



The role of the family on entrepreneurial intentions of young individuals

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Abstract

Regardless of the race, language, religion, culture, tradition, norms, age, gender, affluence, and societal positions, every individual belongs to a Family. Studies on the role of the family on entrepreneurial intentions has been limited to the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991). This study aims at investigating the role of the family on entrepreneurial intentions of young individuals. The study was based on the micro systems of the ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979). The study also made use of secondary data from articles, journals and other relevant online resources. Findings from the study revealed that the family exists in every social groups or institutions. Findings also revealed that the family has a direct impact on the child thus playing a number of roles in the society. Recommendations were made to individuals, social entrepreneurs, the government and the society at large.

Keywords: role, family, development, sustenance, eco-friendly, entrepreneurial environment

1. Introduction

Regardless of the race, language, religion, culture, tradition, norms, age, gender, affluence, and societal positions, every individual belongs to a Family. The family is a unique social structure which basically consists of the Father, Mother and the Children (Murdock, 1949) ^[15]. The family is the formation or group of people living together either through blood relations or through vital or legal responsibility (Stephen, 1999) ^[20]. The family as a unique social structure and their roles and functions in which they perform in the society has received numerous attentions from scholars, authors and sociologists all over the world, most especially the works of (Guirkingner and Platteau, 2017; Foster and Rosenzweig, 2002; Saptarshi *et al*, 2019; and Booth & Deli, 1996) ^[9, 13, 17, 7] to mention a few.

Entrepreneurial Intent refers to the mindset of individuals in engaging in entrepreneurial activities or set up a business. Entrepreneurial Intent happens as result of a number of factors which includes education, awareness, entrepreneurial background, state of the economy, lack of employment opportunities, high achievement goals, and desire to be self-employed amongst others (Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Akanbi and Ofoegbu, 2011; and Kolvereid, 1996) ^[18, 5, 14].

One of the major influence on entrepreneurial intent in young individuals is the family in which they grew up (Asenge, 2018) ^[2]. Many studies in past and recent times had reported positive relationships between family background and entrepreneurship intentions, most notably the works of (Anjum *et al*, 2018; Asna and Farhan, 2018; Singh and Prasad, 2016; and Zellweger *et al*, 2010) ^[1, 19, 21]. But none of this studies made use of the micro systems of ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979) ^[8]. The practical implication of the Ecological Systems Theory has being limited to studies relating to out-of-school activities. Sequel to this, this study aims at investigating the roles being played by the family on entrepreneurial intention of young individuals using the ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979) ^[8].

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies on Family and Entrepreneurial Intentions

Previous studies on family and entrepreneurial intentions had made use of the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991) ^[3] as its theoretical background. Some notable past and recent studies of this context will be discussed in this section.

Jon and Siqueira (2007) investigated prior family business exposure and intergenerational influence on entrepreneurial intentions using Ajzen (2002) ^[4] theory of planned behavior. The study found out that prior exposure to family business had a positive significant on entrepreneurial intentions.

Similar to the study of Jon and Siqueira (2007), Akinbode *et al*, (2018) ^[6] also investigated the effect of prior family business background on entrepreneurial intentions. The study made use of data collected from a well-structured questionnaire from 450 university undergraduate students. Structural equation modeling was used to validate the proposed model while multiple regression was used test the hypothesis raised in the study. The results of the study reported that respondent feedbacks showed that there is a significant between prior family business background and entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students. Which is also in correlation with Ajzen (1991) ^[3] theory of planned behavior.

Nandamuri (2016); Zellweger (2010) ^[21]; and Carolin *et al* (2019) ^[10], asserted that family occupational background directly have an impact on entrepreneurial intentions of students.

2.2 Understanding the ecological systems theory

Developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979, Ecological Systems Theory explains how human development is influenced by different types of environmental systems (Ettetal and Mahoney, 2017) ^[12]. The ecological systems theory holds that we encounter different environments throughout our lifespan that may influence our behavior in varying degrees. These systems include the micro system, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macro

system, and the chronosystem. (<https://explorable.com/ecologicalsystemstheory#:~:targetText=The%20ecological%20systems%20theory%20holds,macro%20system%2C%20and%20the%20chronosystem.>)

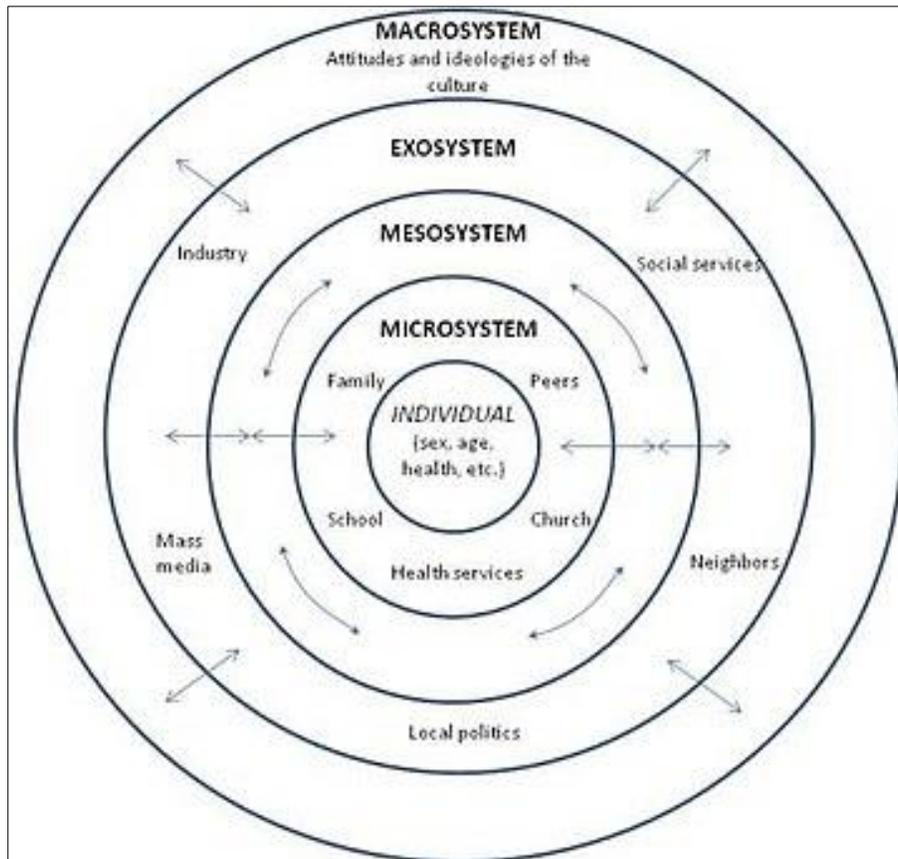
(Ettetal and Mahoney, 2017) ^[12] highlighted four interrelated types of environmental systems in Bronfenbrenner’s classic rendition of ecological systems theory, namely, the

1. Micro-System
2. Meso-System
3. Exo-System
4. Macro-Systems

This study will make use of the Micro Systems Theory of the Ecological Systems Theory. Micro systems theory refers to the

institutions and groups that most immediately and directly impact the child's development including: family, school, religious institutions, neighborhood, and peers. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_systems_theory

According to an article published on explorable.com by Sincero in 2012: The micro system's setting is the direct environment we have in our lives. Your family, friends, classmates, teachers, neighbors and other people who have a direct contact with you are included in your micro system. The micro system is the setting in which we have direct social interactions with these social agents. The theory states that we are not mere recipients of the experiences we have when socializing with these people in the micro system environment, but we are contributing to the construction of such environment.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_systems_theory

Fig 1: Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) ^[8]'s Ecological Systems Theory

2.3 Understanding Roles of the family

The roles in which the family plays cannot be underemphasized in the day to day activities of every family. Every individual in the family plays a certain role as regards the responsibilities coupled with that role. These roles are being allocated within the various members of the family. For instance, the father plays the main role of the provider while the mother in some cases plays such role coupled with other roles and functions which includes primary healthcare services for the children and the total well-being of the family. The children likewise too has their own roles in the family.

An online article published on the <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/350/350-093/350-093.html> website, highlighted the five most essential roles for effective family functioning:

1. Provision of Resources
2. Nurturance and Support
3. Life Skills Development
4. Maintenance and Management of the Family System
5. Sexual Gratification of Marital Partners

2.4 Micro Systems of Ecological System theory and how it applies to Family and Entrepreneurial Intentions

The Micro Systems of the Ecological Theory consists of the

family, peer groups. It is important to know that ecological human theory explains why we exhibit different behaviors and characters and reasons why we take decisions. The application of the Micro System of the Ecological Systems Theory to Entrepreneurial Intentions implies that family directly impacts child. For instance, a child from a successful business background will tend to continue in the business trend or establish another business due to the idea gathered from the family business.

Since socialization begins within the family, every family has a number of roles to play in nurturing entrepreneurial intentions of young individuals within the family. According to the roles specified above, the roles can be summarized as follow:

1. **Role Modelling:** the older members of the family must exhibit a role model worthy attitude to the younger ones towards business and entrepreneurial practices.
2. **Life Skills Development:** Life skills development includes career and business talks.
3. **Provision of Resources:** Provision of resources such as food, water and shelter for the young ones gives room for logical thinking thus improving their chances of thinking towards entrepreneurship.

3. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded that the family as the primary agent of socialization and the micro systems theory, most especially the parents directly impact the child's thinking and psychology thus improving the chances of future entrepreneurial intentions of the young individuals.

The study made and directed the following recommendations to individuals, social entrepreneurs, the government and the society at large.

1. Apart from provision of the basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, parents should endeavor in engaging their children in business and career talks.
2. The government of the Nation should create an entrepreneurial orientation program for pupils in primary and secondary schools.
3. Entrepreneurial intentions should be encouraged by parent's assistance and supports.
4. Finally, more studies should be conducted with the theory of ecological systems as used in this study

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