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Full Length Research Paper

Midas touch or time bomb? A look at the influence of celebrity endorsement on customer purchase intentions: The case study of fast foods outlet companies in Harare, Zimbabwe

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Fast foods companies in Zimbabwe have been outcompeting and outclassing each other in using celebrity endorsers for their marketing communications. The study aimed to investigate the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchase intentions. The study's literature review was based on a copious of celebrity endorsement empirical and theoretical literature. The literature review also acted as bedrock for the research methodology which was later adopted. In order to achieve the research objectives, the study was largely quantitative where survey questionnaires were distributed to customers and these questionnaires were useful in the aggregation of the results. The findings were entered into SPSS software package version 22. The result shows that celebrity endorsement variables showed a positive and significant statistical relationship with consumer buying intentions. The study recommends for fast foods companies to gauge the capacity of celebrities to project multi-attributes which would be consistent and of interest to the consumer's requirements. There is also the need to strengthen certain aspects of celebrity consumer relationship as way of understanding the implications for product endorsement in the fast foods industry.

Key words: Celebrity credibility, celebrity endorsement, perceived expertise, physical attractiveness, purchase intentions, trustworthiness.

INTRODUCTION

There has been great interest on the study of celebrity endorsement in recent years (Amos et al., 2008; Jasmina and Cynthia, 2011; Pughazhendi et al., 2012; Sohail and Sana, 2011). In fact, celebrity endorsement has become very popular in modern marketing in both developing and

developed countries. With many organisations facing unprecedented hyper competition, the use of celebrities in advertisements has become the most effective and bombardment tool for gaining significant competitive advantage (Carlson and Donovan, 2008). Consequently,

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customers have been approached by a myriad of companies which have equal or better offers. These customers have also become harder to please, price conscious, more demanding and less forgiving.

The use of celebrities in advertisement is now not uncommon in many developed and developing countries. As noted by Dash and Sabat (2012), about a quarter of all advertisements in the United States of America feature a celebrity endorser. Similarly, in South Korea more than 60% of prime time television commercials which airing on the three major television networks involve celebrity endorsements (Sharma and Kumar, 2013, White et al., 2015). Brajesh and Gouranga (2011) also noted that celebrities are featured in approximately 80% of Japanese television commercials. The situation is also prevalent in western countries such as Ireland and the United Kingdom (Pomerantz, 2013; Tirtiroglu and Elbeck, 2008).

Following the dollarization of the economy in 2009 there had been considerable market demand by various international and local brands. Indeed, many companies in Zimbabwe including fasts foods outlets have been outcompeting and outclassing each other in using celebrity endorsers for their marketing communications. Indeed, most of these companies had been endorsed by sport athletes, personalities, local artists or singers in an effort to build up brand awareness and gain acceptance. With the marketing communication environment becoming increasingly colourful and inundated with advertisements, this has made it extremely difficult for any one advertisement to get noticed. Most notable had been prominent musicians from local music, "zimdancehall" and other music genres and these have been viewed as great models to endorse a brand image. For instance, Jah Prayzah endorses chicken slice products whilst Alick Macheso is a brand marketer for Chicken Inn products. These endorsers are seen as dynamic in terms of attractiveness and appealing qualities (Jasmina and Cynthia, 2011).

Moreover, 48% of the Zimbabwean people love sporting activities and music and these two have been taking important dimensions in the country (Yew and Zain, 2013). This is at a time when the market appears saturated and increasingly becoming difficult to penetrate, secure and sustain customers' attention. However, it has increasingly become difficult for these fast foods outlets to go through advertisements cluster since consumers are exposed to over 500 messages everyday through different sources such as television, radio or mobile phones (Manjusha and Segar, 2013). As noted by Veldhuis et al. (2014), approximately 39 341 ads have been broadcast through televisions, private and public radio stations in Zimbabwe in 2013 alone. Against this background, the study sought to investigate the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase intentions for fast foods products and services in Harare.

Day by day consumers of fast foods in Harare face thousands of voices and images from newspapers, on billboards, radio, and television (Anam et al., 2015; Pughazhendi et al., 2012). Many of these customers are well educated, diverse and technologically proficient and the challenge of the marketers had been how to find "a hook" that will hold customers' attention. In this regard, these fast foods outlets had been signing deals with celebrities in the hope and expectation that this would help in standing out from the clutter and give a relevant position in the minds of consumers. However, poor judgment in the choice of celebrity endorser could harm not only sales and corporate image. Thus, the study sought to investigate the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase intentions.

Furthermore, most of the studies on celebrity endorsement and purchase intentions have been conducted in developed countries (Culbreath, 2012; Rada, Dominguez-Alvarez, 2014; Parker and Fink, 2012). There is very little research work done in developing countries like Zimbabwe on the Influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase intentions. This gap in literature is somewhat alarming given the emerging changes in consumers' behavioural pattern that seems to be a snowball of the pattern in the developing in economy. The study, therefore, aimed to bridge this gap and highlight the underlying factors of celebrity endorsement on purchasing intentions in a developing country context like Zimbabwe.

The study specifically sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Establish how celebrity endorsement positively influences the buying behaviour of customers for fasts foods products.
2. Identify the effect of the endorser's trustworthiness used in advertisements of food outlets companies on consumer buying intentions.
3. Establish the effect of physical attractiveness of celebrity on consumer buying behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are copious definitions of celebrity endorsement available in the marketing literature. In essence, the authors' views of celebrity endorsement do not differ on the degree to which they define and the spectrum of activities under the celebrity endorsement banner. According to Okorie and Aderogba (2011), celebrity endorsement involves the use of any person who enjoys public recognition and usually uses that recognition on behalf of a consumer product or service by appearing with it in an advertisement. For Prieler et al., (2010), celebrity endorsement is a type of channel in brand

communication through which a celebrity acts as the brand's spokesperson and certifies the brand's claim and position by extending his/her personality. Similarly, Said and Todorov (2011) define celebrity endorsement as individuals who enjoy public recognition and use this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement. From the above definitions, it can be seen that the basic assumption underlying celebrity endorsement is that the value associated with the celebrity is transferred to the brand and thus helps in creating an image that can be easily referred to by consumers.

Examples of celebrities include sport athletes, actors, entertainers, models, pop stars and politicians (Arslan and Altuna, 2010; Schiffman, Kanuk and Kumar, 2010). Moreover, celebrities are known to the general public for their accomplishments. These celebrities usually enjoy high public recognition and do have powerful influence upon endorsing products or services (Knight and Kim, 2007). For instance, the famous footballer David Beckham endorses the sports brand Adidas and American singer Beyoncé endorses Pepsi and the fashion brand H&M (Pandey, 2011). Many celebrities earn much more money from their endorsement contracts than from their usual fields of practice (Lee, Singal and Kang, 2013).

Celebrity endorsement has been used by various manufacturing and retailing companies for a long time in an effort to increase sales (Edlund and Sagarin, 2014; Halliwell, 2013; Temperley and Tangen, 2006). As noted by Tan (2011), companies in both developed and developing countries have been spending millions on celebrity endorsements. For instance, companies such as T-Mobile spend \$20 million in 2012 to celebrities such as Catherine Zeta-Jones (White et al., 2015). Similarly, Pepsi also paid tens of millions to land numerous stars including Beyoncé, Britney Spears, Puff Daddy, Carson Daily, and Tiger Woods (Rada and Dominguez-Alvarez, 2014). Likewise, in India the bulk of advertisements for commercial banks are endorsed by cricketers and Bollywood stars (Kasana and Chaudhary, 2014). These companies go for celebrity endorsement because of its greater benefits and immense possible influence.

There are different dimensions used to evaluate the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement and its effect on customer buying decisions. The dimensions include trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness and respect (Ahmed et al., 2012). For Temperley and Tangen (2006), trustworthiness can be captured within the background of celebrity endorsement such as honesty, integrity and believability of the celebrity by the consumers. Choi et al. (2005) also postulate that celebrity endorser's credibility has both cognitive and positive effects on customers' intention to purchase. Thus, it is more likely that the targeted audience would perceive the celebrity endorser as more likeable because of their familiarity with the target audience.

Moreover, Tan (2011) elucidates that consumers are usually persuaded to purchase advertised brands which are endorsed by knowledgeable celebrity or whose profession is closely linked to the brand functions. La Eerie and Sejung (2005) also corroborate that perceived expertise of an endorser is seen as the most significant component for endorsement to be effective. In this regard, expert opinion of the endorser also matters in persuading and influencing the consumers (Kanibir and Nart, 2009). A study by Akturan (2011) showed that proficiency of the celebrities was a momentous factor explaining customer purchase intentions. These findings are supported by Banytè et al. (2011) who concluded that expertise had greatest impact on the consumer's intention to purchase. Hence, it can be concluded that celebrities can be chosen as endorsers because of the perceived link that exists between them and the service or product.

The other dimension of celebrity endorsement is the physical beauty and other beauty embodiments such as sportsmanship, charm, grace and intelligence (Nelson, 2010). Hakimi et al. (2011) describe physical attractiveness as informational cues which are pervasive; inescapable, subtle, and transcend culture in its effects. Some Products and services are linked with a person's physical attractiveness or facial looks and these include facial creams, beauty soaps, dresses, hair colours and shampoos are much influenced by physical attractiveness of celebrity (Dix et al., 2010). According to Fleck et al. (2012), celebrity endorser's physical attractiveness can be a source to capture attention of audience in both print and electronic media. For instance, meta-analysis study about Razor revealed that attractiveness of celebrity produces significant results as people are themselves conscious about their own attractive looks (Hakimi et al., 2011). Another similar study by Jain (2011) on Malaysian commercial banks also showed a positive association between celebrity physical attractions and likeability of a given brand. Additionally, findings from Indonesian hotels by Yusoff and Khan (2013) concluded that an attractive celebrity does have a positive effect on consumer attitudes towards a brand.

Product and celebrity association is another important factor for generating positive feedback because people take it as evidence that product is in reality used or consumed by celebrity. Fortini-Campbell (1992) expounds that people use brands which do have some association with personalities. Thus, the more familiar an endorser, the more likely consumers are to purchase the endorsed products or services. For instance, Michael Jordan endorsed Nike and he used various products of Nike when he trained and played basketball (Seno and Lukas, 2007). As observed by Forbes (2011), the endorsement improved the sales of Nike shoes in the United States and across the world.

There are numerous reasons that have been adduced

for the use of celebrities in advertising. Key among them includes building credibility, fostering trust and drawing attention and all these can translate into higher organisational brand sales (Dash and Sabat, 2012; Kim et al., 2013; Pughazhendi et al., 2011). As argued by Ashikali and Dittmar (2012), celebrity endorsement not only enhances advertising messages but also encourages brand recognition and creates positive attitudes toward the brand. In concurrence, Martin and Bush (2000) argue celebrity endorsement creates a personality for the product or service being advertised. Accordingly, it is easier to establish a product image with an initial celebrity endorsement than it is to change a product image that is already associated with a celebrity.

Another argument put forward by Sharabi (2012) is that celebrities can influence consumers' feelings, attitudes and buying behavior favorably. Roy et al. (2013) also opine that celebrity endorsements contribute to higher consumer awareness and favorable product evaluations. This is also corroborated by Zafar and Rafique (2012) who argue that repeated association of a brand with a celebrity might ultimately lead consumers to think the attractive qualities that are similar to the celebrity's. However, Shimp and Andrews (2013) caution that celebrity endorsement is effective only if there are positive links between the brand and the celebrity. In this regard, Manjusha and Segar (2013) and Pedhiwal (2011) suggest that there should be congruence between a celebrity and brand image of the product/service. Furthermore, celebrity image will have a long lasting impact on brand image and this helps marketing managers to introduce new products or reposition the existing ones (Bukxa and Mitsis, 2011).

In some instances, celebrities also act as ambassadors in promoting products and services (Kotler and Keller, 2009). In agreement, Naz and Siddiqui (2012) believe that famous people achieve higher degree of attention and awareness. Furthermore, Van der Walddt et al. (2009) elucidate that the use of celebrities helps a product to stand out from the crowd. This is because celebrities are professed as more entertaining and trustworthy. For instance, a study by Rengejangan and Sathya (2014) in India found that consumers are likely to take more notice of celebrity advertisements and also improve their level of product recall. Okorie and Aderogba (2011) also note that customers are more likely to choose goods and services endorsed by celebrities than those without such endorsements. In this regard, celebrities help advertisements to carve a niche in a competitive environment thereby repositioning the brand in the market. Thus, it can be concluded that using popular celebrity can affect consumers' feeling as well as their purchase intentions.

Many scholars argue that celebrity endorsement is effective due to the influential personalities of the celebrities. For instance, Brown (2007) and White, Goddard and Wilbur (2009) suggest that celebrity

advertising is effective because of its ability to tap into consumers' symbolic association. Another benefit of using celebrity endorsement is that it can provide testimony for a product or service, particularly when the product has contributed to their celebrity (Brajesh and Gouranga, 2011; Yusoff and Khan, 2013). Furthermore, celebrities create positive feelings towards brands and are perceived by consumers as more entertaining. Ranjbarian et al. (2010) also posit that celebrities succeed in creating an aspiration in the minds of the consumer to acquire what their favourite celebrity endorses. Studies by Ronay and von Hippel (2010) concluded that people selectively integrated the perceived values and behaviors they saw in celebrities they admired and adopted these into their own lives.

Ahmed et al. (2012) posit that celebrities are used by organizations because they enhance the brands of the organisation and save resources in creating credibility. This implies that the endorser's qualities must match those that the advertiser tries to link with its brand (Temperley and Tangen, 2006). The other advantages for using celebrities include increasing attention to the product and reaching the target market and giving the same status to a product that is being established in an international market. At the corporate level, trustworthy celebrity endorsers are an effective means of communicating positive messages to customers about the company and its products, its contribution to society and corporate competency (Schiffman et al., 2010). Secondly, effective endorsement by an attractive celebrity has the potential to enhance corporate image by diluting negative attitudes toward the company including beliefs that the company is environment-oriented, effective for revenue-generation, competent for marketing (Walddt et al., 2007).

It should be noted that some organisations have suffered financially from the inconsistency in the professional popularity of the use of celebrities in endorsements. As noted by Roozen and Claeys (2010), some celebrities may lose popularity due to some lapse in professional performances. For instance, the 2003 Cricket World Cup threw up the Shane Warne incident, which caught Pepsi off guard when the celebrity was accused of drug abuse (Kulkarni and Gaulkar, 2005). In addition, companies that have their products endorsed by Tiger Woods and Lance Armstrong in advertising their products and services experienced drastic decline in sales as a result of the negative moral questions that hanged over their necks (Forbes, 2011). Indeed, the two personalities were named as the worst celebrity endorsement of year the 2010 (Harrison and Hefner, 2014). Therefore, in choosing a celebrity to endorse a product or service the credibility of the person should be considered since any mishap can affect the buying behaviour of the customers.

Poor judgment in the selection of celebrity endorser can harm not only sales and corporate image but may

hasten commercial failure of products in markets where morality and ethical standards are of high essence. According to Edlund and Sagarin (2014), there are many cases of brands failing in the market place despite famous celebrities endorsing them. Another dangerous pitfall in the celebrity endorsement can be the mismatch between a celebrity and the image of the brand whereby celebrities may manifest certain qualities for the audience. Each celebrity portrays a broad range of meanings, involving a specific personality and lifestyle. For example, the personality of Desmond Elliot, a Nigerian movie artist, is best characterized as the perfect gentleman, whereas Omotola Jolade has the image of the 'good girl' (Okorie, 2010). Okorie and Aderogba (2011) also note that the use of Nkem Owoh, a male in the Harpic advert was a mismatch since as a norm in Nigeria men do not clean toilets at home. Hence, the target audience to promote any toilet cleaning products should be women. It is, thus, pivotal that there is an association between the character of the celebrity and the image of the brand.

Another challenge in the use of celebrity endorsement is the issue of multi brand endorsements by the same celebrity and this may usually lead to overexposure. Consequently, the novelty of a celebrity endorsement gets diluted because of doing too many advertisements. For instance, Sainsbury encountered a problem with Catherina Zeta Jones, whom the company used for its recipe advertisements, yet she was caught shopping in Tesco (Agarwal et al., 2013). As noted by Chen and Huddleston (2009) some celebrities will be willing to endorse anything for lots of money. This is also echoed by Edlund and Sagarin (2014) who argue that most celebrities endorse brands due to monetary benefit they get from companies.

Current literature lacks a clear conclusion on the relationship between celebrity endorsement and buyer behavior (Roozen and Claeys, 2010; Wagner and Petty, 2011). Some researches such as Manjusha and Segar (2013) indicate that celebrity endorsement has a positive effect on buyer behavior; whereas others, like Pedhiwal (2011), have found that some celebrity advertisement campaigns were not successful and hence had a negative result on willingness to buy. Ghani and Kakakhel (2011) found that celebrity endorsers pass on their symbolic meanings and acquired associations to the products they endorse easier because they have an ability to communicate with mass. In China, a strong positive effect is created by celebrity endorsement practices (Chang et al., 2005). In this instance, celebrities are considered to bring attention towards advertisement due to their likeability and attractiveness (Fleck et al., 2012). A study of Malaysian teenagers by Yew and Zain (2013) also concluded that there is a positive relationship between the perceived role model and purchasing behavior. In the United States, 25% of all advertisements

in newspapers and magazines employ the use of endorsers (Abdulmajid-Sallam and Wahid, 2012). In essence, these measures suggest that many US organisations have bought into the hypothesis that celebrity endorsers positively impact consumers' attitude to an associated brand (Okorie and Aderogba, 2011).

However, the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention is not consistent for all product categories. For example, Rengejangan and Sathya (2014) empirically demonstrated that celebrity endorsement had a nominal relationship in the soft drink category and no relationship with some other product categories.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer buying intentions. This means that celebrities do have a positive impact on brand loyalty of the demand for banking products and services. The study reviewed that celebrities, notwithstanding diverse views goes a long way to improve on purchase intentions. As such, it is important for advertisers to be aware of the complex expectations and views underlying the endorsement of celebrities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION

The study was largely confined to fast foods companies in Harare and the research took place from October 2015 to November 2015. The study sample consisted of 280 customers from the 5 selected fasts foods companies. The city of Harare was selected for the study because significant consumers of fast foods products are largely in that town as compared with other cities. Thus, the population from the city was representative of the other cities in Zimbabwe.

Since the study was largely explanatory in nature, a quantitative research design was deemed best suited to this type of research. More significantly, a quantitative research design would allow the researcher to focus on various aspects of celebrity endorsement including perceived expertise, physical attractiveness and trustworthiness (Creusen et al., 2012; Makienco and Bernard, 2012). In addition, a quantitative research design would largely focus on providing the statistical description of the research problem thereby highlighting the celebrity endorsement variables to the research problem (Ergu and Kou, 2012; Stallen et al., 2010).

The study's primary data were collected with the help of self-administered questionnaires from respondents obtained using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling determination table. In the questions, a 5-point Likert type-scale was used whereby the respondents were asked to select the most appropriate number that corresponds with the extent to which they agree with given statement. The scales in the survey questions ranged from 1 to 5 with "1" denoting "strongly disagree" and "5" denoting "strongly agree". The five point Likert type scale offered a greater range of answers to participants and the main advantage of the Likert scale was that it was reasonably easy to instruct and administer (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Hempel, 2012). Additionally, the 5-point Likert scale also determined respondents' feelings towards the attributes of celebrity endorsers such as trust-worthiness, expertise, physical attractiveness and respect.

Before the distribution of the questionnaires, stimulus advertisements were shown to the study respondents. Accordingly, the

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha.

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach alpha
Perceived Expertise	5	0.876
Physical Attractiveness	4	0.954
Trustworthiness	5	0.957
Buying Behaviour	3	0.869
Total	17	0.914

Table 2. Demographic data of respondents.

Variable	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	116	53.9
	Male	99	46.1
Age of respondents	Below 20 years	25	11.6
	21 to 30 years	119	55.4
	31 to 40 years	45	20.9
	41 to 50 years	19	9.1
	Above 50 years	7	3
Academic qualifications	Secondary education	30	14
	Diploma education	70	32.5
	Undergraduate Degree	90	41.9
	Master's degree and above	25	11.6

questionnaires contained a print advertisement of celebrity endorsing a fast foods product. After viewing the advertisement, the respondents were asked to rate the celebrities in regarding attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness as provided by Lee et al., (2013). All primary data were analysed using SPSS software package version 22 and were tested using correlation analysis.

Reliability test

To ensure reliability, the study checked for consistency of questionnaires by using the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha. The method measures squared correlations between observed scores and true scores and this method helped in estimating internal consistency of celebrity endorsement variables under study. Thus, alpha values ranged from coefficient of 0.7 or higher for them to be acceptable (Creswell, 2009). In line with Giroux (2011) and Warburton (2010), the current study used Cronbach's alpha test for measuring the reliability of the variables using SPSS software package version 22. Table 1 shows different Cronbach's Alpha values for the various constructs of the questionnaire.

From the above reliability analysis, there was no need to delete any item as all the values of alpha for the variables were more than 0.70. Indeed, the total scale of reliability for overall Cronbach alpha of 0.914 indicated an overall higher reliability factors. Moreover, the results do show that the Cronbach alpha values were in the range that was good for an explanatory study (Hair et al., 2010).

RESULTS

A total of 280 questionnaires were distributed to customers in the main five fast foods outlets in Harare. A total of 215 questionnaires were returned fully completed representing a response rate of 76.8%. Of the total respondents, 45% were males and 55% were females. In terms of age category, the majority of the respondents (55.4%) were aged between 21 years and 30 years. Regarding the educational qualifications, the majority of the respondents (74.4%) had either diploma or undergraduate degrees. The findings are shown in Table 2.

The study also used descriptive statistics which consisted of a range of possible values such as means and standard deviation. The Likert scale type of questions was used to calculate mean values and standard deviations. Accordingly, the calculated mean values offered information regarding the central tendency of the values and the standard deviations provided information about the dispersion of the responses by participants in relation to the mean values. The findings are tabulated in Table 3.

The standard deviations in the above table were

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics.

Item	Description	N	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Celebrity endorsed product captures my attention.	215	4.36	0.08
2.	Celebrity endorsed product creates a lasting impact in my mind	215	4.68	0.16
3.	Words of endorsement about a product from a favourite celebrity is accepted as a testimonial by the consumers	215	4.04	0.86
4.	Product information from a celebrity reinforces its credibility.	215	4.89	0.05
5.	Celebrity expertise carry more weightage	215	4.56	0.70
6.	Celebrity attractiveness increases the possibility of purchasing the product	215	4.77	0.04
7.	Celebrities trustworthiness the awareness of the desired product	215	4.69	0.07

Table 4. Correlation analysis.

Variable		Perceived Expertise	Physical Attractiveness	Trustworthiness	Buying Behaviour
Perceived Expertise	Pearson Correlation	1.000	0.440**	0.426**	0.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Physical Attractiveness	Pearson Correlation	0.440**	1.000	0.448**	0.785**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Trustworthiness	Pearson Correlation	0.426**	0.448**	1.000	0.776**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Buying intention	Pearson Correlation	0.707**	0.785**	0.776**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

generally less than 1 and that showed that the responses were normally distributed. The descriptive statistics revealed that Celebrity endorsed products captures consumer attention (mean = 4.36). Furthermore, the empirical findings from the above table shows that celebrity endorsed products created a lasting impact in consumer minds (mean = 4.68) as well as reinforcing product credibility (mean = 4.89). Interestingly, the findings showed celebrity attractiveness (mean = 4.77) and trustworthiness (mean = 4.69).

The study proceeded to investigate the correlations between the elements of celebrity endorsement such as perceived expertise, physical attractiveness, trustworthiness and buying intentions. Table 4 shows the results of the analysis from the study conducted on the association between these variables:

The above Pearson's correlation coefficient table shows that perceived expertise has a positive and significant relationship with purchase intentions of products or brand. In particular, the results showed a correlation

coefficient score of 0.707 ($p = 0.001$) at 0.01 level of significance. This means that the more a celebrity is perceived to have expertise on the product being advertised the higher customers will be willing to buy the product. As such, the findings indicate that celebrity expertise about a product is necessary in the advertisement since the audiences also care about the opinion of celebrity about the product or service offered by an organisation. In this instance, using celebrity with expertise in advertisements should act as a goldmine for the fast foods companies for earning the market share, revenues and profits.

The study also revealed that physical attractiveness of a celebrity has a positive and significant relationship with customer buying behaviour at 0.01 level of significance. Physical attractiveness had a positive correlation with buying behaviour with $r = 0.785$ ($p = 0.001$). This invariably implies that the more physical attractiveness a celebrity possesses the more consumers' will to buy the product being advertised and vice versa. It means that

the greater the perceived “attractiveness”, the greater the purchase intention. Likewise, trustworthiness had a correlation coefficient score of $r = 0.776$ ($p = 0.001$) at 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between trustworthiness and buying intention. This suggests that physical attractiveness is an important determinant in predicting consumer buying intentions.

DISCUSSION

The primary data from the study sample indicated that expertise of celebrities was of profound importance in determining the buying behaviour of consumers. These findings are in tandem with Chan et al. (2013) who argue that endorser credibility in terms of expertise has significant importance to the endorsed product. This is corroborated by Anam et al. (2015) studies in Indonesia which revealed that experience matters for most consumers. This is also in line with Banyté et al. (2011) but unlike Malik and Guptha (2014) and Rengejargan and Sathya (2014) the study results did show that credibility of the endorser is related to his or her attractiveness and expertness. Furthermore, Pughazhendi et al. (2011) suggested that if a celebrity endorser is respected, the respect for the celebrity might extend to the brand, and this could lead to a positive attitude towards the brand.

The findings do show that if the trustworthiness of the celebrity is high then this will influence more people to buy than with a celebrity with relatively low trustworthiness. In other words, trustworthiness is a crucial catalyst in the consumer’s assessment processes. This is in line with the findings of Ronay and von Hippel (2010). In fact, Veldhuis et al. (2014) argue that celebrities who endorse products and services perceived as far from being trust worth can indirectly hurt consumers’ perceived images resulting in negative purchase intentions.

Physical attractiveness of respondents was found to be significant and positive. A plethora of studies (Ghani and Kakakhel, 2011; Halliwell, 2013; Yew and Zain 2013) have shown that people respond favourably to endorsement if the endorsers are attractive and desirable. Other researchers such as Bhavana (2011) and Jasmina and Cynthia (2011) also found that consumers most often require endorsers to be physically beautiful if they are to increase brand recognition and purchase intentions. Findings from this study also support meta-analysis studies by Agarwal et al. (2013) and Radha and Jija (2013) in terms of physical attractiveness as a determinant of the buying intentions of customers. Studies by Pughazhendi et al. (2012) in Chennai, India also found that consumers usually require endorsers to be physically attractive so as to increase purchase intentions towards a product. In brief, the physical attractiveness of endorsers unequivocally has a significant effect on consumers and

is a very important factor for fast foods consumers in Harare.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Findings from the survey study confirmed the positive and significant correlations that exist between celebrity endorsement variables (such as physical attractiveness, perceived expertise and trustworthiness) and consumer buying intentions and this have implications for product positioning and brand management. The study showed that celebrity endorsement variables such as trustworthiness, physical attractiveness and perceived expertise are important in enhancing product information and creating awareness among consumers. It can also be concluded that celebrity endorsement enhances product information and also creates awareness among the consumers of fast foods in Harare. In addition, it also helps consumers to recall the brands of fasts foods products. As such, selecting the right endorser is of profound significance for organisational success. For instance, physical attractiveness and trustworthiness do positively affect customer purchase intentions. Accordingly, these traits, must be considered while selecting the endorsers for the target audience.

The study revealed that an advertisement endorsed by celebrity has significant impact in creating positive attitude towards advertisement. This information suggests that if advertisers of products make use of celebrity endorsement for advertising their products then they are likely to get their desired impact and appropriate reach for the money spent. Thus, there is the need to strengthen certain aspects of celebrity consumer relationship as way of understanding the implications for product endorsement in the fast foods industry. This is particularly important in a country like Zimbabwe where celebrities are beginning to command substantial followings.

It is of paramount importance for fast foods companies to gauge the capacity of the celebrity to project multi-attributes which would be consistent and of interest to the consumer’s requirements in all attributes. In other words, managers should ensure that any celebrity selected to endorse the product has the “right” personality and other symbolic properties associated with the celebrity. As such, fast foods companies in Harare must evaluate the overall fit of the celebrity with the brand. From a managerial perspective, it should be noted that the fast foods companies which use promotional strategies such as celebrity endorsement must be careful whilst selecting celebrity for endorsement. This is because the study showed that credibility of endorsers matters for the consumers of fast foods products.

The study was limited to celebrity endorsement and its impact on consumer buying behaviour. Future studies should be able to exploit the implications of multiple

endorsements by the celebrity on the brands endorsed. More so, further studies must also explore with width and breadth on the impact of celebrity endorsement on the products they endorsed.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflicts of interest.

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Full Length Research Paper

Immigrant women's entrepreneurship: Is there a development model in Italy?

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The aim of this paper is to verify if there is a typical enterprise model for the development of immigrant female entrepreneurship in Italy. Based on the literature on the subject, however, it is useful to ask the following research question: "can membership in a national and international network facilitate the development of immigrant female entrepreneurship operating in Italy"? The survey was carried out by submitting a questionnaire to a sample of immigrant women entrepreneurs in the textile and clothing sector based in Italy. The choice fell on this specific economic segment because it represents the third largest sector for the number of female immigrant entrepreneurs (2.271 units) which amounts to 16% of the total number of entrepreneurs operating in the same sector. The percentage of respondents was 35%, with 795 completed questionnaires. The structure of the questionnaire reflects the need to examine the personal features of female entrepreneurs, the organizational aspects and the style of leadership, the task environment in which the enterprise works and the main possible benefits, or obstacles, they might obtain, or face. In addition to the objective of enlarging the literature regarding the management and governance of businesses run by women entrepreneurs, that is quite limited to date, this paper is a contribution to the analysis of a possible development model of women entrepreneurs.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, network, resilience, women entrepreneurs, competitive advantage.

INTRODUCTION

As part of the national and international debate, immigrant entrepreneurship has been analyzed from many different points of view, emphasizing personal, psychological and socio-cultural aspects of immigrant

entrepreneurs and the social context in which they operate (Light and Bhachu 2004; Clydesale 2008; Lin and Tao 2012).

The immigrant entrepreneurship incentives are linked

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to factors such as desire for self-fulfillment, risk appetite, identification of market opportunities and personal dissatisfaction related to social issues (Aviram, 2009). Compared with resident population, immigrants have limited skills and human capital resources, necessary to create and access networks, because of their difficulty to acquire information and evaluate market opportunities (Flap et al., 2000; Alder and Kwon 2002; Kloosterman 2010).

Likewise, immigrants have insufficient language skills and are bound to encounter numerous obstacles to access to the credit market. The transition from being employed to self-employed can represent a reward and an enhancement of their own entrepreneurial ambition (Rajiman and Tienda, 2000).

It is clear that the economic and social disadvantage in which immigrants live is just one of the many negative conditions that stimulate their need for change (De Clercq and Honig, 2011; Vinogradov and Gabelko, 2010; Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou, 2010; Valenzuela, 2001).

At the same time, the lack of adequate education, the limited access to financial resources and poor language skills can also influence the choice of the economic sector where to start a business. Usually, the immigrant entrepreneur is more oriented towards markets that the local entrepreneur tends to neglect. These are markets that you can access through a limited allocation of capital, where the technological barriers are low and where the enterprise sizes are relatively modest and where, due to the number of active companies, the potential for expansion and profit margins are lower than the market average (Rath and Kloosterman, 2000).

In such a complex environment, belonging to ethnic networks could make up for the lack of full integration of immigrants in the economic fabric of the host country. This may stimulate the development of new businesses operating in new markets, and it may be a way to connect with new customers of different ethnicities, and to enable long lasting relationships with local institutions (Saxena, 2005; Valeri and Baiocco, 2012).

Taking all the aforementioned into account, this study examines whether there exists a possible development model of female entrepreneurship in Italy, focusing specifically on immigrant women's entrepreneurship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In an increasingly competitive environment, businesses need to have an appropriate level of knowledge and resources to cope with fierce competition. This need has led to the phenomenon of the specialization of businesses, reducing the number and type of knowledge and common assets. The collaborative process may be disturbed by factors as the high cognitive distance between individual companies and the simultaneous lack

of resources to acquire new knowledge. In this sense, the network represents the best organizational model to promote the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The ability of a network to innovate and compete successfully depends not only on the skill of the individual companies but also on the ability to govern the network of relationships between them. As widely claimed by management literature, the ability to oversee the dynamics of internal and external relations of the network is a way businesses can successfully compete with others in a hyper-competitive economy. Within the international scientific debate, many studies have focused on the analysis of the evolutionary dynamics of the network and on factors that influence their success over time (Gulati, 1998; Gulati and Gargiulo, 1999; Soda et al., 2004; Yin et al., 2012; Das and Teng, 2002).

Thanks to the interdisciplinary debate on network theory (Parkhe et al., 2006) we can mention a number of important contributions that identify the evolutionary phases of the creation and development of inter-organizational relationships, as for example:

1. The preconditions of exchange, or the reasons that led to the birth of the network.
2. The building conditions for any form of relations between enterprises
3. The operation of the network that presupposes the reaching of an agreement on the rules of future conduct and on the mechanisms to regulate conflict management.

The complexity and the increasingly competitive market pressure stimulate the formation and development of inter-organizational relationships, and they allow to acquire and exploit new resources and new knowledge, reducing the environmental uncertainty (Dickson and Weaver, 1997).

In particular, the network cooperation between small and medium-sized businesses is crucial for their survival over time (BarNir and Smith, 2002). The network is an essential organizational model for small and medium-sized enterprises to defend themselves from strong competitive pressures, thus overcoming the limited resources and knowledge that characterize them (Park and Zhou 2005; Valeri, 2016).

In other cases, networks are not created to avoid competitive threats but to improve the competitive position of singular businesses (Park and Zhou, 2005). In this way they are able to seize market challenges they could not face on their own.

A basic prerequisite for the creation and the development of networks is the mutual trust between the parts. Trust is crucial to ease relations between partners (Gulati and Singh, 1998). In inter-organizational relationships, trust presupposes not only the correct behavior of the participants but also the confidence in the

competence of the counterparty (Das and Teng, 2002). The interaction is facilitated when trust between participants has been already proven by prior experience of collaboration (Powell, 1990; Gulati and Singh, 1998).

The case of businesses owned by immigrants in the Italian context, along with the concept of "diversity" which characterizes the typical features of an immigrant enterprise, continues to be the subject of national and international scientific debate (Chaganti and Greene, 2002; Horwitz and Horwitz, 2007; Carter and Mwuaura, 2015).

The concept of "diversity" has been analyzed in several respects, taking into account the nature and the type of activities carried out by immigrant companies. Ethnic traditions, ethnic role models, and community ties represent aspects on which the nature of activities carried out by immigrant businesses are based (Rath, 2000; Smallbone et al., 2005; Rusinovic, 2007). These aspects have their origin in the immigrant entrepreneur communities and they tend to be significantly different from those typical of an occidental company.

In fact, the marginality of services, the poor organizational structure, the lack of managerial and language skills often tend to increase the gap between immigrant and local enterprises (Butler and Kozmetsky 2004). The condition of "economic disadvantage" in which immigrants live is an important element of diversity among the immigrant enterprise and the native enterprise (Levie, 2007). Unlike the native-born population, the immigrant entrepreneur has limited access to formal consulting network and difficulties in finding information, and evaluates market opportunities (Kloosterman, 2010).

The same condition of economic disadvantage influences the choice of the sector in starting the entrepreneurial activity (Zhou, 2004). The immigrant entrepreneur is attracted to markets that are accessible with limited capitals, where technological barriers are low, where enterprises are small sized. These markets are overlooked by local entrepreneurs because they guarantee lower profit margins and expansion potential lower than the national average (Rath and Kloosterman, 2000). Considering their ethnic specialization, these companies tend to produce goods and deliver services intended primarily for consumers belonging to the same ethnic community.

In fact, thanks to a number of factors such as the knowledge of the language and customer preferences, the ease of access to imported goods, the availability of manpower resources at low cost and informality in economic and labor relations, it is possible to create business opportunities for micro and small sized businesses by using limited start-up fixed costs, as well as having the guarantee of being protected from potential competition of indigenous enterprises.

These immigrant enterprises can get typical resources and enable social and economic relations in the origin

communities (Rath, 2000; Rueda-Armengot and Peris-Ortiz, 2012). Moreover, especially in the start-up phase, the opportunity to enjoy economic relations within an extended social network represents a stimulus to business initiatives (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001).

Therefore, by sharing group resources and developing economic co-operations, the ethnic group becomes an important tool that facilitates access to information and to economic resources which may not be found in other contexts (Watson et al., 2000; Masurel et al., 2002).

Despite most of the literature considers the immigrant enterprises as characterized by an effective structural homogeneity and devoid of strategic differentiation, in the last few years immigrant entrepreneurs have made entry into sectors that produce goods and services destined mainly to local markets (Waldinger, 2000; Kloosterman, 2010).

The search for new business opportunities has led immigrant entrepreneurs to step outside the ethnic network, activating a series of relationships with other entrepreneurs and territorial Institutions (Masurel et al., 2002; Wang and Altinay, 2012). It would be thus possible to reduce the risk of slow growth and slow development of immigrant enterprises.

Consequently, the strategic and organizational profile of immigrant enterprises becomes more similar to the native companies because of the quest for independence, the desire to move away from subordination and the need to carry on investment projects.

The immigrant women entrepreneurs: A growing phenomenon

The contribution of immigrants to entrepreneurial initiatives in our territory should not be underestimated. In 2015, Italy had approximately 6,041,187 businesses out of which 524,674 were businesses run by immigrant entrepreneurs (8.7% Italian enterprises, 12.9% Italian sole proprietorships), (Unioncamere/Infocamere 2015). Immigrant enterprises are mostly micro or small sized and together they contribute for 6.5% to the national gross domestic product (GDP) with over 94 billion euros (Rapporto, 2015).

In Italy, sole proprietorships are the major component of immigrant entrepreneurship. Immigrant sole proprietorships are 421,004 units (8% immigrant enterprise, 51.4% sole proprietorship). The trade sector has the largest number of immigrant companies, representing 35.8% of all companies, the construction sector has 24.3% of companies, manufacturing represents 7.4%, the business services sector 5%, and finally 2.4% is the share of the agriculture sector which seems to be the least attractive due to high necessary investment costs (Unioncamere/Infocamere, 2015).

From the geographical location point of view, Northern

Italy has the highest concentration of immigrant businesses (about 51.2%); there, the most attractive sector for immigrant entrepreneurship is represented by the construction industry. South-central Italy hosts 26.7% of immigrant businesses mainly working in the commerce sector. Regions with the highest percentage of immigrant businesses are Lombardy (19%), Lazio (12.8%), Tuscany (12.1%) and Liguria (11.2%). Milan and Rome record 8.6 and 10.9% of immigrant enterprises respectively.

The 49.2% of immigrant businesses is of Chinese nationality, and it is mainly concentrated in the manufacturing sector, 28.2% is of Moroccan nationality, 10.2% is of Bangladeshi nationality and works in the trade sector, 27.6% is of Romanian nationality, 20.4% are Albanians and work in the construction sector. Different market destinations lead to different activities and productions by immigrant businesses: about 58% of them places products at local and provincial levels, less than 25% places products on regional market and the remaining 17% allocates its products on domestic and international markets. There are 15,065 foreign women entrepreneurs in Italy, equal to 16% of the total run by men. The majority of women entrepreneurs is in the commercial sector (6,966), in the service sector (2,717) and in the textile and clothing sector (2,271).

Managers are mostly women in the hotel and restaurant industry (43%), in the textile and clothing sector (38%) and in the service sector (33%); there are fewer women in the areas of trade (18%), transport (8%) and in the production and processing of metals (7%); women are virtually absent in the construction industry (just over 1%). More than one-third of women involved are venture partners: they are 37% of the total. The presence of women among immigrant entrepreneurs is growing: 9.3% of companies are run by women (121,000 units) while 8.5% are headed by men. There are approximately 90,300 foreign women-owned businesses in Central and Northern Italy and they represent 11% of all enterprises run by women of the area (Rapporto Impresa in Genere, 2016).

According to Censis report (2016), over the last five years, the immigrant women businesses increased by 3%. The Chinese community has the largest number of women involved in entrepreneurship, with more than 10,000 female managers. One of the biggest immigrant community in Italy is of Albanian origin; according to Unioncamere Observatory data, in Italy 48% of Albanian immigrants are women and almost 3,600 companies are headed by women, i.e. 12% of total Albanian businesses, ranking as the fifth community with the largest number of female managers in the immigrant women enterprises in Italy.

From a territorial point of view, the highest concentration of immigrant entrepreneurs is in Southern Italy (3.2% versus 2.6%) and this is particularly noteworthy in Abruzzo, which has the highest proportion of women

entrepreneurs (6.2%). Regarding the age, the largest share of immigrant women entrepreneurs is between 30 and 49 years old (49% of the total female population, with an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared to 2015).

The number of entrepreneurs aged 50 to 69 years has slightly decreased (from 34.9 to 34.7%), while women over 70 years old has increased their number becoming 9.4% of the total individual "pink" companies. The region Campania leads the regional rankings, with more than 8 thousand companies led by young women that, in this case, come to represent 9.2% of the company owners registered in the territory.

Rome and Naples are the cities where most young women choose to become entrepreneurs. However, the highest percentage of young businesswomen is recorded among immigrant women. In June 2015, young female immigrant entrepreneurs represented 12.6% of 52,000 owned by immigrant women in Italy (Unioncamere, 2015).

In some ethnic groups, the participation rates among women are slightly higher than among men: in the case of Nigerians, the percentage of women on total enterprise owners exceeds 50%, while in the Chinese and Brazilian communities the percentage reaches 36%, in the Peruvian community it is about 28%.

However, the weight of female entrepreneurship is significantly below the average of the whole of the countries of origin (16%). Actually, in some communities entrepreneurship is heavily male: this is the case of the Macedonians, Pakistani, Senegalese, Egyptians, Tunisians, Albanians and Bangladeshis where the percentage of women among business owners is comprised between 2 and 5% (Rapporto Idos, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out by submitting a questionnaire to a target sample of women immigrant entrepreneurs operating in the textile and clothing sector in Italy. This particular economic segment was chosen because it represents the third biggest sector for the number of female immigrant entrepreneurs (with 2,271 enterprises), 16% of the total of entrepreneurs operating in Italy.

The context under analysis is characterized by micro-sized companies. The interviewed entrepreneurs were aged between 30 and 49 years. The questionnaire was submitted in September 2016 and the return of completed questionnaires by e-mail was agreed for the month of December 2016. The sample selection was made possible by consulting primary sources such as ISTAT, Confcommercio, INPS, CCIAA, Censis, Osservatorio di Genere, Osservatorio IDOS.

The rate of adherence of respondents was 35%, with 795 completed questionnaires compared to 2,271 submitted questionnaires. The questionnaire was structured in a battery of questions, mainly multiple choice, simple and graded, with a specific weight to be assigned to each response. The questions were aimed at analyzing the distinguishing factors of the enterprises of the investigated sample (Figure 1). All these aspects are summarized in the following aspects:

Figure 1. The questionnaire.

<p>Company details</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Company name -Legal form -Core business -Registered and operational office <p>Personal data of the women entrepreneur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Entrepreneur name -Age -Marital status -Qualification -Number of children <p>Personal characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reasons for the acquisition or venture -Management style -Responsibilities within the company -Decision-making process within the enterprise <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Main objectives of the entrepreneur -Relevance of the profit target -Organization of work, functions, roles and responsibilities -Measurement of performance <p>Business Idea</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inspiration of the business idea -Initial phase of raising capital and difficulties encountered -Network benefits (how is the relationship with the environment in perceived and what are the exchanges with the outside?)

- (1) Personal characteristics of the woman entrepreneur
- (2) Organizational aspects and style of leadership
- (3) Task environment in which the company operates

The analytical form of the questionnaire was not a constraint for the interviewer to use rigid forms of dialogue with women entrepreneurs: they were free to describe the company's results, focusing on specific aspects which characterize their business experience. The aspects that are analyzed in the questionnaire are the result of the continuation of previous researches carried out in recent years on women's businesses. These are conceived as factors that characterize the immigrant female enterprises and which delineate the distinctive features compared to the male gender (Paoloni, 2011; Valeri and Paoloni, 2016).

RESULTS

The survey has made it possible to analyze typical factors of a female immigrant business, with particular reference to:

- (1) The personal characteristics of the entrepreneur
- (2) The organizational aspects and style of leadership

- (3) The task environment in which the business operates.

These aspects will be discussed later in the paper, taking into account the statements made by the interviewed entrepreneurs, in order to investigate whether there is a possible model of success for the development of women's entrepreneurship in Italy, in particular as far as immigrants are concerned.

The identikit of an immigrant woman entrepreneur

The identikit of immigrant women entrepreneurs does not vary greatly from that of Italian ones, and includes opposing elements which coexist. The survey shows that immigrant women entrepreneurs are conventional but, at the same time, innovative and dynamic. They are traditional and conservative, but also modern and explorer. For them, success consists of a mix of personal characteristics as, for instance, the ability of taking on responsibility (for 44.7% of them). Relations with employees highlight the style of management adopted.

"In women's enterprises, there is a greater tendency to delegate others than in men's enterprises".

It is interesting to note the ease of integration between women, who tend to be less hierarchical and to build circular relationships. Women tend to be more collaborative than men in the management of roles in the company and women entrepreneurs tend to have a greater focus on the customer's needs.

Service quality (55%) and customer service (37%) represent strengths that female entrepreneurs add to their business model. Women are successful and suitable for management positions because they possess features such as empathy, sensitivity, creativity, attention to details, ability to listen, ability to negotiate, spirit of collaboration and ability to communicate and more.

Moreover, women entrepreneurs choose to adopt development strategies that are compatible with the preservation and enhancement of the environment, focusing their attention mainly on waste management, choice of raw materials and energy saving.

An interesting outcome of the survey is the development of the figure of "circulating" business women, who leave their country of origin to trade in small scale through the sale of their local products in Italy. This phenomenon is particularly widespread within the immigrant community, allowing the entrepreneurs to provide employment to women in the country of origin, helping them combine paid work with family responsibilities, letting them choose when to move and giving them a valid motivation for traveling.

Through the exchange of goods, a cultural exchange takes place too, transforming families and societies according to the different contexts in which the business operates. Among the women contacted during the study research, the majority of those involved in this virtuous circle were from Morocco, Turkey and Albania.

Organizational aspects and leadership style

Organizational aspects and leadership style of women immigrant entrepreneurship are very complex, because of the presence of many intervening factors: different motivations, different strategies for reconciling, different career paths, different personal and professional experiences, which can profoundly affect their life choices.

Interestingly, in the available literature, we find different approaches to women entrepreneurship. It could be read as a response to the stiffness of economy; on the other hand, recent studies suggest that the choices of immigrant women entrepreneurs generally lie in the subjective importance of the desire for autonomy and self-determination.

Analyzing the results of the survey, it has been possible to identify a number of different immigrant women

entrepreneur's profiles, such as:

- (1) Traditional profile (53%); which includes women heavily involved in the roles of both manager and housewife, whose motivation is mainly linked to economic factors;
- (2) Radical profile (31%), women who do not totally identify with both roles, driven by a desire for personal gratification and ideological factors;
- (3) Innovative profile (16%), entrepreneurs who use their company to develop their working lives. These are generally childless women, who express their autonomy through their business. In this case, the desire for autonomy and personal gratification is very strong.

The results of the study survey have revealed no major differences between genders in the adoption of a particular leadership style. Rather, immigrant entrepreneurs believe that it is a personal choice, depending on competencies and that often involves a participatory approach to organizational reality.

«...both men and women have the same competencies: guidelines on how to do business do exist. I believe that the diversity of doing business between a man and a woman lies in the application of the feminine or of the masculine side, from a psychological point of view. What changes is the approach mode».

With regard to the strategies, gender studies show that men tend to prescriptive leadership roles while women prefer a persuasive dimension. Female leadership characteristics can be summarized as follows: interpersonal skills and multitasking know how. Listening, mediation and care are basic components of relational skills. These components are spelled out each day, especially in relationships with customers but also in relations with employees and partners. The natural propensity to motherhood transcends the strictly domestic dimension and becomes a transversal competence.

«.. listening to others is very important, you must always pay attention. If a baby cries, you just can't ignore it..»

"Being multitasking" means having the ability to perform simultaneous multiple actions. The interviews stressed the fact that women are used to having a global view of situations and to managing multiple things at once because of their historical domestic role.

«.. Modern women have the ability to control many things at once. This is very important in any job and in every role, not only that of the leader. Women are very suited to work on several activities at once.»

Multitasking attitude is a highly functional resource in

managing the relationships inside and outside the company because it highlights productivity orientation.

«..women are able to work even under pressure, because of their traditional need to face more than one problem at once. It's natural for a woman to go back home and take care of the house, the children, the washing machine, and the shopping list!>>

Leading men are more resolute and have a natural tendency to delegate. Wondering whether there is a feminine way of being leaders, we must point out that many of the "objective" skills of leadership come from a history full of male leaders. Therefore, women have few models to refer to and the mentoring practice is still little adopted in their management.

The task environment where company operates

The study reveals two important findings that show the importance of the economic environment in which women entrepreneurs operate: the production context, and the recently settled women's network in the clothing and textile sector.

The production context implies certain production rates and specific requests to workers in terms of working hours: operations often require continuity so the activities must necessarily be organized in shifts. It seems clear that in the working organization, best practices should be applied in accordance with the requirements of production.

Over the years, the consolidated industrial workforce has been mainly composed of men; women are fewer in number due to the limited access to employment and it is harder for a woman to emerge with business initiatives. However, the situation is different in the tertiary sector, where the manufacturing activity is different and women have more chances.

The interviewed women have focused on the importance of local context and culture, highlighting the reluctance that still persists today when we talk about female leadership.

«.. the working world is not accustomed to having you inside..»

«..in Germany, they have chancellor Merkel. Do you think Italians might accept a female president?..»

According to the interviewed women, the local context is a significant variable although it is perceived more as a constraint than an opportunity for their careers. The survey provides a number of critical elements, such as:

(1) The lack of adequate services, in particular those related to family and mobility;

(2) The permanence of stereotypes and a widespread attachment to traditional gender roles;
 (3) The lack of social recognition of women's work;
 (4) A business culture that still has its roots in tradition and is unwilling to change.

Perhaps in reaction to this rigidity, female immigrant entrepreneurship is supported by associations which promote the circulation of good practices, initiatives and projects, and that represent the interests and common issues of the associated towards local institutions.

We must also mention the committees for immigrant women's entrepreneurship which were set up at the Commerce Chamber, involved in the organization of information and training meetings about business opportunities for women.

«.. my colleagues and I set up this group, and then many other women entrepreneurs joined us...it is something that really belongs to us.. »

«.. we must stimulate political institutions! »

«.. no man has ever fought for the legislation on maternity. Instead, our group is working on that.. I am also part of an international network working on those same aspects, exchanging tools with Germany, which is more advanced than our country. »

«.. networking is important..I love connecting people because I think every person has something positive to offer and when people meet amazing things can happen”.

The answers of the interviews show the large number of women entrepreneurs who try to escape from the isolation of the productive context with laborious relational activities. The interviewed entrepreneurs are part of a dense network of formal and informal relationships that are able to enrich the intellectual and social capital of businesses, stimulating new synergies between enterprises and territory and promoting greater awareness among themselves.

DISCUSSION

The study aims to verify whether there exists a successful model for the development of immigrant women's entrepreneurship in Italy.

Despite strong similarities with the traditional micro and small enterprises in the Italian native business, immigrant entrepreneurship and, in particular, immigrant women's entrepreneurship, has a number of specific characteristics. Those are related to the migration experience of the entrepreneur and to the rigidity of the economic system in which immigrant companies operate (Light, 2005; Reyneri, 2007; Ndofo and Priem, 2011).

Therefore, alongside constraints related to the profile of

an immigrant entrepreneur, it is possible to identify a number of obstacles that limit the consolidation of immigrant business development. There are obstacles inherent in the immigrant's personal sphere, such as:

(1) Difficulties of integration in the economic and social context: It is not easy to overcome the relative isolation condition that characterizes immigrant companies. The company not only represents an activity of production of goods and services but, in contrast, it contains all the entrepreneur's experience. The migratory experiences, the prospects of integration, the ties with the country of origin are not just traits of entrepreneur's personal life but also contribute to connote the company and influence the strategic choices. The importance of corporate social dimension is particularly evident during the growing process when a multiplicity of relationships within and across enterprises is fundamental to establish. In addition, the relationships activated by ethnic groups are very important: these are considered indispensable, especially in the start-up phase;

(2) Difficulty in starting relationships: Immigrants fail to have confidence in the other participants of the economic sector they have chosen because of difficulties of the migratory path and the precarious living conditions in the host country. At the same time, the existence of widespread distrust of the immigrant entrepreneur by the host territory people should be highlighted (Siqueira, 2007; Roy et al., 2008). Often, the linguistic gap generates closure and results in a real obstacle to access to useful information for business development. In addition, there are limited links with other companies in the sector and business associations. This inevitably generates an underutilization of the potential relationship baggage owned by the entrepreneur.

The obstacles related to the rigidity of the economic system in which immigrant entrepreneurs operate, such as:

(1) Legal constraints for the regularization of the personal position of immigrant entrepreneur in the host country: Current legislation imposes a series of obligations to entrepreneurs who need to regularize their legal position in the host country. Often bureaucratic rigidity lengthens waiting times, for example for the renewal of the residence permit. In the absence of such a document the entrepreneur does not have its own legal identity and consequently, does not have the ability to perform actions necessary for the conduct of business (for example signing of contracts);

(2) Legal constraints for the start of business: Depending on the legal form chosen and the business sector in which they decided to operate, a series of requirements are necessary, especially for an immigrant. Often the constraints imposed by the bureaucracy generate delays in the start of business with inevitable

economic and financial repercussions;

(3) Poor coordination among people working in support of immigrant entrepreneurship: For the immigrant entrepreneur, confusion and lack of coordination make it even more difficult to seize the opportunities offered by the territory. Furthermore, discriminatory attitudes and behaviors towards immigrants are widespread;

(4) Difficulty in accessing credit: The access to the credit market is one of the major obstacles for immigrant entrepreneurship. Economic resources are already scarce because of the economic crisis, and decrease when the potential entrepreneur is an immigrant. This is justified by the "lower reliability" resulting from the difficulty of providing guarantees in dealing with the credit system.

(5) The obstacles inherent in the entrepreneur's personal sphere immigrant as well as those related to the rigidity of the economic system cannot be underestimated. On the contrary, they should be addressed by strengthening the network of relationships to improve the competitiveness of the business sector.

The concept of networking has long been the object of intense scientific debate in management literature. The network bases its success on the ability to establish cooperation and coordination relations (Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven, 1996) and to foster the joint execution of production processes and delivery of products and services (Gulati, 1998).

By sharing resources and knowledge, network allows overcoming the limitations related to the micro and small size that hinder the development of enterprises in many economic sectors. Organizational literature has analyzed the concept of network focusing on the potential of organized inter-relationships (Greve and Salaff 2003).

In particular, these studies have provided arguments about the causes and benefits inherent in their formation and their implementation (Lorenzoni and Lipparini, 2000; Grandori and Giordani, 2011), focusing on cooperative and competitive strategies activated between the actors involved in the network, on conduct of business rules, on network institutionalization levels, on the power relations and the changes in these variables over time. Nevertheless, to date, a specific analysis on the complex dynamic that drives the inner development processes of collaboration between immigrant and native businesses still lacks (Fadahuni et al., 2000).

Generally, it is argued that the start of business by immigrants presupposes the establishment of a network of relationships with all actors involved in the territory, such as:

(1) Ethnic groups: These are communities in which there is a strong sense of common identity between members (language, culture, tradition and historical memory). Ethnic groups traditionally live in the same territory and

represent the first instrument available to potential immigrant entrepreneurs for the procurement of all that may be necessary for their business (Siqueira, 2007). On one hand, ethnic groups are a valuable source to draw on financial, economic, human resources useful information to start new ventures; on the other hand, they may represent obstacles for growth and consolidation of immigrant businesses in the market and in the not-ethnic environment.

(2) Business associations: They play a very important role in supporting immigrant entrepreneurship. For example, they are engaged in the promotion of specific programs and initiatives that tend to the defense and to the social-economic assistance, in the promotion of educational programs for immigrant entrepreneurs, in the organization of specialization courses, retraining and vocational training for manager and workers. Yet today, there are still few immigrant entrepreneurs who are turning to them and this is why the effectiveness of their activities remains limited;

(3) Investment credit: The banks affect the start-ups of immigrant businesses. Considering the difficulties for immigrants to have access to credit, most of the lenders decided to initiate programs for the provision of micro-credit services for immigrants and their families, without asking them for specific guarantees, aware of the strong dynamism of immigrant entrepreneurship in our country. Nevertheless, ethnic groups are still the preferred source of economic resources.

In this perspective of network analysis, immigrant entrepreneurs are not conceived as isolated entities of the context, but may represent the central node in a larger network of relationships activated with all the actors involved in the environment.

Conclusions

Is there a successful model based on cooperation for the development of immigrant women's entrepreneurship in Italy?

This study analyses both the factors that affect the development of immigrant women businesses in Italy, and the obstacles that immigrants face to consolidate their business development.

The research shows that the quest for independence, the desire to move away from a condition of hierarchical subordination, the desire to carry on their investment projects make immigrants businesses more and more similar to native businesses, both from a strategic and an organizational perspective.

The survey shows that immigrant entrepreneurship is an important resource for the growth of our territory: although it may represent a big threat for national companies, It is a great opportunity for integration with

native businesses to strengthen the competitiveness of the national economy. Considering the importance of immigrant entrepreneurship phenomenon and its contribution to the national GDP, Institutions should not underestimate the importance of the phenomenon and should respond appropriately to support development and consolidation of these businesses.

The interviews have revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs have yet to get a full view of using social media strategies to promote their own activities. Keeping acting like this, they will not be able to understand that the web is a source of income and visibility and a tool to find new customers and retain existing ones.

Furthermore, the difficulties of the migratory path and the precarious living conditions in the host country cause a lack of confidence in immigrant women entrepreneurs in relations with the other actors involved in the development of business. At the same time, discriminatory attitudes and behaviors towards immigrants are often widespread in the host country.

In many cases, the difficulty of speaking a foreign language generates closure by the interlocutors resulting in a real obstacle to access to information needed for business development. In addition, there are limited links with other companies in the same sector and with business associations; this inevitably generates an underutilization of the potential wealth of reports available to the immigrant entrepreneur.

Therefore, despite the desire to move from a working position of hierarchical subordination to an autonomous position (like that of the entrepreneur), despite the desire of independence and enhancement of the entrepreneurial aspirations, it seems that as yet there is no talk of the existence of a development model of immigrant women's entrepreneurship in Italy? It is evident that the social-economic disadvantage in which immigrants live is one of the negative conditions that stimulate the search for change.

The study intends to fill a gap in the existing management literature about the study of factors affecting the propensity to start entrepreneurial activities by immigrants, and orient, in this sense, the decision-making processes of the institutions in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the Italian entrepreneurial system.

In future researches, it would be important to study the national profile of immigrant entrepreneurs and examine some empirical evidence of immigrant entrepreneurship successfully launched in Italy, focusing on the analysis of the network's process of creation and collaboration development among immigrant businesses and indigenous realities.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Influence of entrepreneurship education, technology and globalisation on performance of SMEs in Nigeria

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Dwindling oil revenue, high youth unemployment, very high foreign exchange rates and recession are the challenges that Nigeria is currently faced with. There is therefore the urgent need for diversification and resuscitation of the economy. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are thus an important tool to achieve this. How therefore can acquisition of entrepreneurship education skills; adoption and use of technology; and globalisation through improved cross-border transactions enhance performance of SMEs, bring about economic recovery, and thus help to ameliorate the economic challenges. Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. The instrument consisted of forty items on a five-point Likert rating scale, which was administered on four hundred owners/managers of manufacturing SMEs sampled using cluster, proportionate and random sampling procedures from six selected states across all the geo-political zones of Nigeria. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer three research questions. Linear regression was used to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results indicated that acquisition of entrepreneurship education skills; adoption and use of technology devices and platforms, as well as, globalisation enhance productivity and profitability of SMEs in Nigeria. It is concluded that for manufacturing SMEs to operate competitively, profitably and significantly contribute to the economic recovery and growth of Nigeria, they need to continuously acquire newer entrepreneurial skills; adopt and use innovative modern technologies; and have an internationalized profile.

Key words: Entrepreneurial skills, adoption and use of technology, cross-border transactions, SMEs, competitive advantage, superior performance, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is presently faced with, among others, the challenges of dwindling oil revenue, high youth unemployment rate, very high foreign exchange rates

and recession.

According to the Ministry of Budget and National Planning (2017), the current administration recognises

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that the economy is likely to remain on a path of steady and steep decline if nothing is done to change the trajectory. It is in this context that this Government has made several efforts aimed at tackling these challenges and changing the national economic trajectory in a fundamental way. This has necessitated the urgent need for diversification and resuscitation of the economy. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are thus an important tool for rapid diversification and recovery of the economy.

According to Etuk et al. (2014), SMEs constitute significant sources of employment opportunities and wealth creation. While the citizens benefit in terms of employment and income, government also benefits by generating revenue in form of taxes. They help in economic development through industrial disposal and production of primary and intermediate products.

Entrepreneurship education inculcates in its recipients, entrepreneurial competencies and skills geared towards focusing their minds towards self-reliance and self-employment. On the directive of the Federal Government of Nigeria, most tertiary institutions in recent times have incorporated entrepreneurship education into their curricula as a means to stimulate self-reliance and self-employment in the society.

Most economies now support entrepreneurship education, so as to achieve objectives such as encouraging their citizens to demonstrate positive attitude towards self-employment, identify viable business opportunities, portray a desire to venture into business, demonstrate managerial skills for running successful enterprises, encourage new start-ups and other entrepreneurial ventures (Njoroge and Gathungu, 2013).

Technology allows for automation of routine processes, such as production, distribution, sales, after-sales service and inventory management. Adoption and use of automation support SMEs to reduce transaction costs, improve product quality, improve efficiency, enhance customer service, reach new customers and suppliers in existing markets and expand into new markets. Technology is an important factor for SMEs' product mobility within and across national boundaries. Studies such as Oluwatayo (2014) and Rufai (2014) have found that use of technology by SMEs positively impacts business performance in terms of cost reduction, enhanced productivity as well as improved revenue and profitability.

Globalisation entails the movement of goods, services, capital and technology across national boundaries. Globalisation is the integration of economies and societies around the world. Globalisation leads to the breaking down of barriers formerly imposed by distance and unfavourable economic environments. Thus, key globalisation features include continuous reduction in barriers to trade and financial markets through more integration and foreign direct investment, which Nigeria currently needs.

In their study, Ehinomen and Adeleke (2012) posit that

the challenge today for business enterprises is to formulate strategies that will enable them survive in the new market forces created by the spread of global competition. Faced with these challenges, it is necessary for the SMEs in Nigeria to brace up for globalization move which has opened up international trade liberalization.

SMEs are formal and informal business entities with asset base of N5 million, and not more than N500 million (excluding land and buildings) with labour force of between 11 and 199 employees (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), 2012). SMEs in both developed and developing countries play important roles in the process of industrialization and economic growth. The total number of persons employed by the Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector in Nigeria in 2010 was 32,414,884, while MSMEs accounted for 46% of Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP) (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2012).

Performance is a measure of how well a mechanism or a process achieves its purpose. Performance is a success or failure determinant in business endeavours. The level of accomplishment of objectives generally defines an enterprise's performance. Several studies on firm performance use various organizational resources to measure SMEs performance.

In studying SMEs performance, Ahmad et al. (2012) used short term debt, long term and total debt. In the same way, Al-Swidi and Mahmood (2012) moderated the effect of total quality management, entrepreneurial orientation to study organizational performance. Augustine et al. (2012) studied forecasting, planning, controlling, learning, training, industrial training (IT) usage, age, experience and education of the key person as factors influencing firm performance.

Aminu and Shariff (2015) used entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, learning orientation, technology orientation and access to finance as determinants of SME performance. Ogunyomi and Bruning (2015) posit that firm performance constructs include such variables as competitive advantage, market share, profit, costs, sales revenue and customer satisfaction. The constructs used in measuring performance in this study are sales growth, market share, profitability, return on equity, efficiency of operation, product quality, customer satisfaction, productivity of staff and employee morale

Statement of the problem

Nigeria is currently faced with serious economic challenges. There is therefore an urgent need for resuscitation and diversification of the economy. Small and Medium Enterprises contribute significantly to the economic growth and development of Nigeria.

Dogarawa (2011) asserts that SMEs, not only

contribute significantly to improve the living standards and serve not only as a catalyst in the process of development, but also bring about substantial local capital formation and achieve high levels of productivity and capability. They are also the main agents for achieving equitable and sustainable industrial diversification and distribution; and in several countries SMEs account for well over half of the total share of employment, sales and value added.

The associated market competition drives up entrepreneur spirit in many SMEs, which in turn has significant impact on economic development. This is because entrepreneurship is a vital factor in economic development and social change, since it makes for continuous innovation, and commercialization of innovation and technology. Entrepreneurs are proactive to change. They like competition and are always ahead in the market place. They are change agents and catalyst for transforming resources into new products and services with greater utility and value. All these immensely impact on economic development and growth (Etuk et al., 2014).

While globalisation offers unprecedented opportunities for firms to act successfully, it simultaneously heightens the risks for firms lagging behind. Thus, in an open and liberalized world, increasing firm competitiveness has become a major challenge to the SMEs (Ocloo et al., 2014).

Given the great potential of SMEs to bring about social and economic development, this study sought to establish how acquisition of entrepreneurship education skills; adoption and use of technology; and globalisation through improved cross-border transactions could enhance performance of SMEs, bring about economic recovery and thus help to ameliorate the current economic challenges of Nigeria. This is because SMEs are known to be the largest employers of youths in Nigeria. SMEs also substantially contribute to the GDP. The multiplier effects can therefore be felt across all sectors of the economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The framework of this study was grounded on the Resource Based View (RBV) by Wernerfelt (1984). The central premise of RBV is why firms are different and how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage by deploying their resources. The fundamental principle of the RBV is that the basis for a competitive advantage of a firm lies primarily in the application of the bundle of valuable resources that the firm has. RBV postulates that firms possess resources, a subset of which enables them to achieve competitive advantage, and a further subset which leads to superior long-term performance.

Wernerfelt (1984) defines resources as tangible and/or intangible assets which are connected semi permanently to firms. It can be anything which could be thought of as a

strength or weakness of a given firm. Wernerfelt (1984) further gives examples of resources to include brand names, in-house knowledge of technology, employment of skilled personnel, trade contacts, machinery, efficient procedures, capital, etc.

Wernerfelt (1984) in his analysis of RBV theory describes the strategic options that firms have for choosing resources. The new focus on technology in strategy, the increasing tendency for firms to define themselves in terms of technologies, and the setting up of cross-divisional strategic organisations, technology groups and arenas seem to indicate that objectives are strived for in several firms (Wernerfelt, 1984). An example of this is the way electronic and hydraulic skills have eroded the payoffs to electrical and mechanical skills.

Past studies have shown that there are significant relationships between organisational resources, capabilities, performance and competitive advantage using RBV (King, 2007; Barney, 2007; Ismail et al., 2012; Ogunyomi and Bruning, 2015). Ibrahim and Shariff (2016) found that consistent with the RBV, strategic orientations are culture-based, valuable and sophisticated firm resources can lead to competitive advantages.

Teece et al. (1997) highlight the importance of human resources, as reflected in competencies and capabilities of the entrepreneurs, to the performance of the firm. These human competencies and capabilities are the key components of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurial competencies and skills are therefore integral part of the human resources as postulated by the RBV.

Wade and Hulland (2004) provide further insight on RBV and technology, when they posited that RBV provides a valuable way for technology researchers to think about how information technology and systems relate to firm strategy and performance.

In particular, RBV provides a cogent framework to evaluate the strategic value of technological resources and how to differentiate among various types of information systems, and how to study their separate influences on performance. Acquisition entrepreneurial skills, adoption and use of technology, and access to global markets are considered as some of the intangible resources required by SMEs in order to enhance their overall performance and thus provide a basis to premise this study on RBV.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design. Cross-sectional survey research design was adopted because the study has to do with a prevailing current trend in the society that concerns the economy. The major objective of the study was to ascertain the influence of entrepreneurship education, technology and globalisation on performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and three null hypotheses were formulated and tested.

The results of the study could be beneficial to stakeholders,

Table 1. Entrepreneurship education and performance of SMEs.

S/N	Items	Mean	Std Dev	Decision
1	Acquiring creative skills	4.2289	1.1201	High influence
2	Acquiring innovative skills	4.2500	1.0299	High influence
3	Acquiring leadership skills	3.9710	1.0201	Moderate influence
4	Acquiring negotiation skills	3.8870	0.8541	Moderate influence
5	Acquiring self-belief competencies	3.3927	0.7987	Moderate influence
6	Acquiring self-reliant competencies	4.4240	1.1011	High influence
7	Acquiring goal-setting/getting skills	3.9440	0.6646	Moderate influence
8	Acquiring business development skills	4.0070	0.4131	High influence
9	Acquiring financial literacy competencies	4.4200	0.4460	High influence
10	Acquiring skills in recognizing opportunities	4.2400	0.1420	High influence
Cumulative mean		4.0764	-	-

Decision mean = 3.000 (Source: Field survey, 2017).

including: curriculum designers, entrepreneurship educators, students, operators of SMEs and government agencies such as Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Bank of Industries (BOI) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). These agencies are major stakeholders in the implementation of government's economic recovery and growth plan. Operators of SMEs need the support of these agencies in order to play a part in the diversification and resuscitation of the economy. This study was delimited manufacturing SMEs and also delimited to one randomly selected state from each of the six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria. The six states selected were Niger (North Central), Bauchi (North East), Kano (North West), Anambra (South East), Edo (South South) and Lagos (South West).

The instrument used for data collection was Entrepreneurship Education, Technology and Globalisation Adoption Survey (EETGAS), designed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of forty items on a five-point Likert rating scale divided into four sections of ten questionnaire items each. The content validity of the instrument was ascertained by a panel of specialists in the field of measurement and evaluation who were requested to comment and make input on the suitability of the items to measure the constructs.

A pilot study was conducted in Kebbi State, using 30 owners/managers of manufacturing SMEs. The data collected from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha to test for its reliability. A reliability co-efficient of 0.86 was obtained, which exceeds the recommended threshold value of 0.70 by Hair et al. (2013). The suggestions made by the specialists and inputs from the pilot study were incorporated in the final copy of the instrument.

The instrument was administered on four hundred respondents who are owners/managers of the manufacturing SMEs sampled using cluster, proportionate and random sampling procedures from the six selected states. Copies of the questionnaire were issued to each respondent by the researcher and given one day to complete. This was to allow for likely busy schedules of the respondents.

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research question one: What is the influence of entrepreneurship education on performance of SMEs in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question one, data generated from ten questionnaire items were used. The summary of ratings by the respondents is presented as Table 1. From the analysis in Table 1, cumulative mean score of 4.0764 was obtained, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.0000. This indicated that acquiring entrepreneurial skills and competencies positively influence performance of SMEs.

Research question two: What is the influence of technology on performance of SMEs in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question two, data generated from ten questionnaire items were used. The summary of ratings by the respondents is presented as Table 2.

From the analysis in Table 2, cumulative mean score of 4.3480 was obtained, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.0000. This indicated that adoption and use of technology positively influence performance of SMEs.

Research question three: What is the influence of globalisation on performance of SMEs in Nigeria?

In order to answer research question two, data generated from ten questionnaire items were used. The summary of ratings by the respondents is presented as Table 3. From the analysis in Table 3, cumulative mean score of 3.2098 was obtained, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.0000. This indicated that globalisation positively influence performance of SMEs.

Null hypothesis one: Entrepreneurship education has no significant influence on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria

In order to test this null hypothesis, the generated data were analysed using linear regression. The generated

Table 2. Technology and performance of SMEs.

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
1	Making e-payments	4.4700	0.7710	High influence
2	Receiving e-payments	4.5300	1.1409	High influence
3	Using modern technology for production	4.4301	0.8201	High influence
4	Using computers for your operation	4.1201	0.6841	High influence
5	Using internet for your operation	4.0420	0.7987	High influence
6	Using modern communication technology	4.5211	0.1211	High influence
7	Adapting to modern industry trends	4.0701	0.6646	High influence
8	Using technology to reduce operating costs	4.3901	0.4131	High influence
9	Using modern and faster distribution channels	4.4700	0.7860	High influence
10	Using technology to increase product quality	4.4400	0.1220	High influence
Cumulative mean		4.3480	0	-

Decision mean = 3.000 (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Table 3. Globalisation and performance of SMEs.

S/N	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
1	Use of raw materials from outside Nigeria	3.3200	0.771	Moderate influence
2	Purchase of equipment from outside Nigeria	3.7701	1.1409	Moderate influence
3	Potentials of foreign markets for your products	3.9502	0.8201	Moderate influence
4	Use of information and communication technology	3.9401	0.6841	Moderate influence
5	Sale of your products outside Nigeria	2.9645	0.7987	No influence
6	Cross-border transaction	2.8101	0.1211	No influence
7	Belonging to an international network/cluster	2.6412	0.6646	No influence
8	Competing products from outside Nigeria	3.3700	0.4131	Moderate influence
9	Collaboration with foreign financial partners	2.6616	0.7860	No influence
10	Collaboration with foreign technical partners	2.6702	0.1220	No influence
Cumulative mean		3.2098	-	-

Decision mean = 3.000 (Source: Field survey, 2017).

descriptive statistics, model summary, ANOVA and coefficients tables are summarised in Table 4. From Table 4, significant regression equation was found ($F(1.398) = 5.028$, $p = 0.026$), with R^2 of 0.013. The coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.013$ indicated that 13% variability of performance of SMEs was attributed to acquisition of entrepreneurship education skills and competencies. The Beta coefficient for entrepreneurship education was 0.108. This also indicated that for every 1% additional entrepreneurship education skill/competency acquired, there was an associated proportional increase of 10.8% in performance of SMEs. The Beta coefficient for entrepreneurship education (0.108) was significantly different from 0 as its p -value was 0.026, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, going by the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there existed significant influence of entrepreneurship education on performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Null hypothesis two: Technology has no significant influence on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria

In order to test this null hypothesis, the generated data were analysed using linear regression. The generated descriptive statistics, model summary, ANOVA and coefficients tables are summarised in Table 5. From Table 5, significant regression equation was found ($F(1.398) = 8.479$, $p = 0.004$), with R^2 of .022. The coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.022$ indicated that 22% variability of performance of SMEs was attributed to adoption and use of technology. The Beta coefficient for technology was 0.152. This also indicated that for every 1% increase in adoption and use of technology, there was an associated proportional increase of 15.2% in performance of SMEs. The Beta coefficient for technology (0.152) was significantly different from 0 as its p -value was .004, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, going by the decision rule, the

Table 4. Regression analysis of influence of entrepreneurship education on performance of SMEs.

Model	Beta	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
Entrepreneurial education	0.108	-	-	-	5.028	0.026
Performance of SMEs	35.285	0.115	0.013	0.011	-	-

Source: Field survey (2017).

Table 5. Regression analysis of influence of technology on performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Model	Beta	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
Technology	0.152	-	-	-	8.479	0.004
Performance of SMEs	34.341	0.148	0.022	0.019	-	-

Source: Field survey (2017).

Table 6. Regression analysis of influence of globalization on performance of SMEs in Nigeria

Model	Beta	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
Globalisation	0.147	-	-	-	12.820	0.000
Performance of SMEs	35.052	0.181	0.033	0.030	-	-

Source: Field survey (2017).

null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there existed significant influence of technology on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Null hypothesis three: Globalisation has no significant influence on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria

In order to test this null hypothesis, the generated data were analysed using linear regression. The generated descriptive statistics, model summary, ANOVA and coefficients tables are summarised in Table 6. From Table 6, significant regression equation was found ($F(1,398) = 12.820$, $p = .000$), with R^2 of .033. The coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.033$ indicated that 33% variability of performance of SMEs was attributed to globalisation activities. The Beta coefficient for globalisation was 0.147. This also indicated that for every 1% increase in globalisation activities, there was an associated proportional increase of 14.7% in performance of SMEs. The Beta coefficient for globalisation (0.147) was significantly different from 0 as its p -value was 0.000, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, going by the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there existed significant influence of globalisation on the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The answer to research question one, as presented in

Table 1 with a cumulative mean score of 4.0764, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.000, was confirmed by the results of test of null hypothesis one, as presented in Table 4 with $p = .026$, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance.

The study, therefore, established that entrepreneurship education significantly influenced performance of SMEs in Nigeria. It can therefore be inferred that acquisition of entrepreneurship education skills and competencies positively boosted performance of SMEs, which in turn has a multiplier effect on the economic recovery and growth of Nigeria.

This finding confirmed an earlier study by Mitchelmore and Rowley (2010) which found that acquiring entrepreneurial competencies positively impacted on the business performance of SMEs. This was also supported by Mohammed and Nzalibe (2014) who in a related study reported that entrepreneurship education had significant effect on the business success of SMEs in Nigeria. Similarly, Bosire and Nzaramba (2015) reported that entrepreneurship training do lead to better business practices and increased revenues and profits. They concluded that lack of entrepreneurship training was identified as one of the key factors that limit the growth of SMEs.

The answer to research question two, as presented in Table 2 with a cumulative mean score of 4.3480, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.000, was supported by the results of test of null hypothesis two, as presented in Table 5 with $p = .004$, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance. This study therefore,

established that technology significantly influenced performance of SMEs in Nigeria. It can therefore be inferred that adoption and use of innovative modern technology positively enhanced performance of SMEs, which also boosts the diversification of the economy of Nigeria.

This finding is in line with Apulu and Latham (2011) who in an earlier related study found that the competitiveness of SMEs was increased through adoption of Information and Communication Technology. They concluded that those SMEs which had technological innovation also had a higher growth compared to the SMEs which were not that creative.

Sajuyigbe and Alabi (2012) also argued that technology was being used for strategic management, communication and collaboration, customers' access, managerial decision making, data management and knowledge management since it helped to provide an effective means of organisational productivity and service delivery. Technology has critically become an indispensable tool for the daily operations of organisations. SMEs now invest significant amounts of financial resources in technology to strengthen their competitive positions (Ghobakhloo et al., 2012). Rufai (2014) also found that usage technology by SMEs positively impacts business performance in terms of cost reduction, enhanced productivity as well as improved revenue and profitability.

The answer to research question three, as presented in Table 3 with a cumulative mean score of 3.2098, which was higher than the decision mean score of 3.000, was confirmed by the results of test of null hypothesis three, as presented in Table 6 with $p = 0.000$, which was smaller than 0.05 level of significance. This therefore, established that globalisation had significant influence on performance of SMEs in Nigeria. It can therefore be inferred that globalisation through cross-border transactions positively enhanced performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

The results of this study were at variance with Kunkongkaphan (2014), who reported that Thai SMEs were adversely affected by globalisation, as a result of increase of competing foreign products in their local markets. Similarly, Akinola (2014) concluded that globalisation, though had enhanced some areas of the economy, it nevertheless, created more havoc to entrepreneurial development in Nigeria than the benefits derived.

This finding was however, supported by Ocloo et al. (2014) who assert that the challenge today for business enterprises is to formulate strategies that will enable them survive in the new market forces created by the spread of global competition. Sengul et al., (2015) also found that the opportunities resulting from globalisation, such as speed of technological change and new opportunities had positive effect on the performance of SMEs.

The results showed that acquisition of entrepreneurship

education skills and competencies positively boosted performance of SMEs. The results also established that adoption and use of technology positively enhanced performance of SMEs. The results further confirmed that globalisation; through cross-border transactions has significant positive influence of performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

It can therefore be inferred from these results that with improved productivity and profitability, SMEs can create more employment for the youths, create wealth, generate revenues for government and thus contribute significantly to Nigeria's economic recovery and growth. SMEs have thus become the haven for diversification of the economy and economic growth in Nigeria.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is significant positive influence of entrepreneurship education, technology and globalisation on performance of SMEs in Nigeria. It was also concluded that for manufacturing SMEs to operate competitively, profitably and significantly contribute to the economic recovery and growth of Nigeria, they need to continuously acquire newer entrepreneurial skills; adopt and use innovative modern technologies; and have an internationalized profile.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) Practical acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and competencies should be made part of entrepreneurship education courses, at all levels, by the curriculum designers, to enhance the performance of its recipients who could become entrepreneurs.
- (2) Practical acquisition of entrepreneurial skills and competencies should be emphasized in teaching entrepreneurship education courses, at all levels, by the respective course facilitators.
- (3) Small and medium entrepreneurs should continuously acquire newer entrepreneurial skills in order to enhance their product quality and efficiency of operation which in turn boost sales turnover and profit margin, with its multiplier effect on the economy.
- (4) Small and medium entrepreneurs should adopt and use innovative modern technology devices and platforms in order to enhance their productivity and profitability, as well as, superior long term performance.
- (5) Small and medium entrepreneurs should brace up for globalisation move which has opened up international trade liberalization by engaging in cross-border transactions in order to enhance their performance and

be competitive.

(6) Government agencies, such as Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, Bank of Industries and the Central Bank of Nigeria, which are major stakeholders in the implementation of government's economic recovery and growth plan, should facilitate acquisition of entrepreneurial skills; use of innovative modern technologies and cross-border transactions by SMEs in order to enhance their performance and support diversification and resuscitation of the economy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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