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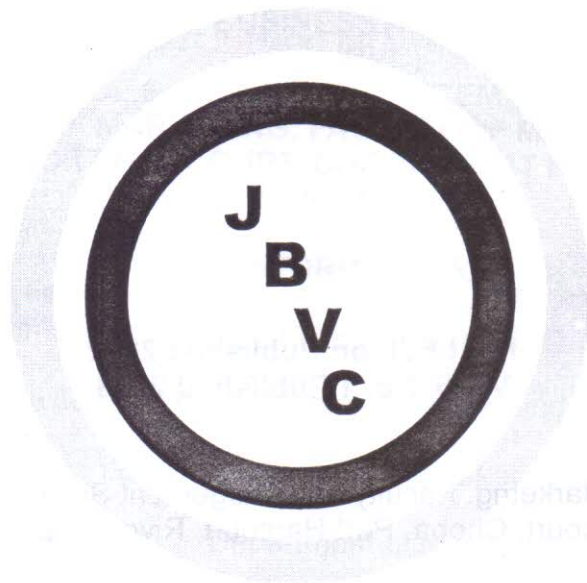


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Influence of Gender on Entrepreneurial Performance: Evidence from Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State

By

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Abstract

*The performance of small scale entrepreneurs in recent past has been recognized to be the key to economic growth and development of every nation and this entrepreneurial performance is believed to be gender driven in some societies. This study purposefully examined the effect of gender on sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The study used appropriate sample size determination methods to arrive at 369 respondents. Primary data were collected through a multiple choice and likert scaled questionnaire that was administered on the target respondents, while secondary data were collected through the relevant Text books, Journals and Workshop materials. Ordered logistic regression analysis model was used to **analyse the subject of discourse. It was discovered through the Pseudo R²** that gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis.*

Introduction

Entrepreneurial activity has been recognized as a significant component of economic development in recent years and this results from the role entrepreneurial activities play in economic growth and development of every nation. Entrepreneurship enables people to use their innovative and creative skills to exploit untapped business opportunities that exist in every nation and translate these opportunities to new products development;

hence, entrepreneurial activity is a major driver of every economy system in the world. The role of entrepreneurial activities in economic development is evident in the number of employment created and empowerment of the vulnerable groups in the society especially women and youths (Abimbola & Agboola, 2011). Yasinand (1996), submits that entrepreneurial activities in any country induce economic growth and development because it empowers the vulnerable groups in the less developed countries like Nigeria.

The participation in entrepreneurial activities cut across genders in most countries of the world but the extent of participation of each gender vary across countries due to certain salient and peculiar factors in each country. The extent of gender participation in entrepreneurial activities is however viewed in different perspectives across different countries. For instance, Chirwa (2008) observed that female entrepreneurial activities in Malawi have enhanced their economic growth than their male counterparts. Similarly, female owned businesses are doing well in business environment and often record higher rate of sales performance than their male counterparts (Chirwa, 2008). Further studies on effect of gender on the performance entrepreneurs as observed by McGee *et. al*, (2009) Delmar & Davidsson, (2000) Carter *et. al*, (2004) Parker, (2009) and Rosenbusch *et. al*, (2009) are mixed and inclusive. For example, McGee *et. al* (2009) and Rosenbush *et. al* (2009), observed in their studies that there are more females engaged in entrepreneurial ventures than males in China and Germany. On the contrary, Tsyganova and Shirokva (2010) observed that the number of women that are venturing into entrepreneurial activities is growing faster than the number of men. Confirming this position further, Pines, Learner and Schwartz (2010), pointed out that the number of women entrepreneurs have increased in recent years and a report on gender difference in entrepreneurial activities in 43 countries across the world also shows that women entrepreneurial activities were lower than that of men. The reason for higher number of men in entrepreneurship before now may be attributed to female disadvantaged position in the society (Kalleberg & Leicht, 1991), lack of finance (Adesua- Lincoln, 2011) and above all culture as it influences their role expectation (Rosenbusch *et al*, 2009).

It is worthy to note however, that whether an entrepreneur is a man or woman, what is important is the success they are able to record in their entrepreneurial activities and that the gender of an entrepreneur might not really be a determinant of the performance of the business owner. Although, the performance of entrepreneurs equally depends on some other factors such as availability of finance, marketing skills, education, tolerance level, conducive environment, religious affiliation, and experience among others. Some of these factors can however hinder the success of both male and female entrepreneurs in any business environment. However, the survey of literature revealed that the

performance of entrepreneurs and other business firms could be measured using performance indicators such as cultural context as it relates to location, sales growth, profit growth, and longtime survival in the marketing environment.

Many researches have been conducted on gender difference in entrepreneurship in other parts of the world such as the studies of Padillah (2008), Pines, Lerner, Schwartz (2010), and Kargwell (2012). These studies were conducted on gender differences in entrepreneurship in western countries and not developing nations such as Nigeria. The review of extant literature revealed that paucity of studies have examined the influence of gender on the success or performance of entrepreneurs in Nigeria. On the basis of this, the present study sought to examine the effect of gender on the sales performance of entrepreneurs in the selected markets within Ilorin metropolis, with the hypotheses that;

- I. What is the effect of gender on the sales performance of small and medium scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis?

Objectives of the study

Specifically, the study seeks to examine the effect of gender on sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis

Hypotheses

Based on the objective of the study, a null hypothesis was formulated, thus:

Ho: Gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis.

Theoretical Review and Conceptual issues

Festus, et al. (2014), described an entrepreneur as an individual, firm, institution that acts in distribution and redistribution of resources to increase the efficient level of production of existing goods and to create new ones. Entrepreneurship is not just about creating new ideas but also making sure that the existing ideas are efficiently improved and sustained. In the same way, an entrepreneur was perceived by Jean-Baptiste, "year as one who shifts economic resources out of an area of lower productivity and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield". In his own view, Schumpeter (1965) sees entrepreneurs as "individuals who exploit market opportunity through technical and/or organizational

innovation". Burdus *et.al.* (2010) submit that an entrepreneur is a person who initiates business idea, takes risks in order to achieve his/her goal, and to make profits and growth by identifying important opportunities. From the above definitions provided by different scholars, one can deduce that an entrepreneur is an individual who uses his/her initiative to inject something new into the economy for his/her benefits and that of others as well as for the growth of the nation's economy.

It is a fact that government in any country may not have the capacity to employ all its citizenry. This fact necessitated the need for entrepreneurial advocacy in every nation especially in developing nations like Nigeria. In essence, the role of entrepreneurship in socio-economic development of a nation cannot be overemphasized in developing nations. This assertion was corroborated by Harper (1991) and Olatunji (2013), when they pointed out the functions performed by entrepreneurs in different areas of a nation's economy to include replacement of crumbling economy and employment generation for army of youths, as well as empowering the disadvantaged strata of the population especially the women folk who are mostly vulnerable.

According to Dingee *et. al* (1997), Driessen and Zwart (2014), Drucker (1970), Knight (1967) and (Duru, 2011) any entrepreneur that want to succeed must have the following characteristics; self-confidence which translates to strong belief in set goals; drive and energy to sustain the business; determine intent of problem solving for completion of various tasks; ability to take risk; learning from failure and ability of the entrepreneur to use criticism to improve performance, creation of new wealth through implementation of new innovation. Driessen and Zwart (2014), further suggested some other necessary traits of successful entrepreneurs which are the need for endurance, need for power, need for autonomy, and need for tolerance of ambiguity.

There are divergent views from scholars on the typology of entrepreneurship. The diversity is based on the various orientations of these scholars. For instance, Danhof (1949), classifies entrepreneurship into four types, these according to him are: Innovative entrepreneur who initiate new idea, new mode of production as well as new market for the products; Imitative entrepreneur as an individual who copy an existing innovative business by injecting new technology and techniques; Fabian entrepreneur on the other hand is a person who apply caution and critical thinking in experimenting change in enterprise; while Drone entrepreneur is described as a person who often refuse to follow new trend or formula. Vesper (1980) categorized entrepreneurs into eleven, based on their business interest. According to him, they are; team builder, self-employed,

independent innovators, multipliers of existing models, exploiters of economic scales, capital gatherers, acquirers, artist who buy and sell, conglomerate builders, speculators, and manipulator of apparent values.

Gender

The terms Gender and Sex are often used interchangeably, however, the duo differs in context. Gender may be viewed from socio-cultural context. Socio-cultural context in the sense that it is ascribed based on social roles passed on by culture to both male and female folks. Sex on the other hand, is biological and natural (Amzat & Dantake, 2012). Sex is biological and natural because it is predetermined before birth. Therefore, gender refers to those roles culturally assigned to both sexes as a member of society. According to Mbilizi (1999), gender is socially and culturally constructed and that the disparities between both sexes (male and female) are fundamentally created by society and not only by any physiological or biological merits and demerits. The different roles assigned to men and women in the society are not because of the biological features of the two sexes but rather as a social construct and socialization process (Mbilizi, 1999).

Studies have equally shown that women could as well perform diligently some roles ascribed to men and vice versa. UNESCO (2003), sees gender as roles and responsibilities created from families, by various societies and different cultures for men and women folks in the society. In the same vein Holmes (2007) asserted that **gender as a phenomenon is a socially** produced disparity between being male and being female. On the other hand, Mutunga (2007) cited in (Ani, 2012), presented it to be a learning process when he stated that “gender refers to social attributes that are acquired or learned during socialization and it defines activities, responsibilities and needs connected to being male or female and not to biological identity associated with masculinity and femininity. Such learnt or acquired attributes are expressed as power, roles, resources and privileges of men and women (Mutunga, 2007).

In most society, socio-cultural roles, responsibilities and expectations are assigned based on sex (Rosenbushet. al, 2009). Society expects men to be responsible to their wives and children by providing them with basic things needed. This role perform by men according to Parson (1937), is regarded as instrumental role. What this means in essence is that men should shoulder the responsibilities of the entire household. While the women are expected to prepare food for the household, do the household chores, rearing of children and other expectations and responsibilities that may be culturally assigned. This is otherwise known as expressive role. However, McGowan (2009) in his study,

demonstrated that women and men in some societies perform similar role, but the involvement of both sexes is largely dependent on the cultural context (Rosenbusch *et. al* ,2009), especially in rearing of children and contributing to economic development (Holmes, 2007).

From all indications, it can be reasoned that gender is not something we are born with but rather a product of socialization in the societies where we belong.

Gender and Entrepreneurship

Though, there may not be adequate data on the number of entrepreneurs in Nigeria vis-à-vis the gender distribution of entrepreneurs. However, a research carried out by Allen *et. al.* (2007) on Women and Entrepreneurship which was reported in General Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) indicated that the number of men in entrepreneurial activities clearly outnumbered that of women based on data collected from over 43 countries across the world. Similarly, Adeyemi (2005), observes that the gender gap in entrepreneurial activity is low in Nigeria with female owned business representing just 6% and 14% between 1980s and 1990s while male participation in entrepreneurial activity stood at 14% and 20% respectively within the same period. This gap according to Adeyemi (2004), is attributable to numerous obstacles especially, the obstacles women face in obtaining loans and start up capitals from banks compared to their male counterparts. Therefore, there are more men that engage in entrepreneurial activities across Nigeria. Pine, Lerner and Schwartz (2010), in their analysis of the gender difference in entrepreneurial participation made it known that what accounted for low turnout of women in entrepreneurial activities is lack of technical skills. They revealed that the percentage of women engaging in entrepreneurial activities is in most instances higher in countries where per capital income is low. As a result, the only means of making a living is by participating in entrepreneurial activities.

Some researchers such as Brush (1992), Srinivasan *et. al.* (1994), Carter (2000), Buttner (2001), Coleman (2002), Tsyganova and Shirokova (2010) and Adesua- Lincoln (2011), have examined the impact of finance on the success of entrepreneurs. In their analysis, they pointed out that male entrepreneurs have much access to finance to improve their businesses than their female counterparts. The inability of female entrepreneur to access finance has contributed immensely to their pitiable performance in business environment. The gender disparity factors associated with access to finance shows that females lack managerial experience, lack of collateral to access finance, harsh conditions

attached to loans and inability of female entrepreneurs to pay back loans. This suggests that women may not record success in their various entrepreneurial activities based on the aforementioned barriers that prevent them from accessing loan facilities.

Empirical Studies

Many empirical studies have reported significant relationship between gender and entrepreneurial performance. Padilla (2008), Pine, Lerner and Schwartz (2010), Adesua-Lincoln (2011) and Kargwell (2012) discovered positive relationship between gender and access to finance, educational level, technical skills, religion, culture and experience. However, only few of these researches were reviewed in this section.

A comparative study on gender and entrepreneurship development conducted in United Arab Emirate by Kargwellin (2012), has it as its major objective to investigate the participation of women in entrepreneurial activity in United Arab Emirate. The study discovered that there is a higher number of male entrepreneurs in the region and this is due to the fact that males are culturally and religiously permitted to participate in business activities. The study further revealed that the male and female entrepreneurs receive equal support from government but their business location differs. The study of Tyganova and Shirokova (2010), also examined **gender differences in entrepreneurship and discovered** that there are more complex factors that influence the performance of entrepreneurs in business environment than their gender. The study also found that despite the contributions of female entrepreneurs to economic growth in developing countries, the activities of male entrepreneurs is still dominant to economic growth and development. The study further discovered that businesses that are owned by women are often smaller in size when compared with the ones owned by their male counterparts.

The study of Adesua-Lincoln (2011) examined the relationship between entrepreneurs' gender and business performance and discovered that male entrepreneurs perform better than female entrepreneurs and that the underperformance of female entrepreneurs is due to the low level of education of majority of women entrepreneurs.

Methodology

This study employed exploratory research design to examine the effect of gender on sales performance of entrepreneurs. The sampling unit of this study comprises of small and medium scale entrepreneurs operating in the various markets located within Ilorin metropolis. However, the study adopted or used simple random sampling technique to

select respondents from seven markets across the three local government areas of Ilorin metropolis and the selected markets are located at Oja-Oba, Oja-tuntun, Ipata, Yoruba Road, Mandate, Ita-amu, and Oko-Olowo. Ilorin metropolis is made up of three Local government areas (LGAs) and these three LGAs are Ilorin-west, Ilorin-east, and Ilorin south. The choices of these LGAs is born out of the fact that they are the hub of economic activities in the state and they are all located within the state capital. More so, the LGAs housed the markets where the sampled small scale business owners or entrepreneurs are located and the LGAs have responsibility for the management of some of the markets under investigation. The population of small scale business entrepreneurs operating in these markets is unknown as there is no sampling frame containing their names. The study adopted Goddard (2004)'s sample size formula to arrive at a true representative sample of the study, which is 369.

A combination of stratified and convenience sampling techniques were used to select sampled elements from the target population. Stratified sampling technique is the process of dividing the population into sub-population or strata and this is done to ensure that different market locations in the three LGAs that constitute Ilorin metropolis are well represented in the study. While convenience sampling is the process of selecting population elements based on certain criteria such as respondents' volunteering, availability, and accessibility. The study used these three criteria in the selection of entrepreneurs from these markets.

This study used both primary and secondary information. The primary data were sourced through a structured questionnaire administered.

Model Specification

In order to achieve the objective, the ordered logistic regression model was used to test the earlier stated hypothesis. The model is used to examine the effect of gender on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis. The model is specified as below:

$$SP_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Sex_i + \beta_2 Age_i + \beta_3 Edu_i + \beta_4 LMkt_i + \varepsilon_i \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where: SP = Sales Performance, Sex = Gender of Respondents, Age = Age of Respondents, Edu = Level of Education, LMkt = Market Location, and ε = Random Variable. β_0 is the Intercept, while $\beta_1 - \beta_4$ are the respective parameters to be estimated for each variable in the model.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Response Rate of Questionnaire Administered

Item	No	Percentage
Returned Copies	258	69.92%
Unreturned Copies	111	30.10%

Source: Authors' Computation, 2016

Table 1 shows the response rate of target elements to the administered questionnaire and it indicates that approximately 70% of response rate. The implication of this is that 70% copies of administered questionnaire were returned and found usable for this study. This response rate is encouraging enough to proceed on the study.

Table 2: Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
.758	.779	258

Source: Print out from SPSS

The above table indicates that 0.758 is the Cronbach's alpha reliability test result for the questionnaire used for the study and this Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.758 falls above 0.70 which is the threshold. The test result simply implies that the instrument adopted for the study is reliable. Hence, the instrument has good reliability as far as internal consistency is concerned. The content validity of the questionnaire was pre-tested on two experts in the area under study who were briefed to elicit their perception on the likely ambiguity and interpretation of the questionnaire items. On the basis of their observations and suggestions some of the questionnaire items were refined and reframed. Therefore, the instrument has both the desired face and content validity.

Table 3: Gender of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Female	137	53.0	53.0	53.0
Valid Male	121	47.0	47.0	100.0
Total	258	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The table3 above presents frequency distribution of the respondents' gender. It reveals that 137 (53.00%) of the respondents are females, while 121 (47.00%) of the respondents are males. This simply implies that there are more female entrepreneurs than male entrepreneurs operating in different markets locations in Ilorin emirate.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Market Locations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Ojaobamarket	56	21.7	21.7	21.7
Valid Ipata market	41	16.5	16.5	38.3
Valid Yoruba road market	23	8.7	8.7	47.0
Valid Mandate market	41	15.7	15.7	62.6
Valid ItaAmo market	33	13.0	13.0	75.7
Valid Okoolowo market	23	8.7	8.7	84.3
Valid Ojatuntun market	41	15.7	15.7	100.0
Total	258	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 4 shows responses on the location of markets where the entrepreneurs under investigation operate. It reveals that 56(21.7%) of the respondents have their businesses located at Oja-oba market, 41 (16.5%) have their businesses located at Ipata market and the businesses of 23(8.7%) of the respondents are situated at Yoruba road market. The table further shows that 41 (15.7%), 15(13.0%) and 23 (8.7%) operate their businesses at Mandate, Ita-ammo and Oko-olowo markets respectively. The remaining respondents representing 41 (15.7%) have their businesses located at Oja-tuntun market. It could be inferred from this results that there is proportional representation of the respondents based on the size of these different market locations in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 5: Industry of operations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agro-allied	114	44.2	44.2	44.2
Trading/Services	132	51.2	51.2	95.4
Manufacturing	12	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total	258	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The table above indicates that 114 (44.2%) of the respondents engage in Agro-allied small scale businesses; 132(51.2%) engage in trading and services oriented small scale businesses, and the remaining 12 (6.6%) respondents engage in manufacturing activities. This result indicates that more of the respondents are into services oriented entrepreneurship activities. What can be inferred from this result is that majority of entrepreneurs in the study area engage in services oriented entrepreneurial activities.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: Gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 6: Ordered Logistic Regression

Variables	(1) Sales Performance
Sex/Gender	-0.591 (0.386)
Age	0.226 (0.261)
Level of Education	0.758*** (0.273)
Oja-ObaMarket	-0.635 (0.687)
Ipata Market	2.186*** (0.785)
Yoruba Road Market	1.976** (0.796)
Mandate Market	0.924 (0.774)
Ita-amo Market	1.636** (0.786)
Oko-olowo Market	-1.497* (0.863)
Oja-tuntun Market	-
Observations	114
Chi-squared	42.90***
Pseudo R²	0.1446

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 6 shows the results of Ordered Logistic Regression used to determine the influence of the independent variables (gender, age, education, and locations of business) on sales performance. Sales performance is seen in the table above regressed to gender, age, level of education, and locations of business (namely: Oja-Oba, Ipata, Yoruba Road, Mandate, Ita-amo, Oko-Olowo, and Oja-tuntun markets respectively). The result shows that level of education and market locations (Ipata, Yoruba road, and Ita-mo markets) have significant

influence on the probability of sales performance. It is also important to note that market location (Oko-Olowo market) has a significant impact on the probability of sale performance but only at 10% significance level. All other variables in the model do not significantly affect sales performance. The result shows that all the significant variables have positive impact on sales performance except Oko-Olowo market which has a negative impact on sales performance. The result implies that the probability of sales performance increases with level of education, and entrepreneurs whose businesses are located at Ipata market, Yoruba road market, and Ita-amo Markets. However, probability of sales performance declines with entrepreneurs whose businesses are located at Oko-Olowo market. The Chi-squared reported in the result indicates all the variables in the model are jointly significant, while the Pseudo R-squared reported indicates the model is relatively weak.

From the result above, gender of the respondents do not have probability of increasing the level of entrepreneurs' performance either p-value <0.05 or <0.1 levels of significant. Since the computed p-value is greater than the critical p-value, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis. Although, other variables included in the ordered regression model such as level of education and market locations of the entrepreneurs (i.e. Ipata, Yoruba road, and Ita-mo markets) have significant influence on the probability of entrepreneurs' sales performance. On the basis of this, the alternative hypothesis which states that gender has significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis is rejected.

Discussion of Results

The analysis of the data revealed that there are more female entrepreneurs than male entrepreneurs operating in different markets locations in Ilorin emirate. It was discovered that entrepreneurs in Ilorin markets engage in different sector of economy, although they are more services oriented entrepreneurship activities. It is observable from the result of test of hypothesis above that gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis. The result showed that gender of the respondents is not significantly relate to the level of entrepreneurs' performance at p-value <0.05 or <0.10 levels of significance while, the probability of other variables such as level of education and business locations (Ipata, Yoruba road, Ita-amo and Oko-Olowo markets) increases entrepreneurs' sales performance. The above result is not consistent with the findings of the studies of Adesua-Lincoln (2011), where he examined the relationship between entrepreneurs' gender and business performance. He

discovered that male entrepreneurs perform more than women entrepreneurs and that the underperformance of women entrepreneurs is due to the low level of education of majority of women entrepreneurs. However, the result is consistent with the findings of the work of Tyganova and Shirokova (2010). They investigated **gender differences in entrepreneurship and found** that there are more complex factors that influence the performance of entrepreneurs in business environment than their gender.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings of this study have revealed there are more female entrepreneurs than male entrepreneurs operating in different sectors of economy such as agro-allied, manufacturing and services at different market locations in Ilorin metropolis. The study also concluded that gender does not have significant effect on the sales performance of small scale entrepreneurs in Ilorin metropolis.

From the findings and conclusions, the study therefore recommends that owners of small scale businesses desiring to improve sales performance should exploit other factors that have been proven to have significant influence on the probability of improving entrepreneurs' sales performance such as level of education and locations. It also recommended that government and its agencies should do more to encourage small scale entrepreneurs to venture into manufacturing activities especially the indigenous ones such as blacksmithing, weaving, goldsmithing etc.

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