

DOES CONSTITUENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE DIFFER IN INDIVIDUALS?

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ABSTRACT: *To address the problem of unemployment through job creation, various governments have developed policies towards the fostering of entrepreneurial culture. It is believed that culture when nurtured, must distinguish an individual from another group of individuals, hence, given the interest in fostering entrepreneurial culture, it may likely imply that individuals nurtured with such a culture are likely to differ significantly from those not nurtured. Using a Mann-Whitney U test analysis to test for differences between the participants of entrepreneurship programmes offered by the government and non-participants, Findings indicate that participants of the programmes differed significantly in three of the constituents of Entrepreneurial Culture identified.*

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurial Culture, Entrepreneurial Attributes, Entrepreneurial Values, Entrepreneurial Mindset and Entrepreneurial Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial culture is a society that shows the exhibition of entrepreneurial attributes, entrepreneurial values, entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial behaviour (Brownson, 2013). Given governments interest in fostering such a culture, it implies that such government policy measures must anchor on the promotion of the constituent of the culture. According to Hofstede (1980), culture by nature distinguishes one group from another which implies that individuals who participates in the entrepreneurship programmes on offer may have been inculcated the needed features of the culture required by the programmes. As such, there is a tendency that they will differ from others who did not participate in the programmes. The aim of this paper is to investigate if the constituent of entrepreneurial culture of the participants of the government entrepreneurship programmes differ from those that did not participate in the programme.

Entrepreneurial Attributes

Entrepreneurial attributes can be acquired from both nature and nurture (Bridge et. al, 2009). They exceptionally describe individuals interested in and able to engage in entrepreneurial activities as such, individuals who possess these attributes may be more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Raab et al., 2005). It has been argued that entrepreneurial attributes are stable (Rauch and Frese, 2007), however, they are disagreement with such views with some researchers asserting that entrepreneurial attributes are changeable (Robinson et al., 1991) in that individuals who one thought do not possess certain attributes could have such attributes developed via external triggers (ibid.) of which government policy measures are likely to trigger such changes in the participants of such measures. Mahadea (2001) adds that the supply of effective entrepreneurship can be enhanced through appropriate training and experience, as such, encouraging entrepreneurial attribute is essential in influencing the development and realization of startup ideas.

Entrepreneurial Values

Values are the driving force for decision making (Keeney, 1994). They reflect the entrepreneurs' conscious view of who they are and directly shape their movement towards action (McClelland, 1965). McGrath et.al's (1992) exploratory analysis of cultural differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs concluded that entrepreneurs share a common set of values despite their different cultural backgrounds. As such, intervention should seek to increase the social recognition of entrepreneur's value to aid in the fostering of entrepreneurship. Tambunan (1999 cited in Shariff and Peou, 2008) found that small business owner-managers having entrepreneurial values such as creativity, integrity, achievement, among others, were more likely to have superior performance in managing organizations than owner-managers without these values. These imply that entrepreneurial values if nurtured in individuals for entrepreneurship purposes may likely differentiate such individuals from others. Hence, those who participate in the entrepreneurship programmes on offer may likely be expected to differ from those who have not participated in such programmes.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

An individual's ability to interpret and respond to situations is determined by his mental attitude which is his mindset. Attitude is dynamic in nature and changes across time and from situation to situation (Robinson et al., 1991_b). Attitudes influences and are influenced by experiences we have, actions we take, and how we think and feel about those experiences (ibid.). Empirically, studies have linked entrepreneurship programmes to a change in attitude towards entrepreneurship though specifically focusing on the educational sector. For instance, Hatten and Ruhland's (1995) study of students' attitude towards entrepreneurship in a Small Business Institute programme found significant and positive changes in the students' attitude towards entrepreneurship emphasizing that participants in entrepreneurship programmes are more likely to become entrepreneurs. Similarly, Souitaris et al.'s (2007) study of entrepreneurship programmes found that they indeed raised individual's attitude. Though student samples have been used in this cases, the studies however indicated that it is possible to tune and shape individuals' entrepreneurial attitude especially with a well planned entrepreneurship programs which could further enhance a rich entrepreneurial culture among individuals (Kumara and Sahasranam, 2009). This implies that individuals who go through entrepreneurship programmes are likely to have a mindset change towards entrepreneurship compared to those who do not go through such programmes (Schwarz et al., 2009).

Entrepreneurial Behaviour

Entrepreneurial behaviour is sometimes referred to as new venture creation or startup (Samuelsson and Davidsson, 2009). Active role of government has been found to enhanced entrepreneurship (Pietrobelli et al., 2004). Several research have found relationship between new venture creation and government sponsored entrepreneurship programmes for instance, Britain's graduate enterprise programme positively affected the participants of the programme to starting their own business (Brown, 1990). US self-employment assistance programme increased the likely startups (Benus, 1994). Netherlands polices aimed at increasing openings of immigrant entrepreneurs led to numerous business established after the introduction of the policy (Kloosterman, 2003) thereby implying that new ventures are likely to be established by the participants of government entrepreneurship programmes which may distinguish them from non participants.

RESEARCH METHOD

A posttest-only design with non-equivalent groups was used given its appropriateness in examining programmes in a setting that does not lend itself for experiments (Agodini and Dynarski, 2004) as the programmes had already started before this study hence control group were not possible. Data was collected in Akwa Ibom State Nigeria where the entrepreneurship programmes were in effect using purposive sampling method with a structured questionnaire. Of 308 respondents used for the analysis 195 respondents were participants of the entrepreneurship programmes on offer and 113 respondents who had not participant in any of the programmes.

ANALYSIS

Using Mann-Whitney U test, each constituent of entrepreneurial culture of the participants (Parts) were compared with that of the non-participants (Non -Parts) as shown on table 1 below. The test revealed significant differences in three of the constituent of entrepreneurial culture.

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U Test on the Differences in the Constituent of Entrepreneurial Culture of Participants compared to Non-Participants group

Differences		N	Mean Rank	Z	P	r
Differences in Entrepreneurial Attributes	Parts	179	153.04	-3.51	***	-.21
	Non-Parts	102	119.87			
Differences in Entrepreneurial Values	Parts	183	153.92	-2.52	**	-.15
	Non-Parts	106	129.60			
Differences in Entrepreneurial Mindset	Parts	171	185.84	-13.91	***	-.84
	Non-Parts	103	57.22			
Differences in Entrepreneurial Behaviour	Parts	195	150.61	-1.16		-.10
	Non-Parts	113	161.22			

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Firstly, significant difference was found in the Entrepreneurial attributes of participants (Mdn = 5) when compared to that of the non-participants (Mdn = 4), $U = 6973.50$, $z = -3.51$, $p < .001$, $r = -.21$ with participants having a higher entrepreneurial attributes than non-participants hence, the premise that entrepreneurial attributes of participants of entrepreneurship programmes differ from that of non-participants is supported in this study although the effect (r) size of the difference is small indicating that such difference do exist in the context studied.

Secondly, significant difference was found in the entrepreneurial values of participants (Mdn = 4) when compared to that of the non-participants (Mdn = 4), $U = 8066.50$, $z = -2.52$, $p < .01$, $r = -.15$ indicating that participants had a higher entrepreneurial values compared to the non-participants supporting the premise that entrepreneurial values of participants of government sponsored entrepreneurship programmes differ from that of non-participants even though the size of the difference observed is small. This implies that the efforts of government policy in sponsoring entrepreneurship programmes is not a waste as they do enhance the entrepreneurial attributes and values of those who participate in the policy measures a bit more than those who do not participate thereby improving their attributes and value for entrepreneurship in order to motivate them towards making that choice to be entrepreneurs than seek paid employment.

Thirdly, significant difference was found in the Entrepreneurial Mindset of the participants (Mdn = 5) when compared to that of the non-participants (Mdn = 3), $U = 541.00$, $z = -13.19$, $p < .001$, $r = -.84$ implying that differences does exist in the entrepreneurial mindset of those nurtured by the programmes compared to those who did not receive such nurturing with higher entrepreneurial mindset for participants compared to the non-participants thereby supporting the premise that participants of entrepreneurship programme differs in their entrepreneurial mindset compare to the non-participants. The large effect size of the difference imply that those who are fostered by the policy measures do have a greater and better perception of entrepreneurship and its benefits after such nurturing compared to those who did not receive such nurturing. This better perception is more likely to lead such individuals to entrepreneurial venture which would further curb the unemployment situation in the context studied.

Fourthly, no significant difference was found between the two groups in terms of their entrepreneurial behaviour as shown on the table. This may imply that those who have already started their own business may not really differ in terms of starting their own business although differences could occur in the nature and newness of their businesses. On the whole, objective five of this study has been addressed with result supporting four out of five hypotheses raised to address it. The differences found in the four constituent implies that fostering Entrepreneurial Culture does distinguish those fostered in the four constituent of Entrepreneurial Culture from those not fostered in the context studied.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the objective of this paper proved that to some extent, there are significant differences in the constituent of entrepreneurial culture (especially entrepreneurial attributes, entrepreneurial values and entrepreneurial mindset except entrepreneurial behaviour) between participants of the entrepreneurship policy measures compared to non-participants and that participants have higher constituent of entrepreneurial culture especially entrepreneurial attributes, entrepreneurial values and entrepreneurial mindset than non-participants. The findings imply that those who are nurtured by the entrepreneurship promotion programmes can indeed be distinguish from those not nurtured by such programmes especially in terms of identified constituent. The findings contribute new knowledge to the entrepreneurship literature in that limited research has actually examined these differences.

The result of this study which proved the prediction of the differences in the entrepreneurial attributes of the participants of the policy measures compared to the non-participants agrees with the assertions by Rajjman (2001) that individuals with such attributes have a better chance of entering the world of business than those without them. The findings support the view that entrepreneurial attributes are changeable (Robinson et al., 1991) thereby disproving the claim that entrepreneurial attributes are stable (Rauch and Frese, 2007) especially being that the participants group differed from the non-participants group in their attributes indicating the importance of the policy measures.

The findings which predicted the differences in the entrepreneurial values of the participants compared to the non-participants corroborates with the assertions of Tambunan (1999 cited in Shariff and Peou, 2008) that entrepreneurial values does distinguish individuals in a group from others. The presence of entrepreneurial values in this context further supports the views that these values are shared by entrepreneurs regardless of their cultural origin (McGrath et. al 1992,

Morris and Schindehutte, 2005). The findings that predicted the differences in the entrepreneurial mindset and entrepreneurial behaviour of participants compared to non-participants adds new knowledge to the entrepreneurship literature and implies that participation in the policy measures does to some extent contribute to the improvement of the three constituent of Entrepreneurial Culture in the participants of the policy measures.

CONCLUSION

This paper sought to examine if differences exist in the constituent of entrepreneurial culture of the respondents who participated in the entrepreneurship promotion policy measures compared to those who did not. The findings have proved that differences do exist in three of the constituent of entrepreneurial culture of the participants against that of the non-participants. It can thus be concluded that those who participate in the policy measures do gain positively in the improvement of their entrepreneurial attributes, values and mindset. It also implies that every individual should avail themselves of the opportunity offered by the government entrepreneurship programmes in order to enhance their entrepreneurial attributes, entrepreneurial values and entrepreneurial mindset so as to be self-reliant and pursue self-employment rather than constantly depending on the limited civil service job which may not be available for majority of them. The study contributes new knowledge to the entrepreneurship literature by bringing new contextual knowledge and angle of approach to the entrepreneurship field. The research could be replicated in other contexts to compare findings.

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