



Effect of personality traits on gender enrolment in entrepreneurship

Bello A ^{1*}, Saka TA ², Onipede EA ³

¹ Entrepreneurship Development Centre, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria

² Business Administration Department, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria

³ Agricultural and Bioresources Engineering, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria

* Corresponding Author: **Bello A**

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Abstract

Carefully when we observed people around, we discovered a lot of differences in our behaviors. While some are quiet, others maybe talkative. Similarly, some worry a lot, others almost never seem anxious. Each time we classify people as either talkative or quiet or active or anxious, we are referring to individual's personality trait. These traits were conceptualized in a Big 5 model to comprise of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. This research was tailored towards measuring the effects of these traits on gender enrolment in entrepreneurship. For effective data presentation and analysis, descriptive statistics, simple percentages and mean were employed. Data obtained for this study was through well structured questionnaires. Out of 500 questionnaires administered, only 475 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned, representing 95% of response rate across the three major metropolises in Local Government. With an average mean score of 3.72, it was admitted that men has high trait of openness than woman while an average mean score of 2.91 shows that women possess high trait of conscientiousness than men. Average mean scores of 3.72; 3.56 and 3.98 respectively show gender's behavior in terms of extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. These values indicate that men are more extraverts, agreeable and neurotic than women which enhanced their enrolment in entrepreneurship. This study concluded that, although traits are combination of genetic and environmental factors, men and women should be taken through entrepreneurship education designed with various skill acquisition programs to enhance their enrolment.

Keywords: Personality Traits, Entrepreneurship, Gender, Enrolment

1. Introduction

Individuals go into business for the benefit of obtaining regular income automatically become self-employed. Entrepreneurship is basically concerned with creating wealth and livelihood through production of goods and services (Ebiringa, 2011a) ^[7]. The prevailing economy situation in Nigeria has necessitated her citizens to embraced entrepreneurship. The country is endowed with abundant natural and human resources capable for her full development, yet, the unemployment rate is at increased. According to Anyadike *et al* (2012), these human and natural resources notwithstanding, Nigeria is still one of the poorest countries in the world and has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in sub-saharan Africa, despite its alleged strong economic growth. In the recent time, entrepreneurship has been identified as the major factor to the success of any economy. Creation of new jobs, formation of new businesses, reduction in unemployment rate and fostering of creativity and innovation are fundamental functions of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are very important in an unstable and transformational economy (Shmailan, 2016) ^[1]. Entrepreneurs emerged from all categories of people. Most make the decision to start their businesses at earlier stage of their life because many have gained the experience right from their family background and experience in the society. Many entrepreneurs also have served an "apprenticeship" in a SME that also gives them the skills they need (Timmons, 1994) ^[2]. Entrepreneurship has generally been recognized as a good medium or strategy for economic development of an individual, a community and a nation at large.

It is widely acknowledged that some gender considerations are often used in the choice of business or even the decision to go into business. Notably, some businesses are regarded as more suitable to men than women and vice versa. The question is, what is the basis for such belief? Understanding of individual personality traits could probably be responsible and determinant for gender engagement in entrepreneurship. Even with several emphases in entrepreneurship, the enrolment to the field is still at low rate. The main purpose of this study is to identifying various personality traits and determining their strength in relation to gender enrolment in entrepreneurship. The study specifically intends to rank these traits as applicable to men and women in entrepreneurship. The study hopes to suggest possible solutions to any gender related impediments to entrepreneurship engagement.

1.1 Problem Statement

The term entrepreneurship is used to describe the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth (Shailesh, Gyanendra & Yadav 2013) ^[16]. Based on the curriculum and expected learning outcome, entrepreneurship is thus expected to create opportunities, meeting the needs of entrepreneurs, customers and society in general. Interestingly, individuals engaged in the field to cater for their respective needs. However, it was observed that gender enrolment varied based on their personality traits and other pressing factors. This present study therefore sought to uncover the effects of personality traits on the gender enrolment in entrepreneurial activity.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to systematically examine the effect of various personality traits while actively identifying their impacts for gender enrolment into entrepreneurship. These include

- a. To study the effect of "Openness" in gender engagement in entrepreneurship
- b. To study the effect of "Conscientiousness" in gender engagement in entrepreneurship
- c. To study the effect of "Extraversion" in gender engagement in entrepreneurship
- d. To study the effect of "Agreeableness" in gender engagement in entrepreneurship
- e. To study the effect of "Neuroticism" in gender engagement in entrepreneurship

1.3 Research Questions and Development of Hypothesis

The following research questions were raised to be addressed

- a. What is the impact of "Openness" in gender enrolment into entrepreneurship?
- b. What is the impact of "Conscientiousness" in gender enrolment into entrepreneurship?
- c. What is the impact of "Extraversion" in gender enrolment into entrepreneurship?
- d. What is the impact of "Agreeableness" in gender enrolment into entrepreneurship?
- e. What is the impact of "Neuroticism" in gender enrolment into entrepreneurship?

Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses were developed

H₁₀: Men are more open than women, hence, their engagement into entrepreneurship

H₁₁: Women are more open than men, hence, their engagement into entrepreneurship

H₂₀: Men are more conscientious than women, hence, their zeal for entrepreneurship

H₂₂: Women are more conscientious than men, hence, their zeal for entrepreneurship

H₃₀: Men are more extravert than women, hence, their large number in entrepreneurship

H₃₃: Women are more extravert than men, hence, their large number in entrepreneurship

H₄₀: Men are more agreeable than women, hence, their willingness in entrepreneurship

H₄₄: Women are more agreeable than men, hence, their willingness in entrepreneurship

H₅₀: Men are more neurotic than women, hence, their reduction in entrepreneurship

H₅₅: Women are more neurotic than men, hence, their reduction in entrepreneurship

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a process of actions of an individual otherwise called entrepreneur who identified an opportunity, mobilizes resource and exploits such opportunity without fair of the risk. Entrepreneurship as being identified as a major course across all disciplines. Entrepreneurship is as old as man. The point at which man stopped satisfying only his needs and accommodated the needs of others marked the real origin of entrepreneurship. Its development has been gradual corresponding, of course, with the development of the human race (Ayegba *et al.*, 2016) ^[3]. Schumpeter (1959) ^[6], considered the entrepreneur as an innovator. He writes that Entrepreneurship is the "carrying out of new combination we call enterprise"; the individuals whose function is to carry them out we call entrepreneurs. According to him, the new combination focuses on five aspects; the introduction of new goals, new methods of production, opening up of new markets, new sources of supply of raw materials and new industrial organizations. Entrepreneurship is the main element to be embraced if the nation required success in economy. Every day entrepreneur's generate economic growth, create new jobs, form new businesses, increase exports, reduce imports, and foster creativity and innovation. In Nigeria, entrepreneurship has been identified as the developmental tool for the economy growth but the supply is limited. Entrepreneurs are risk takers, introduce positive changes, participate in change and work in a highly competitive environment.

2.2 Who is an Entrepreneur?

The process called entrepreneurship has an actor called entrepreneur. Thus, an Entrepreneur is an individual willing to engage in the business without mindful of risk involved. Entrepreneurs are people who can take information and find new opportunities that other people do not have to capacity to do so (Campbell 2014). Based on the opinion of Gartner, an entrepreneur is someone "who started a new business where there was not before". Entrepreneurs make use of different tools to actualizing their dreams. As the driver of economy, entrepreneurs survey the business environment, fish out the gaps (societal needs), and harness all the needed resources and wisely produce goods and services for the benefit of mankind and community at large. Evidently, the activities of entrepreneurs bring about rapid industrialization, job creations, economic and poverty alleviation. Entrepreneurs are not satisfied with the status quo. They think

outside the box and look for opportunities to come up with new solutions.

2.3 Traits of Entrepreneurs

There are no fundamental requirements for being an entrepreneur. However, the success in entrepreneurial journey may be accomplished through abiding or upholding some essential attributes widely acknowledged by scholars in the field. Personable, persuasive, self-motivation, understanding of risk, passionate, versatile, tenacity, self-confidence, drive and energy, resourceful and many more are essential required to be successful in the midst of uncertain and over changing community needs and aspirations. Most researchers and policymakers are interested in not only what traits predict entry into entrepreneurship, but what traits contribute to gender enrolment in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is the process of taking a thought, idea or concept and transforming it into a tangible reality. It's often tied to a business idea in order to generate profit. Being an entrepreneur, however, requires far more than just big ideas. Not everyone makes the cut and most failed because starting, growing and scaling a venture takes hard work and a particularly exclusive set of characteristics – which when combined, allows successful entrepreneurs to beat the odds

2.4 Male vs Female Entrepreneurs

The high rate of women in the field of entrepreneurship, both as academician and business practitioner, is alarming. For many decades, women have made significant progress in entrepreneurship and new venture creation (Kickul *et al.*, 2008) ^[9]. Consequently, female engagement in entrepreneurship and its accompanying benefits are of increasing interest. Moreover, research into women's entrepreneurship has gained recognition since early 2000s (Ettl and Welter, 2010; Langowitz and Minniti, 2007) ^[12, 10]. Despite all these, evidence had shown that businesses owned by men outweighed those businesses owned by women (Gupta *et al.*, 2014). Other empirical evidence showing more participation of men against their opponents includes the findings of notable researchers (Kwong *et al.*, 2009; Langowitz and Minniti, 2007) ^[10, 11].

2.5 Personality Traits

Contemporary research has shown that there are some differences between men and women when it comes to entrepreneurship (Shmailan, 2016) ^[11]. In order word, there are certain traits that are common in entrepreneurs. The phenomenon of becoming an entrepreneur may be due to the inherent nature of these traits rather than a rational process (Cunningham, 1991) ^[13]. Some people may consider the risk involved in business or financial benefit to become an entrepreneur while others may look at the status or

recognition of such business in the society.

Research on the personality traits of entrepreneurs took off in the mid-20th century, unifying approaches from economics, psychology, sociology, and business management to answer the questions: Who is an entrepreneur? What drives them? What traits define them? The first few decades, therefore, faced many conceptual challenges as researchers were eager to develop a solid theoretical framework and appropriate measurement tools (Sari *et al.*, 2017) ^[14].

The personality traits of an entrepreneurial were coined and measured through a model labeled “Big 5 model”. Individual with all these attributes present would be strongly expected to engage in entrepreneurship. These conditions may have both positive and negative influences on the gender enrolment in entrepreneurship. Positive influences facilitate engagement in entrepreneurship, whereas negative influences create inhibiting milieu to the enrolment in entrepreneurship.

2.5.1 Big-5 Model

The Big-5 model is a conceptual and long term acronymic word towards defining personality, via measuring openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. It has been proposed since 80s as basis for defining individual personality traits. For the long used of the model, evidence has shown that it influences engagement and performance in entrepreneurial activity. (Rauch, 2014) ^[8]. The five “macro traits” cover a distinct set of characteristics, as described in John *et al.* (2008, p. 138):

- **Openness to experience:** describes the breadth, depth, originality, and complexity of an individual's mental and experiential life
- **Conscientiousness:** describes socially prescribed impulse control that facilitates task- and goal-orientated behavior
- **Extraversion:** implies an energetic approach toward the social and material world and includes traits such as sociability, activity, assertiveness, and positive emotionality
- **Agreeableness:** contrasts a prosocial and communal orientation toward others with antagonism and includes traits such as altruism, tender-mindedness, trust, and modesty
- **Neuroticism:** contrasts emotional stability and even-temperedness with negative emotionality, such as feeling anxious, nervous, sad, and tense

Based on the aforementioned traits, the research model was developed to substantively reveal the correlation between the personality traits and gender engagement in entrepreneurship. Each of the traits was measured as a function of gender attribute via the designed questionnaires.

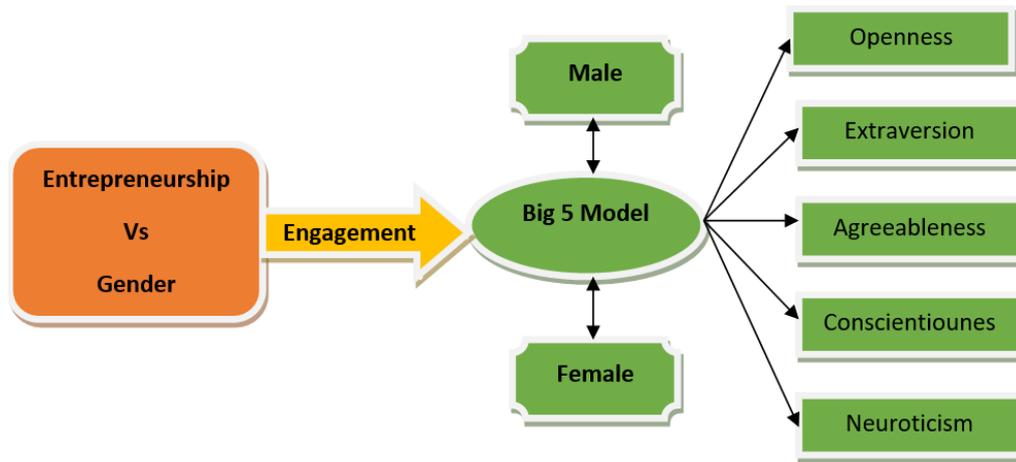


Fig 1: Research Model

3. Methodology

Data obtained for this study is through the primary and secondary sources using well simplified and structured questionnaires to obtain relevant information from owners of Small and Medium Scale Entrepreneurs, individual working under someone and yet to be employed people within the three major towns in Edu Local Government Area of Kwara state. For effective data presentation and analysis, descriptive statistics, simple percentages and mean were employed. A total of 500 questionnaires were randomly distributed amongst respondents in the said local government. Only 475 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned, representing 95% of response rate.

For easy findings, responses were measured with five (5) point likert scale, where strongly agree (SA) = 5; Agree (A)

= 4; Disagree (D) = 3; strongly disagree (4) = 2; Undecided (U) = 1. For reference to be made, a cut of point was determined by finding the means of the nominal value attached to the likert's points. That is: $5+4+3+2+1 = 15/5 = 3.00$

For decision to be made and adopted, the mean scores of 3.00 and above were regarded as agreed statement while mean scores below 3.00 were regarded as the opposite statement.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Demographic Analysis of respondents

The Tables 4.1 and 4.2 were used to show the sex distributions and status of the respondents across the major three metropolis in Edu Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 1: Sex Distribution among respondents

Town	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Lafiagi	88	18.53	102	21.47	187	40.00
Tsaragi	69	14.53	82	17.26	153	31.79
Shonga	65	13.68	69	14.53	135	28.21
Total	222	46.74%	253	53.26%	475	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.1 depicts that out of 475 questionnaires correctly answered and returned, 222 equivalent to 46.74% were male of various status, while the percentage of female were 53.26%. The 40% of respondents from Lafiagi is an indication that it's more populated compare to other town. Shonga district was less populated which had 13.68% male and 14.53% female. Tsaragi town revealed 69 out of 222 male questionnaires returned and 82 from total female questionnaires returned.

Table 2: Status of respondents

Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Practicing Entrepreneurs	95	20
Employees (working for others)	152	32
Unemployed People	228	48
Total	475	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The status of respondents was shown on Table 4.2. This implies that 95 or 20% of respondents across the three major metropolises in the local government were practicing entrepreneurs with various degrees of businesses, while 32% of respondents were observed to be the category of people who either believed in working for others and/or later start their own businesses. The unemployed people top the list with almost half percent of the total respondents. This is not surprising as many researchers have revealed high unemployment rate in the country.

4.2 Personality Traits as Gender Determinants in Entrepreneurship

The Big 5 model of personality traits were perused using Table 4.3 to Table 4.7.

Table 3: Effect of Openness on Gender Enrolment in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Gender's behavior in terms of openness	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean
1	Men have vivid imagination about entrepreneurship than woman	139 (29.26)	125 (26.32)	94 (19.79)	83 (17.47)	43 (7.16)	3.53
2	Men are more interested in abstract ideas leading to entrepreneurship than to woman	133 (28.00)	109 (22.95)	110 (23.16)	76 (16.00)	47 (9.89)	3.43
3	Men are free enough to join effort with others in entrepreneurship act than woman	186 (39.16)	147 (30.95)	62 (13.05)	58 (12.21)	22 (4.63)	3.88
4	Readiness to travel far away to acquire knowledge about entrepreneurship is more of men than woman	192 (40.42)	179 (37.68)	36 (7.58)	57 (12.00)	11 (2.32)	4.02

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.3 above was used to verify the openness trait of gender in their enrolment in entrepreneurship. The response indicates that about 265(55.58%) agree that men have more vivid imagination than woman hence their engagement in entrepreneurship while 177(37.26%) opposed the motion.

With a mean value of 4.02, it's evident to state that men in their personality trait are open-minded than woman. Items 2 and 3 with mean scores of 3.43 and 3.88 also proved that openness as a trait is more of men than woman which reveal their engagement in entrepreneurship.

Table 4: Effect of Conscientiousness on Gender Enrolment in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Gender's behavior in terms of Conscientiousness	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean
5	Men are more careful and meticulous than woman in entrepreneurial journey	79 (16.63)	81 (17.05)	105 (22.11)	135 (28.42)	75 (15.79)	2.90
6	Men show more regard to what is morally right than woman, hence their engagement in entrepreneurship	62 (13.05)	84 (17.68)	149 (31.37)	128 (26.95)	52 (10.95)	2.95
7	Men usually forget to put things back in their proper place hence their negligence in entrepreneurship	84 (17.68)	95 (20.00)	119 (25.05)	152 (32.00)	25 (5.26)	2.92
8	Men do not like order and find it difficult to join others in entrepreneurial journey compare to men	73 (15.37)	69 (14.53)	113 (23.79)	157 (33.05)	63 (13.26)	2.86

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Gender's behavior in terms of conscientiousness was verified with the analysis of Table 4.4. 277(58.32%) disagree that men show more regard to what is morally upright than woman while less percentage of 30.73% agreed. Also, 271(57.05%) disagree that men do forget to put things back to their normal position hence their reluctant in going into

entrepreneurship. Mean scores of 2.90 and 2.86 indicate that woman are more careful and accept order which make them easily enrolled in entrepreneurship. By implication, women are more meticulous and freely join others in entrepreneurial journey.

Table 5: Effect of Extraversion on Gender Enrolment in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Gender's behavior in terms of Extraversion	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean
9	Men seek social engagement than their counter woman hence are more found in entrepreneurship	122 (25.68)	153 (32.21)	104 (21.89)	81 (17.05)	15 (3.16)	3.60
10	Men are more energetic and enjoy being with others than woman, hence their partnership in entrepreneurship	172 (36.21)	157 (33.05)	59 (12.42)	73 (15.37)	14 (2.95)	3.84
11	Men are more confident and lively when it comes to entrepreneurship than their counterpart woman	181 (38.11)	136 (28.63)	82 (17.26)	61 (12.84)	15 (3.16)	3.86
12	Men are known to be more talkative than woman. As such, they enjoy relating to customers than woman	144 (30.32)	124 (26.11)	99 (20.84)	75 (15.79)	33 (6.95)	3.57

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Observation from Table 4.5 shows that 317(66.74%) of respondents assented that men are more confident and lively when it comes to entrepreneurship than woman. This trait, therefore, gear them up to enroll in the field. Contrarily, 143(30.10%) of the respondents dissented to the statement. The energetic nature of men of was proved with responses of

329 respondents. This suggests that men are physically sound and enjoy being with others than woman in the context of entrepreneurship. Other items 1 and 4 revealed that men seek social engagement and talkative than woman with mean scores of 3.60 and 3.57 respectively.

Table 6: Effect of Agreeableness on Gender Enrolment in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Gender's behavior in terms of Agreeableness	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean
13	The cheerful attribute of men make them more enterprising than woman	141 (29.68)	115 (24.21)	100 (21.05)	77 (16.21)	42 (8.84)	3.50
14	Men are more accommodating to people when it comes to entrepreneurship than woman	135 (28.42)	156 (32.84)	81 (17.05)	56 (11.79)	47 (9.89)	3.58
15	Entrepreneurial culture is more pleasing to men as passion than woman	129 (27.16)	138 (29.05)	103 (21.68)	84 (17.68)	21 (4.42)	3.57
16	Men in their spirit of entrepreneurship are more interested in other peoples problem than woman	172 (36.21)	151 (31.79)	72 (15.16)	44 (9.26)	36 (7.58)	3.65

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.6 was analyzed to show the effect of agreeableness in terms of male and female participation in entrepreneurship. 256 respondents comply with the statement that Men's cheerful nature makes them more enterprising than woman. Also, by their spirit of entrepreneurship, men are more interested in other people's problem than woman which is one of the underline focuses of entrepreneur. Although,

116(24.42%) of respondents counter the statement, while 7.58% of respondents were undecided. More so, 291(61.26%) responses consent that men are more accommodating than woman which proved their reasonable number in entrepreneurship. Only 137 respondent disagree and just 47 respondents could not decided.

Table 7: Effect Neurotic on Gender Enrolment in Entrepreneurship

S/N	Gender's behavior in terms of Neuroticism	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean
17	Women have tendency toward anxiety than their counterpart men, hence low engagement in entrepreneurship	181 (38.11)	187 (39.37)	41 (8.63)	22 (4.63)	44 (9.26)	3.92
18	For little negative change in entrepreneurial environment, women feel more irritating than men	211 (44.42)	172 (36.21)	56 (11.79)	19 (4.00)	17 (3.58)	4.14
19	Women have little natural buffer against stress compare to men hence their low number in entrepreneurial journey	162 (34.11)	200 (42.11)	38 (8.00)	51 (10.74)	24 (5.05)	3.89
20	Women become easily aroused when stimulated with negative occurrence hence their reduction in entrepreneurial journey	171 (36.00)	199 (41.89)	44 (9.26)	48 (10.11)	13 (2.74)	3.98

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Neuroticism was the last trait analyzed. Table 4.7 indicates various responses of neuroticism of men and woman. With mean value of 4.14, it was believed that women feel more irritating than men which make them reluctant to engage in entrepreneurship, a field binds with risks and uncertainties. To be aroused with negative stimulation is for woman as 370 respondents assent to the statement, although, only 13 respondents were undecided. More so, only 89(18.74%) of respondents dissent to the statement that woman has little natural buffer to stress. Thus, the counterpart men possesses reasonable natural buffer which is essential trait in entrepreneurial journey. It was also proved that woman has tendency towards anxiety than men, evidence from item 1 on table 4.7.

4.3 Acceptance/Rejection of Hypotheses

From the analysis on Table 4.3, it's reasonable to admit that men are more openness than woman since means scores were all above 3.00. As such, the H_{11} was accepted and H_{12} rejected. The mean scores of 2.90; 2.95; 2.92 and 2.86 show that the women are more conscientious than men hence, H_{20} was rejected and H_{22} accepted. On Table 4.5, all the mean scores were above 3.00 which imply that extraversion is more of men than women. Thus, H_{30} would be accepted against H_{33} . Similarly, mean scores of above 3.00 on Table 4.6 and 4.7 shows that men are more agreeable and neurotic than woman. Hence, H_{40} and H_{50} were accepted and H_{44} and H_{55} were correspondingly rejected.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The foregoing is a research effort to measure the effect of personality trait on gender's enrolment in entrepreneurship. The conceptualized Big 5 model was perused to rate the respondents in terms of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. From the analysis, it was revealed that among all the five traits of personality measured, men possessed high rate of openness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism, while women's conscientiousness was measured high compare to male counterpart. It's therefore not surprised to found men across all segments of entrepreneurship. To create balance and enrolment in the field, the study recommended as follows:

- Entrepreneurship education should be taken across all levels of education to create awareness and trait building.

- Government programmes should be tailored towards skill acquisition to reduce dependent on government and white collar jobs
- Individuals are encourage to seek positive changes in traits for engagement in entrepreneurship
- Successful entrepreneurs should, from time to time, ready to give testimony on the importance of entrepreneurship for potential entrepreneurs and country at large.

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