

**A STUDY OF SOAP MAKING ENTREPRENEURS IN UGHELLI
METROPHOLIS- DELTA STATE**

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ABSTRACT

The progress of a society everywhere is determined by the level of its entrepreneurial process. In Nigeria for example, there are many possible prospects that could be tapped by entrepreneurs. This is so because the country is endowed with a lot of human and natural resources. The materials for soap making are among these resources. It is a known fact that most of its major raw materials are either an input to the local production or a bye-product of the oil production. The ability of entrepreneurs to harness these resources effectively needs to be properly looked into.

Based on the above, the research will aim at the study of soap making entrepreneurs in Ughelli town. Some constraints facing the soap making entrepreneurs and even their employees were looked into. These constraints include among others, the low educational background of entrepreneurs; lack of training on soap production; inflow of women into soap making business etc.

The data for the research were collected primarily using the questionnaire, observational and oral interview methods directed to the

owners and their employees (operatives) of twenty (20 soap making enterprises) of ^{the} metropolis. The 20 entrepreneurs that owned the enterprises, 20 management staff and 20 workers; (operatives) were used. Tabular presentation and frequency distribution; percentage score; mean score and t-test were used to analyse the data obtained. At the end, major findings of the study include the following: it was discovered that the literacy level of soap makers is very low. Many of them are just senior school certificate holders. The number of soap making enterprises in the area under review are not enough compare with demand for the product. People who are into soap making learnt the skill from one another. It ought to be learnt in schools and vocational centers. Majority of the soap makers are women. This means the industry is in the hands of women. The research revealed that the distribution method is not encouraging. Producers do not create the proper awareness strategies of new products through advertisement. It was also revealed that the entrepreneurs employed modern method which is not in anyway compared with those of multi-nationals.

Finally, from the three hypotheses tested, it was found out that there is no significant difference between entrepreneurs and employees in relation to whether the educational background of entrepreneurs affect their level of performance. There is difference between the sale of local and modern products of soap and lastly that there is difference in performance between trained and untrained soap makers at 0.05 level of confidence. Recommendations were also made.