

Assessing Corporate Entrepreneurship in Conglomerates in Nigeria

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Abstract: The Government in Nigeria has of recent years raised the awareness of Entrepreneurship practices through the introduction of different entrepreneurship programmes among all forms of corporations including the Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and conglomerates in the country; especially those manufacturing Corporations in the densely populated areas of the South western Nigeria. The Government has also raised entrepreneurship awareness among the citizenry by improving the accessibility to bank loans and also by including entrepreneurship courses in the curriculum of all post-secondary tertiary institutions in order to improve employability status of young graduates before they are recruited by the conglomerates. Unfortunately, mere observation of the Nigerian economy has not shown any improvement. Hence the need to assess the level of Entrepreneurial variables and Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) in Conglomerates in South-western and Lagos industrial axes of Nigeria. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources. The variables/elements of Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) were categorized into innovation/invention, risk-taking, and proactiveness. Corporate entrepreneurship in this paper is measured by behaviour and characteristics of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the coalition group. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample population. Subsequently, the data generated were analysed with appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings showed that: Nigerian manufacturing industries were not highly entrepreneurial oriented. Though traces of innovations were observed, none for invention, Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) practices among the top management team were dominated by men. This gender imbalance calls for further research in future; The paper discovered that poor infrastructural development repelled most industries away from industrial estates as most CEOs prefer outright purchase of private sites. This made advantages of economies of scale to elude them, especially in the areas of research resulting in poor CE activities. Also, not many of these industries were listed on Nigerian Securities Exchange (NSE), thereby limiting amount of public funds available for research activities in these companies, and lastly, the three key variables/elements/Dimensions (Invention/Innovation, Proactiveness and Risk-taking) of Corporate Entrepreneurship were identified as channels through which Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) can be promoted in Nigeria.

Keywords: Innovation/Invention, Risk-taking, Proactiveness, Elements/Dimension, Entrepreneurial Orientation

1. Introduction

Manufacturing companies are acclaimed to be crucial to the economic development of Nigeria. In developed countries,

manufacturing companies remain the cornerstone of the overall economic development. Apart from ensuring an increase in production of goods, and services, it facilitates technology transfer, accelerates job creation, innovation,

invention, and creates more opportunities and added values for entrepreneurs; thereby accelerating the much-needed rapid economic growth in Nigeria [1-5]. However, manufacturing companies in Nigeria have not met these expectations [6, 7]. The main reasons adduced include lack of entrepreneurial zeal, awareness, and harsh environment in which the conglomerates operate in Nigeria [8, 5]. Many companies have been grappling with the harsh economic environment in Nigeria occasioned by insecurity, the ripple effects of increasing foreign exchange rate, the global financial melt-down triggered by the impacts of covid-19 pandemic, and some policies of governments bordering on multiple taxation and levies [9, 4]. It is sad that this happened despite the efforts of various

government intervention policies since the 1960s to salvage the industrial sector (See Table 1). In the 1970s, indigenization policy was pursued, and by 2003, the Government began to raise entrepreneurship awareness by granting access to loans. Bank of Industry (BOI) facilitated foreign exchange loan to manufacturing companies through World Bank loans, supported by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). National Economic Empowerment programs were also initiated between the years 2018 and 2021 to strengthen entrepreneurial organization behavior in the industries including the conglomerates and raise entrepreneurship awareness among the citizenry, including university graduates, with the view to strengthen the economy.

Table 1. Various Interventions Designed by Governments (1960-2021).

Period	Situation	Intervention	Actors	Delivery
1960-1970	Little economic development	1 st IDC @ Owerri established.	Eastern Region/FGN	Ind. extension & 3 rd Nat. Dev. Plan
1970-1980	Oil boom	Indigenization of economy	Federal Govt	Increased Nigerian Companies
1980-1990	Oil glut & SAP & Downsizing	Raw Mat Res&Dev Council, ITF, FIRO, ADB, NIDB, NERFUND	CBN/Fed & State Govts	Industrial. Estates Promotion
2000-2003.	Low productivity.	Bank of Industry/SMEETS.	FGN/CBN	Export Promotion& World Bank Loan
2004-2006	Low innovation.	National Economic Empowerment & Dev Strategy (NEEDS).	FGN/CBN	Export & Free Zone
2007-2010.	Poor Infrastructure & multiple levies	Entrepreneurship Devt. Institutions.	FGN/STATE GOVT.	Entrepreneurship awareness Programs
2010-2021	Poor Infrastructure, Poor Health facilities to curtail spread of covid-19 pandemic among workers, Corruption in the Public Sector, Insecurity that almost paralyzed farming & economic activities in rural Areas	Intangible intervention in infrastructure, Health facilities & Vague military/Police & security network. Establishment of entrepreneurship institutions but weakened by bad governance.	Corrupt Public Officials/Politicians & weak Presidency	Improved digital banking system & Prolonged University/Research staff strike & Destabilized Entrepreneurship awareness program at Corporate, SMEs & University education levels.

Source: Fieldwork, 2021

Keys:

IDC – Industrial Development Centre

FGN – Federal Government of Nigeria

Nat. Devt. Plan – National Development Plan

CBN – Central Bank of Nigeria

NIDB - Nigeria Industrial Development Bank

SAP – Structural Adjustment Program

ITF-Industrial Training Fund Agency, Nigeria

Raw. Mat. Res & Dev. – Raw Materials Research & Development.

Corporate Entrepreneurship reflects in recurring organizational behaviour such as innovativeness/inventions, pro-activeness, and risk-taking which are its elements/dimensions as reflected in the leadership style of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Coalition group. Some authors have earlier asserted that Entrepreneurial Orientation and Corporate Entrepreneurship had a relationship with risk-taking, proactiveness, innovation/invention, and performance [9-13]. Thus, economic growth in any country reflects entrepreneurial elements/dimension and variables in the economy [14, 5].

The recent slump in Nigerian economic performance was partly attributed to the ongoing security challenges and, low corporate entrepreneurship [7].

In addition to the effects of rising inflation and naira depreciation shock in the last two years, the private sector continues to contend with persistently low productivity and

high machine downtime due to frequent power failures and low entrepreneurial orientation [7]. To overcome these challenges, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) took some fiscal measures, setting out different sizes of the bailout for different sectors. The Federal Government further complemented the initiatives by making loans, and foreign exchange available to companies through African Development Bank, Bank of Industries, and World Bank; creating export free zones in some parts of the country; suspending all levies and duties on selected industrial imports; increasing the entrepreneurial capability of companies, and Nigerians by initiating microfinance banks to fund small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurial education programs for Nigerian universities [15].

Despite the attempts by the Government to tackle the challenges confronting the Nigerian economy, primarily through raising entrepreneurship awareness in the

manufacturing sector, it appears these interventions have very minimal impact on the economy [16]. The way out is for the country to diversify its oil revenue base with greater emphasis on non – oil revenue sources and further increase the entrepreneurial capability of the citizenry, which the Government had initiated since 2003 and also to step up research studies on CE [7].

The paucity of academic inquiry in this area, therefore, suggests additional research to explore the context of corporate entrepreneurship dimensions. Some writers have consistently noted that there is little research to determine the practice and performance of corporate entrepreneurship in Nigeria [11, 13, 15, 9]. Almost all known research studies on corporate entrepreneurship and performance were done in advanced countries. It then follows that there is a need to fill this gap in the literature on developing economies. This paper is in this direction, to examine the extent that large manufacturing companies have incorporated CE into their policies and practices, which of the three variables is prevalent in large firms, and why, and the process of corporate entrepreneurship.

In order to achieve the aforementioned primary goal, this study addresses three specific research questions:

- 1) Do corporate entrepreneurship traits/characteristics exist in the target companies?
- 2) If yes, at what level?
- 3) What is the nature and direction of the relationship between each of the three variables (innovation/invention, proactiveness, and risk-taking) of corporate entrepreneurship in Nigeria as a developing nation?

Thus, the broad objective of this study is to assess the level

of entrepreneurial variables on the overall CE of Conglomerates (Manufacturing) in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

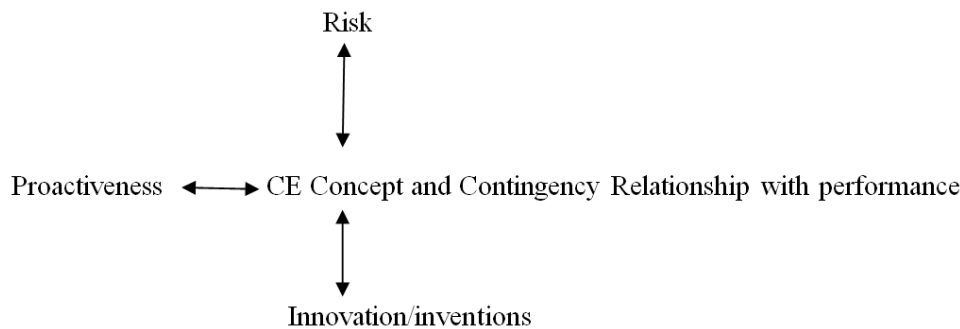
- a. Identify the main corporate entrepreneurship (CE) characteristics of manufacturing companies in the Southwestern industrial axis of Nigeria;
- b. Analyse the entrepreneurial dimension/variables of CE;
- c. Ascertain the level of corporate entrepreneurship (CE) of manufacturing companies in the study area and
- d. Propose the way forward for CE development in Nigeria.

Hypothesis of the study is:

Ho: The manufacturing corporations are not highly corporate entrepreneurial oriented.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Entrepreneurship literature identifies two major models on CE studies, namely; the three-dimension model and the second is the five-dimension model [17, 18]. Each of these two popular models offers different perspectives on both the concept of Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) and the relationship between CE and other firm-level characteristics. Both models have been found in the literature to be helpful. However, the three-dimensional model, was found recently to be more popular among contemporary researchers in a corporate entrepreneurship studies focusing on Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) and performance [13 & 14]. This model has been adapted as the basis for this literature review (See Figure 1).



Source: Adapted from [13]

Figure 1. The Three-Dimension model of Studies on CE.

A Researcher once referred to the corporate entrepreneurship (CE) as the practice of generating ideas in companies to start a new product or adjust the existing ones [9]. This is usually done in response to identified problems and opportunities. It refers to the process of drawing from a wide range of knowledge and skills of persons or groups of people (coalition) to recognize business opportunities, exploit these opportunities to create wealth and add value to a targeted niche of human activity. At a corporate level, it involves teamwork in a coalition group/the power-holding group rather than individual activity [19]. This is the brain

and guiding intelligence of companies, and it is often informal. In the past, leadership in Business Corporation was identified with the entrepreneur, as the godfather. With the rise of the modern industrial system in companies, the entrepreneur no longer exists as a person. The new order has replaced the entrepreneur with informal teamwork (Coalition group). Thus, the guiding intelligence does not lie with the management (since it is not the managers whom most of the time decide). However, effective power of decision is lodged deeply in the technical, planning, and other core staff called change agents or visionary group.

This group, the brain and guiding intelligence of business, is called the "Dominant Coalition" or "the power-holding group" [20, 21].

The behaviour of entrepreneurial companies consists of a product-market system, innovation/invention processes, proactiveness in decision-making, and risk-taking. The level of corporate entrepreneurship exhibited is the total aggregate of the three variables of innovativeness/inventions, risk-taking and proactiveness [9]. For this paper, Risk-taking is the degree to which managers are willing to make large and risky resource commitments i.e. those which have a reasonable chance of costly failure under uncertainty situations. Literature emphasized three types of uncertainty, namely:

1. Risk, which is measurable statistically,
2. Ambiguity, which is hard to measure statistically and
3. True Uncertainty/Knightian Uncertainty that is impossible to estimate or predict statistically [22].

The implication of this study is that in real life situation, the act of corporate entrepreneurship is often associated with genuine uncertainty, mainly when it involves invention, establishing a new product, whose market never exists.

Proactiveness is an "opportunity-seeking, forward-looking perspective involving identifying a market problem and introducing a new product, or services ahead of the competition, acting in anticipation of future demand to create change and shape the environment. Innovation/invention refers to the creation and development of a new products and processes (invention), or changing the existing product. Entrepreneurial innovation is the willingness to support creativity and experimentation in introducing new products from existing products. A distinguishing characteristic of an entrepreneurial company is its strong commitment to planning, adapting or creating and introducing new products to the market, especially well before the competition. Researchers observed that the entrepreneurial planning function has a new feature called "Revised Sequence" This is

contrary to the normal accepted sequence experienced in traditional marketing.

The accepted sequence holds that the individual guides the economy while obtaining the highest level of satisfaction from the income he receives. Whereas the revised sequence, the opposite holds that individual is subject to management/entrepreneurial (technostructure) manipulations called "planning". The quest for good planning in managing customers demand is what the literature calls "The Revised Sequence" [20, 21].

The implication is that once the revised sequence is allowed, the case for leaving the consumer free disappears. It is not the individual's right to buy that becomes important. Instead it is the seller's right to manage the individual taste and demand that becomes more important. This is the trend in the new normal era in Corporate Entrepreneurship [20].

A Researcher studied the formation of proactive behaviors in entrepreneurial companies. In their study, they conceptualized proactiveness as the organizational pursuit of business opportunities deemed by the firm to be positive or favorable. This view is consistent with the definition offered earlier in the literature in which proactiveness is viewed as an "opportunity-seeking, forward-looking perspective involving introducing new products or services ahead of the competition and acting in anticipation of future demand to create change and shape the environment" [18].

Juxtaposition of Models of Corporate Entrepreneurship [CE].

When CE model is juxtaposed with input-output model, the result obtained is shown in figure 2. [24, 25]

The model described in figure 2 assumes that Corporate entrepreneurship and leadership style varies with situations. The transformational leader is a change agent/entrepreneur. The fit or match between the environment's opportunities and threats vis-a-vis the firm's strengths and weaknesses determines the corporate entrepreneurial activities and performance.

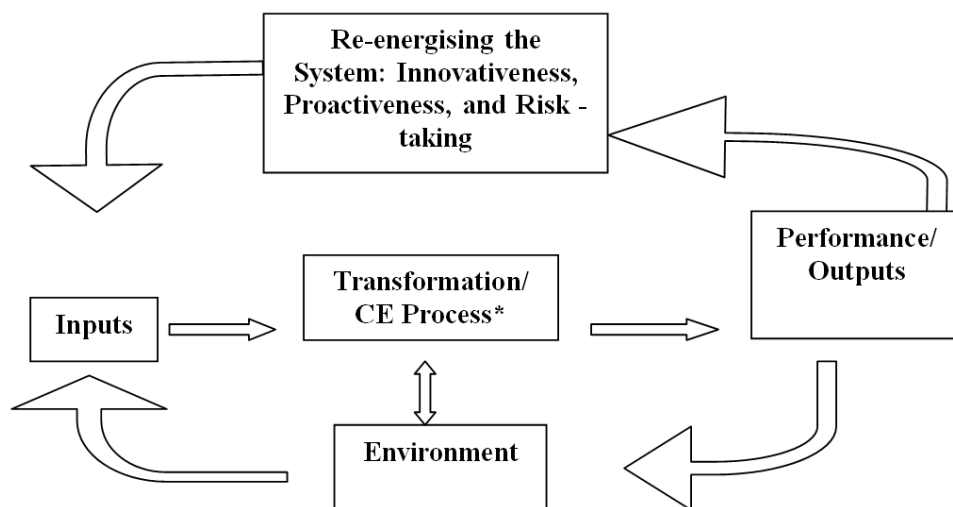


Figure 2. Input-output Model of Transformation /Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) Process.

Source: Adapted from [13]

*This box becomes just a "process" if the leader is not an entrepreneur.

3. Methodology

The study area covered mainly the Lagos and South-West industrial axis in Nigeria. These two areas constituted the main industrial area of Nigeria [6]. The study takes a critical look at corporate entrepreneurship. It is an analysis of the relationship between Corporate Entrepreneurship and its dimension/elements in manufacturing industries.

The data for the research were collected from primary and secondary resources. The target object for analysis is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of each of the company surveyed. This is consistent with the view of [24] and [13], who asserted that entrepreneurship is a firm-level as well as a corporate phenomenon in which the individual CEO is regarded as the firm's entrepreneur together with the coalition group. This is to say that the CEO displays one or some characteristics that are peculiar to entrepreneurs. These characteristics include one, propensity towards risk-taking, proactiveness, and invention/innovativeness; two, that the firm-level behavior is a reflection of the underlying business posture of the coalition group coordinated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and three, that the coalition group/corporate entrepreneurial orientation and objectives become the CEO's entrepreneurial orientation and company's objectives. One hundred questionnaires were returned from the sampling population selected for analysis in the study.

Companies in these two industrial axes were randomly selected to form the sampling frame using national online databases, business directories, and membership list of Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN) according to product category in the following order:

- (1) Food, Beverages and Tobacco - 50
- (2) Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals - 50
- (3) Metal and Fabricated Metal Product - 20
- (4) Plastics and Rubber - 20

- (5) Pulp, Paper, Printing and Publishing - 20
- (6) Textile and Wearing apparel - 20
- (7) Carpet, Leather and Footwear - 20
- (8) Electricals and Electronics - 10
- (9) Motor Vehicle, ICT and Miscellaneous Assembly 20
- (10) Wood and Wood Products - 20

Secondary Data: Secondary sources of data included journals, books and Government publications.

Corporate entrepreneurship was evaluated using corporate entrepreneurial index (CE_i) as used by Covin [26]. While the dimensional variables (i.e. innovative/invention, risk taking and proactiveness) of corporate entrepreneurship was evaluated by calculating the innovativeness index (Hi), Risk-taking and handling index ($RTHi$), and Proactiveness index ($PROACTi$).

To calculate these indexes, the three dimensions of corporate entrepreneurship were assessed using nineteen items. All the nineteen items measured the Corporate Entrepreneurship at the firm level (see table 4). Eight items were utilized to measure innovation (Hi), six items were used to measure risk-taking and handling ($RTHi$), and five items were used to measure proactiveness $PROACTi$. Eight of the items were drawn from original Covin and Slevin [24]. Seven questions from Wiklund, three questions from Dess and Lumpkin [18], and two from Alarape [11]. The adapted questions were reconstructed from seven-points Likert Scale to five-points Likert scale. The paper also attempted to determine whether the corporate company was lowly, moderately or highly entrepreneurial oriented. To do this, the calculated CE_i values was matched into the appropriate classes drawn.

Based on the five-point Likert scale employed for the construction of the relevant questions, the interpretation of the scores was as follows (see Table 2):

Table 2. Likert's scale and the interpretation.

LIKERT'S SCORES	PERCENTAGE (CE_i) EQUIVALENT	INTERPRETATION
1	$X \leq 20\%$	Low Corporate Entrepreneurship
2	$20\% < X \leq 40\%$	
3	$40\% < X \leq 60\%$	Moderate Corporate Entrepreneurship
4	$60\% < X \leq 80\%$	
5	$80\% < X \leq 100\%$	High Corporate Entrepreneurship

From the above "5- point scale", where $CE_i = 80$ percent was considered "High"; while a CE_i that equaled 23 percent was considered as "Low".

The methodology used above for Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE_i) was repeated for the indexes of the corporate entrepreneurship dimension variables, namely: innovativeness (Hi); risk-taking and handling ($RTHi$) and proactiveness ($PROACTi$).

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1. The Socio-demographic Information

The data on the CE leadership team, in the manufacturing

companies showed that the majority (87.8%) were males. This finding implies that there is gender imbalance in the top management team. This is probably because the Nigerian culture expects women to be more comfortable taking care of the home front.

4.2. Characteristics of Corporate Entrepreneurship

The study identified Planning function as a major characteristic of the targeted companies. So, Entrepreneurship entails planning. Before establishing any manufacturing factory, a feasibility study is done to confirm a need for such business. Likewise, for any ongoing entrepreneurial business, there is the need for Business Plan

at the beginning of every manufacturing year to analyze activities for the past year; and use it as a guide for the future.

Table 3. *Distribution of Companies by Documenting a Business Plan & etc.*

ELEMENTS/DIMENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Distribution By Documenting biz plan		
Yes, we have Business Plan	93	95.8
No Business Plan	5	4.2
Total	98	100.0
Distribution by extent of monitoring Biz Plan		
Completely	83	84.7
Mostly	10	11.1
Somewhat	5	4.2
Total	98	100.0
Distribution by Planning for Biz Opportunity		
Business opportunity by chance	20	20.0
Indifferent	6	6.0
Business opportunity explored by scanning & thorough planning	74	74.0
Total	100	100.0
Distribution by PLANNING tendencies		
Planning shapes people's destiny	48	89.0
No need of planning, what would be would be	7	11.0
Total	55	100.0

Source: Field work (2021).

Concerning the documentation of business plan, a few (see table 3) of the companies/respondents (4.2%) claimed they had no business plan. A substantial proportion (96%) documented their business plans. Literature has shown that documenting business plan and following it up is one of the characteristics of entrepreneurial corporations. The implication is that since the majority of these firms document their business plans; Nigerian companies are somewhat entrepreneurial.

The result of analysis in Table 3 also, showed that those companies that monitor their business plans completely have traits of CE. In fact, further interview with the CEOs of these companies revealed that integrating preparation and monitoring of business plans into enterprise activity is a major component of the activities in the board meetings. An interview with two selected CEOs showed that more than 90 percent of the board's time is consumed by business plans that bothered on the areas of risk, strategy, audit, finance, investment, social issues and compensation. During one of the interviews, one of the CEOs said:

"In monitoring business plans by any officer, knowing the power center and how to influence it is a crucial skill. At board meetings, officers presenting business plans do not expect the board to pay too much attention to his initiative unless it is highly strategic. The CEO is the boss. Members of the management team always ensure that they work closely with the CEO on any initiative he supports"

The explanation given by the respondents that either mostly or somewhat monitor their business plans are mathematically expressed below as their philosophy (see eq. 1 & 2) for better understanding:

Equation 1. Philosophical equation expressing Entrepreneurial leadership.

$$\text{Profit} = \text{Sales} - \text{Cost} \quad (1)$$

Equation 2. Philosophical equation expressing Non-Entrepreneurial leadership

$$\text{Sales} - \text{Cost} = \text{Profit} \quad (2)$$

It was found that equation Eq. (2) applies to those respondents without an aggressive business plan. They were about 4% of the data (see table 3). They were less concerned with knowing all the cost implications of their corporate actions and did not vigorously pursue the target profit through innovation. Most of the time, they preferred to imitate others rather than being proactive.

Eq. (1) applies to the philosophy of the entrepreneurial companies that constitute 96% of the data. Such entrepreneurial firms ensure compliance with business plans. They are target and profit-oriented. They analyzed their environment and calculated the cost implications of every corporate action in the business plan before undertaking any action.

Distribution by Planning for a business opportunity in Table 3 also showed that (20%) of the respondents claimed they recognized business opportunities by chance. The data also showed that (6%) of the respondents were indifferent, while a substantial proportion of the respondents (74%) explored business opportunities through scanning of their environment. A good characteristic of CE is the continuous scanning of the environment to identify business opportunities. Majority (74%) of the respondents possessed this trait. In addition, the data in Table 3 also showed that almost 89% of the respondents claimed that proper planning and ingenuity determine the success achieved by an organization. In contrast, a handful of the respondents reported that proper planning was of no use as what would be, would ultimately happen. Thus, things were left to chance.

4.3. Analysis of Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) and Its Variables

The corporate entrepreneurship index was evaluated using

corporate entrepreneurial variables, and its elements (See Table 4). In this section, an attempt is made to describe the elements of each of the CE dimensional variables, starting with innovativeness/invention.

Table 4. Elements/Dimension for the Corporate Entrepreneurship Variables.

INNOVATION/INVENTION	PROACTIVENESS	RISK-TAKING
Generally in our firm, we favour: A strong emphasis on the marketing of ongoing products and services.	Generally in our firm: We typically seek to avoid competitive clashes; preferring a live and let live.	Generally in our firm: A strong proclivity/tendency for low-risk projects with a normal and certain rate of return.
Imitating methods that other companies have used for solving their problems.	We have a strong tendency to follow the leader in introducing new products or ideas.	Prefer to study a problem thoroughly before deploying resources to solve it .
How many new lines of products or services have your firm marketed during the past three years?	Firm makes no special effort to take business from the competition.	Because of the nature of the environment, it is best to explore it gradually via cautious, incremental behavior.
Changes in product or service lines have been mostly of minor nature.	We research into the business environment when there is an indication of a problem in our operation.	<i>When confronted with decision-making situations involving uncertainty, our firm.....</i> Adopts a cautious, wait and see posture in order to minimize the probability of making costly decisions.
My firm prefers to adapt methods and techniques that others have developed	Business opportunities are recognized through chance	Risk taking is powered by intuition and actions are taking without recourse to forethought and research
In dealing with its competitors my firm typically initiate actions to which competitors initiate		If an employee takes a risk and fails he or she will be punished
We are very rarely, the first firm to introduce new products, services, administrative technique & operating technologies etc		
Investment in Rand D is the first to cut during difficult economic periods		

Source: Fieldwork (2021).

4.3.1. Frequency Distribution of CE Elements/Dimension by Innovativeness/Inventions

The data in Table 5 confirmed that almost one-third of the respondents had strong emphasis on marketing of on-going products whereas more than half (55%) had strong emphasis on Research and Development (R&D); even though most

actions that go-on in the R & D department are more of innovations rather than outright inventions. In the same vein, (14%) of the respondents are indifferent because, according to them, the infrastructure in the estate is poor and cannot facilitate research activities.

Table 5. Distribution by Innovativeness in Marketing, Problem solving, etc.

ELEMENTS/DIMENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Innovation By Marketing		
Strong marketing of ongoing product	31	31.0
Strong emphasis on R&D and Tech	55	55.0
Indifferent	14	14.0
Total	100	100.0
Innovation By Problem Solving		
Emulation of other companies' method	46	47.0
Indifference	12	12.2
Experiment own method of solving problem	40	40.8
Total	98	100.0
Distr. By New Product Line (in the Last 3 Yrs)		
No new products	25	25.2
Very many lines of new services/products	59	59.5
Indifferent	15	15.1
Total	99	100.0

Source: Field work, 2021.

The implication of the presence of marketing and R & D activities is that these companies have the potential to be entrepreneurial by being innovative but not in producing new

products by invention. Almost half (47%) of the respondents claimed to follow suit or emulate other companies' methods of solving problem; Almost 3 out of every 25 (12.2%)

respondents were indifferent and 2 out of 5 of the respondents claimed to experiment their own methods of solving problems. The implication of this finding is that invention in new product development processes is absent in the target firms with majority following and emulating others in the industry. Table 3, also showed the distribution of CE by lines of products marketed in the last three years. One fourth of the respondents in Table 3 claimed not to market new lines of production during the past few years. Almost 2 out of every 3 respondents

(59%) reported many lines of product/services had been marketed in the last 3 years while 15 percent of the respondents were indifferent. Further investigation into the activities of R & D department showed that a number of innovativeness rather than inventions did really occur in these companies. This finding has serious implication on the ability of Nigerian companies to invent new products as they seemed to improve most of the time on the contents, quality control or packaging of existing products.

Table 6. *Distribution by Reliance on other Companies' Methods, etc.*

ELEMENTS/DIMENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Distr. By Reliance On Other Firms		
Reliance on other firms' methods	27	27.0
Indifferent	10	10.0
Design its own methods	63	63.0
Total	100	100.0
Distribution By Competitors' Deals		
Respond to competitors' action	40	40.0
Indifferent	5	5.0
Initiate actions which competitors respond to	55	55.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr, by Period of introducing new product		
Very rarely	39	39.0
Very often	58	58.0
Indifference	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By competitiveness		
Avoid competition	31	31.0
Indifference	7	7.0
Compete to outdo rivals	62	62.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By propensity to lead		
Emulate leader firms to introduce new product	28	28.0
Indifference	11	11.0
Strive to lead for others to follow	61	61.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By competitive drive		
No Drive to outdo competitors	33	33.0
Indifferent	7	7.0
Very competitive and ready to compete	60	60.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By Research Activity		
Research where there is a problem in business	25	25.0
Indifferent	9	9.0
Scan business environment continuously	66	66.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By Buisness Opportunity		
Business opportunity by chance	20	20.0
Indifferent	6	6.0
Business opportunity by scanning	74	74.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By Proactiveness Tendencies		
Victims of uncontrollable situations	5	6.3
Taking active role, being proactive, entrepreneur controls business	75	93.7
Total	80	100.0

Source: Field work (2021).

4.3.2. Frequency Distribution of CE Elements/Dimension by Proactiveness

With regards to technological methods of production, almost two-thirds (27%) claimed to rely on other firms' techniques or methods (see table 6), one-tenth of the respondents were non-committing and more than two thirds of the respondents (63%) claimed to design their own techniques or methods. Further investigation revealed that copyright laws do not encourage companies to copy other companies' methods out rightly but they do some changes when adapting rather than inventing their own methods. In dealing with the competitors, (40%) of the respondents (see table 6) claimed to respond to competitors alternative cause of action by imitation, one out of every twenty respondents were indifferent and (55%) of the respondents reported that their companies initiated action which other competitors emulated. This finding revealed strong ability of target firms to be proactive. Further, it is worthy of note that companies (58%) that introduce innovative products, have traits of Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE). Almost (39%) of the respondents (see table 6) claimed they seldom or very rarely introduce innovative product administrative techniques and operating technologies whereas (58%) of the respondents claimed their companies introduce very often innovative products, administrative techniques or operating technologies. A handful of the respondents (3%) were non-committing. As earlier observed, risking introduction of new products in the target companies were more of innovation rather than invention. It is encouraging that target firms demonstrated some innovativeness in their operations. This probably accounted for their good performance despite economic down turn. The implication of this finding is that national industrial policies on invention, if any, need to be reawakened and focused on inventions.

The data in table 6 further showed that almost 31% of the respondents avoided competition with other companies whereas (7%) of the respondents were indifferent. More than 2 out of 3 of the respondents adopted competitive clash to outdo the competitors. This again confirmed the entrepreneurial ability of the target companies. Although this is more of innovation rather than invention; entrepreneurial companies tend to be aggressive and more competitive in this era of globalisation. Again, in table 6, about 28% of the respondents reported that they emulated rival companies in introducing new products or idea and (11%) of the respondents were non-committing, while more than (60%) of the respondents claimed that their companies have the propensity to introduce a novel idea or product ahead of other firms contending with it. This finding showed the innovative nature of the target companies. It seemed the companies were conscious of the relevance of innovativeness to the survival of companies in this globalisation era. In the table 6, it was evidently clear that a quarter of the respondents reported that their companies research into impending problem. Nine % of

the respondents were indifferent whereas (66%) of the respondents adduced that their companies continuously scanned their business environment. This is an indication of entrepreneurship trait; tendency to undertake research activities continuously while scanning the environment. Table 6 showed that (20%) of the respondents claimed their companies recognized business opportunities by chance. The data also showed that (6%) of the respondents were indifferent about the company's business opportunities while a substantial proportion (74%) of the respondents explored business opportunities through scanning of their environment. This is a trait of corporate entrepreneurship. Table 6 showed that the companies with no proactive drive to outdo their competitors accounted for almost one-third of the data. The respondents that were indifferent about their companies accounted for (7%) while (60%) of the respondents were very competitive and ready to compete with strong business contenders. This finding avows the presence of CE traits in the target companies. In table 6; about, 6 % of the respondents reported that entrepreneurs are victims of forces beyond what they can decipher. It showed that they are victims of uncontrollable situations. On the other hand, the data supported presence of CE inventory as it affirmed that more than 9 in every 10 respondents claimed that through proactive tendencies, entrepreneurs control their businesses.

4.3.3. Distribution of CE Elements/Dimension by Risk Taking

This section showed the distribution of those elements that constituted the risk-taking dimension. Table 7 showed that (20%) of the respondents claimed they recognised business. In table 7, almost (20%) of the respondents affirmed that their companies have tendency for low risk project with normal and certain rate of return; while a handful of the respondents (2%) were non-committing. However, almost 8 out of 10 of the respondents (79%) were of the opinion that their firms were involved in high risk project with chance of high rate of returns. Another good trait of CE is the continuous desire to take high risk in turning business opportunities to wealth. 79% of the respondents possessed this trait. The distribution in table 7 showed that (17%) of the respondents claimed their companies preferred to study a problem thoroughly before deploying resources to solve it. A few of the respondents (2%) were indifferent about how their companies approached solving a problem and more than 8 out of 10 respondents (81%) adduced that their companies spent money to forestall a protracting or persistent problem.

A good trait of CE is the ability to do things right at the first time so as to prevent problems. It is a good trait for entrepreneurial companies to seek perfection and excellence. 81% of the respondents possessed this trait.

Table 7. *Frequency Distribution by Propensity to take RISK, etc.*

ELEMENTS/DIMENSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Distr. By Propensity To Take Risk		
Low risk project with normal rate of return	19	19.0
Indifferent	2	2.0
High risk and high returns	79	79.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By “Approach To Solving Problems”		
Study problem thoroughly before solving them	17	17.0
Indifferent	2	2.0
Spend money on preventing problem	81	81.0
Total	100	100
Distr. By Environmental Perspective		
Explore environment gradually with cautions	15	15.0
Indifferent	8	8.0
Hold/undertake wide alternative actions	77	77.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr. By “Act Of Aggressiveness”		
Cautious in approach, avoid costly decisions	14	14.0
Indifferent	4	4.0
Aggressive posture to exploit opportunities	82	82.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr by “Inclination to Research”		
Take actions without recourse to research	14	14.0
Indifferent	3	3.0
Avoid taking actions without research	83	83.0
Total	100	100.0
Distr By Maturity In Handling Research Errors/Mistakes		
Employee punished	10	10
Indifferent	5	5.0
Employee encouraged	69	69.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field work, 2021.

The data in table 7 showed that (15%) of the respondents explored their business environment gradually via cautions and incremental behaviour. A substantial proportion of the respondents (77%) held wide ranging acts that were necessary to achieve company objectives while a handful proportion (8%) of the respondents were non-committing on how their companies pursued their objectives. This showed that majority of these companies did a lot of planning and ensured strict compliance to planned events and this act made them to have CE trait. Table 7 depicts that (14%) of the respondents claimed that their firms adopted a cautious, wait and see posture in order to minimize the tendency of making costly decisions. The respondents that were indifferent was (4%) of the distribution while more than 8 out of every 10 respondents were of the opinion that their companies adopted an aggressive posture tenaciously in order to maximize the tendency of exploiting business opportunities. Entrepreneurial companies are always cautious but aggressive in exploiting opportunities. The data above showed that the target companies have traits of CE. Considering Table 7, about (14%) of the respondents claimed that their companies took business risks by intuition. Actions were taken without recourse to research and thorough thinking. Few of the respondents (3%) were indifferent about their firms’ risk-taking inclination and proclivity while (83%) of the respondents adduced that their firms avoided taking action without recourse to profound forethought and

thorough research. Again, the data showed the majority as having proclivity to research which is one of the traits of CE. The data in table 7 showed again that 1 out of 10 of the respondents asserted that if an employee takes a risk and fails, he/she will be punished; a handful of the respondents (5%) were indifferent about whether a positive approach is meted out on an employee who takes a risk and fails. About (70%) of the respondents were of the view that an employee that takes a risk and fails is encouraged by the company.

In Table 8, the relationship between the elements/dimensions of corporate entrepreneurship was observed in order to accept or reject our hypothesis. The data showed that Companies with low innovativeness had a significant empathy for low proactiveness (74 percent). Those with moderate innovativeness have a high tendencies for high proactiveness and those with high innovativeness have very significant proactive tendencies. Companies with low innovativeness express high risk-taking tendencies (about 54 percent). Those companies with moderate and high innovativeness constituted 87 and 100 percent respectively. However, only two-fifth of companies with low proactive tendencies were high risk takers but those with moderate and high proactiveness have very high risk-taking tendencies. This finding showed that manufacturing industries in Nigeria are moderately corporate entrepreneurship oriented.

Table 8 further revealed the distribution of the CE characteristics of manufacturing conglomerates in terms of how

low, moderate or high their dimensional levels are in relation to innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk-taking. It also showed that the respondents exhibit some traits and characteristics of CE. Pulp and Paper products company, and solid mineral companies showed a very high degree of innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk-taking. Plastic and rubber products companies with little innovativeness showed a very high pro-activeness and risk-taking. Basic metal and Chemical/Pharmaceutical companies also showed some measure of high pro-active tendencies. However, Electrical/Electronics company which showed considerable low innovativeness showed a considerable

moderate pro-activeness. And except Footwear/Leather products and Information/Communication companies, all other companies showed a high degree of risk-taking.

Testing of Hypothesis: With a chi-squared value of 21.871 and a probability value of $p > 0.05$ for innovativeness, 21.558 and $p > 0.05$ for pro-activeness and 21.5000 and $p > 0.05$ for risk-taking respectively, there is no significant relationship between the manufacturing companies and corporate entrepreneurship. Thus the hypothesis one is accepted that the manufacturing companies in the southwestern Nigeria are not highly corporate entrepreneurship oriented.

Table 8. Level of CE Variables in the Manufacturing companies.

Manufacturing companies	Innovativeness (%)			Pro-activeness (%)			Risk-taking (%)		
	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High
Food beverages	41.9	25.6	32.1	30.2	9.3	60.5	2.4	16.7	81.0
Textile wearing apparels	50.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Footwear and leather products	60.0	40.0	0.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	40.0	40.0
Wood and wood product	33.3	50.0	16.7	33.3	16.7	50.0	20.0	20.0	60.0
Pulp and paper products	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Chemical and pharmaceuticals	42.1	10.5	47.4	35.0	10.0	55.0	15.0	10.0	75.0
Plastic and rubber products	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Electrical and electronics	66.7	0.0	33.3	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Basic metal	22.2	55.6	22.2	27.3	9.1	63.6	0.0	11.1	88.9
Information and communication	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0
Solid mineral mining	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Others	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Chi-square	21.871			21.558			21.500		
Sig	0.468			0.487			0.490		

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The contribution of Conglomerates and CE towards the rapid economic development of the country; the various interventions by the government since independence, the current economic meltdown due to covid-19 pandemic, and the global call for the promotion of entrepreneurship in general and CE in particular as a panacea to economic problems served as background information in this paper. Also, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study and hypothesis were discussed and foreground in the Introduction section.

Theoretical and empirical works on dimensions of CE were reviewed.

The Methodological section enumerates and discusses the research methods, the sampling technique, sources of primary, and secondary data collection, and the questionnaire. Also, the methods adopted in operationalizing various constructs of the study and the techniques of data analyzes were discussed. The target sampling units of interest were manufacturing companies with more than 200 workers with total assets of more than #500million. They generally engaged in extraction, transformation, conversion, fabrication, and assemblage of production inputs, and final products for commercial and consumption purposes. The multi-stage sampling technique adopted in selecting the sample population, and the primary data were collected through questionnaires and direct interviews. The secondary data

were collected from official documents, such as financial reports, records, bulletins, and journals of target companies and scholarly articles from libraries of universities. The data generated were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Then followed by the presentation of the findings in line with the stated objectives, The study identified the existing corporate entrepreneurship (CE) characteristics of manufacturing companies in Southwestern Nigeria in which the planning function is the most prominent. It described the CE variables which include Innovation/invention, proactiveness and risk-taking. It further identified the level of corporate entrepreneurship (CE) in the study area and there after tested the H_0 : The manufacturing corporations are not highly corporate entrepreneurship oriented. The majority of the respondents were male (about 88%). There is gender imbalance at the top management level. The Federal Government may want to be cautious in encouraging women participation in industry as this may have an adverse effect on the home front especially as it affects the upbringing of the children. However, women with the identified track of Corporate Entrepreneurship traits may be encouraged to become CEOs or supported to own companies.

The majority of the respondents preferred outright purchase of factory sites to locating factories at industrial estates leading to higher cost of operation because of poor infrastructural development in the estates. The government may want to reverse this situation by attracting more industries into the estate to promote joint research effort that

enhances CE.

Planning was found to be very crucial to management activities. With a chi-squared value of 21.871, and a probability value of $p > 0.05$ for innovative, 21.558 and $p > 0.05$ for pro-activeness and 21.5000 and $p > 0.05$ for risk-taking respectively, there is no significant relationship between the manufacturing companies and corporate entrepreneurship. Thus the hypothesis one is accepted that the manufacturing companies in the southwestern Nigeria are not highly corporate entrepreneurship oriented.

From the foregoing, the majority of the manufacturing companies in southwestern Nigeria were moderately corporate entrepreneurial oriented. The innovative nature of the Companies is more of innovations and not inventions. The implication of this finding is that federal government may want focus more on enacting industrial policies that will facilitate invention in the manufacturing sector.

In the light of above, the following recommendations are made: Further research into gender imbalance at the top management level of the manufacturing industries is necessary so as to identify the role of women in corporate entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

The Government may want to improve on infrastructural facilities at the Industrial Estates to enhance CE. Government may want to encourage more manufacturing industries to get listed on NSE so as to make more money available for research activities in the companies.

The innovativeness of the Conglomerates in Southwestern Nigeria should be improved by enhancing their access to finance, research opportunities in the universities and other research centres in Nigeria. Also, raw materials and technology, particularly, the cost of critical raw materials and appropriate technology, should be partly funded by the government.

Access to finance should be guaranteed by the government, especially the local government in order to carry out research and development activities. The CEOs and members of coalition groups in each industry should be continuously undergo training in management development programs in order to enhance their managerial competencies and capability and make them more entrepreneurial.

The Local Governmental and non-governmental organizations in Nigeria should emphasize the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes, together with auxiliary system that promotes the institutionalization of CE as a strategic orientation of manufacturing Industries.

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