

CULTURE, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GENDERED ENTREPRENEURIAL DISCOURSES AND PRAXIS IN AFRICA

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Abstract

This paper is a synthesis of earlier studies and recent research on culture and entrepreneurship in terms of which they represent a treatise in cultural theory, entrepreneurship, gender and economic development in two crucial areas: (i) the relationship between cultural values and entrepreneurship in the context of gendered entrepreneurial ideas and its praxis and (ii) the constraints such cultural values and practices may have on the development of entrepreneurship in the context of Africa. The method of inquiry is derived from the tradition of critical theory and discursive praxis. Here, the discourse of the subject of entrepreneurship is subjected to critical inquiry. A critique of the discourse on entrepreneurship from an African experience of it enables one to become resisting, rather than assenting, spectators and readers of entrepreneurial texts, praxis and research. The paper consists of four parts. Part one focuses on the introduction where it deals with how the concept of entrepreneurship in Africa has been perceived differently among scholars and researchers. Part two deals with the concept of culture, entrepreneurship and economic development and shows how entrepreneurship is seen as a product of webs of culture. There is evidence that economic underdevelopment and a lack of entrepreneurial ethos in Africa are the results of indigenous cultural practices which are antithetical to the demands of modern economic practices. Part three deals with culture and gendered entrepreneurial discourses and practices. It critically

examines how the notion of entrepreneurship and its contiguous concepts privilege masculine oriented ideas to the exclusion of the feminine halve of the gender equation. Part four suggests ways through which African nations can develop entrepreneurship by cultural reprogramming, intervention and re-orientation. Finally, the paper warns about the danger inherent in turning reified concepts into manufactured reality, which then becomes the basis of action.

Keywords: Culture, entrepreneurship, gender, discourse, critical theory, economic development

Introduction

Entrepreneurship in Africa has been perceived differently among scholars and researchers. One view is that there is lack of entrepreneurial talent in Africa which has resulted in fewer establishments and management of manufacturing industries for productive activities (Mungai and Ogot, 2012; Morch, 1995). Another view is that entrepreneurial talent is indeed available but that the economic, financial, political and the institutional environments have not been conducive to allow this talent to develop (Ogbor, 2009; 2016). This study takes on another view, that the manner in which entrepreneurial theories and discourses are gendered is a hindrance for the development of a robust entrepreneurial theory that is inclusive of both male and female entrepreneurs. The masculine dominated ideas that permeate the discourse and the eclipse of feminine qualities when defining

and reading entrepreneurship is capable of hindering the development of a sustainable entrepreneurial culture and thus national development.

Previous studies on gender and entrepreneurship indicate that women had a lower level of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and lower level of entrepreneurial performance (EP) as compared to men (Fay and Williams, 1993; Hisrich and Brush, 1984; Kuada, 2009; Matthews and Moser, 1999; Ogbor, 2000; Omari, 1991; Stevenson, 1986). The model of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) suggests that there are five dimensions of EO: autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness (Baron, 2004; Forlani and Mullins, 2000; Palich and Bagby, 1995; Thomas, 2004). These traits that are commonly associated with masculinity are seen as the psychological conditions promoting entrepreneurship.

In particular, the prevailing discourse has shown how women exhibit a consistently lower likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur than their male counterparts as a result of early socialization (Blumberg, 1989; IFC, 200, 2006; Chanock, 1985; Ferree, 2006; Holmquist and Sundin, 2006; Nelson and Smith; 1998). With African nations being dominantly patriarchal, the extent to which women are able to freely participate in entrepreneurship activities will largely be determined by the existing cultural atmosphere, discourses and ultimately praxis.

Considering the various cultural and structural challenges and obstacles facing women, it is not unlikely that we may draw the conclusion that women are usually discouraged from venturing into enterprise development (Chitsike, 1985; Heyer, 2006; Mungai and Ogot, 2012; Ogbor, 2009; 2016). First, early socialization practices emphasize the primary role of women as mothers and wives, influencing girls' total expectations for future participation in the labor force and the choice of career paths. Second, an African culture is mainly seen as

a barrier to development because it perpetuates culturally sanctioned biases against women and provides excuses for men (Chitsike, 2000; Chanock, 1985; Heyer, 2006). This, according to the existing literature, has resulted in lower participation of women in business activities with the notable exception of their participation in the informal sector economy (the shadow economy).

Traditionally, cultural ideas on gender often mean that men are seen and see themselves as more instrumental, risk-takers, opportunistic, competitive and committed to business activities and career than women (Ogbor, 2000, 2011, 2014). Thus, men were and still are privileged in terms of social position, career, income and authority. Most cultures, particularly in Africa, are of masculine nature, with masculine notions, stereotypes, values, beliefs and assumptions.

The argument that cultures should be gender-neutral has been advanced severally. One of the main concepts emphasized in line with this argument is "creating equal opportunities," which involves the elimination of structural and cultural barriers and biases that inhibit women participation in business activities and advancement at workplace (Omari, 1991). In the context of Africa, however, this argument has received scanty responses from both scholars and policy-makers. Even where such "equal participation" laws are enshrined in the constitution, they are rarely adhered to.

According to Mungai and Ogot (2012), existing research in this field have only covered "gender equality" at the workplace in the developed western nations through such policies as equal opportunity programs and various affirmative initiatives that tend to bridge the gap between men and women in terms of employment opportunities and job creation. According to the authors, the existing studies failed to conduct extensive and in-depth investigation on societies with a pattern of shared values, beliefs and traits which are ideally associated with a culture that is patriarchic in nature. Further, much of

the evidence on gender-related entrepreneurial activity comes from studies based in the United States and European countries; the generalizability of these findings in an African setting is questionable (Ogbor, 2016; Mungai and Ogot, 2012). This is considered a research gap in the existing research. To fill this gap, the study suggests a cultural dimension to gender differences within African society, and proposes a dialogue within the discourse and praxis of entrepreneurship in order to suggest ways in which a theory of culture, gender and entrepreneurship could be developed in the context of national socio-economic development in Africa.

The relationship between culture and gender and how entrepreneurial discourses are gendered have not been critically examined in the context of Africa. This study is not only looking at the relationship between culture and gender. Rather, it intends to fill a gap in the extant research which seems to ignore the fact that gendered entrepreneurial ideas are socio-culturally constructed and imposed upon others in a man-made and manufactured reality.

The purpose of this paper then is to examine the discourse of culture in the context of culturally gendered entrepreneurial ideas and to propose a way forward in the context of cultural discontinuity and re-programming necessary for national socio-economic development. The method of inquiry is derived from the tradition of critical theory. Insofar as knowledge of an object prescribes the way practice is directed towards it, the practice of entrepreneurship in Africa has neglected the contexts and unique environment under which entrepreneurship is practiced. It is on this basis that this research is anchored on four pillars: discourse, praxis, contexts and prescription.

Thus, this present paper is a synthesis of earlier studies and recent research on culture and entrepreneurship in terms of which they represent a treatise in cultural theory, entrepreneurship and economic development in two crucial areas: (i) the relationship

between cultural values and entrepreneurship in the context of gendered entrepreneurial ideas and its praxis and (ii) the constraints such as cultural values and practices may have on the development of entrepreneurship in the context of Africa.

In other words, the goal of this present work is to initiate a basis for discussion and a critical examination of the existing discourse and its relevance to the development of African entrepreneurship in the context of gender relationship. Following the tradition of critical theorists in management and organization studies, a critique of the dominant discourses on entrepreneurship inspires people especially those engaged in serious research to explore the relationship between illusion, ideology and reality as it stimulates self-reflection in order to free individuals from the restrictions and repression of the established social order and its ideologies (Ogbor, 2000). A critique of the discourse on entrepreneurship from an African experience of it enables one to become resisting, rather than assenting, spectators and readers of entrepreneurial texts, praxis and research.

From a discursive perspective, this paper examines the various theories advanced in the quest to understand the subject of gender, culture and the practice of entrepreneurship. It is essential to offer a critique of an existing discourse. The reason is that one way through which a discourse (or mode of theorizing) is legitimized is its effect on the practical aspects of life (praxis). Sometimes, discourses of social phenomena are manifestations of societal myths and ideology which may be nonsensical to the reality of entrepreneurship on ground. Fay and Williams' (1993), cited in Ogbor 2000: 624) study of women's participation in entrepreneurship shows how widely held perceptions about women have led to gender discrimination when seeking start-up capital. Such discriminatory behavior by loan officers and other practitioners, according to Fay and Williams, may not be, and probably is not, intentional. Rather, the pervasiveness of the

social construction of differential gender roles in society is such that it is more likely that discrimination is derived from ideas produced in the discourse on entrepreneurship.

Culture, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development

In his book, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Clifford Geertz (1973), whose ideas this essay draws inspiration, points out that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. He adds that culture is those webs. In this paper, entrepreneurship is seen as a product of those webs of culture. Culture, in this context, comprises an entire set of social norms and responses that condition people's behavior; it is acquired and inculcated; a set of rules and behavior patterns that an individual learns but does not inherit at birth. Entrepreneurship is seen here as a patterned way of behavior, which is acquired and environmentally conditioned.

Studies in social anthropology indicate that culture "denotes an historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz, 1973: 89). Culture enables people to make sense (meaning) of their world. Knowledge of the concept of culture is thus necessary for understanding entrepreneurship because certain questions as to why some people, social groups or nations are more entrepreneurial than others and what motivates people towards business entry and self-employment have been answered with reference to the role played by cultural values and partly by those derived from psychological traits. Thus, the relationship between culture, entrepreneurship and economic development has long been established since Weber's treatise on *The Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* (Weber, 1930) and Schumpeterian entrepreneurial discourse (Schumpeter, 1934).

Beginning from the early and late 70s, many studies have examined the relationship between culture, entrepreneurship and economic development in Africa (e.g., Beveridge and Obserschall, 1979; Herskovts and Haritz, 1964; Kilby, 1971; Marris, 1968; Nafzinger, 1977). From these early studies, there is evidence that economic underdevelopment and a lack of entrepreneurial ethos in Africa are the results of indigenous cultural practices which are antithetical to the demands of modern economic practices. In addition to these early studies, culture has been implicated by recent research as the reason for Africa's inability to develop an entrepreneurial ethos (Tshikuku, 2001).

From a policy standpoint, the importance of the relationship between culture and entrepreneurship has also been raised as the "new way" to promote economic development. For example, the Government of Tanzania clearly acknowledges the role of certain cultural practices in inhibiting entrepreneurial development when it stated in its "*Development Vision 2025*" that "The move from a command economy to a free-market one demands a change in attitude in both individuals and institutions. Cultural customs and practices can prevent people from adopting new ways of doing things" (The Government of Tanzania, 2004).

The influence of culture on economic growth and entrepreneurship was first recognized by Max Weber at the beginning of this century. As Weber famously argued, Protestantism encouraged a culture that emphasizes individualism, achievement motivation; legitimating entrepreneurial vocations, rationality, asceticism, and self-reliance. Thus, it has been shown that the Protestant ethic was a fundamental drive for the spirit of entrepreneurship, modern capitalism and growth of western economies (Kayed and Hassan, 2011; Mirels and Garrett, 1971; Percy, 2010). Weber also feels that this ethos of rational individualism and achievement motivation was absent in other cultures. For instance, he argues that a rational economic ethic would not develop

in Hinduism owing to its belief in the caste system, fate, excessive ritualism and reliance on magic or supernatural (Weber, 1930).

To appreciate the role of culture in the social construction of entrepreneurship, we will also examine the concept of culture from the perspective of mental attitude which affects behavior. Geertz (1973: 44) elaborates on this subject by suggesting that culture is best seen as "a set of control mechanisms – plans, recipes, rules, instructions (what computer engineers call 'programs') – for the governing of behavior." In a similar manner, Hofstede (1980a) defines culture as "a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". Thus, differences in culture may be expressed in national, regional, ethnic, social class, religious, gender, values and language variations. Values are held to be a critical feature of culture and cultural distinctiveness.

Geert Hofstede's works on culture and organizational practices across culture may be applied to indicate how various aspects of national and regional cultures affect entrepreneurial values across a range of countries and regions. Frequently studied aspects of culture in the context of managerial practices and entrepreneurship are value orientations constructed along five dimensions: (i) individualism-collectivism, (ii) uncertainty avoidance, (iii) power-distance, (iv) masculinity-femininity, and (v) time orientation (Hofstede, 1980a; 1980b; Hofstede, 1989; Hofstede, 1993). How these cultural value dimensions relate to the entrepreneurial discourse and patterns of economic development have been extensively covered in the literature. In general, researchers have shown that entrepreneurship is facilitated by cultures that are high in individualism, weak in uncertainty avoidance, low in power-distance, high in masculinity and have long-term orientation. Similarly, the greater the cultural distance from these ideal types, the lower the average individual and aggregate levels of entrepreneurship (Ogbor, 2009;

Shane, 1994; Shane and Venkataramany, 2000; Tan, 2002; Tiessen, 1987).

Culture and Gendered Entrepreneurial Practices

Although entrepreneurial discourse and praxis have long been undertaken within a gendered framework (Collins and Moore, 1964; Fay and Williams, 1993; Hisrich and Brush, 1984; Kuada, 2009; Matthews and Moser, 1999; Meghji and Virji, 1987; Ogbor, 2000; Omari, 1991; Stevenson, 1986), the gendering of entrepreneurship seems to be more pronounced in Africa than elsewhere.

Earlier studies indicate that women are more vulnerable because tradition usually gives them less decision-making power over assets than men, while at the same time their opportunities to engage in remunerated activities, and therefore to acquire their own assets, are more limited (World Bank, 1995, 1996). In a different study, ILO (1999) found that in patriarchal societies, such as Africa, customary conventions play a major role in determining the socio-economic status and involvement for women in entrepreneurial activities.

While Africa continues to strongly uphold patriarchal values, this impacts heavily on women's ability to build businesses in many contexts. Cultural/ethnic values can play a critical role in determining who gets into entrepreneurship and what functional role each plays in this activity (Omari, 1991). Thus, it could be suggested that women and men operate in two separate worlds with quite different value systems (Ferree, 1990). Evidence also shows that distinct ethnic groups assume their own behavioral expectations, with some communities emphasizing purely domestic chores for women (passivity in entrepreneurial activities), and for others financial independence for both genders. Still for others, the path to entrepreneurship is reflective of women's frustrations encountered at the domestic front (Nussbaum, 2000; Papanek, 1990; Stichter, 1990).

Cultural pressures and expectations to maintain sexual piety, as well a "sound moral reputation, are brought to bear on women" (Chitsike, 2000:75). These pressures impinge significantly on the economic factors that women face (Meghji and Virji, 1987; Chanock, 1985; Chitsike, 2000). Such pressures constrain women's mobility, limit whom they talk to, and conduct business with, and structure their relationship to the market. For example, a study by Chitsike (2000) in Zimbabwe found that some women view making large amounts of money as a dirty pursuit, full of all kinds of evil ("she wants to make money like a prostitute"). According Mungai and Ogot (2012) gender role is a cultural orientation or attribute conditioned by a traditional social system in which men are expected to behave as men (masculine) and women are expected to think and behave as women (feminine). Studies in the literature on female entrepreneurship have shown severally those gender matters. In particular, women exhibit a consistently lower likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur than their male counterparts (Kimbi, 1991; Mungai and Ogot, 2012; Heyer, 2006; Chanock, 1985). With African nations being dominantly patriarchal, the extent to which women are able to freely participate in entrepreneurship activities will largely be determined by the existing cultural atmosphere.

Considering the various cultural and structural challenges and obstacles facing women, it is possible to conclude that women are usually discouraged from venturing into enterprise development. First, early socialization participation in the labor force and the choice of career path has been seen one of the reasons (Kimbi, 1989). Second, an African culture is mainly seen as a barrier to development because it perpetuates culturally sanctioned biases against women and provides excuses for men. This has resulted in lower participation of women in business activities (Kimbi, 1989; Moribo, 1998; Mungai and Ogot, 2012).

Many studies have shown that, specifically in Africa, women are more disadvantaged than men in benefiting from opportunities arising from the dynamics of cultural practices (Mathews and Moser, 1995). Such studies have drawn attention to power inequality in social relations and how this inequality is rooted in the role of "the woman" in society. Unequal power relations in Africa have produced a gendered economic environment which eschews the full participation of women in the process of economic development.

Gender differences and its associated inequality, including their manifestation in economic activities have been explained against a backdrop of a cultural value orientation that privileges masculinity over femininity. According to Hofstede et al. (1998), in a masculine-oriented culture, sex roles in society are clearly defined and it is accepted that men should dominate in society. Thus, women's early socialization has significantly affected their level of self-confidence, achievement motivation and even their ability to take risk (Hisrich and Brush, 1984; Moribo, 1998; Omari, 1991). In studies by Stevenson (1984) and Stevenson (1986), women entrepreneurs stated that they were brought up by their parents or significant others to believe that men are better and more important and that the ultimate role in life for women is to be a wife and mother. Consequently, cultural and social norms which have perpetuated gender inequality in social roles and economic opportunity are seen as some of the obstacles to entrepreneurial development in Africa (Omari, 1991). Thus, gender role is a cultural orientation or attribute conditioned by a traditional social system in which men are expected to behave as men (masculine) and women are expected to think and behave as women (feminine).

The gendered dimensions of the cultural, social and institutional environment in Africa are reflected in a number of gender-specific constraints in the context of entrepreneurial development. For example,

property laws impose constraints on women, who do not always have the rights to acquire and own property. This practice has significantly limited women's ability to have access to needed capital for business development as they lack property to use as collateral (Blumberg, 1989; Etzioni, 1987; Ogbor, 2009, 2016).

Constraints resulting from gendered property laws and the practice of confinement due to some religious practices can also impede women to make connections or networks that will become valuable in business development (Omari, 1991; Chitsike, 2000; Blumberg, 1989). Cultural values may conflict with women entrepreneurs' need for freedom of movement and a taboo in socializing with men. This is clearly observed in several countries around the world, and mostly in Africa, where women, due to religious practices and other socio-culturally imposed sanctions, cannot travel outside their homes or transact businesses without their husbands' consent (Heyer, 2006; Kayed and Hassan, 2011; Ogbor, 2016). Traditional practices, and in particular the practice of polygamy, customary inheritance and land ownership, perpetuate the differences in the roles and status of men and women, limiting the later to certain roles that are antithetical to entrepreneurship, that is, street hawking, vendor of foodstuff, tailoring, operators of beauty salons, etc (Moribo, 1998; Downing, 1990; Heyer, 2006).

In addition, civil code and other types of laws such as customary and Sharia laws, inheritance laws, property laws, credit laws, marriage and divorce laws, commercial codes, agricultural acts, privatization and investment laws offer women scarce protection against discrimination and are examples of practices that are reflective of the socio-cultural, institutional, politico-legal and regulatory environments that impede women entrepreneurial efforts and aspirations to become key economic players in Africa (Kuada, 2009; Blumberg, 1989; Boserup, 1970).

Many studies have indicated that even when constitutions are formally gender-neutral, they might still contain clauses that perpetuate discrimination and in some cases, allow discriminatory customary laws to take precedence, canceling out the rights given to women under the constitution. The existence of such constraints to business at various levels and throughout the society has a disproportionately negative impact on women (African Development Bank, 2004; Albaladejo, 2002; Kuada, 2009).

In particular, as a result of constraints imposed on women by various cultural and institutional practices, many prospective African women entrepreneurs tend to be in small sector micro enterprises, mainly in the informal sector that permits a dual role as "woman/mother" in the house and as an "economic agent" in the market. Attempts at reconciling work and family responsibilities are constraints to the development of their entrepreneurial initiatives. Women's more demanding role in the family relative to men's also affects their entrepreneurial ability by reducing the time, energy and concentration levels needed for any entrepreneurial activity. The amount of time they have available for entrepreneurial activity is limited by the time necessary to care for the family (Nelson and Smith, 1998). Thus, household responsibilities make them risk averse unlike their male counterparts who are seen as "Elitists, Risk-Takers, and Rugged Individualists" (McGrath, 1992), while societal perceptions affect their treatment when they step beyond their perceived boundaries, limiting their access to the resources required for successful entrepreneurship.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of African women's contributions to economic growth and their dominance of certain sectors, particularly agriculture and textiles, women generally remain marginalized, shut out of the formal economy, or constrained due to lack of access to capital (Downing, 1990). For example, most financing provided for women has been at the micro and informal

level (IFC, 2006) and credit facility is hard to get by them (Meghji and Virji, 1987). Consequently, rather than becoming an "entrepreneurial woman" the result of discriminatory practices arising from cultural value system has accorded the African woman the unenviable role of the "market woman" – a term which women themselves have internalized and used to describe their occupational pedigree.

The African woman entrepreneur, as it were, is confronted with a lot of challenges and barriers which collectively limit her potential in entrepreneurship. To recap, these barriers include limited access to collateral, and thus access to credit for business expansion; social and cultural norms that discourage women from entering into certain areas of economic activities or business; prejudice, discrimination and lack of opportunities that discourage and limit women from entering into business; a low level of confidence and self-esteem on the part of some women; women's dual roles of productive and reproductive work, and combined responsibilities relating to enterprise management and domestic responsibilities.

Culture, Gender, Personality Traits and Entrepreneurship

Although it has been traditionally noted that entrepreneurship is a product of such psychological constructs as "motives" or "drives", the motive to take risks and the drive to pursue one's spirit of entrepreneurship have been explained by the "classics" as aspects of a society's culture and other institutional arrangements (Collins & Moore, 1964; Erden, 1992; McClelland, 1961; McGrath et al, 1999; Saffold, 1988; Tiessen, 1987). Thus, "motives," whatever its ambiguities, is at one and the same time a psychological and socio-cultural concept – referring both to a felt advantage of an individual or a group's social construction of reality. For instance, although the psychological theories of entrepreneurial supply have individual personality as their common focus of study, research has also indicated that these constructs are shaped by

particular social cultural practices, including religion and institutional arrangements (Buame, 1996; Carswell and Rolland, 2004; Dana, 2009; Kayed and Hassan, 2011; Mibity, 1989; Mirels and Garrett, 1971; Ogbor, 2000; Robinson, et al., 1991). Research has also shown that some ethnic or social groups in the same country may have a cultural and a psychological propensity towards entrepreneurship than others (Busenitz and Lau, 1996; Drakopoulou and Gotsis, 2007; Hayton, et al., 2002; Hindle and Lansdowne, 2005; Kayed and Hassan, 2011; Percy, 2010).

Although, studies have been conducted in the area of gender and entrepreneurship, the connection between cultures, gender and personality traits has been rather tenuous. The four most prominent constructs used in this context are (i) need for affiliation and entrepreneurship (ii) locus of control and entrepreneurship (iii) tolerance for ambiguity and entrepreneurship and (iv) risk taking propensity and entrepreneurship. The discussion in this section is limited to these four constructs.

The Need for Affiliation and Entrepreneurship

The need for affiliation is an "other-related" type of desire. It is the need for belonging, for association, for acceptance by others, or the need for giving and receiving friendship (Harris and Hartman, 2002:208-209). The need for affiliation is regarded as being partially inherent, since newborn babies respond to affiliation and tend to vegetate without it (Harris and Hartman, 2002). According to the authors, the need for affiliation is also cultivatable and can be affected by a number of cultural and social factors; and affiliation-need level has an impact upon one's behavior at work. McClelland identifies one of man's motivations as being "the need for affiliation", to be together, to work with others (McClelland, 1961; McClelland and Winters, 1969; Bolton and Thompson, 2013:51).

As pointed out in a number of studies, entrepreneurship can be affected by the need for affiliation in the sense that this need is revealed to be attached to others through friendship, sociability/socialization or group membership (Anthikad, 2007: 81), which in the long run are sources for entrepreneurial aspirations, intentions and entrepreneurial behavior. According to some authors (e.g., Welter and Smallbone, 2011:41; Kovin and Wales, 2012; Palich and Bagby, 1995), the level of recognition and appreciation for entrepreneurship is an important contextual factor, and association with government officials and local businesses are key factors in developing a strategic approach to enhance entrepreneurial attitudes and fostering their translation into business start-ups and growth enterprises.

Locus of Control

An explanation of entrepreneurial behavior is offered by Rotter's locus-of-control theory (Rotter, 1966). According to this theory, a person perceives the outcome of events to be controlled by chance, powerful other persons (or factors), or him/herself. One who believes that one exercises personal control over outcomes is described as believing in an internal locus-of-control (Martin, 1994:296). Drawing a link of locus-of-control to entrepreneurship, Martin (1994) notes that "a person is unlikely to set up a business unless s/he believes in internal locus-of control". The reason is that "because such 'internal individuals are more striving and competent than their 'external' counterparts that is, those who believe that chance or powerful other control outcomes and extract more information from ambiguous situations or environments" (Martin, 1994:296).

To determine the relationship between locus-of-control and entrepreneurship, Borland (1974) asks over 300 business students to indicate their future expectancy of starting a business, as well as determining their n-Ach scores and locus-of-control beliefs (Borland, 1974). She found out that students with high n-Ach scores and internal locus-of-control expressed high

expectancies, and for students with low n-Ach score and increasing internal locus-of-control correlated with an increased expectancy of starting a business.

Culture is also said to play a relevant part in the relationship of locus-of-control and entrepreneurship, because in cultures characterized by individualistic traits, higher likelihoods for an internal locus of control and entrepreneurial aspirations and orientations were found (Honig, et al., 2010:68).

Tolerance of Ambiguity and Entrepreneurship

It is said that entrepreneurs have a higher tolerance for ambiguity, locus-of-control, greater self-efficacy and need for achievement than those who are not entrepreneurs (Ong and Ismail, 2008). Begley and Boyd (1987) define tolerance of ambiguity as the tendency to perceive ambiguous situations and uncertainty as desirable. Alluding to the decision-making process that is associated with entrepreneurship, Gurol and Atsan (2006:30) suggest that "tolerance of ambiguity can be efficiently conceptualized as an individual's orientation toward taking chances in a decision-making state." Since risk and uncertainty are part of entrepreneurial endeavors, entrepreneurs are frequently required to make decisions with insufficient information, which creates ambiguity. Therefore, they must have tolerance for ambiguity (Cromie, 2000). Entrepreneurship operates within the atmosphere of uncertainty, so McMullen and Shepherd (2006) link entrepreneurial intent and success with ability to bear uncertain situations.

Risk Taking and Entrepreneurship

Some researchers have investigated whether personal traits such as risk propensity and innovativeness motivate entrepreneurial activities (Palich and Bagby, 1995; Thomas, 2004). Researchers who adopt the trait approach propose that risk propensity directly affects the tendency to become entrepreneurial, assuming that

entrepreneurial individuals tend to have a "higher overall tolerance for risk" (Baron, 2004:224) than non-entrepreneurs.

Douglas and Shepherd (2002) found that the intention to be self-employed is stronger for those with more positive attitudes to risk and to independence. That is, the higher the individual's tolerance for risk, and the stronger is their preference for decision-making autonomy, the stronger is their intention to be self-employed. Risk reflects the degree of uncertainty and potential loss associated with the outcomes which may follow from a given behavior or a set of behaviors (Forlani and Mullins, 2000). Entrepreneurs' propensity to take risk may also be related to risk perception. While estimating the riskiness of the situation, the decision-maker forms some beliefs about future outcomes.

The relationship between the above psychological traits and gender can be summarized as follow:

First, the discourse seems to uphold that the level of affiliation, empathy, sense of belongingness, and association are more pronounced in societies that are feminine than those that are more masculine. The latter seems to privilege a sense of individualism than belongingness (see Collins and Moore, 1964; Hofstede, et al., 1989; Ogbor, 2000). Thus, the gendered idea seems to imply that because women prefer to be associated with a sense of belonging, they tend to lack that spirit of individualism that is so essential for entrepreneurship. It needs to be noted that the need for affiliation in the context of gender and aspiration seems to be conspicuously absent in the extant literature in the discourse of entrepreneurship. This is an area that needs to be further examined in detail.

Second, studies have shown that men are more autonomous; more tolerance for ambiguity, have more risk taking propensity, more proactive, and more aggressive than their female counterparts. Collins and Moore (1964: 5-6) argue that, "however we may

personally feel about the entrepreneur, he emerges as more masculine than feminine, more heroic than cowardly. ... His values and activities have become part of the American and intimately related to our ideas of personal freedom, success, and above all, individualism ..."

A consistent empirical result emerging in the literature on female entrepreneurship indicates how consent is secured in terms of which gendered ideas are manufactured and the way consent is attested to including the manufactured strategies in which feminine equation of gender relations are pushed to the shadow economy (Fay and Williams, 1993; Ogbor, 2016, 2009, 2002; Omari, 1991).

Towards a Theory of Culture and Entrepreneurship: Cultural Discontinuity and Cultural Re-Programming

Much of the research on the African entrepreneur seems to suggest that entrepreneurial practice, once it has been culturally programmed into people's behavioral pattern, is hard to change. This approach to studying entrepreneurship and culture is overtly deterministic as it eschews the fact that culture change is one aspect of the phenomenon of culture. Culture is not as static or "enduring" as it seems to be presented in cultural discourses. In fact, the popular euphemism about the idea that "change is constant" seems to be more applicable to the phenomenon of culture than in any other sphere of social life. Culture is always in transition and with it, changes in attitudes and values. This is precisely what is going on in most parts of the world as "anti-capitalist cultures" are re-programmed to become "pro-capitalist cultures" through cultural intervention. Examples are the proliferations of entrepreneurial education and support policies in societies that were once seen as "backward societies".

In the early and late sixties, McClelland and his associates (McClelland, 1961; McClelland and Winters, 1969), tried in their attempts to "motivate economic

achievement" in countries whose cultures are not in sync with the "spirit of capitalism" with various training and "cultural intervention" programs. Specifically, it was "established" that India, with its Hindu culture (which privileges spiritualism and fate or life determinism), was doomed to a society of poverty. Today, India has emerged as a veritable player in the global economy, thanks to a concerted and systematic effort in cultural change whereby the spirit of entrepreneurship and capitalism has been inculcated in the Hindustan mind. As a consequence, the prevailing culture of Hinduism has given way to Weber's "spirit of capitalism." India's transformation to a vibrant capitalist and entrepreneurial society is rooted in the gradual and guided discontinuity of its predominant Hindustan culture brought about by training and cultural re-programming. In a similar manner, China, formerly known as the sleeping giant, and was once a communist enclave with inward-looking development strategy has now become a veritable player in the global economy. This feat is achieved thanks to a process that went through ideological synthesis. In her approach to adopt a socio-cultural and politico-economic change in the context of a policy of gradualism, China has now become the second largest economy in the global market.

In terms of cultural value orientation and entrepreneurial orientation, the United States of America is arguably the most masculine society on earth (Hofstede, 1980a). Not surprisingly, it was from the US that the idea of entrepreneurship as a masculine ethos emerged. Today, however, the United States is producing more women (feminine) entrepreneurs than male (masculine) ones.

The above examples from India, China and the United States indicate phenomena of cultural intervention, change and discontinuity. In the case of India, change in the culture is brought about by education and training. In the case of the United States, cultural change and discontinuity is brought about by, on the one hand, education, and by

the other, laws such as affirmative action and equal opportunity laws and programs designed to eradicate centuries of repressive cultural and institutional practices which had worked against female entrepreneurs. Thus, although culture is a way that people are culturally programmed, this "mental programming" can be re-programmed to support modern entrepreneurial conditions. In addition to training, change in "attitudes", "reflexes" and values can also be enforced through laws and other forms of legislations. The US examples of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity programs are some of the strategies governments have adopted to promote entrepreneurship among women and other disadvantaged social groups in a culture that was overtly masculine.

Cultural discontinuity and "re-programming" is not new in Africa as the continent has been experiencing all sort of cultural discontinuity – in religion, politics, arts, architecture, education, economics and business, etc. The African culture has embraced the Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal religion systems, Western-styled political culture, Oxford/Cambridge/Harvard education culture, MTV-youth culture, CNN, McDonald's, Hollywood, Levi Strauss cultures in their symbolic inducement without a concomitant embrace of their substance – the cultural value system in which they are made meaningful.

As Tshikuku (2001:3) points out, Africa is in transition and "in this transition, the attitudes, reflexes, choices, and the values that support them, remain tragically ambiguous and ambivalent. The socio-cultural systems are nevertheless not fixed." What is needed, as the examples of India, China and the US indicate, is a "guided transition" or "cultural re-programming" – one in which the attitudes, reflexes, and values are supportive of modern entrepreneurship. It is not enough to accept the symbolism of a culture; to make any difference, the substance of the culture must be equally adopted. Adoption of a cultural ideal without a change in cultural values and

attitudes is a futile exercise in terms of entrepreneurial development.

Ogbor (2009) notes that despite the growing recognition of the importance of Africa women's contributions to economic growth and their dominance of certain sectors particularly agriculture and textile and generally in the underground or shadow economy, women have remained either marginalized, shut out of the formal economy, or constrained due to lack of access to capital in the formal financial sector. Women are seen to rely more on informal source of financing such as savings made through contributions than their male counterparts. Even where modern sources of financing are available, most specialized financing provided for women to date has been at the micro level (Ehlers and Main, 1998). Furthermore, private equity funds created to provide capital to SMEs in general are very few, and even fewer for women-owned small businesses (Ogbor, 2009).

Cultural re-programming (in the context of entrepreneurial training and development) cannot occur by teaching out-dated models, and certainly not by introducing new methods using old infrastructures and mental programming. In the context of African entrepreneurship, the culture of African business ownership ought to be replaced – discontinued (through training and with new infrastructures) with an entrepreneurial culture. For example, a business person's knowledge about the future of the business is less likely to be achieved through seeking the advice of a spiritualist than in engaging in feasibility study and producing a sound business plan. Similarly, going to a traditional witch doctor or engaging the services of a "prayer warrior" for spiritual intervention in order to prevent a business from failure obscures the reality and real reasons for business failure.

As consistently argued in this paper, entrepreneurial praxis and the discourse on which it is premised seems to privilege the masculine ethos over the feminine ones

through the use of certain language over others. Concepts such as aggressiveness, assertiveness, competition, independence, high level of individualism, achievement orientation, risk-taking propensity, etc are ideally masculine in nature. On the other hand, concepts such as nurturance, sense of belonging, communality, cooperation, etc are feminine in nature and presented in the discourse as antithetical to the spirit of entrepreneurship.

Sometimes (or perhaps most of the time), the words we speak about something (the discourse of an object) serve as an arena for action and the discourse of entrepreneurship and the manner in which the ideas have been gendered is not an exception.

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