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Human Capital and Women Entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Micro-Business in Ogun State, Nigeria.

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Abstract - Human Capital has been considered as critical and crucial to women entrepreneurial development. It is argued that where womenfolk are generally disadvantaged educationally in developing countries, other variables of human capital are likely to be brought into their businesses. This paper, therefore, attempts to make a sociological survey of the human capital of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye business in Nigeria. To this end, three research instruments were utilized : Questionnaire, Key-Informant Interview, and Observation. The rationale for adopting the three methods was to enrich the quality of data collected. The sample size for this study was two hundred women respondents that were chosen through systematic sampling techniques. The data collected was analyzed with simple percentage and frequency distribution. Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses. The result revealed that most women do not have adequate human capital such as: education and prior training and previous entrepreneurial experiences for the expansion of their micro-business. The hypotheses tested demonstrate that women entrepreneurs do not have adequate access to financial resources and business information for business expansion. The paper recommends that government intervention is necessary for women business expansion in Tye and Dye micro-business.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Human capital theory SUGGESTS that education or training raises the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising the workers' future income and life time earnings. Human capital is the focus of explaining economic growth and, more specifically, it has been linked to entrepreneurial performance. Human capital plays an important role with respect to entrepreneurial know-how as well as access to external resources. Studies have shown that women entrepreneurs are the fastest growing group of business owners in developed countries. The number of women starting and owning businesses has dramatically increased over the last few decades (Marlow et al., 2009). Furthermore, the types of businesses women tend to own are changing

businesses women tend to own are changing. An explanation of why women have emerged as an important entrepreneurial group and why they have moved beyond traditional sectors can be found in a survey of changes in women's human capital—especially their educational attainment and occupational representation (Hackler et al., 2008).

The situation, however, is different in developing countries. Gender studies point out that womenfolk are generally disadvantaged educationally. There are robust data on girl-child discrimination especially in access to attainment of formal education. This discrimination affects the status of women, especially their access to various strategic resources. Therefore, women enterprises in developing countries are still within the domain of traditional sectors. This is more so as long as gender inequality is demonstrated against women in accessing to strategic resources for entrepreneurial development. In developing countries, gender inequalities are persistent, a situation corroborated by Arnfred (2004), cited by Onyenechere (2009) who stated that “women are denied the recognition and representation they seek for their complex identities and gender”. Although disadvantaged by gender, women's access to needed resources are used to institutionalize social inequalities and silence over the rights of women in the informal sector.

Women entrepreneurs in developing countries are, therefore, likely to bring other experiences into the growth of their micro-businesses apart from university degrees and other educational attainments as indicated by the proponents of human capital theory. These experiences and skills may be generic: for example, a person's informal educational attainment, general work experience, preparedness for entrepreneurship, family occupational background, life experiences, socialization, and business orientation. All these may influence the ways in which that person acts as an entrepreneur.

In addition, a person may possess skills that are more specific and experiences that are more pertinent to self-employment than people with degree certificates. These include a specific education in the field in which he or she operates the business. Specific experiences and skills are usually obtained from working in certain occupations such as learning to sell and organizing a specific trade or industry (Hippe, 2004).

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In another dimension, a person may have been culturally exposed to entrepreneurship through another family member or work. These examples highlight the varied nature of human capital apart from education. In reality, other factors are likely to account for the development of business venture among women entrepreneurs in Nigeria. This is in line with the view of Brush (1992) who asserted that studies have shown that women and men come to business ownership from different human capital backgrounds and some of these differences may influence the success of their ventures.

These examples highlight the varied nature of human capital as it relates to self-employment or entrepreneurship development. It is essential to focus on different dimensions of human capital as it affects self-employment and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs. The overall objective of this study is to examine the human capital women in Tie and Dye micro-business in Ogun State, Nigeria.

a) *Research Questions*

More significantly, the following items are the pertinent research questions that this study is seeking empirical answers to:

1. What is the human capital of women entrepreneurs who engage in Tie and Dye Business in Nigeria?
2. What are the motivating factors that are responsible for the choice of Tie and Dye Business by women entrepreneurs?
3. In addition, what are the constraints that account for lack of business growth and expansion among this group of women entrepreneurs?

b) *Objectives of the study.*

The overall objective of this study is to sociologically investigate the human capital of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye micro-business with the view to examining the stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes gained by women entrepreneurs to perform labor to produce economic value, more specifically:

1. To determine the socio-demographic characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye micro-business;
2. To find out the factors that motivate the women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye business; and,
3. To find out the constraints on their trade expansion and development.

This paper is structured into five parts. Apart from the introduction, the second part is the Literature review of human capital theory. Part three is the methodology, part four is the results obtained and part five presents conclusion.

II. LITERATURE

a) *Understanding and Conceptualizing Human Capital*

The theoretical framework most appropriate for adoption of education and development policies has

come to be known as Human Capital Theory. Human capital refers to the stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in a person to perform labor to produce economic value (Wikipedia 2010). It is the attributes gained by a worker through education and experiences (Sullivan et al., 2003). A recurring theme in the entrepreneurship literature is the importance of human capital for entrepreneurial success. Human capital takes many different forms such as: education, experience, preparedness for paid employment and managerial positions. There are different variables of human capital theory which have been delineated in literature.

b) *Education*

Scholars have considered human capital crucial and critical to entrepreneurship development as well as women entrepreneurship development (Glasser, 2000, Glasser, 1998, Lucas, 1998). One of the variables of human capital is education which refers to the formal acquisition of skills and credentials. Becker (1975), however, differentiates between general and specific education whereby the former is associated with the acquisition of skills not specifically related to the business sector and entrepreneurship.

Markusen et al. (2004) stress that human capital is associated with educational attainment such as the number of years spent in school and the degree obtained after schooling. That business is likely to grow in areas where there are a large number of well-educated people. Furthermore, Lynskey (2004) was of the opinion that educational attainment is significantly and positively associated with entrepreneurial performance. Nevertheless, explaining the entrepreneurial success, by using the human capital based on educational attainment is a limiting factor. This is because it leaves out many other relevant sets of experiences and skills which a person needs to become-self employed and operate as a successful entrepreneur.

c) *Experience*

Work experiences gained from working in certain industries, formal organizations and in certain types of occupations may also influence entrepreneurship. Human capital variable is expanded by focusing on experiences a woman has gained in addition to skills and knowledge that go beyond a formal education. Studies have shown that entrepreneurial success is often shaped by the experiences women entrepreneurs have gained during their prior employment.

Hackler et al. (2008) identify three important contributions of prior work experience that are important to the process of entrepreneurship. They include the prior knowledge of markets, insights about ways of serving these markets and knowledge of customer problems. Some of these experiences may endow the

entrepreneur with a general set of skills, while others, such as knowledge of markets and customers can be very specific to the industry of the new venture. Most studies agree that there is a significant relationship between prior work experience in the same industry or line of business and venture success. Aldrich et al. (2006) utilize a range of variables that define prior work experience. These include years of managerial experience, years of other full-time experiences, prior start-up experience, and current self-employment. They argue that these experiences will contribute, more importantly, to the likelihood of entrepreneurial entry. Relevant experiences can also be gained in the same venture as the entrepreneur later operates his or her business.

d) *Entrepreneurial Preparedness*

Entrepreneurial preparedness refers to the personal skills, attitudes and resources gained outside the formal education and work experience. Life experience, as measured by age, comprises another general component of entrepreneurial preparedness. More specifically notions of entrepreneurial preparedness might come from the cultural and family background of the entrepreneur. Having another person in the household who is self-employed might bestow a certain perspective on entrepreneurship that others, without such cultural exposure, might not have.

As the literature review indicates, the connection between entrepreneurship and human capital is not fully represented by education which represents only one fact of an individual's human capital accumulation. Consequently, this study suggests that occupational skills and their enhancement in the workplace, as well as the entrepreneurial preparedness that women gain outside their formal education, are essential to women's entrepreneurship. In the next section, we describe how we have attempted to operationalize several variables described above under the subtitles of education, experience and entrepreneurial preparedness.

III. METHODOLOGY

a) *Research Design*

The study area for this work is a traditional settlement where women, men, and teenage boys engage in tying and dying various materials for use. The Tye and Dye material is known as "ADIRE" in local language. The 'adire' is mainly cotton materials dyed into various attractive and exotic patterns and designs. The material is worn by categories of people in the country. The last civilian president of Nigeria popularized the usage of "Adire" materials to the that 'Adire' materials are designed in various patterns and designs for exportation abroad. 'Adire' materials have the potential to increase the foreign exchange earnings if proper recognition is given to the venture by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

To achieve the objectives pursued in this study, the study employed three methods of data collection. 1- Questionnaire, 2- Key-Informant-Interview (KII); and, 3- Observation. A brief questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions was sent to women entrepreneurs covering questions on all of the objectives of the study. Research assistants were employed to help with the administration, interpretation, and recording of the answers. A three-day observation was carried out to assess, and become familiarized with the arrangement of the study areas. The observation enabled us to get the names of heads of each unit.

The key informant interview was conducted with all the heads of units. We stressed the importance of this work to the key-informants and when we met a potential respondent, we endeavored to brief them on the objectives of the study before the interview was conducted. Questions were asked on the socio-economic background of the respondents, various aspects of their human capital, their motivating factors, and various constraints that serve as hindrance to their business expansion.

The sample size for this study was two-hundred (respondents). There is no standard data for researchers working on informal economy in Nigeria. To get the sample size, the study has to rely on the list of women from heads of each unit. A systematic sampling technique was used to pick the women respondents. Notes were taken during the key-informant interviews. Notes were sorted out and main themes of the study were drawn out. The data from questionnaires were analyzed with the simple percentage and hypotheses were tested with chi-square statistics method of data analyses.

Other sources of data included secondary data collected from periodicals, magazines, textbooks, as well as organizational and technical reports.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a) *Demographic and Socio-economic characteristics of women entrepreneurs*

Out of the total population in the sample (Table1) 40.5% of women are married. 42% were divorced, while 21% were widowed. This implies that the majority of women respondents have responsibilities to cater for the household. In a research carried out by Adegbite et al., (2006), the results proved that married women, divorced, and widowed worked harder and performed better in managing their businesses because of the social, financial, and psychological support than single individuals because of family responsibilities and commitment. Around 66% of women still have responsibility for their children's schooling. This means that women are still burdened with the schooling of their children. The responsibility of parenting will make the women entrepreneurs work harder in order to expand their micro-business.

In this study, 36% of women were between 39 and 48 years of age and 24% of them were between 49 and 58 years of age. The mean age of the women entrepreneurs was forty. This is in line with the research carried out in the United Kingdom, which focuses on "mid-career entrepreneurs" (MCEs) in the United Kingdom. The result showed that MCEs were entrepreneurs who started their own business between the ages of 35 and 55 (Rae, 2005).

b) Human capital variables and women entrepreneurs [Education]

One of the most important variables of human capital is attainment of formal education. Women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye business who had acquired formal education constitute about 63.5%. Those with primary education were 20%, while 36.5% had secondary education. 7.5% had acquired tertiary education. In addition, 36.5% had no formal education. The high percentage of women with formal education could be due to free primary education and the free basic universal education in Nigeria. The acquisition of secondary education in Nigeria does not guarantee employment in formal institutions. Most secondary school leavers work in the informal sector of the economy. The presence of 7.5% who had acquired tertiary education may be because of unemployment in the country or family businesses. In Nigeria, the study carried out by Aderemi et al., (2008) among women in technological and non-technological businesses proved that women, irrespective of their educational background, could establish and manage both technological and non-technological businesses.

c) Prior Training

Prior training is one of most important variables of human capital the result of the study showed that 64% of participants had no prior training in the business, while only 36% of them had prior training in the venture. Non-prior training may affect negatively on the growth of the business. Training in the business is important for understanding the art and integrity of the business. However, lack of training, may serve as a hindrance to the expansion and growth of the business.

d) Previous Entrepreneurial Experience

Forty-eight percent had no previous working experience. Nineteen and half percent believed that their previous entrepreneurial activity was of no advantage, while 32% stated that they had adequate previous entrepreneurial experiences for this trade

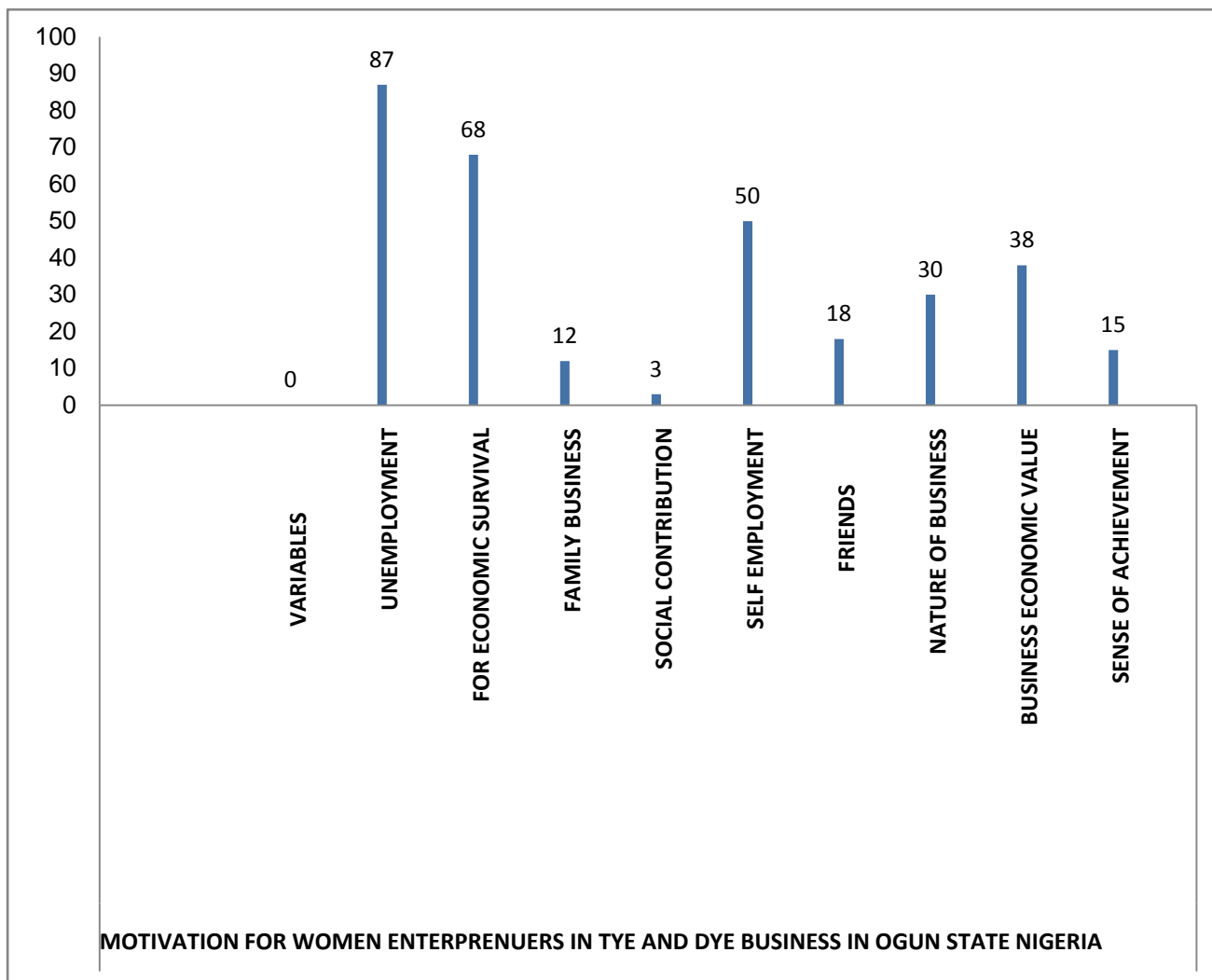


Table 1 : Socio-demographic characteristics of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business.

VARIABLE		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE of FREQUENCY
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	20	10
	MARRIED	81	40.5
	SEPARATED	32	16
	WIDOWED	42	21
	DIVORCED	25	12.5
	TOTAL	200	100
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NO FORMAL EDUCATION	27	13.5
	INFORMAL EDUCATION	45	22.5
	PRIMARY EDUCATION	40	20
	SECONDARY EDUCATION	73	36.5
	TERTIARY EDUCATION	15	7.5
	TOTAL	200	100
AGE OF RESPONDENTS	18-28	23	11.5
	29-38	38	19
	39-48	72	36
	49-58	48	24
	59 AND ABOVE	19	9.5
	TOTAL	200	100
PRIOR TRAINING IN VENTURE	PRIOR TRAINING	72	36
	NO PRIOR TRAINING	128	64
	TOTAL	200	100
PRE-VENTURE ECONOMIC SITUATION	Satisfied	30	15
	AVERAGE	80	40
	NOT SATISFIED	90	45
	TOTAL	200	100
Number OF CHILDREN	1 to 2	48	24
	3 to 4	106	53
	5 ABOVE	46	23
	TOTAL	200	100
PREVIOUS ENTREPRENURAL EXPERIENCE	NO EXPERIENCE	97	48
	AVERAGE	39	19.5
	ADEQUATE EXPERIENCE	64	32
	TOTAL	200	100
AGE OF CHILDREN	1 to 9	92	46
	10 to 20	64	32
	20 ABOVE	46	23
	TOTAL	200	100
CHILDREN'S OCCUPATION	SCHOOLING	133	66.5
	NOT EMPLOYED	40	20
	EMPLOYED	27	13.5
	TOTAL	200	100

Source : field work 2010.

Figure 1 : Motivation for Women Entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business.



Source : fieldwork 2010.

e) *Motivation for Women Entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business.*

In general, a person will never start a business without motivation (McClelland, 1961). Entrepreneurship emerges from an individual's creative spirit in a long-time business ownership (Weber, 1904). Motivation is an important factor in the decision-making to start a business. There are various and possible motivational factors that could influence entrepreneurial behaviours. These could be individual, social, and environmental factors.

Figure one shows that the source of business motivation majority (87%) of women in Tye and Dye Business is unemployment. Sixty-eight (68%) percent were motivated for economic survival while 50% were motivated by self-employment interest. This is similar to the result from cross-cultural studies that women from Eastern and Central European countries go into business ownership as a means of escaping from unemployment (Gundry et al. 2001).Thirty eight (38%) percent were motivated by the need for business economic value, while only 15% were motivated by sense of achievement.

Table 2 : Constraints of Women Entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business in Ogun State Nigeria.

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
LOW BUSINESS CAPITAL		
Yes	102	51
No	98	49
TOTAL	200	100
INADEQUATE CREDIT FACILITIES		
Yes	156	78
No	44	22

Total	200	100
OVER-COMPETITIVENESS OF THE MARKET PRODUCT		
Yes	125	62.5
No	75	37.5
Total	200	100
POOR INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES		
Yes	97	48.5
No	103	51.5
Total	200	100
LACK OF INFORMATION TO EXPLOIT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES		
Yes	118	59
No	82	41
Total	200	100
BURDEN OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES		
Yes	135	67.5
No	65	32.5
Total	200	100
ATTITUDES OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS		
Yes	57	28.5
No	143	71.5
Total	200	100

Source : fieldwork 2009.

The majority (78%) of women entrepreneurs did not receive financial support from the community or any other financial institutions. This was contrary to request made by most of the respondents for financial assistance from government agencies to enable them to expand their businesses, streamline their operations and participate in the global economy.

A key informant in an interview stated:

"Those banks and other financial institutions do not grant us loans whenever we applied for loans. We do not have any collateral as guarantee for loans. We normally depend on daily savings which we collect at the end of the month to buy new materials for our businesses."

The result supports a research published by the National Foundation for Women Business Owners (NFWBO), which showed that 22% of women entrepreneurs in their study reported that maintaining the growth and competitiveness of their firms without easy access to external finance was a significant challenge. This suggests that access to finance represents one of the challenges to entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, 59% lacked adequate information on how to exploit business opportunities, while 41% were aware of the information but lacked knowledge about the process of exporting the materials.

One of the key-informant opined that:

"We are aware that we can export our 'Adire' materials abroad. However, we do not know the process of doing this. In fact, people come from different parts of the country to buy and export them abroad."

As regards the capital for business expansion, 51% of the respondents stated that the capital they worked with was very low. This finding further buttresses the research report by the Common Wealth (2002)

indicating that the capital, the women entrepreneurs work with in developing countries, was not adequate to raise their venture above a subsistence level. The working capital of women entrepreneurs was called "Dead Capital". This is the situations of women in developing countries as they lack access to entrepreneurial strategic resources.

f) Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

H₀: The majority of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business are not affected by inadequate access to capital resources for expansion.

H₁: The majority of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business are affected by inadequate access to capital resources for expansion In confirming term hypothesis, an analysis of two major responses (i.e. Yes, No) was used as it related to the number of respondents for the study = (200 respondents).

Binomial Test of hypothesis

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (1-tailed)
VAR00001	Group 1	2.00	156	.78	.05	.000
	Group 2	1.00	44	.22		
	Total		200	1.00		

Based on Z Approximation.

Using the binomial test at 5% significant level, the test statistic is very significant at 0.000 thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that the majority of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye Business are affected by inadequate access to capital resources for expansion.

Hypothesis 2

H_0 : Prior training is negatively correlated with business success.

H_1 : Prior training is positively correlated with business success.

VAR	00001
Chi-Square	10.894
df	1
Asymp. S	.001

The above revealed that the chi square calculated stand at 10.894 while the critical value is 5.991 at 5% significant level and also the at 5% significant level the chi-square is very significant hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted

Hypothesis 3

H_0 : Lack of information to exploit business opportunities does not hinder business expansion and growth.

H_1 : Lack of information to exploit business opportunities hinders business expansion and growth.

Binomial test :

		C		Observed Prop.	Test Prop	Asymp. Sig. (1-tailed)
VAR 00002	Group 1	2.00	117	.59	.05	.000
	Group 2	1.00	83	.42		
	Total		200	1.00		

a. Based on Z Approximation

At the 5% significant level the test statistic is very significant. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) which states that lack of information to exploit business opportunities hinders business expansion and growth.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The research assessed the human capital of women in Tye and Dye business in Ogun State Nigeria. Firstly, the research shed light on the socio-economic characteristics of those women who were engaged in this type of business. The mean age of the women is 40. The results also proved that the majority of women entrepreneurs were married and have responsibilities of taking care of their families. Concerning human capital of women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye micro-business, many of the women had secondary education. This result was found to be similar to that obtained by Aderemi et al. (2008) in assessing the choice and performance of women entrepreneurs in technological and non-technological enterprises in southwestern Nigeria. However, 64% of the women do not have prior training in this venture. This view was buttressed by Marlow et al., (2009) that women entrepreneurs chose their trade by accident instead of acquiring adequate

training for the venture. Another important variable of human capital is previous entrepreneurial experience. This study reveals that most women in Tye and Dye micro-business do not have previous entrepreneurial experience (48%). Only 32% believed that they had adequate previous entrepreneurial experience for the trade.

The overall results of this study illustrate that women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye micro- business do not possess adequate human capital that would enable them to expand and grow their businesses that would significantly make a difference in their lives.

Secondly, the study showed that unemployment, economic survival and self-employment were the major factors that motivated women to engage in this trade. This result was found to be similar to that obtained from the cross-cultural studies of women in Eastern and Central European countries showing that women go into business as a means of escaping from unemployment (Gundry et al. 2001).

Lastly, the constraints on women entrepreneurs were revealed. The major obstacles to their business growth were inadequate access to credit facilities and lack of information to exploit business opportunities. This group of women entrepreneurs operates their businesses only at the local level. They are not opportunists or well informed to advertise their businesses the world over as they lack access to modern information technology.

The hypotheses so tested showed that the main barriers to business expansion include: lack of prior training in the business, lack of access to credit facilities and lack of adequate information to exploit greater business opportunities.

The research indicates that there is need for government intervention for women entrepreneurs to access financial resources for the expansion of their businesses. The government in association with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) should provide and facilitate access to credit for women entrepreneurs. Lack of access to credit facilities is a major barrier to their business expansion and growth. Such credit assistance can be channelled through women associations. However, no collateral should be required as the women associations would guarantee the loans and monitor both repayments and use of credit. This method had been used and still in use by the Canadian Women Associations to remove the obstacle of lack of access to credit facilities. (Canadian Business Opportunity (2004).

Additionally, there is need to provide adequate information to women entrepreneurs in Tye and Dye business through modern technology. This method has the potential to expose the women and their products to the global world. For dynamism and competitiveness of the product, even at the global level, adequate training is essential and highly recommended. Accordingly,

particular assistance is needed from Non Governmental Organizations in the form of on-the-job training to familiarize the women entrepreneurs with new methods, machines, equipment, processes and management training. Policies and programmes should be directed at developing the Human Capital (HC) of women entrepreneurs; that is why Human Capital has been established as having the capability to enhance the expansion and growth of their trade in the present study.

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