

ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness) and poverty mitigation in rural regions of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The research study adopted a cross-sectional design, supported by the achievement motivation theory. The population comprised an infinite population of large number of rural entrepreneurs. 520 sample size was purposively selected as the respondents that completed the questionnaire. The data collected for the study was analysed using PLS-SEM processed on SMARTPLS statistical software. The results indicated a statistically significant and positive correlation between risk-taking and proactiveness, and the alleviation of poverty. However, it was found that innovativeness does not demonstrate a statistically meaningful impact on the reduction of poverty. Policymakers and development organisations should endorse entrepreneurship programmes that encourage strategic risk-taking and proactive engagement among rural entrepreneurs. Moreso, further research should be conducted to investigate the impact of innovation on poverty reduction.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Risk-taking, Innovativeness, and Proactiveness, Poverty Alleviation.

Introduction

Africa, most often classified as a developing continent with numerous developing nations, struggles with rising poverty levels despite governmental and non-governmental efforts to alleviate it. Sub-Saharan Africa, encompassing 52 countries including Nigeria, faces particularly alarming poverty rates (Okere et al., 2023). Studies by various researchers such as Nwani and Osuji (2020) and Baloch et al. (2020) revealed a grim reality that over 50% of the population in several Sub-Saharan African countries live below the poverty line of one dollar per day, with Nigeria overtaking India as the country with the highest number of individuals living in extreme poverty globally (Jaiyeola & Choga, 2020). The prevalence of extreme poverty in Nigeria, affecting approximately 90 million people according to Orji et al. (2020), demands immediate attention, particularly as the rate of poverty escalation is estimated at six individuals per minute. Moreover, there is a higher concentration of poverty in Northern Nigeria with approximately 86% of the population suffering from extreme deprivation according to (Tunji, 2022).

The poverty situation in Kaduna, located in Nigeria's northern region, is similar to the situation in most northern states and requires urgent attention. Varrella (2020) reported that the Kaduna State

government acknowledges a significant portion of its population, around 3.5 million out of 8.1 million, living below the poverty line, with approximately 44% experiencing extreme poverty. Similarly, Gaiya et al. (2023) echoed concerns about rising poverty rates in Kaduna, emphasizing the need for immediate intervention. Sani (2019) suggested that fostering entrepreneurial efforts at both community and societal levels could be pivotal in addressing the escalating poverty crisis in Kaduna state.

Increasing entrepreneurial activities in rural areas of Kaduna state could be key to reducing poverty levels. The role of women in these entrepreneurial pursuits is crucial, as they often establish small businesses to supplement household income while managing family responsibilities. Shastri et al. (2021) noted a higher prevalence of female entrepreneurs in rural settings, attributed to women's inclination towards starting businesses. Recognizing that women make up approximately half of the global population, their involvement in economic activities is vital for societal development across social, political, and economic dimensions. Similarly, female entrepreneurs typically demonstrate strong determination, self-direction, and a sense of accomplishment, traits that contribute to their ability to innovate. Given this, it is essential to examine the entrepreneurial initiatives of rural women in Kaduna state to address poverty effectively.

Entrepreneurs engage in a variety of behaviours, collectively known as entrepreneurial orientation, aimed at achieving success. Scholarly literature emphasizes three key characteristics aiding orientation: innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness (Corrêa et al., 2022; Urban & Maphumulo, 2021). This study utilized these constructs—innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness—to assess their potential role in alleviating poverty in rural areas of Kaduna state, particularly through the lens of women's entrepreneurial activities. Innovativeness involves introducing new ideas or approaches, while risk-taking entails ventures into uncertain situations (Twum et al., 2021), and proactiveness refers to taking initiatives to seize opportunities or address challenges (Chowdhury & Audretsch, 2021). In considering women's entrepreneurship, these qualities are essential as they enable women to adapt to changing circumstances, pursue novel solutions to economic challenges, and seize opportunities for growth and development in rural communities. Thus, exploring how these traits manifest in the entrepreneurial endeavours of rural women in Kaduna state offers insights into effective poverty mitigation strategies.

As outlined by Makhoulfi et al. (2021), innovation involves the creation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, processes, products, or services. In contrast, risk-taking, as described by Kock and Gemünden (2020), refers to engaging in calculated and manageable risks to achieve benefits, avoiding reckless actions that could harm firm performance. Proactiveness, as defined by Frare and Beuren (2021), is a strategic approach encompassing entrepreneurial decision-making styles, methods, and practices. The integration of these three entrepreneurial endeavours in rural Kaduna could serve as a beam light for poverty alleviation in the state. Furthermore, the scholarly literature has not extensively delved into the relationship between entrepreneurial activities, such as innovation,

risk-taking, and proactiveness, and poverty. There is a notable lack of understanding regarding how innovation, risk propensity, and proactivity correlate with poverty. While the correlation between innovation and Organisational performance has been extensively studied, with numerous works by researchers like Rehman and Iqbal (2020), Singh et al. (2020), Makhloufi et al. (2021), and Donbesuur et al. (2020); only a limited number of studies (e.g., Pansera & Martinez, 2016) have examined the link between innovation and poverty, despite innovation's significant potential in poverty alleviation. Consequently, this research seeks to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the relationship between innovation and poverty in greater depth.

The same approach is taken for risk-taking behaviours which have the potential to significantly enhance business and financial performance that may lead to a reduction in poverty levels within these regions. The act of entrepreneurial risk-taking holds promises for poverty mitigation in rural Kaduna. While the relationship between performance and risk-taking, akin to innovation, has received substantial attention in academic literature, previous research has primarily focused on exploring the correlation between risk propensity and firm or employee performance, neglecting its association with poverty (See Safiullah et al. 2022; Guo & Jiang; 2019, García-Lopera et al., 2022) stands out as it specifically addressed the correlation between risk-taking behaviour and poverty alleviation, an area that remains relatively underexplored in the existing literature. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between employee risk-taking behaviour and the reduction of societal poverty, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge in this field.

In conclusion, the existing literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of the impact of innovation, risk-taking, and proactiveness on extreme poverty. Conducting a study that examines the relationship between risk-taking, innovation, proactiveness, and poverty reduction represents a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge. This is due to the limited availability of research on this particular topic.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

Poverty

Poverty can be defined as the state of being unable to fulfil one's fundamental needs due to insufficient income or limited access to essential services. The term refers to a deficiency in fundamental abilities to engage proficiently in societal activities, insufficient resources to provide for basic necessities such as sustenance and clothing, and a lack of accessibility to credit, among other factors (Guo & Liu, 2022). According to Gamboa et al. (2020), poverty is not solely characterised by the incapacity of individuals to procure fundamental necessities, but also diminishes their capacity and social standing to engage in various societal endeavours. The assertion made by Zhou and Liu (2022) posits that a significant portion of the population in Nigeria has been deprived of the esteemed status of citizenship due to the prevalence of poverty.

Entrepreneurial Orientation

The concept of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) emphasizes the pivotal involvement of top level managers or executives in the decision-making procedures, originating from the entrepreneurship ideology (Clark et al., 2023). Lumpkin and Pidduck (2021) have frequently cited EO as a precursor to exceptional performance. Over the course of time, multiple definitions of EO have surfaced, as noted by Pascal and Shin (2015). EO has garnered significant attention in the field of entrepreneurship research, with a multitude of studies exploring the correlation between EO and diverse aspects of SMEs performance. EO is conceptualized as the procedural, operational, and strategic decision-making processes that facilitate the creation of new ventures. Similarly, it is a company's inclination to undertake innovative, proactive, and risk-taking actions in order to accomplish its strategic goals.

Innovativeness

The concept of entrepreneurial innovation pertains to the introduction of novel ideas, experiences, and inventive processes that deviate from existing practises. Corrêa et al. (2022) explained that entrepreneurial innovation is characterised by a proclivity to seek out innovative, unconventional, or imaginative resolutions to obstacles. According to Al-Hakimi et al. (2021), innovation can manifest in various forms, including product, process, and organisation. Innovation is conceptualized as novel ideas or the implementation of existing ideas in new ways to enhance an organization's sales, profitability, and market shares. Wales et al. (2022) posited that entrepreneurial innovation involves the utilisation of technological, institutional, and human resources, as well as discoveries, in order to enhance productive processes. This results in the creation of novel practises, products, markets, institutions, and organisations that require improvement in terms of organisational performance, such as sales, profitability, and market shares (Al-Hakimi et al. 2021).

Proactiveness

The degree of entrepreneurial proactiveness exhibited by a firm is a critical determinant of its ability to endure in a dynamic market, particularly for organisations with restricted resources relative to larger counterparts (Corrêa et al. 2022). According to Covin et al. (2020), proactiveness is characterised by the ability to anticipate and respond to future needs by actively seeking out new opportunities, regardless of their relationship to current operations. According to Hodgkinson et al. (2023), proactiveness is frequently characterised as the act of seeking opportunities and utilising resources to enhance performance. The concept of proactiveness pertains to the significance of taking initiative in the entrepreneurial process (Corrêa et al. 2022). According to Xiao et al. (2022), an organisation can achieve satisfactory performance by adopting a proactive approach.

Risk Taking

The dimension of entrepreneurial risk-taking is a significant aspect of entrepreneurial activities, with a substantial emphasis on operational activities. According to Baldegger et al. (2021), risk taking refers

to the disposition to allocate resources towards endeavours and undertakings that are characterised by uncertain outcomes. Risk taking can be seen as a deliberate allocation of resources by a firm towards projects that have the potential for significant returns, but also carry a considerable risk of failure. According to Baldegger et al. (2021), entrepreneurs who exhibit a propensity for risk-taking tend to disregard impediments and devote significant effort towards attaining superior outcomes. According to Njoroget et al. (2020) definition, risk taking pertains to the degree of willingness of a company to undertake significant and hazardous obligations.

Theoretical Framework

Achievement Motivation Theory

It is often observed that entrepreneurs often exhibit a caring disposition, evident in their leadership qualities and approaches. This can often be likened to David McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory as pivotal in distinguishing entrepreneurs from non-entrepreneurs (Xue et al., 2021). Thus the theory is grounded in McClelland's theory, as supported by existing literature claims with the assertion that achievement holds greater significance than mere financial gain, motivating individuals to pursue roles and responsibilities aligned with their values. Feedback is deemed essential for success, and those driven by achievement continuously seek to improve and innovate in their tasks.

In alignment with achievement theory principles there are certain entrepreneurs that exhibit heightened levels of motivational characteristics compared to their counterparts in pursuit of objectives and goal attainment. Xue et al. (2021) terms this inclination as "achievement" for individuals with high motivation levels primarily driven by intrinsic desires to enhance their work performance. According to Anderman (2020), the concept of "dominant orientation towards personal achievement" involves a preference for freedom, openness, and energizing republicanism, contrasting with tendencies towards authoritarianism or lethargy commonly seen in inhibiting societies. Thus, the importance of entrepreneurship in fostering economic progress is evidenced through several avenues, such as identifying, assessing and exploiting business opportunities, the establishment or rejuvenation of enterprises to enhance dynamism, and the promotion of innovation, skills, job creation, and risk-taking within the economy.

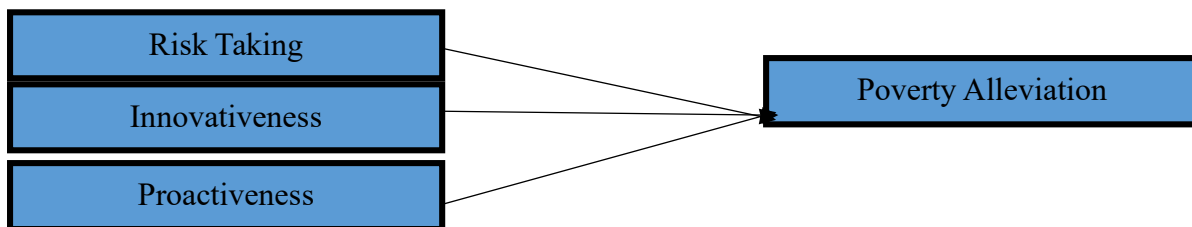
Empirical Review of Related Literature

Limited research endeavours have attempted to establish a correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable under investigation. Several scholars have endeavoured to investigate the correlation between entrepreneurial orientation and poverty. The study conducted by Alvarez and Barney (2013) investigated the correlation between entrepreneurial proactiveness and poverty. The authors arrived at the conclusion that proactivity has significant potential in mitigating poverty. Alvarez and Barney posited that the proactive behaviour of entrepreneurs is a key determinant of their high performance, which in turn has the potential to generate a ripple effect in reducing poverty levels within a given society. Zainol et al. (2014) conducted a conceptual

investigation aimed at establishing a theoretical framework for mitigating poverty. The study conducted by the authors involved a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, leading to the determination that entrepreneurial orientation, encompassing entrepreneurial proactiveness, risk-taking, and innovation, may play a crucial role in mitigating poverty. The study's authors concluded that further empirical investigations are necessary to evaluate the aforementioned relationships. This study aims to empirically investigate the correlation between proactiveness, risk-taking, innovation, and poverty, as suggested by Zainol et al. (2014).

The study conducted by Onyia et al. (2022) investigated the correlation between entrepreneurial innovativeness and the longevity of a firm. The study's authors arrived at the conclusion that there exists a significant correlation between entrepreneurial innovativeness and firm survival. The study's authors arrived at the conclusion that a significant percentage of enterprises that persist within a particular community will ultimately contribute to the reduction of poverty levels in said community. Kareem et al. (2021) conducted a study in Abeokuta, Nigeria, explores the influence of entrepreneurship on poverty. The aim of this investigation is to delineate the socio-economic attributes of the participants within the designated geographical region. The research employed a non-parametric approach to analysis, utilising methods such as the Chi-Square test, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis in order to accomplish the specified research goals. The findings of the study indicate that poverty is influenced by various socio-economic factors, including but not limited to job opportunities, qualifications, gender, age, and years of experience.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

From the research model, theoretical framework, and the empirical review of literature, the study hypothesised that:

- H₁: Risk taking has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state.
- H₂: Innovativeness has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state.
- H₃: Proactiveness has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state.

Methodology

Research Design, Population, Sample, Scope and Source of Data

The research utilised a cross-sectional design. Additionally, the study's population is regarded as infinite. In contrast, Survey Research will be used in this study, which focuses on collecting standardized data from a large sample via self-administered questionnaires. This strategy is designed

to collect data systematically across a large population in order to describe, compare, and explain knowledge, attitudes, or behaviours (Hiver et al., 2021). Surveys are effective for investigating relationships between variables across varied groups, as they provide statistical rigour and the capacity to generalize findings to wider populations. According to Hiver et al. (2021), they provide quantifiable data that can be analysed using various statistical approaches to detect patterns and relationships, making them excellent for hypothesis testing and studying broad trends across a population, as was done in this work.

The population of rural entrepreneurs in Kaduna State is deemed infinite due to the absence of an official count. It is widely speculated that the number of women entrepreneurs in the state exceeds tens of thousands. Since the population of the study is infinite in nature, according to Rose et al. (2015), the formula for determining the sample size of an infinite population is:

$$n_r = \frac{4pq}{d^2}$$

Where:

n_r = required sample size, p = proportion of the population having the characteristic, $q = 1 - p$ and d = degree of precision (i.e. margin of error acceptable). p was set at 0.5 as advised by Rose *et al.*, (2015), $q = 1 - p = 1 - 0.5 = 0.5$, $d = 0.05$, (d was set at 5%, as the acceptable margin of error for this study). Substituting these figures into the formula we have:

$$n_r = \frac{4 \times .5 \times .5}{.05^2} = \frac{1}{.0025} = 400$$

In order to address the issue of non-response bias and to ensure that the study meets the minimum sample size requirement, it has been recommended by Israel (2013) to increase the minimum sample size by 30% from 400 to 520. Thus, the investigator disseminated a total of 520 questionnaires to the participants of the investigation. The participants of this research comprise of rural business owners situated in three arbitrarily chosen local government areas within Kaduna State (Chikun, Igabi and Kajuru).

The study employed purposive sampling as a method for selecting participants to be included in the study given its exclusive focus on women entrepreneurs situated in the designated rural areas under investigation. The allocation of the 520 questionnaires to the respondents was evenly distributed among the three designated local government areas. A total of 520 copies of questionnaire were distributed evenly across rural areas in the three selected local government areas.

The instruments for assessing entrepreneurial innovation, risk-taking, and proactiveness were adapted from the work of Hughes and Morgan's (2007). Three items was utilised to assess each of the three independent variables. The survey instrument employed a Likert scale consisting of five points, with the endpoints being "Strongly Disagree" (SD) and "Strongly Agree" (SA). The assessment of poverty will be conducted utilising the four-item scale that was developed by Naminse and Zhuang (2018).

The data collected for the study were analysed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) processed on SmartPls3.

Analysis of Results and Discussion of Findings.

Table 1: Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Risk Taking	RT1	0.854	0.782	0.873
	RT2	0.883		
	RT3	0.915		
Innovativeness	INV1	0.958	0.905	0.948
	INV2	0.949		
	INV3	0.948		
Proactiveness	PRO1	0.896	0.829	0.914
	PRO2	0.892		
	PRO3	0.942		
Poverty Alleviation	PA1	0.976	0.873	0.938
	PA2	0.950		
	PA3	0.898		

NOTE: No items were deleted from the data set, as they all met the minimum requirements. AVE stands for Average Variance Extracted while CR represents Composite Reliability. PA4 was deleted to poor item loading.

Hair et al. (2019) highlights the importance of loadings that exceed the threshold of 0.7. As evidenced by the data presented in Table 1, all items have loadings that surpass the established criterion, suggesting a constant and strong correlation with their corresponding constructs. Additionally, it can be observed from Table 1 that each construct demonstrates a composite reliability coefficient surpassing 0.7, hence satisfying the recommended minimal threshold for composite reliability. Furthermore, it is worth noting that all constructs in the study satisfy the prescribed minimum threshold for average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.5. Therefore, it may be deduced that the available evidence provides robust support for the concept of convergent validity.

Table 2 : Discriminant Validity using Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio

	1	2	3	4
1. Innovativeness				
2. Poverty Alleviation	0.756			
3. Proactiveness	0.715	0.771		
4. Risk Taking	0.812	0.777	0.820	

According to Hair et al. (2019), the HTMT values for each pair of features are notably lower than the recommended threshold of 0.85. This observation implies that each construct demonstrates more robust connections with its own indicators compared to indicators of other constructs, hence confirming the existence of discriminant validity. The research emphasises the measuring of diverse underlying concepts by using different assessment methods to explore these constructs, hence strengthening the concept of discriminant validity.

Table 3: **Test of Hypotheses (Path Coefficients)**

Hypotheses	Beta Value	Std. Error	T Stat	P Value	Decision
H ₁ : RSK->PA	0.345	0.134	2.573	0.010	Supported
H ₂ : INV->PA	0.159	0.140	1.130	0.259	Not Supported
H ₃ : PRO->PA	0.454	0.098	4.620	0.000	Supported

It is seen on Table 3 that there exists a positive and significant relationship between Risk Taking (RSK) and Poverty Alleviation (PA) in Kaduna state. The data presented demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between risk taking and poverty alleviation at less than 5% significant level ($\beta = 0.345$, T Stat = 2.573, $P < 0.05$). As a result, hypothesis 1 that states that risk taking has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state. is supported. On the contrary, on Table 3, it is seen that Innovativeness (INV) does not exert positive and significant influence on Poverty Alleviation (PA) in the study area ($\beta = 0.159$, T Stat = 1.130, $P > 0.05$). This means that the study does not support the second hypothesis of the study that states that Innovativeness has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state. Finally, that there exists a positive and significant relationship between Proactiveness (PRO) and Poverty Alleviation (PA) in the study area. The data presented demonstrates a statistically significant relationship between the variables at less than 1% significant level ($\beta = 0.454$, T Stat = 4.620, $P < 0.01$). As a result, hypothesis 3 that states that Proactiveness has a significant effect on poverty alleviation in rural areas in Kaduna state. is supported.

Table 4 *R Square*

Construct	R Square
Poverty Alleviation	0.747

The study's coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.747, suggesting that around 74.7% of the variability in Poverty Alleviation in Kaduna State can be accounted for by the independent factors. These variables include Innovativeness, risk-taking, and Proactiveness. The significant proportion indicates a robust correlation between the chosen independent factors and the dependent variable. The statement suggests that the factors of Innovativeness, risk-taking, and Proactiveness play a combined role in influencing the extent of poverty reduction in Kaduna State. This research highlights the significance of these entrepreneurial attributes in facilitating endeavours focused on alleviating poverty and fostering socio-economic progress within the area.

Discussion of Findings

The results shown in Table 3 demonstrate a noteworthy and statistically significant correlation between risk-taking, proactiveness (PRO) and poverty alleviation in Kaduna state. This suggests that entrepreneurs that engage in higher levels of risk-taking tend to achieve more success in reducing poverty levels. Also, the substantial influence of proactiveness on poverty alleviation highlights the need of assuming responsibility, capitalising on opportunities, and aggressively tackling obstacles in promoting socioeconomic progress. The presented findings indicate a statistically significant association between risk-taking, proactiveness; and positive outcomes in poverty alleviation activities in rural areas of Kaduna state respectively. These conclusions are backed by a beta coefficient of 0.345, a t-statistic of 2.573 for risk taking; and a beta coefficient of 0.454, a t-statistic of 4.620 for proactiveness; all with a p-value of less than 0.05 respectively. Potential rationales for this correlation may encompass the notion that engaging in risk-taking frequently engenders creativity and the exploration of novel prospects, so fostering economic expansion and job creation, ultimately facilitating the alleviation of poverty. Similarly, the proactive recognition and utilisation of market prospects, the aptitude to adjust to evolving conditions and the capability to execute prompt and efficient actions to tackle poverty-related concerns can account for reasons for proactiveness correlation. These findings align with prior research that has emphasised the significance of entrepreneurial risk-taking in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty (Gaiya et al. 2023; NikHussin & Aziz, 2021). In summary, the findings offer concrete evidence in favour of hypothesis 1 and 3 and emphasise the need of engaging in risky and proactive behaviour to tackle poverty issues in rural areas of Kaduna state.

In contrast to initial hypotheses, the findings reported in Table 3 suggest that there is no statistically significant positive relationship between innovativeness (INV) and poverty alleviation (PA) in the examined region. This conclusion is supported by a beta coefficient of 0.159, a t-statistic of 1.130, and a p-value greater than 0.05. The results of this study indicate that, in the specific setting of rural regions in Kaduna state, the amount of innovativeness exhibited by entrepreneurs does not have a substantial impact on the reduction of poverty rates. Potential causes for this phenomenon may encompass a range of circumstances, including restricted availability of resources for executing inventive concepts, insufficient infrastructure, or difficulties in expanding innovative solutions to encompass wider demographics. Although the study did not find any significant findings, it is important to acknowledge that innovativeness continues to be a critical element of entrepreneurship and may still have a significant impact on long-term economic growth and attempts to reduce poverty. This study contradicts prior research that has emphasised the beneficial effect of innovation on reducing poverty, indicating that the connection between innovativeness and poverty alleviation may differ based on the circumstances and other factors that influence it.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the correlation between entrepreneurial attributes, namely risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactiveness, and the mitigation of poverty in rural regions of Kaduna state. The results suggest that there is a positive and significant relationship between risk-taking and proactiveness with poverty alleviation. However, innovativeness does not demonstrate a meaningful impact on poverty reduction. These findings emphasise the significance of entrepreneurial conduct, specifically proactive endeavours and strategic risk-taking, in tackling poverty issues. Nevertheless, the absence of substantial importance attributed to innovativeness indicates the necessity for additional investigation and interventions tailored to specific contexts in order to effectively harness innovative ideas for the purpose of poverty reduction in rural areas. In summary, the study enhances our comprehension of the impact of entrepreneurial traits on socioeconomic progress and emphasises the significance of customised approaches to effectively address poverty in rural regions of Kaduna state.

Recommendations

According to the results of this study, there are numerous suggestions that may be made to improve poverty reduction initiatives in rural regions of Kaduna state. Policymakers and development organisations should actively promote and support entrepreneurship programmes that foster measured risk-taking among rural entrepreneurs, considering the strong positive correlation between risk-taking and poverty alleviation. Also, efforts focused on promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and willingness to take risks in rural areas, such as providing education on entrepreneurship and conducting awareness campaigns, could be advantageous in creating a favourable atmosphere for entrepreneurial pursuits.

In addition to this, it is important to establish laws and initiatives that provide incentives and support for proactive actions undertaken by rural entrepreneurs. This could encompass offering assistance for proactive problem-solving strategies, fostering collaboration and networking among entrepreneurs, and advocating for the implementation of innovative technology and business models that effectively tackle poverty-related issues in rural regions. Lastly, though the study did not yield statistically significant evidence supporting a correlation between innovativeness and poverty alleviation, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential significance of innovation in effectively tackling poverty-related issues. Hence, additional investigation is necessary to delve into the fundamental elements that contribute to the absence of importance and to ascertain particular contexts or circumstances in which innovativeness may exert a more substantial influence on endeavours aimed at reducing poverty.

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ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN SELECTED INSURANCE FIRMS IN YENAGOA METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between Organisational change and employee commitment. The correlation surveyed design was adopted to measure the relationship between the variables. The population consisted of all insurance firms in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. However, the researcher selected 5 top ranked insurance companies with quality assurance standards. A sample size of 86 participants was selected from the insurance firms. The participants were the operational level staff. The questionnaire instrument was used to elicit data. The Pearson Moment Correlational Coefficient was adopted to test the hypotheses with the aid of SPSS. The findings showed that Organisational change dimension relate with employee commitment measures. The research concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between Organisational change and employee commitment (affective and normative). However, it was recommended that the management of insurance firms should endeavour to train and retrain their employees so as to survive this era of technological advancement.

Keywords: Affective Commitment, Employee Commitment, Normative Commitment, Organisational Change, Technological Change

Introduction

The primary objective of any organisation, including insurance firms, is to ensure that their products or services satisfy consumer expectations. Nevertheless, as Mathis and Jackson (2010) noted, employees are not only indispensable assets to an organisation, but also problematic to supervise. Assuming that the organization's competitiveness and the fulfilment of its mission are contingent upon the commitment of its employees, as human resources management is indispensable. Employee commitment (EC) can manifest in various ways, including the desire to remain in the organisation (affective commitment), the need to stay in the organisation (continuance commitment), or the mindset of an obligation to remain in the organisation (normative commitment) (Mercurio, 2015).