

## Effect of Social-Cultural Values on the Growth of Indigenous Entrepreneurship in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the socio-cultural factors that influence the growth of Indigenous entrepreneurial activities in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The research was conducted on a sample of 400 potential entrepreneurs, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Respondents were asked questions to assess their perception of the main factors influencing the growth of entrepreneurial activities. Using an analytical descriptive statistical methodology, the data were processed. Table, Percentages, frequencies and chi squares tests were used to analyze the data. The study revealed that many businesses that were operating in the state in the past have either collapsed or operating at meagre levels and many of those entrepreneurs with businesses of their own, are nonindigenants. The result shows that the major factors that affect entrepreneurial growth in Nasarawa State are nepotism, profligacy and discouragement. Given the largest proportion of nonindigenous entrepreneurs operating in the state business sector, the paper made some recommendations that can improve indigenous entrepreneurship in the state.

*Keywords:* Cultural, Entrepreneurship, Growth, Nasarawa, Nigeria, State, Values

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## 1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been identified as one of the key factors required to accelerate the growth and development of the economy in developing countries. Entrepreneurs carry out the process of entrepreneurship which is innovation and/or opportunity identification to create new and unique values in the form of products (goods or services) that can satisfy human needs and thus can command profit in exchange. The “entrepreneurial spirit” is something that has long been associated with the driving force behind economic progress and growth. In Nigeria, the growth process has been very slow despite abandoned resources, (both human and natural). With natural resources for entrepreneurship opportunities, the realization of the potential of these opportunities has not been fully realized due to inappropriate policies at different times and Nasarawa state inclusive, especially among the indigenous population.

This paper is to explore the socio-cultural factors that influence the growth of Indigenous entrepreneurial activities in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Indigenous people are everywhere all over the World maybe exhibiting the same characteristics. The World Bank, (2022) as reported in Ensign (2023), reports that Indigenous people inhabit over 40% of the world’s countries and in total speak more than 4,000 languages, and account for almost 20% of the world’s financially poorest people. Many have undergone profound hardship and destruction during centuries of colonialism. International bodies, agencies, and academics supply definitions for indigenous people but the people themselves argue against the adoption of a formal definition, (Ensign, (2023). They stress the need for flexibility as well as respect and the right for people to categorize themselves. Reflecting on this, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations has stated: “Indigenous peoples have suffered from definitions imposed on them by others, UN, (2013, p.6). So then how do we assess an indigenous entrepreneur and their entrepreneurship? An entrepreneur is someone who has an idea and works to create a product or service that others will buy, (Ensign, (2023). Entrepreneurship refers to the ongoing business activity of an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship has been identified as a means for self-empowerment, poverty reduction, survival, and economic development (Peredo et al., 2004; Hindle and Lansdowne, 2005; Croce, 2017). It is a mechanism for indigenous people to exercise some degree of control over their economic fate. For many, entrepreneurship is the primary means of gaining income and financial freedom (Dana, 1995). An entrepreneur sees an opportunity and seizes it, taking a chance by investing personal time, energy, and resources. If all goes well the entrepreneur experiences (financial) gain. As Henry et al. (2017, p.788) indicate, indigenous entrepreneurship has an ‘emancipatory potential’. As it is often a team involved in a venture, more than one person benefits from the accomplishments. As Anderson and Gaddefors (2016) indicate, indigenous entrepreneurs often give credit for success to others in their community even if they are not directly involved in the venture. The benefits of entrepreneurship can also be self-esteem and pride in one’s accomplishments (Shahidullah and Islam, 2018).

Collins, et al,2017, report that one of the most significant developments in an economy has been the increasing role of Indigenous entrepreneurs and their enterprises. In Nasarawa state, the growth of entrepreneurship has slowed down, especially the indigenous entrepreneurs. The number of Indigenous employers in remote areas of Nasarawa state is almost absent as farming is the major enterprise undertaken by the indigenes. The gap

between Indigenous and non-Indigenous entrepreneurs in the state is increasing with the rate of Indigenous entrepreneurship much lower than that of non-Indigenous populations.

This relatively low rate of Indigenous entrepreneurship is not exclusively a Nasarawa state phenomenon but is replicated in countries with Indigenous populations around the world (Dana and Anderson, Eds., 2007). Since most entrepreneurs, including Indigenous entrepreneurs, operate small to medium enterprises (SMEs) this under-representation of Indigenous peoples in the global Small to Medium Enterprise sector requires some explanation. A combination of factors can be used to explain this under-representation. Most Indigenous peoples experience socio-economic disadvantage relative to the non-Indigenous population, Ensign (2023). Low income, poor health, lower levels of education, high rates of criminality and unemployment, and inadequate housing constitute a formidable socio-economic barrier to Indigenous entrepreneurship (Langton, 2013). As in the case of Nasarawa state, little progress has been made in reducing this Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage. Indigenous enterprises play a crucial role in reducing Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage through contributions to improving the standard of living of indigenous entrepreneurs' families and contributing to the economic development of their communities. Indigenous enterprises generate Indigenous employment. Hunter (2014, p. 16) shows that Queensland created 300 percent more Indigenous employment than other Australian enterprises between 1991 and 2011. At the same time, global Indigenous culture is often characterized by an emphasis on commonality which is the benefit of the many, rather than individuality and the primacy of wealth acquisition of the individual which is the central characteristic of "rational economic man" in neoclassical free market economics (Quiggan, 2010). In this sense, Indigenous culture could be characterized as anti-entrepreneurial. However, as this paper argues, such a characterization is a crude stereotype that offers little to an understanding of the contemporary relationship between Indigenous culture and entrepreneurship in Nasarawa state. It does not sit well with the data on the growth in nonindigenous entrepreneurship in the state Small to Medium Enterprises and the growing strength of the Indigenous community enterprises like co-operatives.

Several policy interventions that aimed at stimulating entrepreneurship development through small to medium-scale enterprise promotion, based on technology transfer strategy, have failed to achieve the desired goals as it led to most indigenous entrepreneurs becoming distribution agents of imported products as opposed to building in-country entrepreneurial capacity for manufacturing, mechanized agriculture, and expert services. The absence of this class leaves a people undeveloped and Nasarawa State's underdevelopment can highly be attributed to this. Indigenous entrepreneurial class is too low in the state and it is blamed on their heritage and ancestry.

Nasarawa state in Nigeria is made up of many indigenous tribes with Eggon and Alago as the dominant ones. Other tribes found in the state include the Mada, Rindre, Buh, Ninzon, Koro, Agatu, Igbira, Jukun, Gbagi, Gaede, among others. About 89% of the State population is directly involved in subsistence agriculture using simple traditional methods and implements (Author, 2018). Indigenous entrepreneurship classes appear to be absent in the state. Industrialists and entrepreneurs of state and national status are non-existent. Those that dominate the modern business sector are mostly Hausas, Ibo, Yoruba, or non-indigenes and hence all profits are repatriated to other places or states in Nigeria. The salient fact about the

absence of the indigenous entrepreneur class in Nasarawa state appears to be hidden in the way of life of the people which includes how they think and do things. So, the question is, why is it that the indigenous people of the state are not involved in entrepreneurship and even when they do, cannot sustain it like other people or tribes? What should motivate the indigenous people of the state towards owning businesses and self-employment? These questions generate the need to find out the level of entrepreneurial outreach and the factors that motivate the people of the state to become or practice the art of owning a venture in the state.

The main objective of this paper is to assess the current level of entrepreneurial activities among the dominant tribes in Nasarawa state and their management practices. We would specifically determine the level of entrepreneurs among the indigenous tribes and also determine the extent of business ownership and find out the level of awareness of entrepreneurial skills by the indigenous tribes. This paper addresses these concerns by focusing on Eggon, and Alago as proxy to capture the indigenous people of the state and the Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba people as non-indigenes.

The rest of the paper is organized into four sections, with section two containing a literature review and three discussing the materials and method. Section four presents the results and discusses our findings while five concludes with recommendations for policy action.

## 2 Literature Review

For many years the concept and study of indigenous entrepreneurship was absent from the scholarly literature (Hindle et al., (2007, p.1). Recently, there has been a surge in the number of empirical studies of Indigenous entrepreneurs and their Aboriginal businesses (Dana et al., 2007; Foley, 2008; Mason et al., 2009; Gallagher & Lawrence, 2012; Meis Mason et al., 2012; Khan, 2014; Shahidullah & Islam, 2018; Ensign, 2021& 2023). As the field develops, researchers suggest using conceptual approaches for understanding indigenous entrepreneurship (Peredo et al., 2004; Croce, 2017; Tengeh et al., 2022). Peredo et al. (2004, p.17) pose an important question in *Towards a Theory of Indigenous Entrepreneurship* when they asked, “Does indigenous entrepreneurship in different locations (within nations and around the world) show significantly similar and distinctive patterns of entrepreneurial features, and/or goal structures?”

Padilla-Meléndez et al. (2022) note the continued heterogeneity and fragmentation in the field of indigenous entrepreneurship. They draw attention to the need for greater specificity with regard to context, geographic area, socio-cultural issues, and economic structure when studying indigenous entrepreneurship at the micro level. Ensign, (2023), notes that there is a need to advance theory building based on empirical results with integration of existing knowledge and praxis. An entrepreneurial ecosystem is a lens to describe details in a spatial context with a significant impact on entrepreneurs and their businesses (Isenberg, 2011; Mason and Brown, 2014; Stam and Van de Ven, 2021). The concept of an indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystem that separates and is distinct from mainstream and immigrant entrepreneurial ecosystems was introduced by Dell et al. (2017) and expanded by Roundy et al. (2018). Mika et al. (2022, p.4) define an indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystem as a self-organized, adaptive, and geographically and culturally bounded community that influences its

indigenous people producing interactions resulting in indigenous enterprises forming and dissolving over time.” Mika et al. (2022, p.13) argue that the evolution from a rudimentary to a mature indigenous entrepreneurial ecosystem is driven by a community’s socio-cultural context and the economic-political structure where the indigenous entrepreneur is embedded. This recognizes structural influences such as cultural value, government and legal; monetary and financial, and market and commerce including non-indigenous influences.

Culture, which is the major variable in this paper defines the unique customs, values, and worldview of a group of indigenous people living in a specific geographic location. It includes critical attributes that influence indigenous entrepreneurship like ethnic identity; language; beliefs; social norms; attitudes toward natural resources; and world view (Tasnim et al., 2018). It is a learned way of life passed from generation to generation. In remote areas, culture tends to be more traditional and static, in urban areas more modern and dynamic. Culture provides or refuses legitimation that supports or holds back an indigenous entrepreneur.

Atavism is directly linked to culture which has to do with the total way of life of the people. The theory of atavism which is used here embodies the doctrine that man has by gradual progression, come up to his present civilized state of the body, the mind, the thinking faculty, and environment from brute conditions, and tends to degenerate back to the original state. It postulates that a character may lie dormant for several generations and then reappear; thus, a grandchild may resemble its grandparents more than either of its immediate parents (Kyarem, 2007). Relating to inherited traits that reappear in an individual after being absent from a strain of organism for several generations, atavistic traits were formerly thought to be throwbacks to ancestral types but are now known to be due to the inheritance of a pair of recessive genes.

Studies have shown that atavism is as old as man himself and its appreciation as diversified as nature. In the Bible, according to Jewish history, God strongly submitted to atavism when He said “I the Lord thy God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children on to the third and fourth generations on those that hate me” (Exodus 20: 5). Here God infers that sin, evil, crime or socially demeaning behavior or culture will not die with the parent but shall pass over to the children and considering that every adult is a likely parent, the transfer of punishment to the third and fourth generation implies endlessness of socio-cultural trait to the people. If a character is suppressed in a second generation it resurfaces in the third or fourth generation hence a strong credence to atavism.

Atavism is employed by psychologists to express traits in individuals, for example, a child by its untruthfulness simply gives expression to a state reminiscence of past conditions of the human race or its progenitors. It is used by social criminologists to explain moral aberrations that are looked upon as having been at one time normal to a race.

Scholars believe the theory of atavism was developed by the criminologist Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909) who offered an abiological explanation for criminal deviance; that criminal deviance is inherited and this inheritance is visible in the shape of the human skull. Through biological determinism, Lombroso attempted to show that physical traits would be

determinants of criminal behavior. Lombroso postulated that an active but small number of individuals in any population display extremely primitive instincts and that they would have difficulty functioning in a civilized culture. They were, in effect, evolutionary throwbacks, or atavistic anomalies. He viewed the killer instinct of a modern serial murderer as an atavistic trend, the reversion to evolutionarily primitive traits identified with the early man who would have been a successful hunter and prevailed in his environment.

Since the development of Lombroso's (1835-1909)'socio-biological atavism, many variants of this theory have emerged. Hayek (1979) on political atavism, Meares (1960) coined the term atavistic regression which was used to denote the tendency to revert to ancestral type in mental encapsulation during hypnosis and Kyarem (2007) termed non-entrepreneurial recoiling tendencies of the Tiv and Idoma tribes of Benue state in Nigeria as economic atavism. Economic atavism of the entrepreneurship variant manifests when a people "...shrink back and recoil from modern entrepreneurship to the ever ready and presently ever declining land for peasantry".

By similar reasoning, the economic atavism of the people of Nasarawa state are historically and inherently farmers and not entrepreneurs. With the advent of modernity, attempts have been made by individuals and groups of these people to break this socio-cultural jinx but with minimum success. The entrepreneurship class that rises up in the state always finds excuses to revert to a farming lifestyle. At the least excuse, the slightest unfavorable condition and minutest unimaginable obstacle, they shrink back and recoil from modern entrepreneurship to the ever-ready and presently ever-declining land for the peasantry. The same obstacles that other tribes like the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria went through and come out as vibrant entrepreneurs atavistically, defeats the entrepreneurs in Nasarawa State.

Economically recoiling tendencies and sudden or gradual withdrawal from entrepreneurship have become a recurring thing of the class of business people in the state. This can best be described as Economic Atavism: The people of Nasarawa State's economic atavism manifest in the dearth of entrepreneurship among the indigenous population.

Interference of alien cultures gradually and persistently revolutionized a local culture but the tendency to return to the "original" attitude is always rife, hence the socio-cultural attitudes of a people permeate time and generations. Members of a society undergo socialization whereby they internalize those values and modes.

The two active concepts crucial for proper understanding of this paper are socio-culture and entrepreneurship. Socio-culture refers to the sum total of a people's way of life. It covers all their spiritual beliefs and social values that form the basis of their actions and reactions as discussed above. It denotes the unwritten beliefs, values, and outlooks that knit the society together or put them asunder while Entrepreneurship is the art and act of organizing land, labor, and capital for value creation to make a profit as discussed above.

Of all the factors of production, entrepreneurship is the most important. In themselves land is dormant, capital is inactive, and even labor is indecisive and waits for an entrepreneur



to create business opportunities for her to pleadingly realize her potential. Therefore, when entrepreneurship class is absent in a place, development is adversely affected; studies from different social scientists spanning several generations have revealed that entrepreneurship and social culture are positively related.

Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* opined that for any nation to be wealthy people must change their socio-culture and imbibe the culture of hard work, low consumption, high saving, and practical investment. In other words, until a nation changes from communalism, extravagance, and profligacy to entrepreneurship virtues of profits, saving, and investment, development will be a mirage, and poverty as opposed to wealth prevalent.

In research on the dramatic growth of the Asian economies, Gunther (1991) revealed that Confucian theology forms the culture upon which the Asian economy springs up. The Confucius tenets of selflessness (self-discipline and self-deprivation), purity (moral purity and mental purity), respect (self-respect, respect for others and respect for truth), and hard work (for yourself or for others) place the society above individual interest and hence vices like cheating and stealing gave way to a healthy economic environment that turned the hitherto latent economies of the Asian nations to enviably vibrant ones.

### 3 Methods and Materials

A multistage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. Since there is no official register of individuals operating in these local government areas, it was not possible to have a listing of them. Respondents were therefore randomly selected from the population in the selected areas using a random start. Systematic random sampling was then used to pick respondents.

The appropriate sample size is determined by the following statistical equation:

$$N = \frac{PQ(Z)^2}{D}$$

Where N= sample size, P= rate of prevalence of the phenomenon in society, and when the prevalence of the phenomenon is not clear it is assumed to be = 0.5, Q= complimentary rate of the prevalence of the phenomenon = 0.5 Z= standard value at 95% confidence level, usually = 1.96, D= random error = 0.0025. Using the equation, sample size = 384, but due to possible unreturned samples, 400 samples were used. 400 entrepreneurs from Nasarawa state constituted the respondents to the questionnaire set by the researchers.

The study was conducted in Nasarawa State of Nigeria. Its area of jurisdiction is made up of 13 local government areas. The target population is the semi-adult and adult people who live in the local government headquarters and are engaged in active economic activities. The other places especially, Villages, the people are mostly farmers.

We have chosen the local government headquarters because most of the entrepreneurs are found there. Sampling design: the 13 local government areas have three senatorial districts namely Northern, Western, and Southern Senatorial districts. One local government area was selected in each of the senatorial districts as the base and was followed by randomly sampling three local Government areas within these senatorial districts. A survey was conducted to identify people who are in one form of business or the other in these areas. Four hundred

questionnaires were administered to them and three hundred and sixty-four responses were received. The sampled people exhibited the characteristics of having a business or not.

#### **4 Sources of Data**

Secondary data was sought from the literature and governmental sources, while the primary source of information is the questionnaire with selected male and female people, both entrepreneurs and those who were not.

The study which is a survey and descriptive in nature has as the first step of ex-ante identification of Alago and Eggon tribes in the areas and Ibo, Yoruba, and the Hausa people as non-indigene that reside in the state. Alago and Eggon people were used to represent the indigenous people of the state because of their population and level of modernization. The choice of these tribes was due to their large population and that they are found in almost all the local government areas of the state. This is a good fit to represent the whole indigenous people of the state.

The data was analyzed descriptively using frequencies and the association between the characteristics of the respondents who practice as entrepreneurs with a chi-square test employed to ascertain the reliability of the responses. The study employed the use of multiple response nominal data to address responses that are in between binary responses.

#### **5 Presentation and Statistical Analysis of Results**

All collected questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis. Here, we present the distribution and return of the questionnaire administered to the sample of people in Nasarawa State, the study area. We distributed a total of 400 questionnaires to Northern, Western, and Southern Senatorial Region people in the state but only 364 or 91 percent were returned. The people were selected randomly. The sampled people exhibited the characteristics of having a business or not as the basis for entrepreneurship.

As shown in Table One in the appendix below, a total of 400 questionnaires were administered to randomly selected people across the three senatorial districts in the state. The random sample technique was adopted to administer 132, 132, and 136 questionnaires in the three senatorial regions of the state (Northern, Western, and Southern senatorial regions) respectively. Of the 400 questionnaires, 364, or 91 percent were returned. This is made up of 119, 119, and 126 from Northern, Western and Southern senatorial regions respectively.

The analysis of the people in different businesses in the state begins with a description of some of the social (gender, education, ethnic nationality), demographic (age), and economic (occupation: petty traders, Civil Servants, Artisans, Private Sectors Workers, Farming) characteristics of the people covered in the study, substantiating the differences between business owners and non-business owners with regard to the key variables.

Table Two in the appendix presents the number of people who have businesses and those who have no businesses in Nasarawa state, the study area.

The returned questionnaires reveal that during the survey period, 86 percent of the sampled businesses had businesses while 14 percent of the sampled had no businesses other than farming. In other words, 14 percent were not in any form of secondary occupation.



From the table, 78 % were male and 22 % were female. The business ownership status of the people reflects this gender disparity. While 76 percent of the people with businesses are males, only 24 percent are females. The table summarizes the primary household variables used in this research for the whole sample according to the status of respondents' economic activities. The people who have businesses is strongly associated with Gender, Education, Age, ethnic nationality, and Geographic location.

Out of the 364 sampled people, 313 have businesses. In terms of gender, the sample comprises 284 (78%) male and 80 (22%) female. Approximately 76% of the sampled males have businesses and 24% of the sampled females are engaged in the same thing. However, those in the business group mainly consist of males (see Table Two).

The age of the respondents ranges from 24 to 75 years old and the overall mean age for the sample is around 41 years old. When grouped into different age categories, a substantial proportion (74%) of those with business fall into the 46-65 years old category while the majority (72%) of those with no businesses belong to the same age category. The average age of those with businesses and with no businesses is very similar.

The survey respondents are divided into three groups with respect to educational attainment, including those without education, those with secondary school education or less, and those with post-secondary education. It can be seen from Table Two that the vast majority of the respondents have obtained some education and only 5% of the respondents reported having no education. The proportion of those without education for those with businesses is 95%, much higher than that for those with no business 20%. Approximately 60% of those with businesses and 53% of those with no businesses have acquired secondary education or less. However, the proportion of those with no businesses with post-secondary education is lower than that of those with businesses 27% versus 35%. It is an indication that among the sample of the business class included in the study, those without any formal education cannot be said to have been marginalized on account of their educational attainment, as far as having businesses is concerned.

Another important characteristic of the people is their engagement in economic activities other than farming. Some are petty traders, artisans, civil servants, or workers in the private sector. The highest proportions 38 percent are farmers, followed by 22% artisans, 19% civil servants, and 11% private-sector workers. The data reveal that farming is the dominant occupational group, which also comprises the highest proportion of those who own businesses 38%, and nonborrowers 48%. Among those that have businesses, artisans are followed by civil servants' 24%, petty traders, and private workers 10%. The same pattern occurs among the non-business owners, with slight changes in the proportions of civil servants' 28%, artisans 10%, and private-sector workers 15%. Within each occupational group, the proportion of those with businesses is much higher than those with no businesses, and there seems not to be much variation across the groups. The highest proportion 62% of those with businesses is within the group of artisans and farming, while the lowest is in the group of petty traders and civil servants 38%. This shows that even though farming is the dominant secondary occupation, the practitioners may not be from the Nasarawa State ethnic nationality.

Our survey results reveal that only a small proportion 26% of the respondents are the Nasarawa State ethnic nationality. The results also show that about 25% are Hausa while 22% each are Ibo and Yoruba. In sum, 69% are not Nasarawa State ethnic nationality while only 26% are with only 5% not accounted for. In all, of those people with businesses, only 20% are Nasarawa State ethnic nationality while 75% are not. Of those without businesses, 60% are from Nasarawa State while only 10% are not from the state. This result suggests that business ownership in the state is skewed toward people who are not of the ethnic nationality of the state.

Table Three in the appendix presents the factors that influence entrepreneur growth in Nasarawa State. The returned questionnaires reveal that nepotism (20%), profligacy (20%), and discouragement (25%) are the major factors that account for the near absence of entrepreneurs in the state. From the table, 5% each of capital, skills, experience, lifestyle, risk-tolerance, and fear of failure respectively and capital 10% are the minor factors that affect entrepreneurship growth in the state. The business ownership status of the people reflects this disparity. While 65% of the people with businesses are affected by the same nepotism, profligacy, and discouragement, only 35% are accounted for by six other factors.

## **6 Discussion on Entrepreneurship in Nasarawa State**

Nasarawa State was created in 1996 out of Plateau State. The desire of the people for a state of their own state has been to control their affairs, especially the economic activities of the State. This has hardly been met.

Nasarawa state is one of the least urbanized states in Nigeria with a large agricultural population of about 90% and a rural population of over 75%. The projected population is over 3.8 million, (NBS, 2014). The history of Nasarawa indigenous entrepreneurship is largely that of a few personalities spanning four decades from 1976 to date. Commercial centers are lacking with only remote local government headquarters serving this purpose. By declaration, about 52 settlements are treated as towns but in reality, only 23 have developed to a status of anything more than big villages. Lafia, Keffi, Akwanga, Nassarawa, Doma, and Karu clearly stand out as the biggest towns in the state (NBS, 2014). The employment structure of the state depicts entrepreneurship poverty. 75% of the people are peasant farmers, 10% are traders, 6% are civil servants, and 9% other occupations (NBS, 2014). With only 10% involved in modern business practices mostly petty trading and handicrafts, entrepreneurship is hardly noticeable.

At the creation of the State in 1996, the egocentric feelings of “my own state” gave rise to the emergence of an entrepreneurship class but the gain of that class was cosmetic and the class soon vanished and the people returned to their agrarian nature and peasantry. By 1979 when the state was under Plateau State, there were transport entrepreneurs, retail and commodity traders, and entrepreneurs in the medical lines, in sports, and in civil security. However, by the late 1990s, the economic militarization and mismanagement by the various military governments in Nigeria atavistically crushed life out of almost all of them.

Though stimulated by ego, the Nasarawa entrepreneurship class was motivated by a vision and a philosophy of business. Denen Tofi and Ajav Ugah whose operations included

Lafia have as their philosophy inscribed on all their vehicles; Do well, God will help you, and Human beings have no rest as self-encouragement. In the state, Bala Angbazu's philosophy was more days, more hope, Mai Dunama's was Greatest glory while Alhaji Abdullahi Idde's own was Trust in God (Focused Interview, 2018). These were in various fields. While Alhaji Al-Makura was into building construction, Bala Angbazu ventured into the provision of modern education. While Bitrus Saleh had a vested interest in civil defense and security, he also had a Farm at Abu in Fadan Ninzon district in Sanga local government area of Kaduna state which is no more. The cartel had a hand in sports with some football clubs of some kind which were expected to have grown by now. They also operated hospitals at Lafia, Akwanga, and Keffi. His Excellency Baba Alhaji Halilu Bala Usman after a successful career in the civil service that saw him becoming a Deputy Governor in the old Plateau State venturing into farming and general commodity sales while Alhaji Waju Wamba and Mr. Danladi Kpati (Alias Dankpa Enterprises limited) who were into transportation were also deeply rooted in farming and crop retailing with trade activities scattered all over Wamba, Akwanga and Nasarawa lands.

Like all entrepreneurs, these people all had a vision of adding value to people's lives. One thing common to all of them however is that they all collapsed by the 1990s and the couple that survive are only a shadow of their old selves. His Excellency, Alhaji Aliyu Akwe Doma after being Deputy Governor in the old Plateau State and later Governor of Nasarawa state collapsed to farming with a large Farms (Cow/poultry) at Doma. His Royal Highness, Mr. Bala Angbanzu's Abaine Book shop and Abaine Memorial College (Secondary schools) Akwanga as well as Hotels at Keffi and Akwanga are memoriam testimonies of the good old days. It is significant to note that Abaine Civil and Construction Company is still there is not situated in Nasarawa State but Jos, Plateau State. The roll call of entrepreneurship fiasco in the state is quite disheartening. In fact, of the about a hundred leading entrepreneurs in Nigeria presently, none is a Nasarawa State indigene.

Gunduma farm at Gunduma in Keffi local government area with special genetically cultured animals is long extinct. Mico farm's towering cereal pyramids in Akwanga are all gone, which is but a shadow of its old self. Na'Allah Farms businesses are all gone and so are all the other entrepreneurs' efforts. Today, there is little or no sign of the effort of the Mai Dunama enterprises, Lubuna's Naira and Kobo, Alhaji Waju Wamba, Alhaji Dogara Yusuf Wamba, Wema Farms, Onda Farms, Timothy Anjide, I K Kwarra, Danladi Kpati (Dankpa Enterprises Limited) and few others that are not mention here. Most of them are long forgotten stories.

The fact stands tall that Nasarawa people are peasant farmers and at best career public service workers. Business and entrepreneurship are not in their make-up. The very tough qualities that make successful entrepreneurs among other tribes and cultures unmake the Nasarawa entrepreneur. There is always a genetic pullback in crisis times to the farm which is linked to Atavism. Of course, there are sporadic initiatives towards entrepreneurship scattered throughout Nasarawa state but these do not reflect the general reality of the societal focus.

## 7 Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper which assesses the current level of entrepreneurial activities among the dominant tribes in Nasarawa state and their management practices revealed that many businesses that were operating in the state in the past have either collapsed or operating at a meager level and many of those entrepreneurs that have businesses of their own are nonindigenes with very few indigenes in the state. Many of them said that nepotism, profligacy, and discouragement were responsible for their not taking an active part in owning and operating businesses of their own while few of them attribute their actions to a lack of skills, experience, lifestyle, risk-tolerance, and fear of failure and capital. Given the largest proportion of nonindigenous entrepreneurs operating in the state business sector, this gap implies a great potential loss in output and services due to ineffective production and growth potential of the state.

The indigenous people's cultures secretly discourage aspirations for excellence. Ambition is suspect and viewed as competition against pronounced society personalities. The culture of social, political, or economic apprenticeship is absent and a dominant figure dominates. This type of attitude kills entrepreneurship. There is a strong spirit of nepotism inherent in the people's culture. The traditional administration is confederation. There are small independent clans with distinct features loosely tied together with one another. Thus, nepotism and clannish arrogance that celebrates mediocrity and selection/election of dwarfs prevail. Entrepreneurship hardly thrives in such an environment.

Summarizing the anti-entrepreneurship characteristics of the indigenous people of Nasarawa state with particular attention on the dominant tribes, the people's mind is grossly perverted. This pervasion takes the form of four deadly passions...anger passion allowed to run into lust, greed, undue/attachment to material things vanity or egotism... and jealousy. These anti-entrepreneurship attitudes must be suppressed and conscious efforts for a new socio-cultural environment created for the state to move up and forward.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. The skills acquisition centres in the state should provide the necessary information that the entrepreneurs need and that entrepreneurship should be included in their curricula.
2. Our communities should look at some aspects of our culture that are against entrepreneurial development for necessary modification. Socio-culture is rooted in the consciousness and unconsciousness of a people hence attacking it is most resisted. Even when there is no imminent benefit, presumptuously, people resist change and interpret it suspiciously. This implies that an attack on the socio-culture of Nasarawa indigenes will be an arduous task. A Nasarawa State economic orientation agency should be set up and given the task of liquidating anti-entrepreneurship attitudes in the State.
3. Those cultural values that impact positively on entrepreneurial development like the issue of age grade etc. should be encouraged tremendously by our community leaders. The government should among others, make people in the State realize their despicable situation

in the present globalized world, define and set strategies that can direct the society on a new vision revolving around entrepreneurship, and identify prospective entrepreneurs that will lay down stimulants for the class.

4. The government should use tariffs and other incentive schemes to attract investors and encourage entrepreneurial activities.

5. The Government should Spread the culture of entrepreneurship among community members through training workshops, training courses, and the media in general to enhance entrepreneurial activities. When considering entrepreneurship training it is important to take into account the influence of religious beliefs and tribal differences between the society in the components of the study that may affect entrepreneurial activities.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

Table 1. *Distribution of Questionnaires senatorial region in the State*

Questionnaire				
Senatorial	Sent	Percentage	Receive	Percentage
Northern	132	33	119	30
Western	132	33	119	30
Southern	136	34	126	31
Total	400	100	364	91

Source: Author's Computation from field survey, 2018

Table 2. *Profile of the Respondents (Have Business and Have no Business)*

Profile	Have Business		Have no Business		All Respondents		Statistical Test
	N <sub>1</sub>	% to n <sub>1</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	% to n <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>3</sub>	% to n <sub>3</sub>	
<b>Demographics</b>							
<b>Gender</b>							
	Male	238	76	46	96	284	78
	Female	75	24	05	04	80	22
	Total	313	100	51	100	364	100
<b>Education Level</b>							
	No Education	16	05	10	20	26	07
	Secondary Education or less	187	60	27	53	214	59
	Post-Secondary Education	110	35	14	27	124	34
	Total	313	100	51	100	364	100
<b>Age (in years)</b>							
	24-35	09	03	01	02	10	03
	36-45	53	17	12	24	65	18
	46-55	103	33	10	20	113	31
	56-65	128	41	27	52	155	43
	66-75	20	06	01	02	21	05
	Total	313	100	51	100	364	100
<b>Ethnic Nationality</b>							
	Alago	31	10	15	30	46	13
	Eggon	31	10	15	30	46	13
	Hausa	78	25	12	25	90	25
	Ibo	78	25	03	05	81	22
	Yoruba	78	25	03	05	81	22
	Others	17	05	03	05	20	05
	Total	313	100	51	100	364	100
<b>Economic Activities</b>							
	Petty Traders	31	10	05	09	36	10
	Civil Servants	56	18	14	28	70	19
	Artisans	75	24	05	10	80	22
	Private Sector Workers	31	10	08	15	39	11
	Farming	120	38	19	38	139	38
	Total	313	100	51	100	364	100

Source: Calculated from field survey, 2018

\*, \*\*, and \*\*\*, represent the 1%, 5% and 10% significance level, respectively.

Table 3. *Some Factors that Influence Entrepreneurial Growth in Nasarawa State*

Factors	Have Business		Have no Business		All Respondents		Statistical Test
	N <sub>1</sub>	% to n <sub>1</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	% to n <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>3</sub>	% to n <sub>3</sub>	
Capital	31	10	03	05	36	10	$\lambda^2 = 3.71$
Skills	16	05	05	10	18	05	
Experience	16	05	03	06	18	05	
Life-Style	16	05	02	04	18	05	
Risk Tolerance	16	05	03	05	18	05	
Nepotism	62	20	12	25	73	20	$\lambda^2 = 18.2^{***}$
Profligacy	62	20	10	20	73	20	
Discouragement	78	25	10	20	92	25	
Fear of Failure	16	05	03	05	18	05	
Total	313	100	51	100	364	100	

Source: Calculated from field survey, 2018

\*, \*\*, and \*\*\*, represent the 1%, 5%, and 10% significance level, respectively.