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Achievement Motivation, Gender and Entrepreneurial Ability

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of achievement motivation on entrepreneurial abilities using the factorial analysis that considered also whether sex differences account for differential entrepreneurial abilities. 668 students (male=312 female=356) drawn from two Universities were sampled. The achievement motivation questionnaire (AMQ) and Entrepreneurial abilities scale (EAS) were administered and data collected analyzed. The outcome shows that sex plays no significant role in entrepreneurial abilities. Achievement motivation correlates significantly ($r = 0.12$, $df = 666$) with entrepreneurial abilities and has significant influence on entrepreneurial abilities ($F(1/651) = 15.08$, $p < .01$). Table value of $F = 3.84$. It is suggested that continuous observance of correlation between entrepreneurship and some personality variables should draw attention of government and other stake holders especially in Nigeria to consideration of these factors in policy formulation and interventions aimed at jumpstarting an entrepreneurial society.

Keywords: Achievement Motivation, Gender, Entrepreneurial Abilities

Introduction

Few psychological variables have been hypothesized to influence entrepreneurship like achievement motivation (McClelland, 1961, 1962, 1965 and 1967; Ahmed, 1985). According to Allen (2006) entrepreneurs tend to have a high desire to be personally responsible for solving problems and setting and reaching goals. McClelland (1961) had linked entrepreneurship with achievement motivation. According to him, one of the salient factors for the achievement of nations is the extent to which they assume responsibility for solving problems that confront them and their quest to achieve their goals. For this purpose, entrepreneurs are said to have high need for achievement. Need for achievement is often referred to as 'fire in the belly', 'the burning gut' or simply 'passion'. It is common to assume that entrepreneurs are innately driven to make things happen. The extent to which driven by inner impulses as opposed to external is however subject to examination. The

theoretical position taken by McClelland is further expanded while discussing the theoretical position for this work. Entrepreneurship has been linked to many other factors such as locus of control (Ahmed, 1985, Fagbohunge and Jayeoba, 2012), risk propensity (Fagbohunge, 2010; Fagbohunge and Jayeoba, 2012). The role of gender in entrepreneurship has become a subject for speculation for many years. It is believed at some point that being male gives advantage in both managerial and entrepreneurial vocation (Baron, Mark and Hirska, 2001; Hosada and Stone, 2003). Hosada and Stone (2003) noted that male and female continued to be viewed as different, and that certain traits such as aggression, assertiveness, confidence and independent are attributed to males while attributes such as emotional, nurturing, considerate, dependent, indecisive and submissive are attributed to females. Baron (1999) indicated that current stereotype of entrepreneurs is in favour of males who are traditionally viewed as masculine. Such traits as high achievement need, risk taking and assertiveness are viewed as masculine traits.

Aims and Objectives of Study

The study further examined the relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship ability of undergraduates drawn from two Universities in Western Nigeria. Specifically;

1. The relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurial abilities was examined
2. The influence of achievement motivation on entrepreneurship was examined, and
3. The influence of sex on entrepreneurial abilities was examined

Research Questions

The following are the relevant questions that the study answered:

1. Is there a relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurial abilities?
2. Will individuals who are high in achievement motivation show higher entrepreneurial abilities compared to those who are lower in achievement motivation?
3. Will sex have influence on entrepreneurial abilities of participants?

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were tested as follows:

1. Achievement motivation is correlated with entrepreneurial abilities.
2. individuals who are high in achievement motivation show higher entrepreneurial abilities compared to those who are lower in achievement motivation.
3. Male and female will differ significantly in achievement motivation and entrepreneurship.

Significance of Study

Of the factors affecting entrepreneurship in Nigeria, not many have been studied in any great detail. Government has over the year in its policy pronouncements underscore the roles of private sector participation via big capitals such as foreign direct investment(FDI) small businesses (SMEs) as well as entrepreneurs. Actions of government in implementing policies on entrepreneurship are focused on financial mediation; amounting unwittingly to throwing money at the problem. Such monies have indeed gone down the drain as the low pace of job creation and entrepreneurship can bear witness. The missing link is the lack of understanding of man (his knowledge, skills and abilities)

as the most crucial factor. This study is significant by examining achievement motivation as an important personality variable influencing entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

Operational Definition of Concepts

Entrepreneurial Abilities: To Drucker (2000) an entrepreneur is a person who maximizes opportunities, Hisrich and Peter (2002) defines entrepreneurship as the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychological and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence. Also Fagbohunge (2010) views an entrepreneur as a person who engages himself/herself in the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. Two perspectives of the entrepreneur can be gleaned from the definitions above. 1. Entrepreneurship as a process that leads to creation of value with accompanying gains for self and society, 2. The entrepreneur as a person. There is however a third perspective which few studies had focused on. This is, that entrepreneurship is equally about attributes of individuals that can be enhanced and or encouraged to thrive (Jayeoba, 2012). In this study, entrepreneurial abilities is conceived as possession of abilities necessary for the starting and nurturing to growth, profitability and survival of a new enterprise, especially in a competitive environment. Entrepreneurial abilities conceived as a form of ability/potential that can be measured using appropriate psychometric procedure.

Achievement Motivation. Need for achievement defines the drive to excel, to strive to succeed or to achieve in relation to a set of standards. Some people according to Robbins (2001) have a compelling drive to succeed. They are striving for personal achievement rather than the rewards of success per se. This drive is described as achievement need (nAch).

Theoretical Backdrop

Achievement Motivation: Need for achievement defines desire to be personally responsible for solving problems, setting/reaching goals and the drive to excel, to strive to succeed or to achieve in relation to a set of standards. Some people according to Robbins (2001) have a compelling drive to succeed and can be said to have high need for achievement, while others may be classed as having lower need for achievement if they do not display such compelling drive.

McClelland (1961) developed the theory of need in which need for achievement also called 'achievement motivation' is one of three types of needs. The others are need for power and affiliation. Need for achievement defines the drive to excel, to strive to succeed or to achieve in relation to a set of standards. Some people according to Robbins (2001) have a compelling drive to succeed. They are striving for personal achievement rather than the rewards of success per se. This drive is described as achievement need (n-Ach). McClelland (1967) presented a theory on achievement motivation, and the work had offered a much tested theoretical basis for the study of entrepreneurship. The basic premise of the theory according to Fagbohunge (2010) is that entrepreneurial success is a function of the entrepreneur's level of need for achievement. That is:

$$ES = f(n_L\text{-Ach}) \quad (1)$$

Where ES = Entrepreneurial success, $n_L\text{-Ach}$ = Need for Achievement level.

McClelland (1988) identified four characteristics of individuals with strong need for achievement:

1. A preference for moderate task difficulty,
2. Personal responsibility for performance,
3. The need for feedback, and
4. Innovativeness.

Research into this concept has shown that n-Achs differentiate themselves by their desire to do things better. Individuals can be categorized as either high or low in need for achievement. High n-Achs seek situations in which they can attain personal responsibility for finding solutions to problems. They go for challenge and take risks with 50-50 chance of success. The studies of McClelland (1965) have shown relationship between nAch and entrepreneurship behaviour. Content analysis of literature on achievement motivation can give a clue to its definition (Atkinson, 1974; McClelland, 1961). The facet theory (Canter, 1985, style and Elizur, 1994) has also been applied to define the basic facts underlying these content areas. A facet is a criterion or a rule for classifying items of a given content universe. Elizur (1979) and Sagie (1994) specify three domain facets; behaviour modality, type of personal confrontation and time perspective. The behaviour modality relates achievement motivation to the instrumental aspects of behaviour, feelings or affective aspect and preferences or logistic aspect. An example of instrumental aspect is when one undertakes a difficult task rather than easy one. The affective component represents *satisfaction* with difficult rather than easy tasks while the cognitive aspect indicates preference for difficult rather than easy tasks.

Personal confrontation has two primary components: (1) confronting oneself with a challenge and (2) matching solutions (e.g. means, strategies and answers) to problematic situation. Readiness to confront oneself with a challenge is emphasized in behaviors like working hard, being tolerant of ambiguity and uncertainty, and assuming personal responsibility for performance and its outcomes.

The third facet i.e. time perspective relates to task performance; whether the behaviour is relevant mainly before, during and after performance; facing uncertainty and calculating risks which occur prior to the actual performance of a task. During task performance, one confronts difficulties and attempts to match novel solutions to problems. Also facing personal responsibility for task performance and its consequences as well as satisfying the needs to succeed rather than avoiding failure (Atkinson, 1958) are primarily related to after performance stage.

The domain of achievement motivation can therefore be formally defined by mapping sentences to the three facets. This approach was used in the measurement of nAch using an 18-item Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (AMQ) (Sagie, Elizur and Yamuchi, 1996)

Literature Review

Achievement motivation and entrepreneurship. Prime examples of research examining the relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship are those of McClelland (1965); Sagie and Elizur (1996); Miner and Smith (1984); Baron, Markman and Hirska (2001). In a longitudinal study in the U.S.A., McClelland (1965), using 55 Wesleyan graduates predicted the occupational choice of male and female subjects. Using n-achievement scores (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark and Lowell, 1953), found that current occupational status of graduate (obtained from school Alumni Directory) were a reflection of their n-ach scores. Testing on n-ach was conducted during their sophomore year

and their average age 21.6. At the time of this study, average age was 35. 83% of entrepreneurs in business have been high on n-ach as college sophomores whereas 79% of the non- entrepreneurs in business had been low in n-ach. Cross-validation on younger men produced result in the same direction. 60% of entrepreneurs had been high n-ach as college freshmen versus 41% of the non-entrepreneurs; Chi-square for all cases significant at 8.70, $P < 0.1$. The theoretical expectation was that n-ach gravitate people (at least white college students in the U.S.) toward business occupation of an entrepreneurial nature. Indeed, of the sample tested on n-ach, the highest scorer found a thriving business of his own. It will appear from the study that n-ach scores make valid prediction of life outcomes over a period of 10 years, although literature shows test-retest unreliability over periods of a week (Atkinson, 1958). The study essentially, differentiated between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs.

The studies of Meier, Smith and Bracker (1998, 1994) like above also differentiated between entrepreneurs and non- entrepreneurs. Their first (1989) study used data from 118 entrepreneurs who had found their own business and from a comparison group of 41 managers-scientists. Measures of firm growth were developed as dependent variables using innovative technology survey while a measure of motivational variables of a task theory that closely parallels achievement motivation theory (McClelland, 1961, 1962). This was described as Miner Sentence Completion Scale (MSCS). Task motivation was found to exhibit a substantial relationship to the various indices of firm growth (entrepreneurship skill) with correlation ranging up to high .40s. As follow up to this study, in 1994, data on firm performance was introduced 5½ years after the MSCS was completed by the entrepreneurs (N = 59).

The hypothesis was that pre-existing task motivation can serve to influence the level of success of entrepreneur's firm. Results of study lend support to take predictive criterion-related validity of overall task motivation of entrepreneurs, showing a desire for personal achievement, a desire to *innovate*, a desire to plan and set goals, but not a desire to avoid risks.

Studies above have used American samples. The study of Sagie, Elizur and Yamauchi (1996) provides a cross-cultural comparison data on structure and strength of achievement motivation. Unlike earlier studies, the aim was to analyze the structure of the achievement motive domain for samples from five countries; the United States, Netherlands, Israel, Hungary and Japan. Citing earlier studies which showed that same behaviours e.g. calculating risks, coping with difficulty, status aspiration, acquisitiveness for money, are the relevant domain of achievement motivation, they used an 18-item Achievement Motive Questionnaire (AMQ) tapping on these domains and other specific ones like personal responsibility, uncertainty, solving problems and satisfying needs. They found, using various statistical tests, highly significant effects of culture on uncertainty, facing difficulty, personal responsibility, calculating risks, solving problems and need for success. Sex difference was also noted to influence various dimensions of achievement motivation.

Multiple discriminant analysis of data distinguished Hungarian from U.S.A. and Holland samples. Samples with collectivist orientation (Japanese and Hungarian) were also distinguished from American individualistic sample whereas Israel and Dutch with mixed orientations were classed together on various components of achievement motivation.

In all cultures the conceptual structure of achievement motivation was similar and variation was only in terms of relative strength of the achievement motivation components in the different samples. This study in essence showed that certain cultural differences based on the individualistic-collectivistic orientation do exist among the samples investigated and that the more individualistic

rather than collectivistic orientation of a person or a given cultural group, the higher the level of achievement motivations component tend to be.

One main limitation of this study can be seen in the use of one standard instrument, the AMQ across cultures. Imperfect translation of the questionnaire and differences in meaning of items may contribute additional sources of variance. Also, among other variables, Ahmed (1985) and Fagbohunbe (2010) in a correlational study, examined the relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship and found a significant positive relationship.

Methodology of Research

Research Setting/Population

Participants were drawn from two Universities located in Lagos and Agowoye, Ogun State, that is, Lagos State University (LASU) and Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU). The two institutions were visited while in session. Students at 300 and 400 levels of academic career were considered as appropriate sample. This is because attributes and abilities are to be measured and educational level cannot possibly contaminate the outcome of study.

Sampling and Sample Characteristics

Participants in the main study were 668 students (M=312, F=356) drawn from two Nigerian Universities in the Western part of the country. 334 students were sampled from each of the Universities. By selecting university students, the moderating role of intelligence as well as age, were controlled for. Age of participants range between 18 and 27 years and the average age is 21years.

Instruments

The Entrepreneurial Abilities Scale and the Achievement Motivation Questionnaire were used as described below:

1. The entrepreneurial Ability Scale (EAS). It is self-constructed by loading items on those indicant entrepreneurial attributes earlier identified. It is a multidimensional scale set in the Likert format and designed to yield quantitative scores useful for statistical analysis. A 33-item scale was derived which psychometric properties; Correlation between forms = 0.62, Guttman Split-half = 0.76, Cronbach's Alpha for part 1 = 0.74, Equal –Length Spearman-Brown = 0.77

(Unequal –Length), Spearman Brown = 0.77 and Cronbach's Alpha for part 2 = 0.69

2. Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (AMQ). The 18-item Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (AMQ) devised by Sagie, Elizur and Yamauchi (1996) was used. Internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) coefficient for composite sample for confronting uncertainty (0.74), facing difficulty (0.77) undertaking responsibility (0.83), calculating risks (0.75), solving problems (0.87) and gratifying the need for success (0.86) are considerably high. Pilot study (n = 178) shows the following reliabilities; alpha = 0.60 and standardized item alpha = 0.62, Spearman-Brown= 0.51 and Guttman= 0.51.

Scoring of Scales

The instruments were scored as follows:

EAS has 33 items and were rated 0 to 5 for the options which range from 'statement applies in every instance' to 'statement does not in any way apply'.

AMQ. This has 18 items of which 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15 were reversed scored, while the rest were scored directly. The options range from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

Research Design

The study employs non-experimental survey design, using Ex-post-Facto and correlational techniques. Statistical design used is factorial design.

Study Procedures

For the study, in deciding on choice of University, the list of State Universities in the Western states of Nigeria were made and two - Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo and Olabisi Onabanjo University (OOU), Agowoye - were randomly selected. Since course of study could have moderating role on the variables under study, it was decided that participants will be those pursuing similar course of study in either the social or management sciences. Using random selection, two courses; Industrial Relations and Personnel Management and Psychology were selected. At the time of collecting the data only a handful of students were on enrolment in the Psychology programme at The Lagos State University. It was decided that students studying Industrial Relations and Personnel Management which exist in good numbers in both Universities be sampled. Finally participants were drawn using the simple random sampling technique. The sampled population was stratified into male and female. Though unintended, it turned out that equal number of males and females, that is, 344, took part in completing the scales from both Universities.

Data Analyses

Responses to the instrument was entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 13 (SPSS, Inc., 2005), after they were appropriately coded and the analyses to determine reliability indices, components of EAS using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), correlation indices of variables under study were carried out and the 2 by 2 Factorial Analyses were used to examine differences between 2 levels of the independent variables with gender as the second factor.

Results Presentation

The data was analysed and the following results displayed in tables 1, 2 and 3 were obtained.

Table 1. Sex, University and Course of study

	LASU (IRPM)		OOU (ILR)			
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Gender						
Male	150	45	162	49	312	46.7
Female	184	55	172	51	356	53.3
	334	100	334	100	668	100
Age						
Younger (17-23)	129	39	151	45	280	41.9
Older (24-30)	205	61	183	55	388	58.3
	334	50	334	50	668	100

Of the 668 respondents 356 (53.3%) were female, while males were 312 (46.7%). Half of these are from Lagos State University (LASU) and the other half from Olabisi Onabanjo University. The course of study for LASU students are Industrial Relations and Personnel Management and Industrial and Labour Relations for those in OOU. Both courses are similar in a lot of respect. This is partly to control for influence of course of study on participants responses.

The age range is between 17 and 30 and these were categorized into young (17-23) and old (24-30). 280 (41.9%) participants are in the first category and 388 (58.1%) in the latter. Average age is 25.6

Correlation between achievement motivation and entrepreneurial abilities was examined using the Pearson Product Moment correlation index which indicates that $r = 0.12$, $P < 0.01$, $df = 666$.

Table two shows the mean differences between male and female students with high or low entrepreneurial abilities.

Table 2. Respondent's mean differences and standard deviation

Respondent's sex/n-ach		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	Low	121.18	17.88	152
	High	127.61	19.85	158
	Total	124.46	19.15	310
Female	Low	122.15	17.58	178
	High	123.14	17.79	180
	Total	122.65	17.67	358
Total	Low	121.71	17.70	330
	High	125.23	18.89	338
	Total	123.49	18.38	668

The mean differences reflected in table two are subjected to factorial analysis to show whether they are significant.

Table 3. 2X2 Analysis of Variance

Source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Comment
Corrected model	3837.45	3	1279.15	3.83	0.01	Not Sig.
Intercept	1013754.80	1	10137542.75	30388.99	0.00	Sig.
Sex	505.73	1	505.73	1.52	0.22	Not Sig.
n-Ach	2288.36	1	2288.36	6.86	0.01	Sig.
Sex*n-Ach	1233.03	1	1233.03	3.70	0.05	Not Sig.
Error	221505.49	664	333.59			
Total	10412342.95	668				
Corrected Total		667				

** $(F(1/651) = 15.08, p < .01)$. Table value of $F = 3.84$.

The hypothesis which states that high need for achievement will score higher on entrepreneurial abilities scale than low need for achievement was confirmed (observed mean scores; higher need for achievement $\bar{x} = 125.23$, low need for achievement $\bar{x} = 121.75$). There is therefore significant difference in entrepreneurial abilities of low and high need for achievement ($F(1/651) = 15.08, p < .01$). Table value of $F = 3.84$.

Discussion of Results

There was a positive correlation between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship. In their study of entrepreneurial motivation, Yalcin and Kapu (2008) had found a link between achievement motivation and entrepreneurial intention. Also Ahmed (1985) found correlation between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship. Apart from financial motive, entrepreneur are said to be motivated by personal factors of which self actualization and need for achievement are strongly indexed. Glancey et al., (1998) and Stewart et al, (2003) also reported similar connection between need for achievement and entrepreneurship. The current study confirms these findings.

The main hypothesis which states that high need for achievement will score higher in entrepreneurial ability scale than low need for achievement was confirmed. Significant difference was therefore observed between high and low n-achs with high n-achs reporting higher entrepreneurial abilities. The result confirms the following findings of Baron, Markman and Hirska (2001) and Sagie and Elizur (1996). Fagbohungebe (2010) in a correlational study using Nigerian sample also found that achievement motivation relates with entrepreneurship. Male and female do not differ significantly as shown from the factorial analysis displayed in table three. It will appear that the male's and female's potential for entrepreneurship is not significantly different. According to Aldrich (1989) entrepreneurship is a male 'turf' and women can only break into what is the old boys' network. When viewed against the Nigerian environment it will appear that female entrepreneurs have indeed broken into the male network. They mostly dominate the informal sector and their less representation in the formal sector may be traceable to the nature of organizational structure, access to fund and historical, albeit cultural, practices that had prevented women from the world of work. Brenner (1987) however stipulated that entrepreneurs are those male or female who face prospect of their social status.

Do male and female differ in achievement motivation? It will be interesting to explore such question further, especially in view of pre-existing social as well as cultural stereotype assigning lower level of aspiration to women. Is such stereotype still valid even when women are becoming well represented as entrepreneurs in both formal and informal settings? A look at the data indicated higher female representation of than male, a trend that is becoming common in admission into courses especially in the social sciences and management. What factor other than high need for achievement can explain this trend? This is indeed an interesting area of study.

Conclusions

Some studies reported relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship, others do not. The current study not just establishes a link between the two variables, but also shows that high n-Achs are higher in entrepreneurial abilities than low n-Achs. It can be said that the more an individual possess a need to achieve, all other factors considered (Jayeoba and Aremo, 2010) the more the probability of entrepreneurial success. Other factors that are important relates to the social, cultural environment and the inhibitory or facilitator capacity of such an environment. Also important is the financial mediatory input and the extent to which available opportunities are recognized and harnessed.

Recommendations

More understanding of factors underpinning entrepreneurship is still required. Much of the information available is not derivable locally. Indigenous enterprises as well as entrepreneurs that had survived the decades need to be studied. Also, like McClalland, in the study using 55 Wesleyan college students, longitudinal studies following up on the extent of translation of entrepreneurial abilities/intentions by graduates are required. This will not only provide empirical validation for measuring instruments, but will at the same breadth provide clear link between hypotheses and reality. At governmental policies and decisions level, an incorporation of research findings relating personality factors to entrepreneurship is required; most especially in Nigeria where there is urgent need for jumpstarting an entrepreneurial society.

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