context of Nnewi it could be said that two variables are affected by the Nnewi culture namely the leadership and education and are the most important, however the two factors that determine the success of the entrepreneur are negatively related to the cultural influences. At first sight this would seem bad but consider the data from the presentation in table 1. 1 Nnewi SMS's men surveyed on the average did not go beyond WASC levels (100% of those surveyed surprisingly! Contrast this with a more evenly skewed and spread distribution in terms of education and this might explain the negative relations that education and success have and consider the position of the same men to apprenticeship as a form of education. On the other hand, if the emphasis is on empowering the females the possibility is high that they will be more receptive to formal education and their dedicated linear model could as well post a positive and significant relationship in contrast to that of the men. If one takes a look at the removal of leadership from the equation one would be tempted to say that it is out of the norm, again the Nnewi people are after all Igbo people and the Igbos are known with adage, Igbo enwero eze- meaning that the Igbo-man has or recognizes no king, the Igbos are known to be individualistic in business and this removal could rightly be said to be in order! The Nnewi man is ready to do "boy" that is, go under tutelage but will take to freedom when enough knowledge is garnered at the slightest opportunity. That is why again the second excluded variable Prior Knowledge comes into play, this variable could in effect on the part of the Nnewi entrepreneur have been subsumed under apprenticeship and rightly so they value mentoring as the most preferred method and therefore prior knowledge would have been double counting for the Nnewi entrepreneur. Had it been that the level of education had been skewed like that of the women maybe prior knowledge might have been more important.

As a way of summary, this study has more than anything else pointed out the need for careful and systematic handling of issues relating to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in the Nigerian context. The context policies and principles are developed, and the context they are to be applied must be paramount in the minds of

whoever is thrust with such responsibility. The research also shows that what may have been conceived as a simple and clearly understood phenomenon may be more complex than what is outwardly expressed. All said and done this paper points to a model that put two important variables that can be influenced over time to increase and sustain the gains from the Nnewi culture.

Conclusion

This study set out to carry out an assessment of cultural influences on entrepreneurial activities of small manufacturing firms in Nnewi Anambra State of Nigeria, this was in the aim of throwing more light on the Nnewi phenomenon as it pertains to their success story in the small manufacturing enterprises in particular and small and medium enterprises in general. In the course of this study the following were found:

1. In general, cultural influences do have significant and great impact on the factors that determine the ability of entrepreneurs in Nnewi to be successful. However, taken one by one the effects can be positive and when taken together may all turn negative.
2. The negative nature of each relationship when taken together seems to be the catalyst that drives the Nnewi entrepreneurial spirit and should not be misconstrued as unconstructive.
3. There is need to emphasis the educational and leadership factors by encouraging the age long individuality of the Nnewi man who is primarily an igbo man who likes independence and deemphasises the leadership factor which seems to set them aside from other Nigerian entrepreneurs in manufacturing at the small and medium level. The 'Igbo ewero eze' concept should be encouraged amongst them however the apprenticeship system is the driving force for male entrepreneurs who do not go beyond WASC and technical certificate level. Refer to the study and recommendations of Aluko (2003) in this respect.
4. The females are not encouraged by the Nnewi culture in the SME business however they are succeeding just like their male counterparts. They on the average are more educated than their male counterparts because for them to succeed they need more than the men. At present majority do not go through mentoring and that is why they rely on formal education to be able to compete favourably with their male counterparts
5. All four factors that ensure success by the entrepreneur in Nnewi proved to have strong relationships to the Nnewi cultural influences. Using the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient education as a factor with --. 735 and a significance of . 000 was found to be strongly and negatively related to the Nnewi cultural influences. The other factors were also strongly influenced by the Nnewi cultural factors but this time positively; these are Prior Knowledge (. 924, sig . 000),

Communication (. 910, sig . 000) and leadership (. 960, sig. 000). The situation is to be taken that the relationship is a complex one that still needs to be explored further possibly one factor at a time broken into more sub factors and re-examined. The present study and those cited are just surfing at the top. There needs to be a deepening of the efforts in the future.

6. Also, it was possible to build a general linear model with leadership and education as the independent variables, while entrepreneurial success measured by length of existence of the Manufacturing as the dependent variable.

Generally, just as other cited authors have sounded a note of warning, the significance of the relationship between factors of entrepreneurial success and the cultural environment should be applied with caution. The entrepreneurial research in Nigeria is still getting up to go and there is still a lot of work that need to be done to ensure that what is applied in our African context is suitable for that context.

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