

THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION OF COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS

S. G. Jolaosho* and M. O. Afolabi

Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacy Administration Faculty of Pharmacy,
Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Article Received on
30 June 2017,
Revised on 20 July 2017,
Accepted on 10 August 2017,
DOI: 10.20959/wjpps20179-9946

*Corresponding Author

S. G. Jolaosho

Department of Clinical
Pharmacy and Pharmacy
Administration Faculty of
Pharmacy, Obafemi
Awolowo University, Ile-
Ife, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

Community pharmacists encounter several challenges in the course of practice but these are perceived by some as opportunities which can be converted to economic gains based on entrepreneurial orientations. The study seeks to explore gender variation in entrepreneurial orientations of community pharmacists in Lagos State and to determine the significance of such orientations in community pharmacy practice. The study is a cross-sectional descriptive survey of 203 randomly selected community pharmacies across the twenty local government areas of Lagos state. Pretested semi-structured questionnaire was used to obtain data from the pharmacists on business survival strategies and entrepreneurial activities in their premises based on their level of autonomy, innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-aversiveness and

competitive aggressiveness. The data obtained were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The respondents were mostly (107, 53%) male and about half (98, 48%) were within the age group of 30 to 49 years. The t- test conducted yielded significant differences in the level of proactiveness ($ms = 7.25, t = 2.32, p = .02$) and competitive aggressiveness ($ms = 7.83, t = -3.67, p = .00$) between the male and female gender. However, there are no significant differences in the level of autonomy, innovativeness and risk-aversiveness of community pharmacists based on gender. The study concluded that the female community pharmacists were more aggressive in nature compared to the male in handling their business ventures. On the contrary, the males were more proactive in anticipation of future events. Both measures of proactiveness and competitive aggressiveness are relevant orientations for business survival in community pharmacy practice.

KEYWORDS: entrepreneurial orientation, gender, community pharmacy, community pharmacists.

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality has been flogged in the research domain in the past few decades. Women are not given equal opportunity to participate in politics, education or in the work place. Despite the series of steps taken to promote gender equality in Africa, some political leaders are still averse to women participation in public affairs. According to statistics, women have been performing well in fields such as education, politics, social, commerce and industry. For example, two-fifth of businesses in the US are owned by women. Similarly, more than a third of the total small businesses in Canada are owned by women. The role women play in nation building cannot be over-emphasised. Women are constantly faced with barriers such as social restrictions, low literacy, low risk-bearing ability, multiple responsibilities, financial constraints, marketing problems and limited mobility.^[1]

Pharmacists are the most overtly involved in entrepreneurship in the context of all healthcare professionals. In the course of practice, they are inundated with challenges which others perceive as opportunities which may be harnessed for economic gains depending on their entrepreneurial orientation. The importance of gender in the outcome of a business enterprise has been found to be very significant in literature. Consequently, this study seeks to explore the effect of gender in the entrepreneurial orientations of community pharmacists.

Entrepreneurial Orientation

Not all leaders are entrepreneurs, but entrepreneurs may be considered as leaders in their own right.^[2] Several studies have emerged linking the core characteristics of entrepreneurs with different characteristics of leadership in an area now referred to as entrepreneurial leadership. These scholars have looked at the characteristics that lead to orientation towards entrepreneurship among business owners and the management of corporations. Entrepreneurial orientation of leaders is what leads firms to venturing into new areas previously not part of their business lines as well as the formation of mergers. In view of the same, the various leadership styles have been connected to the core characters that lead to entrepreneurship amongst individuals and firms.^[3] While some leaders emphasize on particular leadership styles, generally, it is the leader's individual traits developed over time that can move a firm or an individual into taking hold of new opportunities and converting same into profits.^[4]

The concept of entrepreneurial orientation was developed by Miller^[5] as comprising three dimensions of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk taking. However, Lumpkin and Dess^[6] suggested that there are two additional salient dimensions to the construct of entrepreneurial orientation. These are competitive aggressiveness and autonomy. Entrepreneurial orientation refers to the processes, practices and decision making activities that lead to the new entry of products and services. It involves the intentions and actions of key players functioning in a dynamic generative process aimed at new venture creation. The key dimensions that characterise entrepreneurial orientation include a propensity to act autonomously, willingness to innovate and take risks and the tendency to be aggressive towards competitors and proactive relative to the marketplace opportunities.^[6] Many scholars are of the opinion that these characteristics cannot all be in a particular individual, but Gordon^[7] disputes that the individual taking lead within the organisation should have these characteristics if the organisation's venture is to succeed. For the purpose of this study, we shall examine the entrepreneurial orientation of community pharmacists along the five dimensions identified.^[5,6]

Risk taking

Risk taking as an aspect of entrepreneurial orientation is the ability of a firm to knowingly devote resources to projects with chance of high returns but may also entail a possibility of high failure.^[6,8] Gender differences have been identified as the most pronounced for risk attitudes in car driving and financial matters and least pronounced in the career domain. However, the authors further stated that apart from gender, age, height, and parental background, economic reasons significantly impact on willingness to take risks.^[9] In a similar study, the willingness to take risks increases the probability that an individual becomes an entrepreneur in future.^[10] Risk taking is commonly associated with entrepreneurial behavior and generally, successful entrepreneurs are risk-taker.^[11] The ability of pharmacists to take risk as a measure of entrepreneurial orientation will be compared on the basis of gender differences.

Competitive aggressiveness

According to a resource- based theory of a firm, competitive advantage only arises from the use of scarce, intangible and firm-specific assets.^[12] Some authors affirmed that the firm's internal resource base is a determining factor of competitive advantage in small and medium firms.^[13] Literature further states that, the firm's competitive advantage and performance are

largely influenced by the entrepreneurial behavior of the firm.^[14,15] Firms may benefit from efforts to increase their level of entrepreneurial orientation in order to survive dynamic, fast paced and complex business environment which is characterized by shorter life cycles, globalization and continuous improvement in technology. Entrepreneurial orientation is thus, a mechanism for the survival and success of a community pharmacy.^[16]

Significant relationship exists between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance while competitive advantage is found to partially mediate the entrepreneurial orientation and performance.^[6] It is important for pharmacists to be entrepreneurially oriented to develop a measure of aggressiveness for them to survive the intensely competitive market environment.

Most small and medium enterprises including community pharmacy outlets have been characterised as dynamic, innovative, efficient and their size allows for flexibility, immediate feedback and short decision making process, better understanding and quicker response to customer needs.^[17,18] The entrepreneur pharmacist needs to seize opportunities that arise from the complex interaction of internal and external factors on the business environment. The dynamic capabilities of such interactions will enable the pharmacy to re-figure the existing strategies and put them in a competitive advantage to improve business performance.

Proactiveness

Some scholars merge proactive personality and risk taking because what pushes an organisation to accept and pursue an idea in the face of several risks is the proactive personality of the leader in charge.^[19] Proactiveness is defined as taking the initiative essential for innovation and entrepreneurial activities. Pharmacist that are rated as highly proactive have a strong tendency to be ahead of competitors at producing novel ideas, products or services that competitors typically follow or copy. Most scholars and educators are of the opinion that entrepreneurial activities come directly from intentions of individuals and actions undertaken over time.^[20] These intentions affect and determine majority of entrepreneurial conduct including the creation of new ventures as well as self-employment.^[21] Intentions in the field of entrepreneurship remain a central point as it forms the first step in the formation of any business.^[22] Individuals who engage in continuously solving issues and challenges and have strong inclinations towards making changes to their environment have a higher likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs. Such entrepreneurs are described as being proactive.

Autonomy

Autonomy refers to independent activities taken by entrepreneurial leaders or teams directed at bringing about a new venture and seeing it succeed.^[23] In an organisational context it refers to an action free from organisational constraints.^[6] Research shows that superintendent pharmacist should have a level of autonomy in their decision making process because it generally creates an environment that better supports entrepreneurial activity. Encouraging individuals and team to identify best opportunities and take advantage of them without constantly referring to their superiors is highly commendable. This is however difficult in large organisations because of their complex and bureaucratic nature. For the purpose of this study, autonomy will be considered noting the effect of demographic characteristics on this variable.

Innovation

Innovation is an outcome which could be a service or product as well as the process of innovating. A study defined innovation as the process of introducing new or significantly improved goods or services and/or implementing new or significantly improved processes.^[24] It is an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption.^[25] The perception of an entrepreneur as an innovator is based on the paradigm which puts the entrepreneur as a person involved in the identification of opportunities and employs the innovation tool for developing a new business successfully.^[21] New goods or services or new processes may include the development of a new technology, an adaptation of existing technology to a new use (e.g. electronic commerce), or may be non-technological in nature (e.g. organisational and managerial change or some changes in marketing). Entrepreneurship comes into play in innovation in the place where a person comes across something but may not have the capability of translating the same into a proposition that is commercial.^[20] In another vein, innovation relates to entrepreneurship as it is its particular instrument, being an act that leads to the provision of resources with fresh ability for wealth creation.^[26]

A community pharmacy operates in a competitive business environment and is therefore subject to market pressures. The challenges facing community pharmacies are not unusual in the world of business. Business administration and technological innovations such as a policy for overall risk management, new information and communication technology, an intranet between pharmacies in a small chain, new procurement arrangements, or premises redesign,

are essential for overall business effectiveness and efficiency. In making a decision to introduce a service, technology or management innovation, pharmacy owners need to undertake a feasibility assessment which includes the overheads of running the pharmacy as well as the opportunity costs of innovating.

Inter pharmacy collaboration and the development of inter-professional partnerships between community pharmacies and other health care professionals were identified as central issues in pharmacy administration.^[27] There are also identified the substantial managerial challenges associated with the development and maintenance of these organisational forms. It is obvious that a greater contribution to patient care can be achieved with integration and involvement of community pharmacists in the wider primary care team.

There is the belief that community pharmacies make greater contribution towards patient care but there are well acknowledged barriers to achieving this. Innovation in pharmacy has become important due to various challenges bedeviling the practice setting. The dynamics of the current practice coupled with the activities of charlatans have encouraged innovation within the profession. Provision of new ways of services, development of new products and new business models will help the practice to stay above competitions. The objectives of this study are to explore the effect of gender variation in entrepreneurial orientations of community pharmacists and to determine the significance of the orientations in the practice.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design is a cross-sectional survey of community pharmacists in Lagos State. A sample size of 286 was obtained using Yaro Yamanne formula^[28] from a population of 752 registered community pharmacies in Lagos State as at December 2014 using the register of the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria. The survey excluded outlets registered outlets in 2015 and 2016 and other areas of pharmacy practice settings such as distributorship, wholesaling etc. A response rate of 79.3% was obtained.

Research Instrument

A pretested research instrument for Business Survival Strategy (BSS) was used to gather data from the community pharmacists. The questionnaire was adapted from a previous study^[29] and it consisted of 57 items divided into five different sections to explore the demographic characteristics of respondents, management skills and survival options in community pharmacy practice. It also includes entrepreneurial training, activities, roles and

responsibilities of developmental agencies. The data obtained were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists, (SPSS) Version 20. The questionnaires were sorted, edited and coded accordingly. The results were interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS

Table I presents the demographic characteristics of responding community pharmacists in Lagos state. Out of a sample of 203 community pharmacists, 107 (53%) were males and majority of the respondents 98 (48%) were within 30 to 49 years of age followed by 60 respondents (30%) who were within 50 to 59 years, while only 9 respondents (4%) were between 20 to 29 years.

Majority of the community pharmacies (93%) were independent pharmacies while only 7% had multiple or chain outlets. Most of these outlets (42%) have operated for between 13 to 20 years followed by 21% that had operated only for 1 to 4 years. All the respondents had a uniform basic qualification of B.Pharm degree while some (55%) community pharmacists had additional qualifications such as MBA (28%) and M.Sc/M.Phil. (10%).

Table II presents the effect of gender on entrepreneurial orientation. There is no significant difference between the gender of pharmacists with respect to the level of autonomy, innovativeness and risk aversiveness at $p < 0.05$. However, there exist a significant difference between the male and female pharmacists based on their competitive aggressiveness ($t = -3.67$, $x = 7.83$, $p = .00$) and proactiveness ($t = 2.32$, $x = 0.22$, $p = .00$).

The effect of gender on entrepreneurial orientation shows that males are statistically different from females based on their aggressiveness and proactiveness at t - values of -3.671 and 2.32 respectively. This implies that female pharmacists are more aggressive with a mean score of 7.83 than males. On the contrary, the male pharmacists were more proactive with a mean score of 7.25 .

Table I: Demographic Characteristics of Community Pharmacists.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	107	52.7
Female	96	47.3
Total	203	100
Age (years)		
20-29	9	4.4

30-49	98	48.3
50-59	60	29.6
60+	36	17.7
Total	203	100
Age of Business (years)		
1-4	42	20.7
5-12	36	17.7
13-20	85	42.0
21-28	40	19.6
Total	203	100.0
Highest Qualification		
BSc./B.Pharm	91	44.8
Pharm.D	7	3.4
MSc./M.Phil	19	9.4
MPH	12	5.9
MBA	57	28.1
Ph.D	17	8.4
Total	203	100.0
Nature of Pharmacy		
Independent Pharmacy	189	93.1
Multiple or Chain Outlet	14	6.9
Total	203	100.0

Table II: Effect of Gender on Entrepreneurial Orientation.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std Error Mean	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std Error Diff
Autonomy								
Male	107	12.98	2.96	.28	-1.50	.13	-.59	.39
Female	96	13.57	2.61	.27				
Innovativeness								
Male	107	54.61	10.70	1.03	-.08	.94	-.11	1.40
Female	96	54.72	9.11	.93				
RiskAversiveness								
Male	107	15.00	3.04	.29	-.36	.72	-.14	-.96
Female	96	15.16	2.80	.29				
Proactiveness								
Male	107	7.25	1.94	.19	2.32	.02*	.67	.10
Female	96	6.58	2.17	.22				
Competitive Aggressiveness								
Male	107	6.85	2.06	.20	-3.67	.00*	-.98	-1.51
Female	96	7.83	1.71	.17				

DISCUSSION

The males are more forward-looking and opportunity-seeking in anticipation of a future demand than the females. The multiple responsibilities which women keep as home keeper and entrepreneur serve as obvious reasons for her shortcomings in being proactive. Women

are more prone to problems because of the complex nature of their job. The society believes that women are expected to be a helper or subordinate to man. This attitude denies her the freedom and the will to achieve her personal goals which may come through training and skill acquisition. Similarly, some culture restricts young girls from venturing out and as such set strict boundaries to restrain her mobility.

The entrepreneurial orientation as a measure of entrepreneur's characteristics serves as a mechanism for impacting on a firm's performance.^[30] Several studies have investigated the role of gender in the field of entrepreneurship and venture success,^[31,34] Contrary to our findings on the proactiveness of the female gender, several researchers were of different opinion.^[35-38] Other studies examined the ability of women to run a business.^[31] This revealed that many women want economic and personal independence, but are less capable and less confident to run a business. Some authors indicated that male entrepreneurs did better in all performance indicators than female entrepreneurs and therefore suggested that stakeholders should address the barriers preventing female entrepreneurs from performing.^[39] Their recommendations include a change in the focus of entrepreneurial programs from the normal classroom training towards a real industrial practice setting in order to give women the right orientation. Other studies noted that the fact that there were few differences in level of education and business motivations among the gender, women entrepreneurs were found to have less experience in managing employees or setting up new businesses. Business performance indicators suggested that the limited experience of women working in similar firms and helping to start-up businesses may help to explain the smaller size, slower income growth, and lesser sales per employee of their firm.^[14]

CONCLUSION

Most women entrepreneurs unlike their male counterparts lack appropriate collateral security to obtain financial assistance from commercial banks. More often than not, the impact of economic losses is more severe in women. This explains the reason why they are more aggressive than the male when it comes to financial matters. Furthermore, male pharmacists are more proactive in their dealings in a bid to forestall a negative future occurrence or anticipate a new demand based on market trends. However, in order to make full use of opportunities in community pharmacy practice, pharmacists need to be proactive and aggressive in their dealings irrespective of their gender.

Authors' contributions

The study was carried out by SGJ under the supervision of MOA. The study was designed by MOA and data was collected by SGJ. The literature search and the first draft of the manuscript was written by SGJ and edited by MOA. The statistical analysis and the findings were collated by both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors declare that no external funds have been received for the purpose of this study.

REFERENCES

1. Kuchnur. Women Entrepreneurs: Classification, Problems and Remedies. *International Journal of Research in Computer Science and Management*, 2013; 1(1): 1-3.
2. Gurol Yand Atsan N. Entrepreneurial Characteristics among University Students: Some Insights for Entrepreneurship Education and Training in Turkey. *Education+ Training*, 2006; 48(1): 25-38.
3. Nabi G and Holden R. Graduate Entrepreneurship: Intentions, Education and Training. *Education + Training*, 2008; 50(7): 545-551.
4. El Annan S. Innovation, Proactiveness and Vision are Three Integrated Dimensions between Leadership and Entrepreneurship. *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2013; 1(12): 148-163.
5. Miller D. The Correlates of Entrepreneurship in Three Types of Firms. *Journal of Management Science*, 1983; 29(7): 770-791.
6. Lumpkin G and Dess G. Clarifying the Entrepreneurial Orientation Construct and Linking it to Performance. *Academy of Management Review*, 1996; 21(1): 135-172.
7. Gordon S. Improving the Front End of Innovation with Information Technology. *Research Technology Management*, 2008; 51(3):50-58.
8. Miller D, Friesen P. Innovation in Conservative and Entrepreneurial Firms: Two models of Strategic Momentum. *Strategic Management Journal*, 1982; 3(1): 1-25.
9. Thomas D, Armin F, David H, Uwe S. Individual Risk Attitudes: Measurement, Determinants and Behavioural Consequences. *Journal of European Economic Association*, 2007; 1(3): 115 – 118.
10. Caliendo M, Fossen F, Kritikos A. "Risk Attitudes of Nascent Entrepreneurs: New Evidence from an Experimentally-Validated Survey," *Small Business Economics*, 2009; 32(2): 153-167.

11. Kuratko D and Hodgetts R. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. 6th Edition. South Western College Publication, 2004; 29(5): 577-598.
12. Spender J. Making Knowledge the Basis of a Dynamic Theory of the Firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, 1996; 17(5): 45-62.
13. Tovstiga G and Tulugurova E. Intellectual Capital Practices: A Four Region, Comparative Study. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 2009; 10(1): 73-85.
14. Wiklund J and Shepherd D. Knowledge Based Resources, Entrepreneurial Orientation and Performance of Small and Medium Sized Business. *Strategic Management Journal*, 2003; 24(13): 1307-1314.
15. Zahra S, Covin J. Contextual Influence on the Corporate Entrepreneurship Performance Relationship: A Longitudinal Analysis. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 1995; 10(1): 43-58.
16. Rosli M and Norshafizah H. Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance of Women- Owned Small and Medium Enterprises in Malaysia: Competitive Advantage as a Mediator: *International Journal Of Business And Social Sciences*, 2013; 4(1): 1-9.
17. Idar R and Mahmood R. Entrepreneurial and Market Orientation, Relationships to Performance: The SME Perspective. *Interdisciplinary Review of Economics and Management*, 2011; (2): 1-8.
18. Singh R, Garg S, Deshmuk S. Strategy Development by SMEs for Competitiveness: A Review. *Benchmark: An International Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2008; 15(5): 525 - 547.
19. Dodgson M. Exploring New Combinations in Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Social Networks, Schumpeter, and the Case of Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795). *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 2011; 20(4): 1119-1151.
20. Cogliser C and Brigham K. The Intersection of Leadership and Entrepreneurship: Mutual Lessons to be Learned. *Leadership Quarterly*, 2004; 15(6): 771-799.
21. Meyer M. Academic Entrepreneurs or Entrepreneurial Academics? Research-Based Ventures and Public Support Mechanisms. *R&D Management*, 2003; 33(2):107-115.
22. Zhao F. Exploring The Synergy Between Entrepreneurship and Innovation. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research*, 2005; 11(1): 25-41.
23. Rauch A, Wiklund J, Lumpkin GT, Frese M. Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance: An Assessment of the Past Research and Suggestions for the Future. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 2009; 33(3): 761- 787.

24. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005). Annual Report, 2005-06. Accessed on the 25th February, 2017. [www.Abs.Gov.Au/AUSSTATS/Abs@Nsf/Details Page/1001.02005-06](http://www.Abs.Gov.Au/AUSSTATS/Abs@Nsf/DetailsPage/1001.02005-06) Open Document.
25. Rogers E. Funding of SMEs: Sourcing of Funds and Problems Limiting Access, *ICAN Journal. Nigerian Accountant*, 1995; 35(1): 5 – 15.
26. Currie G, Humphrey M, Ucbasaran D and McManus S. Entrepreneurial Leadership in the English Public Sector: Paradox or Possibility? *Public Administration*, 2008; 86(4): 987-1008.
27. Bond C. Change Revolution In Community Pharmacy. Synopsis Report For The Community Pharmacy Research Consortium. June Pharmacy Practice Research Trust, 2003.
28. Yaro Yammane. *Statistics: An Introductory Analysis*, Hamper New York, 1964; 36-37.
29. Lotz H. An Assessment of Corporate Entrepreneurship in Agricultural Businesses. An Integrated Framework. Potchefstroom: North West University of Potchefstroom (Dissertation-Doctor of Philosophy in Entrepreneurship, 2009).
30. Sulaiman S, Noor U, Hadi S, Tehseen. Impact of Entrepreneur's Demographic Characteristics and Personal Character on Firm's Performance under the Mediating Role of Entrepreneurial Orientation. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics of Research*, 2015; 4(2): 36 - 52.
31. Raposo M, Do Paco A, Ferrira J. Entrepreneurs' Profile: A Taxonomy of Attributes and Motivations of University Students. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, 2008; 15(2): 405 - 418.
32. Grilo I and Thurik A. Entrepreneurial Engagement Levels in the European Union (No, 2905). Paper on Entrepreneurship, Growth and Public Policy, 2005.
33. Van Der Kuip, Verheul. Early Development of Entrepreneurial Qualities. The Role of Initial Education. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 2004; (2): 203 - 226.
34. Reynolds P, Bygrave W, Autio E, Cox L, Hay M. *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Executive Report*, Babson College, London Business School And Kauffman Foundation, 2002.
35. Wilson F, Kickul J, Marlino D. Gender, Entrepreneurial Self Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Career Intentions: Implication for Entrepreneurship Education. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 2007; 31(3): 387– 406.

36. Tkacher and Kolvereid. Self-Employment Intentions among Russian Students Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, 1999; 11(3): 269 - 280.
37. Crant J. The Proactive Personality Scale as A Predictor Of Entrepreneurial Intentions Management, 1996; 29(3): 62-74.
38. Davidsson P. Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intentions. Paper Presented At The RENTX IX Workshop. November, Piacenza, Italy, 1995; 23-24.
39. Phelista W, Bwisa H, Kihoro J. Gender Based Entrepreneurial Mindset and their Influence on Performance of Small and Medium Manufacturing. International Journal of Business and Commerce, 2012; 1(9): 182 - 198.
40. Kalleberg AL, Leicht KT. Gender and Organizational Performance: Determinants of Small Business Survival and Success. Academy of Management Journal, 1991; 34(1): 136-161.