

# SOCIO-CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOR IN KANO, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** *This study examines socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano, Nigeria. The population of study consists of entrepreneurs in Kano, Nigeria. The city of Kano was divided into different strata which consists of Local Government Areas, Wards and Streets. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select sample elements across different strata. Copies of questionnaire were administered to elicit information from respondents. The data collected were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentage and Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC). The result of the study established a strong positive correlation between family background and business ownership ( $r = 0.993054$ ), and between religion and business innovation ( $r = 0.992256$ ). Family background, religion, age, sex, education among others were confirmed as determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends the need for proper orientation among different families on the importance of entrepreneurship. Religious organizations are also advised to put more efforts in giving hard work a pride of place in their sermons.*

**Keywords:** Socio-cultural determinants; Entrepreneurial behavior; Business ownership; Business innovation.

## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship entails making practical and effective use of resources (Thijssen and Vernooij, 2007). According to Ogundele, Sofoluwe and Kayode (2012) entrepreneurship involve services provided by individuals that establish new business. A person who establishes a business and nurtures the business to growth or takes charge of an already existing business either because it was sold or acquired as inheritance after the death of the original owner with the aim of building the business innovatively is an entrepreneur (Akanwa and Agu, 2005). One can easily conclude therefore that an entrepreneur harness resources to produce and sell products or services that meets specific needs. The economic importance of the entrepreneur has been recognized for several decades. Schumpeter (1934) attributed innovation to the entrepreneur. He described entrepreneurship as the engine of economic development. He argued that “to study entrepreneur is to study the central figure in modern history”. Unlike the capitalist, the entrepreneur directs the application of acquired knowledge to the production of goods for human consumption.

The resultant financial gains from entrepreneurial ventures are always of benefit to a country. The propensity to behave entrepreneurially is not exclusive to certain individuals; different individuals have diverse mix of capabilities for demonstrating and acquiring entrepreneurial behavior, skill and attributes. These behaviors can be practiced developed and learned. Drucker (1985) observed that entrepreneurship is an innovative behavior that marries existing resources with new wealth producing capacity. Innovative behavior is tantamount to entrepreneurial behavior. Entrepreneurial behavior refers to predilection for innovation and a change in the status quo with the aim of creating value and making profit.

The influence of socio- cultural factors on human behavior across societies cannot be over emphasized. Socio-cultural factors refer to phenomena which determines behavior. These factors shape the personality of people and influence behavior and decisions of people (Adeleke, Oyenuga and Ogundele, 2003). Socio-cultural characteristics such as family background, ethnic affiliation, religion, birth order, and age, educational level of parents, gender, and marital status have a lot of influence on the decision of individual to act in a given way. On this note, Turker and Selcuk (2009) asserted that entrepreneurial intention and by extension entrepreneurial behavior is driven by socialization, relationship, environment, and business background of family. This position was given credence by Linan, Moriano, Romero, Rueda, Tejada, and Fernandez (2009) which maintained that socialization process among others and support from parents as well as modeling have significant value on entrepreneurial behavior.

Over time, the important role of culture, traditions and norms have been demonstrated from sociological and anthropological perspective. For instance, Greenfield and Strickon (1986) sees entrepreneurship as cultural process, Morris (2005) on his part observed differences in cultural norms and values which influence entrepreneurial behavior. Mueller (2000) noted that culture entails symbolic features, ideas and values that shapes the behavior of people. Cultural values according to Turker and Selcuk (2009) influences entrepreneurship behaviors of people.

Nandamuri and Gowthami (2014) established a correlation between entrepreneurial orientation and family background. Equally, Ranwala (2016) observed the significance of family background in setting business up. He found a nexus between family background and entrepreneurial behavior. Ijaz, Yasin & Zafar (2012) noted that family is indispensable in establishment of firms as well as their development. They also posited that peer group influence entrepreneurial intention. According to Ijaz et al. (2012) entrepreneurship ideas which shapes entrepreneurial behavior are developed during interaction with peers. Furthermore, Audretsch, Bonte & Tamvada (2007) noted that religion shapes entrepreneurial decision which in turn shapes entrepreneurial behavior. Tracey (2012) and Henley (2017) submitted that levels of entrepreneurship activities vary among adherents of different religions. Entrepreneurial behavior engenders new ideas and profit maximization which leads to growth and development of the economy.

From the foregoing, this research seeks to examine socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano, Nigeria. The research was conceived to identify specific socio-cultural determinants that enhance entrepreneurial behavior in Kano. The city of Kano is popularly known as the center of commerce in Northern Nigeria and for neighboring Chad and Niger Republic. Entrepreneurship activities took a pride of

place in Kano during the pre-colonial era and it continues during the colonial era up till the present time. Kano is well known for trade in Textile materials, Hide and Skin, Cattle, Horses and Carmel among others. The city is the hometown of Aliko Dangote (a great entrepreneur) the wealthiest person in Africa. Kano is in the North-west geopolitical zone in Nigeria. Kano state has the highest population in Nigeria (2006 census). Hence, a study of the socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano is appropriate.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

Economic realities in Nigeria in recent years has made the role of entrepreneurs to be greatly emphasized as well as the need for entrepreneurship development across the length and breadth of Nigeria. It has been observed over time that there is a great difference in entrepreneurial behavior among people from various cities and ethnic group in Nigeria. The recent economic meltdown in Nigeria and the resultant social problems epitomize by hunger, kidnapping people for ransom; necessitate the renewed call for people most especially the youths to imbibe the culture of entrepreneurial behavior across the length and breadth of the country. Entrepreneurial skills and attributes provide benefits to society, even beyond their application to business activities. Obviously, personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity and a spirit of initiative can be useful to everyone in their day to day existence.

Therefore, there is a need to understand the socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano the commercial hub of northern Nigeria with a view to make the country the hub of economic activities and to boost the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nigeria.

## **3. Research Question**

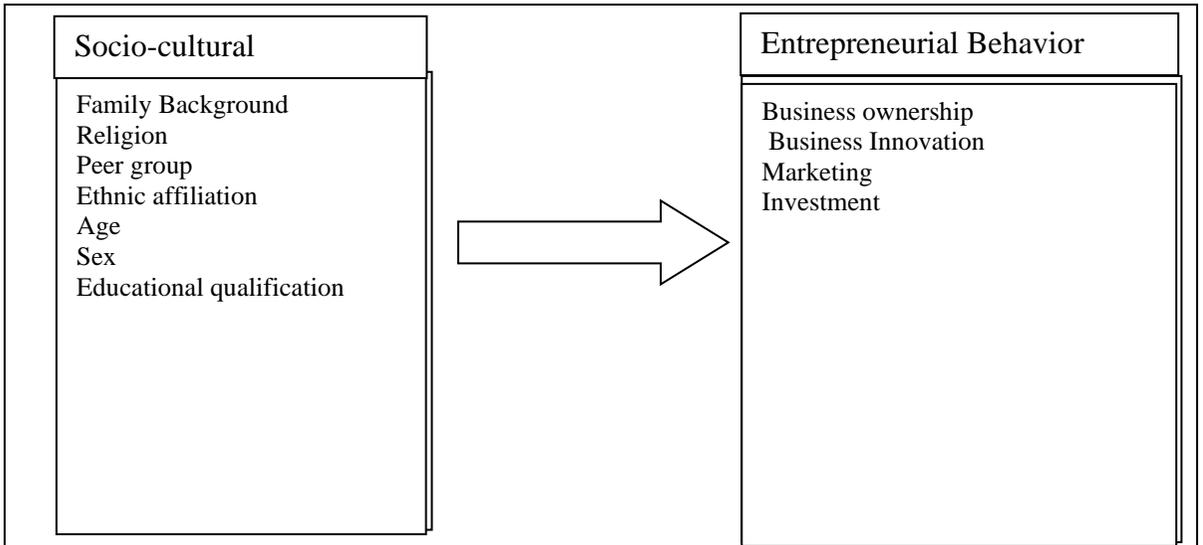
What are the socio-cultural factors that determines entrepreneurial behavior in Kano?

## **4. Research Hypothesis**

1. There is a significant relationship between family background and business ownership in Kano.
2. There is a significant relationship between religion and business innovation in Kano.

## Research Model

**Figure 1: Socio-cultural Entrepreneurial Model**



**Source:** Researcher's illustration, 2021

The figure tagged Socio-cultural Entrepreneurial model depicts the hypothetical relationship between the variables of study. Socio-cultural factors such as family background, religion, ethnic affiliation, education, age, sex are assumed to influence entrepreneurial behavior exemplified by business ownership, business innovation, marketing and investment. This study is an attempt to establish the authenticity of the model.

### 5. Theoretical Framework

Over the years, scholars and researchers have been able to propound so many theories related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behavior. For instance, sociological theories focuses on social context of entrepreneurship behavior within the society. Reynolds (1991) observed four social contexts that are related to entrepreneurial activities. He noted that social network is one of such social contexts. To him, the focus is on building social relationships and bonds that engenders trust and not the taking of opportunities as and when they arise, regardless of planning or principle. This means that the entrepreneur should not take undue advantage of people to be successful. Furthermore, he noted that the second context is the life course stage that involves an assessment of the life situations and characteristic of individuals who made decisions to become entrepreneurs. For these people, experience could influence their actions and thought in order to do something tangible with their lives. The third Social context is linked to ethnic identification. The social milieu of an individual is the major factor in this sense as it constitute the driving force or the "push" factors which makes a person become an entrepreneur. This is applicable to a large extent in Nigeria considering the fact that the Igbo ethnic group is well known for entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria more than any other social or ethnic group. Moreover, the fourth social context known as population ecology is hinged on the idea that environmental factors play a leading and critical role in the survival of businesses as well as

entrepreneurship activities. Nkansah (2011) noted that the political system, government legislation, customers, employees and competition are some of the environmental factors that may have an impact on survival of new venture or the success of the entrepreneur.

Max Weber, in his book "The Spirit of Capitalism and Protestant Ethics" opined those religious characteristics such as hard work and thrift influence entrepreneurial activities. On his part, Le Vine (1966) as against other motivation theorist argued that the influence of family on the need for achievement is intrinsic and capable of propelling entrepreneurial behavior. He further posited that status mobility influence values of parents and in turn influence entrepreneurship orientation given to children within family settings. This theory emphasized the role of the family in developing the entrepreneurial character as family background and family orientation influence the emergence of entrepreneurs. It is believed that the home atmosphere and values of an entrepreneurial family can provide a great deal of nurturing and support for development of entrepreneurial personality or character (. This is so because the family background of an individual has a strong influence on his values and character and therefore serves as a strong source of influence whether he would be an entrepreneur or not. In view of this, Kuratko and Hodgetts, (1998) reasoned that certain traits established and supported early in life will lead eventually to entrepreneurial emergence and success. Kuratko and Hodgetts, (1998) further pointed out that entrepreneurial traits established within the family early in life determines entrepreneurial behavior. The applicability of these is hinged on the fact that a lot of business owners in Kano hails from families of entrepreneurs. Family members seems to be mentored and established to stand on their own by their parents or close relatives. This is the true considering the story of Aliko Dangote and other notable business owners in the city. This study examined the extent to which this claim is applicable.

## **6. Research Methodology**

This research is descriptive in nature and therefore adopts a survey method. Quantitative data were collected from respondents in Kano, Nigeria. The population consists of entrepreneurs selected from different locations in Kano. Stratified random sampling was used to divide Kano city along different strata which include local governments, wards and streets from which sample elements were selected randomly. A total of 200 respondents were selected. Copies of questionnaire were administered in order to elicit information from respondents. Trained research assistants served as interpreters and guide for respondents who could not read or write. The questionnaire consists of open and closed ended questions. A total of 184 questionnaire were retrieved out of 200 questionnaires administered. Data collected from respondents were analyzed using simple statistical methods of frequency distribution and percentage. Furthermore, Pearson product moment correlation was employed to test variables in the hypothesis. The result of data analysis serves as a basis upon which conclusion was drawn.

## 7. Data Analysis

**Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents**

	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>		
18 – 28	32	17.4
29 – 39	50	27.2
40 – 50	65	35.3
51 & above	37	20.1
Total	184	100
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	125	67.9
Female	59	32.1
Total	184	100
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	68	36.9
Islam	110	59.8
Others	6	3.3
Total	184	100
<b>Ethnic Affiliation</b>		
Hausa/ Fulani	98	53.3
Igbo	30	16.3
Yoruba	38	20.6
Others	18	9.8
Total	184	100
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Primary School	95	51.6
Secondary School	41	22.3
Tertiary Education	30	16.3
No Education	18	9.8
Total	184	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, 2021

Table 1 shows respondents' characteristics. Majority of respondents' selected falls between the ages of 29 to 50 years. This is reasonable and good for the economy because individuals in this age group constitute the most vibrant and active workforce of the population. The distribution of respondents according to sex shows clearly that male entrepreneurs are more than entrepreneurs who are females in Kano. This no doubt has cultural connotation as the culture of the city exemplified by the religion of the people allows women to stay at home as full-time housewives. The distribution of respondents in line with their religion indicates that there are lots of Islamic religion adherents in Kano as majority of the respondents are Muslims while about 37% of the respondents are Christians. A few percentages of respondents were neither Christians nor Muslims.

Majority of the respondents are Hausas/ Fulani as Kano is a commercial nerve centre for northern Nigeria dominated by the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group. However, there are considerable populations of people from other ethnic groups living peacefully and doing business in Kano. The educational level of respondents indicates that a large

number of entrepreneurs have just primary and secondary school certificate. Some entrepreneurs are not educated while a few of them have tertiary education certificate. This further attest to the low level of school enrollment in the past. It is worthy to note that school enrolment for western education has improved in recent years most especially in Kano and other cities in northern Nigeria.

**Table 2: Opinion of Respondents**

<p><b>1. Which of the following determines your entrepreneurial behavior?</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>F</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Family Background</td> <td>121</td> <td>65.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religion</td> <td>94</td> <td>51.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peer group</td> <td>26</td> <td>14.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ethnic affiliation</td> <td>31</td> <td>16.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td>18</td> <td>9.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sex</td> <td>98</td> <td>53.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education</td> <td>32</td> <td>17.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		F	%	Family Background	121	65.7	Religion	94	51.1	Peer group	26	14.1	Ethnic affiliation	31	16.8	Age	18	9.8	Sex	98	53.3	Education	32	17.4	<p><b>2. Which of the following entrepreneurial behavior is applicable to you?</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>F</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Business ownership</td> <td>174</td> <td>94.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Innovation</td> <td>121</td> <td>65.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marketing</td> <td>112</td> <td>60.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Investment</td> <td>184</td> <td>100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		F	%	Business ownership	174	94.6	Business Innovation	121	65.8	Marketing	112	60.9	Investment	184	100
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Source: Researcher’s fieldwork, 2021

Table 2.1 shows that family background, religion, peer group, age, sex and educational qualification all influence entrepreneurial behavior. However, majority of the respondents observed that family background, religion and sex of individuals influence entrepreneurial behavior more than other socio-cultural factors. Table 2.2 shows that business ownership, business innovation, marketing and investment are part of the entrepreneurial behavior applicable to the respondents in this study. 74% of the respondents in table 2.3 opined that family background influence entrepreneurial behavior while 53.3% of respondents in table 2.4 indicated that religion influence entrepreneurial behavior. Table 2.5 shows that 84.8% of the respondents hailed from family of Entrepreneurs while 94.6% of the respondents

owns a business as shown in table 2.6. Furthermore, 88% of the respondents claimed that they are religious in table 2.7 while 65.8% of the respondents in table 2.8 noted that they are good at business innovation.

### 8. Test of Hypothesis

The test of Hypothesis 1 exemplified by the variable in table 2.5 and table 2.6 using Pearson correlation coefficient shows a strong positive correlation between family background and business ownership with a correlation coefficient value of  $r = 0.993054$ . The result supported Ijaz et al. (2012); Nandamuri & Gowthami (2014); Ranwala (2016) on leading influence of family on entrepreneurial behavior. The result also validates the theoretical framework with respect to the position of Kuratko and Hodgetts (1998) on family background and entrepreneurship.

$$\frac{3026}{\sqrt{9285223}} \approx 0.993054$$

Similarly, test of Hypothesis 2 exemplified by the variable in table 2.7 and table 2.8 using Pearson correlation coefficient indicated a strong positive correlation between religion and business innovation with a correlation coefficient value of  $r = 0.992256$ . The result of the correlation coefficient test corroborated Audretsch et al. (2007); Tracey (2012); and Henley (2017) which submitted that religion shapes entrepreneurial activities.

$$\frac{1951}{26\sqrt{5719}} \approx 0.992256$$

### 9. Conclusion and Recommendations

The focus of this study is on socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in Kano, Nigeria. The result of the study clearly shows that family background, religion, peer group, age, sex and education all influence entrepreneurial behavior. Above all other factors, family background and religion was found to influence entrepreneurial behavior in Kano, Nigeria in line with the position of Ijaz et al. (2012); Nandamuri & Gowthami (2014); Ranwala (2016); Tracey (2012); and Henley (2017).

The study therefore recommends the need for proper orientation among different families on the importance of entrepreneurship. In addition, religious organizations should put more efforts in giving hard work and the zeal for entrepreneurial activities a pride of place in their sermons.

#### *Suggestion for further study*

Efforts should be made to study socio-cultural determinants of entrepreneurial behavior in other major cities in Nigeria most especially Lagos, Ibadan, Aba and Onitsha which are commercial nerve centers.

#### *Ethical Considerations*

The importance of ethical issues in research cannot be overemphasized. Ethical issues revolve around such matters as authorship, plagiarism and acknowledgements of contribution of others. These issues were taken into cognizance in this study. The

researchers got informed consent from respondents. Moreover, the researchers ensured that information elicited from respondents was given absolute confidentiality. Also, the researchers ensured honesty and vigor in analysis, interpretation and report of the results of the research.

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