

**DIASPORA ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A STUDY OF  
NIGERIAN ENTREPRENEURS IN LONDON**

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**Ph.D.**

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## **Abstract**

The dynamic evolution of Diaspora Entrepreneurship reflects broad range of vistas; profoundly tensing up ‘conventional wisdom’, pressing knowledge boundaries and simultaneously exposing fundamental paradoxes in the characterisation of ethnic-minority groups in the context of their entrepreneurship. Prior efforts at researching and advancing knowledge in this sphere have been hugely complicated, not less by the ‘problematic of subjectivity’. Against this background, this thesis explores inter-subjective discourses and situated practices with a view to unravelling the temporal and spatial dimensions of entrepreneurship among Nigerians, the most populous Black-Africans in the UK. Thus, from contextual lenses of Nigerian entrepreneurs in London, the thesis unpacks the dialectics of diaspora entrepreneurship to allow the formulation and stabilisation of a diagnostic schema. Leaning on the philosophical axioms of interpretive discourse analysis, data are extracted from first-generation Nigerian entrepreneurs principally through the use of narrative interviews.

The study finds taxonomical fluidity in the schematisation of contemporary ethnic entrepreneurship as well as its trajectories of growth. Whilst increasingly enmeshed in the evolving phenomenon of diaspora entrepreneurship, ‘home’/‘host’ country dualisms are revealed and found to impact entrepreneurial values and identities. Essentially, the duality of entrepreneurial spaces reveals ambivalent positions, constraining the representation of ethnic entrepreneurship whilst at the same time pointing to new subject position. In both spaces, the study recognises unique trends, opportunity structures and spatial arrangements impacting business development and strategies.

The study demonstrates that ethnic entrepreneurship is a plethora of competing and negotiated value systems and meaning structures from which it is possible to assert that diaspora entrepreneurship is a product of persistent interface between multitude of social forces, attributes, states of being, actions, networks, attitudes, emotions, values, and beliefs. Therefore, by revealing entrepreneurship encounters as acts of empowerment, resistance and expression for newly immigrant ethnic groups in Britain, new sites of knowledge are evidenced.

## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is the report of my research and contained as its main content work that has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Signature.....

Date...7<sup>th</sup> August 2013.....

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

This chapter presents a general outline of the thesis, which is the study of Nigerian entrepreneurs in London. The thesis sets out to examine Nigerian entrepreneurship from multiple theoretical perspectives with a view of capturing the nature of engagement, change or movement overtime in the establishment of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship in the UK. In order to present a clear framework, the chapter is arranged over nine sections. These include: 1.1 Background; 1.2 Statement of the problem; 1.3 Research objectives and rationale; 1.4 Research questions; 1.5 Research methodology; 1.6 Significance of the study; 1.7 Scope and depth of the research; 1.8 Thesis organisation; 1.9 Contributions, constraints and summary sections.

### 1.1 Background

There is increasing recognition that entrepreneurship lies at the heart of economic empowerment especially for minority groups. This is not a new wisdom as it is already embedded in a number of studies (for example, Clark and Drinkwater, 2010), and not restricted to any particular geographic area but has now become a global economic phenomenon. However, contemporary global pattern is marked by volatility such that the shape and form of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial phenomena is fluid. This creates ‘newer challenges’ and emerging vistas, such as diaspora entrepreneurship, in the ethnic entrepreneurship field. The dynamic evolution of diaspora entrepreneurship reflects broad range of vistas; profoundly tensing up ‘conventional wisdom’, pressing knowledge boundaries and simultaneously exposing fundamental paradoxes in the characterisation of ethnic-minority groups in the context of their entrepreneurship.

Ethnic entrepreneurship studies in the UK are a much focused field both in the academics and the practitioners’ worlds (for example, Ekwulugo, 2006; Barclays Bank, 2005). The interconnectedness of issues such as inclusivity, growth, and employment encapsulated in ‘everydayness’ of governments’ dealings is increasingly recognised in national discourse. Ironically, in much of the established ethnic entrepreneurship knowledge in Britain, the Black African group is relatively understudied in comparison

with other visible ethnic minority groups (Daley, 1998). The frame of reference for the Black African entrepreneurs in Britain is tenuous. This is because a good deal of research focuses on the generic Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurship that tends to generalise Black ethnic entrepreneurship as a single categorical group (Nwankwo, 2005). It is partly for this reason that Black African ethnic groups' entrepreneurship is consistently subsumed within fuzzy appellations such as Black entrepreneurship, Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurship, African-Caribbean entrepreneurship, and so on. This muddle seems to link to a failure on the part of scholastic research to appreciate the temporal and spatial dimensions of self-employment relations in distinctive Black ethnic groups or deal with the differences in operating contexts.

Contemporary British society is in a state of fluidity in which mobility of people (migrants) has become a visual landmark. Britain has increasingly become more diverse and characterised by a 'multi-colour' composition with a great cultural, social, ethnic and religious variety (Benedictus, 2005). Increase in migration has produced the proliferation of a more diffused pattern of community life, which throws up dialectic tensions on issues of immigrants' inclusiveness, integration, and multiculturalism. These issues, in part dominate current debates on 'societing' in Britain (Lerman, 2010; Uslaner, 2010; Connolly, 2010; BBC, 2011b). Essentially, escalating mobility and population growth movement across time and space, dominant in global discourse especially in Europe (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1998), enlightens the emergence of a large vibrant Black African diaspora in the UK. According to the national census of 2011 (Office for National Statistics, ONS, 2012), Black African population has doubled from 0.8% in 2001 to 1.7%, or from 484,783 to 989,628 nominally in 2011. Correspondingly, there is an escalation of Black African entrepreneurship in Britain, which reflects the widespread growth of ethnic minority businesses in recent years (Nwankwo, 2005).

Generally, there are indications of higher levels of entrepreneurial activity among the UK's Black population compared with other ethnic minority groups (LDA, 2005; Small Business Service, SBS, 2005). However, Black entrepreneurship still represents something of a challenge for both academics and government departments involved with enterprise policy frameworks (for example, tax and regulatory bodies). Nwankwo (2005) alludes to known methodological problems in the study of Black entrepreneurship in the UK. Also, the inability to adequately measure the actual size of the Black economy could at least, have an impact on official policy and regulatory

frameworks. For instance, London Development Agency (LDA) concedes that there is an enduring problem with the availability of reliable and consistent baseline data on Black businesses in London (LDA-OECD, 2005). This appears untenable, especially given the significant contribution of Black businesses to the economy (for example, LDA (2006) estimates that in London alone there are roughly 66,000 Black businesses generating a total turnover of £90 billion in 2004).

In the context of ‘ethnic penalty’ factors (Carmichael and Woods, 2000) and the mixed embeddedness theory (Kloosterman *et al.*, 2002), contemporary Black African entrepreneurs are confronted with opportunities and new challenges. Consequently, they need to become more dynamics, more resourceful and even more adroit in order to effectively navigate through challenges and meet these new opportunities. For this reason, cutting-edge research and studies are needed in producing and disseminating knowledge on the very prominent Black African groups’ self-employment culture. This will assist to uncover knowledge of their entrepreneurship and to refine taken-for-granted assumptions about their markets and strategies. More fundamentally, many research interests are hindered by the scarcity of in-depth studies on distinctive Black Africans, for instance Nigerian, Ghanaian, or Sierra Leonean entrepreneurship in the UK. Some studies focus primarily on the broad spectrum of Black African entrepreneurship (for example, Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006) and make only perfunctory or comparative references to individual ethnic African ventures (for example, Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000). This can be all too perplexing as there are wide differences (as there are multiple similarities) among and between Black African countries, tribes, and ethnic groups. Thus, this creates the need for specific Black African ethnic-focused entrepreneurship analyses. Accordingly, this thesis explores the Nigerian entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial identities. It marshals, maybe for the first time in a scholarly research approach, original and insightful contributions to Nigerian entrepreneurship aimed at expanding the Black ethnic entrepreneurship field and, very importantly, charting new directions for researching the subject of Black African entrepreneurship in the UK.

Although, not much is known about Nigerian entrepreneurial group in the UK, their migration patterns and the stories behind them (International Organisation for Migration, IOM, 2007) made it clear that they are not merely changing their circumstances; they are changing their ‘selves’. The historical/colonial connection

between the UK and Nigeria causes the former to be a destination of choice for Nigerians, and the Nigerian community is deemed to be one of the largest and fastest growing African communities in the UK (Change Institute, 2009). The migration history of Nigerians to the UK stretches back to the colonial period. The migration was mostly for higher education, but the trend changed following economic deterioration and increasing political tensions in Nigeria in the 1980s (De Haas, 2006). This brought about the observed transformation of Nigerians from being transient migrants to permanent residents in the UK (as confirmed in many ONS, Home Office statistical and other sources, for example, Danzelman, 2010). Hence, cumulating to a noticeable shift towards entrepreneurship as reflected in Nwankwo's (2005) study of Black African entrepreneurs in London. But little is known of the entrepreneurial profiles of Nigerians in the UK. Consequently questions arising include: who are the Nigerian entrepreneurs? How did they start their businesses? How evolved or evolving is their entrepreneurship? What knowledge, experiences and resources were available to them to identify and exploit opportunities? What ethnic strategies do they use in developing and growing their businesses? All these questions are there to be examined thoroughly.

Despite Nigerians being described as "flexible and venturesome, willing to seek far and wide and to take risks in the quest for profit" (Schatz, 1977, p.95), accounts of how their entrepreneurship experiences evolve both temporally and spatially overtime compared to other ethnic minority groups in the UK are comparatively rare within the extant ethnic entrepreneurship literature. Whilst their 'visibility' as a major ethnic group in the UK has been broadly documented (for example, BBC, 2005; White, 2005; Change Institute, 2009) few scholarship works (such as Madichie, 2007; Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000) have been contributed to explain some aspects of their entrepreneurship in the UK. Such studies, whilst affording refreshing insights nevertheless are restricted in scale and scope.

Generally, the Nigerian entrepreneurial experience has been eclipsed within the flourishing trend of Black African literature on ethnic entrepreneurship that has developed in Britain (for example, Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006; Okunta & Pandya, 2007; and Nwankwo *et al.*, 2009). Legitimately though, the study of Nigerian entrepreneurship situates within the broader discourse of African entrepreneurship and, even more broadly, ethnic entrepreneurship. On the whole there is little comparative data that contrasts and compares their experiences to other Black African diaspora

groups. Therefore, given the width of latent research, this study engages with particular aspects of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurial 'invisibility' by illuminating the evolution of their entrepreneurial experiences in the UK. However, to establish the development within the ethnic entrepreneurship literature and the contemporary global migration discourse, an account of the characteristics of their entrepreneurial tradition is required.

It is generally observed that over the years there has been a significant shift in the orientation of migrants towards self-employment. Entrepreneurship is generally regarded as an important self-organising principle, by means of which migrant minorities are able to improve their weak socio-economic position (Baycan-Levent *et al.*, 2003). Within this context, Nigerians in the UK reconstruct their realities as well as their definitions of themselves as entrepreneurs, that is, expressions of self-transformation via the self-employment vehicle. Responding to the stories they told and shared among themselves instigated enquiries of what might be discovered if one closely examine the reconstitution of their 'selves', their adaptive and transformative responses to the opportunities and challenges they encounter in the British society. Hence, this research is set to probe the adaptation of an African ethnic group into the British society and how they define themselves through self-employment using the platform of entrepreneurship. It is fascinating to observe the level of adaptation as dependent on institutional constraint; the environment as an enabler or impeder of their entrepreneurship. As a result, this research is an attempt to seek answers to whether the environment in which they live has been constraining or enabling in the construction of their entrepreneurial identities; how they have sought to reconstruct their identities, and whether their felt sense of assimilation is an issue to do with what is happening. This will help to both recognise the range of experiences and problems encountered, and to gain a comprehensive description of, and the potential for, explanation of their entrepreneurial processes. Thus, the uniqueness of this study is better appreciated when considered alongside what it aims to deliver. Essentially, the aim is to achieve the following:

- Demonstrate how Nigerians as an ethnic group are situating their entrepreneurial culture in the UK.
- Illustrate the cohesiveness in the social capital framework and patronage behaviour, which in turn, results in kinship and friendship networks in the UK.
- Show how these networks determine a dominant pattern of activity in entrepreneurship engagements.

- Explain the extent to which these entrepreneurial engagements helped and facilitated the movement and settlement of Nigerians in the UK and resulted in their incapsulation from the wider society.
- Describe how opportunities (emergent opportunities and existing opportunities) are consequently being created.
- Explicate how entrepreneurship was triggered by personal idiosyncrasy.

The overarching outcome confers situative understanding of how to improve job creation robustness through entrepreneurship; improve support and advice mechanisms available; as well as chances of success as part of a wider policy thrust towards securing the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurship among the British Black population.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

From observations and anecdotal evidences, many Nigerians engage in small scale businesses in London. Partly because of their highly scattered nature, there is little information available on them such as in the case of Black minority entrepreneurship (Nwankwo, 2005). Their entrepreneurship thus wallows in relative obscurity as they have not been a subject of systematic research and have remained rather fully unexplored. This is rather surprising against the background of studies such as Fadahunsi *et al.* (2000) that allude to the creativity of Nigerians and as successful business owners comparable to their south Asian counterparts. Several factors may have contributed to the lack of visibility, for example, the absence of reliable statistics regarding Nigerians and their businesses in the UK, and engagement in the informal sector (due to various reasons, which include, skirting of policies and regulatory obstacles). Other factors may include, their habit of keeping secrets, and their preference {borrowing Sepulveda *et al.*, (2008, p.7) phrase} “to remain partly or entirely ‘in the shadows’, that is, operating embedded within their ethnic markets and communities and/or disengaged from mainstream”.

Based on the synthesis of what is already known, and building on the back of existing work (for example, Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000; Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006), a lacuna is found in the literature that straddles three interrelated elements; entrepreneurial individual, the firm, and the environment. As a consequence, this confounds the process of understanding the nature and perception of entrepreneurship among the Nigerian diaspora in the UK. The nature of the group’s entrepreneurship is still inexplicably

mystifying as few frames of reference are available in the literature, albeit many aspects of ethnic minorities entrepreneurship in the UK have been extensively researched (for example, Barrett *et al.*, 2002; Basu and Goswami, 1999; Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000; Smallbone *et al.*, 2005), and to some extent, Black African entrepreneurship studies (for example, Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006). But there are limits to the knowledge distilled from these studies. Consistently, there is a clustering of several ethnic groups under Black or African-Caribbean studies that tends to submerge important differences existing among various Black ethnic groups. The entrepreneurial orientation of the Black African is markedly different to that of Black Caribbean. Even, among African groups, differences do exist (Nwankwo, 2005). It is then essential to de-cluster the literature of African-Caribbean entrepreneurship into its common constituent parts. Moreover, researchers such as Barret *et al.*'s (1996) advocate that much theorisation is necessary in locating the diverse ethnic entrepreneurship in its complete historical and structural context. In the same vein, Aldrich & Waldinger (1990) call for more multi-group comparative research to reflect the heterogeneity that pervades ethnic groups. Likewise, Deakins (1999) outlines the divergence in ethnic entrepreneurship and concludes that there are many important distinctive ethnic groups. There is certainly a need to delineate the different ethnic groups in the overall Black (Afro-Caribbean) nomenclature.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Rationale**

The overarching objective of this research is to add knowledge to the field of ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK. Improve understanding of the economic impact and the contributions of Nigerian ethnic group in the UK economy. This will contribute to the understanding of the barriers ethnic entrepreneurs have to overcome, together with knowledge about their dynamism and performance in an operating environment that is often very different to that of their country of origin. The research objectives complimentary to the aims of the study already highlighted are:

1. Exploring the reinforcing or limiting role of integration in relation to business start-up.
2. Generating theoretical and empirical understandings of socio-cultural, economic & political contributions of diaspora entrepreneurship.
3. Exploring the interlinked factors of the entrepreneurial character, the enterprise, and the environment.

4. Producing new empirical knowledge of the various factors constraining or preventing diaspora entrepreneurship and evaluate the policy environment for promoting diaspora entrepreneurship.
5. Developing focussed strategies to promote urban ethnic entrepreneurship with a view to improving or solving the problems of structural unemployment among many in the ethnic minority population.
6. Investigating the factors inhibiting the 'breakout' of Nigerian businesses from their ethnic embeddedness.
7. Contributing to the development of assessment criteria for the evaluation of the impact of diaspora entrepreneurship.

The section is guided by the need to address the flaw in the academic interpretive morphology of ethnic entrepreneurship. Van Dijk (1993) suggests that ethnic minority groups and their academic elites have no access or control over the manner their circumstance is defined and represented in social sciences. The basis for the study is also informed by the need to bring together the societal prejudices and the group's own interpretation of their entrepreneurship in the context of the composite mega/meso business environment. This is achieved by unpacking the intricacy of language construction; whether it has a bearing on how their entrepreneurship is interpreted or the language they employ to describe their situation. Thus, this provides a broader insight into the dilemmas and dialectics of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK. Succinctly put, the justification for the research is cemented in the desire to develop focussed strategies for the promotion of diaspora entrepreneurship with a view to improving or addressing the multifarious problems confronting many ethnic enterprises (Nwankwo, 2010: 2009: 2005; Ram, 1998).

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Typically, the research question is firmly scoped within the context of existing theories, and the substantiation relies strongly on the ability of qualitative data to advance insight into complex social processes that quantitative data cannot easily expose (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Thus, the initial enquiry of this research was formulated in a teleological framework: What is the state of Nigerian entrepreneurship in today's UK? How have they become what they are and what are the prospects of becoming 'other'? Further reflections on the state of knowledge on Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship raise more questions: Is there a contributory link between the phenomenon of diaspora

entrepreneurship with levels of ‘assimilation’ or ‘alienation’ in the UK? What attribution factors promote or retard diaspora entrepreneurship? What are the underlying processes and factors that lead individuals to pursue the creation of a new business firm? How does the environment moderate the growth and sustainability of diaspora entrepreneurship? Essentially, the underlying research questions may be recast as follows:

(a) To what extent do environmental pressures and personal attributions influence the processes, procedures, and outcomes of diaspora entrepreneurship?

(b) To what degree would the attempt at synthesizing the antecedents (and consequences) of diaspora entrepreneurship help in formulating a diagnostic schema that would, in turn, help to develop focused strategies in the promotion and evaluation of diaspora entrepreneurship?

These questions are addressed by looking at each different vista and their manifestations such as in the individual, the firm, and the environment. Hence, enabling the researcher to realise the objectives listed in section 1.3 above.

### **1.5 Research Methodology**

A multi-disciplinary approach is adopted by this study to investigate the entrepreneurial process of Nigerians living in London. Given the backdrop of a history of African immigration to the UK and the emergence of large population of Nigerians in the UK, this study offers data from interviews with a group of 25 Nigerian entrepreneurs who live, own and operate businesses in London. Positioned in the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concepts of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’, the thesis examines how and whether the discourses of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ demand a particular type of subjectivity from Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurs that includes the ability to align with their given identities of ‘minority body’, Black African, and foreigner while exhibiting their adaptive subject positions. Consequently, based upon a post-structural premise, the study illustrates how the group acquires agency to express themselves through the transformative potential of language. Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept is drawn upon to illuminate the fluid notions of identity and subjectivity as advanced in narrative interviews, ethnic peculiar sources, and ethnic media resources. In adhering to Guattari (1995), media are complex present-day sites for subjectivity formation and are endowed with contradictory forces of ‘control’ and ‘becoming’ (in Iyer, 2009, p.243). Then it must be said that the design of this research is guided by methodological appropriateness rather than orthodoxy. This approach is justified because, despite an

increasing body of research into aspects of ethnic entrepreneurship, basic understanding of the many social facets that influence perception of the entrepreneur remains blurred. Clarity of definition is often elusive, although one can describe and explain it in context. Consequentially, such constructions are subjective, descriptive, often nebulous and heavily reliant upon stereotype.

#### 1.5.1 Approach to Investigation

Most studies in ethnic entrepreneurship tend to focus less on ‘aspects emphasising the “entrepreneurial” component of migrant entrepreneurship’ (Tolciu, 2011, p.410), but their interests are rather directed on ethnic loyalties and ethnic markets which are ‘assumed to be the hallmark of immigrant entrepreneurship’ (Rath and Kloosterman, 2000, p.663). In view of the declared focus of the study, the entrepreneurial component beginning at the individual level occupies a prime position in this research investigation, even though Gartner’s (1989, p.47) laconic statement that “who is an entrepreneur is the wrong question” criticised entrepreneurial research that focuses mainly on the entrepreneur’s individual behaviour. But ‘who the person is’ does indeed matter. According to Kupferberg (2004, p.80), biographical (likewise discourse) researchers cannot use concepts such as success or innovation as ‘objective’ or behaviouristic concepts that are independent on the meaning-construction and negotiation of self-identity in which the person is engaged. The individual constitutes the central focus of entrepreneurial processes, hence, understanding the entrepreneurial process means understanding the individual as essentially interactive (Brundin, 2007). Furthermore, recognising the resources employed by the individuals in the process of becoming diaspora entrepreneurs is fundamental to the formulation of policy recommendations that meet the diasporas’ realities. Identifying the entrepreneur is not immaterial from the point of view of a discourse narrative approach. In reality, it must be the starting point for any consequential analysis of entrepreneurial phenomena (Kupferberg, 1998). In contrast, Van de Ven (1993) promotes the view that business creation is mostly affected by environmental factors, arguing that on the one hand the study of entrepreneurship will be inadequate if it concentrates solely on the characteristics and behaviours of individual entrepreneurs, and on the other hand, deficient if it treats the socio-economic and political factors influencing entrepreneurship as external demographic statistics. Therefore, some environments may be more favourable to the formation of business ventures, while others may encumber it.

Consequently, the method of enquiry is based on interpretive discourse analysis. This technique reflects the lived experience of the subject population. It is a methodology that is appropriate in the sense that it encompasses both elements of the individual and the environment. It is also apposite for the population of study, which is diffused, fragmented, and difficult to access as reflected in Nwankwo's (2005) Black British African entrepreneurship study. Discourse analysis/narrative research gives researchers a privileged access to construct meaning, negotiate identity, and choose appropriate strategies of adaptation (Sikes and Gale, 2006). Applying discourse analysis to this study allows an analysis of media discourse that enables analysis of 'the dynamics of social construction' (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p.14) beyond demonstrating traditional and non-traditional identities (Iyer, 2009). It also facilitates the reflexive amalgamation of methods, and a rhizomatic concept (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) to explain theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation.

Hence, discourse of Nigerians in the UK 'becoming' entrepreneurs is an assemblage of multifaceted discourses where 'the meaning and syntax of language can no longer be defined independently of the speech act they presuppose' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.78). Mumby-Croft & Hackley (1997) speak of drawing on different discourses of entrepreneurship, because there is no one entrepreneurial discourse, but a plurality. Taken together, these motives demonstrate discourse analysis as an attempt at 'profound interrogation of the precarious status of meaning' (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p.6). While recognising that discourse analysis is a complex set of techniques (Potter, 1998), it enables exploration at different levels (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007) in discursive sites for transformative and adaptive purposes in ethnic entrepreneurship.

### 1.5.2 Scope of Data Collection

The sampling for the study is through network, purposive and snowballing (Hemmington, 1999; Robson, 2002). Network sampling relates to lists gathered from acquaintances, friends & families (Adeniji-Neill, 2012). Purposive sampling allows the researcher to use his judgment in choosing respondents with the suitable experience and expertise that would best enable him to answer the research questions and thus meet the study objectives. Snowball sampling is a chain referral method used to identify potential participants based on the recommendations of others (Altinay and Wang, 2009). Thus, through personal contacts and gatekeepers from various Nigerian organisations such as

churches, mosques, town hall associations, appropriate respondents (for example, diaspora entrepreneurs) are selected. The selection process is carefully tailored to reflect variations of entrepreneurial activities engaged in by the population; demographic considerations; gender; and geographic locations in London. Interviews, Nigerian media organisations, and other peculiar resource avenues, for example, ethnic business centres and social gatherings, in London are the tools of data collection.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

There have been very few studies done on ethnic entrepreneurship focusing the Nigerian community compare to other ethnic groups (for example, Asians). Available studies focus exclusively on general Black community which includes Caribbeans in the UK or on a monolithic Black African group (Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006; Kitchin *et al.*, 2009). Most of these academic studies on Black entrepreneurship have paid little or no attention to the transformation in the characteristics of their ethnic entrepreneurship despite evidence of considerable resourcefulness in adapting to difficult market conditions, willingness to trade outside the co-ethnic community and a generally positive outlook for the future (Ram and Deakins, 1996). Moreover, in spite of a steady growth of Black African owned business start-ups, which Nwankwo (2005, p.120) describes as the “fastest mutating phenomenon in London”, and research evidences that the group engages in transnational economic activities with the Africa continent (for example, Oucho, 2008; Ojo, 2012), not much is known or written about them in terms of characterisation, size and scope of activities (Blankson and Omar, 2002). For instance, connected with its characterisation are issues of transnational entrepreneurship (Ojo, 2012), religion entrepreneurship (Nwankwo and Gbadamosi, 2009; Nwankwo *et al.*, 2012), and so on. In the face of constant growth of Black African population and increasing proclivity towards entrepreneurship, there is little understanding of how to provide support intervention to secure the growth and sustainability of the developing phenomenon. Therefore, a situated study of Nigerian entrepreneurship will allow a ‘worldview’ of not just the population growth but a window to see how immigrants Africans are adjusting. By studying the Nigerians, one segment of the Black African population, a window is created that helps in studying the dialectics of migration; diaspora settlement in terms of level of entrepreneurship; the situational factors confirming them as entrepreneurs; their growth trajectory; and their lived experience of entrepreneurship.

Consequently, this research is significant in facilitating the generation of fresh insights into the burgeoning world of diaspora entrepreneurship in the UK, and building on such studies, there is huge potential to expand knowledge of the entrepreneurial behaviours of diaspora entrepreneurs. The study also has the potential to offer fresh insights into the domain of Black African diaspora entrepreneurship through the articulation of a novel approach and the use of associated batteries of robust theories. The application of rigorous and verifiable novel methodological process of investigation and analysis will aid the de-clustering of Black ethnic entrepreneurship study in the UK. This will open a new vista that could be useful to researchers in regional urban studies and in other comparative ethnic studies.

The importance of the study is further manifested in the platform of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship. An empirical study of Nigerian entrepreneurship is likely to provide information about the ethnic strategies of Black Africans businesses. The group's entrepreneurship study is a good platform to research Black African entrepreneurship in the UK because of their numeric strength; Nigerian population, currently flaunted at 162.4 million (BBC, 2011), is by far the largest in Black Africa. Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship could reflect other Black African entrepreneurship as many features of Nigerian cultures and mores traverse Black Africa national boundaries, for example, language or ethnic groups span several African nations (Elam & Chinouya, 2000). In essence, the findings of research into this group has the potential for replicability on other British Black African ethnic groups as there is overlapping aggregation of tribes, ethnic groups, and so on, in the Sub-Saharan Africa continent producing homogeneous similarities across national boundaries (Ekwulugo, 2006).

Overall, the significance of this study is revealed in its contribution to research and theory on ethnic entrepreneurship, and generation of findings that have policy implications. It is presumed that promotion of ethnic entrepreneurs is important in reducing economic inequality. The findings are novel and likely to be very useful to policymakers, particularly as there are increasing Black African businesses in the UK. The contribution to knowledge is unique for their usefulness as a source of information on Nigerian ethnic immigrants in general in the UK.

## **1.7 Scope and Depth of the Research**

The scope of this study stretches to cover three distinct and interconnected components; the entrepreneur individual, the entrepreneurial organisation, and the environment. This forms the basis in theory for defining entrepreneurship as the formation of a new venture (for example, Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Gartner, 1984). Lumpkin and Dess (1996) offer a multidimensional entrepreneurial conceptualisation with three primary elements; individual entrepreneurial orientation (comprising autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and complete aggressiveness); organisational factors (consisting of size, structure, strategy, strategy making processes, firm resources, culture, and top management team characteristics); and environmental factors (including complexity, dynamism, munificence, and industry characteristics). Gartner (1984) presents a model of individual characteristics and behaviour interacting with environmental characteristics and firm characteristics as affecting start-up behaviour in his analysis of the start-up behaviour of 106 entrepreneurial firms. Individual and firm behaviours were considered within an interactive environment. The expanse of the study also includes the perceptions of the entrepreneurial individual on their own behaviour and on the nature of the environment and how it affects their subsequent behaviour. These three elements are perceived to affect performance, which is characterised as incorporating sales growth, market share, profitability, overall performance and stakeholder satisfaction.

Low & McMillan (1988) suggest that, to understand entrepreneurship, one ought to comprehend the process, context, and outcomes. Aldrich & Martinez (2001, p.520) argue on “(how) strategies are constructed, moulded and adapted in processes of interaction with environments”. Subsequently, the question is asked: What are the relationships between the three elements; the individual, the firm, and the environment, and how do they affect the success of entrepreneurial enterprises? An effective means of tackling the question is the construction of a functional analytical schema useful in examining aspects of the self-employed immigrants with a focus on their social, and to a degree, business environments. This will help in gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between motivations and strategies, and of the structural limitations and experiences. It will also help in the formulation of a theory of practice to the study of diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship that facilitates a profound examination of “how the dual cultural, institutional and economic features of the complex, cross-national

domains in which immigrants operate influence the entrepreneurial strategies and actions they undertake” (Drori *et al.*, 2009, p.1005).

The interactive model (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990) and the mixed embeddedness model (Kloosterman and Rath, 2001) are employed to analyse the ethnic/diaspora entrepreneurship in the UK environment. These theoretical concepts consist of adequate sets of tools that can facilitate the analysis and also provide meaningful proposals on how entrepreneurship and environment can be comprehended in the context of diaspora entrepreneurship. The models explain the pathways for the establishment of ethnic minority businesses, and their ability to reach beyond their communities to engage with wider market and institutional contexts, which is vital for business competitiveness (Kitching *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, the thematic corpus of the analytical framework includes combining aspects of strategic management literature (for example, causal texture, and competitive advantage) and entrepreneurship for a more integrated approach. The strategic process involves co-aligning individuals with organisation structure and the environment. A purely subjective perception of the entrepreneurs regarding their success (Cooper & Artz, 1995) is employed during the analysis. Accordingly, the investigation is performed at three levels, namely:

- **Individual** (micro) - entrepreneurial attitudinal orientation framework, assessing attitudinal and behavioural orientations.
- **Firm** (meso) - competitive attitude, strategic orientation, and the utilisation of networks for information exchange.
- **Environment** (macro) - turbulence, hostility, complexity, and munificence.

Put differently, the determinants of entrepreneurship at the micro level centred on the decision making process of individuals and individuals’ inspiration to be self-employed. At the meso level, the significant determinants are sectors of industry and market specific factors, such as profit opportunities for entry and exit (Carree and Thurik, 1996). The macro level seeks to combine the micro and meso levels and focus on a variety of environmental factors, such as technological, economic, and cultural variables, as well as government regulations.

The final analysis is then executed through the determination of entrepreneurial outcomes (economic success and the entrepreneur’s satisfaction) fostered by the mediation of the three levels of investigations. Measures of success or failure should be identified in the areas of finance, integration, growth, and satisfaction. This can be

classified as economic success - sales growth, employment growth, and income; and non-economic success – satisfaction and contentment. The society gives enormous weight to the financial success of enterprises, reflected in many ways such as the stock exchange index, the Forbes rich list, television reality shows, and so on. However, apposite and accurate measurements are exposed to the problem of subjectivity.

#### 1.7.1 Choice of Location

The preference for London-based Nigerian entrepreneurs is expedient as Nigerian population has the largest number of second and third generation Black Africans in London (Elam & Chinouya, 2000). At any rate, London is peddled as the major centre for Nigerians in the UK (BBC, 2008). One of the primary aspects of ethnic entrepreneurship that this study explores is the geographic scope of the resources that are available through diaspora and ethnic networks. As a result, Nigerians in London are perfectly situated to determine the scope and depth of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK.

### **1.8 Research Contributions and Constraints**

#### 1.8.1 Research Contributions

The study beams the spotlight on the characteristics and nature of ethnic entrepreneurship as indicator of an alternative form of economic adaptation of foreign minorities in advanced societies, which could also be linked to the mobilisation of their cross-country social networks (Portes *et al.*, 2002). Its potential significance for immigrants' integration into the countries of residence and for economic development in the countries of origin has been duly highlighted in the literature (Portes *et al.*, 2007). Further, the study uses the platform of entrepreneurship to explore contemporary movements among the Nigerian ethnic diaspora group as an active force in reinvention of self, articulation of entrepreneurial adroitness, and assimilation into the UK society. This helps in the analysis of the wider shift in the Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK's enterprise landscape and in the definition and redefinition of their ethnic entrepreneurship as a strategic issue. Besides, the research provides further support to the emerging ethnic entrepreneurship theory and could become a basis of support to government policy makers whose brief covers immigrants and small business development and employment.

Effectively, the study contributes to capturing the change in entrepreneurial engagement, that is, progression overtime of Nigerian diaspora in the UK; their description of self-employment as fecund ground in expressing identity whilst confronting their non-inclusion, in many aspects and areas, into the main-stream of the society. In other words, excavating the ways Nigerian diaspora community have acted upon themselves in order to create and recreate economic livelihood even as they establish self-sufficiency in a foreign land that has become their abode.

### 1.8.2 Research Constraints

During the course of undertaking a research study, researchers sometimes experience unanticipated problems and encounter limitations that impact on the overall quality of the research despite stringent planning and robust strategies. In regards to this research, the limitations could be classified into two categories; the nature of research and the personal circumstances of the researcher. Firstly, using qualitative method only has its own limitations to precisely test some emergent conceptual theories or paradigms deriving from study. Then, there were challenges in capturing the exact meaning from translation of some of the interview transcriptions as they were mostly in languages other than English. Moreover, the size and type of businesses in this research vary in a wide range; therefore, it is not possible to examine the effect of these characteristics on networking approach of ethnic business owners.

The perception of performance measures are primarily biased, reflecting subjective interpretation by informed individuals based upon their individual perceptions (Ibrahim and Goodwin, 1986). The data collection methods may not be adequate to capture the motivation in its entirety. Motive is an ‘inner state’; respondents may be reluctant to reveal their innermost thoughts and considerations (Churchill, 1996, p.267). If proper care is not taken, the authorial voice of the researcher may drown those of the researched due to shared experiences. The researcher’s voice is always present in any high-quality study, this reflecting his/her enthusiasm in the meticulous planning and execution of the research (Hasselkus, 2003), and this is what Geertz (1988, p.9) refers to as the “authorial presence”. The researcher as an instrument of data collection in qualitative studies (Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) could be an asset or a drawback. The data collection strategies and preferences may reduce the possibility of generalising this research to all Black African groups. In keeping with the nature of

qualitative research, the number of participants is small; hence, this research will raise further questions and lead to other directions of study.

Finally, the personal circumstances of the researcher, being a full time self-sponsored student with much family commitments, made it difficult to examine in details the unfolding migratory tendency to transnational entrepreneurship that requires going to Nigeria to observe and verify claims made by informants. Also, the pace and process of change in this epoch is such that a 'grand narratives' of the Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurship might be difficult to uncovered or impractical. In this sense the strength of the thesis lies in observations, discernment and ambiguity. Ambiguity in this sense is not a bad thing, as contemporary patterns are shrouded in ambiguity and, fortunately, the study uncovered the emergence of an enormous variety of phenomena.

### **1.9 Organisation of the Thesis and Summary**

This thesis is structured to contain the title page, an abstract, table of contents, eight chapters, references, and appendices. The eight chapters of the thesis are arranged in the following chronological order: Introduction; Entrepreneurship: Theories, Concepts and Processes; Ethnic and Diaspora Entrepreneurship Nexus: Contextual Analysis; Research Methodology; Research Findings; Discussion and Analysis; Reflection on Learning: Synthesis of Discussion; and Conclusion. A synoptic review of each chapter (beginning with chapter 2) is given below.

#### **1.9.1 Entrepreneurship: Theories, Concepts, and Processes**

This chapter, a literature review, is a conceptual map of the study, shaped by insights from (aside from entrepreneurship) many fields of study, especially research in sociology that looked at the role of attribution in influencing economic activity, and also research from economics that looked at the impact of 'networks'. Therefore the literature review is constructed to inform issues such as the influence of 'attribution' and 'ethnic strategy' on economic activity, and also to establish the effect of transnational activities on the economic development at the dual levels of interaction. These insights will then assist in a deeper understanding of the extent that ethnic entrepreneurs harness the opportunity structure and transnational resources to influence economic activity and affect economic development. Thus the conceptual structure, which is embedded in the tripod framework (individual, firm, and environment), will follow the contours of:

- The means by which the migration process and the process of ethnic community formation shape economic activities.
- The role(s) of social networks on economic activity, and the role(s) of ethnic networks in resource mobilisation.
- The role of ethnic entrepreneurship in influencing cross-border economic activity through the diaspora direct investment process.

### 1.9.2 Ethnic and Diaspora Entrepreneurship Nexus: Contextual Analysis

The chapter helps us to read the subterraneous factors, the inner being/self, or the otherness of the research respondents by bringing out their lived experience. Further, a systematic body of knowledge relating to how the Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurial process in the UK is mediated by transnational economic activities to or from Nigeria is developed. London is chosen because of the fact that the capital is generally accepted as home to the largest diaspora population of Nigerians in the UK, and it is touted as the main base of Nigerians (BBC, 2005) and Nigerians Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Britain. The impact of Nigeria's business environment on the activities of the diaspora entrepreneurs comes under scrutiny in the section.

Also in this chapter, terms used in the study are appropriately defined and described. The field of entrepreneurship has been infiltrated by diverse disciplines such that many terms which are used interchangeably may connote different things in different contexts. The field of ethnic entrepreneurship is particularly replete with expressions and terminologies that are used in replacement with each other.

### 1.9.3 Research Methodology - Technique of Analysis

The research is qualitative based discourse analysis, which is informed by the attraction for insights that are particularly concerned with the processes, procedures and apparatuses, whereby truth, power, knowledge and desire are interrelated in the production of narratives and in their effects. The research methodology is thus positioned to consider encounters between Foucauldian genealogies (Foucault, 1988), entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurs' narratives (see Hjorth and Steyaert, 2004). From the perspective of this analytical triangle the aim is to investigate whether and how genealogy can be used as a toolkit to probe how entrepreneurs' narratives are intertwined with discursive regimes of power/knowledge within which ethnic diaspora entrepreneurial self emerges in entrepreneurship. Interviews are the primary method of

data collection and further strengthened by non-participant observations, and secondary data so as to develop a better grasp of the study. Potentially, this approach can contribute positively in terms of cutting through taken-for-granted assumptions, prompting action or challenging complacency.

#### 1.9.4 Research Findings

The findings chapter outlays the outcomes of the research project revealing the state and status of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK; the movement and motion in their entrepreneurial journey; the dialectics and dilemmas of their entrepreneurship; the transforming and transformation process of their entrepreneurial activities; and the impact and influence of entrepreneurship on the process and concepts of assimilation, alienation, and multiculturalism.

#### 1.9.5 Discussion

Themes of the research findings are grouped into two categories; endogenous and exogenous themes (relative to the study). The former comprises cultural deficits, financial overstretching, poor marketing strategies, social capital duplicity, and inadequate practical trainings. The latter includes factors such as discrimination/exclusion, regulation/bye-laws, competitive pressures, invisible/lack of role models, and diaspora-linked pressures. Collectively, both endogenous and exogenous forces are arranged and analysed in four sections consisting of; characteristics/nature of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK; socio-cultural networks and characteristics; the role of State in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour; and the issue of transnational entrepreneurship. By and large the chapter manifests how the research questions are addressed and research objectives achieved.

#### 1.9.6 Reflection on Learning

This chapter synthesizes issues from the discussion chapter to demonstrate that diaspora entrepreneurship is influenced by the combination of forces at multiple levels. This is done through the integration of three fundamental levels of investigations: the individual (micro), the firm (meso), and the environment levels (mega) alluded to earlier in section 1.7. These levels are expounded in the entrepreneurial element, transnational element, and the environmental element; as diaspora entrepreneurship is shaped by the convergence of social forces at several levels (Chen & Tan, 2009). The multi-level

approach offers a composite framework for understanding diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship.

#### 1.9.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the deductions and the summary of the study are laid out. Also included are suggestions for future research directions and implications drawn from the research. Furthermore, the original contribution, limitations and shortcomings of the study are listed.

#### 1.9.8 Summary

The study focuses on the transcendental nature of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK within the complexity of global migrations, the growing literature and the vast research devoted to contemporary ethnic entrepreneurship. It pursues the option of combining a social constructivist perspective and the life world of naturally occurring conversation (Mishler, 1986) within one methodological framework, discourse analysis, in order to explore how ethnic minority adaptive responses are narrated and negotiated in relation to ethnic diaspora entrepreneurship framework. The purpose of oral account is often to “give voice” to marginalised or forgotten individuals or groups, to listen to their stories and give them the possibility to speak from their perspectives (Thompson, 2000).

Business ownership has historically been a path to economic emancipation for ethnic minority groups (Fairlie & Robb, 2007). These groups, partly on account of labour market disadvantages, frequently take recourse to entrepreneurship in order to make out a living. While this is a dominant view in the literature (Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp, 2005; Johnson, 2000; Deakins, 1999; Kloosterman *et al.*, 1998) there is insufficient understanding of the situative conditions of entrepreneurship among many diaspora communities (Ionescu, 2007). Given this background, this research signals the intention to explore the contemporary advent of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship not simply as an economic process but rather as a derivative of complex relations between economic and non-economic factors. It also indicates the attempt to plug the hole in the literature of UK-based Nigerian entrepreneurs by using broader perspectives that could lead to in-depth understanding and generate new insights into the wider British Black African entrepreneurship study. Invariably, the research conceptual map lays out details of the engagement configuration of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurial community in the construction of their own reality. It also explores the complexity, the language used to

describe situations, how the language is constructed, and whether it has bearing on how ethnic entrepreneurship is interpreted. Finally, the perceived limitations of the methodology, methods, and tactics are acknowledged.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THEORIES, CONCEPTS, AND PROCESSES

#### 2.0 Introduction

A review of the literature is essential in appraising not only the significant points of current knowledge but also theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular research topic. This chapter is arranged in sections in cognisance of the need for clarity and to minimise ambiguities. The dominant drive is to outline the broad field of entrepreneurship through its conceptual frameworks. This will help to shape and clarify the contextual agenda of the next chapter, which penetrates to the ethnic entrepreneurship domain. The road map for the review begins with the examination of the general entrepreneurship field, key theories and the delineation of terms employed. This is followed by the analysis of ethnic entrepreneurship and the critique of its key theories and models. The final section looks at measurement issues in determining outcomes of ethnic entrepreneurship. Important concepts are discussed in sub-sections as the review progresses.

#### 2.1 The General Domain of Entrepreneurship

##### 2.1.1 Evolution of Entrepreneurship in Contemporary Society

Entrepreneurship as a concept has evolved overtime and has been applied to a lot of things, that is, it has become located on every scene in society, profit and non-profit making, governmental and private, cultural, social and commercial settings (Steyaert & Katz, 2004). Arising from being an indescribable label, entrepreneurship has mutated to become a ubiquitous ideal (Hisrich, 2005). It is applied to numerous paradigms and settings (Bruyat & Julien, 2004). Aside from the traditional attachment in the realm of business and commerce (Kaufmann & Dant, 1998), labourer (Valenzuela, 2000), festival (Frost & Oakely, 2007), sports (Hall, 2006), cultural (Flores & Gray, 1999), sex (Lane, 2001), entrepreneurship can be linked to any imaginable profession such as accounting (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006), law (Lee *et al.*, 2007), medicine (Loscalzo, 2007), banking (Black and Strahan, 2002), and education (Van Der Sluis *et al.*, 2008). Its sphere of influence has also expanded to include: governments as entrepreneurs (Link & Link, 2009), parastatals (Goyal, 2011), charities (Morris *et al.*, 2001), third sector

entities such as social organisations (Thompson, 2002), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) (Auplat, 2006), politicians (Younkins, 2000) and many more. It is the case that governments' social and economic developmental schemes are routinely planned via entrepreneurship conduits. The language of growth is increasingly couched in entrepreneurship venture creation (Keister, 2000), and the vehicle of job generation are routinely expected to be driven by the hands of entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is always in the eyes of the storm in whatever economic climate prevailing in a society. This prompts Baumol (1990) to argue that entrepreneurs are seen to be present during great leaps in economic growth or were absent during economic slowdowns. As a counterpoint, though, periods of economic depressions have been known to act as a fillip to new genres of entrepreneurs and business start-ups. However, the centrality of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in governments' economic policy objectives is significant. The words of Gibb (1987, p.3) underscore this: "The entrepreneur in the UK has become the god (or goddess) of current political ideology and a leading actor in the theatre of the new economics". It is the case that more and more governments' pursuits are decidedly steered towards entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, the natural pastime of government vis-à-vis social provisions and responsibilities are gradually and steadily going entrepreneurial. The enterprise circle is perceived as a way out of the structural economic crisis (Scase, 2000). In short, the term 'entrepreneurship' has become amorously embedded in our global consciousness that anything and everything is attributable to it. Fillion (1997) substantiates this by arguing that people are inclined to identify entrepreneurs and define entrepreneurs based on their own background or disciplines.

### 2.1.2 What is Entrepreneurship and who is an Entrepreneur?

Foremost, it is pertinent to examine the literature for the general concept of entrepreneurship to understand the personality of the entrepreneur, entrepreneurial orientation, and entrepreneurship formats. This characterisation will enhance the understanding of who the diaspora entrepreneur is – a concept treated in the next chapter. There is hardly any consensus on the definition of entrepreneurship (Fillion, 1998; Chell *et al.*, 1991; Dana, 2006). Extensive collections of definitions or measurements have been generated on the concept by several researchers (Hébert and Link, 1989). Not only do the sources and determinants of entrepreneurship extend over

a broad range of theories and explanations (Brock and Evans, 1989), the impact of entrepreneurship on economic development is equally contentious (Baumol, 1990).

Bearing this in mind, how then do we define Entrepreneurship, and interpret who the Entrepreneur is? A review of the literature uncovers a wide range of definitions (sometimes contradictory) of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship, (Kaufman and Dant, 1998) and methodological slant (Low and MacMillan, 1988). The term has evolved over time and become important in contemporary socio-economic advancement. The attraction of entrepreneurship to many interdisciplinary fields such as psychology, sociology, economics, cultural, political, and historical studies (Brock and Evans, 1998) contributed to the definitional dilemma. For instance psychological studies focus on the individuals' motives and characteristic traits that shape the psychological disposition of individuals which in turn establishes why these individuals behave in certain ways. Sociological studies, on the other hand, focuses on the collective background of entrepreneurs. Economic studies are related to the decisions that are pertinent to resource allocation and the performance of firms, industries, and nations' economies.

Basically, entrepreneurs are people who create and grow enterprises, while entrepreneurship is the process through which entrepreneurs create and grow enterprises (Thornton *et al.*, 2011). Researchers have described an entrepreneur variously as; profit induced taker of non-quantifiable risks (Knight, 1961); able to spot and exploit opportunities (Kirzner, 1973); innovative character with economic motivation for profit making that continuously experiment with new combinations (Schumpeter, 1949); social agent for change (Barth, 1967); influencing his/her environment by organising resources (Casson, 2003); coordinator and planner of the productive process and chief agent of production & mediator (Say in Filion, 1998). Entrepreneurship has also been portrayed as the manifestation of cultural values (Weber, 1905); construed as the expression of high need for achievement (McClelland, 1961); equated to management by Marshall (Van Dijk, 1999); and projected as a means to acquire recognition in compensation for social marginality (Hagen, 1962). Leighton (1988) believes the context (environment, culture, and so forth) of entrepreneurial behaviour is imperative; a theme supported by other researchers such as Peterson (1988), Dana (1990), and Shapero (1984). Invariably, entrepreneurship is a multidimensional concept, the definition hinges largely on the focus of the research undertaken (Verheul *et al.*, 2001).

However, entrepreneurship can be delineated along some visible demarcations. Kaufman and Dant (1998) categorise contemporary definitions of entrepreneurship into three perspectives; traits, processes, and activities. Sharma and Chrisman (1999) assert entrepreneurship belongs to two schools of thought; the first group focuses on its characteristics (that is, innovation, growth, uniqueness) and the second focuses on the outcomes for example, the creation of value. Other demarcations recognise three major intellectual traditions which are detectable in the multitude of definitions of entrepreneurship. The German tradition is based on Schumpeter's (1934) innovation theory (innovative technical ability); while the American tradition of Knight's (1961) uncertainty-bearing theory built on risk (speculative ability) and the Austrian tradition of Kirzner's (1973) market process theory and the exploration of 'alertness to opportunity' (spotting ability) (Herbert and Link, 1988; Ripas, 1998). But one can safely ascribe entrepreneurship to be both a process and a property. Entrepreneurship as a chain of events and activities that takes place overtime involving identifying business opportunities that are potentially profitable (Baron and Shane, 2008; Gartner, 1985; Low & Macmillan, 1988) defines the process; while the possession of some traits or qualities (Chandler and Jansen, 1992; Aldrich and Wiedenmayer, 1993; Hood and Young, 1993) perceived as facilitating the process of entrepreneurship determines the property. Several of the definitions and descriptions are featured in many theories of entrepreneurship, a few of which are discussed below. At this junction, the point has to be made that certain modes of entrepreneurship for example, corporate ventures (McGrath *et al.*, 1994), management buy-outs and buy-ins (Wright and Coyne, 1985), franchising (Shane, 1996) and the inheritance and development of family firms (Church, 1993) are excluded in this study.

### 2.1.3 Theories of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship theories mirror the subject's eclecticism. They provide guidelines as to how the various concepts in the domain are linked, and which subjacent constructs of the concepts can be identified as unique to the field. The focuses of these theories are diverse but specific to the context in which they are created. The following are some of the major theories from these domains.

#### *Sociological Theories*

Sociological theories focus on the social context, that is, the level of analysis is traditionally the society (Landstrom, 1999), and they describe how social factors hasten

the growth of entrepreneurs (Reynolds, 1991). A range of underpinning theories is encapsulated (for example, religious beliefs and social changes theories). The key elements maintain that entrepreneurship is liable to grow in a specific social culture; society's values, religious beliefs, customs, and taboos affect the actions of individuals in a society. Theory of religious beliefs and theory of social change are more prominent in this category. Max Weber's (1905) theory of religious beliefs emphasised the effect of religious ideas on economic activities. It highlights the interaction between various religious thoughts and entrepreneurial culture. Key essentials of Weber's theory include:

- Spirit of Capitalism; this underlines the origins of modern capitalism in the religious ideas of Protestantism. Capitalism encourages economic freedom, nurtures private enterprise and propagates the entrepreneurial spirit.
- Adventurous Spirit; this encompasses free force of impulse that promotes entrepreneurship culture. A distinction is made between spirit of capitalism and adventurous spirit. Whilst the former is influenced by firm discipline, the latter is affected by whimsical impulses. According to Weber, both of them shape entrepreneurship culture.

Weber's theory however has been criticised for asserting that Protestantism promotes entrepreneurship culture. For instance, the Austria School of economics critiques (for example, Yergin and Stanislaw, 1998) made reference to the Tiger economies of South-eastern Asia where vibrant entrepreneurial culture exist in the absence of Protestantism. Hagen's theory of social change (1962) correlates innovation (a precursor of entrepreneurship ideas) to societal economic development. He believes traditional society transformed to develop into one in which there is continuous technical progress. The theory underlines the entrepreneur's creativity as an important factor for social transformation and economic growth.

### *Economic Theories*

These theories infer that entrepreneurship and economic development are mutually dependent (Harper, 2003). Entrepreneurs play active roles in contributing to the rise in a country's national income which, in turn, leads to economic growth (Filion, 1998). The theories are based on the premise that economic stimuli are the major inspiration for entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurship, and economic growth occur when the economic situations are auspicious. Stimuli include taxation and industrial policies, sources of finance and raw material, infrastructure availability, investment and

marketing opportunities, access to information about market conditions and technology. Schumpeter's theory of innovation (1934) belongs to the economic theory cluster. He describes entrepreneurs as innovators, creators and catalysts for change. According to Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is one who brings about change through introduction of new technological products/processes. His 'creative destruction' mantra projected the endogenous displacement of old processes with new ones. His theory distinguishes between invention and innovation. The latter is the application of new development to practical use while the former is the discovery of new development.

However, although Schumpeter's theory has contributed enormously to the development of entrepreneurship studies, it has also been faulted for the following reasons: Kaufman and Dant (1998, p.9) argue that if indeed entrepreneurship is an exceptional and discontinuous change inducing activity as inferred by Schumpeter, then "the goal of predicting, packaging, and specifying that process is necessarily an illogical exercise". Witt (2008) believes Schumpeter exaggerates the personality of the entrepreneur, claiming that the average entrepreneur do not resembles the Schumpeterian entrepreneurs who are anything but average. Furthermore, the theory assumes that the research and development (R&D) and innovative character are embedded in the innovating entrepreneurs (Langlois, 2007). But these characters are supposedly missing in developing nations where entrepreneurs are small scale business men/women who are constrained to imitate rather than innovate (Baumol, 1986). In addition, the theory is heavy on innovation at the expense of the risk-taking and organising features partly because not many entrepreneurs ever embark on Schumpeterian type of radical innovations for most innovations are of an incremental nature (Loasby, 1991; Freeman, 1992; Witt, 2008). Schumpeter portrays entrepreneurs as large scale businessmen who introduce new technology, process, and method of production. But this may not be a stable portrayal of developing countries as most of entrepreneurs in those parts are small scale business owners with little resources. The theory failed to adequately explain why some economies have more entrepreneurial talents than others. Acs and Audretsch's (1988) empirical studies have also spurned the Schumpeterian claim that economies of scale are required for innovation. Lastly, researchers such as Gálvez Muñoz (2006), find fault in the theory as it focuses mainly on men entrepreneurs and rather excludes women entrepreneurs.

### *Cultural Theories*

Cultural theories, for example, Hoselitz, 1960; Peet & Hartwick, 2009, attempt to appraise entrepreneurship as the product of culture. The theories situate entrepreneurial talents in the cultural values and cultural system that are embedded into the cultural environment. Hoselitz's theory (1960) explicates that the source of entrepreneurship is governed by cultural factors and cultural minority groups are the pioneers of entrepreneurial and economic development (Mohanty, 2005; Peet & Hartwick, 2009). Hoselitz (1960, p.60) further posits that an economy devoid of class and caste barriers in which gains from economic activities are distributed based on achievement, exploitation of profitable market situations, and the "ruthless pursuit of self-interest" should be encouraged. In apparent emphasis on the functions of managerial and leadership ability, the theory argues that entrepreneurs have emerged from a particular socio-economic background in many countries. Hoselitz then stresses the role of culturally marginal groups like the Christians' contributions to entrepreneurship in Lebanon, the Chinese in South Africa and Indian in East Africa in promoting economic development.

Nonetheless, cultural theories stifle development because of the perception of entrepreneurs as "born" not "made". The ramification of the contextual placement of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship is vital especially when seeking avenues for moving away from the conception of entrepreneurs as "special individuals" to entrepreneurs as process (Chell, *et al.*, 1991; Johannisson, 1991).

### *Psychological Theories*

Psychological theories (for example, McLelland & Winter, 1971; McClelland, 1987) focus on identifying the psychological traits of the individual in a society and concentrate on personal resourcefulness, and believing that psychological characteristics influence the supply of entrepreneurs in the society (McLelland & Winter, 1971). Several aspects of psychology like human volition, innovation, organisation building, will to power, will to conquer, vision or foresight, and so on, influence stream of entrepreneurs. The theories infer these traits are shaped during the individual's upbringing which stresses standards of excellence, self-reliance and low father dominance. McClelland theory of Achievement Motivation (1961) comes under this category. McClelland identifies two traits necessary for entrepreneurship as; doing things in a novel and better way and making decision under conditions of uncertainty.

This theory, also known as Acquired Needs Theory, assumes three types of personal needs: Need for achievement – acquire success through personal efforts; Need for Power – dominating and influencing others; Need for Affiliation – bonding and maintaining friendly relations with others.

However, McClelland (1965) argues that people with high achievement orientation are more prone to become entrepreneurs and such people are not swayed by monetary or external inducements. These individuals regard profit to be a gauge of achievement and capability. The Kakinada experiment he conducted, aimed at inducing achievement motivation in participants, concludes that traditional beliefs do not hinder entrepreneurs and appropriate training can impart essential motivation to entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1987). The experiment positively identifies the importance of Entrepreneurial Development Program (EDP) in promoting motivation and competence in young, prospective entrepreneurs. It also stresses the fact that motivations, though essential for the successful business creation, were not genetically bound.

Other psychological perspectives include; locus of control theories, which deduce that entrepreneurs probably have strong internal locus of control (Low & MacMillan, 1988; Amit *et al.*, 1993). Locus of control refers to entrepreneurs having beliefs in their own capabilities to start and finish things and events through their own actions (Virtanen, 1997). For instance, Rauch and Frese (2000) found that business owners have a slightly higher internal locus of control than other populations. Nonetheless, psychological theories have been criticised for linking entrepreneurial behaviour to the individual's personality, rather than a reaction to the environment, framework or industry in which the business operates (Chell *et al.*, 1991; Gartner, 1989). There is overwhelming need to identify collections of personality characteristics instead of individual traits. Not least are the methodological difficulties inherent in the identification of personality characteristics and the contradictory findings of different studies (Beaver, 2002, p.39). The failure of trait theories to predict entrepreneurship may be due to lack of understanding of the social/environmental context (Johnson, 1990; Reynolds, 1991).

Invariably, there is a general consensus that entrepreneurs' attributes include the ability to react to profit opportunities, foresight to assume and bear uncertainty, and the knack to bring about a balance between supplies and demands (O'Farrell, 1986). Further characteristics of successful entrepreneurs include; tolerance for ambiguity (Schere,

1982; Sexton and Bowman, 1985), achievement-orientation, ability to take responsibility for decisions, high levels of energy, the overarching desire to be in control, charisma and seductiveness (Kets de Vries, 1985). Baumol (1991) maintains that entrepreneurs have the alertness to discover market opportunities and do something about them. But Kets de Vries (1985) argues that if these traits become entrenched, especially the desire for control often leads to over-control, that is, desire to keep a tight rein and letting no one else have any power, they may have negative impact when the business grow in size. Over-control may render employees infantilised, making them becoming incompetent idiots and unable to take decisions or circulate very little information. Such entrepreneurs also have personal quirks; growing to be distrustful of subordinates thereby hurting the business.

Though each of the definitions mentioned above depicts an aspect of entrepreneurship, none captures the entire picture. Essentially, entrepreneurship is entwined with a broad range of contiguous and overlapping concepts such as management of change, innovation, technological and environmental turbulence, new product development, small business management, individualism and industry evolution (Low & MacMillan, 1988). The table below indicates the traditional mainstream approaches to the subject. It is often argued that entrepreneurship by nature is spontaneous and therefore entrepreneurial behaviour cannot be predicted “using deterministic models” (Eatwell *et al.*, 1987, p.151).

**Table 2.1: The Mainstreams of Entrepreneurial Research**

<b>Mainstreams</b>	<b>Research Subjects</b>	<b>Line of Inquiry</b>
<b>Psychological: Traits and Behaviour</b>	Entrepreneurs’ Characteristics and entrepreneurial process	Causes (Why)
<b>Sociological: Social and Cultural</b>	Entrepreneurs of different social or cultural backgrounds	Causes (Why)
<b>Economics</b>	Relationship between economic environment and entrepreneurship	Effects (What)
<b>Management</b>	Entrepreneurs’ skill, management and growth	Behaviour (How)

Source: Chu, 1998, p.9

#### 2.1.4 Determinant of Entrepreneurship

Past research on entrepreneurship predominantly centres on entrepreneurial motivations; it was accepted that the entrepreneurial panache, risks taking proclivities and the craving to create a business were intrinsic in the individual. This motivation was referred to variously in the literature by Schumpeter (1934) as an innovative drive, McLelland (1961) as a 'need for achievement', and Rotter (1954) as 'locus of control'. The intrinsic qualities have been identified to include the degree to which a spirit of enterprise exist or can be aroused to respond to uncertainty and competition (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2000, p.98). Many other variable factors feed into the personality of an entrepreneur, aside the claim of innate features of achievement and hardworking. The level of education is equally important, though opinions are divided as to the relevance of education level on self-employment decision. Cooper and Dunkelberg (1987) and Robinson and Sexton (1994) prove that educational accomplishment influences self-employment decision. Conversely, Wennekers *et al.* (2002) found that higher level of education in a country comes with a lower rate of self-employment. Nonetheless, studies (such as Nwankwo, 2005) on Black African entrepreneurs in the UK find majority of them to be highly educated.

Shapero (1984) focuses on the 'entrepreneurial event' rather than on the person, asserting that individuals engage in entrepreneurial actions due to rationale such as work, family circumstances, inertia, and daily 'pushes and pulls'. The pushes comprise of external "negative displacements" factors such as refugee movements or job related changes (for example, being sacked, demoted, or transferred) and "internal displacements" that involve attitude shifts such as age landmarks or midlife crises. Positive pulls include "perceptions of desirability", financial reward, personal values, family, peers, work experience together with "perceptions of feasibility" such as financial or other support and evidence of success. Shapero invariably believes negative forces are more persuasive (Shapero & Sokol, 1982, p.78-84). The environmental influences on entrepreneurship has also generated vast amount of researches. Many of these studies attempted to empirically assess the impact of country characteristics on entrepreneurship and business start-ups with little success. Economists concluded though that growth in demand, income growth, and the degree of urbanisation have a vital influence on entrepreneurship (Reynolds *et al.*, 1994).

### 2.1.5 Issues in Entrepreneurship Research

The review of the entrepreneurship literature also points to shift in parameters and changing paradigms occasioned by the increasing realisation of its importance. In illustrating the contribution of entrepreneurship to job growth across the globe, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2010 (GEM, 2011) survey shows that some 250 million people were involved in what it defines as early stage entrepreneurial activity with huge exponential job creating opportunities across the 59 economies covered in the report. Research into entrepreneurship is particularly critical in this epoch of global economic slow-down. Entrepreneurship, to be sure, can be a leading light in kick-starting a retarding economy, hence robust entrepreneurship research exploring ramifications of historical and structural contexts is a requisite.

Nevertheless, the entrepreneurship field has been overlooked in term of empirical research relative to the other three factors of production, that is, land, capital, and labour (Leibenstein, 1995). In the same light, Kirzner (1985, p.69) asserts that growth and development economics in particular have "suffered rather seriously from the neglect of the entrepreneurial role". This overlook happened, according to Leibenstein (1995), due to two main reasons. Firstly, entrepreneurship is hard to measure empirically (few economists can even agree on the definition of entrepreneurship) hence, developing the tools to measure it has been particularly challenging. Secondly, entrepreneurs fall outside the purview of mainstream economic models, which assume perfect information and clearly defined production functions. But entrepreneurship is characterised by uncertainty and typically transpire in the company of imperfect information, unknown production functions, and market failure (Leibenstein, 1995; Kilby, 1983). Furthermore, other reasons are found to militate against the development of a specific theory of the entrepreneur/entrepreneurship. One, mainstream economics presumes that anybody can become an entrepreneur, as people are always on the lookout for easily identifiable opportunities and act on same for advancing their situations as much as possible (Earl & Wakeley, 2005). Simply put, mainstream theory considers entrepreneurs as infinite resource, and infinite supply in economics tends not to command much attention as economics focuses on how best to utilise scarce resources. Again, entrepreneurship cannot be comprehended easily within the economics' equilibrium framework and it certainly does not fit well with the notion of the fully informed rational decision maker (Earl and Wakeley, 2005). Following this trend, Davidson *et al.* (2001, p.7) maintain that there is no harmony about the appropriate scope of entrepreneurship research, and it

is imperative to create a community of entrepreneurship scholars that bring insights from multiple disciplines to explore a 'set of phenomena that are not too broad as to defy the notion of intellectual community, nor so narrow as to lose sight of our goal', that is neither overly ambitious nor overly restrictive. They then outline two key issues surrounding the purpose of entrepreneurship research; firstly, to determine the extent to which entrepreneurship research generates knowledge that aids the creation of new economic activity or new organisations. Secondly, to determine whether entrepreneurship research should be restricted to micro level issues or should seek to explain the role of new enterprise or new organisations in societal development.

However, Low and MacMillan (1988, p.141) suggest that the organising framework for entrepreneurship research consists of 'six design specifications': the purpose of the research, choice of theoretical perspective, focus of the phenomena to be investigated, level or levels of analysis, time frame of analysis and methodologies used. On the general state of entrepreneurship research, Gartner (2001) advocates the creation of several scholarly communities focusing on more strictly defined subject areas. Whereas Low (2000) proposes alternative strategies for entrepreneurship research, that is, the balance that will preserve the integrative, inclusiveness, and practical characteristics of the field while making substantive and enduring intellectual contributions. Arguing that significant progress has been made in applying evolutionary theory to the study of entrepreneurship, Aldrich and Martinez (2001) presume that by foraging into other related disciplines and by using a clearly defined phenomenon with a common set of conceptual tools, scholars will enhance the quality of entrepreneurship research.

Ucbasaran *et al.* (2000) on the other hand, contend that even though individual study may have focus, the general entrepreneurship research lack focus. Ironically, while clamouring for the inclusiveness of additional, broadening, contexts such as management buy-outs and buy-ins, franchising, corporate venturing and family business blended with supplementary varieties of entrepreneurs such as nascent, novice, serial and portfolio, they conclude that narrowly defined studies offer the most valuable insights. There are suggestions also that entrepreneurship research should focus on new economic activity that promote economic progress (Low and MacMillan, 1988) through the discovery and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities, the individuals involved and the forms of action used to exploit the opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman,

2000). A counter suggestion (Gartner, 2001) alleges that entrepreneurship is about organising and is better understood through the study of firm creation.

Yet, extant studies are expanding the remit of entrepreneurship studies beyond specific embedded moralisations and artificially narrowed choice of research subjects (Rehn and Taalas, 2004). The motives for entrepreneurship, the structures of markets and the legitimacy of business are implicitly ensconced in a legal and moralistic domain (Rehn and Taala, 2004; Anderson and Smith, 2007). It is implicitly assumed that formal economy is a legally circumscribed domain from which entrepreneurship is derived. But entrepreneurial behaviour in criminal settings exposes the multifaceted nature of economic activity. Hence, it is commonsensical that good scholarship in entrepreneurship research does not have to mean academic silos, but ought to be holistic. Accordingly, this frame of mind dictates the direction and structure of this thesis, as its organising frame takes cognisance of the broadening context.

#### 2.1.6 Context of Entrepreneurship

The context of entrepreneurship relates to its examination in term of the plurality of stakeholders involved in facilitating a successful business operation. Entrepreneurship can be expressed in a number of contexts, for instance it can be studied based on its definition as the establishment of new firms (Bull *et al.*, 1995; Low & MacMillan, 1988) but this limits the study to business start-ups and their early growth. Likewise, acquiring a franchise or an existing venture or firm can be regarded as entrepreneurship (Gartner, 1984). It can also be based on Schumpeter's (1934) and Baumol's (1990) process-driven view secured in time and space specificity. Yeung (2002, p.37) adopted this framework by envisaging that entrepreneurship involves taking risks to establish, integrate and sustain operations and stresses that 'an entrepreneur may not forever be an entrepreneur because he or she may lose entrepreneurship over time or in different places'.

The numerous entrepreneurship typologies designed by researchers served to point out the various dimensions of the entrepreneurial process. These alternate perspectives of entrepreneurship typically illustrate differences in entrepreneurship as the result of various combinations of individual, group, organisational, or environmental factors that influence how and why entrepreneurship occurs as it does (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). As a result, nomenclatures such as ethnic entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship,

corporate entrepreneurship, and so on, have emerged in research applications. Essentially, this thesis focuses mainly on the context of entrepreneurship along diaspora ethnic marginality as a paradigmatic case. This will be within the premise of structural and cultural contextual variables of situational encumbrances and prospects, in alignment with such concepts as embeddedness, capital resources (social, cultural, financial, & human), enclave and protected market. Entrepreneurial orientation and behaviour are differently constructed, thus necessitating a much tighter conceptual prism to enhance analytical rigour and scholarship. With this as a point of departure, ethnic entrepreneurship is accordingly focused next.

## **2.2 Ethnic Entrepreneurship**

### 2.2.1 Overview

Historically, the ‘economic progress’ of earlier immigrants groups in Western societies had been enhanced by participation in small business enterprises (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990, p.17). The considerable influx of migrants from the poor *South* to the developed *North* has rendered cities and metropolises in those countries pluriform and the multicultural mix of the society has been established (Rath, 2006). This gravitation towards a multi-cultural society observed in most developed World’s urban areas has enabled new entrepreneurial activities that are situated within the specific socio-cultural behaviour of ethnic population in those places. Entrepreneurial action is thus rooted in social interactions with other individuals (Sarason *et al.*, 2006), and economic decisions are often shaped by social concerns and influences (Fershtman *et al.*, 1996). Invariably, entrepreneurial behaviour is then said to be resolutely entrenched in a given social and economic context within which some individuals encounter or discover opportunities through their interactions with others (Aldrich, 1999; Kirzner, 1997). Hence the characteristics of a group can be said to reflect on its entrepreneurial behaviour. The analysis by Autio and Wennberg (2010) reveals very strong group-level effects on entrepreneurial behaviours; their findings confirm that individual-level entrepreneurship behaviour is significantly a reflection of group-level dispositions to entrepreneurship.

### 2.2.2 What is Ethnic Entrepreneurship?

The population of ethnic groups in many industrialised nations and cities has reached such a significant critical mass to stimulate ethnic entrepreneurship (van Delft *et al.*, 2000). Waldinger *et al.* (1990, p.3) portray ethnic entrepreneurship as “a set of

connections and regular patterns of interaction among people sharing common national background or migration experiences”. Others (for example, Rath, 2010) describe it as business activities, mostly small or medium sized, commenced by foreign migrants with the main aim of covering the socio-economic needs of immigrants of various ethnic or socio-cultural groups. Also, it is a form of self-employment in relatively low section of the labour market (Barrett *et al.*, 1996; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990). Consequently, ethnic entrepreneurship stimulates an increase in the aggregate supply of jobs and employment of immigrant workers without crowding out the indigenous work force (Light and Bonacich, 1988). Besides, employment can also be extended to non-ethnic workers by many successful ethnic ventures (Light *et al.*, 1999).

### 2.2.3 Ethnic Entrepreneurship Theories

Many theories have attempted to conceptualise ethnic entrepreneurship but alas no theory can explain the phenomenon completely (Volery, 2007). Each individual theory is capable of explaining the business entry decision of a single ethnic entrepreneur and perhaps of small groups with comparable immigration history and entrepreneurial activity (Volery, 2007). Contemporary theoretical models that are prominent are; the interactive model (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990), social embedded concept (Granovetter, 1985), and mixed embedded model (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999). Actually, these frameworks all incorporate two major strands in the field of ethnic entrepreneurship, that is, the culturalist and the structuralist approaches.

#### (a) Culturalist Approach

This approach considers socio-cultural values and cultural components as the basic determinant of entrepreneurial activities. It attributes ethnic entrepreneurship to their specific ethnic or cultural characteristics rather than the opportunity structures in the host countries (Berger and Hsiao, 1988; Redding, 1990). The key tenet is that family values, religious beliefs and communal solidarity stimulate immigrants to work hard for low wages, which in turn makes ethnic enterprises more competitive than those in the mainstream economy that relied on market-level wages. Their reliance on family-based networks and communal self-help facilitates economic success. The approach further supposes that immigrant groups have culturally established characteristics leading to a tendency to choose self-employment (Masurel *et al.*, 2004). Embedded features such as dedication to hard work, frugal lifestyle, risk-seeking, compliance with social value pattern, solidarity, and inclination to self-employment, provide an ethnic resource which

prompts ethnic entrepreneurship (Fregetto, 2004). The entrepreneur's skills, also known as ethnic resources, are inborn and the family is the main focal point for grooming entrepreneurial skills (Borjas, 1993). Entrepreneurial activities are considered to be part of ethnic ideology that must be taught and infused into children as a way of life and an expression of one's faith. Some religions even urge their members to engage in entrepreneurial enterprises, for example, the Mennonites in the US (Redekop *et al.*, 1995).

#### *Middleman Minority Theory*

Within the culturalist approach is listed the theory of 'middleman minority' which perceived the minority status as a determinant of entrepreneurship (Turner and Bonacich, 1980). Minority groups turn to entrepreneurship, having been excluded from mainstream social and political roles in the host society, to acquire social recognition through their ethnic capital. The 'middleman minorities' paradigm (Bonacich, 1973; Morokvasic, 1993) asserts that immigrants grow the sojourner mentality and engage in middleman occupations or easily liquidated businesses with low entry barriers because of host community antagonism, discrimination and constrained opportunities for upward mobility. As middlemen, entrepreneurs take on an intermediate position at which they operate as agents linking ethnic products to consumers and also linking ethnic employers with co-ethnic employees (Bonacich, 1973).

The theory also relates to the type of business that immigrants or ethnic entrepreneurs engage in; they often act as traders or negotiators (Zenner, 1991). Family and ethnic networks for labour, capital, and information are the only viable options for business transactions and survival. Hence members of the immigrant group seek help and support inside the group, developing strong bonds of mutual solidarity and enforceable trust (Bonacich and Modell, 1980). This trust system helps create social capital through which varieties of resources are dispersed throughout the community (Butler and Greene, 1997). The businesses created in some of these communities primarily serve as market for hiring largely co-ethnics and also functioning as ethnic enclave (Nee and Nee, 1986; Wilson and Portes, 1980; Portes and Bach, 1985). The cultural component was attributed for the proclivity of Asians to become self-employed and the strong presence of Chinese people in the catering business led several observers to presume that a certain predisposition of the Chinese culture facilitates participation in such endeavour (Leung, 2002). However recent studies have pointed to other critical aspects

such as employment alternatives, immigration policies, market conditions and availability of capital which the presumption failed to consider (Volery, 2007).

#### (b) Structuralist Approach

On the other hand, structural approach upholds that external factors, such as discrimination or entry barriers in the labour market due to education and language insufficiency, forces immigrants into self-employment. The tendency to go into business by immigrants is also inspired by the opportunities available in the host society. Different ethnic and immigrant groups react to these external forces differently (Razin, 2002). The approach suggests individuals are ‘pushed’ into self-employment when they do not realistically have a chance of becoming employed, whereas they are ‘pulled’ into self-employment possibly from paid employment because of attractions of rewards and autonomy (Borooah & Hart, 1999).

Basically, the approach contends that ethnic participation in entrepreneurial activities is dictated by the conditions in the host society (Cole, 1959). Boissevain *et al.* (1990) argued that opportunities should be analysed at all levels, viz; national, regional and local. This is due to the fact that opportunities available in a society differ widely from one region/area to another. The importance of this was firmly established by Razin and Light (1998) when they presented proof for special deviations among immigrants from the same groups and deviations between different ethnic groups in the same economic setting. The local influence includes the local economy and the characteristics of the local ethnic community that is the specific location of ethnic network. Mostly the viability of ethnic enterprises is predicated on their being embedded in a setting where social capital solidarity and trust compensates for lack of capital.

#### *Disadvantage Theory*

Embedded inside the Structural approach is the ‘disadvantage theory’ (Light and Gold, 2006). With origins in sociology, it attempts to explain ethnic entrepreneurship in the light of the difficulties encountered by immigrants in a host country. For instance, it is claimed that ethnic minorities are substantially disadvantaged at the job market in the UK (Barret *et al.*, 2001) due to de-industrialisation and racism (Ram & Jones, 2006). Also, the lack of human capital such as language skills, experience, and education, coupled with restrained mobility due to discrimination, poverty, and inadequate knowledge of local culture thwart their assimilation into employment relations and force

them into self-employment. The theory views ethnic entrepreneurship not as a symbol of success but an alternative to employment. However, the theory is useful in explaining the advent of informal and illegal activities but not adequate to explicate the prevalent creation of immigrant enterprises (Volery, 2007). The different rates of self-employment between equally disadvantage ethnic groups have been attributed to the differences in ethnic resources (Delmar and Davidsson, 2000). The expounding variables most theories pinpoint for the difference are gender, experience, and ethnicity (Bates, 1997).

### *Enclave theory*

This is another concept embraced in the structuralist approach. The theory suggests that in many instances, the specific demand for ethnic goods and services can only be fulfilled by co-ethnics with knowledge of tastes and buying preferences, thus provoking the launch of ethnic enterprises (Portes, 1995). Hence, it suggests that ethnic entrepreneurship is entwined in a complex system of co-ethnic social networks within a self-sustaining ethnic enclave (Zhou, 2004) and basically confined within co-ethnicity, co-ethnic social structures and location (Bonacich and Modell, 1980; Zhou, 2004). Ethnic enclaves such as Chinatown, Brixton, and Peckham in London represent refuges where new immigrants could hibernate in a foreign environment. Economic opportunities are invariably located within these enclaves that become useful for the new arrivals (Murdie and Teixeira, 2000). An enclave economy can be of great economic significance for the ethnic enterprise. Evans (1989) found that members of very large ethnic groups are about 1.5 times liable to start business than those belonging to very small groups. Also, the magnitude of the ethnic market and the labour pool affects the growth of ethnic small enterprises.

In essence, the theory stresses that ethnic minorities' spatial concentration (enclave) enables the expression of their entrepreneurship in the formation of their business enterprises on the road to economic advancement (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990). Enclaves markets promote ethnic enterprises and enhance ethnic social capital better than the general market. Enclaves are different to middleman groups in that the latter are 'dispersed' among other populations but the former are not (Portes, 1995, p.27). Enclave markets are strengthened by ethnic residential concentration, which has been known to provide a solid customer core for many ethnic businesses in the UK (Cook *et al.*, 2003). This view is in line with Aldrich *et al.*'s (1985) suggestion that ethnic

ventures have captive markets created by the migration configuration of many immigrants from their countries of origin.

Encapsulated in the enclave theory is the 'Protected Market Hypothesis', which refers to the initial market for ethnic entrepreneurs naturally arising from within the ethnic community itself (Light, 1972; Aldrich, 1985). Also, the concept of ethnic niche derived from it, refers to the protected market space that can only be supplied by members of a particular cultural community (Ward, 1987). Protected market for unique ethnic needs such as products for hair and body care, preference for distinct ethnic foods, and so on, bestows ethnic businesses with some shelter from non-ethnic competition (Wilson, 1975).

However the validity and explanatory power of the theory have been questioned (Crick *et al.*, 2001). For instance, the advent of multi-ethnic neighbourhoods and new businesses resulting from ethnic enclaves enterprise activities cannot be rationalise within the theory's precept (Zhou, 2004). Also, the entrepreneurial activities of skilled and educated second generations of ethnic minorities are transforming the ethnic entrepreneurship terrain from the usual ethnic-based labour-intensive enterprises to professional services and technology-based ventures with broader market appeal (Wang and Altinay, 2010). Furthermore, enclave market can restrict growth. Concentration of sizeable number of ethnic entrepreneurs engaging in similar business activities in a narrow market and in an environment of high unemployment and low purchasing power could adversely affect the survival rates of enterprises therein. It is evidence that the solution to growth is to 'break-out' of the protected market into the mainstream markets as suggested by the 'Middleman Minority Model' (Bonacich, 1973). This is consistent with the view that ethnic businesses' growth will be constrained if they remain in their communities. Failure to attract customers from beyond their ethnic market is a major constraint on growth (Barrett *et al.*, 2002). Hence, the integration of ethnic entrepreneurs into the mainstream markets through contacts, (human) capital formation, and marketing techniques is crucial (Deakins *et al.*, 1997; Ram and Deakins, 1996).

Generally, ethnic entrepreneurship markets are usually typified by low barriers to entry in terms of requisite capital and educational qualifications, small-scale production, high labour-intensity and low added value whilst operating in a stiff competitive environment (Nwankwo, 2005). Unavoidably, there is considerable start-ups and collapse. Inevitably,

to remain competitive many of the entrepreneurs resort to unwholesome practices in matters relating to taxes, labour regulations, minimum wages, and employing and/or exploiting illegal immigrants (Rath and Kloosterman, 2002).

### *Social embeddedness theory*

There is also the social embeddedness theory (Granovetter, 1985) which asserts that individual entrepreneurs partake in ethnically specific economic networks that help their business operations (Rath, 2006). It is an approach which affirms that entrepreneurs do not function in a social vacuum but are entrenched in various social networks which they employ and manipulate for economic ends (Rath & Kloosterman, 2000). The implication is that the increase in ethnic entrepreneurship would only be attributed to the mobilisation of ethnic entrepreneurs' ethno-social networks. Their social embeddedness facilitates the reduction of transaction costs by removing formal contracts, gaining privileged access to vital economic resources, and providing reliable expectations as to the effects of malfeasance (Granovetter, 1985). In other words, economic transactions are not solely rational decisions made using cost/benefit computation but are embedded in "overarching social structures that affect their form and their outcomes" (Portes, 1995, p.6). Individuals are embedded in broad social structures in the form of personal relations and networks of relations that are characterised by trust, expectations and enforceable norms (Portes, 1995).

Nevertheless, exploiting the advantage of social embeddedness is a complex and dynamic process (Rath, 2010). This is largely because of the linkage to cultural, human and financial capital, and dependency on the goals pursued and the political and economic forces at work. Besides, it is difficult to exploit social embeddedness due to its being the product of the interface between structural factors such as migration history and processes of social, economic and political incorporation in the mainstream. Also, the theory has been faulted on the ground that it focuses only on the supply side of entrepreneurship. Opponents claim it spotlights the unregulated and undifferentiated economy, whereas economies are neither unregulated nor undifferentiated in real life (Rath, 2006). Thus, limited consideration was given to a range of regulatory structures that advance certain economic activities while restraining others. Besides, the economic dynamics of a market has to be taken into consideration; different markets present different opportunities and impediments, requiring dissimilar skills and lead to different results (Rath, 2006). Furthermore, Wang and Altinay (2012, p.7) argue that, 'like the

emergence of most influential theories, embeddedness as a theory has not been fully developed’.

#### 2.2.4 Ethnic Entrepreneurship Models and Concepts

Subsequent to the weaknesses of ethnic entrepreneurship theories, researches led to the development of contemporary approaches which reveal that much differentiated analysis is needed to grasp the complexity of ethnic entrepreneurship. Higher rates of entrepreneurship have been linked with faster rates of social mobility and growth among ethnic groups (Light & Gold, 2000), thus prompting huge interest in investigating the processes by which ethnic businesses are formed. The following frameworks represent developments in the study of ethnic entrepreneurship.

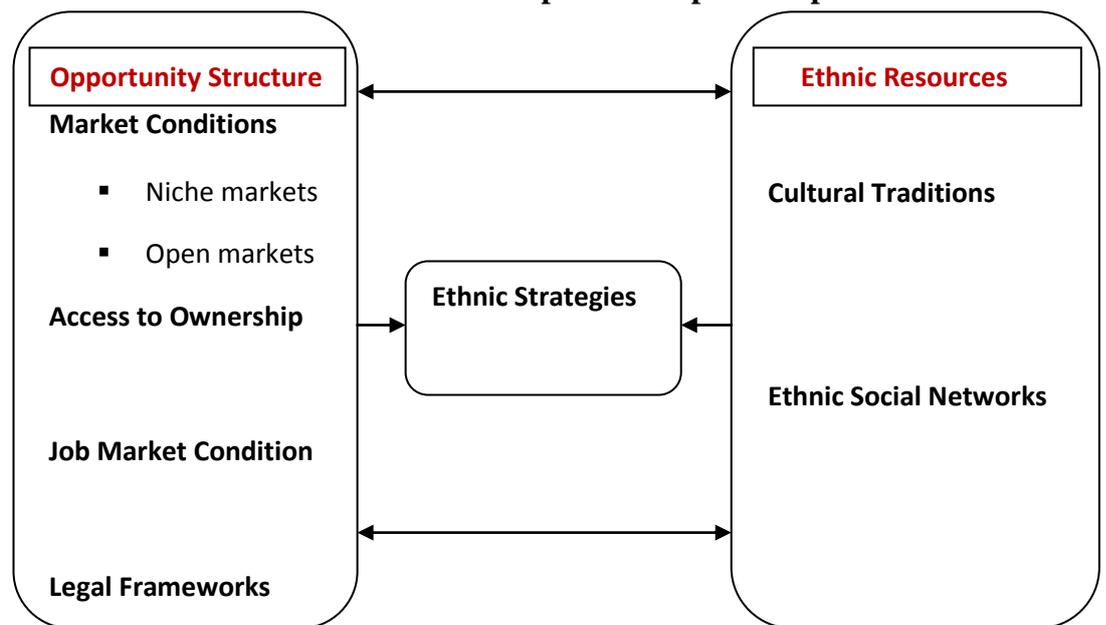
##### (a) The Interactive model

Waldinger *et al.*'s (1990) interactive model conceptualises that the development and success of ethnic business is contingent on more than one characteristic; a complex interaction between opportunity structures and group resources is actually responsible. Entrepreneurship is said to be driven by both demand and supply (Light and Gold, 2000) and in respect to ethnic entrepreneurship, the demand side is the opportunity structure and the supply side is the group characteristics.

The theory is an interactionist perception that also integrates the structuralist and culturalist perspectives, stressing the relationship between the opportunity structure in the host country and the ethnic resource of an immigrant group (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Chan and Chiang, 1994). The opportunity structure refers to the market conditions, government policies (legal and institutional frameworks) as well as social and cultural norms. The ethnic resources refer to family and kinship bonds which form social capital that aids entrepreneurial activities. For ethnic entrepreneurs, the formation of a viable enterprise in a strange environment requires the interaction of these two dimensions. A niche market emerges in a new ethnic community for the supply of specific ethnic goods that can only be provided by co-ethnics. The greater the cultural differences between the ethnic group and the host community, the greater the need for ethnic goods and the bigger the market. But whatever is the size of the market, the opportunities it proffers are restricted and access to the main-stream market is hindered by high entry barriers.

The aspect of resources shared by ethnic people focuses on the form of cultural traditions and ethnic social networks. Cultural traditions are based on the assumption that culture has a role to play in the determination of self-employment (Pütz, 2003), although this is not to be overemphasised. Social network is the interrelational connections within family and ethnic complex and it plays an important role in the success of ethnic enterprises. The model then concludes that opportunity structures and ethnic resources continually interact; strong ethnic network can affect and improve some features of the opportunity structures (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990). Ethnic strategies provide solutions to particular problems that might crop-up during interaction between the opportunity structures of the host country and the characteristics of the group. The problems may include gathering of information, customers and suppliers, capital, training and skills, human resources, political attacks and competition (Boissevain *et al.*, 1990).

**Figure 2.1: Interactive Model of Ethnic Entrepreneurship Development**



Source: Adapted from Waldinger *et al.* (1990).

The survival and growth of ethnic enterprise is dictated by the entrepreneur’s aptitude to acquire skills through “involvement and innovation” (Jones and Ram, 1998, p.57). Basu and Goswami (1999) employed multivariate model that include economic, cultural, social, and managerial variables to isolate the determinants of entrepreneurial growth in Britain’s Asian ethnic firms. They found that individual cultural characteristics can encumber growth, for instance, the inability to delegate responsibilities to non-family employees. Furthermore, human capital factors such as the entrepreneur’s educational

accomplishments and employee training have far reaching effect on business development (Volery, 2007).

Although the interactive model is useful in the classification of entrepreneurship and as precursor to more comprehensive theoretical approaches, it has been criticised for its methodology (Light & Rosenstein, 1995) and lack of attention to issues of class and gender. Further criticism include; insufficient emphasis on processes of racialisation of immigrants (Collins *et al.*, 1995), attendant supposition that immigrants' entrepreneurs act differently than mainstream entrepreneurs (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003), and generally tends to presume ethnic homogeneity and neglect intra-ethnic diversity. Light and Bhachu (1993) suggest that the interactive model tends to disregard the impact of the host society on ethnic entrepreneurial activities. For instance, ethnic entrepreneur's embeddedness in non-ethnic networks may also be mobilised as an advantage, yet the model neglects this factor. In addition, the model ignores the importance of the banking system as well as the intricacy of the regulatory and policy framework (Light and Gold, 2000).

(b) The mixed embedded model

The mixed embeddedness concept (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Rath, 2002) is a multilevel approach stemming from the recognition of the significance of regulation as well as market dynamics. It grasps the importance of social and cultural structures to economic development (Rath, 2006). The concept is an advancement of the interactive model; useful in re-assessing the internal group properties and the wider economic and institutional context in which ethnic/immigrant entrepreneurship is inexorably integrated. The model inserts entrepreneurship in ethnic networks and in the broader markets and institutions (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999). It acknowledges that the structures of a local economy and legal-institutional factors have a strong impact on ethnic entrepreneurship. But the economic environment varies broadly on a national scale, offering considerably different opportunities from one area to another. The local effect depends on the local economy structure and on the characteristics of the local ethnic community. Hence, opportunities have to be analysed on a national, regional and local levels (Boissevain *et al.*, 1990). The assumptions of the mixed embeddedness model are: opportunities must not be blocked by too high barriers of entry or government regulations; an opportunity must be recognised through the eyes of a potential entrepreneur as one that can provide sufficient returns, and an

entrepreneur must be able to seize an opportunity in a tangible way (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999). The action of entrepreneurs is both promoted and inhibited by the processes of institutional relations that include the social and business networks, political-economic structures and dominant organisational and cultural practices (Yeung, 2002).

Mixed embeddedness model is thus considered a broad conceptual framework for investigating ethnic entrepreneurship that clearly differentiates between macro-, meso- and micro-levels. It demonstrates the importance of ethnic social networks and cultural imperatives as relevant to the growth and sustenance of ethnic/immigrant entrepreneurship. It suggests that competitiveness depends on entrepreneurs' capacity to draw on wider market and institutional contexts and not just on their strong ties with ethnic networks (Jones *et al.*, 2000; Kloosterman and Rath, 2001). Thus, it recognises the relevance of immigrants' concrete embeddedness in social networks and considers their relations and transactions to be entrenched abstractly in the wider economic and politico-institutional structures. The institutional framework embraces the law and the issuance of rules and regulations relating to economic activity and its execution (Rath and Kloosterman, 2000). It is expected that the high level of regulation in social welfare economies would impact negatively on the quality and on the success of self-employment endeavours. Hence, the embeddedness of self-employment in ethnic communities on the one hand and in state policies on the other hand is seen as contradictory (Apitzsch, 2004).

A collection of governmental and non-governmental regulatory structures that promote certain economic activities while inhibiting others exist for ethnic entrepreneurship. Regulation is central to the workings of the market and must not be mixed-up with legislation. Regulations are certainly not just a matter of subjugation and constriction, but also act as facilitator in a sort of sticks and carrots approach (Rath, 2006). Engelen (2001) refers to the 'sticks' as 'legislation per se', while 'carrots' alluded to financial incentives and disincentives or can be persuasion. These notions are vital as they underlined the fact that regulation can be repressive and constraining but can also be enabling. Repressing illegal practices like tax evasion or prosecuting the perpetrators of labour and immigration laws violators are manifestations of regulation (repression), so also are the decision not to prosecute and tolerating these practices. Various business support agendas that affect the workings of the market can be said to be forms of regulation (Rath, 2006). Succinctly, it is necessary to take into account the fact that

economies are dynamic, layered and regulated. Different markets proffer different opportunities, put up different barriers, entail different skills, competencies and resources (financial capital, social network, human capital), and lead to different forms and levels of success (however defined).

In essence, mixed embeddedness theory highlights opportunities and entrepreneurs' strategic linkages with their embeddedness in the economic, socio-political environment. The mixed embedded paradigm takes the interactive model a step further. It proposes that the structure of a local economy together with the legal framework combine vigorously to influence the creation and growth of small & medium enterprises (SME) in general. But these factors affect access to entrepreneurial activities by immigrants even more (Razin, 2002).

#### *The concept of Embeddedness*

This concept submits to the fact that diverse economic transactions are incorporated in overarching social construct, which shapes their forms and outcomes (Granovetter, 1995). It points to the role of non-economic and institutional factors as determinant of entrepreneurship. The proponent, Granovetter (1992, p.33), differentiates between "relational" and "structural" embeddedness. The former refers to personal relationship between economic actors, which consist of normative expectations, sense of belonging, and reciprocity transactions. The latter concerns wider network of social relations and it concerns the placing of economic activities within a larger social magnitude comprising other economic participants (Portes, 1995, p.6) through the employment of their social capital. Portes and Landolt (1996, p.94) describe social capital as "an elegant term to call attention to the possible individual and family benefits of sociability", and Portes (1995, p.12) refers to it as the 'ability of individuals to mobilise' free scarce resources on demand through their membership in a group or broader social structures. Detailed components of social capital are dealt with in section 2.2.5.

However, embeddedness has some limitations according to some authors; Waldinger (1995) affirms that the negative facet of embeddedness emerges when the intersection of ethnicity and entrepreneurship encumbers access to outsiders, that is, non-group members might be excluded and/or penalised in the form of higher cost. This assertion was confirmed by Portes (1998), who identifies three other aspects of negative outcomes of embeddedness as: excessive requests might be made on group members

(problems of free-riding); individual freedom can be constrained as a result of group membership (uncertainty about whether the individual profit from group social capital); and the possibility of ‘downward levelling pressure’ on group members exist (the same features of social capital that bestow positives may also give negatives). Uzzi’s (1997, p.35) ‘paradox of embeddedness’ maintains that embeddedness promotes the economies of time, allocative efficiency and complex adaptation only to a point beyond which it can ruin economic performance by making firms susceptible to exogenous shocks or shielding them from information that exists outside their network. The notion of atrophied embeddedness has been presented as a way of conceptualising some of the negative aspects of embeddedness (de Bruin & de Bruin, 2002).

*Contestation of Mixed Embeddedness*

While the mixed embeddedness model gives a more comprehensive explanation of ethnic/immigrant entrepreneurship, it lacks historical perspective and does not rationalise the “wide-ranging, inter-ethnic variation in entrepreneurial concentration observed among immigrant groups in the host environments around the world” (Peters, 2002, p.33). Apitzsch (2004) considers the model as inadequate as it does not deal with individual business ideas and professional resources, and it only addresses a male-dominated form of informal work. Equally, the model is not robust enough to deal with issues (such as motivation, entrepreneurial conduct, and so on) arising from diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship. The tensions inherent in cross-national entrepreneurship induced by the concurrent straddling of two different economic environments escape the analytical rigour of the model. As suggested by Razin and Light (1998), spatial variations exist and are due to different urban features. Particularly the size of communities, varying widely from one setting to another, has an influence on entrepreneurship.

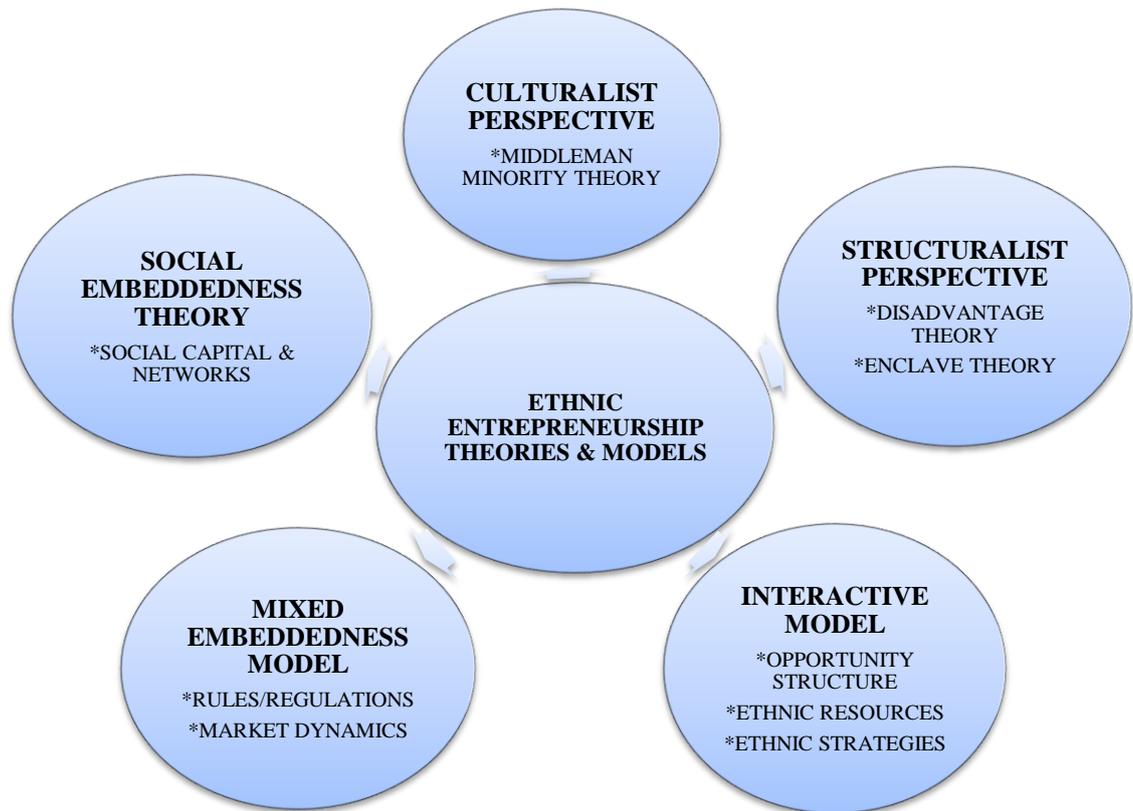
**Table 2.2: Synthesis of Ethnic Entrepreneurship Perspectives**

Theoretical Perspective	Primary Focus	Limitation/Constraint	Form
<b>Culturalist Approach</b>	Individual adaptation of culture leading to action; Cultural repertoires	Maintains that the individual entrepreneur is dependent on structural patterns over individual choice. Hence focuses on cultural homogenisation	Middleman Minority Theory
<b>Structuralist Approach</b>	Ethnic entrepreneurs are entrenched in	Narrowed focus on structural patterns over	Disadvantage Theory; Enclave

	various social networks which they employ and manipulate for economic ends	individual choice.	Theory (Protected market hypothesis)
<b>Social Embeddedness Theory</b>	The ability of actors to extract benefits from their social structures, networks, and membership	Social capital and network theory has difficulty tracking embedded social relations in dual environments, particularly when they may be deconstructed and reconstructed to suit advantage	Social capital and Social network
<b>Interactive Model</b>	Complex interaction between opportunity structures and group resources	Have little to say on ethnic entrepreneurship at the political-institutional level. Engaging only on the structure of economic opportunities and constraints produced by market forces. Incapable of explaining sharp international variations in the performance of ethnic entrepreneurship	Opportunity Structure: Market conditions; Access to ownership; Group Resources: Predisposing factors; Resource mobilisation; Ethnic strategies
<b>Mixed Embeddedness Model</b>	The regulatory regimes do much to shape the general commercial environment for ethnic ventures. Diverse forms of immigration and labour legislation may potentially affect ethnic minorities, often posing almost intractable obstacles to prospective ethnic entrepreneurs.	Lacks historical perspective. Fails to explain broad variation in inter-ethnic entrepreneurial concentration seen among immigrant groups in the countries of settlement. Inability to rationalise diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship	Wider economic and institutional context

Source: Literature Review

**Figure 2.2: Theories & Models of Ethnic Entrepreneurship**



Source: Literature Review

Table 2.2 and figure 2.2 above provide a synthesis of the theories and models examined in the section. Essentially, the theories of entrepreneurship discussed are diverse, but are somehow complementary. Each one illuminates different aspects of this multifaceted phenomenon and contributes to a deeper understanding of its dynamism. However, central to the thematic themes and how they might differ arise from the tension evolving in locus of control and deployment of ‘ethnic resources’ that are crucial in enhancing, and furthering our knowledge of ethnic entrepreneurship.

### 2.2.5 Analysing Ethnic Entrepreneurship Resources

Even though the issues of resource (control and appropriation) are embodied in the preceding discourses, it is essential to establish and emphasise the types and nature of ethnic entrepreneurs’ resources. Resources or capitals of entrepreneurs are reserves of values that can be exploited to accomplish a social or economic task (Kontos, 2004). Resources are crucial tools for the success of an ethnic enterprise and can compensate for many disadvantages encounter in a foreign environment. It is then essential to outline some of the recognised ones so as to inform analysis and discussion in chapter six. Some researchers have commented on the “plethora of capitals” emerging in social

and economic theories, which refer to practically all aspects of social life as a form of capital (Baron and Hannan, 1994). However, the major ones centre on; human capital (education, training, experience, and so on), cultural capital (cultural endowment), social capital (embeddedness in social networks), labour capital (personnel and manpower), and financial capital (funding capacity). Access to these forms of capital shapes business operations and, consequently, business success or failure.

Distinction is made between ethnic resources; cultural traits, & niche (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990), and class resources (finance, education, self-confidence, and communication skills) (Light and Bonacich, 1988). They both contribute to shaping differing experiences of ethnic communities' entrepreneurship, though, the latter is said to be of greater significance (Ram and Jones, 1998). These resources grouped as social, cultural, human, labour, and financial capitals, and their consequences on ethnic entrepreneurship are examined below.

#### (a) Social Capital

Coleman (1990) describes social capital as a function of social structure producing advantage. In an update, Putnam (1993) refers to the concept as connections within and between social networks and the value that an individual gets from the social network. Putnam (2000) proclaims two key components of the concept; bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The former denotes the value allotted to social networks between homogeneous groups of people while the latter relates to the social networks between socially heterogeneous groups.

Social capital manifests in ethnic solidarity that leads to trust-based relationships between employers & employees and entrepreneurs (Woolcock, 1998). It comprises ethnic resources which Light & Karageorgis (1994) define as socio-cultural and demographic characteristics of a group that ethnic entrepreneurs can employ or reflexively benefit from. Benefits such as informal credit, contact, lower cost labour, social support, business information and training can be harnessed (Iyer & Shapiro, 1999), thus helping new business start-ups to deeply reduce transaction costs and resolves coordination problems (Lazega & Pattison, 2001). Coleman (1988, p.119) marks out three forms of social capital that contribute immensely to start-up and growth of ethnic enterprises as; (i) obligations and expectations (contingent on trustworthiness of the social environment), (ii) information-flow capacity of the social structure and (iii)

norms with attendant sanctions. Many studies contend that ethnic networks form the basis of social capital and have a constructive role in employment opportunities of immigrant and ethnic communities in host societies (Munshi, 2003; Kahanec and Mendola, 2007).

The importance of social networks to the entrepreneur is a well-established research area (Aldrich & Zimmer, 1985; Johannison & Johnsson, 1988; Birley *et al.*, 1991; Blackburn, *et al.*, 1990). Waldinger *et al.* (1990) surmised that social capital facilitates business start-ups among minorities. A social network encapsulates both formal (business contacts, bank, lawyers, local government, NGOs, and so on) and informal (family, friends, acquaintances) sources. The size (that is number of people in the network), the 'level of interconnection' within the network, and the regularity of communication determine the amount of social capital obtainable in the network (Sequeira & Rasheed, 2004, p.81). Also, the 'network intensity' varies from strong to weak - the strength depends on the combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, intimacy, and mutual services that typify the tie (Granovetter, 1973, p.1361). Sequeira & Rasheed (2004, p.89) suggest that strong ties are necessary for start-ups but can be unhelpful at 'break-out stages'. It is important for growth oriented ethnic entrepreneurs to invest in generating larger networks and weak ties. However, a study discovered no differences in the exploitation of social networks by ethnic and non-ethnic entrepreneurs (Zimmer & Aldrich, 1987).

Social networks are vital to the development of ethnic enterprises. Their closed nature allows networks access to members but denied to non-members of the group thus given the former some operational advantages over the latter (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990). At the core of ethnic entrepreneurship social networks are the family and the community. This is exhibited in the 'personal network' (the connection of the entrepreneur with specific individuals) and the cultural aspect (the dimension in which the entrepreneurs are engulfed) (Ram, 1994, p.43). Social network ties are often said to depend on the trust of its members for its sustenance over time, hence trust is a significant business resource which could be a source of competitive advantage (Smith *et al.*, 2001; Aldrich and Zimmer, 1986; Ram, 1994; Honig, 1998).

Portes and Landolt (1996) identify the negative side of social capital networks to include the promotion of 'public bads' (for example, prostitution & gangsterism) just as

easily as ‘public goods’. They claim social capital can initiate discrimination, restriction of individual freedom and creativity, lack of economic opportunity, and overwhelming obligations. Discrimination can be in form of exclusion of outsiders in strong voluntary associations, communities, and social networks with high levels of solidarity. Strong social networks can also damage entrepreneurial activity. Successful entrepreneurs are often expected to help others and this can affect their ability to maintain their businesses. Furthermore, personal freedom and expression can be curtailed as high social capital is dependent on a high level of conformity within the group and nonconformists can be ostracised. Hence, some social capital had to be relinquished for the opportunity to remain in the group (Kraybill & Nolt, 1995). It also can result in a great deal of power for those in leadership positions in the group, for example, the Mafia-type power structures. Portes and Landolt (1996) further identify “downward levelling pressures”, which can manifest in form of the pressure to conform to group norms in order to tap into group resources (which may be seen as the only resources available). This can keep an individual from trying to access the mainstream for opportunities, for instance prostitution rings and youth gangs, the network norms in these groups act to keep individuals within the familiar group culture. Any attempt by a member to achieve something beyond the network may be seen as a threat to group solidarity and is suppressed. Granovetter’s (1974) hypothesis proposes that ‘strong ties’ in social capital tend to be narrowly bound, produce overlapping information, and surround economic transactions with emotional contents.

#### (b) Human Capital

Human capital is said to be endowments relating to secondary and post secondary education, learning experience and labour market experience of an ethnic group. High level of literacy will bestows a better learning environment for group members and consequently superior access to information avenues, higher participation rate and better labour market experience (Coleman, 1988; Rettab, 2001). Human capital is also said to influence the probability of engaging with entrepreneurship (Reeves and Ward, 1984). Human capital approach in ethnic entrepreneurship stresses the role of education, experience, job-related skills and training, and language fluency (Mincer, 1974; Borjas, 1992). Within this concept is the ‘human capital externalities’ theory. This attempts to describe minority ethnic disadvantages in educational or occupational achievement in terms of the lack of apposite role models among co-ethnic connections, or possibly the case that successful entrepreneurs are invisible in the ethnic community (Borjas, 1995).

Additionally, entrepreneurs' past experience, training, education, and skill development contribute to successful ethnic business ventures (Deakins and Whitam, 2000).

Many research studies found that higher educational qualifications boost both the possibility of becoming an ethnic entrepreneur (Boyd, 1990; Marger, 1989; Pessar, 1995), and also the likelihood for greater success (Basu, 1998; Bates, 1994; Birley & Ghaie, 1992). Greater business experience is also said to lead to self-employment (Evans, 1989) and enhance business success (Basu, 1998). On the contrary, some studies affirm that more education leads to a lower possibility of becoming self-employed (Evans, 1989; Mesch & Czamanski, 1997; Clark and Drinkwater, 2010). Obviously, education and work experience are significant factors that have a bearing on self-employment prospects, but they are not sufficient to wholly rationalise occupational mobility and earnings. However, the general verdict on education points towards it being a powerful tool that promotes enterprise growth and effective over-sight.

Human capital and social capital are linked; sometimes it is difficult to demarcate them. Some studies have shown that people with higher levels of human capital are predisposed to have higher levels of economic capital that tends to confer more social capital on them. For instance, highly educated people are liable to have bigger quantity of social contacts, better connected, and are more inclined to engage in civic activities that enhance their labour market positions (Lin, 2001; Li *et al.*, 2005; Li, 2008).

#### (c) Financial Capital

Financial capital describes the accumulated wealth of group members and their access to the financial market (Rettab, 2001). Starting a business requires start-up capital and additional financial resources to hedge related risks. It is common knowledge that ethnic entrepreneurs, and small businesses have difficulties in accessing bank loans (Sabri, 1998), and have to resort to alternative means for funding (Rettab, 2001) for example, family and friends sources (Kraybill *et al.*, 2010). The theory of credit rationing under asymmetric information describes the inability of young and small enterprises to access credit due to their lack of track records and the associated problems of adverse selection and moral hazard (Stiglitz and Weiss, 1981).

The dominant views in the literature suggest that ethnic entrepreneurs are discriminated against in the credit market (Curran and Blackburn, 1993; Smallbone *et al.*, 2003).

However, Fraser (2007) claims that there is no ethnic discrimination in credit markets, that is, ethnicity had no role in explaining financial refusal rates or obstacle from applying for finance. He claims that non-ethnic risk factors explained most of the wide variations in access to mainstream finance among ethnic minority businesses in the UK. The data also implies that pressure on limited capital bases to meet non-enterprise obligations (social & cultural obligations in home countries) constitute a strain on meagre financial resources. Clearly, availability of fund helps business start-ups and richer groups with reliable assets and collateral are more liable to launch businesses, more prone to take risks and obtain loans (Wakefield, 1997; Rettab, 2001).

#### (d) Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is described as cultural attitudes that act to enrich entrepreneurial ability within a group (Rettab, 2001). Sell (1983) asserts that group characteristics influence, to some degree, the business attitudes of ethnic entrepreneurs. Rettab (2001) declares these attitudes consist of personal desire for economic independence, which is a major determinant of migration. This attitude is believed to endure and strengthen the chances of business creation. For instance, the gap between ethnic entrepreneurs and financial institutions could be rooted in the cultural background and group characteristics of immigrants, as well as their attitudes, resulting in the rejection of outside control over their businesses, and the desire to be self-directing and be self-employed (Rettab, 2001).

Bourdieu & Passeron's (1979, p.14) conceptualisation of cultural capital contends that apart from economic factors, innate 'cultural habits and dispositions' are essentially important to success. They maintain that culture shares many of economic capital properties and, in particular, cultural habits and dispositions consist of a resource capable of producing profits and potential source of monopoly by individuals and groups. In addition, giving the right situation, they can be diffused from one generation to the next (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). It is then perceived to have the possibility of being utilised in an entrepreneurial sense to provide goods and services in specific ways and forms that are desired and valued by groups.

Furthermore, Basu and Altinay (2002) analysis of six different ethnic groups found that the cultural diversity existing between them, in terms of differences in business entry motives, women's involvement in business, patterns of finance, and the degree of their dependence on co-ethnic labour and co-ethnic customers, accounts for variance in their

entrepreneurial performances. Song (1997) and Watson *et al.* (2000) also conclude that the growth of ethnic entrepreneurship (that is South Asian and Chinese) is directly linked to cultural factors such as hard work, a trading ethic, and reliance on family labour and ethnic community networks. The difference in the more successful Indians businesses compared to the Pakistanis in Britain is as a result of cultural factors claimed by Metcalf *et al.* (1996). Cultural factors are in fact limiting the potential for growth of ethnic minority businesses; successful negotiation of these cultural barriers can assist their survival and growth (Nwankwo, 2005; Metcalf *et al.*, 1996; Smallbone *et al.*, 1999).

#### (e) Labour Capital

Ethnic labour capital manifests in ethnic entrepreneurship in two dimensions; in the first aspect, it relates to employment of co-ethnics in ethnic ventures. Ethnic entrepreneurs create employment for themselves, relatives, friends and acquaintances and, more generally, co-ethnics as social networks are often interfaces for information on the recruitment of new employees (Waldinger, 1986). The use of resources, such as labour, advice or capital, drawn from co-ethnics especially at the early stage of the business formation has been shown to be critical (Ram *et al.*, 2000). Also, new immigrants getting employment among co-ethnics enterprises inevitably gain access to contacts, opportunities to learning on the job and role models. Hence, they enjoy a higher likelihood of ensuing progression to ownership than do their counterparts who work in non-ethnic larger firms (Aldrich *et al.*, 1985).

The other dimension of ethnic labour capital is marked by the succession circumstances in ethnic entrepreneurship. For instance, in the UK many Asian firms have been classified as 'family businesses', that is, business run by the family (Werbner, 1984; Ram *et al.*, 2000) and sustained by continuous involvement of family members. The importance of family participation in ethnic business is laid bare in the observation that most ethnic businesses in the UK encounter succession problems (Janjuha & Woods, 2000; Chan & Juanjuha, 2000). Suggestion has been made that the rate of ethnic entrepreneurship growth may be faltering due to the increase in well-qualified British-born generation getting entrenched into mainstream job markets (Jones and Ram, 2003). Younger generations are no longer interested in the family businesses; they are attracted to the mainstream job market where they can gain higher status and greater monetary rewards than the family businesses could deliver. The working conditions/environment

(for example, long working hours, and low rates of returns) that characterised family firms also put off generations that are born in the UK in participating in family businesses (Wright *et al.*, 2003). The younger generations are more integrated within the larger society and have different orientations and aspirations from their parents; they often have higher professional status and higher educational qualifications. They may take roles within larger organisations or they may enter self-employment (SEU, 1999). Perhaps this phenomenon is not peculiar to the UK business environment because a piece of research into the Nigerian entrepreneurship environment by Chu *et al.* (2008) found that majority of Nigerian enterprises established by the first generation entrepreneurs do not pass down to the next generation.

#### 2.2.6 Measuring Success or Failure

Regardless of whatever theoretic lens is applied in the analysis or empirical evaluation of ethnic entrepreneurship, a predominant feature has always been that a section of ethnic entrepreneurs tend to suffer disproportionate level of business failure crisis (Nwankwo, 2005). However, this sub-theme is peripheral to this thesis but nevertheless needs to be highlighted.

Measuring performance in entrepreneurship could be helpful in achieving specific managerial purposes. As part of their overall management strategy, entrepreneurs can use performance measures to evaluate, control, budget, motivate, celebrate, learn and improve. However, establishing the benefits, performance and success of ethnic entrepreneurship can be daunting because measures, definitions and interpretations are fraught with great amount of variations. Rath (2006) contends that determining benefits, performance and success either quantitatively or qualitatively stoutly centre on interpretations. ‘Performance’ is frequently attached to and measured by macroeconomic and integration indicators, this is because it is often appraised in terms of ‘assimilation and integration into the labour market’ of the host country (Constant & Zimmerman, 2005, p.2). Whereas, ‘Success’ have a tendency to take a more specific perspective based on the individual situation thus evaluation of success is as a result socially constructed (Rath, 2002). Yet, economically success can be viewed in terms of financial measures, market growth, reputation, and advancement of technological know-how (Whitley, 1999). As McClelland (1987) argues; people with a high need for achievement need feedback from the consequences of their decisions in order to establish success or failure. The gauge of their achievement can be money or profits,

which act as success indicators (Peacock, 2000). However, what may be advantageous to one can be damaging to another. A business can thrive financially but at the expense of workers who are remunerated poorly and working under indigent conditions.

Werbner (1999) believes the notion of success/failure in ethnic entrepreneurship is fuzzy. Rather, a collective creation of value is an ideal measure of success, though the ingredients of value are significantly vague. Deconstructing the concept of success and failure of ethnic entrepreneurship through the probe of narrow economic models of value or on the basis of easily quantifiable measures can be both difficult and misleading. Success criteria based on data on business performance (including capitalisation, profit intensity and gross income) are near, if not totally, impossible to obtain within ethnic entrepreneurial circles (Nwankwo, 2005). The exercise can also be misleading because other facets of accomplishments (for example, learning new skills, provision of employments, sense of independence, and so on) that are equally critical to performance evaluation, but not readily quantifiable may be neglected (Nwankwo, 2005).

### **2.3 Summary**

The fact of inconsistent theories of entrepreneurship is highlighted in the chapter. Although the failure to settle upon common definitions has impeded research progress (Vesper, 1983; Gartner, 1985), some opportunities are presented. It is the case that adopting a pluralist perspective will bestow insights that alternative theories offer and thus set the task of reconciling them to engender deeper understandings. Entrepreneurship theories examined in the chapter are somehow complementary - each one elucidates different aspects of this multifaceted phenomenon and contributes to a deeper understanding of its dynamism.

Furthermore, the chapter drills down to ethnic entrepreneurship as a subset within the general entrepreneurship domain. The features and characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurship are explained through theories, models, and concepts. Also mentioned are resources that ethnic entrepreneurs exploit in pursuit of economic opportunities. Social capital is a key resource but comes with costs attached, some of which are; concept of 'freeloading' – individuals benefiting from a group without a reciprocal contribution, and the concept of 'levelling pressures' – successful members of the group put under pressure to conform by the group. Assessment criteria in the measurement of

the success or failure of entrepreneurship are mired in both subjectivity and objectivity configurations.

The chapter also underlines how the norms in social groups affect individuals' probability of engaging in entrepreneurial behaviour. Societal norms, referring to the common ideas about the proper way to behave (Granovetter, 2005), are usually thought to be shared within reference groups irrespective of members' individual characteristics (Fershtman *et al.*, 1996). In this regard, Autio and Wennberg (2010) found that the norms and attitudes of the social group demonstrated an influence on entrepreneurial behaviour that was significantly stronger than the attitudes and personal feature of the individual, and also the effects of the social group strengthen those of the individual. Analysis of the diaspora entrepreneurial identity in the next chapter condenses this paradigm.

Emerging from the chapter is the awareness of the shift and movement in the domain of ethnic entrepreneurship. This then exposes the weakness of existing paradigms of ethnic entrepreneurship research but in the same breath unlocks further possibilities, some of which are explored in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ETHNIC AND DIASPORA ENTREPRENEURSHIP NEXUS: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

#### 3.0 Introduction

Having laid out the conceptual framework in the last chapter, there is a need to unpack diaspora entrepreneurship as a precursor for engaging the contextual issues. This is done in this chapter. The overriding thrust is to sketch out the emerging field of diaspora entrepreneurship by distilling from the broad thematic category of Black African entrepreneurship. Diaspora entrepreneurship category could not have otherwise been captured if dealt with directly because of the inter-linkages between the theme of the research and the broad ethnic entrepreneurship research. Essentially, the chapter will drill down from Black entrepreneurship to Nigerian entrepreneurship concepts in the UK in order to ferret out their antecedents and consequences. For instance, the emergence of Black African diaspora entrepreneurs in Western societies as contributors to business development in Africa has begun to appear in literature (for example, Ndofor-Tah, 2000; Okele *et al.*, 2008; African Development Bank, 2011). This is not surprising as other studies (for example, Ketkar and Ratha, 2009; Hernández-Coss and Egwuagu-Bun, 2006) have illustrated the importance of African diasporas' remittance flow to Africa developmental growth. Also, a number of global networking organisations (for example, The African Network, TAN) exist to promote African diaspora entrepreneurship (Newland and Tanaka, 2010).

Fundamentally, ethnic diaspora entrepreneurs are exposed to the vagaries of a complex and interdependent business environment (Fogel, 1994). Thus, there is a need for redirecting conceptual attention to the nature of the environment in which they operate. For instance, Nwankwo (2005, p.131) reflectively refers to the complexity arising, among others, from 'the operating and institutional environments' of African entrepreneurs in the UK. To understand the ethnic entrepreneurial propensity of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurs in London, one must place significant emphasis on understanding the context in which it is embedded so as to uncover its intricacy. Furthermore, the field of minority entrepreneurship is particularly replete with expressions and terminologies that are used in substitution with each other. Thus,

various terms and concepts used in the study will be delineated. These backgrounds and conditions will assist to put the research in proper context and aid understanding. The chapter analysis begins at explaining the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism, as both represent the organising context of diaspora entrepreneurship. The growing occurrence of Nigerian entrepreneurial activities straddling the UK and Nigeria makes the concepts a natural research imperative. It is then essential to explicate these paradigms as part of the contextual background as outlined in the next section. This is followed by the sections on British Black entrepreneurship, Black British African, and Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship respectively.

### **3.1 Diaspora and Transnational Concepts**

#### **3.1.1 Diaspora Framework**

The term ‘Diaspora’ does not have a specific accepted definition, neither is there a legal recognition of the term and as a result many diverse meanings and interpretations exist (IOM, 2009). Originally the word referred exclusively to the Jewish Diaspora but recently has been used to include other historical mass scattering of people of common extraction (Ember *et al.*, 2004). The Jewish and the African-American experiences of oppression, forced exile and the despair of no return formed the historical background. But the Jewish and the African-American Diaspora experiences of remorse, anger and bitterness do not sit well with the diasporic voluntary motion or displacement of peoples in the general discourse of transnationalism. Vertovec and Cohen (1999, p.484) identified some forms of Diaspora: Diasporas by design, Diasporas by accident, Diasporas of loyalty, and Diasporas of exit. These perceptions assist in delineating involuntary migrants from voluntary migrants; the latter denoting migrants whose separation from their homelands was an articulation of individual agency. Different countries have different definition of diaspora reflecting the policy interest in the diaspora population. Terms such as: *Nationals’ abroad*, *permanent immigrants*, *expatriates*, *transnational citizens* and so on, are applied broadly to embrace multiple realities that vary across nations. Some of the classifications include: people who are settled permanently in a host country, labour migrants residing abroad for a length of time, dual citizens, ethnic diasporas, or second-generation groups (Ionescu, 2007).

That said, diaspora communities have generally been described to be scattered from an original centre to more than one peripheral places and still maintaining links, memories,

and images of their original homeland (House of Commons, 2004). They are not fully integrated with their host country and mostly harbour the desire to return to their homeland when the time is right (Manger & Assal, 2006). Ionescu (2007, p.8) defines diasporas as: “members of ethnic and national communities, who have left, but maintain links with, their homelands”. The links are forms of transnational networking essential to development of the homeland. Newland (2003) recognises five forms of transnational network: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by immigrants in their home countries, tourist visits by members of the Diaspora, charitable donations by individual immigrants, diaspora organisations providing resources for development, nostalgia for food and goods from the country of origin that generates local production, new markets and trade. Skinner (1982) looked at diasporas in terms of dispersion, networking and coordination. Within this framework is, among others, the political dimension which is dominated by feelings towards the ancestral land, affiliation with host community, the possibility of returning and reintegration back home. The notion of diaspora also symbolises efforts at examining the social and cultural dynamics of transnational movements. This is done through exploration of the enduring relations of the foreign communities established by immigrants with their homeland (Ember *et al.*, 2004). The maintenance of strong sentimental and material links between immigrants and their countries of origin is then fundamental to the notion of diaspora. The form of transnational circulations of labour, goods, capital, knowledge, and information that characterise the diaspora set it apart from other racial or ethnic minorities that may have ceased to sustain such significant emotional and economical ties with their home countries (Sheffer, 1986). Though diaspora-specific identities entail a particular level of boundedness and stability, it must be recognised as social and cultural process of movement and change. While seen as communities, diasporas are transnational in nature rather than being sheer ethnic or immigrant minority groups located in a particular country as they embody means of envisaging community, citizenship, and identity as ‘simultaneously here and elsewhere’ (Clifford, 1992).

The essence of these definitions reveals the fact that individuals are diffused, probably across many countries, but they preserve an interest and connection to their home country. The diversity in description also reflects both intangible (identity and belonging) and concrete (time, and place of birth) issues. Diaspora is said to entail a sense of identification with a group, or the emotion of belonging to a particular identity (Butler, 2001). The event of circular migration tends to have diluted the dimension of

irreversibility and of exile as indicated by the notion of diaspora. Individuals who migrate to work abroad for a short while may decide to stay longer, return home, and leave again, thus it can be difficult to separate migrants from diaspora using time frame (Ionescu, 2007). Again, country of origin does not by itself delineate diaspora, since second and third-generation migrants born in host countries can have a stronger emotional sense of belonging and a measure of commitment to their parents' country of origin (Ionescu, 2007). But the notion of diaspora is different to that of migrant. Safran's (1991) rules of distinguishing between diasporas and migrant communities include the provision that the group maintains a myth or collective memory of their homeland. They consider their true home to be their ancestral homeland, to which they will ultimately return. They are devoted to the restitution or preservation of that homeland and connect "personally or vicariously" to the homeland to a point where it shapes their identity (Brubaker, 2005; Cohen, 2008; Weinar, 2005). Consequently, the Diaspora effect would be investigated relative to the situative conditions within which Nigerians purvey their businesses in the UK.

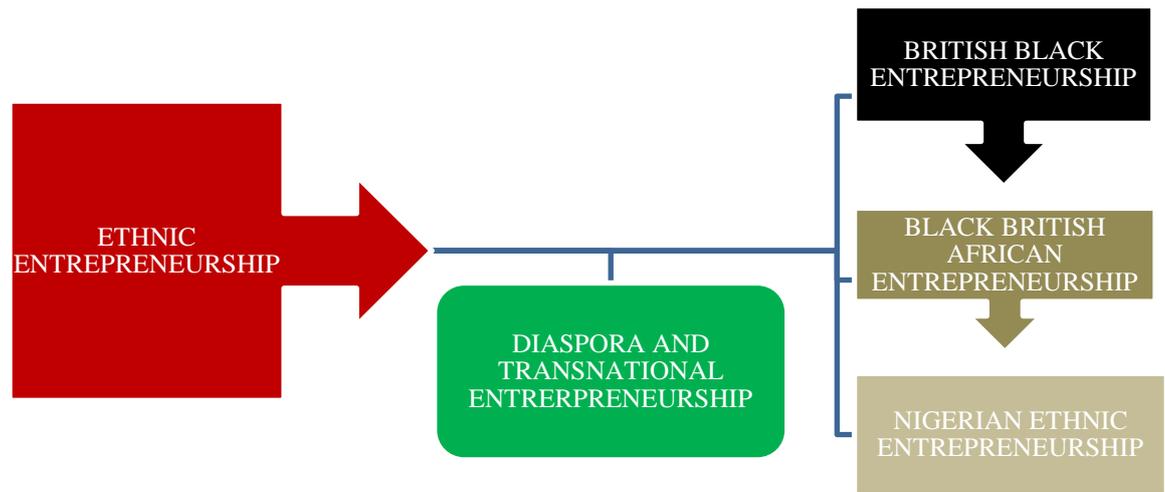
### 3.1.2 Transnationalism Concept

Similar to diaspora, the concept of transnationalism focuses on the cultivation and development of activities spanning national borders. It entails the crossing and linking of multiple binaries. If such activities are successful, then the immigrants are able to fulfil their economic targets without undergoing a prolonged process of acculturation, as expected in the past (Jasso and Rozensweig, 1990). Some academicians employ the idea of transnational communities to accentuate the notion of movement and exchange between home and host countries and draw awareness to the reality of informal networks and circular movements (Ionescu, 2007). Foner (1997) confirms the bifocal nature of migrants' transnational views of the worlds they reside in, claiming that migrants recognise more than one locale as part of their lives, adjusting to the unique set of circumstances in their environment. The multi-local nature of transnational migrants who are not permanently fixed anywhere as they are in a situation of having to react to loyalties, desires and agencies that cross multiple worlds is best expressed by the cliché "Neither here nor there". In linking the two terms, Tölölyan (1991, p.5) refers to ethnic diasporas as 'the exemplary communities of the transnational moment' and this, according to Vertovec (1999), has become the paradigm in the perception of transnationalism. Differentially though, Ionescu (2007) prefers the notion of 'diaspora' to that of 'transnational communities' because the former projects an image of

population that are ‘settled’ abroad, people who have become citizens in the host country including second generations. The transnational approach has become prevalent by shifting away from the dichotomy of *either one or the other* that underscore various relationships between states, institutions and individuals (structure/agency, migrant/non-migrant, temporary/permanent, place of origin/settlement, global/local, and the past/the present) and implies a more synthetic and connected set of concepts. The transnational concept affords researchers the opportunity to explore many links between taken-for-granted binary boundaries and, therefore, refocus towards a more balanced approach (Kwak and Hiebert, 2010).

Invariably, there is considerable overlap between diaspora and transnationalism concepts such that one is difficult to distinguish from the other (Bauböck & Faist, 2010). Therefore, the two terms (diaspora and transnational) are used interchangeably, especially with regard to entrepreneurship in this study. To demarcate the contextual milieu, the expression ‘diaspora entrepreneurship’ will be used when referring to entrepreneurship in the country of residence and transnational entrepreneurship in the context of country of origin and both substitutable for the overall entrepreneurial process. This approach will aid the perceptual discernment of the study, which is schematically depicted in the figure below.

**Figure 3.1: Schematic Flow of Contextual Frameworks**



Source: Literature Analysis

## 3.2 Issues in Diaspora Entrepreneurship

### 3.2.1 Diaspora Entrepreneurship Motivation

It is to be expected that the propensity for diaspora entrepreneurship, similar to ethnic entrepreneurship, derives mainly from the challenges imposed by low earnings in the labour market (Clark and Drinkwater, 2000). With a few exceptions, ethnic groups in the diaspora are generally assumed to be in the lower socio-economic segment of European cities, mainly as a result of their lack of education, skills and high levels of unemployment (Baycan-Leven *et al.*, 2006). Factors of social exclusion, discrimination and other forms of exclusion processes may also expose ethnic individuals to 'blocked mobility' in the workplace (Li, 2000). They are also drawn to entrepreneurship because they are perceived to be less risk averse than the indigenes (as they have chosen to take the risk of leaving their own countries) (Parker, 2004). Transnational networking activities are integral part of the attempts of ethnic entrepreneurs to adjust to and integrate into the host country (Min, 2005). Such activities enable ethnic entrepreneurs to exploit different markets rather than limiting their businesses to the co-ethnic market (Menzies *et al.*, 2007). Apitzsch (2004) also confirms that other research findings suggest that the idea of entrepreneurship appears to be a personal response to institutionalised barriers and exclusion mechanisms, and as a coping device aimed at social integration and recognition.

Hogart *et al.* (2009) suggest that for whatever reasons, the job prospects of ethnic minorities in the UK are always poor, especially at times of economic slowdown and unemployment, and competition for jobs in the labour market increases during such times. Subsequently, those at the bottom of the employment queue particularly, ethnic minorities, are often forced to earn meagre income at the margins of the economy (Boyd, 2000). It then follows that the motivation for entering self-employment derives from the process of reflection and awareness of 'unlived life' that has to be realised in relation to a strive for recognition from the social environment that deprived that recognition (Kontos, 2004, p.67). The strong positive motivation that underlies efforts to realise an alternative personal plan derives from intuitive knowledge of 'unlived life' and should be considered as a further compensating resource for action (Apitzsch, 2004). In the literature review chapter, this pattern is discussed as a typical underlying path to self-employment which exists alongside other typical paths and as a basis for a middle-range theory that could be developed from the empirical material. Hence,

motivation is extremely important for coping with the difficulties entailed in the entrepreneurial tasks as entrepreneurship has to be self-organised, organisational routines have to be invented and risks taken. In essence, the evolving structure of motivation is that of realising ‘unlived-life’ possibilities, connected to a struggle for recognition and respect (Kontos, 2004, p.68).

### 3.2.2 Entrepreneurial Identity

The aim here is to seek to understand the context of how the accounts of the identities of diaspora entrepreneurs are constructed and what is gained from these constructions. The question of identity is significant because what individuals can think of themselves as a person depends upon the symbolic conventions offered to them by discourse. Generally, identity configuration is the development of the distinctive personality of a person regarded as an enduring entity in a specific stage of life in which individual characteristics are possessed and by which a person is recognised or known (Jørgensen, 2006). This process defines individuals to others and themselves. Erikson (1968, p.22) describes identity as ‘process located in the core of the individual’, and in the core of his/her communal culture. Nevertheless, an emerging consent (as quoted in Down and Warren, 2008) that identity is not situated in the personality of the individual but rather is established through interface between the individual, society and culture has been found in philosophy debates (Foucault, 1982; Taylor, 1989; Dennett, 1993), sociology arguments (Giddens, 1991; Jenkins, 1996), and social psychology opinions (Lewis, 2003; Harre´ and Gillett, 1994).

As such, research in ethnic entrepreneurship (ditto diaspora entrepreneurship) is said to warrant looking beyond the individual approach, but calls for investigation on the level of groups and at significant variations between different ethnic groups (Light and Bonacich, 1988; Light and Rosenstein, 1995). Besides, analysis by Autio and Wennberg (2010) reveals very strong group-level effects on entrepreneurial behaviours; their findings confirm that individual-level entrepreneurship behaviour is significantly a reflection of group-level dispositions to entrepreneurship. In other words, the donor group is the decisive driving force responsible for the recruitment decision to go into entrepreneurship, even though self-employment and start-up decisions are typically taken at individual or household levels (Rettab, 2001). Moreover, the social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) which is a key social psychological theory of how individuals in subcultures create identities, advocates that people arrange their

perceptions of themselves and others by classifying others into groups, and then relating with one group as against another (Barker, 2003). Identities are no longer given and innate, individuals must now create who they are and how they want to be known, just as groups, organisations, and nations do. In post-modern times, identities can be assembled and disassembled, accepted and contested (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000; McAdams, 1993) and, indeed, performed (Langellier & Peterson, 2004).

This addendum is essential as the entrepreneurial individual is analysed within the remit of diaspora network group. As Warren (2004, p.26) suggests; “there is clear resonance between the conceptualization of entrepreneurial identity as a reflexive journey and the conceptualization of entrepreneurship as a networked social process”. Autio and Wennberg (2010) also reveal very strong group-level effects on entrepreneurial behaviours; their findings confirm that individual-level entrepreneurship behaviour is significantly a reflection of group-level dispositions to entrepreneurship. Marcus (1995, pp.106-110) advocates approaches which either ‘follow the . . .’ people (particularly migrants), the thing (commodities, gifts, money, works of art, and intellectual property), the metaphor (including signs and symbols or images), the plot, story or allegory (narratives of everyday experience or memory), the life or biography (of exemplary individuals), or the conflict (issues contested in public space) (quoted in Vertovec, 1999). Hence, collective forms of entrepreneurship (Lounsbury, 1998) as expressed in community entrepreneurship (Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989) refer to entrepreneurial group sharing a common fate. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community (however loosely defined) whose members can engage with one another, acknowledging and legitimising each other as participants (Wenger, 1998; Warren, 2004b). Wenger (1998) argues the significance of identity in this process, and the negotiation (and re-negotiation) of identities within a community of practice.

Hitherto, the comprehension of the entrepreneurial identity of the sample population in this study would be greatly enhanced through interaction with a number of formal and informal channels (for example, social & cultural gatherings, literature, ethnic media fora, and so on). For instance, engaging with the Nigerian ethnic media organisations in the UK opens a window of opportunity that facilitates a profound appreciation of their entrepreneurial identity and enables its categorisation and contextualisation.

### 3.2.3 Delineating the Contextual Boundaries

The literature is inconclusive as to the use of notions like immigrant entrepreneurship and ethnic entrepreneurship (Rath, 2002) and there is lack of definite consensus about definitions of certain terms (as established in the preceding chapter). On this basis, it is deemed useful and valid to outline the keywords in the main academic literature in this field towards clarification of working definitions of prominent terms employed in this study. Concepts of 'ethnic', 'minority', and 'immigrant' are closely interwoven but may connote diverse meanings in different situation that a careful definition of each and the context in which they will be employed have to be set.

Ethnicity denotes a sense of kinship, group solidarity, common culture and self-identification with an ethnic group (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996). Ethnic framework permits analysis of boundary formation (Wallman, 1979), social identity (Watson, 1977), processes of disadvantage and exclusion (Rex, 1973) and the cultural constructs of groups (Ballard, 1994). Yet, using the ethnic paradigm risk the inclination to homogenise ethnic groups thus oblivious to the diversities within them in terms of class, gender locations, and in some cases tribal distinctions (Anthias, 1998). For example, the clustering of ethnics under Black or African-Caribbean studies tends to submerge important differences that exist among various Black ethnic groups. The entrepreneurial orientation of the Black African is markedly different to that of Black Caribbean and so forth (Nwankwo, 2005). In this vein, Aldrich & Waldinger (1990, p.131) call for more 'multi-group comparative research' to reflect the heterogeneity that pervades ethnic groups. Deakins (1999) was reading from the same page when he outlines the divergence in ethnic entrepreneurship and concludes that there are many important distinctive ethnic groups.

Basu (2006) portrays minority entrepreneurs as business owners who do not belong to the majority population. A minority may not of necessity be an immigrant and may not share a strong sense of group solidarity with an ethnic group, in terms of a shared history, religion, or language. The difference between ethnic and minority entrepreneurs according to Spinelli *et al.* (2004) is that ethnic entrepreneurs are recognised based on the level of their social attachment with others of a similar national or immigrant background, while minority entrepreneurs are acknowledged exclusively on the basis of their identified ethnic origin. Customarily, however, ethnic entrepreneurs are almost deemed subset of minority entrepreneurs who may or may not be immigrants.

Chaganti and Greene (2002) describe immigrants as recent arrivals in a country, who often engage in business activities as a means of economic survival. They may or may not be part of a network linking migrants, former migrants and non-migrants with a common origin and destination. Invariably, an ethnic entrepreneur may or may not be an immigrant and is likely to belong to a minority community, but an ethnic minority entrepreneur is an entrepreneur who belongs to a minority ethnic community (Basu, 2002). Berry *et al.* (1989) classified immigrants according to four different strategies: assimilation, integration, separation (segregation) and marginalisation: (1) Assimilation refers to the replacement of the immigrants' original cultural patterns with those of the host society. (2) Integration indicates that the immigrants keep their own culture and adopt the host culture. (3) Separation signifies the immigrants keep their own culture, but do not want to adopt that of the host society. (4) Marginalisation implies that the immigrants are involved neither in their own culture nor in the culture of the host society.

In a related development, 'ethnic economy' has been defined by Light and Gold (2000, p.3) as immigrants' self-employed group, its paid and unpaid employers (including family members) and other co-ethnic employees. This economy is based on property right and ownership controlled on the basis of numbers, clustering and organisation. Furthermore, the expressions; 'business ownership' and 'self-employment' as corresponding to entrepreneurship have to be underlined. The term self-employment refers to people who provide employment for themselves as business proprietors rather than searching for a paid job. In addition, there are a number of researches that tried unsuccessfully to differentiate between entrepreneur and the owner/manager based either on risk or innovative roles (Carland *et al.*, 1989; Gartner, 1989). Sociologists (Wilken, 1979, p.60) and Economists (Baumol, 1968, p.66) failed to unequivocally separate owner/manager from the status of "entrepreneur". Invariably, due to lack of unified definition and clarity of what an entrepreneur is has given rise to the use of terms such as Self-employment, Small business owner, and Small business owner/manager interchangeably with that of entrepreneur (Lundstrom and Stevenson, 2005).

Hitherto, like Waldinger *et al.* (1990), entrepreneurs will be classified as owners/managers of business enterprises throughout this thesis. This is a useful

distinction, especially in the context of the exclusions (entrepreneurial types) made in chapter two section 2.1.2. Invariably, the marking out of boundaries helps set the tone for the next two sections.

### **3.3 British Black Entrepreneurship**

#### **3.3.1 British Black Entrepreneurs**

The starting point is to establish that Black people are visible migrant group in the UK, comprising mainly African and Caribbean diasporas. In spite of being the second largest ethnic minority group in the UK, the characteristics and structures of British Black business community are rather under-researched (Bank of England, 1999). This may probably be due to their below average representation in self-employment compared to other minority groups in the UK (Bank of England, 1999). Generally, British Black entrepreneurship is marred by multifarious constraints (Nwankwo, 2005). The entrepreneurs are confronted by multiple factors that impede their growth, these include; lack of access to local role models (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000), dearth of strong predisposing causes such as a business tradition (CEEDR, 2000), absence of a large protected market, entrepreneurial and financial over-stretch (Nwankwo, 2005), defective marketing strategies (Madichie, 2007) and restricted access to ownership as well as necessary resources, such as capital and credit (Bank of England, 1999).

Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp (2005) investigated and compared the structures of Europe immigrant entrepreneurship in an attempt to identify the 'European' models of immigrant entrepreneurship and highlight the determinants of immigrant entrepreneurship therein. The study reveals that the UK labour market experience of ethnic minorities is characterised by high unemployment rates, low participation rates and low status employment; a deduction similar to an earlier conclusion reached by Carmichael and Woods, 2000). Hence the increase in self-employment co-exists with the reality of unemployment rates. The study further adduced that people are 'pushed' to self-employment due to unemployment situation and blocked opportunities; whereas the 'pulled' factors are due to economic gains and financial independence that enterprise attracts (Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp, 2005).

In the UK the 'pull' factors rather than the 'push' factors draw Indians to self-employment, but for Black entrepreneurs, the 'push' factors are at least as significant as

'pull' factors in deciding on entrepreneurship (Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp, 2005). Attributes such as education, marital status, class, housing tenure, area of residence, number of children in the household and the presence of other earners in the household, account for differences between the ethnic groups. Baycan-Levent and Nijkamp (2005) claim that Blacks are disadvantaged comparative to Indians due to lack of educational qualifications, low marriage rates, and absence of other earners in the household. Also that Indians have high marriage rates, a lower average age at marriage and have more than one earner in the household. Similarly, Borooah and Hart (1999, p.111) concluded that the low rate of self-employment among African-Caribbean, as compared to Indians, is due to the fact that Black-Caribbean were "ethnically disinclined" to enter business and lacked the attributes that were self-employment friendly. Other authors (for example, Reeves and Ward, 1984) ascribe the under-representation of Black ethnic group in self-employment in Britain, culturally, to a value-base that is predisposed to running a family business. The absence of extended-family and community networks is also blamed (Blaschke *et al.*, 1990).

Structurally, access to class resources was lower among African-Caribbean compared to the Asians in Britain, hence the incidence of lower participation in entrepreneurship by Blacks (Carter and Jones-Evans, 2000). Findings of Small Business Service (SBS) Report in the UK (Whitehead, *et al.*, 2006) also implies that Black businesses experienced more difficulties in securing loans than Indian or Chinese businesses. Other factors include comparatively high degree of unemployment among the Black community which serves to induce self-employment in low-skill, highly competitive and poorly rewarded informal industrial sectors that do not show up in official statistics (Blaschke *et al.*, 1990). Moreover, negative stereotyping of Black African-Caribbean limits their capacity to raise fund from banks and racist customers' behaviours affect their business development potentials (Jones, 1997). The comparatively low levels of home ownership invariably inhibit their ability to offer tangible collateral for business start-up funding loans.

In addition, majority of Black businesses are concentrated in low-value-added ethnic niche sectors with low entry barriers in term of finance and skills hence they face problems peculiar to other mainstream small enterprises (Barret *et al.*, 2002; Ram *et al.*, 1999). In large ethnic enclaves, severe business competition among co-ethnics for an essentially limited amount of opportunities inflict a major ceiling effect, despite other

group's traits that present a strong inclination toward entrepreneurship (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990). By and large, ethnic niches are harshly constrained because of the smallness of the size of the minorities compared relative to the overall UK market and also due to their limited financial power (McEvoy & Hafeez, 2009). Consequently, the adaptation of Black entrepreneurs, both to the weakness of the business sector and to their overall economic situation, has put in motion a vicious circle that hampers the advancement of Black entrepreneurship (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990).

### 3.3.2 Black British African (BBA) Entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship studies in the UK are many and varied with researches into delineated Asian groups occupying the prime position. In contrast, the African-Caribbean entrepreneurial group, aside from having comparatively less research focus is characterised by merging two distinct groups, Black Africans and Black Caribbean, together as one (for example, Ram & Deakin, 1996; Ram & Jones, 1998; Barrett, 1999). This results in a prevalent lack of intelligence on the characteristics and needs of Black African entrepreneurship in the UK. Only recently is research attention being directed to some facets of Black African entrepreneurship (for example, Nwankwo, 2005; Ekwulugo, 2006). BBA in this instance refer to Black Africans originating from the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continent, and its usage corresponds to that of Nwankwo *et al.* (2011).

Ekwulugo (2006) develops a conceptual matrix classifying Black Africans into four emergent groups, which in turn determine their entrepreneurial intentions. The study only skirts around the issue of Black African entrepreneurship within the larger Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in Britain and does not dig down enough to their characteristics and features. Nwankwo (2005, p.133) on the other hand provides a preliminary exploration into the characteristics of Black African entrepreneurship but conceded that 'the emerging phenomenon of African entrepreneurship is explored further in order to address the lacunae that currently exist in both literature and policy arenas'.

In view of previous foray into varied entrepreneurship models, concepts, definitions, and contextual jungle, the vital question that comes to mind is: what manner or type of entrepreneurship is discernible among the British-African diaspora communities in the UK? Are we talking of the Schumpeterian type (entrepreneurship as

imagination/creativity); the Kirznerian sort (entrepreneurship as alertness/discovery); or possibly the Knightian variety (entrepreneurship as risk-taking/speculative)? Perhaps the general entrepreneurial activity among this group is simply a managerial activity that is, consisting of routine business management tasks. Relevant literature on British-African entrepreneurship is scanty. It is necessary to forage in the studies of entrepreneurship of other ethnic groups to have a contiguous understanding of the stimulus, perceived success factors and predicaments encountered by the British-African entrepreneurs.

#### (a) Problematizing 'Research' into BBA Entrepreneurship

In order to fully appreciate the contextual platform of the BBA entrepreneurship there is need to unpack some intricate issues surrounding the concept. For instance, the sensitivity of language construction to the interpretation of entrepreneurship is interpreted; the language ethnic minorities employ to describe their situation; and the academia interpretive morphology of ethnic entrepreneurship. Van Dijk (1993) suggests that ethnic minority groups and their academic elites have no access or control over the manner their circumstance is defined and represented in social sciences. Hence, the critique is how to bring together the societal prejudices and the ethnic own interpretation of their own context in the composite mega/meso business environment to provide broader insight into the dilemmas and dialectics of diaspora ethnic entrepreneurship. Aspects of ethnic minorities entrepreneurship in the UK have been extensively researched, and to some extent, Black entrepreneurship studies. However there exists a lacuna in research into BBA entrepreneurship. The need for a research study on this ethnic group entrepreneurship is imperative, see earlier discussion on this.

#### (b) The Nature of BBA Entrepreneurship

The literature on Black ethnic entrepreneurship seems to suggest that BBA entrepreneurs participate in small scale ventures that are positioned to serve the needs of co-ethnic; are mostly fragmented and on the fringes of the mainstream economy (Nwankwo, 2005). The frog metaphor; 'boiled frog', 'drowned frog', 'bullfrog', 'cool frog', and 'tadpole', is employed by Nwankwo (2005) as qualifiers for the archetypal BBA entrepreneurs. The 'boiled frogs' category represents entrepreneurs who are mostly 'pulled' into business for self-fulfilment reasons. As their paid employment environments become unbearable, they dashed out to leverage their competencies in the self-employment terrain. 'Drowned frogs' allegory refers to the group of entrepreneurs

who are frustrated out of their comfort zone of paid employment and ventured into entrepreneurship. Most are 'pushed' to business to augment their income. The 'bullfrogs' are those that are in business mostly for personal aggrandisement. They are usually money-messing megalomaniacs who are in business just for show-off. The 'cool frogs' symbolise the serious-minded entrepreneurs who go about their businesses with a clear understanding of what to do. And lastly, 'tadpoles' represent the failed business start-ups that never grow to maturity; they have a disjointed vision of entrepreneurship and have no clear objectives (Nwankwo, 2005). This characterisation is helpful in providing profound insights into BBA entrepreneurship in the UK.

Furthermore, studies have underlined the role of region, language, religion and class/caste on entrepreneurship (for example, Kotkin 1993; Markovits 2000; Wang 1996). These studies are useful for gaining comparative insights into the structures and methods of African ethnic entrepreneurship. They also underlined the significance of comparative analysis of subgroups in order to advance theorisation.

#### (c) Nature of Competition among BBA entrepreneurs

Ekwulugo (2006, p.73) emphasized the high level of diversity among Black African population in the UK and came up with four classifications of Black African businesses, that is, "African in Africa", "African adopters", "British African" and "Johnny just come" - thus suggesting their businesses are not homogeneous. BBA businesses are mostly small, operating in predominantly pressured competitive environment and are generally struggling to survive (Nwankwo, 2005; Fadahunsi et al., 2000; Ram and Deakin, 1996). The competitive environment of African diaspora ethnic businesses is indeed stiff and cut-throat. There is high 'death' rate of nascent enterprises in the community. The 'race to the bottom' (Bonacich *et al.*, 1994) squeezed revenues from entrepreneurs at unsustainable speed that forces many to exit business prematurely. When competition becomes fierce between businesses there are increased incentive to sell products at loss. The race to the bottom instigates BBA entrepreneurs to engage in unwholesome practices and cut corners; either in procurement (smuggling, under-invoicing, and 'creative accounting') or in compliance with regulations, bye-laws, and health guidelines (Nwankwo, 2005).

The review in this section highlights the sequence from the general Black British entrepreneurship to BBA entrepreneurship. The distinction is necessary in recognition

of the differences between separate black groups and their representations in the literature. Nwankwo (2005) alludes to the culture of over-generalisation in viewing the UK's ethnic minority population as a monolithic group. Particularly, Black groups are treated as homogenous in most studies, despite the differences in black groups in the UK (Ekwulugo, 2006). Researchers (for example, Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990) have call for distinct studies into separate ethnic groups in view of the heterogeneity that pervades ethnic groups. Consequently, the next section further distils the contextual framework down to the UK based Nigerian entrepreneurs.

### **3.4 Nigerian Diaspora Entrepreneurship in the UK**

#### **3.4.1 Background Information on Nigeria**

Short background information on Nigeria is considered essential in putting the contextual outline in proper perspective. The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a federal constitutional republic encompassing thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Located in West Africa, and sharing land borders with Republics of Niger in the north, Chad and Cameroon in the east, the Republic of Benin in the west, and by the Atlantic Ocean in the south. English is the official language on account of its colonial historical ties with Britain. The country is rich in mineral resources especially oil on which it over depends. Oil provides 95% of foreign exchange earnings and about 80% of budgetary revenues (CIA Factbook). Her economy is one of the fastest growing in the world; the real GDP growth rate was 7.3% in 2009 and 7.86% in the third quarter of 2010 according to the figures of the National Bureau of Statistics (2011). In terms of religion Nigeria is roughly split half and half between Muslims and Christians with a very small minority practicing traditional religion.

Given the estimated population of over 155 million, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; prominent among which are: Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5% (CIA Factbook). The three largest and most influential ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Obviously with the multitude of tribal groupings, the Nigerian society, home or abroad, is not culturally homogenous. The community is not a monolithic group as often portrayed in the press. To allude to a Nigerian culture may seem a misnomer, just as some authors question the assumption that an ethnic group has a common culture, particularly in contemporary societies

(Tamney, 1995). Invariably, Nigerian diaspora in the UK and in many other developed societies have multiple layers of identification. Contingent on the situation and to whom they interact with, they adopt different markers. The most common markers include nationality (identifying as 'Nigerian' when in another country; race/culture (as 'Hausa/Igbo/Yoruba', and so on, when trying to differentiate themselves from the other racial or cultural communities); and region/dialect (as 'Ijesa/Ijebu/Egba/Oyo', and so on, when trying to distinguish themselves within their own racial or cultural community) (IOM, 2010).

But after over fifty years of independence from Britain (on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1960) the numerous cultures have been aligned in such a manner that one can safely allude to a Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurship culture. This alignment, known as 'acculturation', was described as a process of cultural modification and adaptation of groups of individuals with divergent cultures consequent to continuous direct contact among them (Redfield, *et al.*, 1936, p.149; Harry, 1992, p.55). Therefore, as far as this study is concerned, a homogenous ethnic group in the context of Nigeria is regarded as a monolithic group in the UK society.

#### 3.4.2 Historical and Structural Factors

Nigerian ethnic cluster is a major group within the Black ethnic minority population in the UK. For example, census and Home Office data suggest that the Nigerian community is the largest of the Sub-Saharan Africans in England, and is the oldest Black community in the UK (British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC, 2008). Likewise, Nigerian-born British residents feature for the first time in a list of those born outside the UK with a population of 191,000 in the 2011 census analysis (Pears, 2012). In any case, many features of African communities traverse national boundaries. For example, language or ethnic groups span several nations such as Bantu people who live in several African countries, Luo tribe inhabits Kenya as well as Uganda and coastal and border communities have many features in common with contiguous nations. Facets of culture or food that seem to be exclusive to a community may be found elsewhere and the experience of migration and living as a minority ethnic group also intersect national differences (Elam & Chinouya, 2000; Ekwulugo, 2006). Nigerian diaspora ethnic entrepreneurship research can thus be employed as starting point or as comparative platform in other British-Africans ethnic entrepreneurship studies.

Nigerians' migration to the UK span over 200 years. Being a former colony of Britain, Nigerians' first port of call in the pursuit of the Golden Fleece, business enterprise, and holiday destination is the UK. Up to the 1970s the trend was for Nigerians who studied in the UK to return to Nigeria and fill up many available employment opportunities (International Organisation for Migration, IOM, 2007). But the 1980s witnessed a change in the migration trend following the end of the oil boom era in Nigeria that signalled the beginning of economic doldrums for the country (IOM, 2007). Oriola and Adeyanju (2011, p.641) confirm that 'almost on a daily basis, hundreds and thousands of Nigerians check out of Nigeria to seek greener pastures because of the social, economic and religious problems occasioned by the blatant failure of the state'. Due to these developmental problems (Elkan, 1988), considerable wave of Nigerians' migration into the UK becomes characterised by an increased propensity for the migrants to settle permanently in the country in order to secure better life and be fully integrated into the UK community. Nevertheless, this epoch has produced a new generation of Nigerian migrants whose views, conducts and general mindsets are tangential to the aspirations of the academic-oriented generation of old.

#### (a) Migration Process

Since 1990, Nigerians are dominant among many West African migrants travelling to Europe and North America (Van Hear, 1998). This is understandable as the nation is the most populous in Africa. The visa procurement restrictions and the intensification of migration controls at ports of entry provoke an increase in the numbers of Nigerian migrants resorting to crossing the Mediterranean illegally from North Africa after crossing the Sahara overland. Aside from the dangers of the sea, the most difficult parts of the trans-Saharan journeys are the desert and border crossings (De Haas, 2006). Trans-Saharan journey is typically made in several phases taking between one month and several years. On their way, migrants and refugees often stay temporarily to work and save enough money in towns' en-route to their final destinations (Collyer, 2005).

Although, many Nigerians like other African immigrants in Europe have entered the UK legally, on some sort of visa, and then overstayed (Düvell, 2005), but many more entered illegally through other means that include: securing a tourist visa or residency permits through (real or fake) marriage or arranged work contracts; travelling with forged documents or documents of family look-alikes; or travel by air using so-called via/via systems (De Haas, 2006). Some others stowed aboard passenger or cargo ships

sailing from North and West Africa to Europe clandestinely or through bribing ship's crew (various sources cited in De Haas, 2006). When in the UK, most go underground and work at irregular jobs in the large and thriving (formal and informal) agricultural, construction and service sectors. Others are often self-employed and involved in trade (De Haas, 2006). Nigerians in the UK could be placed into different categories, including; settled residents with rights of abode (for example, Nigerians with British nationality and other European Union (EU) nationality), those who are in the UK on a temporary status (for example, students, visitors, or highly skilled workers), irregular migrants (for example, those who have overstayed their visas or undocumented migrants and asylum seekers).

#### (b) Bicultural Competence

The cultural analysis of black people's experience in white-dominated society sometimes invokes racial confusion in the personal experience of African diaspora living in the UK. Often Black Africans try to engage with what it means to be black instead of avoiding and denying it, but the ability to competently align black culture with white culture leads to success (Gordon, 2007). Consequently, the notion of bicultural competence suggests that people with such aptitude can productively shuffle from a cultural setting to another without feeling disorientated. Thus, the biculturals individuals are those that have internalised two cultural schemas (Hong *et al.*, 2000).

By exploring the experience of members of the African Diaspora, Gordon (2007) assumes that through conscious bicultural competence, Blacks Africans in the UK could begin to work with the visible and invisible legacies of their shared histories (with Britain) towards a better world. The author provides important insights into how social inequality is maintained and the many social problems Black Africans face in contemporary UK society (such as the widely espoused underachievement of Black boys in the British school system).

In essence, bicultural competence could shed light on whether the embeddedness of ethnic groups in their communities' accounts for the performance of ethnic enterprises. For instance, high failure crisis in entrepreneurship could largely be due to ethnic entrepreneurs' inability to negotiate the different cultural terrains in the host country. If they are able to successfully navigate cross-cultural competence, then, cross-over in terms of market spaces (that is, breaking-out) could be achieved. It is then the case that

Nigerian enterprises in the UK cannot get to the mainstream without understanding the mainstream consumption pattern, what they buy and their preferences.

### (c) Informal Economy

Substantial number of Nigerian diaspora is excluded from the labour market for various causes. Wrench & Solomos (1993, pp.157-172) reveal the subtle and indirect manner in which ‘institutional racial discrimination’ in the labour market is perpetuated. This could explain why a lot of Nigerians in the UK are involved in the informal economy. For most, this is the only mean of survival in an unfamiliar social environment. The informal economy is described as economic activities that are unregulated by law (Portes, 1995). The activities in the ‘informal sector’ are differentiated from criminal activities such as prostitution or drug-running but include dealings like unlicensed street vending, auto & home repairs or other unregistered small entrepreneurship (Portes, 1995, p.29). Informal activities are rife with potentials for fraud as no legal structure moderates their conducts. Parties to a transaction can easily default on verbal commitments. Unscrupulous owner/manager often robbed workers of their pay or made to work much harder than previously agreed.

For various reasons, it is not uncommon to find many Nigerians operating in the informal economy in the UK. This is against the background of the view that to an extent, a large percentage of the Nigerian diaspora in the UK could be tagged economic migrants as they have migrated into the UK for economic reasons (IOM, 2007). Kershen (1997) suggests that many Nigerians have come to Britain in order to acquire capital sufficient to allow them to return home. Ultimately, business ownership has historically been a path to economic emancipation for ethnic minority groups (Fairlie & Robb, 2007). Taken together, the explanation for the prevalence of Nigerian entrepreneurs in many business ventures among Britain’s Black ethnic groups begins to unravel. Nwankwo (2005) alluded to deficiency in official statistical records of Black enterprises in the UK and the constraints in quantifying the size of the unofficial black/informal economy. In the same vein, the magnitude of Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK is difficult to measure; the size can only be guesswork. However, the rate at which Black businesses failed is phenomenal. Nwankwo *et al.* (2009) refer to persistent higher degree of sustainability crises among Black business start-ups than the average.

### 3.4.3 Nigerian Entrepreneurs in London

It is generally accepted that London is home to the largest diaspora populations of Nigerians in the UK and the Nigerians population has the largest number of second and third generation Black Africans in London (Elam & Chinouya, 2000). The capital accommodates more Nigerians & Nigerian Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) than any other part of the UK. The 2001 census statistics observes that about 70% of estimated Nigerian community resides in London (IOM, 2007, p.6). Hence, London is touted as the main base of Nigerians (BBC, 2008) and Nigerians' SMEs in Britain. There is also a regular drove of shoppers coming to London from Nigeria buying from the mundane to exotic products. Visitors from Nigeria are said to be the UK's fourth biggest foreign spenders, ringing up an average £500 per shop (Mark, 2012).

However, despite a large and vibrant Nigerians and Nigerian businesses in London there is a noticeable drought of information on the sector. This is not surprising as not much is known or written generally about London's Black businesses in terms of characterisation, size and scope of activities (Blankson and Omar, 2002); even though they contribute considerably to London's economy (London Development Agency (LDA), 2005). Nevertheless, there is now a steady growth of Black-owned business start-ups, necessitating Nwankwo (2005, p.120) to describe them as the 'fastest mutating phenomenon in London'. Consequently, London provides a veritable research ground for Nigerians, Nigerian entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial activities. A glimpse of the entrepreneurial environment in Nigeria - as shown below - could deliver added value in terms of profound insights into the entrepreneurs' homeland background.

### 3.4.4 Characterisation of Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

The ability to effectively integrate entrepreneurial environments (country of residence - UK and country of origin - Nigeria) by Nigerian entrepreneurs is vital to the success of their ventures. It is then necessary to include an epigrammatic glimpse of the entrepreneurial environment in Nigeria in cognisance of the fact that many Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurs and businesses are intrinsically connected with Nigeria. Moreover, diaspora entrepreneurs that engage in ethnic niche supply markets exclusively rely on and maintain trade links with 'home' (Nigeria). Thus, the nature of the entrepreneurial environment in Nigeria has a great impact on the outcomes of their entrepreneurship in the UK.

Generally, entrepreneurs in developing countries are faced with colossal and quite similar challenges that include unstable and highly bureaucratic business environment, complex and difficult to understand laws governing private enterprise, especially business registration and taxation systems (Chu *et al.*, 2008). The literature suggests that contract and private property laws are often poorly designed and/or enforced, and that the inauspicious institutional/regulatory environment is often complemented by the added expenses of corruption and bribery in developing economies (Kiggundu, 2002; Pope, 2001; Stevenson, 1998). In a survey of more than 3600 entrepreneurs in 69 countries, Kisunko *et al.* (1999) found that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the most critical problems were corruption, tax regulations and high taxes, inadequate infrastructure, inflation, crime, theft and financing. Mambula (2002) confirms this in a study of Nigerian entrepreneurs, reporting that the entrepreneurs claimed they were frequently harassed by government officials who extorted money from their businesses. The study further confirms that poor infrastructure, that is, irregular electric supply, bad roads and water shortage added further challenges. Akande (1994) identifies several sources of entrepreneurial stress including loneliness, time demands of business, conflicts with partners and employees and their needs for achievement in a study of Nigerian entrepreneurship. Ariyo (2005) asserts that though the difficulties encountered in accessing bank credits and other financial institutions funding proved to be a debilitating factor in the development of Nigerian entrepreneurship but the most serious and damaging problem is the lack of government interest in and support for entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the pressure of issues such as corruption, nepotism and tribalism are deepened by prebendalism, thus constituting formidable threat to entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Prebendalism is a theory (Joseph, 1987) that describes a patron-client or neo-patrimonial state in which people of a country develop a sense of entitlement to the revenues of the state. Different groups claim a right to a share of government revenues, thus state offices are considered prebends that can be usurped by office-holders to generate significant benefits for themselves, relatives, and cronies.

On the gender front, there are no significant differences between male and female entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Halkias *et al.*, 2011). Although in their study, Ehigie & Umoren (2003) found that Nigerian women entrepreneurs' high self-concept of their commitment and roles in business can help them to become more successful. Further, their report suggests that entrepreneurial success is influenced by psychological factors such as self-concept, managerial competence, work-stress and business commitment.

Self-concept is described as those ideas the individual has of him/herself that he/she discovered in relationship with others (Sabin, 1954). Therefore, a positive self-concept signals positive action and perception of the world and negative self-concept indicates feeling of dissatisfaction and unhappiness.

### **3.5 Summary**

The chapter examines the context in which the study is ensconced. In view of the accounts of BBA entrepreneurship experience involvement both temporally and spatially overtime (Nwankwo, 2005) and its emergence significance, the chapter reviews the concepts of Diaspora and Transnationalism in cross-border entrepreneurship. This assists to demonstrate the importance of networks in facilitating the diaspora mobility, businesses activities and the inter-connection between ethnic entrepreneurship and diaspora entrepreneurship. Thus, diaspora entrepreneurship now assumes a definite ontological shape which unravels in the next (methodological) chapter.

The chapter underlines the inadequacy in the Black African entrepreneurship research. Despite the fact that the UK has the largest African population in Europe with a large market segment (CEEDR, 2000), Black entrepreneurship studies routinely cluster under African-Caribbean investigations. The clustering of British-Black ethnic groups under Black or African-Caribbean studies tends to submerge important differences that exist among various Black ethnic groups. For instance, differences exist between Black Africans and Black Caribbean and among Black Africans themselves, and these are often ignored. Also, the entrepreneurial orientations of the Black African are markedly different to that of Black Caribbean and so forth (Nwankwo, 2005). Consequently, the chapter segregates British Black entrepreneurship into distinct constituents along its characteristics and structural differences. Invariably, investigating the dynamics of the Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship exposes the defect in the mainstream literature (for example, Kitching *et al.*, 2009; Ram & Jones, 1998) and enriches current knowledge of the field. The delineation of contextual boundaries is elemental to clear any ambiguity that may arise when employing contiguous expressions in the study. Hereafter, various terms and concepts used in literature of ethnic/immigrants' entrepreneurship are put into proper perspectives relative to the terms of engagements expressed in this study.

Furthermore, the chapter highlights historical and structural factors of Nigerians embeddedness in the UK society against condensed bio-data information on Nigeria.

Also, emphasized are Nigerians migration history and entrepreneurial activities in London. This helps to underline their idiosyncratic ethnic entrepreneurship practices. Additionally, the nature of enterprise customs and tradition in Nigeria was stressed in order to demonstrate the herculean task confronting the cross-border entrepreneurs. Economic prosperity for Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurs in the UK depends on a vibrant private sector both at 'home and abroad'. Having produced a crisp appraisal of the contextual framework, attention now shifts to the methodological structure of the thesis as described in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

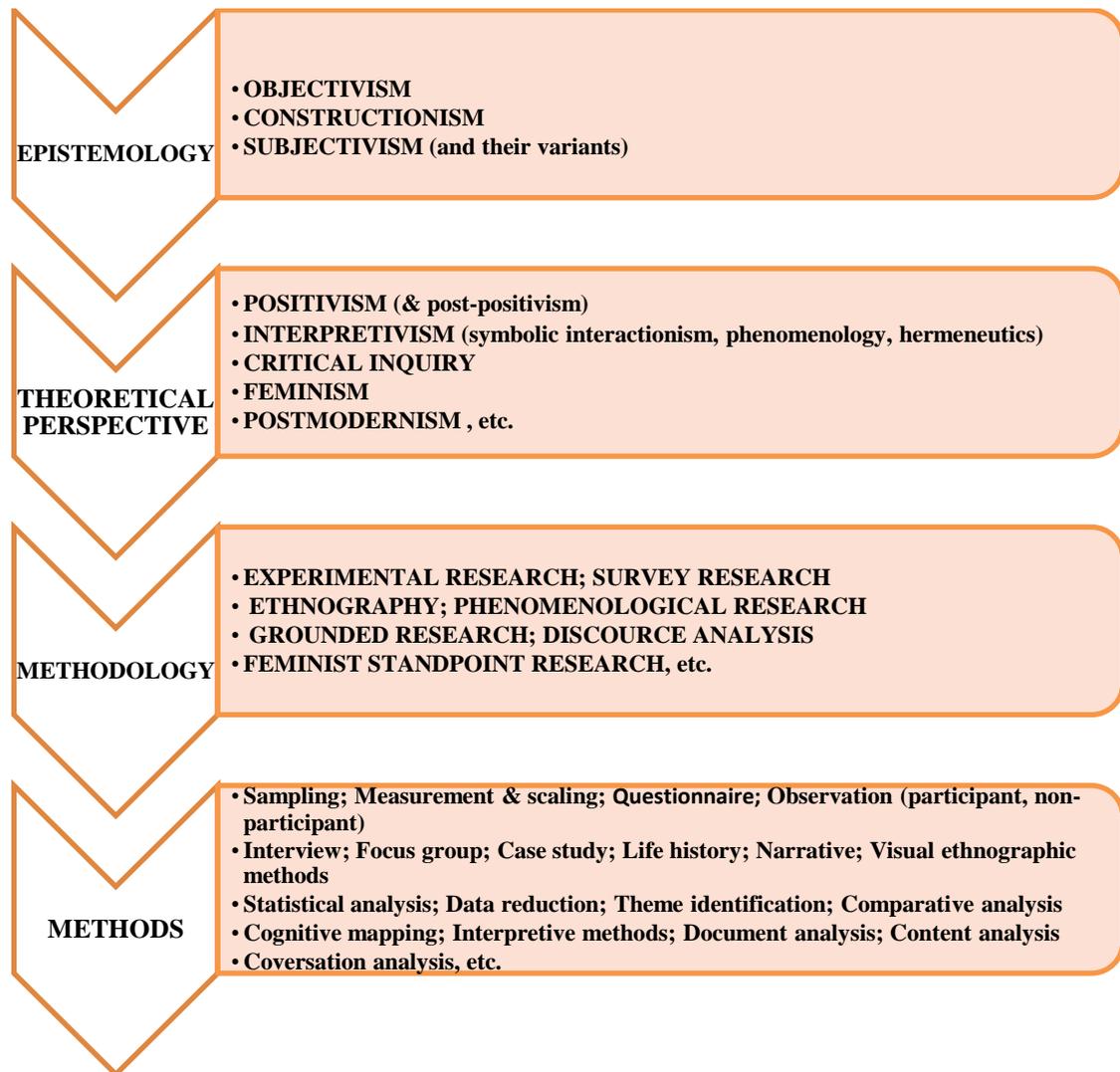
### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the approaches used in embarking on the exploration of Nigerian entrepreneurship in London, and the underlying assumptions that have informed the choice of methodology and methods. Research methodology is a generic term for the combination of techniques used to enquire into a specific situation and methods are individual techniques for data collection, analysis, and so on (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). Undertaking a research study to find answers to queries involves a number of activities carried out within a framework of a set of approaches (philosophies), while employing procedures, methods and techniques that have been tested for their validity and reliability in order to obtain legitimate and justifiable outcomes.

Social scientists are probably influenced towards different methodologies by different ontologies, epistemologies and models of human nature (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Identifying and selecting the right theoretical perspective (Philosophy) for a research study can be challenging. Methodological philosophies are full of contradictions and inconsistencies mainly because they are far from being clear cut or “defined in such a way as to be able to differentiate between and across them on the basis of a fixed set of principles and procedures” (Goulding, 1999, p.862). Nonetheless, researchers must ensure that their chosen “methods are carefully selected and carefully and conscientiously applied” (Wallendorf and Brucks, 1993, p.355). Essentially, some elements of the research process are schematically represented in Figure 4.1 below:

**Figure 4.1: Elements of Research Process**



Source: Adapted from Crotty, 1998.

Basically, this chapter illuminates the ontological and epistemological obligations and the choice of methodology that ensued. The general aim has been to understand diaspora entrepreneurship through investigation from multiple perspectives with a view to capturing the tensions and movements in entrepreneurial engagements among Nigerian diasporas in the UK. The thesis is written from the ontological position that reality is a creation of individual perception, not something external and ‘out there’. The methodological approach is qualitative, seeking to understand, rather than predict and manipulate (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000, p.502). This research methodology consequently becomes a guide by which readers can recognise the procedural structure in which the study is carried out (Remenyi *et al.*, 1998). Hence, the methodological excursion is structured to adequately answer a question qualitative researchers are

frequently asked: What makes your study a piece of academic research? Isn't it just good storytelling? (Wigren, 2007).

Ultimately, the methodology navigates the extent to which environmental pressures and personal attributions influence the processes, procedures, and outcomes of diaspora entrepreneurship. Also, it helps to establish to what extent would the attempt at synthesizing the antecedents (and consequences) of diaspora entrepreneurship assist in formulating a diagnostic schema that would, in turn, aid in developing focused strategies in the promotion and evaluation of diaspora entrepreneurship. The route includes an exploration of the role of diaspora organisations in the creation of a diaspora community infrastructure, including business ethics and the process of cultural identity recreation.

The chapter is arranged in five parts to articulate the research processes, and the first part delves into the research philosophy considerations. This is followed by research strategies, which deals with the research challenges, thus leading to the choice of data collection and analysis. It is noted that research strategy is related to the whole approach adopted, but the data collection methods, the third part, represents operational and methodological decisions (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). The fourth part, research procedures, focuses on the quality considerations and assessment, while the last part summarises the chapter.

## **4.1 Philosophical Assumption and Paradigm**

### **4.1.1 Research Philosophy**

The awareness of the interconnectedness of philosophical assumptions, world-views, and researcher's beliefs/attitudes is essential as they are all rooted in peoples' thoughts. These can influence researcher's engagement with the study and the comprehension of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs, enterprises and their external environments. Creswell (2003) concludes that, fundamentally, the philosophical assumptions/world views consist of a viewpoint relating to the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what she/he knows (epistemology), the language of research (rhetoric), the function of values in the research (axiology), and the methods used in the process (methodology). Likewise, Burrell and Morgan (1979) contend that philosophies in research inform researchers about the complexities of organisational study and create

awareness about the impact of research paradigms on knowledge construction. According to them “all social scientists approach their subjects via explicit or implicit assumptions about the nature of the social world and the way in which it may be investigated.” This relates to, (a) ontology of the phenomenon under investigation - whether the 'reality' being studied is external to the individual or a product of individual consciousness and, (b) epistemological assumptions “about how one might begin to understand the world and communicate this knowledge to fellow human beings” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.1). The methodology chosen for a research project is the outcome of “a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology)” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.18). The Table 4.1 below condenses major research methodologies aligned with relevant epistemologies.

**Table 4.1: Research Methodologies Mapped Against Epistemologies**

	Positivist	Relativist	Constructionist
<b>Action research</b>	*		**
<b>Case method</b>	*	*	*
<b>Collaborative research</b>			**
<b>Cooperative inquiry</b>			**
<b>Ethnography</b>			**
<b>Experimental methods</b>	**	*	
<b>Grounded theory</b>	*	*	**
<b>Narrative methods</b>			**
<b>Quasi-experimental research</b>	**	*	
<b>Survey feedback</b>	*	*	*
<b>Survey research</b>	*	**	*

Source: Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008, p.83

Essentially, the table demonstrates the availability of variety of epistemologies and methodologies for researchers to employ. However, the preference here is the social constructionism paradigm. The justification for adopting it resides in its implicit assumptions. Given that the intention of the study is not to examine statistical regularity but, rather, explore ‘lived experiences’ which cannot be scaled by any kind of ordinance scale. The plan is more of getting reality to come out on its own terms, hence the

adopted approach is fit for purpose. It has been used elsewhere in terms of dealing with real life situation not only in business, but in entrepreneurship and other related areas (for example, Nwankwo, 2005).

#### 4.1.2 Social Constructionism Paradigm

This thesis is structured to focus on the ways that people make sense of the world by sharing their experiences with others through the path of language. As such it is steeped in social constructionism, the tenet that holds that human knowledge of truth or meaning comes from engagement with realities in the world, that is, knowledge is constructed and not simply ‘a disinterested reflection of reality’ (Nash 1994, p.68). Understanding is shaped in a social context, implying that people construct knowledge and act based on their perceptions and experiences. Entrepreneurship is then comprehended as a socially constructed phenomenon that is reproduced, for instance, in the emergence of opportunities, as individuals make sense of information and their actions, thus retrospectively ‘discovering’ and ‘recognising’ business ideas (Gartner *et al.*, 2003). Entrepreneurship hence takes place in an ‘enacted’ environment (Weick, 1995, p.30). The presumptions of social constructivism (Burr, 1995) are, first, reality is created in social processes and, second, meanings of reality are formed by the interaction of people. People recognise reality through meanings, based on which different versions of reality are constructed and knowledge claims made consequently. Truth and facts are also socially negotiated, suggesting that the ways in which people generally understand reality and the concepts they use to interpret it are historically and culturally specific. Third, different ways of understanding are specific to particular cultures and periods of time and depend on the ‘particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that culture at that time’ (Burr, 1995, p.4). Lastly, language proffers a system of categories for people’s experience and for allocating meaning to it. Hence, language operates as the mediator for creating reality (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007). Invariably, meaning is not discovered but constructed according to individual perception, hence the variations in perspectives across cultures and era. It is the duty of research to advance our understanding of these perspectives (Steyaert, 1997; Chell, 2000; Downing, 2005; Fletcher, 2006). This obviously contradicts objectivism, which claims that meaning and meaningful reality exist aside from the process of consciousness and that objective truth can be discovered (Crotty, 1998).

As socially constructed paradigms, it is imperative to create knowledge on the interaction processes that produce and reproduce the concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs (Steyaert, 1997). The focus of social constructionism will then be on the interpretive inquiry into how and why opportunities, entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial processes and entrepreneurship are constructed in social interaction between people (Lindgen & Packendorff, 2007). The corollary to studying a phenomenon that is regarded as socially constructed is to rely on an interpretive approach (Brundin, 2007). Its rationale is to create a dialogue in which mutual understanding can be accomplished in order to offer new perspectives and/or expand existing ones (Brundin, 2007). However, it is to be noted that there is considerable diversity of methods and designs within constructionist research tradition (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008) and selected methods/designs must be consistent and logical.

References are made interchangeably to intepretivism and constructivism in this study. Both are interrelated research approaches that are typical of particular philosophical outlook (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Schwandt (1994) describes these terms as sensitising concepts that guide researchers towards the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it.

#### 4.1.3 Research Ontology and Epistemology

Ontological assumption is concerned with the nature of reality (Collis & Hussey, 2009), and is expressed differently according to different philosophical orientations. The ontology of entrepreneurship in social constructionism relates to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship as subjectively and inter-subjectively understood by human beings. Individuals' interpretations and constructions of reality take place within the confines of institutionalised cultural norms (Giddens, 1984). This implies that the interpretations and constructs of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs differ among various cultures in the society (Berger and Luckmann, 1991). As a result, research is geared towards how entrepreneurial concepts and acts are constructed, instead of ascertaining 'objective truths' on psychological traits and macro-economic laws (Lindgren and Packendorff, 2003). This also implies that who and what are included and/or excluded in/from these conceptual groupings may vary according to the group of people interviewed (Lindgen & Packendorff, 2007).

This ontological situation directly shapes the epistemology. Epistemology involves the provision of philosophical framework for resolving the types of knowledge (of entrepreneurship) that is achievable, how such knowledge are produced, and how to validate their adequacy and legitimacy. It is then necessary to recognise, clarify, and substantiate the epistemological position taken (Crotty, 1998).

## **4.2 Research Strategy and Design**

### **4.2.1 Research Strategy**

Broadly, methodological issues have always been contentious in social science research (Fusari, 2004), more so in the specific field of entrepreneurship (Busenitz *et al.*, 2003; Cope, 2005) and ethnic research (Stanfield, 1994). Due to the complexity and heterogeneous nature of the entrepreneurship phenomenon (Bruyat and Julien, 2001), there is no single method that could be easily adopted for all entrepreneurship research. But the selected methods should be compatible with the aim of the study, keeping in mind its characteristic features. Nevertheless, this study's research method is idiographic; that is, striving to appreciate the unique and concrete. Qualitative methods are employed because they allow for 'thick description' of a phenomenon (Geertz, 1973, p.6) to be expounded without the burden of a pre-prearranged frame of reference, thus providing a suitable platform which is in harmony with this study's objectives.

The research methodology is embedded and couched in discourse analysis, which is deployed to boost the breadth, the width, and depth of the research. Discourse analysis is said to be more strongly based on a social constructivist paradigm than most other qualitative methodologies (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). In embracing this, language is seen as a form of constructing and/or producing entrepreneurship domain and not only as a mode of conveying messages. Berglund & Johansson (2007) assert that the procedure of construction processes, reality-maintenance and change is better managed through discourse, and this represents a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories and statements that jointly produce a particular version of the world (Foucault, 1993).

### **4.2.2 Qualitative Research**

This study adopts a qualitative research approach based on the belief that this will provide a route to entering the subjective reality of the population under study in order

to uncover the complexities therein. Hindle (2004) suggests that qualitative research into entrepreneurship fuels broader in-depth understanding and the capacity to learn directly from the research subjects. This sentiment is supported by Dana & Dana (2005) who suggest that qualitative research appears particularly suitable for exploratory studies in entrepreneurship research due to its evolving research design and flexibility. Effective research in entrepreneurship should be able to unravel the ‘how’ questions (Dana & Dana, 2005) such as; how is business run in diverse environments? How do different ethnic entrepreneurs recognise opportunity? Or how others can be encouraged to succeed in entrepreneurship? These questions are better answered not via mail questionnaires, surveys or brief interviews but by qualitative research. For instance, surveys and short interviews are said to be open to manipulation by facilitating the acquisition of socially desirable responses from respondents who are inclined to present themselves favourably in regards to current social norms (Adair, 1984; Lopez, 1982; Rahim, 1983; Berry, 1986). Moreover, the approach is favoured over quantitative research, which is often restricted by narrow and strict methods, and by unrealistic suppositions that made them “miss a true understanding of real-world behaviours in alien cultures” (Pasquero, 1988, p.184).

Qualitative research has been described as holistic-inductive that relies on naturalistic inquiry and, also, research devoid of manipulation by the researcher (Willens and Rausch, 1969). It is based on personal observation of events, situations, individuals, interactions, transactions, document analysis and open-ended interviews producing detailed and oral testimonies (Dana & Dana, 2005). Hence, qualitative data includes solid description (Geertz, 1973) and direct quotations from people regarding their “attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, intentions, actions and experiences”. Effective qualitative researcher never takes for granted the meanings of words, concepts or behaviour (Dana & Dana, 2005, p.82). To achieve complete understanding of entrepreneur’s motivations and perception of opportunities and constraints in a given environment, a qualitative researcher has to be alert as well as flexible when taking in multiple qualitative aspects such as, recording interactions, verbal and non-verbal communication, attitudes, facial expressions, and so on (Dana & Dana, 2005).

In celebrating qualitative approach as best fit for entrepreneurship research, Dana & Dana (2005, p.80) contend that measurement errors, which are common in assumption-lead survey studies, are reduced and the interaction between researcher and the

researched reduces incidences of “Type III error (asking the wrong question) and Type IV error (solving the wrong problem)”. Qualitative approach generates internal validity and can be used to substantiate quantitative research (Dana & Dana, 2005) although some qualitative researchers have maintained that validity, generalisability, replications and reliability, which are cornerstones of quantitative research, are not relevant for qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

However, Richards & Richards (1994) sketch four major observed limitations associated with the use of qualitative methods. These are volume of data, complexity of analysis, details of classification record and flexibility and momentum of analysis. Also, qualitative research is said to be messy. It never goes according to plan as researchers become aware of the political and ethical “perils” and “pitfalls” of actually carrying out research (Punch, 1998, p.159). All these downsides were taken into consideration and carefully negotiated in this thesis as reflected in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

#### 4.2.3 Research Design

The research design is eclectic; mixing and blending a number of approaches and techniques to tease out vital data relevant to the prosecution of the aim of bridging the macro, meso, and micro levels aspects of diaspora entrepreneurship. This approach beams the searchlight on all areas of diaspora entrepreneurial activities including those subterranean business ventures that pervade Nigerian entrepreneurship. It also brings pluralism in ethnic entrepreneurship research to the fore. Thus, acknowledging diverse meanings about entrepreneurship, imparting knowledge on interaction processes and describing its complexity. The approach gels with the calls by researchers for studies into social networks and entrepreneurial processes beyond individual entrepreneurs and their created organisations (Drakopoulou-Dodd and Anderson, 2007; Gartner, 2001; Fletcher, 2006).

In order to logically and legitimately derive valid research design and methodology, there is a need to develop clear information requirement. That is, the researcher must know what sort of information is needed to solve research question(s). It is when one can answer the question: “what would the description of the nature of the solution to the research question look like?” that one can then try to identify and evaluate possible alternative designs to choose from (Draper, 2004). The chosen design must tick all of the following boxes: capacity to deliver information required, reliability

(trustworthiness), resources required, timeliness (time available), ethical correctness and researcher's capacity (work-life balance, skills, and so on). Suitability of design and methods must drive choice but not current researcher's skills (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Saunders *et al.*, 2003; Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). Thus, the information requirement is satisfied through analysis of data the researcher chose to collect. The potential methods of collecting data and data collection processes/tools/instruments are also evaluated for practicality, ability to yield the type of data needed, researcher's personal skill-set, and the time frame available for the project.

#### 4.2.4 Discourse Analysis Methodology

There are several explanations and definitions of discourse and discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1997). Generally, discourses are organised collections of texts and related practices of textual production, diffusion and consumption that formed the structure of power prevailing in certain context (Hardy *et al.*, 2000). McCarthy (1994, p.5) contends that "discourse analysis is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which is used". It is said to emerge from the interaction between different social groups, their 'texts', as well as from the context in which the interaction is embedded, therefore the understanding of the context is crucial in discourse analysis (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007). Discourse analysis is used to examine, in the wider social context, natural language data produced in conversation and other textual sources such as newspaper articles, computer conferences or advertisements (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). It is also applied to naturally occurring talk within the researched community. Naturally occurring talk refers to spoken language produced entirely independently of the actions of the researcher (Potter, 1998). It exists, for example, in everyday telephone conversation, items in the news media, or interaction between entrepreneur and customer in a market place. Conversation is the prime medium that people use to construct their reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1991) and in an apparent linguistic turn Gartner (1993, p.231) declares that: 'words lead to deeds'. Hence, the form of discourse analysis this thesis espouses aims to make visible the ways in which discourse is central to action, the ways it is used to constitute events, settings and identities, and the various discursive resources that are drawn on to build credible descriptions. This approach to discourse is useful to the understanding of interaction and social life. Furthermore, it has paid particular attention to analytic practice and to role of evidence (texts and recordings of interaction) in supporting claims (Potter, 2004).

Often, discourse analysis attempts to restructure the argumentation structure applied to define a problem or object (Donati, 2001). In order to understand the structure of discourses and to facilitate the analysis of the discourse of interest, researchers could consider the following:

- (a) Discourses could be focused discourses, for example, the discourse of researchers on topics related to female entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2002).
- (b) Different strands of entrepreneurship discourses operate in different discursive fields, such as sciences, politics, education, everyday life, business or administration (Jager, 2001).
- (c) Discourses cannot be directly grasped and understood, but are rather condensed methodically from discourse materials (Ahl, 2002).
- (d) Discourse analysis can take place on different levels (Ahl, 2002).

A discourse analysis on the meso level refers to the analysis of contents as well as language patterns. In respect to entrepreneurship, this permits the identification and understanding of the images transported through media which, in turn, influence the role of entrepreneurs and their identity, thus shaping the extent and nature of entrepreneurship (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007). Discourse analysis methodology enhances entrepreneurship research by facilitating the investigation of the processes of socially constructing entrepreneurship-related experiences, and their economic/societal connotations (Ainsworth, 2001). It examines 'how the socially produced ideas and objects that populate the world were created in the first place and how they are maintained and held in place over time' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.6). Thus, entrepreneurship is not a unitary or static concept that exists independently of the locale where it emerges. Frequently 'entrepreneurship's conception in a particular setting depends on integrating two or more discourses – one economic and one cultural and may be one environmental or social' (Steyaert & Katz, 2004, p.186). Hence, this notion of discourse analysis research includes both the social reality and the experienced world of the individual, thus giving the approach a dialectic conception.

Therefore, in this thesis, the approach attempts to give a platform for dialogue between different interpretive frameworks so as to engender interpretive insight, especially into the ways in which meaning is implicated in the daily mundane lives and activities (Miller, 1998) of entrepreneurs. Discourse highlights how social life might be organised within multiple realities, how the realities are socially constructed through the use of

language and the reflexivity of accounts of social settings, realities and issues. Then, reflexivity concept refers to the ways in which the interpretations of social realities concurrently express and constitute the realities (Garfinkel, 1967 quoted in Miller, 1998). The descriptions of social realities, then, cannot be divorced from the objects, persons or circumstances that they depict or the languages used to express them (Miller, 1998). The key subject of interest is the underlying social structures, which may be assumed or played out within interviews, conversation or text. Invariably, this researcher seeks to answer questions such as: how does the discourse assists in understanding the subject under study? How do people form their own version of an event? How do people use discourse to preserve or construct their own identities? Consequently, this methodology positions lived experiences of entrepreneurs within the unconscious structures of meaning that traverse life stories. This reinforces the idea that social reality involves ‘discursively constructed ensembles of texts’ (Alvesson & Karreman, 2000, p.137).

Yet, discourse analysis is a contested disciplinary terrain, fragmented in complex range of different theoretical notions and analytic practices (Billig, 1991; Potter, 1998). Different types or schools of discourse analysis exist (Fairclough, 1995; Phillips and Hardy, 2002) and considerable range of objectives and themes and methods abounds. Lots of academic disciplines draw upon it and contribute to it (Fairclough, 1992). There is no one precise and comprehensive definition of a discourse and its content. Instead, it is produced and reproduced differently by diverse social actors (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007). The different approaches that are labelled discourse analysis (Potter, 1998) emphasise the fact that there is no best way of doing discourse analysis (Jager, 1999). This is congruent to Alvesson and Karreman’s (2000, p.147) appeal for ‘discursive pragmatism’ which recognises the varied meaning of a discourse stemming from the mass of social realities (Achtenhagen & Anderson, 2007). Discourse analysis is then a method with a high amount of flexibility (Jansen, 2008) and a multidisciplinary method that provides contextualisation, which is one of the major advantages of qualitative research (Sutton, 1993). It has been applied in a series of assorted topics and on distinct levels in the field of entrepreneurship. For example: ‘entrepreneurship as an individual’s identity: How are entrepreneurs depicted in the discourse in media? What metaphors are used to describe individual entrepreneurs? How is the discourse in non-academic media linked to academic research on the person of the entrepreneurs? How does media discourse construct identities of entrepreneurs? How does these influence nascent

entrepreneurs in creating legitimacy when starting their venture?’ (Achtenhagen & Anderson, 2007, p.213).

Discourse analysis tool is consistent and aligns with the research epistemology and methodological assumptions made in the research designs that underpin this study. It enables a condensation of highly complex and context-bound information into a format that tells a story in a way that is fully compelling to others. Furthermore, it helps in reinterpreting the discursive mix through which entrepreneurship becomes socially constructed. The emergence of entrepreneurship in a broader set of spaces, together with its ubiquitousness in social, civic, environmental, cultural and artistic, expressions, suggest that the economic discourse and the business logic permeate all components of society and everyday life (Steyaert & Katz, 2004). Discourse analysis is good in enquiries relating to power and control relationship and how these are created and recreated. It is also employed in the discourse of differences, for instance, in relation to social identities such as ethnicity, gender or age (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Furthermore, its relevance is acclaimed in a whole range of different topics, on different levels in the field of entrepreneurship (Achtenhagen & Welter, 2007; Fairclough, 1995). These benefits provide justification for selecting discourse analysis above others (such as grounded theory and phenomenology methodologies) in this study.

The justification for discourse analysis is firmly established in the context of what the study aims to achieve. For instance, phenomenology methodology is concerned with the way individuals gain knowledge from the world around them and use language in the forms of text to communicate experience. However, it could be claimed that language constructs rather than describes experience. The same event may be described in many ways. As a result, language cannot only give expression to experience, but also, since phenomenology relies on participants’ descriptions of accounts, the suitability of such accounts could be questioned. For example, how good are the participants at communicating their experiences to the researcher? Invariably, while phenomenology permits rich text of an individual’s discernment of the world it does not advance our understanding of why such experiences occur and why individuals’ experiences may be different. In that sense, phenomenology research “describes and documents the lived experience of participants but it does not attempt to explain it” (Willig, 2013, p.95). Furthermore, there exist competing visions of how to practice phenomenology stemming from different philosophical values, theoretical preferences, and

methodological procedures. Different forms are demanded according to the type of phenomenon under investigation and the kind of knowledge the researcher seeks (Finlay, 2009). On the other hand, grounded theory research is useful in generating theories that account for patterns of behaviour and social processes that are both “relevant and problematic for the actors involved” (Strauss, 1987, p.34). It is thus designed to aid the process of discovery through theory generation. However, as it is meant to give rise to new theories, in that observations give rise to new ideas; this ignores the role of the researcher suggesting that the data speaks for itself; therefore grounded theory does not adequately address reflectivity (Willig, 2013).

Nevertheless, the adopted discourse analysis contains elements from both grounded theory and phenomenology approaches, as the analysis of the research is adaptable, iterative, and multidirectional. It is the case that they all embrace ambiguity, paradox, descriptive nuance, and a more relational clarity of meanings, that is, they acknowledge the relative, inter-subjective, fluid nature of knowledge, asserting that researcher and participant co-produce the research.

A major disadvantage of discourse analysis is the general lack of explicit techniques for researchers to follow. The collection of choices available through the various discourse analysis traditions can render issues of methodology problematic, since each tradition has its own epistemological position, concepts, procedures, and a specific understanding of discourse and discourse analysis (Morgan, 2010). In discourse analysis meaning is never fixed and so everything is always subject to interpretation and negotiation. This notion can be very challenging as there are rooms for infinite number of analysis and each new interpretation leads to further intense appraisal. Moreover, similarities and differences between concepts may cause confusion for researchers, especially the neophytes (Morgan, 2010). It is also criticised for its inadequate attention to context (Fairclough, 1992).

Achtenhagen & Welter (2007) observe that there is no best way or simple recipe to conduct discourse analysis since an analysis can be said to be exhaustive when it no longer derives new insights regarding its content. It is then essential to note that it is hardly possible to assess an entire discourse when conducting a discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is thus an umbrella term expressing a huge assortment of different,

and at times incompatible paradigmatic orientations. But a particular variant, Foucauldian discourse analysis, is employed for its relevancy in this thesis.

(a) Foucault discourse Analysis

Foucault's discourse analysis, based on the idea that truth is not fixed but a construction of interpretations that are assumed to be true, offers a theoretical framework to dissect the complex social, cultural, economic and political relationships underpinning the concept of diaspora entrepreneurship, as presented in this research. Even though the research analysis at the micro level focuses on the individual, it is useful to situate the individual within the group it identifies with. Identity is said not to be situated in the personality of the individual, but established through interface between the individual, society and culture (Down & Warren, 2008). Furthermore, the dependence on the knowing subject (that is individual subject) as advocated in the social sciences (for example, Bryman, 2001; Bogdan & Taylor, 1975) has been contested (for example, Taylor, 1987; Foucault, 1970). This is because such introspections and self-reports accomplish little in revealing the essence of social life since 'social life is established on forms of collective activity or praxis' (Prior, 1998, p.64). According to Foucault (1972), the social world is organised and normalised in specific ways through discursive practices. This, in turn, defines the dimension of human activity that cannot be confined in the consciousness of the isolated individual. The practices consider that it is through this path that knowledge could be harvested, encoded and displayed, thus conferring legitimacy on the author/researcher of any given subject (Prior, 1998). Foucault discursive formation correlates with the researcher's desire to construe diaspora entrepreneurship from a number of meaning creation sources as observed by Foucault himself: "Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation" (Foucault 1972, p.38).

Present in Foucault works are archaeological and genealogical approaches to narrative forms of research inquiry (Squire, 2008). The basis of the archaeological method is that systems of thought and knowledge (epistemes or discursive formations) are governed by rules, outside those of grammar and logic, which exist in the sub-consciousness of individual subjects and define a system of conceptual possibilities that establishes the

limits of thought in a particular field and period. The thrust of genealogical analysis is to demonstrate that a given system of thought (itself uncovered in its essential structures by archaeology) was the outcome of contingent turns of history, not the result of logically unavoidable trends (Gutting, 2011). Hence, the archaeological method of discourse analysis examines the way in which particular stories or narratives have become established and recognised in place and time. The genealogical method is used to explore critically and reflexively at stories to see how they have moulded and formed meaning systems that have gained prominence and acceptance as fact overtime, and the remedial action to take (Sikes & Gale, 2006). Genealogy is a type of critical history that attempts an analysis of ‘the present time, and of what we are, in this very moment’ so as ‘to question ... what is postulated as self-evident ... to dissipate what is familiar and accepted’ (Foucault 1988b, p.265).

Consequently, the Foucauldian analytical tracks are chosen to follow narratives of lives of the Nigerian entrepreneurs and the changes in their entrepreneurship overtime in the UK. The Foucauldian devices informed not only a careful interrogation of the surrounding discourses, but also at the discourses of the entrepreneurs themselves, their narratives through which they made sense of their lives (Tamboukou, 2000). Foucault discourse analysis has the potential and indeed a strong base to ferret out the significance of the social and cultural factors that have shaped a particular ethnic group entrepreneurship orientation. For instance, a Foucauldian historical perspective commences with the genealogical reality that to an extent, a large percentage of the Nigerian diaspora in the UK could be tagged economic migrants as they have migrated into the UK for economic reasons (IOM, 2007). Entrepreneurship as a route to economic empowerment of ethnic groups has been established in literature (for example, Ram, 1998; Nwankwo, 2005) and, also confirmed is the psychological need for creativity, self-reliance, and the manipulative control of situation traits inherent in the quintessential entrepreneurs (for example, McLelland & Winter, 1971; Kets de Vries, 1985). The combination of these insights was latched into to unpack Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship and produce empirical knowledge of the key factors constraining or preventing diaspora entrepreneurship. It is for this reason that the Foucauldian discourse analysis is employed in this study.

Broadly, Foucault’s works are apparent in four thematic areas identified as: historical perspective and methods; problems of rationality, discourse, and the production of truth;

practices of government, power, and domination; subjectivity, the self, and ethical practice (Dean, 2003). Foucault has thus become a kind of touchstone for many social sciences researchers seeking to address questions on three broad domains: reason, truth, and knowledge; power, domination, and government; and ethics, self, and freedom (Foucault, 1985). This is what Flynn (1988) calls a ‘Foucauldian triangle’ of truth, power, self. Indeed, narrative research informed by Foucauldian insights is particularly concerned with the processes, procedures and apparatuses, whereby truth, power, knowledge, and desire are unified in the production of narratives and in their effects. Discursive practices can then be deemed to be establishing entrepreneurship as systems of truth and discipline and act as powerful constraints on entrepreneurs. It is then necessary to understand how discourse constitutes diaspora entrepreneurs’ subjectivities, establishes and naturalises entrepreneurial control. In claiming that language is a medium of social control and power, Leclercq-Vandelannoitte (2011, p.1251) argues: ‘discourses that reproduce relations of power get naturalised, and such relations may be opaque to participants’.

Nevertheless, the Foucauldian ideas has been slated for having the ‘tendency to ascribe too much power to discourse over fragile subjects, for example, a discourse-driven social reality’ and wish ‘to highlight problems with the tendency to work with a too grandiose and too muscular view on discourse,’ (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000, p.1145, as quoted in Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, 2011, p.1251). It is also the case that Foucault discourse analysis could be complex for empirical researcher to explore in methodological guidelines, a fact attested to by Foucault himself: ‘All my books are little tool boxes. If people want to open them, to use a particular sentence, a particular idea, a particular analysis, like a screwdriver or a spanner.. so much the better!’ (Foucault, 1995, p.720, quoted in Prior, 1998). However, Foucault’s legacy could contribute immensely to any social study working at the cutting edge of contemporary research (Dean, 2003).

#### 4.2.5 Narrative Method

Narrative method is embedded and reinterpreted in discourse analysis. The notion of narrative research includes both the social reality and the experienced world of the individual. Knowledge of things can only exist if they have meaning, thus it is discourse, not the things in themselves that produces knowledge (Sikes & Gale, 2006). Essentially, narratives articulate and give life to discourses. The employment of

narratives in this study is justified in the attempt to link two analytic formations and made them mutually informative, and simultaneously appreciating the unique contributions and integrity of each perspective (Miller, 1998). The focus on how opportunities are created, and the motivation for studying entrepreneurship as creative social energy, as an aspiration to become the other, can also be a sound basis for using a narrative approach (Hjorth, 2007). In this sense, it is very helpful to pay attention to points of connection between Deleuze & Guattari (1987) and Foucault as exhibited in the significance of language and representation in doing research. Essentially, Hjorth (2007) contends that language, language-use and writing, are problematic with wide-ranging consequences for comprehending data, methodology, analysis, and presentation of research results. This facilitates conversations with practitioners and the research communities. A narrative approach, and narrative forms of knowledge, allows knowledge creation from concepts and experiences defined by local practitioners in entrepreneurship studies. It is in such forms that knowledge has been carried forward (Hjorth, 2007). Furthermore, the endeavour is also aimed at identifying the areas of maximum complementarity between these (narrative and discourse) distinctive perspectives. This aspiration differs from triangulation, which is a research strategy involving several methods exploited to expose multiple aspects of a single reality (Denzin, 1978). Triangulation presumes that observing an issue from multiple viewpoints presents researchers with broader knowledge of the issue and also assumes that there is a 'need for a single set of standards by which the methodological act can be evaluated' (Denzin, 1978, p.339).

Narrative method belongs to the constructionist research designs (Boje, 2001; Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). Its ontological element implies that stories and myths are essential part of organisation reality and organisation research should focus solely on them (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). The epistemological constituent gives the indication that the collection of stories by researchers will guarantee insights that could not be gained by more conventional resources (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). Reissman (2002, p.696) opines that "the approach does not assume objectivity; rather, it privileges positionality and subjectivity". The method may require participant-observer becoming involved in the construction, transmission or collection of stories through interviews. In a narrative method the respondent gives a detailed account of him/her self and is encouraged to tell his/her story rather than answer a list of preset questions. Narrative method is used in extensive life histories, in order to understand how personal lives traverse

entrepreneurial activities, and is especially successful when people are discussing a life changing event. The approach has been used to explore themes such as entrepreneurial learning (Rae, 2005), entrepreneurial identity creation (Down and Warren, 2008), evolution to self-employment (Mallon and Cohen, 2001), international entrepreneurship (Johansson, 2004), gender and family influence on entrepreneurial activity (Kirkwood, 2007) and succession in family businesses (Hamilton, 2006). It has also become a trend in mixed methods entrepreneurial research (de Bruin and Flinte-Hartle, 2006). The narrative approach facilitates the capture of social representation processes such as feelings, images, and time. It is favourably disposed to address ambiguity, complexity, and dynamism of individual, group, and organisational phenomena (Gill, 2001). It has also been claimed that narrative interviews enable participants to have a greater stake in setting the research agenda (Overcash, 2003) and may even produce emancipatory outcomes for particular marginalised groups (Parker, 2005). Hosking and Hjorth's (2004, p.265) elaborate description of narratives declares: "Story construction is a process of creating reality in which self/story teller is clearly part of the story. Narratives are relational realities, socially constructed, not individual subjective realities. Narratives are situated - they are con-textualized in relation to multiple local - cultural - historical acts/text. Inquiry may articulate multiple narrative and relations. Change-work works with multiple realities and power relations, for example, to facilitate ways of relating that are open to possibilities."

Sikes and Gale (2006) assert that the structures and the vocabularies of narratives that people exploit to tell their stories are pointers to their perceptions and experiences as well as significantly providing information about their social and cultural positioning. Storytelling can help in transmitting intricate tacit knowledge or act as a source of implicit communication (Ambrosini and Bowman, 2001; Linde, 2001) and can contribute to sense-making (Gabriel, 1998). Stories are a fundamental way in which meaning is expressed, embodying the cultural values. Stories, related within their cultural contexts to advance certain values and beliefs, can contribute to the construction of individual identity or concept of community. Traditionally, Nigerians are known to be storytellers, Nigerian culture, history, philosophy, mores, kinship systems, moral disposition, and so on, are revealed by folktales (Kehinde, 2010). At any rate, society is said to express itself through oral tales, which in turn reflect that society and its beliefs (Wynchank, 1998). The structure and conceptual content of an individual's story can disclose his/her current sense of reality, who he/she believes to

be, and his/her 'concept of purposeful activity' (O'Connor, 2002, p.36). Hence, by obtaining an individual narrative the researcher gains access to a chronology of actions and the context in which they occurred, the basis for engaging in them and most importantly the nous that was made of the ensuing experience (Søderberg, 2006). Story develops into an object of study, focusing on how individuals or groups make sense of events and actions in their lives. In this thesis, the subjects' stories are obtained through prolonged engagement techniques such as observation, interviews, discussions, and media watch.

'Story' and 'narrative', though often employed interchangeably, are analytically different. The difference borders the limit of primary data and the start of analysis of that data. Frank (2000) suggests that people tell stories, but narratives emanates from the analysis of stories. Therefore, the researcher's role is to decipher the stories in order to analyse the underlying narrative that the storytellers may not be able to articulate. Riessman (2008, p.23) contends that life-story interviews involve a 'narrative occasion' in which the researcher and respondent become active participants who 'jointly construct narrative and meaning' and thus 'render events and experiences meaningful'. Organisational story "incorporates the feelings, goals, needs and values of the people who create it" (Robinson & Haupe, 1986, p.115). Since peoples' language cannot be separated from their goals and beliefs (Taylor, 1985), the examination of narrative that "is infused with motive" (Tsoukas & Hatch, 2001, p.1002) reflects the personal interest of storytellers. As such, a narrative approach offers a suitable lens to view elements of the Nigerian ethnic/diaspora entrepreneurship as conceived by this thesis.

A narrative approach offers a number of benefits to studying diaspora entrepreneurship. Firstly, it facilitates a polyphonic approach, one that allows "us to listen for and to the voices of all who are working together" (Hazen, 1993, p.16), giving a way to examine entrepreneur's memory, which comprises "not one grand storytelling but many distributed centres of local tellings" (Boje *et al.*, 1999, p.243). Viewing diaspora entrepreneurship as a product of narrative dialogue gives credence to the existence of multiple realities, and diaspora entrepreneurship as a process of negotiation between competing realities held by individual entrepreneur. Although this perspective is in harmony with relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), it is also consistent with the constructionist epistemology and theoretical stance adopted in this thesis. Multiple 'realities' are produced in the interaction, or negotiation,

between diaspora entrepreneurs, and between researcher and the researched, since the act of conducting research creates its own 'reality'.

But it is not all hunky-dory with narratives approaches as a research method. Some identifiable problems include: universalised expectations about narrative, reification of the narrative object, reduction of lives to narratives, multiplicity and incongruity of approaches and lack of generalisability of findings (Andrews *et al.*, 2008). Narratives approaches are criticised for not offering much distinctiveness or additional to 'normal' qualitative research process (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008, p.95). Moreover, narrative analysis is deemed not suitable for studies of large number of faceless and nameless subjects. It is time consuming and requires attention to subtlety; nuances of speech and organisation of a response, relation between the subject and the researcher; social and historical contexts (Atkinson, 1997; Reissman, 2002). Besides, the apparent inundation of narratives approaches reaches such a crescendo that inducts confusion, that is, narratives touted as sense-making method is no longer making sense. Josselson (2006) suggests that proliferation of narrative methods has led to an avalanche of solipsistic studies difficult to digest and rather tricky to build a knowledge base from (Rosenwald, 1988). Sikes and Gale (2006) allude to the problems of evaluation within the context of narrative inquiry, establishing benchmarks for evaluating texts is thus highly challenging. Andrews *et al.* (2008) assert that narrative research offers no automatic starting or finishing points. There are no self evident categories on which to concentrate, nor is there a clear account of how to analyse the data unlike with content-based thematic approaches or with analyses of specific elements of language. They also claim that narrative research offers no overall rules about suitable materials or modes of investigation, or the best level at which to study stories unlike other qualitative research perspectives. Further, they contend that narrative does not tell us where to look for stories, whether in recorded everyday speech, interviews, diaries, TV programmes or newspaper articles; whether to aim for objectivity or researcher and participant involvement; whether to analyse stories' particularity or generality; or what epistemological significance to attach to narratives (Andrews *et al.*, 2008).

Regardless of all these problems, Andrews *et al.*, (2008) proclaim that narrative enables the understanding of different and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning, and the in-depth comprehension of individual and social change. It robustly helps to describe, understand and even explain important aspects of the world. Therefore, with narratives,

people strive to configure space and time, deploy cohesive devices, and reveal identity of actors and relatedness of actions across scenes. Narratives create themes, plots, and drama, and in so doing, narrators make sense of themselves, social situations, and history (Bamberg and McCabe, 1998). On the whole, the narratives methods provide holistic perspective on behaviour, valuable in examining relationships between individuals and the wider organisation, and useful in introducing values into the research process (Hazen, 1993). Furthermore, the analysis of the narrative informs the researcher about the respondent's understanding of the meaning of events in his/her live (Boje *et al.*, 1999). Thus this approach is well suited for studying subjectivity and the impact of culture and identity on the human situation as envisaged by this thesis.

### **4.3 Data Sources, Collection and Treatment**

#### **4.3.1 Pilot Study**

Pilot studies were conducted between May – July 2012 (using methods such as interviews and focus groups). In social science research, pilot studies are used in two different ways, as feasibility study which is "small scale version(s), or trial run(s), done in preparation for the major study" (Polit *et al.*, 2001, p.467). Also as a pre-testing or 'trying out' of a particular research instrument (Baker, 1994, pp.182-3). Among its advantages is the possibility that it might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether planned methods or instruments are unsuitable or too complex. De Vaus' (1993, p.54) admonition: "Do not take the risk, pilot test first" underlines the importance of conducting a pilot study.

For the pilot study, eight Nigerian entrepreneurs based in North London are selected. Their businesses include general retailing, consultancy and mini-cabbing, these reflecting the predominant activities within the ethnic group. Useful lessons were learnt from the pilot study. For instance, the pilot studies revealed that many respondents' are comfortable discussing in Nigerian languages and/or Pidgin English, which were then translated back into English by the researcher. It is also the case that the pilot enables the researcher to have a clear understanding of the appropriate methodological approaches to employ given the nature and characteristics of the researched group. This confers more credibility to the research process. Furthermore, the pilot made the researcher realised that qualitative approaches are best employed to answer the research

questions and achieve the research objectives as stated in chapter one. Lastly, the pilot revealed that there were no real issues with the research instrument, thus generating confidence to proceed.

Reference is made here to discourse analysis, which explores the way people apply language to construct versions of their experiences. This is based on the supposition that people draw on cultural and linguistic resources in order to structure their talk in a specific manner to have certain effects. Hence, the researcher's understanding of the local languages is handy in many instances and in fine-tuning responses. Collectively, the research notes, verbatim explanations and transcribed quotations provide a complete record of the research engagement.

#### 4.3.2 Sample Population

The particular focus is on first generation of Nigerian entrepreneurs in London, although the arguments are projected to be of broader significance. First generation entrepreneurs are selected because the history of entrepreneurship among Nigerians in the UK is short. The first generation are thus the prominent group and are dominant in entrepreneurship. Data are obtained from business owners, transnational entrepreneurs (those whose business activities straddled both the UK and Nigeria), serial entrepreneurs, informal entrepreneurs, and other identified individuals/organisations of Nigerian origin. The samples' common link is their recognition and acceptance as entrepreneurs in the Nigerian community. The plan is to clarify business owners' activities in context in all the cases: to recognise the contributory mechanisms connecting the diaspora with business competitiveness and to comprehend the conditions that sustain or hamper such connections.

#### Sampling Strategy

Sampling procedures in qualitative research are not rigidly nor systematically set as in quantitative studies. However, the lack of clear guidelines on the principles of sampling can cause confusion (Coyne, 1997). Nonetheless, it is imperative to address the issue since the lack of a sufficient description of the sampling strategy used in a study makes interpretation of findings difficult and affects the opportunity for replication of the study in other settings (Kitson *et al.*, 1982). So, right from the start of the project, the concern about sampling criteria remained paramount. This is because clear profiles of entrepreneurship are not discernible as distinction between formal and informal

activities, and legal and illegal frames could not be safely drawn. Substantial number of the sample population interviewed during the initial selection profiling stage operates in both formal and informal economies with many business operations pushing the limits of legality - though in varying measures. Many respondents are often confused and seldom make an effort to demarcate between both spheres. This corresponds to Nwankwo's (2005) findings that significant number of Black African entrepreneurs in the UK is involved in both formal and informal economies. This nebulous character of the sampling units also includes *a posteriori* the conventional question of what critical mass of respondents' type is required for selection.

Based on this observation and analysis, there is no discrimination in the selection of respondents along formal/informal dichotomy. Even though, the term informal economy/informal sector is a contested concept, value-laden and context-dependent (Rauch, 1991 quoted in Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011), it is generally described as economic activities that are unregulated by law. Portes and Sassen-Koob (1987, p.30) define it as activities which "escape normal record-keeping". But the activities in the informal sector are differentiated from criminal activities such as prostitution or drug-running but include dealings like unlicensed street vending, auto & home repairs or other unregistered small entrepreneurship (Portes, 1995). Consequently, the basis of selection is then linked with the construct of entrepreneurial identity of the subjects, analysis of which is outlined in the literature review chapter. All the respondents are first generation entrepreneurs and are legally residing in the UK.

#### 4.3.3 Sources of Data and Selection Protocol

Aside from Nigerian entrepreneurs in London, data and resources from the following sources are fully harnessed in the execution of the project:

- Government sources through which valuable data on ethnic entrepreneurship were retrieved for example, Office of National Statistics.
- Learning Resources Centres - useful research materials were accessed from libraries such as UEL Library, British Library, and Borough Libraries.
- On-line resources for journals and articles were extensively consulted.
- Ethnic entrepreneurs' sources (for example, media organisations) – these also supplied important repertoire for narrative interviews, informal resource groups, and media monitoring where useful nuances and ethnic entrepreneurial dexterity of the group were gleaned.

### Sampling Process

Selection of representative samples from a population in researches has always been challenging (Newby *et al.*, 2003). Due to the diffused nature of the Nigerian entrepreneurship in London, idiosyncratic sample as suggested by Gartner (1989b) was employed. The diffused state of Black African entrepreneurship in the UK has already been established by Nwankwo (2003). The interactiveness of this sampling technique facilitates distinctive information compatible with the research methodology to be gathered. In line with the notion of ‘researcher as research instrument’ (Patton, 2002, p.109; Guba and Lincoln, 1981), the researcher interacts with the respondents through personal contacts (aided by the researcher’s entrenched knowledge and ethnic affinity), while observing and recording their respective behaviours (Dana & Dana, 2005). Patton (1982) is of the opinion that researchers have to be close and personal to the phenomenon under study to obtain contextually sensitive, inductive, and naturalistic methodological mandate. Nwankwo *et al.* (2011, p.63) posit that ontological stance relevant to ethnic entrepreneurship must be rooted in multiple realities and in an epistemology that “recognises the importance of minimising the distance between the researcher and the researched”, thus reflecting an effective interactive/interpretive perspective.

The selection process was carefully tailored to reflect variations of entrepreneurial activities engaged in by the population, demographic considerations, gender, and geographic locations in London. Table 4.2, taken from Nwankwo (2005), reflects the types/categories of ventures predominant among Nigerian entrepreneurs in London. These categories are also reflected in the high number of advertisement placements in the various Nigerian media sources monitored during the research period. Religion, especially church programs, advertorial, infomercial, and activities populate the largest share of space/airtime in the Nigerian ethnic media sources in London.

**Table 4.2: Categorising Nigerian Enterprises**

<b>Professional service firms</b>	<b>Accountancy</b>
	<b>Legal/solicitors</b>
	<b>Financial advisory</b>
	<b>Training/consultancy</b>
<b>Food</b>	<b>Restaurants and catering</b>
	<b>Public houses</b>

	<b>Food retail</b>
<b>General merchandise</b>	<b>International trading activities</b>
<b>Fashion and beauty</b>	<b>Hair dressing salon</b>
	<b>Barbing salon</b>
	<b>Cosmetics</b>
	<b>Clothing</b>
	<b>Fashion accessories</b>
<b>General services</b>	<b>Auto mechanics</b>
	<b>Electric and electronic</b>
	<b>Logistics (freight forwarding)</b>
	<b>Cab offices</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>All-purpose enterprises</b>

Source: Nwankwo, 2005.

Initially, random sampling was contemplated but jettisoned in view of Kuzel's (1999) claims that the basic assumption behind qualitative research makes random sampling inappropriate and the worst choice because it signifies a wish to generalise from sample to population. This is neither possible nor desirable in qualitative research (Neegaard, 2007). Qualitative research does not aim to ensure representativeness, but rather the field under study generates substantive information that will contribute to illuminate the problem issue, and on this basis facilitates naturalistic or analytical generalisation (Sandelowski, 1995).

Ultimately, 25 entrepreneurs were selected through 'network' sampling (Adeniji-Neill, 2012, p.17) from a purposive and snowballed (Hemmington, 1999; Heckathorn, 1997; Robson, 2002) list gathered from acquaintances, friends & families and notable gate-keepers. 'Network' sampling occurs when one participant leads to another, and has been used in researching a Nigerian group in the US (Adeniji-Neill, 2012), hence its relevance to this study. Purposive sampling allows researchers to use their judgment in choosing respondents with the suitable experience and expertise that would best enable them to answer the research questions and thus meet the study objectives. Snowball sampling is a chain referral method used to identify potential participants based on the recommendations of others (Altinay and Wang, 2009). Thus, the employment of the technique of intentional selection of participants (Patton, 1990) in this thesis is based on the researcher's judgement in picking respondents that are considered relevant because

of their characteristics (for example, experience, accessibility, and knowledge) and the goals of the study.

The number of twenty-five entrepreneurs (21 businesses) was arrived at after having achieved informational redundancy or theoretical saturation, which is the continuation of sampling and data collection until no new conceptual insights is generated (Bowen, 2008). Many researchers have tried to suggest some kind of guidelines for qualitative sample sizes. For instance, Bertaux (1981, p.35) admitted that in all qualitative research, fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample (quoted in Guest *et al.*, 2006). Charmaz (2006, p.114) suggests that "25 (participants) are adequate for smaller projects". According to Ritchie *et al.* (2003, p.84), qualitative samples often "lie under 50". Green and Thorogood (2009, p.120) state that "the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies little that is 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people". Furthermore, Neergaard (2007) asserts that in reality it could be tricky to ascertain whether the point of redundancy or saturation has been reached and inexperience, lack of time, resources or difficulty in negotiating access may lead the researcher to stop sampling prematurely. Recognising when to stop sampling is a faculty that is acquired through experience. Ultimately, Sandelowski (1995) opines that deciding ample sample size in qualitative research is in the long run a question of judgment and knowledge in assessing the quality of the information collected against the purpose to which it will be utilised, the specific research method and purposeful sampling strategy employed, and the research product anticipated.

The selection of respondents is largely informed by certain considerations and postulations. The first of which relates to insights acquired from interrelated, but contextually different studies (for example, Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011; Ekwulugo, 2006; Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000). Second is the discernment gathered from the unorthodox resource avenues (described in the data collection section below), and third is the discovery oriented stance of the study (Mahrer, 1988).

#### 4.3.4 Triangulation

Triangulation is a potent procedure that assists validation of data through cross-checking from more than two sources (O'Donoghue and Punch, 2003). In social science research, Cohen and Manion (2000, p.254) suggest that triangulation is an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by

studying it from more than one standpoint”. Although used as methodological design in relativism epistemology (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008), it generally refers to the application and combination of various research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon. By combining many observers, theories, methods and empirical materials, researchers can expect to overcome the limitation or inherent biases and the problems that emanate from single method, single-observer and single-theory studies (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Engagement with the triangulation process during the course of this study started at the piloting stage and is sustained to the end. For instance, the instruments of discourse analysis employed to ferret out significant information about the research focus is extended to monitoring and analysing various constituents of the Nigerian diaspora media set-up in Britain. The entrepreneurial propensity of Nigerian diaspora in the UK is exhibited in the establishment of many media organisations (see details in section 4.3.7). Throughout the research period, these media are constantly monitored, and they proved valuable as dependable sources awashed with quality research data and information. The interactive phone-in sessions in the electronic media are especially excellent in educating the idiosyncratic customs and practises of Nigerians, and how these impinge on their entrepreneurial activities. Triangulation increases credibility and different types employed in this thesis include: methods triangulation - consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods, triangulation of sources - consistency of different data sources within the same method (for example, comparing observation with interviews, interviews with written material or what people say in public and in private), analyst triangulation - using multiple analysts to review findings, theory/perspective triangulation - using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret data (Patton, 2002, p.556).

#### 4.3.5 Negotiating Access

The issue of research access is deemed to be a vital element of research design for every project (Altinay and Wang, 2009). It is really important to reflect meticulously on what data to collect, where to locate the data and how much time might be needed for the process (Altinay and Wang, 2009). It is also imperative to consider well in advance the phases of the “getting in,” “getting on,” “getting out,” and “getting back” stages identified by Buchanan *et al.* (1988). Through these stages, reflexivity (discussed later in section 4.4.3) is established in the research process.

A useful dimension of being an insider is the ability to decipher the unspoken words, nuances and cultural insinuations. For instance, one may get a much enriched information from a respondent if his or her partner is absent during the interviewing process. The habit of not wanting to reveal one's worth or express innermost concerns to partners is widespread, especially among Nigerian men. This is exemplified in the Yoruba adage; '*ohun agba n'fi j'eko abe ewe lo wa*' or '*ohun afi ju omode lo aki nfihan*', literally meaning that it is foolhardy to divulge your forte to a child, child in this instance referring to women/wives. On some occasions where couples are involved, the researcher often shrewdly arranged or rearranged interview meetings to coincide with the absence of a partner to reflect the type of information sought after. Whereas, sometimes it is beneficial to have couples present at the same time. It is the case that throughout the methodology stage the researcher engages a continuous balancing act. This is an attempt to be sensitive to what is appropriate for each specific moment or situation (Brundin, 2007).

#### 4.3.6 Research Protocols

As indicated previously (in section 4.3.3), the qualitative methods employed involve in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs focusing on the start-up process, the factors responsible for outcomes, financial barrier, institutional barrier and so on, experienced by them. The research project benefits from researcher's intimate knowledge of the area under discussion and the particular environment. This is in line with the problem solving focus of applied research which suggests that in investigating a problem closely, the researcher's knowledge of the circumstances will render a substantial advantage.

However, as field work advanced, there is anticipation that various unexpected important issues will emerged. This informs the interpretive approach (Russell, 1996) and the iterative style (Scapens, 1990; Hoque *et al.*, 2004) embraced in this research. The researcher performs both a reflective analysis (Bryman, 2001; Holland, 1999) with an initial problem focus that facilitates detection of other emergent issues. This enables the construction of interpretations from the direct experience, perceptions and beliefs of participants by the researcher. The field-work is an intensive qualitative research conducted in various locations in the London metropolis between July 2012 and December 2012, enhanced by the researcher's practical experience and "indigenous knowledge" (Dixon *et al.*, 2005, p.409). Gummesson (2002) argues that an assessment

of research protocol should depend on the tacit understanding of actual, situated, practice in a field of inquiry. This, he claims, is not a weakness but “hallmark of interpretive research in which the key objective is to understand how individuals interpret events and experiences, rather than assessing whether or not their interpretations correspond to or mirror the researchers’ interpretive construct of ‘objective’ reality” (Mishler, 1990, p.427).

Face-to-face interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire were completed in three rounds of interviews (July-August 2012, August-September 2012 and September-December 2012). The media monitoring was on a daily basis with special focus on phone-in and discussion programmes on popular media such as BEN TV, NAIJA FM 101.1 radio and Surprise Radio, covering the period between January-December 2012. Print media such as *The Trumpet* and *Naijalife* were also consulted during the same period. All the entrepreneurs interviewed belong to the first generation of immigrants (most came to the UK between 1985 and 2005). There are fourteen men and eleven women whose twenty-one ventures fall into the categories of either sole traders or joint (spouses) ownership (ranging between 1 and 12 employees). They were selected from each of the categories Nwankwo (2005) identified in his British-African entrepreneurship in London (see Table 4.2). Their business enterprises (see Tables 5.1 & 5.2) were mainly established between 1990 and 2008 in sectors with low barriers to entry but harsh competitive conditions.

#### 4.3.7 Data Collection Process

Various methods were considered when deliberating on what approach to use to make sense of and connecting with the entrepreneurial phenomenon encountered. Insights from other related but contextually different studies discouraged the use of questionnaire approach by highlighting the problems (that is, none or little response from respondents) associated with the method (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011; IOM, 2007). The focus group technique which seems to be the favourite in such studies (for example, Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000; Ekwulugo, 2006; Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011) was found ineffective during pilot. The reasons are largely linked to participants’ unwillingness to discuss business matters with their peers in a pre-arranged forum. This is similar to the problems highlighted by Blackburn and Stokes (2000) in their research into small businesses. The transnational content of their entrepreneurship makes it difficult to find the critical mass needed for a session on occasions where acquiescence is obtained,

since many of the respondents either travelled to Nigeria or unavailable at the same time.

## Methods

The epistemological perception of 'knowing' necessitates the construal of meaning to create a context for a profound and emotional discernment of the participants' 'life world' (Habermas, 1987, p.126) through the use of methods and strategies such as, interviews, media monitor and 'unorthodox resource avenues'. Employing these methods is akin to coming out of the closet (Sutton, 1997). Qualitative studies relying on traditional interviews only do not meet the challenges of capturing a process as it develops over time (Brundin, 2007). Furthermore, the assortment of methods was deemed to give a compelling plinth for diverse African entrepreneurs to identify with. Especially in the light of Barret *et al.*'s (1996) view that much theorisation is necessary in locating the diverse ethnic entrepreneurship in its complete historical and structural context. A parallel is found in Rosenwald's (1988) perception that in multiple-case research outcome, readers often encounter experiences similar to their own.

## *Interviews*

Interviews are best for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives and experiences, especially when sensitive topics are being investigated (Arksey and Knight, 1999). But interviewing or "asking questions and getting answers" is a much more difficult task than it may seem at first (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p.361). Initially, a semi-structured format which consists of strings of open-ended questions based on the research field was adopted. This involves a general interview guide approach that enabled the planning of a list of open-ended questions, subjects and issues for discussion with respondents. This also triggers spontaneous conversation with their family members (where available) to get information and knowledge that could be missed out during guided interview (Piperopoulos, 2010). Although, in many cases the interviews became unstructured, that is, in-depth interview with very little structure, but this is not a disadvantage. Patton (2002) expresses unstructured interviews as a spontaneous generation of questions in the normal flow of an interaction and as natural extension of participant observation during fieldwork. Eventually, several set of possible questions based around six areas of interest were asked: the goal of the entrepreneur, his/her personal background, nature of business and structure,

entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges, market and competitive strategies, personal attributions and transnational linkages.

During the interviews, discussions were allowed to develop naturally with the researcher ensuring that the areas under discussion were covered (Blankson and Omar, 2002; Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011). Limited number of topics is thus discussed in great details, and the questions are framed on the basis of the interviewee's previous response (King, 2004). In many cases the interviews turned into conversations which were more and more personal and became intimate conversations. This is a good practice, as it takes care of a defect identified with interviews. Brundin (2007) suggests that interviews indicate asking questions that have to be answered. This implies that the researcher is in charge and that it is a one-way relation. Conversely, conversation is ideal since it infers that two persons are in charge of what is taking place. Gadamer (1994, p.383) argues that when 'we fall into conversation, or even when we become involved in it ... no one knows what will "come out" in a conversation'. Further stating that: 'all this shows that a conversation has a spirit of its own, and the language used in it bears its own truth within it, that is, that it reveals something which exists'. This fits very well with the interpretative tradition and the understanding that is sought in this research process.

The average duration of the interviews is between 45 minutes and one hour. Mostly, notes were skilfully taken, even though Rapley (2004) contends that this interferes with good interview. Audio tape recordings were only used in few cases. Experience gathered during pilot alerts the researcher to the reticent attitude of respondents to the notion of being tape-recorded. Recording during interviews assume the air of officialdom to most respondents. This seriously affects the free flow of their narratives as even the friendliest respondents hesitate to pick their words. This situation makes sense when viewed from the assertion that for self-preservation reasons African 'entrepreneurs are not "open" and will very readily shield their businesses from external scrutiny... "Outsiders" are viewed with suspicion and as far as possible "shut out" until trust is established' (Nwankwo, 2005, p.132).

#### *Nigerian Media in the UK*

The researcher has identified media sources as repositories for information on social structures and personal narrative of experiences and relationships among Nigerians in

the UK, and a form of literature for African ethnic researchers and scholars. Given this range, it is not inadvertent that the media watch/monitoring is a logical choice for ethnic social studies, testing the boundaries between the public and the private and encourage the assessment of the social, political, economic and personal lived experiences of Nigerian diaspora in the UK. It is deemed fruitful to ‘archaeologically’ investigate the innumerable twists and turns of human practice that have produced the text/narrative. This study then proceeds to examine the Nigerian media in the UK in furtherance to the structuring and our understanding of the entrepreneurial construction of the research populace through their lived experiences. Social reality is created and made real through discourses. Social interactions cannot be fully understood without allusion to the discourses that give them meaning. Discourse analysts’ task is to expose the relationship between discourse and reality (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). Hence, the analysis of media discourses could facilitate an enhanced understanding of contemporary processes of social and cultural change in the entrepreneurship context (Fairclough, 1995). This informed the decision to engage the UK based Nigerian community media sources.

Nigerian media organisations maintain a noticeable presence in the UK media industry. They are vibrantly represented in all the sectors of the industry; from the internet to the print and electronic fora and are easily accessed by cohorts. These media are entrepreneurial pursuits broadcasted and printed in London, reaching areas that are noted to have considerable Nigerian population. Many phone-in programmes, debates, analyses, Nigerian community social activities coverage, community tidbits, and so on, are regularly showcased on these media. Generally, they cater for Nigerian news, social networking, culture and religious viewing. Therefore, they offer an impressive research conduit for studying all aspects of the diaspora’s lives in the UK and beyond. The views and opinions expressed by Nigerians on these media organisations on matters that relate to exclusion, challenges, entrepreneurship and aspirations were monitored, recorded (taped) and analysed (during preliminary trial research) according to the techniques of discourse analysis. The Table 4.3 below shows some of the mostly visible ones.

**Table 4.3: Nigerian Media Organisations in London**

Media Organisation	Media Type	Registration Status	Channel/Frequency
<b>BEN TV</b>	Television	Licensed/Registered	Sky Channel 182
<b>OH TV</b>	Television	Licensed/Registered	Sky Channel 199
<b>Vox Africa TV</b>	Television	Licensed/Registered	Sky Channel 218

<b>HITV</b>	Television	Licensed/Registered	Sky Channel 193
<b>Oodua Satellite TV</b>	Television	Licensed/Registered	On-line
<b>The Trumpet</b>	Newspaper	Registered	Monthly newspaper
<b>Naijalife</b>	Newspaper	Registered	Monthly newspaper
<b>N Power Radio</b>	Radio	Unlicensed	FM 108.3
<b>Naija FM101.1</b>	Radio	Unlicensed	FM 101.1
<b>Surprise Radio</b>	Radio	Unlicensed	FM 96.4

Source: Research Fieldwork

However, the information from the media watch is open-ended and its structure is episodic and fragmented. There is an uncertainty about what to expect or what the future holds and in this sense information gathering is always in process. Yet, they offer authentic information field in which rich data could be mined on every aspects of Nigerian diasporas' activities in the UK. Their efficacy not only resides in data gathering but also serves to triangulate data from other sources.

But if media watch/monitoring is to be considered as research tool, some pertinent questions become obvious, for example; what type of evidence, precisely, does a media watch/monitoring provide? How do we handle the subjectivity of the media watch/monitoring in academic research? What is the relationship between the media watch/monitoring as text and the life as lived? How have media watch/monitoring influenced our understanding of social, historical, political and cultural formations in this epoch? There are further questions around audiences: (a) who engages media watch/monitoring? (b) How are the interactions between the monitored and the monitor affected by the social, historical positions of both? (c) How does the accessibility of the media watch/monitoring informs research validity? (d) What are the ways in which researchers of media watch/monitoring fragmentary comments constructs the self, the text and the social milieu? Finally there are questions raised of access to archive materials in the media, it may seems to be the case that many of these media firms do not keep records due to their precarious financial states and informal status. Many only fleetingly exist in the market before vanishing into oblivion. But, in order to ensure the reliability and validity of data from these sources, only information from the licensed/registered media outfits are used, since these provide archived materials.

### *Unorthodox Resource Avenues*

Nigerians in the UK diaspora congregate socially in many fora such as in religious congregation (worship assemblies and devout occasions), ceremonies and celebrations shindigs (naming, burial, house-warming, chieftaincy, graduations, and so on), recreational gatherings (barber shops, ethnic film screening avenues, leisure centres, and so on) and educational meetings (schools/colleges, exhibitions, and fairs). These avenues provide unique platforms where concrete data could be harvested within the group. Useful data were collected in a selected number of venues/occasions mentioned above as some are more conducive than the others and ethic considerations are better negotiated in some than others. It took more than one year to perfect the act of harvesting data using this format. Spontaneity sometimes is the rule of the game. For instance, during a visit to a Nigerian restaurant the researcher met a group of Nigerian customers discussing issues relating to a research study at the time. Being familiar with all the requisites of the research process, the researcher introduced himself and sought their consents (which they gladly gave) in joining the conversation as it will help in his research program.

Invariably, the efficacy of the method was tested and confirmed in many social gatherings. Data were collected between August and December 2012. There are numerous social occasions happening in the Nigerian diaspora community and people get invited according to the extent of their social networks. Nigerians are notorious for organising, arranging and throwing parties (Abati, 2011) in London, nay, anywhere. Ceremonies are very important features of West African societies as they strengthened social structures, celebrate important rites of passage (baptism/naming ceremonies, weddings, funerals, house-warming, and so on) and usually an opportunity for merriment (Ham, 2009). Researchers delving into any aspects of their (Nigerians) lives will be at advantage if they explore these information-rich social gathering avenues for inspirations and data collection. This view is akin to Waldinger *et al.*'s (1990, p.46) comment about information procurement among some ethnic groups; 'Ritualised occasions and large-scale ceremonies also provide opportunities for acquiring information'.

Ethical considerations have to be carefully negotiated when using this technique though. A useful common opening gambit is to set the ball rolling by declaring: "I find your discussion interesting, and if you may know, I am currently researching this particular

subject, so what do you think about....” or sometimes the introduction of the researcher as a PhD student elicits debates on his study domain. Hot deliberations have been generated on the back of being introduced as a researcher. Rarely was the researcher denied consents on many of such occasions. Perhaps the opportunity to partake in serious academic discussions, or the prospect of showing off latent intelligence, or simply a chance to help a fellow ‘brother’ (Adeniji-Neill, 2012) to accomplish his academic obligations induced the cooperative spirit (Oguntade and Mafimisebi, 2011). The researcher has a dexterous duty to perform, special consideration has to be taken when subtly moderating (one doesn’t conduct this type of informal focus group) discussions. Firstly, as a rule, the intention to use some details of the discussion for research purposes has to be made clear from the onset. Secondly, researchers should seek to regulate the direction of discussion since they tend to go off course at least and at worse degenerate to shouting matches if uncontrolled.

The method provides an opportunity for research into themes on which ‘so little’ is known. Its justification can be located within Nwankwo *et al.*’s (2011, p.61) aphorism: “Those seeking to enter the field (researching African entrepreneurship) may sometimes find themselves going outside the ‘regulated path’ of inquiry”. Due to its spontaneity, hard fact and sometimes detailed personal experiences are discovered in these fora. Furthermore, the method facilitates the bridging of objectivity (when reporting or describing observations) and subjectivity (when interpreting observations) gaps. Recourse to this method is reinforced by Nwankwo *et al.*’s (2011) declaration that the use of informal networks proved particularly important in African entrepreneurship research.

The method is more effective if the researcher is an ‘insider’ to the group, that is, has commonalities with the group. This makes it easier for the participants to open up freely and honestly. Being familiar with (or being member of) the group assists the ‘researcher’ to quickly get to grips with the nuances, foibles and the unspoken/body language of the participants. Non-verbal communication or body language is a form of silent speech that emphasises and amplifies the spoken or undermines and contradicts it (Lewis, 1989). An understanding of it helps in strengthening comprehension of peculiar nuances and oxymoron. The researcher is able to promptly and effortlessly separate chaff from candour, fact from fiction, and myth from reality during discussions. Essentially, the data collected in this way offer good grounding during interviews with

the 25 selected respondents. Hence, this innovative approach enhances the quality and authenticity of data and information collected. Nwankwo *et al.*'s (2011, p.71) scholarly counsel entreat researchers to allow 'reality tell its own story on its own terms' through 'the use of informal networks' in researching diffused ethnic groups (Gartner, 1989) such as immigrant Africans in the UK (Nwankwo, 2003). Researchers are charged not to remain as external observers but should "move to investigate from within the subject of study and employ research techniques appropriate to the task" (Morgan and Smircich, 1980, p.498). Huse and Landstrom (1997, p.11) beseech researchers 'to employ venturesome and entrepreneurial methods'. These strategic advices proved to be suitable for effecting effectiveness and efficiency. Such that confounding variables (Guba, 1961) like absences, location problems, unanswered questionnaires, and so on, that can plague researches are minimised.

#### 4.3.8 Control Panel

One key feature of the research plan is the inclusion of a control panel in the research design. This convention was used by Nwankwo *et al.* (2011, p.65) as a 'sounding board' in their research into African entrepreneurship in the UK. It helps them to dig out the humdrum and subterranean matters that are ethnically embedded in the sub-consciousness of respondents. In the same token, a panel of three well established Nigerian entrepreneurs in London was instituted. The two men and one woman entrepreneur-panel are well-known in the Nigerian entrepreneurial circle with combined years of entrepreneurial experience totalling 65 years. Their businesses cover wide geographic areas which include the UK, US, Europe (Holland, Ireland Italy, Germany, Greece, Spain, and Portugal) and West Africa (Nigeria and Ghana). Their role is very valuable, as they assist in interpreting and validating emerging themes and concepts.

Much has been made of the advantages accruing from the researcher's easy access on the account of ethnicity and entrepreneurial background. But the danger of over-familiarity that could compromise the integrity of the research lurks. Aside from offering valuable advice, the control panel often act as reflexive instrument to guide and mediate the researcher's taken for granted assumptions. As a result, their inclusion proves effective in checkmating the authorial voice from drowning those of the respondents. Thus, the strategic use of a control panel in this study enhances trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in a qualitative research supports the contention that the study's findings are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.290).

Trustworthiness is linked with credibility, which is an appraisal of whether or not the research findings correspond to a “credible” conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.296). It has to be mentioned that members of the panels are not included in the respondents list.

#### 4.3.9 Research Instrument: Interviews Content

Due to the discovery-oriented design of the research, the attributional questions used in the Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics (PSED) and employed by Shaver *et al.* (2001) and Nwankwo *et al.* (2011), were initially used in the exploratory interview phase. PSED research program is designed to enhance the scientific understanding of how people start businesses.

The information obtained includes data on the nature of those active as diaspora entrepreneurs, the activities undertaken during the start-up process and the characteristics of start-up efforts that become new firms. Below are the four open-ended questions:

1. Why did you engage with entrepreneurship?
2. Why do you expect the business to be successful?
3. What are the major problems you have encountered in self-employment?
4. What other major problems do you anticipate in the future?

On the basis of an analysis of the exploratory ascription enquiries, the interview range was expanded. It follows the National Panel Study of the US start-ups (Reynolds, 2000) format. Questions are structured around the following areas:

- Introductory conversation
- Start-up activities
- Nature of business
- Social network
- Start-up funding requirements
- Market, competition assessment
- Competitive strategy
- Knowledge, use of assistance
- Future expectations
- Personal attribution
- Personal decision making style

- Current labour force activity
- Work, career experience
- Respondent birth order
- Residential status, migration
- Family business background
- Household structure

Furthermore, questions are directed to elicit details regarding the locus of control, religious orientation, navigation and the understanding of the informal/formal economic divide, long term plans, entrepreneurial perceptions and transnational entrepreneurship orientations. The question guidelines are in appendix 1.

#### **4.4 Research Procedures**

##### 4.4.1 Data Analysis Techniques

The empirical data consist of the narratives of the diaspora entrepreneurs. They narrate their experiences and stories from which the language of entrepreneurship is constructed, and focusing on how ethnic entrepreneurship is interpreted (power of discourse). Thus, its analysis is the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help illuminate why those patterns exist and interpreting them, and linking the findings to those of other research constitute real analysis (Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Hindle (2004, p.594) describes ‘data analysis techniques’ as method for analysing data regardless of methods used for collection and the methodical cluster within which the technique is applied. But first, data has to be process or prepared. Data preparation is often vital in quantitative research as it is equally important in any research method. This can clearly take up a lot of the research analysis time. In this research the preparation process consists of, (a) data selection - recognising the pertinent data for analysis, (b) data cleansing - resolving quality issues, that is, rectifying mistakes such as misspellings, duplication, inconsistencies and so on, (c) data integration - bringing together data from different sources, which can sometimes produce new themes, (d) data transformation - alteration to the structure of the data or modification to data type to obtain consistency across all variables, (e) data reduction - shrinking data size by sampling, eliminating variables with low explanatory potential and combining variables (for example, into index) to reduce dimensionality, (f) data display - the use of tables and figures to help and move the analysis to the conclusion of the research project (Miles & Huberman,

1994). In linking data reduction and display, the researcher draws and verifies the conclusions through analysis (Punch, 1998). Most data have a shelf-life as they depreciate in value over time, although some eventually become historically appealing. Attention was given to the handling and processing the narrative data on and off the field. This is because ‘writing down’ stories in the field and ‘writing up’ at home/office are both ‘matters of textual construction’ (Atkinson, 1990, p.61) and they are sensitised to objectivity and subjectivity respectively.

### The Analysis Process

Data are examined by means of an iterative schema to extort thematic categories that intersect cases (Huberman and Miles, 1994). Firstly, the comments are arranged by resemblance of content. This emphasises the importance to the respondents’ implicit theories of the world (Harre and Secord, 1973). Secondly, the data are cross-examined to find support for the research questions. Pertinent annotations are obtained and categories are formed. Cross-referencing systems are fleshed out to allow data to be clearly located while preserving its original context.

Hundreds of minutes of recorded data (excluding the exploratory stage) are taken from twenty-five in-depth and fifteen follow-up interviews. The data, including notes and journals, are then transcribed and subjected to ethnographic analysis (Weitzman and Miles, 1995). The ‘connected narrative approach’ (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2011) was applied to the large mass of data so as to preserve the richness of context, boost transparency of analysis and share authorship with respondents (Mishler, 1990). Interview transcripts were deconstructed and conceptual labels (codes) were assigned to them, that is, applying brief verbal descriptions to small chunks of data. This included an extensive ‘line-by-line’ analysis so that no concept was missed out of the analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.57) describe coding as; "The operations by which data are broken down, conceptualised, and put back together in new ways". Originally 250 open codes were developed but reduced by grouping together in four higher order categories (see chapter four) based on mutual concepts. There are alterations and modifications at every stage of the analysis in the light of experience and as ideas developed. Hence, earlier coding is adjusted to reflect the full picture of the data. The researcher then closely observes and compares these concepts to identify similarities and differences. Related concepts are grouped together to form categories. These coding steps do not automatically take place in set stages, rather, the researcher shuffles between coding

stages until new themes stop emerging. Themes that integrate substantial sets are identified as adequately representing the textual data.

It is the case that the interactions between the entrepreneurs and the researcher have the benefit of reducing the loads of materials (notes, tapes, mails, and so on) during the process of interpretation. Brundin (2007) believes the quality of interpretations will be enhanced if the respondents and researchers are jointly involved in the process, and will also bestow on the former a sense of getting something back for providing access (Balogun *et al.*, 2003).

#### 4.4.2 Validity

The need for demonstrating good quality in this research designs raises the concern for issues of validity and reliability. A number of views are expressed on validity by researchers. Golden-Biddle & Locke's (1993) three requisite criteria essential to good quality are identified as; authenticity – demonstrating deep understanding of the subject, plausibility – connecting with some current interest/concern among other researchers and criticality – encouraging scrutiny of presumptions that may impart new insights. Silverman's (2000) perspectives for guarding against anecdotalism in the prejudiced selection of data include; refutability – searching for examples that might disprove current beliefs, constant comparison – looking for new cases and settings that will broaden the existing theory, comprehensive data treatment – executing a preliminary analysis of all the data available before reaching conclusions and tabulations – greater stringency in organising data. This research adheres to the requirements stipulating that the results of constructionist research be plausible and obtained via transparent methods as express by Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2008). Invariably, since interpretive research deals with unique situations, reliability cannot be defined as a measurement of the likelihood of similar conditions giving rise to similar observations (Aunger, 1995). That would be within the framework of positivist research.

#### Transparency in Research

The notion of transparency as the benchmark for qualitative inquiry cannot be overstressed. The need for complete clearness of paradigm assumptions, procedures and data analysis, as well as in research dissemination is a requisite in contemporary research milieu (Hiles, 2008). Moreover, transparency is of paramount concern in the requirement for critical evaluation. The methods and logic of inquiry, data collection

and analysis, must be clear enough for others to replicate. As a consequence, the research methods pay close attention to specific personal and contextualised experiences and at the same time employ techniques that ensure the credibility of results. This is prompted by ensuring the research is explicit about the basis of the interpretations, employing systematic procedures to observe and check their influences. Transparency cause is also served by striving to present the results in logical and transparent ways which permit assured conclusions.

At the same time, there is the awareness that too much formal rigor could introduce risks such as narrow span of findings, overconfidence in results and blindness to emergent or marginal phenomena (Haverkamp, 2005). A balance is then struck between interpretive openness and rigour. The advice given on the dialectic of qualitative research by Huberman and Miles (2002, p.396) to “seek formalism, and distrust it” seems pertinent here.

#### 4.4.3 Research Reflexivity and Participatory Ethics

Reflexivity as a process of continuous negotiation and renegotiation of meanings towards deeper understanding of respondents’ patterns of social interaction (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008) is fully negotiated in this thesis. Integrating reflexivity to qualitative research meant the researcher’s alertness to how the diverse elements of their identities (for example, gender, race and class) become crucial during the research process and noted in the research presentations (Brewer, 2000; Pink, 2001). According to Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000, p.5), reflexivity is a continuous awareness and attention to ‘the way different kinds of linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements are woven together in the process of knowledge development, during which empirical material is constructed, interpreted and written’. Harding (1987) professes that researchers are not indistinctive, indistinguishable, voices of authority, but subjective, located individuals with interests, prejudices and motivations. Hence, it is important that the inevitable bias of this researcher is in some ways recognised and explored. Johnson and Duberley (2003, p.1279) argue that in order to understand ourselves as researchers and educators, “we must engage with ourselves through thinking about our own thinking”. Furthermore, the awareness of the instability of language spurs the concern for what the narrative actually epitomises (Lyotard, 1984). It has been suggested that the diverse ways at which narratives enable the perceptions of the world may reflect certain cultural antecedents to do with gender, class, ethnicity, and so on. Hence, the researcher’s

inquisitiveness reflectively interrogates narratives as: ‘How did the author come to write this narrative?’, ‘What conditions led to this text being said?’, ‘Whose views does the text represent?’, ‘How was the information obtained?’ and so on (Sikes and Gale, 2006). In other words, reflexivity to narrative touches ethical issues. The researcher complied with Foucault injunction of cautiousness to ethical sensitivities in all forms of expression. This is effected by probing whether the text of the narrative concern itself with ethical issues, whether there is a demarcation between the public and private spheres of life and whether the research participants are represented in fair and accurate ways. It has to be noted though that critiques have pointed out that ‘reflexivity’ is baseless and unnecessary, involving too much researcher’s introspection, which can be both problematic and paralytic to the research process (Cunliffe, 2003, p.990). Nevertheless, reflexivity concerns are taken into consideration throughout the duration of this study. For instance, it could be challenging sometimes to try and translate vernacular data precisely into English as the message could be lost in translation when writing. Consequently, when condensing data into coding characters it becomes even more difficult to try to get the nuances of a particularly complex conversation. There is a risk that one is just left with black and white scenario, that is, simplistic solutions are offered for complex construal. This danger is minimised through painstaking analysis and referral back to the respondents, and/or the control panel asking them to unpack terms.

### *Ethical Reflections*

All necessary ethical requirements are observed in the conduct of this research. Ethics are moral codes and values that affect the conducts of the researcher in carrying out research activities. Mostly, ethical issues are believed to crop up predominantly within research designs that use qualitative methods of data collection. This is due to the closer relationships between the researcher and the researched. Nonetheless, all social research (whether via surveys, documents, interviews or computer-mediated communication) invoke a range of ethical concerns involving privacy, informed consent, anonymity, secrecy, being truthful and the appropriateness of the research (Blaxter *et al.*, 2001).

Invariably, there are two different approaches to ethical concerns: ‘ethical absolutism’ and ‘ethical relativism’ (de Laine, 2000). The latter approach is established on an interpretive concept and presumes that the world is socially constructed and opens to various interpretations (Johnstone, 2007). Observing people in public places without

their permission or knowledge is justified by Spradley (1980, p.23) who observes that ‘anyone has the right to observe what others are doing in public and to make cultural inferences about patterns of behaviour’. Though Spradley added a caveat that researchers have an ethical responsibility towards the people they study and should protect their welfare, dignity and privacy. But researchers may also use a justification of lack of harm to allow the covert observation of people who are incidental or peripheral to a subject entrepreneur (Johnstone, 2007). Brundin (2007) alludes to the state of no perfect compromise between what can be revealed in the name of research and what should be disguised in the name of privacy. Nevertheless, informed consent from the entire entrepreneur respondents was obtained and the research conducted within the accepted ethical norms. Besides, fieldwork did not commence until after securing the university ethics committee approval.

#### **4.5 Summary**

Researchers have to be familiar with research methods/techniques and methodology. It is essential for researchers to understand how to apply, and which of the methods or techniques, are relevant and which are not, and what would they mean and indicate and why. Researchers also need to know the assumptions behind various techniques and the criteria by which certain techniques and procedures are appropriate to certain problems and others are not. This signals the need for researchers to design their methodologies for their problems as these may differ from problem to problem (Kothari, 2008). Problems such as; how to effectively gather reliable information and what shapes of control to exercise over methodological processes and procedures may crop-up when dealing with the methodological questions on entrepreneurship. Competent methodological mechanism is required for the focus on the nuts and bolts specifics of African diaspora entrepreneurship, and boundaries have to be defined and demarcated. The inherent problems of Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurship in terms of group segmentations, culture delineation, data collection and analysis and openness require the boldness to devise novel approaches.

The reflexive and collaborative methodological techniques employed are deliberately calibrated to provide an in-depth and rich storytelling context. This enables the respondents to express their own experiences of entrepreneurship and locate themselves interpretively within their own narratives. Within each of these methods, a number of interpretive practices are explored by tackling issues such as inclusion, causal texture,

diaspora-linked pressures, fatalism, cultural imperatives and social capital agenda in the text. It could also be argued that this methodology is necessary because research enquiries in the African diaspora communities are tricky as they are difficult to penetrate (Nwankwo, 2005). For people who perceived themselves as being disadvantaged in the UK a careful methodological process has to be employed for research investigations. This is the position of Mertens (2003), who declares that ontologically, sensitivity to the experiences of marginalised and pressured people requires methods that capture the diversity of their point of views in respect to their social locations. Ultimately, the methodological implication of the adopted social constructionism is aimed at invention and meanings decoding as the starting point. The research design is reflexivity and the technique is narrative. The analysis or interpretation is given as sense-making and the outcome is geared towards understanding the competing tensions, ambiguities and dilemmas inherent in diaspora entrepreneurship. In this way the researcher is able to understand the adaptive process of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurs and how they go about structuring the context of their business spheres in the UK.

Theoretical and methodological diversity and incompatibility of approaches are perceived difficulties inherent in discourse analysis research. But its advantages include the apparent universality and interdisciplinarity (Andrews *et al.*, 2008). It offers different levels of analysis, from microstructure, through content to large-scale context, whilst bridging theory and practice. Finally, the essence of entrepreneurship is needed when researching the field and as argued by Gummesson (2002), entrepreneurial research should be innovative, evoking element of risk-taking. He further maintains that “mainstream researchers are bureaucrats, while true scholars should be entrepreneurs” (Gummesson, 2002, p.337). Nwankwo *et al.* (2011, p.71) remind us that those “seeking to enter the field of entrepreneurship may sometimes find themselves going outside the regulated paths of inquiry; they are likely to meet with the unexpected, ask and be asked the unexpected and sometimes receive unexpected answers.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 5.0 Introduction

In view of the study's avowed objectives (stated in chapter 1), the findings of this research are distilled from iterative schema to extort broad thematic categories (see section 4.4.1). Significant categories emerged via initial data interrogation and consequently established in data layout and schematisation. These categories are thematically arranged and exemplary narratives are selected to embellish them as they represent (to a rather high degree) certain patterns found in the sample. The categories, exploited in the chapter's four sections include: opportunity configuration, group features, strategic engagements, and socio-political and institutional embeddedness. Twenty-five respondents representing twenty-one business ventures were interviewed as shown on Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3. Though the selection criteria were discussed in chapter 4, it is to be noted that most of the entrepreneur respondents engage in small entrepreneurial activities. This is a reflection of the types and scale of business activities rampant within the Nigerian ethnic group (see Table 4.2 in chapter 4). But then, this is not a drawback as Johnson *et al.* (2003) contend that small entrepreneurial activities are a possible way of studying phenomena that, regardless of their invisibility, may have an influence on the business.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 show the list of respondents, demographic information, attribution, orientation, transnational activity, and other relevant information referred to in this chapter.

**Table 5.1: Demographic Representation of Respondents**

Nos	Gender	Age	Education	Years in Britain	Years in business	Nos. of business	Principal line of business	Ownership structure	Nos. of employee
1	Male	56	1st Degree	30	21	3	Food Processing	Sole	12
2	Male	50	1st Degree	28	22	3	Food Packaging	Sole	7
3	Female	45	1st Degree	25	15	2	Leisure/Trips Planner	Sole	3
4	Male	51	2 <sup>nd</sup> Degree	21	20	3	Food Retailing	Joint +Wife	1
5	Male	45	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	15	12	1	Property Investor	Sole	1
6	Male	52	Diploma	23	19	2	Food Wholesaler	Sole	3

7	Male	51	Diploma	29	10	2	Media	Sole	6
8	Female	50	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	21	10	2	Restaurant	Sole	5
9	Female	26	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	8	4	1	Extramural/Training	Sole	5
10	Female	51	Diploma	12	3	1	Child Minding	Sole	1
11	Female	50	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	22	15	2	Day Care	Sole	2
12	Female	45	Diploma	18	5	2	Hair Saloon	Joint +Hubby	4
13	Male	51	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	24	18	2	Motor/parts Export	Sole	3
14	Male	56	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	22	15	2	Food Manufacturing	Joint+ Wife	4
15	Male	49	Diploma	25	6	1	Towing Vehicle	Sole	0
16	Male	40	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	10	5	2	Estate Agency	Sole	1
17	Female	45	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	24	15	2	Law Firm	Sole	1
18	Male	48	Diploma	12	5	1	Builder	Sole	1
19	Male	55	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	30	4	2	Auto Repair Garage	Sole	3
20	Female	39	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	25	10	1	Event Organisers	Joint + Hubby	10
21	Female	46	Diploma	26	21	2	Cloth Retailing	Sole	1

Source: Fieldwork

**Table 5.2: Attributions of Respondents**

Nos	Method of start up	Ability to cope with policies	Initial Context of migration	Previous experience	Locus of control	Perception & performance	Permanent Settlement Orientation	Transnational activity
1	Started up	Weak	Temporary	Yes	External	Struggling	Nigeria	Yes
2	Started up	Moderate	Temporary	No	External	Successful	Nigeria	Yes
3	Started up	Moderate	Permanent	Yes	External	Surviving	Nigeria	Yes
4	Purchased	Moderate	Temporary	Yes	Internal	Surviving	Nigeria	Yes
5	Started up	Moderate	Temporary	Yes	External	Successful	UK	Yes
6	Started up	Moderate	Uncertain	Yes	External	Surviving	Nigeria	Yes
7	Started up	Capable	Temporary	No	Internal	Struggling	Nigeria/UK	Yes
8	Started up	Weak	Uncertain	Yes	External	Struggling	UK	Yes
9	Worked as employee	Capable	Permanent	No	External	Managing	UK	No
10	Started up	Capable	Permanent	Yes	External	Managing	UK	No
11	Started up	Moderate	Temporary	Yes	External	Successful	Nigeria/UK	Yes
12	Started up	Capable	Permanent	Yes	External	Managing	Nigeria/UK	Yes
13	Started up	Capable	Temporary	Yes	External	Managing	Nigeria	Yes
14	Started up	Weak	Uncertain	Yes	External	Struggling	Nigeria	Yes
15	Started up	Capable	Uncertain	Yes	External	Successful	Nigeria	No
16	Worked as employee	Capable	Temporary	Yes	External	Managing	Nigeria/UK	Yes
17	Started up	Capable	Permanent	Yes	External	Managing	UK	Yes
18	Started up	Weak	Temporary	No	External	Managing	Nigeria	Yes
19	Purchased	Moderate	Uncertain	Yes	External	Struggling	Nigeria/UK	Yes
20	Started up	Moderate	Permanent	Yes	External	Surviving	UK	Yes
21	Started up	Capable	Temporary	Yes	External	Managing	UK	Yes

Source: Fieldwork

## **5.1 Opportunity Configuration**

As Waldinger (1989, p.71) asserted “immigrants will not go into business unless there are opportunities”, this research findings begin with the organising theme of the opportunity dynamics available for Nigerian entrepreneurs in London. The opportunity dynamics is expressed through configuration of the market situation and business location, and ownership control.

### **5.1.1 Market Situation**

Initially, there was an attempt to conduct a physical census by treading renowned Nigerian enclaves such as Peckham, Dalston, Brixton and Shepherd Bush in London (BBC, 2005). But the enormity and impracticality of such venture soon become obvious. Aside from the inadequacy of resources (time and money), the attrition rate of businesses is frightening. Some business premises earlier visited have simply disappeared (closed down) on subsequent visits a few weeks later. Yet many have been trading on the same spot or area for over twenty years and became part and parcel of the feature of the locality. A respondent (4) jokingly refers to two types of Nigerian enterprises in London as either ‘DOA’ (dead on arrival) or ‘BG’ (born global); a laconic cue to very high number of failed ventures within the first year of operation on one hand, and instances of businesses that are initiated to exploit transnational opportunities on the other hand.

Nevertheless, it is the case that the respondents start particular businesses in markets where demand seems to exist. An aspiring entrepreneur has to have the right kind of resources (financial, human, social capital, and ethnic capital). Most of the respondent entrepreneurs confirm lack of financial resources or do not have easy access to significant funds. Hence, they can only start a business that requires a relatively modest outlay of capital. Forms of highly capital-intensive (mass) production that necessitate large minimum efficient scales are not very accessible for them. It is therefore hard to find business start-ups by Nigerian entrepreneurs in areas of mass-production or mass-distribution. But a few of the respondents are in small-scale businesses in food manufacturing and processing. Also many of the respondents with relatively high educational qualifications are in stagnating market and vacancy-opening of small-scale, low-skilled, low-value added production, labour-intensive production with low growth potentials business sectors.

Broadly, large concentration of Nigerians in enclaves around the capital seems to facilitate great numbers of their businesses at those locations. Visitors to such locations (for example, Peckham) would have thought they were in a Lagos (Nigeria) suburb. The cacophony of different Nigerian languages and dialects that assail the earshot could be overwhelming. Several media sources (for example, BEN TV; Naija FM 101.1) confirm the availability of ‘any’ Nigerian product for sale in Peckham. One respondent (18) claims that fetish sacrificial materials are abundantly available; even native doctors and Islamic marabouts from Nigeria do regularly hold consultation for people who are so inclined. Comparable conditions exist in other Nigerian enclave locations/markets around London. Similarly observed are cases of non-Nigerians, especially Pakistanis competing robustly in all the markets selling Nigerian popular products at competitive prices to their Nigerian customers. One can visibly notice that whilst the Asian shops attract all-comers, the Nigerian establishments are predominantly patronised by Nigerians. Observations were made in some cases where Nigerian customers first buy their foodstuffs and materials from Asians before going to nearby Nigerian shops to purchase products not stocked in the former. There may be many reasons for this but largely unrelated to price differentials because, in the cases mentioned, the price levels are the same. The strength of the group’s social capital and network is challenged by this situation. The restaurateur respondent (8) put this in context by asserting that Asian middlemen are into most Nigerian-focussed businesses except in few cases like hers. She proclaims:

*‘I’m sure the Asians could have opened Nigerian restaurants if not for cultural and authenticity issues... and you know what, they would have been patronised heavily by our people’.*

It could be the case that the entrepreneurs are unable to fully grasp the dynamics of inter-racial business management or failing to master the necessary requisites needed to attract patronage across ethnic divisions. Perhaps, this could shine light on the concepts of ethnic embeddedness and ‘breaking-out’ as they affect the group’s entrepreneurial undertakings.

### 5.1.2 Business Location

Location advantage consists of a number of composites that impact location order. There are many issues that inform location choices that go beyond the norm. For example, all the respondents confirm that the order of geography, accessibility, rent and

business rate determines the spot. Sometimes, the nature of ventures they go into may be a determinant factor. This suggests that some do choose business types or options based on a number of multiple factors. A couple-respondent (12) verifies:

*'We open this boutique only because we calculated that the location would be suited for hairdressing and barber shop and because there is already a Nigerian restaurant (our first choice) nearby'.*

Fundamentally, location on the high street is most sought after due to heavy footfalls and mass of potential customers, but there is a general consensus that local council lock-up shops in densely populated areas also provide good and cheaper option. The prevalent vehicular restrictions on many high streets in London and high rent cost are said to affect their businesses. The opportunity to buy existing business also appears to be an attractive option as testified by the auto repair garage-owner respondent (19):

*'I was able to shadow the business for a time before buying it from the previous owner, so I was able to hit the ground running when I started after inheriting customers, staff, and necessary equipments'.*

Though not all the respondents businesses are located at their preferred locations, they all generally acknowledge the importance of good and affordable location to a successful venture. In essence, location choice is driven in the main by aggregation of population, and location options feed into the environmental complexity and munificence loop.

### 5.1.3 Ownership Control

Ownership opportunities appear uncomplicated enough for the respondents as they all report ease of access to register or conduct their ventures. But despite the liberalism in broad entrepreneurial regime in the UK, there is still a felt sense of marginalisation among the group. It may well be that the felt sense of marginalisation is distilled into the way they see the establishment to be almost against themselves. Many believe that the whole of government policy (for example, immigration, and so forth) tends to stifle their own initiatives as they could not utilise the social capital that could have help them build their businesses. For instance, there is apprehension among Nigerian entrepreneurs (as expressed in the Nigerian ethnic media and by respondents) concerning mass deportation of Nigerians due to government's hard stance on immigration. Attention was drawn to a rally in Peckham on the 26 January 2012

(stopdeportationsnow, 2012) condemning mass deportation to Nigeria. Many respondents are worried about the impact on their businesses, several of which employ illegal immigrants. It could be the case that their felt sense of marginalisation is affecting business start-ups, and this in turn appears to explain the sense of temporariness, short-terminism, and a sliding to the 'black market'.

Majority are also of the opinion that their ownership control is curtailed by various restrictions through different organs of government impinging on their enterprises. For example, a respondent (6) describes some limitations placed on goods imported from Nigeria. The respondent gives various instances where importers have fell afoul of both implicit and explicit importation rules. The respondent's experience is correlated with the findings of Ansen Ward (2003) that around 1 in 4 consignments of air freighted smoked fish from Africa (for example, Nigeria and Ghana) are detained for some reasons at port of entry. Of these, 70% are destroyed. This is approximately 17.5% of consignments and equivalent to 20 tonnes of product with a retail value of £240,000 to £390,000. The main reasons for detention are:

- Packaging is inadequate – re-used computer or TV boxes, in poor condition, newspaper or baskets are used for packing the fish.
- Insect infestation.
- Establishment number stapled on the box rather than written on.
- Health certificates not filled in correctly.
- Smoked fish included among other goods and not declared.

Invariably, restrictive conditions such as immigration policy constraints on recruitment of ethnic compatriots, or importation restrictions, and so on, place a lot of stress on ownership control. But it is the case that many of the respondents have devised means of navigating through the maze of official hurdles to access ownership control. Their strategic interventions unfold later in section 5.4.

## **5.2 Group Features**

Through interactions with respondents and Nigerian media sources, the study is able to get a clear line on some underlining characteristics of Nigerian entrepreneurial peculiarity. Motivating factors, home-bound orientation, occupational duplicity,

paternalistic orientation, social networking, and business performance evaluation of the ethnic group unfold in the findings underneath.

### 5.2.1 Motivating Factors

It is difficult to demarcate clear lines of distinction between pull and push factors as reasons for self-employment among the respondents. A single set of motivators could not be safely extracted as there are manifest of both push and pull factors, in varying degrees, in the sample population. The general impression gathered from various Nigerian media sources (see list in chapter 4) points to attainment of economic independence and be their own bosses as key factors in setting up a business. Many of the respondents also attribute their self-employment decisions on blocked mobility in their employment relations, why some indirectly allude to copycat factor, for instance, emulating successful co-ethnic compatriot in starting a business enterprise. Ironically, majority of the respondents denounce the copycat mentality, as reflected in this statement by the motor-vehicle exporter (13):

*‘Nigerians rarely initiate original business ideas, but will rush en-mass to any visibly successful enterprise originated by their countryman, eventually making that venture unprofitable for everyone’.*

Most of the respondents have an intensive sense of competition and want to develop their businesses quickly. The urge to make it ‘quick and big’ is also identified as motivating factor for entrepreneurship since most realised that salary from employment is not adequate to resolve their financial needs. One gets the impression from various phone-in chat shows and programs in the Nigerian media of the ‘get-rich-quick’ mindset of many Nigerian business persons. Hankering for instant riches, claimed the food processor magnate, explains the lack of sufficient planning and attention to details that is widespread among Nigerian entrepreneurs in Britain today. It is suggested by many that a culture of impatience, exasperation, and undue radicalism in enterprise appear to have crept in to take hold of the Nigerian entrepreneurial psyche. Several entrepreneurs are said to perpetually look for short-cuts to achieve their unrealistic aspiration targets. On the whole, it may appear that ethno-cultural orientations and context-specific imperatives are driving entrepreneurial motivations. Also, it could be that many first generation entrepreneurs were already established and adept at running own businesses prior to migration to the UK and therefore impatient with institutional dysfunctionality.

### 5.2.2 Home-bound Orientation

It is the case that majority of the respondents harbours plan to retire or relocate to Nigeria sometime in the future (the individuals' future varies from two to ten years). Although it could be said that the initial intention to temporary sojourn in the UK (about 50% of the respondents have that migration objective) seems to reflect the home-bound intent. Perhaps, what is motivating the eagerness to 'return home' is their exaggerated prior expectations, that is, the conditions they met in the UK is not what they expected. This unrealised expectation could be linked to openings in trans-national spaces. Nevertheless, home-bound orientation appears to have impacted their business plans and activities. The anticipation of returning 'Home' appears to motivate periodic trips to Nigeria for leisure and business purposes. The food wholesaler entrepreneur (6) encapsulates the general opinion of most of the male respondents:

*'Our generation is afflicted: we've served (looked after) our parents, and against the natural order of things (at least in Africa) we are serving our children and if care is not taken, we will be serving our grandchildren. The UK system is fettering our children; rendering them to be mean, selfish and uncaring. Without any doubt most of us will end up in old peoples' home in retirement if we remain in this country. At least, in Nigeria, I'm accorded all the respect and honour that is due to people of my age, status and achievement, that's why I'm gradually repositioning my business to Nigeria'.*

There are other reasons attached to the home-bound orientations such as self-actualisation, changes in personal circumstances (for example, becoming full UK citizen or obtaining leave to remain) altruistic, charity, and so on. For example, the tow vehicle operator (15) alleged:

*'I'm not getting profit out of the business venture I set up at home (Nigeria). I really don't mind though since the venture is keeping my siblings engaged and out of trouble in Nigeria. But since I have regularised my papers....I'll be going home regularly now to oversee things for myself'.*

It seems the case that the non-inclusiveness exhibited by most of the respondents in their strong display of Nigerianness belies their claim to British citizenship. Their British identity is perceived exclusively in terms of immigration documents valuable for instrumental purposes, for example, ease of travel around the world, and privilege to entitlements. Ironically it is understood, from various Nigerian community sources, that many Nigerians are desperate to relocate to the UK; the harsh economic condition in Nigeria is consensually peddled by the respondents as responsible for setting off the

mass inclination to migrate to the UK. The implication of this perspective on the process and outcome of business transaction to Nigeria by many of the respondents is then brought to focus.

### 5.2.3 Occupational Duplicity

Many of the respondents (71%) are involved in multiple business concerns or taking up paid employment simultaneously. Two survival impulses emerge as informing this phenomenon. Firstly, many engaged in multi-enterprise as self-preservation mechanism. For instance, some masked their enterprises from official (for example, tax, immigration, regulation and compliance) gaze by having full-time employment or self-declared unemployed and claiming relevant benefits. Secondly, others dabbled into multi venture as a strategic intervention believing that they would generate regular income even if one line of business is flagging. Nevertheless, there are admissions that many of the expansion programs are ill-informed, or constitute a drain in the coffer of the entrepreneurs. The experiences of the food retailer and food manufacturer are particularly poignant; they both embarked on vertical and horizontal expansions by opening retail outlets in other parts of London with grave financial, social, and emotional consequences. Invariably, occupational duplicity enables entrepreneurs to switch between interests and not fixated in a particular line of business. This increased mobility in the expression of entrepreneurial characteristics could account for vulnerability to failure many are experiencing. Basically, some are becoming ‘fair-weather’ or ‘convenience’ entrepreneurs as oppose to business people who are strategically driven.

### 5.2.4 Paternalistic Orientation

The research finds that majority of the respondents are regular religious adherents who consistently attribute success factors in entrepreneurship to an act of a benevolent God. The phrases ‘*God is in control*’; ‘*God’s willing*’; ‘*I believe God will do it*’; ‘*God shall provide*’ and ‘*by the grace of God*’ interpolate statements made by nearly every respondents, same is noticed in the Nigerian media audience phone-in interactions. This raises attention to the connection between theocentric orientation and entrepreneurial orientations and its ramifications in the quantification of entrepreneurial outcomes. The entrepreneurs’ apparent external locus of control have an effect on how individual entrepreneur gauges success in business; more as a question of divine intercession rather than as a result of strategic planning.

Another angle from which to look at this predisposition to ‘divine intervention’ is the conspicuous self-isolation or self-exclusion perceptible in the broad demeanour of the respondents (and the group in general gleaned through ethnic media interactions). The institutional disadvantage the respondents perceived (real or imagine) could be related to ethnic penalty that plays out in a different type of ways. Essentially, the theocentric orientation could well be an expression of submissive reaction to the perceived institutional failures or ethnic disadvantages, which then linked into why business planning is either done on shoestring or ad hoc basis on many occasions. It could also represent perceived hopelessness in sustaining viable start-up with implication for entrepreneurial orientations and stimulation of activities.

#### 5.2.5 Social Networking

The research establishes that majority of the respondents are regular religious adherents who consistently exploit their religious social networks to enhance their entrepreneurship. Religious gatherings (churches and mosques) are found to be not only centres for worship but avenue to network and promote entrepreneurial and other activities. Majority of the respondents admit to use the regular religious meetings and congregating to mobilise resources for their enterprises. About half of the respondents also believe their membership of other socio-cultural associations in the community tend to generate business opportunities and linkages for them. The others have had reasons to withdraw their memberships or had not bothered to join any social club/association. The assessment of the tow vehicle operator (15) offers an insight:

*‘Those clubs/associations are platforms for ego-tripping, jealousy infused networks that serve no useful purpose but place great burden on successful members’.*

Those respondents that engage in transnational business activities confirm strong dependency on their social networks in Nigeria to facilitate or strengthen their ventures. Typically, a respondent’s [Leisure (3)] views expressed below represents the cross-section of opinions:

*‘Family members and friends are the backbone of my business in my village, I doubt if the business could have survived without them’.*

Furthermore, many of the respondents confess not to have relational experiences with other non-Nigerian groups. This inability to link up or have social connections with other ethnic groups could have negative effect on take up of their products outside their ethnic division. Broadly, in spite of the general presumption among the respondents that the Nigerian community in the UK lack cohesion and hardly help each other compared to groups such the Jews and Asians, many admitted their business start-ups received some support from their close social network contacts.

#### 5.2.6 Performance Evaluation

Overt and covert attempts to appraise the outcomes of the respondents' entrepreneurial experiences could only produce subjective evaluations as shown on Table 5.2, even though at no time in the research are these experiences deemed measurable. In essence, subjective expressions such as 'struggling', 'surviving', 'successful', and 'managing' are conspicuously employed. These terms are directly imported unprocessed into Table 5.2 only as illustration of respondents' personal perception of performance appraisal. Most of the respondents are wary of opening their 'books' to the scrutiny of the researcher no matter the level of intimacy. At any rate many of them confess that their account-books are not regularly updated due to time constrains, but in some cases there are confirmation of multiple accounts record keeping; one for the taxman, one (authentic) for the entrepreneur, and one for other sundry uses (depending on purpose, for example, loan application, local council income assessment, and so on).

*'Creativity is the name of the game in the UK, my business accounts are multi-layered and multi-purpose'* claims the cloth retailer respondent (21).

It is the case that many of the respondents do not evaluate business success or failure in monetary terms alone. Issues like autonomy, self-aggrandisement, multiplicity of incomes, and work-life balance are alluded to in interviews as constituting business performance profiling. Therefore, 'success' is an amorphous concept; meaning it is content-dependent.

### 5.3 Strategic Engagements

Strategic engagements relate to conduct developed from the adjustments entrepreneurs make to the resources accessible to them, relative to their group's characteristics. Recurrent themes in a lot of the respondents' narratives are assembled comparable to

Boissevain et al.'s (1990, p.133) list of seven common business problems confronting ethnic entrepreneurs. These are: (1) How do ethnic or immigrant entrepreneurs acquire the information needed for the establishment and survival of their firms? (2) How do they obtain the capital needed to establish or to expand their business? (3) How do they acquire the training and skills needed to run a small business? (4) How do they recruit and manage efficient, honest, and cheap workers? (5) How do they manage relations with customers and suppliers? (6) How do they survive strenuous business competition? (7) How do they employ the trick of the trade to navigate composite business situations? Each of the questions was thoroughly rummaged to uncover how the respondents' strategies negotiate those problems.

### 5.3.1 Access to Information

Relevant information that are key to business start-up and maintenance include market information, availability of premises, laws and regulations, warnings of market fluctuations, suppliers, successful products, professional advice, capital, labour, and so on. It was found that all the entrepreneurs in the study relied on direct ties in their social network and information gathered indirectly from the general African communities. A respondent (9) illustrates the connection between social network and information acquisition:

*'I could have loved to open an African restaurant given my expertise and qualification in catering and hotel management, but you need to know a lot of people to succeed in that line of business especially at the initial stage. One definitely needs to know people who can guide and give valuable information'.*

This reflects the widely circulated view in the community that only close family, friends, and associates formed the entrepreneur's initial clientele base, sources of information, and business counsellors. Ritualised events such as Home Town Association (HTA) perennial meetings, religious meetings (Church and Mosque congregating) and ceremonial occasions (weddings & other rites) provide avenue for exchange of information.

It is also the case that the level of educational attainment of the entrepreneurs is proportional to the strength and quality of information at their disposal which, in turn, influences the intensity of engagement or nature of enterprise. For instance the food manufacturer respondent voiced his preference for immigration consultancy venture, but

believed his limited education (Diploma) to be a barrier. However, it emerges that many respondents express difficulties in accessing relevant information sometimes in their day-to-day business activities. Given that most of the respondents are educated (at least to Diploma level); it may be that their education (in Nigeria) is not adequately suited to navigate the UK business terrain, in which case they are educationally qualified but knowledge (UK) deficient. Nonetheless, all the respondents start, maintain, and expand their businesses exploiting ethnic network channels.

### 5.3.2 Access to Financial Capital

Financial capital is absolutely important for establishing any business, though there are variations in the amount of money needed across start-up phases, there seems to be a similarity in how such funding were mustered. For instance, the extramural/training entrepreneur started her business with only £1000.00, which was mainly used for promotional and educational materials. Whereas the restaurateur needed in excess of £50,000.00 to fully commence her business. All the respondents claim to obtain the bulk of their capital from their own savings, families, relatives, and friends. Only in two instances (restaurant and food processing) were the capital augmented by loans from banks at the start-up phase. Many of the respondents' personal savings were accumulated through frugal subsistence and multiple employments. The personal admittance of the restaurateur respondent illustrates a common experience:

*'I had to keep three jobs (works in the local council offices, mini-cabbing, and catering at events); refraining from any form of ostentatious purchases, and relying on my partner/children to foot all the household bills, in order to squirrel away substantial savings for my business project'.*

The towing vehicle operator got his start-up capital by combining his redundancy remuneration with 'rotating credit' through the credit association he formed with colleagues at work. Obtaining the bulk of business capital entirely from informal sources seems to follow a predictable and well-trodden path in ethnic entrepreneurship. But, what is incredible is the insignificant change in the inability of the respondents to access loans and credit from formal sources after their relatively long sojourning in the UK. However, the recourse to mostly informal sources to fund business start-ups seems to have repercussions. For example, in order to save face and not disappoint credit benefactors in repayment, some of the entrepreneurs confess to high levels of stress. This has led to befuddled state of mind (at least in the case of respondent (7), and

strategic drift in entrepreneurial focus. The implication seems to counteract the seemingly widely accepted view of the benefits of ethnic informal capital acquisition format.

### 5.3.3 Access to Training and Skills

It is surprising that contrary to expectations only two of the entrepreneurs (food retailing & Estate Agent) actually acquired business-relevant skills and training through a sort of apprenticeship in other Nigerian owned establishments in the UK. But only four (media, tow-vehicle, builder, and food package) entrepreneurs have no prior business experience either in Nigeria or the UK. Majority has either owned or worked in family outfits in Nigeria before emigrating. The experiences gathered elsewhere appear to mould and give structure to the ways in which the entrepreneurs learn relevant skills and also the motivation for self-employment.

It was found that only one of the respondents (Extramural/Training) actually engaged or sought help from the support services that abound in London before or after start-up. The pervading sentiment is that it amounts to sheer waste of time to go to these support agencies; the media entrepreneur (7) narrates his experience:

*'I went to the offices of three so-called support managers; they were unable to offer substantive help. I doubt whether they have any clue of my business anyways. I have been advising potential ethnic entrepreneurs to go to fellow ethnic entrepreneurs for practical and useful advice after my own experience'.*

However, it is the case that there is mixed feelings about the quality of advice and training offered by co-ethnic sources. A couple of the respondents (cloth retailer, and food retailer) speak of the outright refusal of Nigerian shop-owners to grant them tutelage or apprenticeship slots prior to commencing their own ventures. But with the benefit of hindsight these two also resolve not allow anybody to shadow them unless they are employees, and even employees are not freely and willingly shown the rope for fear of nurturing potential competitors in a very restricted market.

Nevertheless, the recounted experiences of the two entrepreneurs that acquired training and skill from other Nigerian establishments suggest a role model effect on entrepreneurship as one (4) commented:

*'The knowledge I acquired coupled with the success of my principal prodded me to open my own shop' after two years as employee'.*

It appears that the sequence of developments that shape entrepreneurial activities originates from imitative pattern, sheer gut and fragmented information were tweaked to formulate training, tuition and skill toolkit. Lack of training or experience in business leads to inadequate clear strategic market positioning and fuzzy outward look of the direction business is headed. It is the case that the severe realities of running a business are often misjudged. However, the averseness to training and skilling could be deemed to link with educational background of many of the respondents, who may believed that they are better qualified than many of the official business advisors. It is also the case that official advisors and trainers are seen as 'outsiders' who are mistrusted and as far as possible stay away from.

#### 5.3.4 Recruitment of Labour

Many of the respondents businesses are small scale, the staff strength ranges from one to twelve. The inputs of family in the management of the enterprises are visible in about half of the number interviewed. Four are jointly owned and managed by couples (hairdresser/barber, food manufacturing, event planner, and food retailing) and seven others (leisure, food processing, child-minding, money transfer, media, cloth retailing, and restaurant) exploit family labour in one form or the other.

*'It could be fatal to hire Nigerians as they are generally not interested in the welfare of the business; they are only concerned with their own selfish ends', - [food retailer (4)] is a sentiment shared by all the respondents.*

Paradoxically, all employed co-ethnic (Nigerians) workers and only four (food processing, food packaging, education, recruitment agency) has non-Nigerian among the workers in their employment. There is a general view of ineptitude regarding the Nigerian workers who they all believed to be intelligent but too self-centred to be effective. This suggests that the trust and loyalty relationship between the parties (entrepreneur & staff) is flawed.

Most of the respondents admitted to paying their workers, recruited through ethnic sources and connections, below the national wage structure. Some are even paid extortionary low salary (there is an instance of £1.50/hour pay) and work long hours

every week. It was gathered that most of the workers are irregular (illegal immigrants) since regular (legal immigrants) workers tend to find employment in the mainstream rather than work for fellow Nigerians. Although many of the entrepreneurs accepted that the wages they pay are low, but they justified their position by claiming that they are not making any money themselves and only struggle to even pay their staff salary. One of them declares [food processing (1)]:

*'There are many occasions that I have to borrow from the staff immediately after paying them to fuel my car. I hardly have enough for myself most of the times... it is a constant struggle'*

A common opinion among the respondents is that employing co-ethnic workers is a sort of Samaritan ethics (helping a 'brother' in need), as these workers are ostracised from the labour market and are trapped in a circle of helplessness. However, there are respondents who appreciate the symbiotic relationship between themselves and their irregular workers:

*'I would certainly not be in business if I had to employ regular workers and pay the minimum wages. I have a good and practical arrangement in place as I employed both legal and illegal immigrants. The legal immigrants are on state benefits so the wages they receive from me is a kind of top-up payment'-* [food packaging (2)].

This statement reveals that not all the workers in the employment of the respondents are illegal immigrants; many are legal but working clandestinely in order to continue claiming myriad of available social benefits. Yet some are moonlighting only to secure extra incomes. Hence it appears that the feasibility and stability of the respondents businesses is partly a consequence of a synergy between the employers and the employees on wages and salaries. It is then the case that Nigerian small enterprises exploited open resources, and are partially keyed to family and familiar mode of production, which consists of an integral dynamism geared towards the growth of the domestic cluster.

#### 5.3.5 Managing Customers and Suppliers (Relational Mediation)

The respondents businesses serve mainly African customers, even though many of them profess to offer products and services to a wider clientele base. It seems many are unable to negotiate the multiple roles required to attract and expand to the mainstream.

For example, few of the respondents' business advertisements (mainly in the local ethnic media) are coined and directed to Nigerian clientele awareness. Again, from the researcher's personal observation, most the entrepreneurs' marketing mix tools (product, promotion, price, and place) criteria are not well integrated. For instance the layout and ambience of majority of the respondents' shop/premises only conform to co-ethnic taste and sensitivity. Many rarely advertised, hardly engaged in any form of promotion save for word of mouth, and do not associate with non-Nigerian networks or belong to large networks such as church or HTA where personal contacts rule. There seems to be a disposition to attracting customer by offering products/services at a rock bottom price. A retailer respondent (4) confirms:

*'There is a perpetual race to the bottom by all of us in this market (food), imagine selling two kilogram of packed Gari for £2.00, the same price we were selling it ten years ago. Sometimes you wonder how we are still surviving in this business'.*

Intense competition to woo customers is rampant within the Nigerian entrepreneurial circle leading to the bankruptcy of many business ventures. A food retailer (4) gives a brief analysis:

*'Look here my friend, it takes an average of about 35% profit-margin on products to run a shop, but most British products (for example, cigarette & drinks) have between 10-20% mark-up. Our profits come from items from Africa; most have around 50-100% profit-margin. The only problem is that competition pressures depress profit and we are all struggling. I only make a quarter of what I used to make fifteen years ago when there were less shops around'.*

In order to retain or gain customers some of the respondents disclose that they sell on credit to customers who may or may not pay back or on time. A retailer respondent (21) also attributes credit-sales on familiarity pressures, she said:

*'Sometimes you cannot refuse to sell on credit to someone you respect or familiar with, and sometimes you entice/retain customers by selling on credit'.*

Another entrepreneur [food wholesaler (6)] alleges:

*'Giving credit facility is a common practise back in Nigeria and our people expect the same in London'.*

Yet despite attempts to win customers over, most of the respondents are of the opinion that customers' attitude is one of the key factors incapacitating their entrepreneurial efforts. A respondent [food retailer (4)] is quoted as saying:

*'Many Nigerians (& Africans) prefer to buy from Asians instead of buying from their own people even when the prices are the same; some are envious of us (Shop-owners) while some can't just be bothered. You hardly see Asians coming to buy stuffs from African shops though, not even general non-ethnic items. It is a crying shame'.*

But, it is the case that customers' problems are not exclusive to the Nigerian clientele alone, as some respondents report difficulties in relating to, and handling of non-Nigerian customers. For instance, the property investor (5) respondent's narrates his experience with an Eastern European tenant:

*'I had to organise thugs to occupy a room as lodgers in one of my multi-let apartments in order to eject a recalcitrant Bulgarian tenant. It takes less than two weeks for the tenant to vacate my property as she could not put up with the anti-social behaviours of the bogus 'new' tenant. This method cost me less in time and money compared with the lengthy court process I had earlier embarked on'.*

Perhaps the most visible of the respondents' strategy to attract and keep customers resides in the provision of general services in form of finding time to chat, joke, listen, and give counselling on variety of issues. It is noticed that many of the respondents' business premises serve as community centre where fellow Nigerians gathered to exchange views and information. An auto repair garage operator (19) offers an insight:

*'A lot of Nigerians do come here all the time. The opportunity to congregate at a friendly place seems a better alternative to the loneliness of their homes. You know one can go mad in this country if you don't have the chance to talk or share your burden with someone'.*

Almost all [except the lawyer respondent (17)] flay the professional services they received from Nigerian professionals such as accountants and lawyers. The food retailer (4) respondent shares his experience:

*'I'll strongly advise against using Nigerian professionals. I was nearly ruined by my former Nigerian accountant by the manner he handled my business account. It took the grace of God and the expertise of the Caribbean accountant, later introduced to me, that kept me out of jail and the Taxman palaver'.*

The relationship with suppliers appears to be mixed and selective. For instance, respondents (food manufacturer, processor, & importers) do prefer doing business with the Asian retailers than the Nigerians (or Africans) retailers. They claim whereas their Nigerian customers buy in small quantities and on credit, the Asians have more financial wherewithal to buy large quantity and often paid in cash or acceptable credit format with less hassle and haggling, albeit they demand big discount. The wholesaler respondent (6) asserts:

*'Nigerian shopkeepers will call you my brother but their unreasonable demands will bankrupt you if care is not taken. I have thousands of pounds owed to me by many African/Nigerian shops; some have even closed down and remain untraceable'.*

It is found that many of the respondents were helped at the initial stage of business development by co-ethnic suppliers who gave credits (the size depends on the strength of the network). But non-ethnic suppliers fare better in the hands of the entrepreneurs as they don't give credit and many do not deliver goods unlike their Nigerian suppliers. It is the case that most of the retailing entrepreneurs in the study depend solely on co-ethnic clientele, but the wholesalers/importers/manufacturer entrepreneurs supply both ethnic and non-ethnic customers with the latter easier to deal with. All the respondents give personal and general service to keep their co-ethnic customers happy, and some that have non-ethnic customers/suppliers derived a cosmopolitan or knowledge that assist them in satisfying customers/suppliers.

### 5.3.6 Competitive Dynamism

Although aspects of the nature of competition have been explored in the preceding section, this section deepens the exploration further. It is the case that the competitive environment in which all the respondents operate is very intensive as there are many other Nigerian entrepreneurs doing exactly the same thing in the same area as the respondents. Stiff competition is a reality of life for all the enterprises studied, which instigate a number of coping mechanism that appears generic to most of them. The main strategy includes long working hours, Sunday openings (one respondent claims he opens 364 days a year, closing only on Christmas day), and paying very low salary to self and employees. This type of competition seems to have stunted the growth of their enterprises, as one respondent (8) declares:

*'Most of us are soldiering on only because of pride and the shame of liquidation, or the sturdy believe that things could get better'.*

There are reported intense competition in all the market categories investigated thus providing a very fertile environment for the deployment of informal economic strategies. Also many diversified into other markets as a way of tempering the competitive quandary.

When the subject of cooperation in terms of stemming the calamitous tide of competition was broached by the researcher, it became crystal clear that jealousies among the Nigerian entrepreneurial circle are insurmountable. The food packaging respondent expresses his frustration at getting fellow Nigerians to form a sort of cooperative union in order to buy bulk materials from their suppliers at reduced rate:

*'For seven years now I have been canvassing for a number of us (big buyers) to come together and break the monopoly and the stranglehold of the Asian cartel on the raw materials we use in producing our products to no avail. We seem incapable of rising above pettiness and mistrust bogging down our community'*

The rhetoric of ethnic cooperation seems to highlight the deep individualistic tendencies inherent in the Nigerian entrepreneurs' comportment and their continued inability to successfully participate in the marketplace. Yet, the issue here could be considered to extend beyond competition per se, as human agency dynamics appear to be at play. Essentially, the capacity of individual entrepreneurs to act independently and to make their own self-advantaged choices seems to be affected by the socio-political and economic configuration of the UK's structure that they believe limit or influence the opportunities they have.

### 5.3.7 Adaptive Entrepreneurship

There is a perceived evidence of a form of adaptive entrepreneurship in the stories the researcher gathered from some of the participants and from other sources (as indicated in the methodology chapter). Adaptive entrepreneurship originates in its alertness to profit opportunities and ordinary discovery and it appears in many forms (Yu, 2000). One of the forms is a tactical manoeuvre of engaging in entrepreneurship for a short period of time to harvest observed opportunity in the market. This strategy is similar to guerrilla entrepreneurship described by Yu (2000) in Hong Kong entrepreneurs. An

example given by respondent (3) claims that during the early 1990s when calling cards (phone prepaid cards, for example, *Econophone* cards) were first introduced in the UK, a few Nigerian entrepreneurs got involved, have their own branded cards, made some quick profit and left the market as soon as the big players moved in. Another illustration is the testimonies of the food retailer respondent (4) to the effect that he, at one time or the other, often engages in a one-off opportunistic trading when chanced.

*'On more than one occasions I've engaged in what I called "hit-and-run" entrepreneurial activities. For example, I exported tyres (new and worn) to Nigerian in the mid-1990s to fill the gap in the market, but made a quickly exit when the "big boys" moved in'.*

Some of the other respondents give few instances in which they employed guerrilla entrepreneurship strategies. However, this line of enquiry was carefully navigated because clear line of demarcation cannot be safely drawn between serial and guerrilla entrepreneurship concepts, especially from the perspectives of the respondents. Consequently, further research focus is needed into this entrepreneurship genre to clear up the confusion.

Other adaptive actions are also employed as survival toolkit. For survival in business, many confirm they do not always conform to the prevailing laws and regulations in which case some of their activities may take on a (semi) informal disposition by participating intensely in under-the-counter/informal activities. Not wanting to present themselves as law-breakers, many made allusions to the sleazy dealings of their rivals by regaling the researcher with instances of sharp practices occurring in the market. Some examples will suffice: constant changing the ownership details and identity to evade several bills and payments; claiming unmerited state benefits; selling counterfeit or popular but banned products under the counter (for example, bleaching creams, exotic games meat); employing and exploiting illegal immigrants; and under-invoicing of goods for Custom & Excise, and tax purposes. A few employed non-ethnic employers at the front office to attract non-ethnic customers. Furthermore, many (see Table 5.2) engage in transnational business activities as strategic action to (1) by-pass the middlemen suppliers of African stuffs, (2) expand their market base, (3) adding value in a strategic value chain intervention tactics (transferring knowledge and technology in the process) for example, importing pre-packed food items from Nigeria to save cost of packing in Britain. Additional survival measures exploited by the

respondents are treated in the next section under the negotiating the rules and regulations terrain segment (5.4.1).

#### **5.4 Socio-political and Institutional Embeddedness**

This section condenses themes relating to environmental pressure on ethnic entrepreneurship. The mixed embeddedness model proposes that the structure of a local economy together with the legal framework coalesced to impact on ethnic entrepreneurship in general. These impacts are interrogated on the premises of: negotiating the rules and regulations terrain, socio-political embeddedness, and insider-outsider dichotomy of the respondents' business ventures.

##### **5.4.1 Negotiating the Rules and Regulations Terrains**

The approaches and schemes employed to traverse government's laws and compliance with standards and policies regulating their activities are varied and multifaceted. Responses to the demands of government regulations can be daunting even for savvy entrepreneurs. It was found that most are not aware of many of the relevant rules and regulations associated with their industry, even in instances of awareness; many found it difficult to comply. Government regulations/policies are often not favourably disposed to ethnic businesses in some instances. For example, the legislation on immigration is a constant source of headache for many entrepreneurs. A respondent (18) evokes the plight of two of his friends:

*'One (food processor) was forced to close down because of complaints from tenants of newly-built residential homes in the area even though he had been there for nine years. Another suffered customers' loss due to relocation of his vehicle spraying work-shop to an industrial zone because of new environmental pollution laws'.*

Recounting a related experience, the couple-respondents [food importer (4) narrate a devastating experience of the past when clearing their goods from Nigeria. The wife has this to say:

*'I lost a lot of money when my container of food and materials was delayed at the port for over six weeks because of a small quantity of Palm-oil and Ground-pepper that was packed with the main consignment of Beans, Gari, and Yam-flour. The Palm-oil and Ground-pepper were taking to the laboratory for analysis (which I was charged for) for God-knows-what toxin the Customs*

*officials were looking for. I was desperate as the days gone by with demurrage charges escalating, I had nowhere to go to for help.....I went through hell’.*

The narrative shows little understanding of the requirements of the Her Majesty Revenue & Customs regarding importation of certain categories of food materials from Africa. It can also be presumably construed to mean that there is little or no engagement with business support facilities. Another respondent [Restaurateur (8)] recounted her friend’s experience when immigration officials raided his establishment sometimes ago and deported some members of staff who were illegal immigrants.

*‘The action disrupted the business immensely and to add salt to injury he was penalised for employing illegal immigrants and threaten with jail term if he didn’t desist from hiring illegal workers’.*

The capability to cope or negotiate the policy and regulations terrains fluctuates with the entrepreneur’s proficient, industry and market requirements, and the attitude of different Boroughs’ compliance officers. The food manufacturer (14) provides a suitable example:

*‘I have operated in three London boroughs (Hackney, Newham, and Haringey) and I found the health and safety compliance officers in Haringey very tough and unhelpful (one of them is conspicuously racist) compared to officials from the other two Boroughs who demonstrate understanding most of the times. I had to relocate from Haringey otherwise I could have died of hypertension induced by their incessant expensive health and safety requirements’.*

The manipulation of laws and regulations as a technique of coping is not unknown among the entrepreneurs studied. For instance, respondent (2) narrates that the norm for Nigerians food processors and manufacturers was to labelled their variedly derived products “Pounded Yam” until the local Food and Health authority who, acting on complaints of some customers that the content of the various products was anything but real yam, clamped down on the producers for misrepresentation. To get around the problem the producers had to change their labels from “Pounded Yam” to “Poundo-Iyan”; “Pondo”; or “Iyan”, glib anagram and marques which still convey the meaning of the real yam product to co-ethnics but without the use of the contentious word ‘Yam’. In order to import the popular but banned “bush-meat” (collective name for meat of wild animals); importers remove the heads, cut and pack the smoked meat with smoked fish to deceive Custom officials who cannot differentiate between them since the latter is not contraband. The extramural/training respondent speaks of partnering with other

similar organisations to share the increasingly high public liability insurance bill when organising events. The day care respondent on her part share her experience of operators in her line of business who use other peoples name to bypass stringent registration demands. The lawyer respondent also speaks of diverse tactics employed in her trade to regularise her clients' immigration documents by navigating various loop-holes in the system. A well-known example is provided by the vehicle exporter respondent:

*'For us to be able to export motor cars over ten years old to Nigeria (cars over ten years old are banned), we either procure fake registration documents or, bribe officials, or creatively dismember the cars and list as spare parts only to reassemble after clearing Customs in Nigeria'.*

It is the case that each sector has unique ways of skirting government regulations. In their repertoire are; exploiting ambiguities in existing laws, paying fines, bribing officials, and/or conforming at all cost.

#### 5.4.2 Socio-economic Entrenchment

The welfare benefit regime appears to create economic opportunity structures for many of the respondents. Only two of them do not access state benefit in one form or the other (see Table 5.3). The importance of this is laid bare by the food processing entrepreneur (1):

*'The government's student loans and grants made available to my children provide a much needed financial palliative as it could have been difficult for me to support their university expenses from my business activities'.*

Getting State help, even as nominal as 50% off in council tax rebate, is a relief many of the respondents appreciated. But the researcher could not positively verify whether many of the benefit claims are merited.

It was found that State intercession aimed at regulating businesses has profound impact on the respondents' businesses and is affecting their strategic interventions. It appears a few are actually visible officially, that is in terms of registering their enterprises (for example, VAT registered), but most remain invisible in terms of compliance with numerous policies and regulations. Regulatory barriers (such as permits) is hampering access and affecting all the businesses under investigation. For instance the property investor (landlord) is worried that the new regulation introduced by the London

Borough of Newham for compulsory licensing of landlords in the Borough will be adopted by other Councils in London where he has letting properties. Under the scheme, which cost £500, landlord will need to show that they are "fit and proper persons", which could involve a Criminal Record Bureau check (CRB). The child-minder respondent also comments:

*‘There are hoards of (new/existing) rules and regulations to comply with in my business; from CRB check on myself and family, requirement of minimum of three years residency in the UK, registration with Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (OFSTED), food and hygiene certification renewable every three years, computer literacy, insurance, staff/child ratio, first-aid training, health and safety courses, and lots of other local council requirements. In fact only two of us, out of twenty-six, successfully completed our certification training when I was setting up’.*

Other respondents (for example, extramural/training and day care centre) share similar experiences, and in fact all the respondents speak of increasingly tough regulations, rules, and legislations regarding range of products, location, size of and type of office accommodation, skill requirements and educational qualifications, and so on, being introduced in their lines of business. Most of the respondents concur that these sorts of regimen not only raise the thresholds but also make breaking-out strategies to other more favourable markets difficult.

The Table 5.3 below provides more details on the respondents’ level of reliance on State’s help to facilitate and/or sustain business activities.

**Table 5.3: Socio-Economic Embeddedness of Respondents’ Enterprises**

Nos.	Marital status	Home Ownership	Benefit (Housing)	Benefit (Unemployment)	Benefit (Family credit)	Benefit (Council-Tax)	Benefit (Others)	VAT registration
1	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Rebate (50%)	Non	Yes
2	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Non	Non	Yes
3	Divorced	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Non	No
4	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Exempt (100%)	Student grant (children)	No
5	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Non	Non	No
6	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	Yes
7	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Exempt	Non	No
8	Married	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Non	No

9	Married	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Exempt	Non	No
10	Married	No	No	No	No	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	No
11	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	No
12	Married	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Exempt	Non	No
13	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	No
14	Married	No	Yes	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	Yes
15	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Undisclosed	No
16	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Non	Non	No
17	Divorced	Yes	No	No	No	Rebate (50%)	Undisclosed	No
18	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	No
19	Married	Yes	No	No	No	Rebate (50%)	Non	Yes
20	Married	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Non	No
21	Divorced	Yes	No	No	Yes	Rebate (50%)	Student grant (children)	No

Source: Fieldwork

#### 5.4.3 The Insider-Outsider Dichotomy

A strong undercurrent insinuation of aloofness is palpably displayed by the respondents in form of “them” and “us” nuances in their narratives, which connote self exclusion and self isolation (see section 5.2.2). Some of the respondents claim to live and operate almost exclusively within the Nigerian community with little or minimal contact with other groups. The food retailer respondent (4) declares:

*‘I operate absolutely within the Nigerian community; my customers and suppliers are Nigerians. The contacts I have outside the community relates to occasional dealings with government officials or trips to the supermarkets’.*

Some openly expresses bitterness in perceived and felt discrimination in varieties of occasions and engagements with the larger British mainstream society. The lawyer respondent (17) shares the advice she usually gives her children:

*‘I often told my children they need to put in thrice the effort of the average White person for them to be successful in this system. I also remind them that Nigeria, their home, is the only place where the sky is the limit to their aspirations and dreams’.*

It is the case that the ‘us’ versus ‘them’ sentiment is not dampened by the length of years most of the respondents have been residing in Britain, thus exposing the vulnerably soft underbelly of the notion of integration.

The insider-outsider divide also manifest in the form of the social and residential segregation pattern. All the entrepreneurs express the view that moving out of the social housing and/or notorious ethnic enclaves is a must for them to raise progressive and successful family. The general consensus is summed up by the Motor parts exporter respondent (13);

*‘You cannot raise your child in the ghetto and expect them to do well. The peer pressure from the decadent culture of the British inner-city will infest them. We move out of Hackney to secure the future of our children’*

Home-ownership, accompanying relocation away from renowned enclaves, is then geared towards upward social mobility aspirations and thwarting vulnerability to downward mobility for their offspring.

The Nigerian media in London variously reported societal constrictions to Nigerians upward mobility choices and of becoming ‘different’. Their ability to choose different employment options are continuously challenged in the UK’s contemporaneous environment. Claims in the media sources reckon that Nigerians (and Black Africans in general) have been suppressed by the system for too long and have ‘lost out’ in the order of ‘entitlement’ to recent immigrants from the European Union (EU) countries (for example, Albanians, Polish, and so on). Many discussants in the media seem not to be able to envisage a radical change in their labour market employment opportunities. It then seems the case that change for the Nigerian immigrants’ stems from an adaptable process of adjustment to present circumstances and by constantly modulating these circumstances to their requirements. This change encompasses a deeper level of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ as initiated through a determined creation of opportunities and navigation of entrepreneurial landscape.

**Table 5.4: Supplementary Representation of Commonly Expressed Comments and Quotes Underlying Some Emergent Themes**

Organising and Emergent Themes	Representative Quotations
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<p>Opportunity Configuration</p> <p><b>Market Situation</b></p> <p><b>Business location and Ownership Control</b></p>	<p>‘There is no Nigerian goods you will not find in London; even if you want corpse’s skull’ (rhetoric allusion to widespread availability of products) – phone-in callers on FM101.1 Naija Radio, 2012.</p> <p>‘It is increasingly difficult operating business in London...the fear of traffic-wardens, government officials, and bills, is the beginning of wisdom’ - Discussant on N-Power Radio FM 108.3, 2012.</p>
<p>Group Features</p> <p><b>Motivating factors</b></p> <p><b>Social Networking</b></p> <p><b>Business Performance</b></p>	<p>Hardworking or grafting, what matters is bringing money home; so long it is within the law - general consensus at a discussion forum on Surprise Radio FM 96.4 (2012) focusing on propriety of wealth creation in the UK.</p> <p>‘Despite the consequences, I was able to start and grow my business through variety of supports from my kith and kin both in Nigeria and UK’ – Cloth retailer respondent.</p> <p><i>‘Ey go better na im make man tey for journey’</i> (allegory for business performance conundrum) – media respondent.</p>
<p>Strategic Engagements</p> <p><b>Procurement of resources</b></p> <p><b>Nature of Competition</b></p> <p><b>Adaptive Entrepreneurship</b></p>	<p>‘It is an open secret that most of us are massively constrained in sourcing resources. There are not many official help out there for African businesses’ (comment made by a renowned entrepreneur on BEN TV, 2012).</p> <p>‘The maths of surviving of Nigerian food-stores defers comprehension as they seem to ignore the concept of inflation. Twenty years ago African food-stuffs were more expensive than British food-stuffs, but nowadays the reverse is the case. How could one explain the prices of basic stuffs, for example, Gari &amp; Beans, remaining more or less the same in the last fifteen years when every other non-ethnic stuffs have increased multiple-fold?’ – Discussants at a naming ceremony, 2012.</p> <p>‘Understanding the tricks of the trade is crucial for survival. Unfortunately, they don’t teach them in the school, you learn-as-you-go’ – Lawyer respondent.</p>

Embeddedness	
<b>Negotiating the Rules &amp; Regulations</b>	The business rules and regulation system in the UK demand skilful and careful negotiation; something most of us so-called entrepreneurs treat with levity – Discussants at a naming ceremony, 2012.
<b>Terrain</b>	
<b>Socio-economic Entrenchment</b>	<i>‘Na bad belle dey worry them’</i> (a case of sour grape) – response of a discussant to accusation of impropriety of accessing undeserved state benefits by business people at a barber-shop discussion setting, 2012.
<b>Insider-outsider Dichotomy</b>	‘Home-sweet-home, “Insah’Allah” my days are numbered in this country’ – sentiment expressed (and shared by many) by a cleric at a Nikkai (wedding) ceremony, 2012.

Source: Fieldwork

### 5.5 Summary

The result of this study highlights the prominence of ethnic network that facilitates entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial capital whilst expounding the opportunity structure of ethnic entrepreneurship. It does this through considering not only ethnic’s social networks but also the host country environment. Hence, the data of the study unravels in the combination of four conceptions of opportunity configuration, group features, strategic engagements and socio-political and institutional embeddedness to demonstrate the phenomenon of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship. Also, revealed are the impacts of the socio-economic and political environmental changes on the strategies employed by the group in overcoming barriers and competition for survival.

The focal entrepreneurs rely on the availability of ethnic resources to promote entrepreneurship. The strategy for accessing ethnic resources is to keep close co-ethnic ties and ethnic social networks by extending family, kinship, friendship and associations in order to obtain information, workers and capital. The entrepreneurs obtain capital through personal savings and other informal sources. They acquire job experience and skills through ‘trial and errors’, or previous knowledge (from Nigeria) and, in isolated cases, by working for co-ethnic firms. They recruit cheap labour from families and co-ethnic sources. Many of these workers are paid low wages, and some are unpaid. In addition, they manage relationships with their customers through extending credit, offering special services and delivering mobile services to clients. Moreover, immigrant entrepreneurs used strenuous survival strategies such as self-exploitation (for example,

long hours of work, and an emphasis on being industrious to increase savings), diversification (extending their chain of products and services or opening other unrelated businesses), and transnational activities.

However, the data unravel many contradictions and complexity inherent in the Nigerian entrepreneurship at different levels of interaction, that is, the individual, the firm, and the environment in the UK. Some of these contradictions and complexity easily tense up what is already known, whereas others challenge conventional knowledge. Critical appraisal of the data is then applied to put matters arising into coherent perspectives in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter is about the analysis and discussions of the data to produce synthesis based on findings. On examining the findings, a number of cogent themes become apparent, and these themes are pulled together under endogenous and exogenous classifications. The key endogenous themes are cultural deficits, financial overstretching, poor marketing strategies, social capital duplicity, and inadequate practical trainings. The exogenous factors are discrimination/exclusion, regulation/bye-laws, competitive pressures, invisible/lack of role models, and diaspora-linked pressures. Cumulatively, both endogenous and exogenous forces are arranged and analysed in four sections in order to achieve conceptual clarity and much focussed configuration. The sections are characteristics/nature of Nigerian entrepreneurship in the UK, socio-cultural networks and characteristics, the role of State in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour, and the topical matter of transnationalism in entrepreneurship.

#### 6.1 The Nature of Nigerian Entrepreneurship

##### 6.1.1 Positionality

The findings demonstrate that the businesses are heavily concentrated in vulnerable, easy-to-enter and quick-to-exit sectors as articulated in the literature (Barret *et al.*, 2002; Ram *et al.*, 1999). Whereas Nigerian businesses are opening in most London boroughs and adjoining suburbs, majority are located in ethnic enclaves such as Peckham, Brixton, Dalston, and Shepherd Bush in London (BBC, 2005). In this context, Fraser's (2007) assertion that ethnic minority businesses are more likely to locate in inner city areas that are most economically deprived areas of the country appears justified. Although, his claims that these locations constrain access to required skills and capital seem not applicable in the Nigerian entrepreneurship case. Research data confirm that a pool of requisite skilled workers and informal capital inputs are readily available for the entrepreneurs in their inner city enclaves. This is also in line with Porter's (1995) argument that inner cities offer certain unique competitive advantages such as large

market, strategic locations that are economically viable and densely populated with diverse population and workforce.

Nevertheless, the point has to be made that the consequences of locating in ethnic enclaves manifest in the fact that many are marginally “managing to survive” (Ram, 1994), and many are collapsing or “suffer failure crises ever so frequently” (Nwankwo, 2005, p.118). The implications may stress the apparent failure of the official growth and sustainability policy agendas for a particular section of ethnic entrepreneurship. However, the paradox surrounding location choices and preferences is laid bare in the seeming invisibility of Nigerian produce (foods and material) at affluent parts of London (for example, the West End), which arguably serve as critical intersection of global tourism traffic. On one hand, entrepreneurs could benefit from increase and diverse footfalls offered by such affluent locations, thereby facilitating not only bigger patronage but also the ‘breakout’ of their businesses/products into the mainstream. This would enhance visibility and drive up quality in service and product delivery. But on the other hand, the need to locate in markets within or close to their ethnic community seems to limit the entrepreneurs’ expansion ambitions beyond their ethnic enclaves.

#### 6.1.2 Resources, Competences, Skills, and Experience

The dominant number of educated respondents in the study is in line with other studies showing similar trend among Black African entrepreneurs in the UK (for example, Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000; Nwankwo, 2005; and Ekwelugo, 2006). Being predominantly economic migrants, most Black African entrepreneurs are well educated and have high levels of motivation to survive in entrepreneurship in the face of increasing discrimination (Ekwelugo, 2006). Nigerian entrepreneurs network well among themselves, especially with their religious groups sharing information and knowledge about setting up a business, analogous to Cook *et al.* (2004) findings in their study on Black African entrepreneurship. The exploitation of resources such as labour, advice or capital, drawn from co-ethnics sources especially at the early stage of the business formation in this study could be deemed crucial in line with the findings of Ram *et al.* (2000). It is also understandable that employment of co-ethnic has the potential for the workers to gain access to contacts, opportunities to learning on the job and role models. This facilitates a higher likelihood of progression to ownership than their counterparts who work in non-ethnic larger firms (Aldrich *et al.*, 1985). However, the findings reveal some reluctance in handholding prospective entrepreneurs for fear of nurturing future

competition. But this wariness of the established entrepreneurs in offering tutelage or apprenticeship to potential co-ethnic entrepreneurs is not unrelated to the suggestion that groups can harshly punish unwelcome newcomers by not communicating to them the crucial nuances of work practices normally discovered through interaction (Dalton, 1959). Granovetter (2005, p.41) refers to the “dark side of mentoring” when ‘in some settings, assistance can be gotten in exchange for status deference, so that those willing to kowtow to experienced workers may improve their performance’ (Blau, 1963).

Trust relations could be considered to be an issue given the apparent mistrust existing among the entrepreneurs. The literature suggests that co-ethnic enterprises thrive on trust built on shared culture (Ram, 1994; Sequeira & Rasheed, 2004; Honig, 1998; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990), but the data seems to challenge this notion. The reinforcing or limiting role of social capital in relation to business start-up and growth in the context of Nigerian entrepreneurship is clearly against the grain as revealed in the findings.

Several complaints and instances of poor quality of services, indigent ambience of business premises, weak marketing strategies, and so on, encountered in many businesses during this study beg the questions; were the entrepreneurs “forced” into business as a matter of strategic action? Do they have any past experience with running a business or experience in the sector of operation? What level of training did they receive prior to setting up? What is the nature (if any) of professional advice and support obtained to help smooth out the challenges of business? Arising from these questions, one is inclined to ruminate on whether regular training and personal development plan is inadequate among some of the entrepreneurs, especially the professional entrepreneurs. Marlow (1992) makes a case for the importance of training and development initiatives for the survival of small enterprises in the UK.

### 6.1.3 Financial Exclusion

The acknowledgment of inadequate finance and access to conventional funding by the respondents is in line with the dominant views in the literature that argued the unavailability of mainstream funding confronting ethnic minorities in the UK, and asserting that there is evidence of ethnic discrimination against African-Caribbean entrepreneurs in the credit market (Curran and Blackburn, 1993; Jones *et al.*, 1994; Smallbone *et al.*, 2003). However, Fraser (2007) holds a contrary view, suggesting that there is no ethnic discrimination in credit markets, that is, ethnicity had no role in

explaining financial refusal rates or obstacle from applying for finance. He claims that non-ethnic risk factors explained most of the wide variations in financial outcomes among ethnic minority businesses in the UK. The Bank of England's (1999) study seems to support this view by claiming that lack of collaterals coupled with high street banks' lack of adequate knowledge of African-Caribbean business frequently result in rejection of many loan applications. But it could be that this position is fuelled significantly because of the perception in the socio-economic mainstream that UK Black entrepreneurs are spenders of money rather than generators of wealth, as some bank managers' perceived Black businesses as failing while believing Asians are more entrepreneurial (Smith, 2006).

But given that the entrepreneurs are mostly excluded from mainstream finance and could only fund their ventures mainly through informal sources, then, there is need to examine the strength of their collective agency. In terms of collective agency, it appears that in many ways the entrepreneurs are small, dispersed and lacking in economic power to formidably organise themselves financially. This could be linked to why they are perpetually in the shadow of the relatively powerful Asian business communities, which they envy so much.

#### 6.1.4 Marketplace Relationship

The marketplace relationship is mediated hugely by social, cultural and economic imperatives. Socio-cultural triggers and underpinnings of the entrepreneurs' disposition impinge on their approaches to entrepreneurship. For instance, selling/buying on credit without proper contract/arrangement, the patronage of other ethnic businesses at the expense of the Nigerian owned ventures, the effect of culture on entrepreneurial activities {a well researched area in the literature (Basu and Altinay, 2002; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Werbner, 1990)}; and other attitudinal problems contribute to set-backs in entrepreneurship. However, contemporary business management stresses the importance of customer relationship as a strategy to keep customers happy and loyal. Customer service is a central focus in the marketing mix of the four P's (place, products, price and promotion) which are core factors in modern marketing. This strategy is useful when they have stable clients which allow ethnic entrepreneurs to manage relationships with their customers through extending credit, offering special services and delivering mobile services to clients (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Basu & Gowsami, 1999; Ding, 2001; Teixeira, 1998).

The conclusions of Fadahunsi *et al.* (2000) and Ekwulugo (2006) that African entrepreneurs are not as successful as their Asian counterparts in Britain is supported by the findings in this study. As revealed, most of the entrepreneurs are frustrated and envious of the Asians who are mostly thriving especially when trading in African foodstuffs that they presumably know nothing about. For instance, many Nigerians owned grocery stores selling their ethnic foodstuffs and materials are barely solvent, it is a constant survival struggle for them and many are closing down regularly. This mirrors the outcomes in Black African entrepreneurship observed by Nwankwo (2005). In contrast, the Asians who run similar establishments appear more thriving and better entrenched; in fact, they have deeply penetrated the African enclave markets to the extent that they have proportionally bigger African customers on account of selling Nigerian/African stuffs cheaper than most Nigerian/African owned shops. Moreover, the larger wholesale outlets selling Nigerian foodstuffs & materials are owned by the Asians. Nevertheless, the study established that it is the belief of Nigerian entrepreneurs that their ethnic customers patronise Asian businesses more than theirs. A familiar parallel is to be found in an oft-quoted observer's comment that recurs in practically every historical case study of Black businesses (Drake & Cayton, 1962, p.439-443; Pierce, 1947, p.181-193); "black customer would walk three blocks or more to trade with a white man, when there is a Negro store next to their door. They say the Negro does not have good material as the white man. In all cases that is not true" (quoted in Waldinger *et al.*, 1990, p.63). It could be the case that these entrepreneurs are frustrated in their effort to exclusively capture and control their ethnic niche market, and their frustration is misdirected towards their customers and Asian rivals.

However, it could be argued that due to the fact that Nigerians are "flexible and venturesome, willing to seek far and wide and to take risks in the quest for profit" (Schatz, 1977, p.95), explains their enthusiasm to try out new things such as food and materials from other ethnic groups. It may still partly resolve the dilemma that confronts the entrepreneurs on the penchant of their people patronising other ethnic group businesses at the expense of their own. A situation they believed rarely encountered in other groups, for instance, they argue Black African business enterprises seldom have Asian clientele. Essentially, this assertion is consistent with Light's (1972) analysis of Black entrepreneurs' frequent whinging about the failure of Black customers to give them support. This is also in line with suggestions in the literature that the inability to

attract customers from outside of the ethnic market limits the growth of ethnic businesses (Altinay and Altinay, 2008; Schnell and Sofer, 2002). Basically, it has been suggested that a strategic 'breakout' into mainstream markets is needed to facilitate the growth of a business and increase of market share through serving both mainstream customers and co-ethnic customers (Altinay and Altinay, 2008; Barrett *et al.*, 2002). It could also be the case that, similar to Waldinger *et al.*'s (1990) analysis, the extraordinary discrimination faced by the entrepreneurs not only deprived them of capital and skills but also impoverished their customers who are, consequently, forced to buy at the lowest prices from Asian businesses. Thus, generally even if social solidarity had been solid, Black/Nigerian customers would not have patronised Black/Nigerian businesses.

Relationship with customers and suppliers is also mediated by some of the entrepreneurs through the concept of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitan identities concept is more adapted to culture-crossing situations, with the suggestion that people with such identities can productively move from a cultural setting to another without feeling confused. Some of the entrepreneurs that have customers/clients from non-African groups display cultural knowledge that help them maintain and keep their customers happy. Consequently, the notion of cosmopolitan identity, which is often regarded as a 'perspective' or a 'state of mind' (Hannerz, 1990, p.238), is not only a mental attitude but also a business strategy that is detailed in a context of tough economic competition and struggle for economic survival. Perhaps this explains the deliberate employment of non-ethnic workers as the face of the business to draw in non-ethnic customers by some of the entrepreneurs.

Invariably, the ability to deal with multiple identity references and how to navigate in different cultural contexts has commonly manifested in people with high cultural, social and economic capitals. Such that Friedman (1997) makes a clear distinction between diasporic intellectuals, who embrace such multiple cultural identifications and their plebeian compatriots who are least concerned by such discourses, being restricted to their 'local ghetto identity' (Friedman, 1997, p.84).

#### 6.1.5 Business Rivalry

The data demonstrate the existence of cut-throat competition permeating most business sectors in which the entrepreneurs engaged such that many of their business ventures

are moribund or stagnant. Akin to Levitt and Dubner's (2005) *Freakonomics* histrionic exploration of: "Why Drug Dealers Live With Their Moms", many of the entrepreneurs are unable to make enough money from their ventures. Sale prices of goods and services are rigid, so much so that prices of food items remain virtually the same for years, in spite of inflationary pressures on costs. Little wonder there is no visible upward mobility in many of the ethnic ventures, particularly in the food sector. This situation seems to contradict the hackneyed 'protected market' aphorism (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Wilson, 1975). This also flies in the face of Aldrich *et al.* (1985) contention that the intense residential segregation of Blacks has provided a captive market for ethnic groups in British cities. The principle of enclave (economic and social) is explained within the ethnic internal and external orientations framework. Internal orientation (enclave) may offer a more protected market, but will not deliver market expansion (break-out), whereas an external orientation requires more skills, diversified communication channels and access to government policy support measures (Deakins *et al.*, 1997; van Delft *et al.*, 2000). Rath (2000) stresses that the opportunities and strategies of entrepreneurs are closely connected to their embeddedness in the socio-economic and political-institutional environments in which they exist. A break-out strategy in ethnic entrepreneurship is seen as an approach to move away from the situation in which own ethnic groups prescribe issues of capital, clients and employees. Therefore, a break-out strategy is an escape strategy from entrenchment in ethnic enclave or a transition from an internal orientation to external orientation (Baycan-Levent *et al.*, 2004). It is then the case that more value would be created if the entrepreneurs could expand their customer base beyond their ethnic enclaves. They could enhance their businesses if they succeed in expanding beyond their ethnic enclave to attract custom from outside their ethnic community (Ram & Jones, 1998). The best way to break-out of local ethnic market niches and enclaves is to execute a non-ethnic and non-local market strategy (Basu, 2011), and Baycan-Levent *et al.* (2004) argue that breaking-out strategies may be achieved if ethnic entrepreneurs repositioned to the more promising niches outside the traditional sectors. This they believed could be better achieved by the younger generation of migrants who are more exposed and can exploits new opportunities outside the non-ethnic markets rather than the older generation of migrants that tends to be more accustomed to supplying the needs of their own ethnic groups in the traditional market.

As revealed in the findings, the penchant for Nigerian entrepreneurs to copy what they perceived as successful co-ethnic business models or enter the same business/sector often results in over-supply of businesses leading to high venture failure statistics. The copycat phenomenon was observed by Ritterbush (1988, p.148) with the claim that indigenous entrepreneurs are 'poor innovators but good imitators'. Already Kloosterman and Rath (2001) have recognised that many ethnic minority entrepreneurs start copycat ventures in sectors where other migrants have established a market.

However, critical evaluation would suggest that mass participation in same line of business, intense competition, depressed pricing, or the copycat mentality are products of myopic entrepreneurial engagement generated from lethargic strategic intervention. This could be ascribed to the entrepreneurs' felt sense of temporariness in the UK, which in turn explains their transient entrepreneurial commitments.

#### 6.1.6 Guerrilla Entrepreneurship

A form of adaptive entrepreneurship technique also known as guerrilla entrepreneurship was mentioned during the course of this research. Guerrilla entrepreneurship is described as a significant business strategy for disadvantage entrepreneurs to compete with established giants (Yu, 2000). It involves high flexibility and mobility to successfully exploit market opportunities by using the strategy of a guerrilla force. The entrepreneurs seek out an opportunity for profit margins in a particular market, develop a formula and exploit the advantages in the market quickly. They make profits over the short term and then exit the market for another before competition forces prices down to unprofitability. For this reason, some Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK have adopted a short-term strategy as they are highly flexible and are able to adapt quickly to changing market conditions. They engage in entrepreneurial activities with a short gestation period and low capital content and are inclined to look for the maximum gain in the shortest period of time. Thus, the short-term perspective limits the scope of planning. In sum, the competitive environment in the UK has forced some entrepreneurs to pursue a guerrilla style of entrepreneurship to ensure survival. Perhaps it is then the case that not all the observed business closures, referred to in chapter five section 5.1.1, could be counted as failure but strategic guerrilla tactical withdrawal. It might as well be a case of serial entrepreneurship.

### 6.1.7 Hydra Phenomenon

The penchant for diversifying too quickly and widely seems to be a major inhibiting factor to many of the entrepreneurs. The unbridled expansion compels them to engage in several business undertakings concurrently resulting in insufficient attention given to their core businesses. This is reinforced by Nwankwo's (2005, p.130) observation that the unrestrained octopus diversifications of Black Africans entrepreneurs 'become a cluster of disparate activities linked only by the entrepreneurs but lacking any strategic coherence'. The implication unfolds in the transition problems encountered by many of the respondents. Transition or growth progression derived from expansion of enterprises in economic term, and transition to the next stage (higher) in the progress prescription of ethnic entrepreneurs can be viewed as a strategy of growth and expansion. Presumably, many engage in more than one business venture simultaneously to gain competitive advantage, or designed to further develop their businesses and improve their fortunes. Nevertheless, 'Hydra phenomenon' marked the personal orientation of many entrepreneurs in the sense that uncoordinated expansion program marred business growth trajectory and could derail smoothly planned positive transition process. This occurrence might be because the entrepreneurs are mostly inexperienced (CEEDR, 2000), have inadequate business training and lack basic skill or management/organising skills.

### 6.1.8 Lack of Visibility in the Mainstream

Even though many Nigerians are engaged in various entrepreneurial endeavours in London, these business activities seem to be invisible in the mainstream of London or the UK economy. For instance in the food sector, with over 300 Nigerian restaurants in London (African London, 2009), and in spite of highly dexterous Nigerian chefs and the mesmerising taste of most Nigerian dishes (comparable with any in the world) the lexicon of London culinary is bereft of inputs from the Nigerian community. Opinions are divided on the inability of Nigerian cuisine to break into the mainstream of London culinary world. Madichie (2007, p.258) argues that this is due to deficient "marketing strategies" implemented by the concerned entrepreneurs. However, in a research carried out among Nigerian restaurants in London, Ojo (2012b) uncovers some interesting findings: (1) that there is a linkage between Nigeria's tourism appeal and the popularity of its cuisine in London. Nigeria not being a popular tourist destination for the British holiday-makers robs them of opportunity to recreate holiday food experiences back in the UK. It is usually the case that tourists will want to relive their nostalgic holiday

experience (including craving for foreign foods they had on holidays) once they returned home. (2) That the dearth of creativity in producing spontaneous dishes outside the normal Nigerian traditional menu range is one of the root causes of its unattractiveness in the mainstream. This opinion strand believes that many sceptics could be attracted if an element of adventure is introduced in creating varieties of tantalising food based on the Nigerian/African concept using authentic Nigerian/African ingredients. (3) Insufficient adaptation of Nigerian dishes to suit Londoners' palate in such manners as the Chinese and Indian foods, and (4) lack of commitment and experience of Nigerian restaurateurs. Nevertheless, it could also be the case that the Nigerian cultures place high premium on home cooking and the habit of eating out is not strongly embraced by the community who by and large are supposed to be at the forefront of promoting Nigerian cuisine at restaurants. Also mentioned is the 'scorched earth' policy of the big supermarkets (notably Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury, and Morrison) that scuttles the efforts of small businesses (BBC, 2010) including a few Nigerian entrepreneurs who tried to access mainstream London/UK market.

Fundamentally, lack of visibility could be attributed to a number of factors (some of which are mentioned in this chapter), but it is the case that inability to break out into the mainstream has a constraining effect on ethnic businesses.

#### 6.1.9 Entrepreneurial Outcomes

As severally alluded to in the findings (see Table 5.2) the entrepreneurs' assessment of performance is subjectively constructed, as terms such as 'struggling', 'surviving', 'successful', and 'managing' are used to describe entrepreneurial outcomes. Establishing the benefits, performance and success of entrepreneurship can be daunting because measures, definitions, and interpretations are fraught with great amount of variation. Werbner (1999) argues that the notion of success or failure in ethnic entrepreneurs setting is confusing and even false. An ideal measure of success is the collective creation of value; however, the elements of value are rather ambiguous (Masarel and Nijkamp, 2004). Similarly, Rath (2006) contends that determining benefits, performance and success either quantitatively or qualitatively stoutly revolves on interpretations. 'Performance' is frequently attached to and measured by macro-economic and integration indicators, this is because it is often appraised in terms of assimilation and integration into the labour market of the host country (Constant & Zimmerman, 2005, p.2). Whereas, 'Success' has a tendency to take a more specific

perspective based on the individual situation thus evaluation of success is as a result 'socially constructed' (Rath, 2002). Yet, economic success can be viewed in terms of financial measures, market growth, reputation, and advancement of technological know-how (Whitley, 1999). So also are accomplishments like acquisition of new skills, status enhancements, and so on. Moreover, what may be advantageous to one can be damaging to another. A business can thrive financially but at the expense of workers who are remunerated poorly, and working under indigent conditions.

Overall, Nigerian entrepreneurs have similar aspirational orientations toward rewards, apart from economic rewards (Campbell, 1992); personal rewards, social respect, reputation and enterprise growth (Basu & Gowsami, 1999; Constant & Zimmermann, 2006; Forsyte, 1998; Orhan & Scott, 2001) were emphasised in the findings.

## **6.2 Socio-Cultural Networks and Characteristics**

### **6.2.1 Paradox of Embeddedness**

All the entrepreneurs in the study positioned their businesses to serve first and foremost co-ethnic customers; a vindication of Bonacich and Modell (1980); Waldinger *et al.* (1990); Ram (1994). Their reliance on ethnic networks helps in facilitating access to market information, capital and labour, and consequently lowered transaction costs. However, such enclave economic activities negatively affect their economic performance by restricting and exposing them to market structural change and insulating them from information beyond their community-based networks. Also, pandering to cultural sensitivity seems to have negative effect on entrepreneurship enactment such that ambivalence exists in entrepreneur-customer relationship. For instance, the positive impact of the respondents' networks with their customers is negated by frequent criticism of the latter, a fact congruent with Dyer and Ross (2000).

Furthermore, a paradox of embeddedness as evidenced in the findings seems to affect most of the entrepreneurs. Many of their asserted adverse business encounters with fellow Nigerian entrepreneurs emphasises the paradox of embeddedness. This situation could be connected to many causative influences, such as the trust element within the entrepreneurial circle, competency, environmental factors, and so on. Nevertheless, the manifestation of deleterious relational experience between the entrepreneurs supports the argument on the negative facets of embeddedness which stresses its limitations by

some authors (for example, Waldinger, 1995; Portes, 1998; Uzzi, 1997). For instance, Uzzi (1997) argues that embeddedness promotes the economies of time, allocative efficiency and complex adaptation only to a point beyond which it can ruin economic performance by making firms susceptible to exogenous shocks or shielding them from information that exists outside their network. The notion of atrophied embeddedness, as a result, has been presented as a way of conceptualising some of the negative aspects of embeddedness (de Bruin & de Bruin, 2002).

### 6.2.2 Ritualised Occasions

The data's analysis revelation of religion as a unique context in terms of being a specific social milieu and particular cultural expressions that are exploited by the respondents in their entrepreneurship is informative. The combined forces of religion and ethnicity enhance the effects of dense social networks, trust, reciprocal expectations, shared values, and a common religio-cultural outlook in ways that amplify and boost the social capital of a group (Kraybill *et al.*, 2010). The link between religion as a form of social capital and entrepreneurship is well established in the literature (Gabbay & Leenders, 1999; Hansen, 1995; Aldrich, 1999). Social capital, according to Putnam (1996, p.56) comprises "features of social life (networks, norms, and trust) that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives". Fukuyama (1999) argues that it is a shared norms or values that foster social cooperation, as represented in social relationships such as religious sects, village associations, clans, and so on, and suggesting it to be a necessary precondition for strong economic growth. Candland (2001) indicates that faith can be a form of social capital and shared faith may allow believers to trust each other. According to Meagher (2009), religion shapes processes of social and economic change within an African informal enterprise clusters. Dodd (1998) also advocates that religion can affect networks through the basic level identification or affiliation with a particular religious grouping. The network reinforces the behavioural norms of the faith, and also provides a primary source of contacts for the individual. Invariably, relationship exists between distinctive forms of religiosity and ethnic identity (Jacobson, 1997) and there is a propensity for this to be magnified in the case of minority migrant groups in search of a 'positive identity' (Tajfel, 1974). It is also conceivable that religion centres provide avenue for ethnic minorities to get absorbed into the mainstream as ably recorded by Vora and Vora's (2002) documentation of the role of the Black church in facilitating integration of members to society.

Gathered from the findings, it is the case that social gatherings provide avenues for networking; the contemporaneous existence of social events and celebrations is organic to the integration and bonding of domestic and social life of Nigerians. Several celebrations and rites of social relationships such as child-naming, weddings, funerals, house-warming, kingship rites, and so on, brand and shape the repertoire of the Nigerian society's social-cultural identity. This seems in line with Arthur's (2000) observation that some African immigrants view their social organisations as demonstration of their pan-ethnic awareness and identity. Events/social organising among Nigerian ethnic group could be said to be a manifestation of collective agency toward the preservation of native culture. It is the case that ritualised occasions deliver a network effect for many of the respondents to enhance their enterprises, and also serve to intensify and highlight the tension between place and movement that defines their lives.

Yet, it is the case that ritualised occasions point to the existence of a strong and positive collective identity. But this seems to be centred on the private and personal spheres of friends and family, rather than in the more public spheres of mainstream social-political activities and involvement.

### 6.2.3 Theocentric Orientation

Theocentricism pertains to fatalism in entrepreneurial orientation. Fatalism is linked with low locus of control predominant in the Nigerian culture (Dixey, 1999; Reimanis, 1977). The respondents' high external locus of control, which is the belief that powerful others, God, fate, or chance principally determine events in their lives (Rotter, 1975). Every outcome of events in their lives including success or failure in entrepreneurship are attributed to external circumstances, particularly, divine intervention. This orientation develops, according to Nwankwo (2005, p.132), "because of the apparent effect of extraneous factors (particularly religion) in shaping entrepreneurial orientations". But then this is not surprising as Ayuk (2002) argues that Nigerians by nature are spiritual; they consider life from a spiritual perspective rather than from a secular dimension, and the notion of God is deeply entrenched in their consciousness.

Nigerian entrepreneurs' religious spirituality coalesces with their entrepreneurship to offer a credible perspective as to the ways and manners they conduct their businesses and possibly enhance the understanding of their motivation and ascription of

entrepreneurial outcomes. For instance, Cook *et al.* (2003) believe religious issues affect the structure and viability of Black African businesses. Similarly, Nwankwo (2005, p.132) considers that the stimulus of religion is essential in understanding their entrepreneurial orientations; such as attributing entrepreneurial success to a ‘matter of divine intervention rather than an outcome of strategic processes’. But his conclusion that the theocentric orientation of Black entrepreneurs in the UK seems not to be ‘simplistically culture-bound’ but a reflexive reaction to exogenous circumstances is a moot point especially within the construct of the Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurial psyche. Religion is closely fused with all phases of the Black African life; be it in sociological aspects of family, rights of property, authority, tribal organisation, judicial trials, punishments, intertribal relations, and commerce (Nassau, 1904). It is also the case that the infused theocentricism provides a perspective illustrated by what Lévi-Strauss (1963, p.70) describes as the ways in which we act, not just according to how each of us feels but according to how we are allowed by the norms of our culture to act: ‘Customs are given as external norms before giving rise to internal sentiments, and these non-sentient norms determine the sentiments of individuals as well as the circumstances in which they may be displayed’.

Essentially, theocentric orientation of the respondents could imply that they are not actually imbibed in the psychology of entrepreneurship, and are therefore not proper entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship psychological focuses include; locus of control theories, which deduce that entrepreneurs probably have strong internal locus of control (Low & MacMillan, 1988). In any event, the external locus of control of most of the entrepreneurs’ respondents may have negative implication for their entrepreneurial outcomes. Brockhaus (1982) confirms that successful entrepreneurs display more internal locus of control than unsuccessful ones.

#### 6.2.4 Being and Belonging

There seems to be a contributory link between the phenomenon of ethnic entrepreneurship with levels of ‘assimilation’ or ‘alienation’ in the UK. As revealed in the findings, the low level of assimilation and high level of alienation of most Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK reflect the state of their sense of belonging. This is strongly reflected in the widespread references to Nigeria as ‘Home’ by all the respondents and all the numerous callers on the Nigerian televisions and radios daily interactive programs. This phenomenon could be examined from three perspectives. Firstly, the

evidence of the cultural hybridity and marginality seems to point to borderline existence and disjunction, and displacement in the entrepreneurs' life-world. So also is the revelation of the difficulties entrepreneurs encounter when deploying their ethnic background to drive their products embeddedness and legitimacy; a necessary task considering the relevancy of ethnic minority cultures in contemporary UK society. Such cultures are often broadly structured in vastly deleterious terms as 'other' and by connotation with socio-economic disadvantage. In as far as ethnic minority entrepreneurs operate in an environment composed of social actors largely made up of majority individuals; they are likely to have to deal with their minority status in their legitimacy-seeking entrepreneurial narratives. However, how they deploy such background is not easily predictable. On the one hand, it has been argued that it is particularly hard to reconcile a minority background with dominant discourses of entrepreneurship which reflect personality traits associated with white men, to 'fit in' (Essers and Benschop, 2007). On the other, in as far as an ethnic minority background is discursively constructed as 'otherness' it might also provide specific opportunities to claim difference and authenticity, 'standing out' and thus rather fostering one's legitimacy.

Secondly, it is useful to look at the Maslow's theory of needs (Gobble, 1970) to explicate the seemingly exclusionary sensitivity of the entrepreneurs. Maslow theory includes claim that it is not just that people want or like to belong, they need to. That theoretical view-point holds that human beings are motivated by both physiological and psychological basic needs, which are organised into a 'hierarchy of relative prepotency' (Gobble, 1970, p.39). 'Survival needs' form the basis of the hierarchical triangle and the needs considered essential for 'self-actualisation' are at the top, while 'love and belongingness needs' are positioned somewhere in between. Consequently, if the need to belong is met, a person attains positive development. If not, personal development is likely to halt. Even worse, if the experience of seeking and not realising belonging has been sufficiently traumatic, personal development may actually regress. Obviously, profound significance is attached to the need to belonging in the social sense, and Maslow argues that belonging as a social designation was necessary to self-development and to self-actualisation (Goble, 1970). Although this theory has been variously criticized for its hierarchical formation (Wahba & Bridwell, 1974) and ethnocentricity, that is, it focuses on needs stemming from individualistic rather than collectivist perspectives (Cianci and Gambrel, 2003); it still offers a valuable analytic

template for the issue at hand. The perception of non-inclusivity of the entrepreneurs in the socio-political/economic affairs in the mainstream may then be presumed to have some effects on the nature and feature of their entrepreneurial identity. It is the case that self-employment pursuits serve as fecund ground in expressing their identity whilst confronting their non-inclusion into the main stream of the society. Entrepreneurship inadvertently then becomes a vehicle that reinforces disengagement from the mainstream. Perhaps, this partly explains the drive to transnational/diaspora entrepreneurship as there is an observed transformation of many of the respondents from being just ethnic entrepreneurs to diaspora entrepreneurs. Enclosed within this context is Papastergiadis' (2000) consideration of immigration as metaphor for the complex forces that are integral to the radical transformations of modernity, which changes and altered our fundamental perceptions of time and space. Thus this have a profound effect on the way people understand their sense of belonging in the world.

Lastly, from the Foucauldian power concept, recourse to entrepreneurship seems to constitute resistance to exclusion and a form of empowerment for the entrepreneurs. Their entrepreneurial encounters express within the Foucauldian technologies of the self; seem to be a remedy to exclusions and ethnic penalties. Foucault concept of technologies of the self refers to reflective and voluntary practices through which individuals engage in activities and conducts aimed at transforming themselves. In other words, Foucault's (1998, p.63) refrain; 'Power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' could be applied in this instance to represent a type of 'power' or 'regime of truth' that exists within the ethnic group, and which is in constant flux and negotiation. Diaspora entrepreneurial activity seems the manifestation of this fluidity and negotiation.

#### 6.2.5 Entrepreneurial Role Models

The dearth of visible British-Nigerian business moguls to serve as role models or hand-holders is shown in this study as a key challenge. It appears not enough successful entrepreneurs are engaging or identifying with the group as unravelled by the research. The importance of role models in business has been stressed by many studies including; how role models' experiences affected business success (Haynes, 2003); entrepreneurial intentions enhanced by entrepreneurial role models (Matthews and Moser, 1996); and role models providing inspirations, motivation, and business management skills for women (Sarason and Morrison, 2005). The relevance of role models for entrepreneurs is

also demonstrated in the popular business press that is inundated with tales of, and allusions to, entrepreneurial accomplishments and successes that have influenced other entrepreneurs. There is also a lot to learn from the global success of Jewish entrepreneurship.

Perhaps it is then safe to infer that lack of visible role models to learn from could be an issue (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000). The absence of many noteworthy business role models in the UK's Nigerian community could be a drawback factor depriving a motivating impetus and drive for others to emulate. Persuasively, this point sounds credible in entrepreneurship development. Personal choices (leisure or business) are often guided by the behaviour and opinions of others, the expression of their identity and by the examples they provide (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000; Krumboltz *et al.*, 1976; Ajzen, 1991). Many entrepreneurs have been inspired into self-employment ostentatiously because of influence of other perceived successful entrepreneurs who may range from famous people to former colleagues or relatives that serve as role models.

Nevertheless, if one is to scratch below the surface, the dearth of visible role model among the entrepreneurs' community could be linked to the exegesis of Nigerians' UK-migratory history. It is the case that different historical periods recognise different economic involvement and engagement. For example, (as already established in chapter 3), the changing trend in migration intentions from studentship to economic migrants beginning from the 1980s seems to produce late mover disadvantage in entrepreneurship. The phenomenon of Nigerians permanent residency (or long-term stay) and entrepreneurship in the UK is recent. This creates a range of take-off difficulties in business start-up, and inability to consolidate positions in socio-political environment in which they are entrenched. Consequently, this could explain the deficiency of role models in the community.

#### 6.2.6 Cultural Mystification

The cultural connotation underlining the Nigerian entrepreneurship is palpable as Nigerians are people of culture. Culture is an important factor in defining a people's way of life, values, norms, behaviours and mode of thinking; it has several meanings and interpretations for different people, but generally it is described as the distinctive 'ways of doing things' (Dicken 2004, p.126). Hofstede maintains that culture is the 'collective programming of the human mind', and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner

regard it as ‘the way in which people solve problems and recognise dilemmas’ (Shenkar & Luo, 2008, p.156). Duesenberry (1949) wrote that every activity people are involved in is culturally established and almost all acquisitions are to bestow physical contentment or to realise the activities that create the life of a culture. Nigerian cultures emphasize the importance of the collective; the individual is subordinate to the community (Anugwom, 2002). The European concept of individual autonomy, privacy, self-development and happiness (Shenkar & Luo, 2008) is in contrast with the African beliefs in the rhythmic strength of collective life and conformity to cultural norms and practices.

The discovery of profound contradictions and bewilderment in the cultural orthodoxy of the entrepreneurs is then unsurprising. On the one hand, there are evidences of strong network in which the currency of social capital is much in use; for example, in information gathering for business formation, and loans & funding sourcing through families and friends, and so on. On the other hand, there are plenty markers of disunity and narcissism; unpreparedness to engage neophytes in purposeful tutelage, unwillingness of co-ethnic workers to serve employers diligently, absence of strong cohesive common fronts, and so on. This obviously contradicts Hofstede (2001) scoring of Nigeria (West Africa) as low in individualism and high in collectivism, a rating confirmed by Aluko (2003, p.177) who emphasizes “Nigerian culture low individualism and high collectivism” in a study. The parallax snaps of cultural canon of Nigerian entrepreneurs’ exhibit a paradox of collectivism and individualism. The former is a preference for a tightly knitted social framework in which individuals look after one another and groups protect their members’ interests, and the latter signifying focusing attention on one self instead of the groups’ interest (Hofstede, 2001).

Perhaps it is not so difficult to explain this paradox through the process of alignment of culture known as acculturation. Acculturation describes the process of cultural modification and adaptation of groups of individuals with divergent cultures consequent to continuous direct contact among them (Redfield, *et al.*, 1936; Harry, 1992). It could be the case that the entrepreneurs’ prolonged interaction with the British culture, which is predominantly individualistic (Hofstede, 2001) has reshaped the Nigerians towards self-oriented tendencies. The case could be made that the observed evolution to individualism by the entrepreneurs could be a result of the cultural convergence effect of a universal culture espoused by Huntington (1996), which indicates globalised

commitments to common cultural value of individualism, a strong believe in market economics and political democracy. Notwithstanding, researchers (for example, Chang *et al.*, 2003) have demonstrated that traditional values such as group solidarity, paternalism, and so on, can co-exist with modern values of individual success and competition.

Another explanation could be that the intense competition in the enclave markets in which the entrepreneurs mostly operate is prompting individualism behavioural configuration. The entrepreneurs may merely be responding to their environment by embracing bicultural adaptive options (Hong *et al.*, 2003) that allows for reconciling seemingly incompatible and contradictory expectations of collectivism and individualism precepts. Yet, it could be that the selfishness and self-centredness identified by Achebe (1983) in the leadership echelon of the Nigerian State have percolated down to some Nigerians (home and abroad). Thus, this may be linked to the ordering of the individualistic attitude of the entrepreneurs in their effort to survive in a tough and highly competitive environment. Several indications of self-interest abounds in the research findings. Nevertheless, it could be that migration has produced identities which are shaped and located in and by the UK socio-cultural environment. These identities can be both unsettled and unsettling; hence, the 'new' observed behaviour cannot be pinned down simply to one source. Essentially, the analysed cultural mystification seems to caution against undue generalisation in assessing Nigerian entrepreneurship against the background of paradoxes and ambiguities encountered in the study.

### **6.3 State Intervention**

#### **6.3.1 Regulations, Legislations, and Policies Impediments**

The difficulties (relating to regulations and legislations) experienced by the entrepreneurs are apparent from the data; as negotiating the policy/regulatory frameworks proves to be a daunting exercise for most of them. Authors (such as Emslie and Bent, 2006, and Clark and Drinkwater, 2000) claim that bureaucracy and regulations intimidate and severely constrain both new and existing ethnic enterprises. Government regulations/policies are often not favourably disposing to ethnic businesses in some instances. The navigation of regulations and bye-laws by ethnic entrepreneurs can be gruelling without official assistance, although the various business support

agendas that affect the workings of the market can also be said to be forms of regulation (Rath, 2006). For instance the legislation on immigration is a constant source of bother for many of the respondents. The admissions by them that they depend on illegal immigrants as workers seem partly due to cost and social obligation reasons. Many illegal workers are paid well below the minimum wages rather as a matter of survival necessity than extortion. Jones *et al.* (2004) confirm that illegal migrant workers are crucial to the survival of these firms, since they supply cheap and flexible labour. Though ethnic entrepreneurs also tend to run their ventures with family members, relatives, and workers hired from their own ethnic group (Levent *et al.*, 2003).

The convergence of opinions towards surreptitious manoeuvre of the UK economic environment for entrepreneurial gains (for example, claiming undeserved state benefits, buying smuggled goods, under-declaring sales/receipts, or other business misdemeanour suggest deliberate and calculative action. The common expression among some of the respondents regarding bending the rules in order to survive in business may as well indicate a desperate struggle to keep head above water. Perceptibly, the marketplace behaviour of the entrepreneurs may also be said to reflect how they make out the UK economic system; whether as inclusive or alienation. Their response strategies therefore entail “survival by any means and at all cost”- even if it means bending the rules of the game. This is possibly because of perceived marginalisation in the broader British society.

Then again, the inability to comply with the rigmarole of laws and regulations may also lead to informal and unwholesome activities; a situation amply explained in the literature by De Soto (1989); Friedman *et al.* (2000); and Johnson *et al.* (1999). But as expanded by Chen *et al.* (2001) there are two broad types of regulations: (a) regulations related to **becoming** legal for example, registration and licensing; (b) regulations relating to **remaining** legal for example, taxation, health and safety regulations, and labour obligations. It is the case that many of the entrepreneurs appear to find the former easier to handle than the latter. Many of them also attest to the fact that non-compliance or forays into the informal (even criminality) is due in part to their inability to navigate the regulatory and compliance terrains. Kloosterman *et al.* (1998) argue that many small firm owners can edge inadvertently into illegality due to the complex regulatory regimes of advanced economies with multitude of rules and regulations too many for them to know or remember. This declaration was supported by Freeman and Ogelman's (2000)

claim that little familiarity with the institutional framework in which they operate is among the reasons why ethnic entrepreneurs are “drastically over-represented” (Light, 2000, p.162) within the regulation-flouting informal economy (Sassen, 1996). Although, based on evidence from some European countries, Williams (2004, p.14) has a contrary view, claiming that: “There is no strong correlation between ethnicity and participation in the informal economy”.

As to be expected, the high level of regulation in social welfare economy such as the UK seems to have crucial effect on the quality and maintenance of most of the entrepreneurs. Access to State benefit funds appears to be helping subsidised their business ventures; thus the embeddedness of self-employment in ethnic communities on the one hand and in state policies on the other hand could be seen as contradictory, a fact substantiated by Apitzsch (2004).

### 6.3.2 Informal Economy

The indication that many of the respondents operate off-the-book payments, employ illegal immigrants, fail to pay the minimum wage, and so on, is a substantiation of Jones *et al.*'s (2004) testimony that the problem of hiring illegal workers stems from the mismatch between high demand for ethnic goods and services and price levels, which is insufficient to generate profit or break even. The market is overcrowded and hyper competition forces prices down to unprofitable level. In that scenario workers' wages often bear the burden of the cost-paring required to sustain such a regime. It is only by bending the rules that economic profits are generated. MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000, p.7) suggest that “strategies of survival and success involve contesting and transgressing boundaries of various kinds...such as contesting the boundaries of the law by evading taxes, licensing requirements and other commercial regulations”.

The findings also substantiate Chen *et al.*'s (2001, p.14) views that some people operate illegally in the informal sector “either because the costs of formalising their economic activities are simply too high or the procedures for doing so are too complicated, intimidating, and time-consuming”. The general assumption that marginalised entrepreneurs from the formal economy are either forced out of necessity or driven by opportunity into the informal economy is tested by Williams (2004). The conclusion was that the majority are concurrently both necessity and opportunity driven into informality. It is the case that working from home (as in some cases in the study) allows

some people to balance work and home responsibilities (Kelly and García, 1989). De Soto (1989) argues that State bureaucracy and regulations pertaining to petty trading and settlements are a determining factor for urban migrant poor to adopt informal (and even illegal) activities for their survival. It also seems the case that the ‘escapist mind-set’ refers to by Nwankwo (2005) drives many of the entrepreneurs to engage in the informal economy. However informal economy has both positive and negative effects. It provides jobs, alleviates poverty and moderates unemployment and underemployment. Though, in many cases the jobs are low-paid and job security is poor (Travers, 2001). Informal economy reinforces entrepreneurial activity, but at the detriment of compliance with State regulations, particularly regarding tax and labour regulations. It has been suggested that in the long run informal activities is subsidising the formal economy by providing cheap goods and services to the labour force, as a result allowing large firms to pay very low wages (Allen, 1998). Generally, it is noted that ethnic minority firms are exceptionally inclined to informality (Light, 2004; Sassen, 1996), although authors such as Jones *et al.* (1994) believe that informality is not peculiar to ethnic entrepreneurship alone. Scase and Goffee (1982) also confirm that historically, informality is the quintessential response of the small firms to minimising cost, risk, inconvenience and paperwork.

Basically, ethnic minorities various entrepreneurship manipulations could be examined within the context of entrepreneurship dynamics. As Gershuny (1979) and Pugliese (1993) suggest, new forms of creative entrepreneurship seems to be thriving particularly in an informal sector of western (UK) economies. But it is the case that new combinations of institutional and organisational parts can be formed from the entrepreneurial landscape. Such that both formal and informal institutions can justifies or unjustified business activity as a socially valued or attractive activity – and support and restrain the entrepreneurial spirit (Veciana and Urbano, 2008; Welter, 2005). In what appears to be a cat and mouse game, the authorities’ policy/regulatory responses to fraud or illegality in business often elicit ingenious reactions from the ‘business people’. Entrepreneurial tactics, such as manoeuvring between spheres, exploiting social capital currency, and so on, “co-exists with ‘moral’ skills, in persuasiveness, the manipulation of norms, and recognition of culturally specific opportunities” (Stewart, 1990, p.143) to create a dialectic of moral and tactical changes and influence outcomes.

It could be that the complexity of the UK life requires adoption of different tactics which may be conflicting. The pressure experienced by individual entrepreneurs seems to be creating tensions between their different tactics when what is required by one may infringe upon the demands of another. For instance, the desire to ‘take care’ of relatives back at ‘Home’ may impinge on and often contradict the demands of steady focus (both materially and financially) on business development and growth. Sending money ‘home’ or looking after relatives back ‘home’ may conflict with the business demands of full commitment (financially and materially).

### 6.3.3 Engagement with Business Support Services

Despite the awareness that enterprises in different sectors confront different market conditions and need different kinds and levels of support (Ram and Smallbone, 2001), the findings generally confirm what is already known in the literature: Black African businesses in the UK do not engage productively with mainstream business support agencies (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2010; Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000). For instance, Cook *et al.* (2003) previously established that Africans usually do not access official financial support. They resort to the use of their credit cards to finance business ventures instead. Their distrust of authorities (Cook *et al.*, 2003) could explain the minimal contact with business support system (Nwankwo, 2005). Also, Black enterprises are bedeviled by complex internal factors part of which are; the entrepreneurship spirit of freedom perception that looking for help is a waste of time, inclination to concentrate in non-priority areas for example, retailing, and the tendency to have fragile resource base that limits their access to business support services (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2009). Nwankwo (2005, pp.131-132) further gives a number of reasons for the low interaction with institutional support systems by Black African entrepreneurs. These consist of: little awareness of the support provisions largely due to the fact that many ‘are so operationally embedded in their ethnic communities to the point of being almost oblivious of what obtains outside the community network’; self-exclusion through the wrong perception that the support networks were not intended for them; self-preservation is employed as a strategic device to shield business activities from external scrutiny possibly for tax and regulatory compliance reasons, hence "Outsiders" are not trusted and as far as possible "shut out" until trust is established.

However, the disengagement could partly be due to the fault of the support agencies themselves. Nwankwo *et al.* (2010) tender support agencies’ attitudinal factors that

include: failure to market services effectively; lack of cultural awareness & perceptive; and inadequate understanding of Black businesses as reasons for the disconnection. Conceivably, insufficient rapport with business support agencies would be a major setback both in accessing help and in negotiating policy and regulation regimes. Failure to effectively traverse the policies, rules and guidelines regimens is entrenched in personal orientation of the entrepreneurs. Altogether, it seems the case that the entrepreneurs are palpably ignorant on how to positively negotiate the UK business environment to their full advantage. There is a lot to learn (or borrow) from other ethnic groups (for example, the Asians) that appear successful in navigating the UK entrepreneurial landscape.

## **6.4 Transnationalism**

### **6.4.1 Strategic Intervention**

The findings highlight strategic planning as an important justification for diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship by many of the respondents. As a strategic scheming, one could deduce that by working hard, entrepreneurs are attempting to accumulate capital by engaging in middleman occupations and mostly easily liquidated livelihood (Tsui-Auch, 2005). This might be due to the ‘sojourner mentality’ (Bonacich, 1973); a disposition for hard work based on the belief that temporary sacrifice in a strange country would result in riches once the individuals in the diaspora returned to their homeland. But unfortunately, from personal observations and passing comments of several respondents, it seems amassing capital from their various endeavours prove illusionary. The level of despondency in some suggests their entrepreneurial activities are futile exercises in wealth shadow chasing. This probably is as a result of their participation in mostly low-end business enterprises or/and their entrenchment in their enclave markets.

Nevertheless, in the context of strategic planning, most of the entrepreneurs have no long-time plan for their ventures, even though it is dawning on them that they might be residing in the UK for longer than anticipated. An indication of this is captured in Nwankwo’s (2005, p.121) “demonstration of clear sense of permanence relative to settlement in the UK”. Still, in their sub-consciousness lurks the aspiration of home-going; Anwar’s (1979) ‘The myth of return’ describes the situation of foreigners (Pakistanis) as sojourners who do not intentionally propose to settle permanently in the

UK. Invariably they are neither here nor there, thus, their entrepreneurial engagement is mostly ad-hoc, and heavily reliant on luck. This is in corroboration with O'Regan *et al.* (2005) views that Small and Medium Enterprises competitive tactics are mainly by trial and error as oppose to clear strategic decision-making processes.

#### 6.4.2 Investment Instrument

The rationale for investment in Nigeria (or transnational entrepreneurship) gathered from the entrepreneurs varies; arising from person-specific factors, and the operating and institutional environments. But the four reasons that stand out; nostalgia, phobia, altruistic and opportunity investments are explicated in the discussion below.

*Nostalgic-led Investments* – this investment rationale is predicated on longing for reintegration in the country of origin. It is the case that the entrepreneurs' experiences of various forms of ethnic penalties (Carmichael and Woods, 2000) act as push factor for them to invest 'Home', while many are simultaneously pulled 'Home' because they expected to extract benefits from an improved social status in the country of origin (Ammassari, 2004). The urge to invest 'Home' also appears derived from their nostalgic feelings and/or patriotic fervour. Being settled far from family and kin and separated from their original social networks and symbolic ties, diaspora migrants often felt quite isolated abroad, and lacking personal appreciation and gratification (Ammassari, 2004).

*Phobia-induced Investments* – many of the entrepreneurs' investments in Nigeria appear to be based on fear. Worries on retirement living conditions in the UK, apprehension over perceived exclusions from the mainstream of the UK socio-political affairs, or concerns for the welfare of unemployed relatives in the countries of origin seem to fuel the establishment of several entrepreneurial ventures in Nigeria. The downward levelling pressures associated with social capital and network concept (Portes and Landolt, 1996) can manifest in form of the demands to conform to the cultural norms in the provision of livelihood for the underprivileged members of the family back in Africa. This often exerts pressure on Nigerians in the diaspora to 'look after' their families/relatives back home; this some do through creating and sustaining business ventures (even moribund ones).

*Altruistic Investments* – the self-help support mechanism stimulates some business investments to provide job opportunities for relatives in Nigeria. This has philanthropic

objectives and different to investment initiatives generated out of trepidation for culture compliance reasons described above. Prestige, accolade and credit often flow to the investors from their people and communities in recognition of their generosity. Thus, investing 'Home' facilitates the fulfilment of opportunities for both economic growth and poverty alleviation (Okele *et al.*, 2008).

*Opportunistic Investments* – these are purely business ventures organised to exploit opportunities in the market. This is because entrepreneurs endeavour to control resources, improve capabilities and exploit opportunities as a matter of strategy (Yeung, 2002). The cross-border business activities of many of the entrepreneurs confer competitive advantage that helps survival in a tightly competitive environment. A business on an expanded scale could gain purchasing power. Also, an enlarged chain of production could control the channel flow from supply to distribution and lower the transfer costs (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Apparently, entrepreneurship is the ability to work smarter and harder than your competitors (Leibenstein, 1978). As such, transnational activities enable ethnic entrepreneurs to exploit different markets rather than limiting their businesses to the co-ethnic market (Menzies *et al.*, 2007). Hence, many of the entrepreneurs demonstrate a dual sense of belonging, dual loyalty, and, in some cases possess dual political citizenship (Faist, 2007). It is then the case that the possibility of edging competitiveness facilitates the exploitation and exploration of two market-spaces (Britain & Nigeria) in order to gain competitive advantages.

#### 6.4.3 Angst Mediation

It is also the case that transnational activity is a dedicated action of disengagement with Europe, and a gradual relocation-to-Africa scheme. In other words, the growing 'draw' towards home country seems to be due to the perceived harsh socio-economic conditions in the UK, or could probably be due to aborted dreams of success. Perhaps the UK has not proven to be what they dreamt about whilst in Nigeria. Through history, representation of England as a land flowing of milk and honey challenged 'lived experiences' of many Nigerians. But, it is certainly the case that the motivation for investing in entrepreneurial ventures in Nigeria by many of the entrepreneurs derives from the process of reflection and awareness of 'unlived life' that has to be realised (Kontos, 2004, p.67). This is in relation to a struggle for recognition from the social environment that conferred that recognition. The strong positive motivation that underlies efforts to realise an alternative personal plan derives from intuitive knowledge

of ‘unlived life’ and should be considered as a further compensating resource for action (Apitzsch, 2004). This situation is similar to Ammassari (2004) contention that receiving due recognition and respect together with the prospect of finding a good job or better business opportunities in the country of origin are major driving forces for diaspora immigrants to return home. As shown in the findings, majority of the male respondents (especially middle age men) are more eager to want to relocate to Africa than their women counterparts. The attraction of a return to a patriarchal society is more compelling for men as most women do not relish losing the independence they have experienced and gained in the UK. This is comparable to Manuh’s (2001) findings that Ghanaian men in Canada are more likely than Ghanaian women to return home. Correspondingly, Arthur’s (2000) gender analysis of African immigrants’ experience in the United States concludes that African women have undergone cultural transformations and these transformations have challenged traditional African gender ideologies.

In essence, the evolving structure of motivation is that of realising ‘unlived-life’ possibilities, connected to a struggle for recognition and respect (Kontos, 2004). It is then the case that after many years of residency in the UK, many of the entrepreneurs are still not comfortably integrated within the British society. They still considered themselves as ‘outsider’. This has huge implications for their socio-political and economic engagements both in home and host countries. For the effect of having been living abroad for a period of time is likely to impact their re-integration back into the Nigerian society when relocating or transacting business operations in Nigeria.

## **6.5 Summary**

The discussion chapter analytical prism derives from the data, which confer legitimacy to question assumptions and draw inferences towards the creation of credible path in understanding Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship. The research findings were analysed within the thematic arrangements of; nature and characteristics of entrepreneurship, socio-cultural networks, State intervention, and transnationalism. The Nigerian ethnic entrepreneurship is characterised by being located in predominantly ethnic enclaves and markets. Despite operating with restricted and constrained resources many entrepreneurs are utilising various tactics and stratagem to keep heads above water. But some of the strategies tend to have unintended outcomes; even as entrepreneurial outcomes are subjectively determined by individual entrepreneurs.

Nonetheless, the strength of individual entrepreneurs' social networks leads to different forms and levels of success (however defined). The entrepreneurs appear to exploit various ritualised occasions such as religion congregating, cultural events and celebrations to promote their trades and businesses. Their religious congregating not only facilitates networking; it provides avenues of fellowship with co-ethnics in a country where their sense of belonging is impaired. Also, it gives meaning to their fatalism orientation to entrepreneurship; a resigned demeanour of 'whatever-will-be-will-be-as-God-is-in-control' to enterprise.

The inability to fully understand or negotiate the business regulations, rules and policies environment is constraining. This led to all manners of behaviours that may not be totally legitimate or acceptable. Engagement with business support services that might be of assistance is severely constrained due to a number of both endogenous and exogenous reasons. Hence, operating in highly competitive and stifling environment combined with individual orientations and strategies is shaping and ordering diaspora entrepreneurship. That is, a transformation from ethnic entrepreneurship to transnational business activities is emergence. The issue of transnational activities is treated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### REFLECTION ON LEARNING: SYNTHESIS OF DISCUSSION

#### **7.0 Introduction**

Having analysed the narratives/data in the discussion chapter, it is now necessary to reposition the understanding of diaspora entrepreneurship. The synthesis of discussion directs to clear realms that are evident in some paradigmatic vistas. These vistas probably aggregate along three main domains that indicate some key issues in the lived and entrepreneurial experiences of the respondents: (1) the attribution factor, which is essential to the construction of identity; (2) the competitive strategy, a concept that covers the theme of ethnic manoeuvrability and flexibility and (3) the causal texture, which signifies the uncertainty deriving from the turbulent business environment. These concepts correspond to some of the significant themes in the narratives such as entrepreneurial interpretive morphology, expectations and performance. This chapter thus extends the discussion chapter to enable a nuanced understanding of the study and provide more answers to the research questions.

Essentially, distilling from data analysis and discussion are three key levels of investigations: the individual (micro), the firm (meso), and the environment levels (mega). These are alluded to in chapter one and are represented in a schema. The levels are expounded in the entrepreneurial component, transnational component and the environmental component. The multi-level approach offers a composite framework for the understanding of diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship, as it is logically more capable of presenting explanations and understandings of different phenomena on a more detailed level.

#### **7.1 The Individual (micro) Level**

At the level of the individual, the focus is on the entrepreneurial attitudinal orientation. The diaspora entrepreneurs (see Table 5.2) operate in two worlds as they are entrenched in social institutions of their home-base (residence) and homeland (origin). They are exploiting advantage of resources and opportunities that stem from their unique position or affiliation while transcending essential cultural dichotomies. The entrepreneurial component shapes the quest for entrepreneurial opportunities and could be separated

from the entrepreneur's cultural or religious background. Individuals identify and engage opportunities differently and factors that determine individual entrepreneurial orientation could comprise: psychological aspects, information and knowledge, resourcefulness, cognitive heuristic and personal attribution.

#### 7.1.1 Psychological Aspects

Psychological aspects are features such as the need for achievement, the belief in control over one's life and a propensity to take risks. These features naturally epitomise the typical entrepreneur. Several aspects of Psychology such as human volition, innovation, organisation building, will to power, will to conquer, vision or foresight, inspire stream of entrepreneurs (McClelland, 1965). Scholars have suggested that some individuals are more likely to identify and exploit opportunities than others (Kirzner, 1973; Low & MacMillan, 1988; McClelland, 1961; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). It is the individual who recognise, discover and exploit opportunities that results in entrepreneurship. It is also established (refer to section 5.2.1) that entrepreneurial motives are influenced by individuals' high aspirations, need for achievement, risk taking, and a sense of independence. The hope of making a social contribution is also strengthened.

#### 7.1.2 Information and Knowledge

The possession of exclusive information and knowledge also inspires respondents to pursue and exploit opportunities in a particular area and specific market (see section 5.3.1). In addition, networks and social interactions influence information collection and access to vital resources. But it also seems the case that the level of education and experience influence information and knowledge acquisition that contributes to the enactment of diaspora entrepreneurship.

#### 7.1.3 Resourcefulness

The ingenuity demonstrated by many respondents appears to shape their ability to assess an opportunity and convert it into viable business. Resourcefulness entails unique skills, aptitudes, insights and circumstances, associated with creative dispensation. Besides, the dual social contexts in which they operate require diaspora entrepreneurs to develop special awareness to the different cultural and knowledge schemas. Bicultural competence of respondents is discussed in section 5.3.5 (p.146).

#### 7.1.4 Cognitive Heuristics

Cognitive heuristics, as the capability to discover and advance uncomplicated strategies to deal with various unavoidable problems (Schaper and Volery, 2004), is verified from the data. Inevitably, problems that demand immediate and efficient handling occur in the daily routine of entrepreneurial process. As suggested by Lamont (2000), cognitive heuristics is influenced by power relations. This reflects the entrepreneur's choice of strategy which, in turn, depends on resources accessible to him/her, either material or symbolic. Professional knowledge, skills, and communal social position/connection are factors that seem to facilitate and expand the entrepreneurs' range of toolkit in negotiation and ability to manoeuvre business relations and political corollaries in their dual settings. In short, cognitive strategies illustrate how the entrepreneurs used particular cognitive strategies to cope with certain demanding aspects of their business enterprises. These consist of strategic use of certain conflicting roles to cope with specific situations. The strategic engagements of respondents are fully discussed in section 5.3 (pp.138-149).

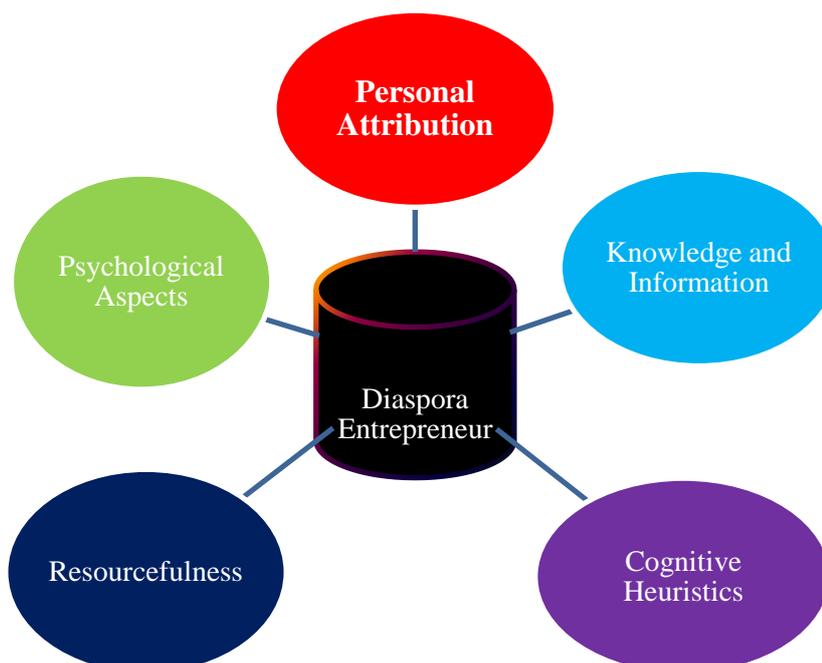
#### 7.1.5 Personal Attribution

The respondents' attribution peculiarity reflected in the data is informative (see Table 5.3). Personal attribution of the respondents seems to shape their socio-cultural engagements and directs their entrepreneurship. Attribution relates to a concept in social psychology dealing with how individuals explain causes of events, their own and other's behaviour. Attributions permit individuals to predict and control their environment (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1967). The consequences of attributions have an influence on the entrepreneur's subsequent thoughts, emotions and behaviours. According to Heider (1958), people make personal (internal) and situational (external) attributions. The former is explained in terms of personal characteristics/attitudes and the latter in terms of situational factors, for example, the social situation or surrounding environment. These attribution types lead to different perceptions of the individual engaging in a conduct. It is the case that individual entrepreneurs constantly or impulsively make causal deductions on why events occur. In time, these deductions seem to develop into beliefs or expectations that allow them to predict and comprehend the events that they observe and experience. However, Heider (1958) believes that fundamental attribution errors occur when there is overestimation of the power of the individual and the power of the situation is underestimated, although heuristic to a certain extent explains why this happens. The manner in which individuals perceive and

grapple with entrepreneurship is different and may be explained by differences in an individual's general tendencies to interpret the causal nature of opportunity. Attributions affect decisions; therefore, attributions should affect business decisions. Invariably, the influence of attribution on economic activity links with how people understand the reasons for their successes and failures (Weiner, 1974). For example, some of the entrepreneurs (see Table 5.2) attribute failure in business to such causes as insufficient funding, discrimination, lack of governmental support or bad luck. Therefore, personal attributions have bearing on the processes, procedures, and outcomes of diaspora entrepreneurship.

In effect, the five aspects define the agency and the entrepreneurial process of recognising, evaluating and exploiting of opportunities. Hence, the practice of diaspora entrepreneurship involves employing diverse repertoires of entrepreneurial behaviour and action in everyday life, requiring a wide range of social skills, cultural knowledge and sensibility (Drori *et al.*, 2009). Thus, this review demonstrates that individual factors are relevant to diaspora entrepreneurial aspirations. The Figure 7.1 below shows the relationship between the factors and represents the analysis of diaspora entrepreneurship at the primary micro (individual) level.

**Figure 7.1: Components of the Entrepreneurial Process of Diaspora Entrepreneurship: Individual (Micro) Level**



Source: Original to the author

## **7.2 The Firm (meso) Level**

The Firm level analysis deals with competitive attitude, strategic orientation, and the utilisation of networks for information exchange with emphasis on the transnational dimension of diaspora entrepreneurship. The influence that the transnational dimension wields on diaspora entrepreneurship can be extremely diverse as gathered from data analysis. The influence is contingent on the magnitude of the cultural differences between Nigeria and the UK. Also, the amount of discrimination encountered by the entrepreneurs, their degree of social integration, experience gained in the UK, age, gender and the education level of the entrepreneur counts. For instance, the older male respondents are most prone to show empathy for relocation to Nigeria than others (see Table 5.2). There is a clear understanding that the entrepreneurs set up businesses which are easily portable and allow them to transverse between their home-base and homelands. This seems possible through acquiring skills or assets that are easily transferable across geographic regions. Generally, diaspora business (often low in innovation) begins as ethnic entrepreneurship in the country of residence. Usually, the immigrants acquire skills and capital needed to start an enterprise while being employed. Consequently, when the time is right (for example, after regularising their immigration status) and they feel confident about their capabilities or as a competitive strategy, they embark on establishing or expanding the business to Nigeria. This conventional channel symbolises entrepreneurial reproduction, that is, the entrepreneurs carry out a familiar activity and attempt to bring added value to their services or products through operational efficiency (Iyer and Shapiro, 1999). However, drawing from the data, a number of factors are coalesced in the transnational dimension: social capital and networks, institutional perspectives, knowledge and technology transfer, cultural aspect and competitive advantage.

### **7.2.1 Cultural Factors**

Cultural capital, described as cultural attitudes which act to enrich entrepreneurial ability within a group (Rettab, 2001), plays out strongly in the data/discussion (refer to sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.6). The appraisal of cultural capital from the data aligns with Throsby's (1999, p.5) assertion that cultural capital is "an adaptive capacity of human populations to deal with and modify the natural environment. Cultural factors include popular methods of learning about business, degree of imitation in the group (refer to sections 5.2.1 and 6.1.5), general approach towards entrepreneurship in the group, and

the concentration of group in business sector and in the region (see section 6.1.1). The concept has moral, ethical and religious overtones”. The adaptation of the respondents towards market conditions in their start-up businesses has the imprint of cultural capital. It is such that market conditions in the dual environments instigate diaspora entrepreneurship.

### 7.2.2 Social Capital and Networks Factors

The data reveals that social capital concept is useful in diaspora entrepreneurship generative processes of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of business opportunity. The concept is variously referenced in sections; 5.1.1, 5.1.3, 6.1.2, 6.2.2, 6.2.6, 6.3.2, 6.4.2, of the findings and discussion chapters. As a network, social capital is rooted in social relations that are reproduced in a variety of arrangements used interchangeably by the entrepreneurs when developing their ventures. Consequently, social capital is accrued through the entrepreneurs’ organisations and reproduction of their dual (home-host) networks (see sections 6.1.2 and 6.2.2). Social capital seems to improve respondents’ economic opportunities by leveraging resources toward the formation of their ventures (see section 5.1.1). Their enterprises are advantaged through sourcing labour from ethnic pools at competitive rates (see section 5.3.2); through the diffusion of crucial information on markets, suppliers, technologies, and business practices and through acquisition of funding from the informal ethnic sources. It is the case that their networks are capable of transferring social capital and resources back to Nigeria (see section 6.4.2).

### 7.2.3 Knowledge and Technology Transfer

Through sensitizing with data, it is apparent that there is the interchange of knowledge and technology through some conduit to individual/organisation over time. Embedded inside the notion of transnationalism discussed in section 6.4 is the consequence of transfer of knowledge and technology. Hence, it is safe to assume that the entrepreneurs’ organisations are strategic channels of technology and business know-how to Nigeria. In view of the cultural and socio-economic connection with Nigeria, their importation of technology/knowledge will appear to be in tune with local realities and cultural sensitivities. As a result, congruent with Debass & Ardovino (2009), they are more likely to import and employ suitable technologies than foreign investors who may have little experience doing business in Nigeria.

#### 7.2.4 Business Development

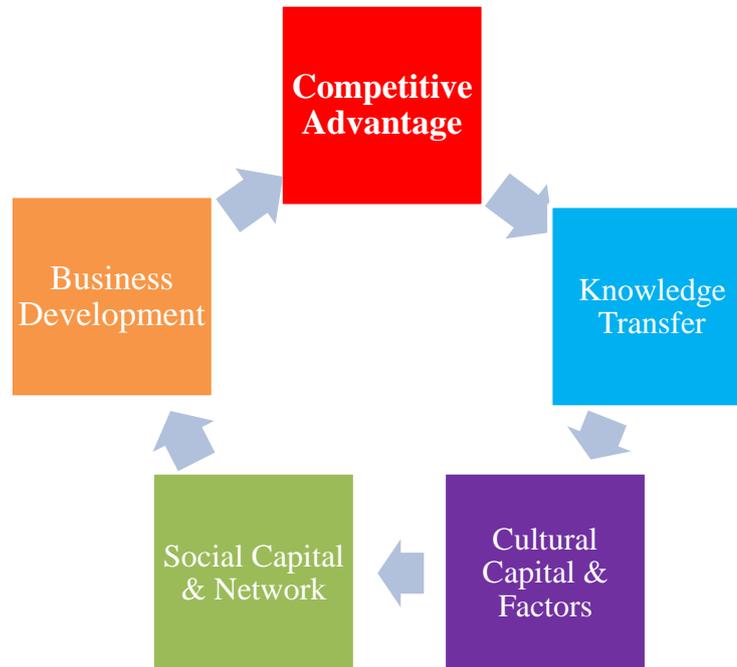
Business development aspect taps into social capital through cultural and linguistic understanding to foster growth and job creation. It is then the case that some entrepreneurs (see Table 5.2) take advantage of opportunities that exist in the form of providing goods and services from the UK to Nigeria or vice versa. Furthermore, the context of reception in the UK seems to vary in terms of the work opportunities open to them, thus influencing the creation of their businesses and development processes. It is also the case that the lightly-regulated UK's regulatory regime (Ram & Jones, 2008) fosters business set ups by the Nigerian entrepreneurs. However, it could be argued that this equally promotes the formation of multitude of businesses that are utterly badly equipped to prosper under conditions of uncontrolled competition. Ultimately, diaspora entrepreneurship may be partly a response to downward mobility or negative reception in the UK society (refer to section 6.4.2).

#### 7.2.5 Competitive Advantage

The data illustrate (see section 5.3.6) the principle of competitive advantage (also known as firm-specific advantage) which denotes the unique assets or competencies resulting from cost, size, or innovation strengths that are hard for rivals to imitate without incurring significant cost and uncertainty (Cavusgil *et al.*, 2008). These value creating attributes and resources enable competitive business to outperform other competitors (Chaharbaghi and Lynch, 1999) when effectively implemented. Competitive advantage is a crucial contributing factor to superior performance ensuring survival and growth in the market. It is against this background that some of the respondents' engagements with transnational activities should be seen (refer to sections 6.1.4 and 6.1.5). The assumption of knowledge of the culture, language, and market in Nigeria could be a competitive advantage in transnational practices as claimed by many. Invariably, by virtue of their distinctive geographical affiliations, these entrepreneurs may be in a unique position to exploit opportunities either unnoticed or unavailable to other entrepreneurs whose businesses are located in a single geographical site (see Table 5.2).

Taken together, the Figure 7.2 below depicts aspects that form the meso level of interpreting diaspora entrepreneurship as discussed above.

**Figure 7.2: Components of the Entrepreneurial Process of Diaspora Entrepreneurship: Firm (Meso) Level**



Source: Original to the author

### **7.3 The Environment (Mega) Level**

Analysis at the environment level entails the investigation of turbulence, hostility, complexity and munificence of the dual environments in which some of the entrepreneurs operate (refer to Table 5.2). Diaspora entrepreneurship organisations could be said to be open systems which essentially engage in various forms of exchange with their environment (Katz and Kahn, 1966). Not only are organisations transformed in the course of interacting with and adjusting to their environment, they also change that environment (Baker, 1973). Kotter (1979) claims that based on the fact that environmental dependency impedes an organisation's capability to perform autonomously, it then becomes imperative for a firm to manage such dependency in order to survive as an independent entity. Organisations usually handle environmental dependency by establishing and maintaining resource exchanges with other organisations (Levine and White, 1961). Transnational engagements of some of the entrepreneurs thus serve this purpose (see section 6.4.2). Dexterous handling of the turbulence inherent in the environments could inevitably have positive impact on outcomes. The issues identified as germane at this level of analysis based on the data

are, institutional context, diaspora direct investment, transnational circulation and networking, remittances and causal texture.

### 7.3.1 Institutional Context

Implications could be drawn from data (for example, section 5.2.2) to the effect that the diaspora entrepreneurs' strategies are impinged on by the diverse institutional environments in the UK and Nigeria. Thus, they seem to have developed dual capabilities in understanding and operating in multiple institutional environments. The assumption is that the composition of respective institutional environment may be substantially different in many aspects and littered with diverse set of challenges for them. For instance, diaspora entrepreneurs need to leverage UK's business practices and benchmark with that of Nigeria's allegedly peculiar enterprise routine. The institutional perspective plays a major role in shaping modes, operations and performance of diaspora entrepreneurs. Generally, in this instance, institutional contexts may be grouped into developed (the UK) and emerging (or transition) market (Nigeria) economies, with both exhibiting considerable heterogeneity in the rules and regulation for undertaking business. These differences in entrepreneurship culture are liable to involve different challenges for diaspora entrepreneurs. For example, as reinforced in sections 5.4.1 and 6.3.1, ease of navigation of rules and regulations in the UK differs from that of Nigeria. Also, networks and human capital built in one institutional environment may not be suitable for the others in which the entrepreneurs operate. National differences in institutional structures represent different modes of diaspora entrepreneurship by influencing ownership patterns of firms, business formation and coordination, intra firm management and/or entrepreneurial process and work and employment relations (Drori *et al.*, 2009).

### 7.3.2 Diaspora Direct Investment (DDI)

DDI is the circular or return migration that a person undertakes to bring acquired skills back to the country of origin typically using a "set of arrangements or a well-defined interval" (Tilly, 1975, p.9). As alluded to in chapter six (6.4.2), DDI creates economic, social, and political capital through transnational networks and strategic relationship. It is the case that the respondents have the financial incentives of a typical foreign investor. They also have the socio-cultural aspects and knowledge of Nigeria's business environments and investment possibilities, which confer advantage.

### 7.3.3 Transnational Circulation and Networking

The entrepreneurs maintain networking with their families, relatives and friends in Nigeria, that is, they engage in transnational circulation and networking. Transnational networking then denotes the occurrence of a multi-stranded relations process where the entrepreneurs manage a significant part of their social, economic and cultural lives in Nigeria while working, living and settling in the UK. Eventually, activities such as receiving or sending financial remittances and the establishment of hometown and ethnic-oriented associations are incorporated. Also included are; returns/visits home either temporarily or permanently (see section 5.2.2), the financial support of and regular communication with families/relatives left behind (see section 6.4.2), the formation of professional and social links in the host and home countries, and the formation of cross-border entrepreneurship and business networks (see Table 5.2). In that sense transnational networking activities are integral part of the attempts of the entrepreneurs to adjust to and integrate into the UK's system. Such activities enable them to exploit different markets rather than limit their businesses to the co-ethnic market in the UK.

### 7.3.4 Remittances

The fact that Nigerians send money to relatives in Nigeria is well documented (see Hernández-Coss and Egwuagu-Bun, 2006; Ojo, 2012), and established in the findings of this study. Remittances are private money transfer by expatriates/immigrants abroad to their native countries, which forms significant transnational flows that are essential in their development programmes (refer to section 6.4.2). Remittances supplement beneficiary households' income, smoothen consumption, encourage industry and the multiplier effects raises productivity. However, findings suggest the negative effect (financial overstretch) of remittances on entrepreneurs' businesses. Furthermore, the volatility of the foreign exchange regime could be deemed to have great impact on their ventures, thus choice of strategy is both shaped by and shapes the remittance framework.

### 7.3.5 Causal Texture

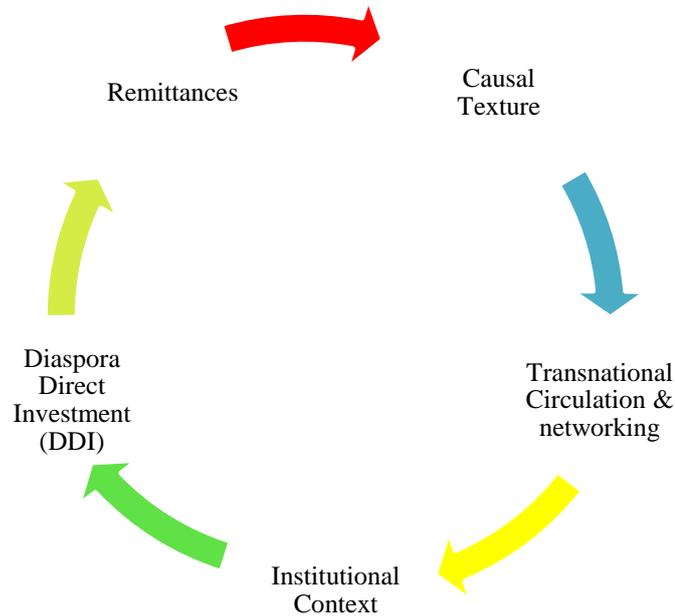
The strategic management field offers an ontological platform to capture a whole lot of dynamics in terms of both environment and entrepreneurial processes and within this field is the causal texture dynamism. Causal texture becomes essential because it relates to the dynamism, change, movement, and tension that surround certain behaviour. So, in

order to capture those tension and movements, one needs to get into elements of how they interface directly with the environment. Basically, not every environment is important but the one that interfaces and poses the most threat because of the level of interaction and interdependency, is the one captured by the causal texture. Conceptualising the causal texture of an organisation's environment is to emphasize the importance of its environment, upon which the preservation, survival and growth of the firm depends. The whole substance of this research finding then links to the causal texture issues.

With that as a point of departure, a whole raft of other qualities relating to wider market and institutional contexts can be isolated to provide more focus. Hence, causal texture comes handy in capturing a number of key dimensions particularly the entrepreneurs strategic market positioning (sections 5.11 and 6.11), engagement with wider policy regime (section 5.4.1), competitive tactics (section 5.3.6), and so on. The manner of response of the respondents (diaspora entrepreneurs) to the characteristic features of the environment can be express in the psychology of the causal texture. The environment is a causal texture in which different events are regularly reliant on each other (Emery & Trist, 1965). Due to the presence of such environmental causal couplings, entrepreneurs come to interpret one event as representing another even. It is by such interpretation that entrepreneurs come to manoeuvre their ways through that complex network of events, stimuli and happenings, in their environments.

It is constructive to then interpret diaspora entrepreneurship within the realm of traditional entrepreneurship theories and the causal texture. In so doing, the entrepreneur's skill as a risk-taker (Knight, 1961) and ability to spot opportunities (Kirzner, 1973) in a changing and uncertain environment will unfold. Invariably, the entrepreneurs are known to evaluate the environmental risks and then reallocate available resources to generate profit. But there can be a 'double-whammy' of environmental risk exposures (both in Nigeria and the UK) that could determine the direction of entrepreneurial outcomes for those (diaspora) entrepreneurs if evaluation is skewed. Figure 7.3 modelled the mega (environment) level of investigation.

**Figure 7.3: Components of the Entrepreneurial Process of Diaspora Entrepreneurship: Environmental (mega) Level**



Source: Original to the author

#### **7.4 Summary**

This chapter demonstrates that diaspora entrepreneurship is shaped by a coalition of social forces at multiple levels. It is formed at the macro level by the opportunity structure and at the micro level by individuals' access to resources. The reflection on learning enables the pulling together of issues evident in the data and discussion chapters. Such issues capture intrinsic tensions inherent in cross-national entrepreneurship engagements of some entrepreneurs in the UK. The trivet concepts develop around three levels (individual, the firm, and environment) of analysis encompassing; competitive advantage, causal texture, and attribution.

The decision to transform to or engage in diaspora entrepreneurship is an outcome of a complex decision making process. The analysis in this chapter thus provides indicators that inform the application of appropriate decision making processes at three levels of engagement that gives rise to diaspora entrepreneurship. These indicators are related to personal characteristics, firm characteristics as well as market opportunities. Essentially, diaspora entrepreneurs connect a number of different characteristics which suggest that their

position in the host and home countries is closely linked with the socio-cultural, political, and economic resources at their disposal. The push/pull dichotomy inherent in these characteristics explains the allure of diaspora entrepreneurship. Furthermore, business strategies or seeming chances of success are associated with the particular social and cultural prerequisite that may complement economic considerations. The individual psychological traits at the micro level of diaspora entrepreneurship interact with conspicuous opportunity structure and ethnic resources at the meso level enabling immigrants to navigate, establish, maintain, and profit from businesses at dual worlds environment (Mega) of interaction. This duality of space is an essential factor for survival, a means of “breaking out,” and/or a method for providing competitive advantage (Drori *et al.*, 2009). Accordingly, diaspora entrepreneurs are able to relate and modify their social structures to changing circumstances and contexts (Sewell, 1992). Obviously, entrepreneurial outcomes; economic success and the entrepreneur’s satisfaction, are determined by the effectiveness of diaspora entrepreneur’s strategies in harnessing the potentials of the ever increasing complex and dynamic business environments.

Invariably, this analysis seems to suggest that changes in the external environment impact the opportunity structure of immigrant/ethnic entrepreneurs. Since environmental changes in the host country affect the opportunity structure of ethnic entrepreneurship (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001), so also will the changes in the country of origin affect the outcomes of ethnic entrepreneurship. It is the case that the basic canon of the analysis extends the existing ethnic entrepreneurship models (interactive and mixed embeddedness) to explain the phenomenon of diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship. This is a growing trend in ethnic entrepreneurship enabled through globalisation and rapid global technological developments.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

#### 8.0 Overview

This chapter is the conclusion to the study. It provides summary, future research directions, and implications deriving from the research. Also included is the re-articulation of original contribution to knowledge, areas of shortcomings and reflections.

#### 8.1 Summary

The study is conducted within the Nigerian diaspora organising context in which many entrepreneurial activities are located and within the *spirit* of exploring African entrepreneurship in Britain bearing in mind the *letter* of Nwankwo *et al.*'s (2011, p.71) appreciation of 'how so little' is generally known about this phenomenon. It is also conducted with reference to Morawska's (2005, p.327) declaration of the "constellations of factors responsible for specific 'compositions' of entrepreneurship and forms of immigrants' adaptation". The study takes into account the dynamic interaction between opportunity structures (for example, labour market, economic, institutional), social, cultural and other resources available to migrants in the host country, as well as individual factors (relating to psychological, economic or other needs) in order to understand the way in which the ostensibly deprived individuals in the economic sphere have nonetheless etched out spaces of control to earn a living by becoming self-employed. The thesis establishes that through entrepreneurship, many Nigerians are actively engaged in a process of change. This process of change is explained through linking Foucauldian discursive precepts with Deleuze and Guattari (1987) notion of 'becoming'. Foucault tenet of power relations (and links with language) in the society resonates with engagement with the processes of 'being' and 'becoming' as conceptualised by Deleuze and Guattari (1987). Through exploration of Foucauldian theory our understanding of power, identity and autonomy as experienced through entrepreneurship is enlightened. This is because the theory argues that power operates to impose identities on its subjects and that the power structure is open for negotiation "in social realms where all voices do not have the same opportunities to be heard" (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p.33).

Evidence from the study shows that manoeuvres of different kinds are used by the respondents to remain and/or get ahead in business in the UK. For instance, “strategies of survival and success involve contesting and transgressing boundaries of various kinds...[such as] contesting the boundaries of the law by evading taxes, licensing requirements and other commercial regulations” (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganaga, 2000, p.7). Transnational business transaction is also in the frame as strategic toolkit, which in a sense is not just a response to static opportunity structures. The respondents are able to change and mould the opportunity structure through innovative behaviour, thus creating opportunities that up till then did not exist. The subjective-interpretative accounts of the entrepreneurs are considered, thus putting emphasis on the meaning of business success or failure to the owner themselves and consequently shedding light onto the complex issue of motivation. The entrepreneurs are considered players who are able to interpret the social world and take action.

## **8.2 The Research Expediency**

The recent past has seen a massive expansion in the numbers of self-employments in the private sector (ONS, 2011). This is buoyed by recent agitation by government for more self-employment in the face of the economic recession of the time, and the expansion is set to continue with the current double-dip recession in the country (Flanders, 2012). Underpinning much of the policy debate is an acceptance that for the economy to bounce to growth, there must be a cultural shift in attitudes to the private sector job creation activities. In short, the political context is one of widening participation rates and broadening access opportunities to entrepreneurship. Academic literature and popular press have documented the participation of ethnic minority groups in the private sector job creation process. But one ethnic group’s entrepreneurship that is not documented or well recorded are the Nigerians who constitute a large portion of UK African population. It is their entrepreneurial experiences and traditions that inform the research study. Therefore, the study probes the archetypal Nigerian entrepreneurs’ own reality and explores its latent complexity. The exploration of the language they use to describe their situation and their perception of alienation precipitates a robust schema that encapsulates the intricacies of diaspora enterprises within the composite environment. The study, thus, aligns with Marsh’s (1982) declaration that collection of sufficiently complete picture of the context that a respondent is located enables decoding of meaningful dimensions.

It is the case that many analytical themes are identified by the study, some complementary, some contradictory and some ambiguous. Contemporary configuration of issues has rendered a ‘grand narratives’ of the Nigerian entrepreneurship impossible. Contradiction or ambiguity in this circumstance is not a bad thing, since current issues are masked by ambiguity. Humes and Bryce (2003, p.180) emphasize plurality of meanings and volatility of concepts when they maintain that: “the search for clarity and simplicity of meaning is seen as illusory because there will always be other perspectives from which to interpret the material under review. To seek a definitive account is, thus, a misguided undertaking.” Fortunately, this research adopts discourse analysis methodology, spiced with Foucauldian concepts, attempts to avoid replacing one ‘truth’ with another, appreciating that “there can be no universal truths or absolute ethical positions [and hence]... belief in social scientific investigation as a detached, historical, utopian, truth-seeking process becomes difficult to sustain” (Wetherall, 2001, p.384).

### **8.3 Resolution of Research Questions**

At the onset, two overarching questions are acknowledged as inspiring this study: (a) to what extent do environmental pressures and personal attributions influence the processes, procedures, and outcomes of diaspora entrepreneurship? (b) To what degree would the attempt at synthesizing the antecedents (and consequences) of diaspora entrepreneurship help in formulating diagnostic schema that would, in turn, help to develop focused strategies in the promotion and evaluation of diaspora entrepreneurship? By exploiting empirically grounded multi-level conceptualisation of entrepreneurship in chapter 7, these two questions are deeply explored through the analysis of a multi-dimensional schema. In effect, the answers are provided through analysing the impact of the different external environments between Nigeria and the UK on respondents’ aspirational orientations toward entrepreneurship.

The tracking of the transition from ethnic entrepreneurship to diaspora entrepreneurship by some of the respondents helps to resolve the secondary questions: What is the state of Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship in today’s UK society? How have they become what they are and what are the prospects of becoming other? Is there a contributory link between the phenomenon of diaspora entrepreneurship with levels of ‘assimilation’ or ‘alienation’ in the UK? What attribution factors promote or retard diaspora entrepreneurship? What are the underlying processes and factors that lead individuals to pursue the creation of a new business firm? How does the environment moderate the

growth and sustainability of diaspora entrepreneurship? Invariably, the questions are answered and analysed as in the key research findings presented below.

#### **8.4 Key Research Findings**

The energy and barriers that either cause or deflect the contemporary patterns of ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK have both obvious and hidden locations. Some of the known forces made visible by the study include, in this context, internal factors of cultural deficits; financial overstretched; poor marketing strategy; social capital duplicity and inadequate experience, skills and training. External factors consist of discrimination/exclusion, regulation/bye-laws, competitive pressures, dearth of role model and diaspora-linked pressures. There may be other factors that are imminent but still remain hidden that dictate entrepreneurial template and orientation, but this is to be expected as entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon. The appreciation of its complexity informs the multidimensional analysis at three levels of investigation to probe the relationship between its component elements; the entrepreneurial individual, the firm and the environments within which business ventures operate. In addition to addressing the research questions, the study has resulted in some key findings as shown below:

- 1) The increasing number of ethnic businesses and their competitive environment in the UK raises the spectre of whether the small ventures run by immigrants could expand outside its confining environment (both local and international) or are perpetually trapped in a dead-end street. The frequent failure crisis of Black African entrepreneur's businesses in London alluded to by Nwankwo (2005) correspondingly relates to Nigerian entrepreneurs. This is also a marker for the non-visibility of Nigerian ventures and products in the mainstream. Thus, the thesis exposes how an ethnic group's entrepreneurship embeddedness constitutes a distinct trajectory of incorporation.
- 2) The fluidity of contemporary ethnic entrepreneurship has evoked the routes of movement towards diaspora entrepreneurship and created uncertainty about the possibilities of permanent settlement in one location. Diaspora entrepreneurship attests to the fact that entrepreneurship identity is not fixed in space (Hytti, 2005). Since entrepreneurship is deemed to be a boundary-less career in context (Kanter, 1989), individuals are responsible for deciding their own routes

(Svejenova, 2005). Hence, the study demonstrates ways in which the Nigerian diaspora is torn between a distant “Home” territory and the British society to which they do not fully belong, regardless of their British citizenship or permanent residency. The fact that they are ‘transmigrants’ (Okeke 2005, p.117) whose roots are still intact makes them experience ‘deterritorialization’; to paraphrase Papastergiadis (2000, p.115).

- 3) Evidence in the study reveals that many entrepreneurs are leveraging their socio-cultural toolkits to set up and conduct their businesses in dual or multiple environments. Seizing the opportunities that come in form of supplying goods and services to and from Nigeria to the demands of customers in the UK or vice versa by the entrepreneurs are ascribed to a number of trajectories. These include the notion of competitiveness, environmental munificence or influence of ‘attribution’ on economic activity. Thus, by becoming transnational entrepreneurs, diaspora entrepreneurs acquire quite different entrepreneurial roles than other entrepreneurs who are not engaged in cross-border business ventures. By navigating transnational dimension, diaspora entrepreneurs negotiate two diverse environments to create value. This enables them to develop different strategies to circumvent some of the barriers they may encounter in ethnic entrepreneurship.
  
- 4) It is the case that the ‘Mixed Embeddedness’ approach focuses on the influences of the environment of the host country on opportunity structures (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999), while transnationalism focuses on the role of transnational activities that facilitate immigrants settling down in the host country (Landolt, 2001). But, both concepts have paid insufficient attention to how changes in the country of origin and the globalisation consequences impact on the opportunity structure of ethnic entrepreneurship. Helpfully, the paradigmatic schema analysed in this study connects these two concepts in illustrating the emergence of diaspora entrepreneurship among ethnic entrepreneurs in countries of residence. That is, factors in both the host country and the country of origin shape and influence diaspora entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is said to impact on the social because entrepreneurs as products of their social environment are conditioned by the environment and may recognise opportunities as being influenced by their social background. Also, each business forms part of a social web of interactions

that contain the economic elements (Anderson and Miller, 2003). Hence, the finding suggests that scholars should consider the impact of the changes (socio-economic and political environmental changes) in both the host country and the country of origin on the opportunity structure of immigrant/ethnic entrepreneurship.

- 5) It seems the case that the outcomes of ethnic entrepreneurship are not necessarily boosting the prospect of social integration in the country of residence. This is because diaspora entrepreneurship outcomes appear to enhance economic and social linkages with the country of origin. Several lines of research have implied the possible effects of participation in ethnic economy on social integration in the society at large. Blau's (1994) social exchange approach maintains that individuals in an enclosed social environment usually have less interaction with individuals outside. This is due to the fact that they have less time and fewer opportunities to associate with friends outside their group.
- 6) The evidence of the cosmopolitan concept (Hannerz, 1990) was revealed in the study as some entrepreneurs are relying concurrently on two types of intra and extra cultural knowledge. The intra cultural knowledge is exhibited in their operations in the UK where they are dealing with two different 'worlds' of their ethnic customers and suppliers, and non-ethnic customers and suppliers. There is awareness that the management of these two milieus is not always a simple process because not everybody is able to navigate between them. The extra cultural knowledge relates to the countries of origin and residence dynamics in their transnational entrepreneurship. Their anglicised cultural direction which frequently contradicts the African cultural consciousness in Nigeria often requires delicate handling. As a result, the concept of cosmopolitan identities is more modified to such culture-crossing circumstances.
- 7) The conceptualisation of entrepreneurship as a societal phenomenon has been stressed in the evolving arena of transnational entrepreneurship (Drori *et al.*, 2009) among Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK. This could be linked to the topical subject of multiculturalism. It is realised from the findings that new combinations of institutional and organisational parts can be created from the

entrepreneurial landscape such that both formal and informal conventions justifies or unjustified business activity as a socially valued or attractive activity – and sustain and curtail the entrepreneurial spirit (Veciana and Urbano, 2008; Welter, 2005). In this sense, the concept of social inclusion that is rooted in multiculturalism (Hyman *et al.*, 2011) is instructive. In the current political and ideological environment there is a shift from the melting-pot metaphor to multiculturalism that legitimises the articulation of, and organisation around home country loyalties (Waldinger, 2009). Consequently, it is interesting to find the transformation in the rules of engagement and movement over time in the Nigerian diaspora entrepreneurship spatial dimension, that is, the re-articulation and redefinition of its contents and characteristics.

- 8) The fusion of economic opportunism, ‘being and belonging’ and cultural imperatives/responsibilities in the concept of diaspora entrepreneurship is reflected in Hirschman’s (1970) notion of “Exit, Voice, and Loyalty”. In this instance, diaspora entrepreneurship among Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK is interpreted and envisaged as an economic response to disillusionment in the British society, and examined in its interplay with protest and patriotism. In other words, the conceptual ultimatum that confronts entrepreneurs in the face of exclusions and ethnic penalties in the UK triggers ‘exit’ (transnationalism), ‘voice’ (entrepreneurship) and ‘loyalty’ (business development in Nigeria).
- 9) Diaspora entrepreneurship could also be taken as a source of resistance to social exclusion and economic disadvantages being faced in UK by the entrepreneurs. This is congruent with Hagen’s (1962) interpretation of entrepreneurship as a means of acquiring recognition in compensation for social marginality. Thus, the notion of ‘politics of ourselves’ (Falzon, 1998) and ethnico/critical reflection it involves constitutes a mode of self-identification – a moral platform to engage in radical questioning of the broader conditions of ethnic penalty in the UK and building or imagining new kinds of subjectivities.
- 10) Through the application of Foucault’s technology of the self (1988) - devices that make possible the social construction of personal identity, many aspects, such as economic, cultural, social, and psychology of the entrepreneurs’ lived experiences are navigated. It is the case that entrepreneurship encounters act as

tools of empowerment, resistance and expression for the entrepreneurs in the UK. The Foucauldian technology of the self suggests that some individuals are able to initiate changes as a result of choices and considerations which are rooted 'in a personal wish to become another person, or a person who responds to certain values and principles' (Betta *et al.*, 2010, p.232).

11) The findings draw attention to fresh perspective in the predominant notion of ethnic entrepreneurship as a socially constructed and underprivileged vulnerability 'sortie' by ethnic minorities hankering for recognition, livelihood, and empowerment in a foreign land. This disadvantaged doxa occupies a pre-eminence position in many ethnic entrepreneurship studies. The research data present other vista. The research outcome suggests that many entrepreneurial actors are far from being vulnerable, disadvantaged or underprivileged. Their entrepreneurship actions are conscious and calculated activities towards achieving set objectives.

12) Successful ethnic entrepreneurship, in addition to offering business owners the intrinsic satisfaction of owning and running their businesses, contributes significantly to the economy through job creation, widening participation in the economy and economic empowerment. The utter scale of socio-economic challenges confronting societies and the need to expand actions to achieve economic stability and growth gives rise to a central role for ethnic entrepreneurship. Making progress on these fronts would require carefully studying, analysing, documenting and understanding strategic business actions involved in value-defining, value-developing and value-delivering process for achieving and maintaining the desired level of performance among ethnic enterprises.

## **8.5 Implications**

Theoretical and practical implications can be drawn from the research that offers fresh alternatives to the reality of ethnic entrepreneurship from the study's narrative. Ethnic entrepreneurship, as found by this thesis, is a plethora of competing and negotiated value systems and meaning structures from which it is possible to make several assertions. Firstly, it is a product of persistent interface between a multitude of social forces, attributes, states of being, actions, networks, behaviours, attitudes, emotions,

values and beliefs. Secondly, there may be a significant difference between how the ethnic entrepreneur is socially constructed in the literature and what actually amount to the practice of entrepreneurship in lived experience.

For instance, some of the research findings contradict the prevailing notion of ethnic entrepreneurship as a socially constructed and disadvantaged helplessness foray to be acted upon by ethnic minorities on the road to empowerment and creation of integrative or at least a multicultural society. Most studies choose to repeat stories of ethnic entrepreneurship as the exclusion of minorities in the great scheme of things thereby representing and reifying ethnic entrepreneurial narrative as a disadvantaged doxa. This has implications in policy and support interventions in the society. The provision of employments for cohorts is often thought to be a much useful positive conditions. Disadvantage representation and depiction of ethnic entrepreneurship have their place, but also have their limitations despite their claim to relief and support proviso. Thus, most often the narrative of ethnic entrepreneurship narrows down to the exclusion of stories of those ethnic entrepreneurs that do not fit the criteria for such disadvantaged tales. This has consequences for society and for ethnic entrepreneurship as a body of knowledge because other equally valid stories of ethnic entrepreneurship are deprived of the opportunity to inform the social construct. Especially as the conscious manipulative entrepreneurial actions and engagements, which are not peculiar to privation or adversity, can be drawn from the research findings. If the state of affair is allowed to persist, it could influence practical applications of entrepreneurship theory and knowledge, and the conceptual clarity will continue to be compromised.

The implication flowing from the findings that participating in ethnic economy impedes integration into the wider society seems to highlight the substantial social cost attached to the documented notion that employment in ethnic economy is an "alternative avenue" for immigrants to achieve economic advancement in a new country. Other implications can also be derived in areas of research and general policy. The pertinence of diaspora entrepreneurship as a specific category of ethnic entrepreneurship is brought to the fore. Even though both groups exhibit many similarities, further actions such as the formation of professional networks that could aid the transnational activities developed by the diaspora immigrants (Urbano *et al.*, 2011) are evident. It seems the case that transnational entrepreneurship as a contemporary advent of Black African diaspora entrepreneurship is not simply an economic process but rather a derivative of complex

relations between economic and non-economic factors. This is in line with a recent study which suggests that entrepreneurial goals might reflect communal, contextual and moral dimensions (Clarke and Holt, 2010). It is also the case that more advancement in globalisation knock-on effects will facilitate new mutations of ethnic entrepreneurship.

Nevertheless, the study of diaspora entrepreneurship is important to the issues of employment and productivity. These are not only central to the economic recovery and growth in these dire times of global stagnation, but also vital in the socio-political matters confronting nation states. As a consequence, diaspora entrepreneurs are crucial to economic growth and by extension to higher living standards. Their creativeness and willingness to take risks ensure that they are leveraging cultural toolkit that pays dividends in their countries of origin and residence (Portes *et al.*, 2007). Diaspora entrepreneurship impact on the notion of multiculturalism cannot be over emphasised. By exploring its concepts, this study will be stoking the embers of multicultural society debates and thrusting the dynamics of ethnic entrepreneurship into the front burner of national discourse. In the past similar studies had drawn attention to the issues of ethnic entrepreneurship and multiculturalism (Pécoud, 2002; Sahin *et al.*, 2007). A number of researches also focus on the spatiality and geography of entrepreneurship (for example, Ekinsmyth, 2011; Steyaert and Landstrom, 2011) while recognising the importance of an entrepreneurship “organising context” (Johannisson, 2011). This organising context emerges “as a refuge for reproduced local values and behavioural patterns and also as a translator of external influences into refined local knowledge and practices” (Johannisson, 2011, p.143).

Also, the findings underscore the notion of change from within shaped by the determination and the wish for transformation through recombining given personal resources for the sole purpose of creating a new personal order within a group of people. This could suggest that entrepreneurial individuals adjust through practices informed by personal initiatives and desires that are private and innate, and which make use of personal resources. But this is executed through a combination of their group’s characteristics and the opportunity structure that is influenced by the external environmental changes in both the host country and the country of origin. Moreover, there is implication in the study’s claim of transition from ethnic entrepreneurship to diaspora/transnational entrepreneurship. The connotation highlights and suggests the fluidity of ethnic entrepreneurship, and in suggesting this, the study relates to Deleuze

and Guttari's concepts of difference which claim there is no identity. Rather, there is only difference; everything is constantly changing, and reality is a 'becoming', not a 'being'.

Furthermore, the research findings have implication for the administration of the social security benefits regime. It is the case that ethnic entrepreneurs (and most likely non-ethnic entrepreneurs) are subsidised indirectly through the exploitation of numerous financial entitlements available in the system. This makes the appraisal and evaluation of entrepreneurship difficult and obscure, and this could affect policy interventions.

Specifically, the findings further suggest a number of implications for ethnic enterprise policy makers. Policy makers and business support agencies should be aware and engage with ethnic minorities religious establishments as veritable assets sources for business development purposes. Equally, ethnic entrepreneurs must be encouraged to methodically exploit religion-based networks as complementary to engaging with mainstream networks. Utilising both sets of networks will facilitate 'break-out' process that is necessary for growth and, in many cases, sustenance of nascent enterprises. Besides, policy makers can tap into this ethnic (religion) platform to promote government's programs and policies, especially those that emphasis social and economic inclusions.

## **8.6 Contributions to Knowledge**

This study contributes its own quota to the field of ethnic entrepreneurship; a field that is a multifaceted phenomenon with at least as many sides as there are ethnic groups (Masurel and Nijkamp, 2004). The contributions of the study to ethnic and diaspora entrepreneurship are at empirical, methodological and theoretical levels.

Empirically, the study has helped to stabilised Black ethnic entrepreneurship base (typically fluid) as a legitimate area for scholarship inquiry. Although, there are some works being done in the area, but these are a bit unstable because the contents of those works are pioneering. However, this study provides further insights that legitimise and stabilise the area and make it a stable platform for scholarship. Essentially, it has assisted to fill a gap in the existing literature on Black ethnic entrepreneurship by focusing on an understudied area of Black African ethnic entrepreneurship. Nwankwo (2005) states that the literature of Black ethnic entrepreneurship is tenuous compared to

that of Asian ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK. With a focus on Nigerian businesses, the study has helped throw some light on a less researched area. In so doing, it blazes a trail in repudiating the broad-brush approach to the Black ethnic entrepreneurship research. At the same time the study speaks to the immigration literature by highlighting the importance of country of origin.

Methodologically, the study makes a resourceful use of the researcher's embeddedness in the community to draw out important oral data. The researcher and the researched shared nationality, background and entrepreneurial experiences helped to improve the quality of understanding into the subject area (Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2001). In other words, the novel construal of meaning to generate a context for a profound and emotional understanding of the respondents "life world" (Habermas, 1987) has been enabled within the study's context. The connection with the respondents is innovatively exploited. The idea of a 'researcher as number one research instrument', although mooted in the literature, is hadly evidenced in the entrepreneurship field. Entrepreneurship field often tends to maintain a kind of detachment in research in order to maintain objectification. But, in this study, this objectification is replaced with involvement, knowledge and being part of the study's environment through the concept of researcher as research instrument. Thus, the research is personified in such a way that brings alive the paradigmatic worldview of 'researcher as number one research instrument' in the entrepreneurship field.

Furthermore, the distinct fresh innovation in methodological approaches in the research process underscores its uniqueness. The exploit of informal focus groups and the constitution of a regulating panel for the study underlined its innovation. These innovative approaches enhance the quality and authenticity of data and information collected. Nwankwo *et al.* (2011, p.71) scholarly counsel entreat researchers to allow 'reality tell its own story on its own terms' through 'the use of informal networks' in researching diffused ethnic groups (Gartner, 1989) such as immigrant Africans in the UK (Nwankwo, 2003). The novelty in methodology would direct attention to non-orthodox instruments for collecting hard to find information in diffused groups. This is crucial since research works in African diaspora communities are problematic as they are tricky to penetrate (Nwankwo, 2005).

Theoretically, the thesis contributes to theoretical eclecticism as a defining feature of the study – a move away from uni-disciplinary treatment that pervades the entrepreneurship literature. That is, rises above contestations among ‘academic tribes’ as different strands have been pulled together. Perhaps, in the future a continual push towards greater synthesis might bring us closer to theoretic modification necessary for supporting comparative studies whilst not undermining the imperativeness of reflexivity.

Furthermore, research on entrepreneurship is typically argued in terms of its beneficial effects on employment and economic growth (Birch, 1979). But this practise ensures that only certain facets of entrepreneurship become visible. There are many imaginable aspects of entrepreneurship worth of research attention that do not see the light of day, since they are not thought to have a direct bearing on growth or performance (Ahl, 2007). The findings of this thesis substantiate this argument. This is because ethnic entrepreneurs may not necessarily operate from position of weakness or disadvantage, and may not be making appreciable contributions to employments or economic growth in general terms.

In addition, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in using the interactive and mixed embeddedness models to explore the nature and characteristics of diaspora entrepreneurship in an unstudied British African group from Nigeria. This is a novel study of its kind, which investigates the transformation process of an African ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK and adds to the way transnational entrepreneurship can be conceived, as a social construct, and its undercurrent linkages with contemporary issues of multiculturalism and globalisation. The research is sound in its methodology and many of its findings are suitable for publication in academic journals and elsewhere. The material is likely to be of particular interest to journals focussing on diaspora entrepreneurship among Black Africans in the UK and other Western societies that harbour Black Africans. These are possible areas for future publication but some of the initial findings have already been presented in conference proceedings, and ancillary data in reputable academic journals (See Appendix 4 for a list).

There are several important groups that could benefit from enhanced understanding of how British Black African ethnic businesses are prompted. For instance, the awareness of the process and protocols of diaspora entrepreneurship can lessen the burden on those

trying to go down that route. Diffusion of pitfalls and the lived experience of diaspora entrepreneurs to potential transnational entrepreneurs will benefit successful entrepreneurial venturing. Likewise, public policy makers and government officials' knowledge will be enriched from knowing more about the impact of infrastructure, context and assistance programs on ethnic entrepreneurship with the accruing benefits to the economy at large. Also, governments of countries of origin and residence stand to reap the benefit of investing in diaspora entrepreneurship. This is because it has potentials of contributing in many ways to boosting cross-border trade and commerce as well as international friendship between the countries through the entrepreneurs' agency.

Moreover, the academic community would considerably profit from a reliable account of the diaspora entrepreneurship phenomena. For, it is more challenging to generate explanatory theories when there is no fastidious depiction of the phenomena itself. Lastly, the thesis also contributes to ethnic entrepreneurship research by standing back from envisaging the entrepreneur as an individual, but still takes cognisance of their actions, networks, attitudes, beliefs and values as represented in the wider social environment. The social constructionism platform used in the thesis enables the demonstration of a clearer understanding of the entrepreneurial process as it allows the analysis of the way people see and describe entrepreneurship. From the researcher's perspective, undertaking a study on entrepreneurship can be a daunting prospect. However, it could also be extremely rewarding to turn a combination of a good idea plus real passion into a profitable and successful research. Finally, the study offers a platform for practitioners (Black African entrepreneurs) to embark on soul-searching voyage of discovery, which could enable them to connect and reconnect with the intricacies of contemporary British economic terrain towards realizing self-help mechanisms that complement the official support apparatus. More importantly, the study could assist in focusing attention to the broad pattern of entrepreneurship among Black Africans in the 'first World', in order to inform on their ability/inability for business development in countries of origin.

### **8.7 Limitations and Shortcomings**

The researcher pleads guilty of the same offence levied against mainstream researchers in aggregating all Black people under one umbrella group with no regard for ethnic differences among them. Likewise this study's premise assumes that there is

homogeneity amongst Nigerians in the UK, thus, disregarding the existence of group differences and individual preferences. Consisting of multitude of tribal groupings, the Nigerian society, home or abroad, is not culturally homogenous and to allude to a Nigerian culture may seem a misnomer. Consequently, some authors question the assumption that an ethnic group has a common culture, particularly in contemporary societies (Tamney, 1995). Invariably, Nigerian diaspora in the UK and in many other developed societies have multiple layers of identification. Depending on the situation and to whom they are relating with, they adopt different markers. The most common identifiers include nationality (for example, Hausa, Igbo, or Yoruba) and region/dialect (IOM, 2010). This insight suggests there might be differentials in the respondents' entrepreneurial customs and traditions along tribal leanings. This is because differences along the lines of gender, age, class, religion, first or second generation immigrants shape business behaviour significantly (Light and Gold, 2000).

Another weakness of the study resides in the exclusion of second and third generation Nigerians who are entrepreneurs from the sample population (reason for this is given in chapter 4.3.2). Studies (for example, Masurel and Nijkamp, 2004) have shown that there is a distinct demographic generation effect in terms of ethnic entrepreneurship. Second and third generations of ethnic entrepreneurs do have different entrepreneurial motivation and orientation from their first generation counterparts (Masurel and Nijkamp, 2004). Correspondingly, gender issues in entrepreneurship are not clearly demarcated in the study, even though the sample population contains both male and female entrepreneurs. Gender-based differences in entrepreneurship are said to exist in educational background, work experience and skills, business goals and management styles and personal value systems (Verheul and Thurik, 2001; Baycan-Levent *et al.* 2004). Further weaknesses are related to the sample size which is small (though it conforms to the methodological framework) and the restriction of sample to one location (London). Both of these affect the ability of the study to make generalised assumptions. Finally, whilst the findings are significant, meaningful and interesting, they must be utilised with caution due to the exploratory nature of the research.

## **8.8 Recommendations**

There are profound public interest advantages in supporting Black businesses - extrapolating from data generated from this study. The economic benefits that could be reaped from economic empowerment of Black business owners would translate to; less

people depending on State benefits, more taxes collection, freeing up public finances for other social benefits, and so on. It is the case that Black economic enterprise community contributes enormously to London economy (LDA, 2005). Judging from the rate of business start-up (at least intentions to entrepreneurship), future contribution to GDP (gross domestic products) could be phenomenal. At the same time, successful diaspora entrepreneurs will be empowering their 'Home State' in a way that lessens the burden on public sector finances. Extending this further, the social inclusion agenda could gain more traction in the UK as people will develop enduring felt sense of inclusion, felt sense of community cohesion, joining together to develop the economy and its social fabric. In other word, supporting Black entrepreneurship is economically rewarding and socially beneficial.

Policy makers in the UK and Nigeria (countries of residence & origin respectively) need to wake-up to the growing emergence of diaspora entrepreneurship and its attendant benefits by formulating enabling regulations that improve transnational entrepreneurship. For instance, business support services in both countries can be strengthened and tailored to render services suited to problems peculiar to diaspora entrepreneurship. Regulations and rules on import/export procedures should be simplified, and focused information campaign targeted at diaspora/transnational entrepreneurs. The governments of the countries of origin should both implicitly and explicitly demonstrate that the entrepreneurs are welcome, and should adopt policies that make it easy for them to come and go between their countries of origin and residence. The UK government could also provide quality training and vocational education to develop practical skills in business, and establish mechanisms that encourage regular consultations with diaspora professionals. Governments (Nigerian and British) should, in addition, support access to capital through loans specially dedicated to small entrepreneurs. A class of well trained, highly motivated entrepreneurs operating in a business-friendly environments would foster a higher level of growth which could significantly contribute to the economic well-being of the ethnic diaspora 'home' and 'abroad'.

Furthermore, the immigration policy of the government could be tempered to accommodate established and burgeoning businesses that require special skilled workers. This could be in form of special license to bring workers from abroad or grant leave-to-remain permits for illegal workers who are already working in the system.

Another method should be a participatory approach which could be taken to reorganise the business support regime so as to become proactive in engaging and getting feedback from diaspora entrepreneurs. This will initiate a dialogic mechanism that could have direct positive policy intervention.

Many of the ethnic entrepreneurship models and theories are inadequate to fathom entrepreneurial activities that span informal and criminal spheres. In this light, the opportunity to formulate an all-encompassing model of ethnic entrepreneurship that can be employed to rationalise both the informal/formal and illegal/legal frameworks exist in further studies. Diaspora and Ethnic entrepreneurship will be enhanced if better conditions for starting up a business as well as in the daily running of it are created.

### **8.9 Future Research Themes**

The various insinuations emerging from the findings of this thesis make a strong case for research work in the following areas:

(a) Informal and illegal entrepreneurial spaces - intense participation in the informal and illegal spheres by many of the entrepreneurs is established. This is because value is created in these domains. Anderson (1998) has reasoned that if entrepreneurship is condensed to its essence, it becomes obvious that all entrepreneurs do is generating and extracting value from a situation. Studies into how the Nigerian entrepreneurial group (or other ethnic groups) negotiates the opportunity structure to create value could assist new support policy based on the need to pay attention to the combined effect of motives for starting up businesses and the necessary preparatory activities.

(b) Generation and gender divide - the generational and gender effects on entrepreneurship are other key potential research areas to study. It will be informative to analyse (through longitudinal studies) the differential home-bound orientation between the male and female entrepreneurs and evaluate how this impact their entrepreneurial motivations and negotiations. The differences noticed in the orientation of the only young entrepreneur in the research sample population call attention to the possible consequence of generational cogency on ethnic entrepreneurship. It is the case that many first generation Nigerians in the UK talk about going back to Nigeria after some years when they have earned enough money, only a few actually do. Most end up staying, through default or design, in the UK. Moreover, some of those who left do return to the UK after some time. Many second and third generation Nigerians often

refer to themselves as British, Black British Africans, or British-Nigerians reflecting both ethnic origin and national belonging. An in-depth investigation of this diffused state of being and belonging would immensely contribute to our knowledge of the people and profoundly illuminate their entrepreneurial orientations.

(c) Guerrilla entrepreneurship - The instance of guerrilla entrepreneurship evidenced in the stories garnered during the research demands a new line of research into the ethnic group's entrepreneurial activities. The assessment of guerrilla entrepreneurship as a form of adaptive entrepreneurship scheme in response to market opportunities could enhance deeper understanding of the dynamics in ethnic entrepreneurship.

(d) Quantitative enquiry - it would be useful to carry out quantitative investigations on some of the emergence themes in the study. For instance, empirical enquiries on the validities of State social benefit claims to the outcomes of ethnic entrepreneurship will have enormous bearing on policy trends. It will also facilitate the objective measurements of the group's entrepreneurial success or failure. Deductive research engagement would ultimately help in the establishment of a directory of Nigerian businesses in London (as a start).

(e) Comparative studies - there is a need for inter-African ethnic groups' entrepreneurship comparisons, as these will enlighten, and ensure that future research studies will not lump people of African ancestry into an amorphous "Black African" category. Further comparative research is also required for purpose of clarifying structural and contextual influences on analysis results, by comparing the UK Nigerian diaspora group with other Nigerian diaspora groups in other Western societies. The analysis of different countries could produce the opportunity of making a national comparison, which would strengthen this qualitative research more densely. Comparing the different samples of the national contexts with each other increases the ability to differentiate between dimensions such as opportunity structures and ethnic strategies. Finally, it would be interesting to conduct research that will compare between Nigerian entrepreneurs and Nigerians who are either employees or unemployed. This perspective might raise understanding and awareness of the motivations and strategies in relation to ethnic entrepreneurship by contrasting them with other labour market positions, that is, waged employment and unemployment.

(f) Transnational enquiries - the growing trend in transnational entrepreneurship (dubbed diaspora entrepreneurship in this thesis) needed a forensic investigation of its processes and pathways. This is an exercise that can only be fully conducted by following their trails to Nigeria to observe, for instance, how the Nigerian environment is influencing diaspora entrepreneurship, the strategies being employed by the entrepreneurs to navigate both spheres of operations and measurement or appraisal of its outcomes.

#### 8.9.1 Reflections on Further Research Themes

Upon further reflections, three key issues emerge that elicit deep contemplation, but are beyond the scope and capability of the present study. Firstly, it is worthy of note that the only relatively young respondent (Extramural/trainer (26 years old) seems to buck the trend in a number of important areas. Though a first generation immigrant (came to join her parents when she was eighteen) like the rest, she engages robustly with support agencies. Actually she has become adept in sourcing grants, rebates, loans and other assistance from mainstream funding organisations. Her orientations are in many respects different to the others (except perhaps in theocentricism). She believes very much in the UK system and remains unfazed by obstacles real or surreal. Her business achieved a measured expansion ('breakout') into other ethnic groups as she has nationals (for example, Asian) in her extramural classes. It will be useful to investigate this outlier effect by studying younger first generation Nigerian entrepreneurs.

The second issue relates to the observed and perceived cross-cultural burdens on the second generation of Nigerians that are evolving. The cultural obligations instilled in them by their parents (and the Nigerian community) severally run counter to the British ethos they are exposed to outside their homes (the larger society). For instance, Nigerian culture emphasises respect, non-confrontation and unquestioned obedience to higher authorities (parents, elders, teachers, government, and so on), whereas the British system encourages querying and challenging authority on issues. Another example is the Nigerian's obligatory culture of looking after ones parents (and vulnerable close relatives) at old age which appears compromised in the British State care system. How the second (or third) generations are negotiating entrepreneurship within the context of 'cultural baggage' implanted in them by their parents vis-à-vis the British system will be an interesting theme of research since each ethnic group imposes the strength of its cultural uniqueness on entrepreneurship (Harper, 2003). These phenomena of

intergenerational tension and socio-cultural assimilation (Portes, 1995) call for a new proposition on their characteristics and future course.

Thirdly, the long term effect of restrictions of Nigerians' (and other Africans) migration to the UK is yet to unravel. It is the case that as long as a group is renewed through immigration, there is a foreign-born component with limited choices, whose options are restricted to ethnic entrepreneurship (Sanders, 2002). But, it is difficult to understand what will happen if immigration stream dries up, especially given the current rhetoric on the negative impact of economic migration in most developed countries. As a result, focussed research is needed to interrogate how well will current ethnic economies persist, and will there be attractive opportunities for the second and third generations of immigrants to participate in ethnic economies or become ethnic entrepreneurs?

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: The Question Guide

Number	DOMAIN	ITEMS
1	Felicitations	Classification of business type Start-up narration – problems & prospect
2	Start-Up Activities	Explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-start-up preparation</li> <li>• Personal motivation</li> </ul>
3	Firm Registration Activities	Explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start-up activities and sequence of events</li> <li>• Extent of formalisation</li> </ul>
4	Nature of Business	What is the major product or service of this business?
5	Start-Up Team and Social Network	How many people legally own this business – only you, you and your spouse, or you and other people or businesses? How many other people, not on the start-up team, have been particularly helpful to you in getting the business started?
6	Start-up funding requirements	What are the sources of funding? How long does it take before the business was able to pay back all start-up costs from all sources?
7	Market, Competition Assessment & Competitive Strategy	How would you describe the market you are in? Compared to the competitors, what will be the major advantage of your business? What do your competitors see to be your key strength & weakness in this market?
8	Knowledge, Use of Assistance	Many business support programs to help ethnic business get established have been established. Have you made any contact with such programs? How many have you contacted? How valuable would this help be to those starting a new business?
9	Future expectations for the Business	Which of the following two statements best describes your preference for the future size of this business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I want the business to be as large as possible, or</li> <li>• I want a size I can manage myself or with a few key employees.</li> </ul> Where do you see yourself and your business in 10 years? 20 years?
10	Personal attribution and Personal Decision-Making Style	To what do you most attribute your business outcomes (success/challenges)? How do you define success? If someone asked you what kind of person you are, would you say that your preferred ‘doing things better’ or ‘doing things differently’? How well does your preferred style of problem-solving match the types of problems encountered in starting a new business?
10a	Residential status, migration	How long living in the United Kingdom? Do you have dual nationality?
10b	Respondent birth order	Did you grow up with brothers or sisters? How many brothers or sisters born before you?
10c	Family business background	Did parents ever work for themselves or run their own business?

	Household structure	<p>Have your family, relatives, or other close friends being encouraging you to, or discouraging you from, starting a business on your own?</p> <p>How many people live in your household, including yourself, all adults and all children?</p> <p>How many of those 18 and older, including yourself, earned any money in the last year from salaries and wages?</p> <p>Did you earn any money last year from salaries and wages?</p> <p>How would you describe your current marital status?</p>
11	Current Labor Force Activity & Work, career experience	<p>Are you currently involved in any of the following (Yes or no to each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working for others for pay?</li> <li>• A small business owner or self-employed?</li> </ul> <p>How many total years of full time, paid work experience have you had?</p> <p>How many years of managerial, supervisory, or administrative experience?</p> <p>Highest level of education completed so far?</p>
12	Transnational linkages & business activities	<p>What obstacles have your overcome in navigating dual environments?</p> <p>What economic conditions affect your business?</p>

Source: Adapted from National Panel Study of the US start-ups (Reynolds, 2000)

## Appendix 2: Question Guide Probing the Tri-component Paradigm

LEVELS OF ENQUIRY	ITEMS
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Individual (Micro)</b>
Psychological Characteristics	If someone asked you what kind of person you are, would you say that you preferred ‘doing things better’ or ‘doing things differently?’
Information & Knowledge	Many business support programs to help ethnic business get established have been established. Have you made any contact with such programs? How many have you contacted? Have you taken any classes or workshops on starting a business?
Creative Processing	How well does your preferred style of problem-solving match the types of problems encountered in starting/operating a business?
Cognitive Heuristics	How many total years of full time, paid work experience have you had? How many years of managerial, supervisory, or administrative experience? Largest number of people ever supervised? Highest level of education completed so far?
Personal Attribution	To what do you most attribute your business outcomes (success/challenges)? How do you define success? Who has been your greatest inspiration?
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Firm (Meso)</b>
Cultural Factors	Did parents ever work for themselves or run their own business? How many different businesses did your parents own or run? Did you ever work for your parents’ business? Among other relatives or kin, apart from your parents, did most, some, a few, or none own their own business? Have your family, relatives, or other close friends been encouraging you to, or discouraging you from, starting a business on your own?
Business Development	How long have you been in business? Why do you expect this business to be successful? What major problems have you had in starting this business? If you were not doing this business, what would you be doing with your time and money?
Competitive Advantage	Compared to the competitors, what will be the major advantage of your business? How important are each of the following for your business to be an effective competitor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower prices</li> <li>• Quality products and services</li> <li>• Serving those missed by others</li> <li>• Superior location and customer convenience</li> <li>• More contemporary, attractive products</li> <li>• Developing new or advanced product and/or process technology</li> <li>• First mover’s advantage</li> </ul>
Knowledge & Technological Transfer	Many business support programs to help ethnic business get established have been established. Have you made any contact with such programs? How many have you contacted? How valuable would this help be to those starting a new business?
Social Capital & Network	How many other people, not on the start-up team, have been particularly helpful to you in getting the business started? For those, up to five, that have been most helpful: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gender?</li> <li>2. Age?</li> <li>3. Ethnic background?</li> <li>4. Length of relationship with you?</li> <li>5. Contributions to the start-up?</li> </ol>

	6. Reason for providing other contributions? 7. Occupation? 8. Personal experience with start-ups? 9. Relationship to respondent 10. Country of residence?
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Environment (Mega)</b>
Institutional Context	How do the operating environments compare or differ in Britain and Nigeria? Does the diversity of rules & regulations plays a major role in shaping modes, operations and performance of your ventures?
Remittances	How often do you remit money 'Home'? What is the remittance for (Business or personal)?
Diaspora Direct Investment	What are your motivations for DDI? How do you monitor your investment(s)?
Transnational Circulation & Network	What obstacles have your overcome in navigating dual environments? What economic conditions affect your business?
Causal Texture	What obstacles have your overcome in navigating dual environments? What economic conditions affect your business?

Source: Literature/PSED

### Appendix 3: Question Guide Probing Attribution & Business Dynamics

CATEGORIES	ITEMS
Felicitations	
Start-Up Activities	
Firm Registration Activities	
Nature of Business	Probe: How business is characterized for example, product/market Sector dynamics (for example, vulnerable, easy to enter & easy to exit sector) Uniqueness of product/market standing (for example, extent of ethnic embeddedness)
Start-Up Team & Social Network	Explore the resourcing of business, for example: Ownership structure, ties & relationship Extent of family embeddedness Proprietors connection with the business
Start-up Funding Requirements	Explore: Sources of capital and extent of capitalization Interaction with financial institutions and intermediaries Particularly, probe experiences (or lack of) with banks
Market, Competition Assessment & Competitive Strategy	Explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of market boundaries</li> <li>• Customer profiling</li> <li>• Competitive intensity which may lead to failure crisis</li> <li>• Awareness of market dynamics</li> </ul> Explore self-perception of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique capabilities, if any</li> <li>• Market profiling</li> <li>• Competitive vulnerability</li> </ul>
Knowledge, Use of Assistance	Probe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of interactions with business support environments</li> <li>• Level of awareness of business support opportunities</li> <li>• Level of disposition to accepting or rejecting support interventions</li> <li>• Evaluation of support intervention if received. Reasons for self-exclusion</li> </ul>
Future Expectations for the Business	Explore growth trajectories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interconnection with growth opportunities</li> <li>• Perception of where future growth lies</li> <li>• Readiness to adapt to growth challenges</li> </ul>
Personal Attribution & Personal Decision-Making Style	Explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How success is evaluated; accounting for success or failure</li> <li>• Visible instrument as markers of success; social imperatives, economic &amp; non-economic parameters</li> <li>• Characterization of self</li> </ul>
Current Labour Force Activity & Work, Career Experience	Explore perception of the institutional environment, & labour market dynamics Experience with the labour market Recap on motivation for start-up
Residential Status, Migration	Length in business Vs length as a resident Extent of engagement with home country Family structure
Respondent birth Order	

Family Business Background	
Household Structure	
Transnational Linkages & Business Activities	

Source: Literature/PSED

#### **Appendix 4: List of Published Papers**

1. Ojo, S., Nwankwo, S. & Gbadamosi, A. (2013), Ethnic entrepreneurship: the myths of informal and illegal enterprises in the UK, *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, DOI:10.1080/08985626.2013.814717.
2. Ojo, S. (2013) 'Diaspora Entrepreneurship: New Directions in Enterprise Development', in Ndubisi, N. & Nwankwo, S. (eds), *Enterprise Development in SMEs and Entrepreneurial Firms: Dynamic Processes*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, pp. 42-63.
3. Ojo, S. (2012) 'Ethnic Enclaves to Transnational Entrepreneurs: A Critical Appraisal of Nigerian Entrepreneurship in London'. (Best Track Paper Award) Presented at The International African Academy of Business Development (IAABD) 13<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference 2012 El Jadida Polidisciplinary University, Morocco.
4. Ojo, S. (2012) 'Ethnic Enclaves to Diaspora Entrepreneurs: A Critical Appraisal of Black British Africans' Transnational Entrepreneurship in London', *Journal of African Business*, 13(2), pp. 145-156.
5. Nwankwo, S., Gbadamosi, A. and Ojo, S. (2012) 'Religion, spirituality and entrepreneurship: the church as entrepreneurial space among British Africans'. *Society and Business Review*, 7(2), pp.149-167.