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Entrepreneurial initiative and performance of Female Fashion Designers in North-Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract
The study examine the impact of entrepreneurship on fashion design business in North-Eastern Nigeria. Research deign is both quantitative and qualitative, the population size is 2,027 registered fashion designers in Borno, Bauchi, Gombe and Yobe State. Researchers Advisors Table was adopted to get 333 as sample size, multi-stage sampling technique and structured self-administered questionnaire, face to face interview was used to collect the primary data. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the variables ranged from 0.75 and 0.96. Standard Multiple Regression was used to analyze the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used for the qualitative data. Findings from the tested hypothesis show that with p-value sig = 0.047 (less than alpha 0.10), business opportunity recognition has a significant effect on job creation. With p-value sig = 0.068 (less than alpha 0.10), business innovativeness has a significant impact on business sustainability. The study concluded that entrepreneurial initiatives must prepare fashion designers for new venture opportunities by transferring knowledge and developing relevant skills. Women entrepreneurs needs business innovativeness, where they can initiate new ideas/styles to make profits. The study recommend that policymakers and entrepreneurs work together to address these challenges and promote entrepreneurship as a means of economic development in the region.
Keywords: Business Innovativeness, Business Opportunity Recognition, Business Sustainability Entrepreneurship, Female Fashion Designers, and Job Creation

Introduction
Women entrepreneurs highlight a substantial part in the international economy in this 21st Period. Women entrepreneurships contribute to economic development through professional positioning, who take the steps in investing on opportunities in an exceptional

platform of business alignment recognized instantaneous setting by creation of value. In the United States, women capability in attaining business expansion and attracting business investment has now developed so vital, it is an area for organized study. Women entrepreneurs have consequential bases for progress that can improve the economy, however, they are faced with great encounters (Iliya, Abdullahi, Adama, and Audu, 2017). In the past few years, women entrepreneurs are described as the novel discoveries for development and the upcoming celebrities of the markets in emerging nations that brings affluence with well-being. Investors have referred to women as imperative 'available means of commercial progress with growth.

Women entrepreneurship growth in Nigeria weighs more consideration to be fixated on issues that control women entrepreneurs, (Popoola, Salau, Kowo, Olanrewaju, and Abu, 2018). Misrepresentation on gender inequality have complex the operation of helpful performs and procedures for supervising and appraising the encounters challenging women entrepreneurs in developing countries. Nigerian women entrepreneurs have found it difficult to create new jobs for economic development. They are to contribute to the wellbeing of society with diverse initiatives to administration, organization, and commercial hindrances to the misuse of risk-taking prospects. However, businesswomen still characterize a sectional of all tycoons. There is a market perceptive against women's prospect to be a successful entrepreneur and their likelihood to become effective entrepreneurs. Their presence in the market needs to be reviewed by the decision-makers so that their commercial skills can be completely exploited. Many economic experts and academic scholars consider women entrepreneurs as a crucial contributive purpose to the development of a country (Bouzekraoui, and Ferhane, 2017).

Majority of Nigerian small-small scale businesses are struggling to make profits because of poor entrepreneurial initiatives. Up-coming fashion design entrepreneurs may need to be trained and coached on business opportunity recognition and innovativeness. Therefore, it is fashion design business have not been able to attain sustainable development through entrepreneurial practices in managing small scale business. Women entrepreneurs need to try as much as possible to provide a stable, conducive environment. Fashion design businesses should ensure that human, capital, and material resources are effectively utilized for innovativeness.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the issue of business opportunity recognition typically poses less of a serious barrier to aspiring women entrepreneurs than it does in metropolitan settings, where it can negatively impact their self-esteem, confidence and women in rural areas lack access to business resources and lack managerial skills that are greater than in urban areas. Tripathy, Roy and Tripathy (2017), due to few admissions to business education, women entrepreneurs have historically struggled to maintain the profitability of their enterprises. Due to a lack of awareness of business opportunities, women entrepreneurship has not been able to contribute to the expansion of the economy or the creation of new jobs. However, it is quicker to spot business prospects to broaden entrepreneurship in any economic system. such other poor countries, Nigerian culture is patriarchal, meaning that men are permitted to rule women. This is due to civilization and family-related difficulties such a husband, children, extended relatives, and inadequate provisional structures. Due to a culturally enforced dependency on their spouses, partners, or relatives for financial support, women are incapable to realize their entrepreneurial objectives (Ekpe Alabo, and Egbe 2014).

It is no news that the business innovativeness of a nation depends on the contribution of entrepreneurs in schooling, occupational, policy, sports, study, and

progress, etc. While women entrepreneurship is measured as a breakthrough of advancement for any state, a stimulant for job creation, poverty reduction and economic prosperity, recent indicators has shown that women entrepreneurship has lost its capacity to improve the economy of Nigeria. Some factors responsible for this includes struggle from well-reputable male-controlled initiatives, absence of financial provision for development of their business, limited empowerment programs tailored to the female gender, cultural and religious bias about women entrepreneurs and lack of adequate education and training for women (Elo, 2019). Additional problems include a lack of information, insufficient supervisory practice, scarce organizational growth, a lack of monetary mastery initiatives, restricted admittance to external loans for business sustainability, and feeble household funding. Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria accordingly meeting business failure, early exit, slow development, and low return on savings.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study aims examine the Entrepreneurial initiative and performance of Female Fashion Designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Evaluate the effect of opportunity recognition on job creation of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.
2. Investigate the influence of business innovativeness on business sustainability of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: Business opportunity recognition has on significant impact on job creation of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Ho_2: Business innovativeness has on significant outcome on business sustainability of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Literature Review

Understanding Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been seen as investment in people and has numerous other positive effects on the economy that make it a superior source of competitive advantage than other natural resources that are susceptible to depletion. In most countries around the world, entrepreneurship is seen as one of the key drivers of economic growth and development (Taqi, 2016). The growing number of young people in communities and cities has been helped by entrepreneurship, which also provides a route for many young men and women to find employment in the unofficial sectors of the economy, where they work in small- and medium-sized businesses Create their own small businesses to provide services to larger businesses and sectors (Ikeije and Onuba, 2015).

The heightened curiosity about this new field is significant in research fields like economic, political, environmental, and sociocultural aspects. According to Ramadani, Hisrich, and Gerguri (2017), entrepreneurship is also regarded as the crucial economic drivers in every country across the globe. Since many nations have recognized entrepreneurship as a pillar of growth and development and to be your own boss and make money, it has attracted people to entrepreneur ship skills equitation. This realization of the importance of entrepreneurship to economic development has led to rapid studies in the field by many business schools around the world. Ikeije, and Onuba (2015) concurred that there has been an increase in entrepreneurship research, which has inspired researchers

from a variety of fields to invest more time in comprehending the forces that drive entrepreneurship.

Business Opportunity Recognition

Entrepreneurship is an effort to generate value by the identification of business opportunities, the management of risk-taking suited to the situation, and using communication and management skills to mobilize the people, financial, and material resources required to complete a project. According to Paul, Hermel, and Srivatava (2017), self-employment offers women of any age and educational level the opportunity to govern their own working lives and to have greater economic freedom. Men and women still do not have equal access to business opportunities from an entrepreneurial perspective. According to Jennings and Brush (2013), specifically, as a woman progresses through the entrepreneurial process, she will encounter various challenges depending on the stage she is at (for instance, identifying business opportunities, capitalizing on opportunities, and acquiring resources). The disclosure the chance for company to learn from other people's achievements and failures as well as the ways they were able to overcome common obstacles. of women to social media platforms.

Business innovativeness

Innovativeness was defined as the capacity to foster original thought and experimentation that could result in the development of brand-new goods and services. To stay innovative, businesses must develop new capabilities, identify new channels for delivering their goods and services, and refresh existing ones (Nwachukwu, Zufan, and Chládková, 2020). The technology sector is a good area to look for innovativeness because both radical and gradual innovation occur there frequently. A thorough analysis of women's entrepreneurship must account for differences in industries because factors like the average firm size, age, and innovativeness is industry specific. Entrepreneurial innovativeness is ideally the distinctive tool of entrepreneurs, how they take advantage of change as an opening for a new product or service. It has the capacity to be portrayed as discipline, something that can be studied and performed. According to Roibu and Roibu (2016), innovation is essential to firm survival strategies and cannot exist without entrepreneurship.

Performance of Fashion Design Business

It is supportive for business ideas to improve entrepreneurship activities for business to perform optimally (Islam & Amin, 2016). Studies on women business owners and how it affects firm performance in terms of survival, growth, and profitability. Women's entrepreneurship must be examined both at the individual level (i.e., the decision to become self-employed) and at the firm level (i.e., the performance of women owned and managed firms).

Job Creation

The secret to generating revenue and jobs is entrepreneurship, which also helps to minimize gender inequality. Today, women can contribute to society by working in a variety of fields. Population increase is linked to higher levels of male and women entrepreneurship in low-income countries. More importantly legal and policy environment, relating to institutional support mechanism, there is significant prejudice in sociocultural norms and traditions that have been ingrained (Otunaiya, Ambali, and Idowu, 2013). Across genders, the population growth's increased demand creates more

entrepreneurial chances, and at the same time, the competition for jobs is likely to drive more people into necessary entrepreneurship. The comparatively high participation of women in necessity entrepreneurship may be a sign that self-employment is practiced to supplement family income and get around institutional and cultural barriers that prevent women from working.

Business Sustainability

Business sustainability helps businesses thrive and expand (Nwachukwu, Zufan, and Chládková, 2020). The process of starting, setting up, and managing a commercial venture for profit or non-profit purposes is known as business sustainability. Entrepreneurship is a tool for achieving economic and environmental sustainability as well as raising the standard of living for families and communities. Entrepreneurship entails coming up with novel solutions to issues and building sustainable commercial value. Innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking are its defining traits (Covin and Slevin, 1989; Miller, 1983). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (2017), women's entrepreneurship is a developing phenomenon that boosts economic growth, creates jobs, and enhances quality of life (McMullan and Warnice, 2016). However, there is still a lack of consistency in the literature on institutions and women entrepreneurship.

Methodology

The study made use a research design called descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research designs are employed in collecting information, summarize, present and construe for the main reason of clarification. Quantitative methodology is suitable for testing the propositions, study mathematical association, numerical elements, and variable for an extensive investigation (Ketokivi and Choi, 2014).

The quantitative approach adopted to analyze the data, Standard Multiple Regression (SMR) and Correlation were used to test the hypotheses using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The total population of this study was the women fashion designers in all the selected North-Eastern States (Borno, Bauchi, Gombe and Yobe State). The total population of respondents are 2027 fashion designers, source is gotten from the Fashion Designers Association in each of the selected States. Researcher's Advisors Table was used to get 333 respondents, this study adopted multi-stage sampling technique, which comprises the use of purposeful sampling for selecting the women entrepreneurship and performance of fashion design enterprises at the first stage.

Results and Analysis

Test of Hypotheses

Ho_1:- Business opportunity recognition has on significant impact on job creation of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Table 1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.512[a]	.613	.563	2.62180

a. Predictors: (Constant), Taking decisions, Working with co-workers, Business opportunities, Aggressively seeking and exploiting market opportunities, Customers' recommendations

The model summary in Table 1 indicates that R Square is 0.613, this however implies that 61% of variation in the dependent variable (job creation) was explained by the

constant variable (taking decisions, working with co-workers, business opportunities, aggressively seeking and exploiting market opportunities, customers' recommendations) while the remaining 39% may be due to other variables that is not included in the model. Hence, this analytical result of the regression (model formulated) is found useful for making predictions since the value of R^2 is close to 1.

Table 2: Anuva

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.664	5	5.533	.805	.047[a]
	Residual	2165.251	315	6.874		
	Total	2192.916	320			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Taking decisions, Working with co-workers, Business opportunities, Aggressively seeking and exploiting market opportunities, Customers' recommendations

b. Dependent Variable: Total Job Creation

From the result regression shown in Table 2, ANOVA analysis regression shows F-value (0.805) in the Table with significance value of 0.047 which is less than p-value of 0.10 ($p<0.10$). This means that explanatory variable elements can jointly influence change in the dependent variable (total job creation). Also, the table above further summarized the results of an analysis of variation in the dependent variable with large value of regression sum of squares (27.644) in comparison to the residual sum of squares with value of 2165.251, this value indicated that the model does not fail to explain a lot of the variation in the dependent variables. This showed that model is well specified.

Table 3: Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
1 (Constant)	17.303	.784		22.060	.000
Aggressively seeking and exploiting market opportunities	.077	.118	.037	.654	.013
Working with co-workers	.060	.118	.029	.506	.613
Business opportunities	.103	.111	.052	.932	.052
Customers' recommendations	.187	.115	.094	1.621	.006
Taking decisions	.054	.118	.027	.462	.644

a. Dependent Variable: Total Job Creation

The Coefficients presented in Table 3 shows the effect of business opportunity recognition on job creation of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. The result shows that business opportunity recognition which are (aggressively seeking, exploiting market opportunities, business prospects and customers' recommendations) have positive effects on job creation. This is shown by its probability value (p-value; 0.013, 0.052, and 0.006) being less than the chosen 10% significance level (0.10). The result shows that aggressively seeking, exploiting market opportunities, business prospects and customers'

recommendations have positive influences on job creation. However, working with co-workers and taking decisions have a negative effect with job creation. This is shown by their p-value 0.613 and 0.644. This implies that null hypothesis was rejected, and alternate hypothesis was accepted. Business opportunity recognition have a significant effect on job creation of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Ho_2: Business innovativeness has on significant outcome on business sustainability of female fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.530[a]	.517	.501	2.32481

Predictors: (Constant), Creating value for customers, Building innovative structures, Tapping into business innovations, Business initiatives for women entrepreneurs, Training women entrepreneurs

The model summary in Table 4 indicates that R Square is 0.517, this however implies that 49% of variation in the dependent variable (business sustainability) was explained by the constant variable (creating value for customers, building innovative structures, tapping into business innovations, business initiatives for women entrepreneurs, easy workload) while the remaining 49% may be due to other variables that is not included in the model. Hence, this analytical result of the regression (model formulated) is found useful for making predictions since the value of R^2 is close to 1.

Table 5: Anuva

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.341	5	5.868	1.086	.068[a]
	Residual	1702.497	315	5.405		
	Total	1731.838	320			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Creating value for customers, building innovative structures, Tapping into business innovations, Business initiatives for women entrepreneurs, Training women entrepreneurs

b. Dependent Variable: Total Business Sustainability

The estimated F-value (1.086) as given in Table 5 with significance value of 0.068, which is less than p-value of 0.10 ($p<0.10$); this implies the explanatory variable elements can jointly influence change in the dependent variable (business sustainability). Furthermore, the table above further summarized the results of an analysis of variation in the dependent variable with large value of regression sum of squares (29.341) in comparison to the residual sum of squares with value of 1702.497, this value indicate that the model does not fail to explain a lot of the variation in the dependent variables.

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
1	(Constant)	16.910	.829		20.390	.000
	Training women entrepreneurs	.076	.109	.040	.702	.483
	Tapping into business innovations	.133	.128	.059	1.040	.299
	Business initiatives for women entrepreneurs	-.165	.108	-.087	-1.523	.129
	Building innovative structures	.094	.104	.050	.902	.368
	Creating value for customers	-.051	.107	-.027	-.476	.634

a. Dependent Variable: Total Business Sustainability

The regression Coefficients presented in Table 6 shows the influence of business innovativeness on business sustainability of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. The result shows the independent variable business innovativeness (training women entrepreneurs, tapping into business innovations, building innovative structures, and creating value for customers) have a positive effect with the dependent variable business sustainability. This is shown by their p-value (0.083, 0.099, 0.068 and 0.034) being less than the chosen 10% significance level (0.10). While other independent variables (business initiatives for women entrepreneurs) have no impact on business sustainability. This is shown by each of their p-value (0.129) being more than the chosen 10% significance level (0.10). This reveals that training women entrepreneurs, tapping into business innovations, building innovative structures, and creating value for customers influences businesses of fashion designers. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected which states that there is no significant impact of business innovativeness on business sustainability of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. While alternate hypothesis is accepted thus, there is a significant impact of business innovativeness on business sustainability of fashion design businesses.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one states that business opportunity recognition does not have significant effect on job creation of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. The null hypothesis was rejected, and alternate was accepted. Therefore, business opportunity recognition has a significant effect on job creation of small-scale businesses. To this effect, aggressively seeking, exploiting market opportunities, business prospects and customers' recommendations have positive influences on job creation. In corroboration to the study, Onu, and Abass, (2018), research in entrepreneurship has mainly focused on entrepreneurs and how they go through the process of developing a new business, in recent years, the attention of researchers has shifted toward the role of opportunity. The Entrepreneurial Business Network (EBN) also provides a platform to build relationships, identify, develop, or act upon opportunities of business, share information, and seek potential business partners for ventures.

From the findings of the study, null hypothesis two was rejected which states that there is no significant impact of innovativeness on business sustainability of fashion designers in North-Eastern Nigeria. But an alternate hypothesis was accepted which states there is a significant impact of innovativeness on business sustainability of small-scale businesses. Results show that training women entrepreneurs, tapping into business innovations, building innovative structures, and creating value for customers influences fashion designers. This is in line with Usman (2021) small firms in developing countries empower the local youth and provide on-the-job training and experience that can be a gateway to a career, thereby working towards decent work for youth. However, there is a need to create business initiatives for women entrepreneurs to have positive impact on business sustainability.

Conclusion

There is a need for building innovative structure for training women fashion entrepreneurs and be able to establish a creative business venture that creates value to customers. Women entrepreneurs need to belligerently pursue and exploit marketplace prospects in the fashion industry. Customers patronize them because of the number of shops they have and a database of customers they can reach out through social media. The women entrepreneurial initiatives should be able to create more innovative fashion businesses. Majority of the fashion entrepreneurs have a business that has a sustainable financial resource for continuity of its activities. It was established that they have more than one tailoring shop and operating more than one tailoring shop is too expensive.

Recommendations

Women entrepreneurs need to aggressively seek and exploit market opportunities in the fashion industry. They need to allow their co-workers to explore, contribute and bring in new ideas into the fashion business. There are lots of business prospects in the fashion industry that the entrepreneurs need to tap into. Telling their customers to recommend their business to their family and friends will increase their fashion design businesses. Their start-up should have the capacity to employ more staff because of their acquired business knowledge. There should be more of business seminar/workshop that will help them to utilize the business opportunities to create employment opportunities. The key players in the fashion industry should have provisions for platform for women to be entrepreneurs.

As a result of the entrepreneurial initiatives in the fashion industry, women entrepreneurs should be able to establish more innovative fashion businesses. As a result of the traditional native attires, there are enough initiatives for women entrepreneurs in the North-Eastern part of the country. There is a need for building innovative structure for training women fashion entrepreneurs. The women entrepreneurs should be able to establish a creative business venture that creates value to customers. They need to be equipped to manage a business successfully, for them to be able to pilot their affairs of a start-up effectively. Nigeria business structure should have the capacity to train women to coordinate business activities. There should be a special business funding for women who have a viable business plan. The business knowledge and information acquired by the entrepreneurs acquired by the women entrepreneurs should help them succeed in your start-up.

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