



Advancement of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in Lagos State, Nigeria using Entrepreneurship Skills

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ABSTRACT

The global world is tilting towards entrepreneurship and is becoming a subject of debate among stakeholders such as politicians, economists, intellectuals, and even college students. There have been various research on the relationship between entrepreneurial abilities and the growth of SMEs, but there have been few or no studies explicitly on the impact of communication, creativity, and interpersonal skills on SME growth. This study examines the various entrepreneurship abilities such as communication, innovation, and interpersonal skills effects on SME advancement. The study was conducted in Lagos State, Western part of Nigeria, using a descriptive research design and survey method. The target population of the study covers SMEs registered with SMEDAN in the ikorodu area of Lagos State. The sample size of 128 was selected using a stratified and random sampling method which consist of businesses across different sectors including; manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, retail and service. The research instrument responses were based on a Likert 5-point rating scale in a questionnaire. The reliability coefficient using the Cronbach alpha method was obtained as 0.92. The results showed that communication skills have a significant influence on SMEs' advancement. It also revealed that innovation skills have a significant influence on SMEs' advancement. This study showed that interpersonal skills have a significant influence on SMEs' advancement. It is evident that entrepreneurship skills are key to the advancement of SMEs. It can be concluded that acquiring entrepreneurship skills such as communication skills, innovation skills and interpersonal skills will enhance the advancement of SMEs. It was recommended that entrepreneurs develop a good mindset towards skills development in all concerned aspects of entrepreneurship to help in improving and increasing their capacity to grow their business.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial skills, communication skills, innovation skills, interpersonal skills, SMEs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to put together some innovative business ideas into practice is referred to as entrepreneurship. It includes the ability to organize tasks and manage projects to achieve objectives as well as innovation, creativity, and taking prudent risks. From the conception of ideas to the establishment of a firm, entrepreneurship can be seen as a system that is either individual or collective, inside or external to the organizational structure. (Sousa & Almedia, 2014). Everyone benefits from everyday social activities and domestic relationships because workers are able to see the larger picture and take advantage of opportunities and entrepreneurs can lay the groundwork for a social or business operation.

The global world is tilting towards entrepreneurship and is becoming a subject of debate among stakeholders such as politicians, economists, intellectuals, and even college students. Every year, events are held around the globe that emphasize the value of entrepreneurship to society, the economy of a nation, and the development of the person (Schaper & Volery, 2004). Onuoha (2007) describe entrepreneurship as the practice of starting new organizations or revitalizing mature organizations, particularly new businesses generally in response to identified opportunities. Schumpeter (1965) defines entrepreneurs as individuals who exploit market opportunities through technical and/or organizational innovation.

Agomuo (2002) define entrepreneurship as the process of integrating innovative and creative ideas with management and organizational skills in order to pool people, money, and resources to fill a need and ultimately make a profit is known as entrepreneurship. Gibb (2007) defines entrepreneurship as a way of thinking, reasoning and acting that results in the creation, enhancement, realization, and renewal of value for an individual, group, organization or society. It is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities and establish and run an enterprise successfully.

Our educational system has an issue in that neither the teaching methods nor the evaluation processes encourage pupils to think entrepreneurially. This poses a significant problem for our educational system, particularly for post-secondary education, which should promote exposure to technical abilities that can be improved through entrepreneurial thinking. The benefits of entrepreneurship among citizens are enormous and most schools have included it in the curriculum of every undergraduate. Any society or group can advance with the help of entrepreneurship. It is so crucial that no sector of development should ignore it. The complicated and interdependent conditions of contemporary life, as well as developments in technology and communication, as well as rising demands, necessitate increased entrepreneurship (Olatoye & Oyundoyin, 2007).



Entrepreneurship can be seen as an employment opportunity assisting individuals in becoming self-employed. Entrepreneurship is vital for independence, and the more independent a person is, the better off their family, community, and society as a whole will be. It is obvious that through entrepreneurship, people can maximize their use of resources and life experiences. While innovation gives new items more value, entrepreneurship creates new ideas, concepts, designs, and opportunities (Akinboye, 2003). An individual without entrepreneurial skills might not be able to access the fullness of information and resources available because it's locked up in old habits, structures, patterns, concepts and perceptions (Akinboye, 2003). This is why entrepreneurship, generative perception, constructive and design thinking and plus innovation should form the basis of any education for sustainable development.

Souksavanh, (2014) explained that entrepreneurship is a quality inherent in the minds of entrepreneurs that helps form enterprises, produce jobs, create new goods and services, promote innovation, and increase welfare. Entrepreneurial abilities are those that an entrepreneur needs to analyze problems, possibilities, and settings as well as help him or her structure a firm or enterprise, manage and take on risk (Gakure *et al.*, 2013). Afolabi and Macheke (2012) motivation, the ability to gather resources, financial management, human resource management, marketing, and technical abilities are all essential for the growth of SMEs (2012). A reduction in performance is linked to a skill's weakness.

However, there is a need for every individual or leader to possess one or two skills to function optimally in their roles and responsibilities. Entrepreneurship is not left out in skill acquisition to assume the risk of establishing a business. Moska (2013), entrepreneurial skill is an individual's entrepreneurial talents, the capacity to combine both natural traits and outside resources is known as entrepreneurial skill. Entrepreneurship skills are merely business abilities that people learn to help them succeed in the competitive business environment whether they are self-employed or entrepreneurs. To thrive as an entrepreneur, you need to have certain abilities, but the majority of them can be learned and developed through practice (Ezeani, Osita & Ezemoyih, 2012). Entrepreneurship should be associated with both thought and expertise.

For the growth and operation of their firms, managers require entrepreneurial abilities (Papulová, 2007). Reza *et al.*, (2010) define entrepreneurial skills are specialized technical knowledge that entrepreneurs should possess in order to fulfil their duties and these skills are developed through study and experience. Sousa and Almedia (2014) assert that entrepreneurship is divided into the development of innovative business ideas and intra preneurship which is the creative development of a function. Spencer and Spencer (1993) define entrepreneurial talents are underlying personal qualities that are tangentially related to effective and/or exceptional performance in a job or circumstance. Kaur and Bains (2013) define the personal traits of an individual who takes risks in order to make money in a commercial enterprise.



The underlying characteristic denotes that the abilities are a pretty substantial and long-lasting aspect that can provide insight into an individual kind of behaviour that can predict behaviour in certain situations. Martina, Hana, and Ji (2012) describe the skills of entrepreneurship as a set of specific knowledge, skills, values, motivations, attitudes, and attributes required for each person's successful personal growth and involvement in a company. A person's capacity to exhibit the proper entrepreneurial behaviour, such as the ability to see opportunities and launch and maintain a firm (Rezaei-Zadeh et al., 2014). Sanda (2011), it can also be referred to as particular human behaviours and traits that lead to efficient or outstanding performance. Fazel and Itri (2014) identified four skills such as strategic skill, supervisory skill, individual talents and management skills are important for Nigerian businesses.

Stevenson (1993) contended that entrepreneur needs an inventive talent that includes of cognitive skills like creative; behavioural skills like problem-solving skills are the type of cognitive capacity. The advancement of entrepreneurs rely on several factors such as think creatively, come up with novel solutions, and overcome obstacles in their environment. (Stevenson, 1993). Bosire and Nzaramba (2013) entrepreneurial skill development could serve as a metric for enhancing the self-reliance of startups and established entrepreneurs. In a similar vein, Coric, Katavic, and Kopecki (2011) asserted that the success of an entrepreneur relies on incorporating essential entrepreneurial skills for starting businesses, as well as on their survival and growth in their early years. Undiayaundeye (2015) further proposed that lack of entrepreneurial skills among graduates, degeneration to the unsuccessful entrepreneurial journey of business owners, low profitability margin, low rate of return on investment, and low return on equity have affected the success of SMEs. This context served as the backdrop for the study's examination of the impact of entrepreneurial abilities on advancement of SMEs

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The secret to growth and wealth in many nations is entrepreneurial activity. Given that entrepreneurship growth is the primary driver of economic development, the majority of these entrepreneurial activities call for very strong entrepreneurial qualities and abilities (Harper, 2003). Nigeria is a global leader in entrepreneurial spirit, according to the Global Entrepreneurial Monitor (2012), and it possesses the required abilities and knowledge. Nevertheless, the number of SMEs keep increasing due to the economy of the country where government cannot provide job for all the citizens. It is not an overstatement that some SMEs are failing but this has not decreased the number of SME. In order to fully capitalize on the value of the company, SMEs must not only struggle to secure financial help but also to use that money appropriately and align their various abilities. Any business, regardless of size, depends on its ability to act as an entrepreneur.



There have been various research on the relationship between entrepreneurial abilities and the growth of SMEs, but there have been few or no studies explicitly on the impact of some skills such as communication, innovative and interpersonal skills on SME growth. This study sought to examine the various entrepreneurship abilities on SME advancement.

1.3 Aim: The aim of the study is to examine the influence of entrepreneurship skills on the advancement of SMEs. Specific objectives are to:

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of entrepreneurship skills on the advancement of SMEs. Specific objectives are to:

- (a) Determine the influence of communication skills on the advancement of SME
- (b) Determine the influence of innovation skills on the advancement of SME
- (c) Determine the influence of interpersonal skills on the advancement of SME

1.5 Hypotheses

The Null hypotheses were tested

- (i) Ho: There is no significant influence of communication skills on the advancement of SME
- (ii) Ho: There is no significant influence of innovation skills on the advancement of SME
- (iii) Ho: There is no significant influence of interpersonal skills on the advancement of SME

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The relevant theories that guide the study are the human capital theory and the leadership theory of entrepreneurship.

Human Capital Theory (HCT)

In 1964, Becker created the basic version of the theory. He referred to human capital as the abilities and information that people develop as a result of their investments in education, work training, and other sorts of experience. It consists of the information and abilities that people possess. The theory is most appropriate because it examines the particular insights, abilities, cognitive traits, and aptitudes of entrepreneurs which are some of the entrepreneur skills that can enhance the advancement of SMEs. It also examined the achieved qualities, accumulated work, and behaviours that may enhance or hinder productivity are also included. It symbolizes a resource that is unevenly distributed across individuals and is crucial to comprehending variations in opportunity identification and exploitation (Fatoki, 2011).



The notion contends that those who have greater or more human capital perform better when carrying out duties. The hypothesis contends that knowledge increases people's cognitive capacities, resulting in potential behaviour that is more productive and efficient. In the same thought, an individual who possesses the quality of more human capital traits ought to be more adept at spotting lucrative prospects for new economic activity. Such people should be exceptionally skilled at successfully utilizing possibilities after they have begun the entrepreneurial process.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Theory (ELT)

The second theory that is related to this study is According to this theory, the fundamental benchmark for company management is the care for completing tasks and the concern for the individuals performing the work. Hemphill (1959) asserts the theory revolves around the assessment evolved from earlier studies that attempted to define the critical component of leadership. The school suggests that an entrepreneur should have the ability to translate a vision into reality. An entrepreneur needs to be capable of inspiring, organizing, and directing others. Kao (1989) describes the institution as interested in how a leader completes tasks and attends to the needs of others. The theory is relevant because an entrepreneur is regarded as one who manages the business and also relies on the employees to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization.

The centre of change and values-encouraging is the leadership role, which is more significant. Additionally, it calls for the capability of establishing precise objectives and opening doors. Leaders must effectively mentor and develop their followers. Muhammad and Andow (2010) describe effective leaders are those who establish a vision and institutionalize it. An entrepreneur is more than a manager in the aforementioned position because he is also a leader when it comes to mentoring.

Entrepreneurial Skills and Organization Advancement

The word entrepreneurship originated from the two Latin terms “prehendere” and “apprehension” meaning individual or collective and developing new business ideas respectively (Sousa & Almedia, 2014). Muogbo & John-Akamelu (2018) examined the effect of entrepreneurial skills on youth unemployment reduction in Nigeria. The study used a case study of 160 respondents from ABC Transport Company in Anambra State, to obtain data on curbing the youth unemployment problem, basic training on savings mobilization and business growth, and how entrepreneurial development lessons unemployment. The results of the frequency count and chi-square tests showed that entrepreneurial skills and businesses can engender youth employment. Yusuf (2017) carried out to investigate the relationship between youth business empowerment and entrepreneurship skills. Using a cross-sectional survey of 294 in Doguwa local government of Kano State Nigeria was administered with a questionnaire for data collection.



The analyses were done using frequency and percentage tables, mean and standard deviations; and Pearson linear correlation and regression analysis. It was found that youth business empowerment (entrepreneurship education and financial support) has a positive, strong and significant relationship with entrepreneurship skills. This entrepreneurship demonstrates the significant business knowledge and drives of Albanian university graduates (Akinboye, 2003). Asogwa & Anah (2017) carried out a study to examine the effect of entrepreneurial activities on the standard of living, the impact of multiple taxations on entrepreneurial activities, and the extent to which entrepreneurial activities created job employment for the people of Enugu State. The survey was carried out with data obtained through structured questionnaires administration was analysed with chi-square.

The results showed that entrepreneurial activities create job opportunities which subsequently enhance job employment and standard of living. Afolabi *et al.*, (2017) examined the effect of entrepreneurship education on self-employment initiatives. The survey study covered 100 respondents randomly selected from the science and technology students of Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. Data generated from self-administered questionnaires were analysed using the percentage, ranking, correlation and regression analysis techniques. The findings showed that entrepreneurship education has a positive effect on self-employment initiatives.

Johnson, Snowden, Mukhuty, Fletcher & Williams (2015) also carried out an empirical study to evaluate the entrepreneurial skills required to achieve better financial performance for the firm. They found out that interpersonal skills have a significant relationship with the firm's financial performance and therefore entrepreneurs require various skills inclusive of interpersonal skills to register their business success. Kinyua (2014) investigated the factors affecting the performance of Small businesses in Limuru town market in Kenya. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 275 micro and small businesses and using a descriptive research design, SPSS output revealed that access to finance and availability of management experience are the key determinants of business performance. Other factors that were found to affect business performance include; access to business information, access to infrastructure, government policy and regulation".

Cooney (2013) analyzed entrepreneurial skills for growth oriented business, and found that interpersonal skills are critically important for business growth. He ascertains that interpersonal skills enable the business to have successful links with the key players in the market and thus improving the business performance". Macheke (2012) conducted an analysis of entrepreneurial and business skills and training needs in the SME plastic manufacturing industry in South Africa. Skills studied included; financial, legal, communication and strategy among others. After collecting data from 74 respondents, the result revealed a strong relationship between training in entrepreneurial skills and the success of an organization.



The respondents are too small to represent the entire manufacturing SMEs in the whole of South Africa. Cooney (2013) posits innovation skills is pointed out as one of the most important requirements of an entrepreneur because it was found to significantly affect financial performance. Entrepreneurs should therefore be innovators, which strive to do things better and differently.

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Lagos State, Western part of Nigeria, using descriptive research design. The target population of the study covers SMEs registered with SMEDAN in Lagos State as at the year 2019. The stratified sampling technique was employed to select SME's different sectors including; manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, retail and service; which comprise 260 staff of Company A (63), Company B (70), Company C (59) and Company D (67) of selected SMEs, Ikorodu, Lagos. The taro yamane formula (1967) was adopted to determine the sample size. The Taro Yamane formula for determining the sample size is given by:

$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$ Where:

n = Signifies sample size

N = Signifies population size

e = Signifies margin of error (0.05)

$n = 260 / (1 + 260 (0.05)^2)$

$n = 260 / (1 + 260 (0.0025))$

$n = 260 / (1 + 0.65)$

$n = 260 / 1.65$

$n = 158$

Thus the sample size is 158

Table 1: Sampling Frame

S/N	Company	Staff Strength	Proportion	Sample Size
1.	Company A	63	$\frac{158(63)}{260}$	38
2.	Company B	70	$\frac{158(70)}{260}$	43
3	Company C	59	$\frac{158(59)}{260}$	36
4	Company D	67	$\frac{158(67)}{260}$	41
	Total	260		158

Source: Field Survey, 2021



The representative samples of 158 were selected using random sampling method but only 128 questionnaire was returned completely filled after data screening. The research instrument responses was based on a Likert 5-point rating scale. A pilot study of twenty (20) respondents was conducted on the population that is not involved in the study to determine the instrument reliability using cronbach Alpha coefficient method. The reliability coefficient of 0.92 was obtained. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation statistical method.

4.1 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

	Female	Male
	40 (31.3)	88 (68.8)

N.B *Figures in parentheses are percentages

Table 2 above shows a representation of gender in the population of the 128 respondents. The percentage of the respondents based on gender shows 31.25% female and 68.75% male. This implies that there are more male respondents than female respondents who participated in the study.

Table 3: Age of Respondents

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
25 - 30	10	8.0
31 -35	23	18.0
36 - 40	75	59.0
41 above	20	15.0

Table 3 shows that respondents between 25-30 years are only 8.0%, 18% of respondents are between 31-35 years, 36-40 years were 59% while 41yrs and above are only 15% of the total population. This means majority of the respondents are between 36-40 years.

Table 4: Respondents By Marital Status

	Frequency	Percentage
Single	46	36.0
Married	82	64.0



Table 4 shows that respondents who are single 36%, and only 64% are married to the total population. This means the majority of the respondents are married.

Table 5: Respondents By Educational Qualification

	Frequency	Percentage
ND/NCE	35	27.0
HND/B.Sc	65	51.0
MSc/MBA	28	22.0

Table 5 shows that 27% of the respondents are ND/NCE holders, 51% are HND/BSc, and 22% are MSc. /MBA holders. The results indicated that the majority of the respondents are HND/B.Sc holders.

Null Hypotheses

Table 6: Correlation Analysis

	r	N	Significance (2sided)	Remark
There is no significant influence of communication skills on the advancement of SME	0.97**	128	0.00	Significant
<i>There is no significant influence of innovative skills on the advancement of SME</i>	0.88**	128	0.00	Significant
There is no significant influence of interpersonal skills on the advancement of SME	0.88**	128	0.00	Significant

The association between communication abilities and SME advancement as shown by Pearson Product Moment analysis is seen in Table 6 above. With a correlation of ($r = 0.97$) and a significance level of ($p < 0.05$), it was found that there is a substantial positive influence of communication skills on SME advancement. Thus, improving communication abilities is necessary for SME development. It further implies that communication abilities affect SME development. Additionally, table 6 above displays the outcome of Pearson Product Moment correlation in establishing the influence of innovation skills on advancement of SMEs.



With a correlation of ($r = 0.88$) and a significance level of ($p < 0.05$), it was found that there is a significant positive influence of innovation skills on SME development. It implies that the development of SMEs is influenced by innovative skills. The association between interpersonal abilities and SME advancement as determined by Pearson Product Moment analysis is seen in Table 6 above. With a correlation of ($r = 0.88$) and a significance level of ($p < 0.05$), it was found that there is a significant positive influence of interpersonal skills on the development of SMEs. It implies that the development of SMEs is influenced by interpersonal skills.

4.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results showed that:

1. Communication skills has a significant influence on SME advancement
2. Innovation skills has a significant influence on SME advancement
3. Interpersonal skills has a significant influence on SME advancement

4.3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the study shows that communication skills has a significant influence on SMEs' advancement. This means that communication skill significantly affect SMEs' success. This is supported by the study conducted by Wanjiku & Lumwagi (2014) who ascertained that communication skills play a very central role in high financial performance; and also Wagner, Liston, & Miller (2011) who established that just the presence of communication infrastructure without communication skills would not guarantee increase in financial performance of an organization. The study also showed that innovation skills has significant influence on SMEs' advancement. This means that innovation skills significantly affect SMEs' success. This conforms to Cooney (2013) who pointed out that innovation skills is one of the most important requirements of an entrepreneur because it was found out to be significantly affecting financial performance. The entrepreneurs should therefore be innovators, that strive to do things better and differently; and Freel (2005) who examined the pattern of innovation and skills in small firms. This study was done on a sample of 1345 SMEs of North Britain and found out that there is a relationship between innovation skills and processes in manufacturing SMEs.

The findings show that interpersonal skills have a significant positive influence on SMEs' advancement. This means that interpersonal skills significantly affect SMEs' success. This conforms to Cooney (2013) who opined that interpersonal skills enable the business to have successful links with the key players in the market and thus improving the business performance and Johnson et al.,(2015) who found out that interpersonal skills have a significant relationship with the firm's financial performance and therefore entrepreneurs require various skills inclusive of interpersonal skills to register their business success.



5.0. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is evident that entrepreneurship skills are key for SMEs' advancement. Acquiring entrepreneurship skills such as communication skills, innovation skills and interpersonal skills will go a long way to enhance the success of small and medium enterprises and make them more productive to themselves and society at large leading to improving the economy. The study results are consistent with the conclusion drawn by (Mohammed & Obeleagu-nzelibe, 2014; Kinyua, 2014) that found that entrepreneurship skill has a significant effect on SMEs performance; this implies that business owners that have more entrepreneurship skills are more likely to have more performing business organizations, in addition, it demonstrates that increase in entrepreneurship skills will lead to increase in organizational growth.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the study's findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. In order to boost the performance of small and medium-sized businesses, business owners and managers should concentrate on developing their entrepreneurship abilities. This will contribute to economic growth, the decrease of unemployment, and wealth maximization.
2. Entrepreneurs should endeavour to study and understand the interaction of these skills and the relationship that exist among them, as the understanding of their relationship and interaction will in turn help successfully manage efforts in businesses and thereby direct efforts to effective and efficient utilization of business resources.
3. Entrepreneurs should develop good mindset towards skills development in all concerned aspects of entrepreneurship to help in improving and increasing their capacity to grow their business.
4. Existing business owners should periodically evaluate their businesses to determine the level of growth and make moral inputs to build in themselves or acquire entrepreneurial skills for better performance productivity
5. The government can do more by emphasizing entrepreneurial skill acquisition at the grass root of the educational system which will broaden the minds of learners as to the inherent benefit of entrepreneurial skills.
6. For growth of SMEs in Lagos State, and Nigeria at large, entrepreneurs need to acquire entrepreneurial skills for strategic planning for their enterprises through such area as decision making, resource allocation and innovation.



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Manpower Planning Process and Organizational Productivity of Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigate Manpower planning process and organizational productivity of selected Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in Delta State, Nigeria. Manpower planning is a strategy for the acquisition, utilization, improvement and preservation of an organization's employee. Thus, it plays essential role in the attainment of organizational goals and earning of competitive edge. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Data were obtained through primary and secondary sources. The total population of the study was 2673 staff drawn from three (3) MDAs in Delta State, Nigeria; out of which a sample size of three hundred and thirty-six (336) was drawn with the aid of Freund and William's sample size determination formula. Structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents. Data collected was presented in tables and simple percentages, the formulated hypotheses were tested with correlation and OLS multiple regression; post regression diagnostic test (PRTD) was carried out as well to certify the regression model before generalization, which includes: test for multi-collinearity using the VIF test, test for heteroskedasticity and the Ramsey regression specification-error test for omitted variables (Ramsey RESET). The study also adopted stata version 13 of the statistical package for data analysis. The result of the study