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Motivating entrepreneurial activities to achieve sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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Motivating Entrepreneurial Activities to Achieve Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

Abstract

The objective of this chapter is to explore factors motivating women and men into entrepreneurship in a developing economy –Nigeria. To do this, we conducted 10 in-depth interviews which were transcribed and thematically analysed using NVivo. The findings show that women and men are motivated by different factors. The implication of this finding is that female entrepreneurs should be treated as a homogenous group separate from their male counterparts. Doing this will enable policymakers design a much more effective policies and programs that will better support women entrepreneurs and their enterprises.

Keywords: Gender, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Motivation and Entrepreneurship in Nigeria, Female entrepreneurship in Nigeria

1. Introduction

Studies have shown that individuals are motivated into becoming entrepreneurs for different reasons including financial success, status, self-realization, marriage break-up and seeing an opportunity (Kirkwood, 2009; Manolova et al., 2008). These entrepreneurial motivation factors are generally categorised into push and pull factors (McClelland et al., 2005; Schjoedt and Shaver, 2007; Segal et al., 2005). Push factors are often used to categorise those factors that have negative connotations including lack of job, economic challenges, and poverty ((Kirkwood, 2009). While pull factors refer to those positive aspects that attract people to entrepreneurship including seeing an opportunity (Kirkwood, 2009). Some studies opined that pull factors are more prevalent than push factors (see for instance Segal et al., 2005; Shinnar and Young, 2008). However, these studies are mostly from the developed economies and might not apply to the developing economies where push factors (i.e., economy challenges and absence of jobs) are more likely to abound than pull factors (i.e., opportunities). Besides, it is still unclear whether there are gender differences in the way push and pull motivations influence women and men into becoming an entrepreneur in a developing economy. Highlighting these gender differences is needed especially as women manage their businesses in ways different from their male counterparts (Kirkwood, 2009). Thus, this chapter is underlined by 2 research questions:

1. What motivates people to start a business in Nigeria?
2. How do the motivating factors for women differ from men in starting an enterprise?

To address these 2 questions, we conducted 10 in-depth interviews, with 5 men and women entrepreneurs who operate a range of business enterprises in Nigeria. These interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis. The findings are presented using textural and structural descriptors. After this introductory section, we provide insights into the Nigeria context as a backdrop to examining gender in entrepreneurship and the motivations for entrepreneurs. Then a review of the international and national literature on what motivates women and men to become entrepreneurs. This is followed by the discussion of the research method employed in this study to establish the extent to which women and men become entrepreneurs for different reasons and the relevance of “push/pull” factors in these decisions. The paper concludes by considering the research and policy implications of the research findings.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Gender as a social construct

Social Constructionism is a theory of knowledge of sociology and communication that examines the constructed understanding of the world (Galbin 2014). This paradigm is in conflict with the realists' view that the world represents a mirror of one's reality (Korsgaard 2007). The social constructionist views have begun to furnish a replacement for traditional empiricist accounts of social science (Gergen 2004) as the phenomenon has begun to challenge common societal norms and the knowledge of ourselves (Lober 1994). The discussions around this subject are beyond infusing personality or attitudes into an existing framework of understanding but could perhaps focus on an understanding of everyday social and psychological life (Burr, 1995). The theory of social constructionism has been influenced by other theoretical perspectives including feminism and post-structuralism (Galbin 2014). Social constructionism has also been described as the source of the postmodern movement with a great influence in the field of social sciences (Biever et al., 1998; Gergen & Gergen, 2012). This strand of postmodernism theory posits that individuals experience a socially constructed reality as they interact with society at any time (Biever et al., 1998; Gergen & Gergen, 2012). So, therefore, meanings are socially constructed via the interaction and the coordination of people in their everyday encounters making their realities fluid and dynamic (Gergen and Gergen 2012).

For this study, it is therefore pertinent to make a clear distinction in meaning between sex and gender, based on our understanding of social constructionism. According to Ekoja et al., (2020) social feminist theories, these two concepts, sex and gender, from different perspectives. In her pioneering work on sex and gender, Oakley (1972) described sex as a biological occurrence that divides humans into male and female. Furthermore, Oakley (1972) described gender as a social construction of sex that ascribes certain characteristics to men and women reflecting a notion of femininity and masculinity. Several studies (See for instance: Lober 1994; Marlow and Martinez, 2018; West and Zimmerman, 1991) supported Oakley's idea that sex and gender are different and the two should not be confused as the same. For instance, West and Zimmerman (1990) explained that masculinity and femininity have moved from being a natural and essential property of individuals to being interactional – in other words, social patterns of relationships. And therefore, if gender differences are socially constructed, men and women could act the scripts of any gender as soon as they understand the behaviour of that particular gender (Marlow and Martinez, 2018). This implies that being a woman does not necessarily mean the state of femininity, neither being a man means masculinity. Therefore, the assertions that girls are caring and compassionate and boys are aggressive and competitive are disputable (Amuche, 2015; West and Zimmerman, 1991).

According to Beauvoir (1953), "it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature - feminine." Similarly, Lober (1994) reiterated that "individuals are born sexed but not gendered, and they have to be taught to be masculine or feminine". These social statuses are carefully constructed through intentional processes of teaching, learning, emulation, and enforcement (Adom et al., 2018; Ogundana et al., 2021). Thus, Lober (1994) explained that the constant omission of gender disparity in research is not right especially as it represents a part of our everyday routine. It is therefore vital to discuss gender in this study as it helps to assess if men and women are motivated to venture into entrepreneurship for similar or different push and pull factors. According to Risman (2004: p. 430), gender operates as a universal sorting device '*used to justify stratification*' and, as such, provides a '*foundation upon which inequality rests*'. Marlow and Martinez (2018) stated that women are subordinated by societal ascriptions of femininity while masculinity relegates power to men who enact it. Trying to go against these norms comes with sanctions deemed contextually acceptable.

In a developing country like Nigeria, there is limited studies that have discussed the social construct of gender as a phenomenon. Prior studies that have discussed this phenomenon have done so using societal discrimination of women as a measure of gender (See for instance Garba, 2011; Love et al., 2018; Makama, 2013; Okoli, 2008). For instance, Garba (2011) described the status of women in the developing economies such as Nigeria to be distinct from men and citing natural courses as the reason. Women in the developing economies are described as risk averse, financially dependent on their spouses, and primarily responsible for looking after the home front (Garba, 2011; Ogundana et al., 2021). Families within the developing country contexts are generally ‘patriarchal’ which oftentimes hinders male figures within the family (Fathers or husbands) from supporting the women when accessing opportunities. Love et al, (2018) explained that the society of a developing economy (such as Sub-Saharan Africa) often institutionalize obnoxious traditions, social-cultural and religious constraints with an intention of relegating the female gender to the background. Okoli (2008) also argued that discrimination of the female gender is a result of the creation, maintenance, and perpetuation of an inequality structure in the society rooted in cultural and religious practices. Makama (2013) has however compared gender relations as part of social relations, which she refers to as the ways in which the society categorizes men and women and not just the interactions between men and women in terms of biological reproduction. In Sub-Saharan Africa, women and men are from childhood socialized by culture and society into stereotypical roles (Adom et al., 2018; Ogundana et al., 2021). These stereotypical roles socialize women to be soft, meek and subservient; while it socializes their men counterparts to be hard, aggressive and domineering (Adom et al., 2018; Ogundana et al., 2021).

These analogies echo similar trends within the literature on entrepreneurship. According to Marlow and Martinez (2018), normative masculinity is so pervasive within entrepreneurship affording men the ‘privilege’ merely because of their gender. Similarly, studies (including Bruni et al., 2004; West and Zimmerman 1987) explained that the scope of any analysis of female entrepreneurs will be limited when trying to examine their motivations, activities and accomplishments in isolation from how they ‘do’ and enact gender. In a meta-analytic study, Ahl (2006) examined 81 published research articles on female entrepreneurship published between 1982–2000. The common theme identified within the context of appraising the performance of entrepreneurship was women’s subordination to men because of the use of male-gendered measuring instruments that lacked any form of feminist analysis. Brush (1992) suggest that this is

the singular reason why there is no conclusive evidence of gender differences in entrepreneurship. Braches and Elliot (2016) opined that entrepreneurship in Germany (which is a conservative state that records high employment rates and shortage in talent), is a gendered career due to structural barriers they termed ‘anti-child’ and ‘anti-woman’ attitudes that remain in the society. Marlow and Martinez (2018) took the debate further by critiquing the contemporary approaches to understanding the impact of gender on entrepreneurial activities while warning against the trap of researching women entrepreneurs as a discrete category.

However, regardless of the growing awareness towards feminist critiques of entrepreneurship, Henry et al., (2015) opined that the literature reports little or no attention paid to gender constructions as more studies especially in developing countries like Nigeria only compare men and women and the patriarchal society and the inequality that flourishes due to gender-differential terms (Makama, 2013) rather than challenge gendered practices (Pettersson et al., 2017). Another missing element in the female entrepreneurship literature is the lack of references to feminist theories though the last decade has recorded high numbers in research journals of the use of post-structuralism feminist theory (Pettersson et al., 2017). It is, however, now argued that research on female entrepreneurship that does not involve a feminist perspective will produce a male norm as it will tend to represent women as the ‘other’ in relation to men entrepreneurs (Ahl 2006; Bruni et. al., 2004; Calás et al., 2007). Hurley (1999) suggests that there is no singular feminist theory that fully represents the different disciplines in social sciences (anthropology, philosophy, psychology) but has been termed ‘feminist’ because of their shared reservations on gender relations and social change.

2.2. The Nigerian entrepreneurship context

Existing studies have shown that entrepreneurial activities drive economic growth, creates employment opportunities, and wealth (Brush and Cooper, 2012; Huggins et al., 2018). Studies show that in a developing economy like Nigeria, entrepreneurial activities play an important role, not only in economic development but in steering the socio-economic landscape of the country. In a report by the National Bureau of Statistics (2014), entrepreneurship in Nigeria is seen to account for 97% of the total businesses in the country, contributing 87.9% of the net jobs and 48% of the industrial output in terms of value-addition (Olukayode and Somoye, 2013). Besides, SMEs also contribute 48.7% of the country's GDP (Nnabugwu, 2015). According to GEM (2012), Nigeria is considered one of the world’s most entrepreneurial countries as 35 out of 100 Nigerians are

engaged in some kind of entrepreneurial activity or the other. As such, the Nigerian government, indeed the government of other developing economies, have introduced numerous programmes to support the development and growth of enterprises in the developing economies (Ajayi, 2016; Ogundana et al., 2021). Notable among them are the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN Peoples Bank of Nigeria (PBN), National Bank of Commerce and Industry, Microfinance Banks, National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Scheme (NEEDS). However, studies have observed that many of these policy interventions aimed at encouraging entrepreneurial development have recorded failures due to poor implementation, corruption, excessive red tapes, and bureaucracy (Ihugba et. al., 2013; Igwe et al., 2018; Thaddeus, 2012). Yet, men and women in Nigeria continue to introduce new business enterprises in an unfavourable entrepreneurship ecosystem such as Nigeria. Perhaps, this might explain the reasons behind entrepreneur's demotivation while operating their businesses.

2.3. Entrepreneurial motivation: push versus pull factors

There are many ways to classify entrepreneurial motivations from the literature. Amit and Muller (1995) discuss this phenomenon bases on a 'push' versus 'pull' relationship; Reynolds et al. (2001) refers to this phenomenon as 'opportunity-based' versus 'necessity' based entrepreneurship; while Dawson and Henley (2012) refers to it as a 'positive' versus 'negative' entrepreneurial relationship. This study adopts the push versus pull classification in understanding the entrepreneurial motivation of Nigerian entrepreneurs. Push factors are those factors that have negative connotations including the lack of white-collar employment, job dissatisfaction, unemployment, poor salary, inflexible work schedule, economic challenges, and poverty (Kirkwood, 2009; Ogundana, 2020; Segal, et al., 2005). On the contrary, pull factors include those positive aspects that attract individuals to entrepreneurship including the existence of a business opportunity, seeking independence, self-fulfilment and wealth (Dawson and Henley, 2019; Kirkwood, 2009; Manolova et al., 2008). The social construction of gender suggest that women are less likely than men to be motivated to become entrepreneurs in the developing economies (Kelley et al., 2013; Solesvik et al., 2019). Furthermore, there are differences in the motivational factors for men and women to become entrepreneurs, with more women stating personal and family-related issues as motivator; while their male counterparts are more likely to state financial

reasons (Dawson and Henley, 2019; Taylor and Newcomer, 2005). Although Bush and Cooper (2012) have questioned whether entrepreneurship actually offers an improved work-family balance for women considering starting a business for familial reasons. This might explain why some women entrepreneurs exit from entrepreneurship after some few years. Solesvik, Iakovleva, Trifilova (2019), Bush and Cooper (2012), Dawson and Henley (2019). Kirkwood (2009) stated that researchers have paid little attention to gender differences in the push and pull motivations for becoming an entrepreneur. This omission Kirkwood claims is not new, as entrepreneurship research still lacks gender comparative analysis. As such, Dawson and Henley (2011) posited that “pull” and “push” factors, should be considered along the lines of current contemporary economic conditions and differential personal circumstances of both genders. This highlights an influence of a socio-cultural context and suggests that differences in motivation between men and women may be due to social factors.

3. Research methodology

This study is interpretive in nature, resting on the epistemological assumption that the focus of this research is inconsistent with what obtains in the natural sciences terrain. This discrepancy is driven by the growing recognition that the way entrepreneurship eventuate will vary depending on its historical, institutional, spatial and social contexts (Welter, 2011). By adhering to an interpretive research paradigm, this study unravelled push and pull motivational factors that are unique to male and female entrepreneurs operating within the Nigerian entrepreneurial context. Besides, the interactionist nature of a qualitative research framework enabled this study to identify gender-specific motivational factors and those applicable to both male and female entrepreneurs (Hesse-Biber 2007). We utilised the purposive and snowballing sampling technique to recruit respondents for this study. This sampling techniques were useful for obtaining the information we required from those respondents that possessed such information (Hamilton, 2006). Overall, we interviewed 10 business owners (5 male and 5 female entrepreneurs) who own and operate businesses within different economic sector of Nigeria (see table 1). The interview sessions lasted between 30-40minutes and were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Table 1: Respondents' characteristics

Respondents	Gender	Marital Status	No. of employees	Sector of operation	Years of operation
1	Male	Married	10	Real Estate	10
2	Female	Single	5	Real Estate	3
3	Female	Married	7	Food/accommodation	10
4	Male	Married	35	Food/accommodation	12
5	Female	Single	1	Real Estate	3
6	Male	Married	1	Real Estate	3
7	Female	Married	40	Food/accommodation	18
8	Male	Single	1	Food/accommodation	4
9	Male	Married	350	Real Estate	7
10	Female	Married	25	Food/accommodation	17

Table 1 above displays the overview of the respondents, age of their businesses, sector of operation, marital status and specifically their gender. This helps to provide useful information about the demographics of the respondents. The age of businesses is between 3-18 showing they fall within the range of micro and small enterprises according to SMEDAN’s categorization of MSME’s. This shows a wide range of entrepreneurs covering different age brackets as regards their businesses. The number of employees engaged in the businesses start at 1 and goes up to 350, giving the research the broadness to showcase if managerial challenges of handling staff affects the decision of Nigerian entrepreneurs in any way. To remove discrimination based on marital status because in a Patriarchal society like Nigeria, the importance of man is being elevated and places women as been subservient with an expectation to solely take on the caring responsibilities of the family. It is even worse for unmarried women who are seen as unsettled and lacking certain sought-after characteristics. This sample shows no skewness towards a particular marital status. We started the analysis by reading and re-reading each of the transcripts to get acquainted with the data analysis process (Glaser 1978). With the aid of NVivo, we coded important remarks within each interview transcript using data-driven codes and codes derived from the existing entrepreneurship literature. The evolving codes, commentaries and their interpretations are presented using textural and structural descriptions of factors that motivate male and female entrepreneurs into businesses.

4. Finding and Discussion

4.1. Factors motivating female entrepreneurs in Nigeria

In understanding the factors that motivate women into starting their businesses, we observed that our study agrees with existing research within the developed context that women are pushed into entrepreneurship. Furthermore, our findings show that female entrepreneurs in Nigeria are more likely motivated because of external economic conditions such as job insecurity in the Nigerian labour market (push factors). In that regards, R2 explained that:

... you know the job insecurity uncertainties in the private sector is something else, so you always need a backup plan...

The issue of job insecurity is an issue that is prevalent in the Nigerian economy irrespective of gender. However, the findings from the interview results reveal that mostly women entrepreneurs were affected by the issue of insecurity in employment. This suggests that there are more reasons specific to the way the feminine gender is constructed that makes the issue of job insecurity specific to women. This is consistent with prior studies (including Devine 1994; Winn 2004) that revealed that due to a continuing lack of progress within the workplace, women may be lured into entrepreneurship. Similarly, about half of the women including respondent R2 identified that the presence of a 'glass ceiling' hindering their career development in an employee's role was another factor that pushed them into entrepreneurship – mostly as a backup plan.

Our findings showed that female entrepreneurs are also motivated by the need to gain greater autonomy (pull factors). In that regards, R3 laments:

....okay I have a lot of energy and when I started out with the nine to five I would sit at my desk literally do everything I'm asked to do and will try to generate more work to do and still get done with it and still have so much idle time, I'm someone who wants to give a hundred per cent of myself to anything I'm doing so while I was working for my bosses I didn't feel right to also do things on the side...

This statement shows a need for achievement by the female entrepreneur, a trait uncommon in the general literature. For instance, women's interest in achievement defies the existing assumption that women are generally reserved, unambitious and unenterprising (Kandel and Massey, 2002; Shen, 2019).

The findings also revealed that some women, including respondent R7, were motivated into starting an enterprise because of the flexibility entrepreneurship offers. This is mainly because women are often more likely to be faced with the need to juggle together family and work responsibilities, thereby needing total autonomy to be able to manage both together (Fierrman, 1990; Zellner, 1994). According to Respondent R7:

.....and I like the fact that my time is mine I decide how I do it and I decide what I do when I do which is what only an enterprise can do...R7

Underlying in this statement, R7 who is a married female entrepreneur agrees with Konrad and Langton (1991) and Morris et al (1995) who posits that family issues and responsibility can influence the career choices of women because it is important to them. Family-related factors such as family policies and family obligations (DeMartino and Barbato 2003; Hannah et al., 2020), domestic commitments (Greenfield and Nayak 1992; Marlow 2002), and the need for work-family balance (Jennings and McDougald, 2007; Kirkwood and Tootell, 2008) have been found to be important for the female entrepreneur. These factors though labelled as push factors, according to Verheul et al., (2006) are important entrepreneurship motivation factors irrespective of gender.

Other female respondents claimed to have started their businesses because they identified a gap in the market (pull factors). For example, R5 and R10 commented respectively.

... okay I mean for me I see an opportunity and I'm thinking what can I do here right and how can I take advantage.... R5;

.... i found out I was basically cooking for almost all my friend's events so I could as well be paid while doing the jobR10

These commentaries by R5 and R10 can be categorised as 'pull factor'. Furthermore, contrary to prior studies (such as Kandel and Massey, 2002; Shen, 2019) that indicate that only male individuals have the ability to identify business opportunities in the market, this research shows that female entrepreneur possess the opportunistic tendency that a typical male entrepreneur possesses. Besides, our findings disagree with extant literature on the indications that women are mainly pushed into entrepreneurship; and as such set up businesses mostly in the service (Kuratko and Hodgetts 1995).

Table 2a: Push Factors: Overarching categories, codes and sample quotes

Main category	Interpreted repetitions in line with literature	Sample quotes (M)	Sample quotes (F)
Push factors	Financial motivation	...other reasons of obvious reasons so you know we want to literally enjoy what you earn you know...R1	...it was just trying to make ends meet because initially I was working in the private sector and it was really hectic ...R2
	External economic conditions		... you know the job insecurity uncertainties in the private sector is something else so you always need a backup plan...R2
	Non-pecuniary and internal motivations so one of the reasons that made me, you know try to choose this part was to create an opportunity for people...R1	... you know just to take a couple of people off the streets by giving them you know jobs and opportunities to make ends meet...R1
	Self-employment	...a long-time dream from when I was 12 years old, my mother was a trader, seeing what she does and assisting her in what she does make me what to do this.... it birthed in me such passion to want to do this...R4	... entrepreneurship is something that runs in my blood you know all my life that's what I've been wanting to be to run my business because while I was growing up you know I was suing I was a tailor you know so I'm just a normal tailor and I grew the business to a point where I was wearing clothes and taken them to the UK.... R9

Table 3b: Pull Factors: Overarching categories, codes and sample quotes

Main category	Interpreted repetitions in line with literature	Sample quotes (M)	Sample quotes (F)
Pull factors	Seeking greater autonomy or independence	<p>...believe I can I would have job satisfaction if I am an employee I understand so I noticed that job satisfaction is what made me yeah...R6</p> <p>... you know me as an executive chef running several restaurants for people at some point I felt that I also need to have something for myself right to at least uh stand as a backup that was the initial plan but in the long run I started developing more interesting growing the business because I also need to stand as a brand...R8</p>	<p>...okay I have a lot of energy and when I started out with the nine to five I would sit at my desk literally do everything I'm asked to do and will try to generate more work to do and still get done with it and still have so much idle time, I'm someone who wants to give a hundred per cent of myself to anything I'm doing so while I was working for my bosses I didn't feel right to also do things on the side...R3</p> <p>.....and I like the fact that my time is mine I decide how I do it and I decide what I do when I do which is what only an enterprise can do.....R7</p>
	Regaining excitement/satisfaction in one's work;	...basically to be employed to find satisfaction in the workplace...R4	<p>...okay my initial motivation I would say, I have always had a desire to provide better housing for the less privileged right, I've always had that desire to because I don't feel that because you cannot afford a certain amount of money you should not be able to live in a comfortable environment at least averagely so that has always been my desire since I was quite young ...R2</p>
	Identifying a gap in the market	<p>... and then being from the Northern part of Nigeria, I saw how food was scarce and the need to cultivate homegrown food, without using sophisticated manure...R4</p>	<p>.... those yeah okay I mean for me I see an opportunity I'm thinking what I can do here right and how can I take advantage..... R5</p> <p>....i found out I was basically cooking for almost all my friend's events so I could as well be paid while doing the jobI was working for free had I actually was working in an office and doing that part-time when they have events, I cook I pack I save....R10</p>

4.2. Factors motivating male entrepreneurs in Nigeria

Our findings revealed that respondents in this study were motivated by a complex system of interacting factors. Male respondents are majorly motivated by the idea of being self-employed. Typical with the literature where entrepreneurship is described as male gendered (Ahl, 2003; Verheul et al., 2002) and also defined in a masculine way (Ahl, 2003; Holmquist and Sundin, 1998; Ljunggren and Alsos, 2001).

...a long-time dream from when I was 12 years old, my mother was a trader, seeing what she does and assisting her in what she does make me what to do this.... it birthed in me such passion to want to do this... R4

In a patriarchal society like Nigeria, the man is the head of the home and also the economic figure head of the home. Very typical is to see parents introduce the family business to only the male child because they believe the male child is more superior to the female child and he can handle the business better than the female child. The society also promotes that a female child will get married and change her surname and even if the business becomes successful, the goodwill and accolades will be transferred to the in-law. Meaning the wealth and the glory will be transferred to the wife's family. See also the masculine definition of entrepreneurship come into play here;

...entrepreneurship is something that runs in my blood you know all my life that's what I've been wanting to be- to run my business because while I was growing up you know I was sewing, I was a tailor you know and I grew the business to a point where I was sewing clothes and taking them to the UK to sell....R9

Male respondents are also motivated by push factors -Non-pecuniary and internal motivations. See quote by R1:

... .. so one of the reasons that made me, you know try to choose this part was to create an opportunity for people... .. you know just to take a couple of people off the streets by giving them you know jobs and opportunities to make ends meet ...R1

Non-pecuniary factors drawing on non-economic factors have been labelled as particularly important for women entrepreneurs only (Hisrich and Brush 1986). Also, Dawson and Henley (2011) posit that social entrepreneurs and/or entrepreneurs who provide goods and services in the environmental/sustainability industry are primarily motivated by non-pecuniary factors, this research shows otherwise that R1 operates in the real estate sector and belongs to the male gender, states pecuniary reasons as his motivating factor though secondary to financial motivation.

5.0 Conclusion

In Nigeria, there has been a significant growth in the level of female entrepreneurship, however, the male dominance over females caused by the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society poses an obstacle to women's advancement and development specifically in the field of entrepreneurship. Women are expected by society, just because of their ascribed gender, to perform domestic related roles and these beliefs are enforced by religious and obnoxious cultural obligations. Okoli (2008) supports the argument that discrimination of the female gender is a result of the creation, maintenance and perpetuation of an inequality structure in the society rooted in cultural and religious practices. Makama (2013) in comparing gender relations says the society just compares the interactions between men and women in terms of biological reproduction. Izugbara (2005: 606 as cited in Durojaye and Owoeye 2020) summarizes the social construction of gender in Nigeria as follows:

The most pervasive and deeply entrenched culture or tradition of Nigeria is the role of women in society. In many parts of Nigeria, daughters from childhood are socialized into stereotypical roles. They imbibe an entire view of culture and society, aspirations bound by motherhood and wifehood functions with dispositions moulded in accordance with masculine/feminine dichotomy. While culture socializes daughters to be soft, meek and subservient, it socializes sons to be hard, aggressive and domineering.

The pull/push model which is a common way of explaining different motives behind why people start businesses and was used in this paper to critically understand the gendered differences in entrepreneurial motivation within the context of Nigeria. Push factors have been labelled the

reason why women start businesses and have been situated in a negative perspective which seems opposite to the masculine expectations and definitions of entrepreneurship. These refers to factors such as unemployment, glass ceiling, redundancy, recession, financial reasons (inadequate family income), dissatisfaction at work, or the need to juggle work and home roles. While Pull factors are related to a more positive reason for starting a business such as the need for independence and for achievement, financial reasons (desire for profit-wealth), self-fulfilment, social status and power (Hansemar 1998; Glancey et al., 1998).

However, the reality in Nigeria is quite different as the data shows from the analysis of the lived experiences of the entrepreneurs interviewed. The situation is not clear-cut selection of pull or push factors, because in most cases, there are combined factors. As this paper has shown, differences between women's and men's entrepreneurship stem from social construction of gender stemming from their marital/family status and responsibilities, and this is deeply rooted in the Patriarchal nature of the society. While there is a rise in female entrepreneurship globally and is earmarked to provide a tool for social and economic empowerment for women, there has been a failure to measure their growth rate and why they are not growing at the same rate as their male counterparts and the influence the current social environment has on these enterprises. This paper has highlighted the gendered differences between male and female entrepreneurs specifically as regards their motivation for starting out enterprises and the salient factor of social constructionism. Therefore, it is important to point out that female entrepreneurs in Nigeria cannot be considered "necessity" entrepreneurs who are pushed into entrepreneurship only by unemployment, redundancy or job insecurity (Glancey et al, 1998) but also by pull factors (identifying a gap, profit oriented, need for self-achievement.