ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AMONG IGBO TRADERS IN ANAMBRA STATE

1Ezeanolue Uju Scholarstica, 2Onwuchekwa Faith Chidi & 3Nwosu Kanayo Chike

1&2Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria
3Department of Marketing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria

Corresponding Author: Ezeanolue Uju Scholarstica
Corresponding Author Email: ae.arachie@unizik.edu.ng

Article Received: 27-04-22 Accepted: 10-05-22 Published: 19-05-22

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of entrepreneurial training on the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State. The population of the study consists of all the SMEs owned by Igbo traders in Anambra State. Multi-staged sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of the study. The study employed descriptive and inferential statistics on a sample of 482 respondents. Simple percentages and regression analysis of Ordinary Least Square (OLS) were used to analyze the study. From the analysis of the study, findings revealed that: Business risk has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Business skills were found to be statistically significant in influencing the performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Mentorship has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Business communication has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Business tolerance has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. It was concluded that entrepreneurial training has a significant positive influence on the performance of small and medium enterprises among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Among other this, it
was recommended that the owners of SMEs particularly should strive to learn enterprise risk management and that their training in business skills is imperative. 

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Training, Performance, Small and Medium Enterprises, Igbo Traders and Anambra state.

---

### INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have played a very significant role in the socio-economic transformation of both advanced and emerging economies in terms of their contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), job creation and the fight against poverty. The sector has thus remained a remarkable and vital force for economic growth and empowerment of the local populace (Anggadwita & Mustafid, 2014). In this era of private sector-driven growth, businesses are forced by competition to push beyond the boundaries to sustain their competitive advantage and also develop the competency to succeed. Consequently, the basic characteristics and advantages of SMEs in thriving in the global economy, the government in various countries are lending support to the sector to help enhance the growth of SMES's business model (Ibrahim, Abdullah & Ismail, 2016).

In most developing countries and Nigeria in particular, successive governments have initiated various development programmes aimed at improving the business models of SMEs by way of training business owners on how to take business risks, develop business skills, undergo mentorship, and acquire good business communication skills and develop business tolerance. All these characteristics are acquired through entrepreneurial training (Sial, Rathore & Khan, 2020). Sial, Rathore and Khan (2020) posit that entrepreneurial training is one of the key components in the success of any firm and has been a topical issue in the area of strategic management and entrepreneurship in the past few years.

Today, the rising rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria orchestrated by rising business mortality has brought about the critical importance of entrepreneurial training to the success of businesses, particularly SMEs. Among the SMEs business model, the Igbo man model seems to be relatively more successful when compared with similar businesses owned by people from other extractions in Nigeria, thus suggesting that there is behind the scene principles that propel their business success which, therefore, warrants an empirical study of this nature (Iwueke, Halima & Oparaku, 2020; Anigbogu, Onwuteaka & Okoli, 2019; Chinweuba & Ezeugwu, 2017). Considering the importance of the entrepreneurial training construct and how it enhances the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in most advanced economies, there is a need to empirically examine entrepreneurial training and performance of SMEs among Igbo traders, hence, necessitating this study.

This study was informed by the low performance of the Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) noted that small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria have contributed about 48% -on average -to the national GDP in the last five years. Totalling about 17.4 million enterprises, they account for about 50% of industrial jobs and nearly 90% of activities in the manufacturing sector, in terms of the number of enterprises. Despite the significant contribution of SMEs to the Nigerian economy, challenges persist that hinder the growth and development of the sector. Challenges encountered by the sector include lack of skilled manpower, the multiplicity of taxes, high
cost of doing business, among others (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS] 2020; Price Waterhouse Coopers International Limited [PwCIL], 2020). The lack of skilled manpower suggests that the low performance of SMEs in Nigeria is attributed to a lack of entrepreneurial training. Entrepreneurial training is mostly considered a "cultural construct" with a number of dimensions including pro-activeness, risk-taking and innovativeness that propels the success of a firm. Among Igbo traders in Anambra State and in other parts of the country where they are domiciled, entrepreneurial training is a basic prerequisite for setting up a trade. Therefore, considering the rising business mortality in the country and Anambra State, in particular, it is uncertain if Igbo traders in Anambra State still undergo entrepreneurial training, thus warranting an empirical investigation.

Objectives of the Study
The main objective of the study is to examine entrepreneurial training and performance of SMEs among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Specifically, the study examines the extent to which business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and, business tolerance have affected the sales performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Entrepreneurial Training
Entrepreneurial Training Program is created to provide an alternate route to gainful employment for economically disadvantaged individuals through the establishment of their businesses. Despite the increase in the amount of research conducted in the area of entrepreneurship training and education, Jennings and Hawley (1996) suggest that many entrepreneurship training initiatives do not actually address the real needs of entrepreneurs. They feel that there is often a significant gap between the perceptions of the training providers and those of the entrepreneurs in terms of training needs, for what sometimes appear as key problem areas to the trainer may have little importance for the entrepreneur. This may be because many providers have limited managerial or vocational experience in small firms and fail to understand the practical problems facing entrepreneurs.

Timmons and Spinelli (2004) mention that there is a limit to what can be taught in entrepreneurship training programmes and that the only way to learn is through one’s personal experience. With this in mind, they see the quality of the resulting business plan as a key measure of effective experiential learning. In the various surveys reported on by Dunsby (1996), financial management and marketing have also been highlighted as critical areas in which entrepreneurs require assistance.

This section investigates entrepreneurship education and training further by focusing on entrepreneurial training models. Two training models are discussed to serve as a basis for the chapters that follow. Content analysis is done on various entrepreneurship programmes to investigate the main areas of training that trainers and facilitators need to focus on. In this study, entrepreneurial training programmes are business skills training, technical skills training and entrepreneurial skills training. This chapter explores these skills further utilizing models. The objectives, design, content and duration of entrepreneurship training programmes are described, as well as how to measure the effectiveness of such programmes.
Business Risks
Business risks are those threats that mitigate against a company's ability to achieve its goals. These goals are usually achieved through profit-making. In other words, business risk is usually a danger that threatens the original plan of a business and risk-taking in business is usually associated with opportunity (Mohammed & Knapkova, 2016). Risk is inevitable in business. Businesses that take risks arguably do better than businesses that avert risk. However, the ability to take risks or avert risks is individualistic because a business owner must be intelligent enough to know when an opportunity presents itself. Although there are divergent views on the predictive effect of enterprise risk management on the performance of a business. Quon, Zeghal and Maingot (2012) posit that enterprise risk management information did not predict or have any appreciable effect on business performance. This assertion was based on the findings of their study of twenty-four firms during and after the 2008 global financial crisis. Incidentally, only two of the firms showed statistically significant differences supporting the research hypothesis. Contrary to these findings there is sufficient evidence that board oversight of enterprise risk management was associated with superior performance in value preservation and creation (Li, 2018). This was corroborated by Munther, Abbadi, Al-Omush and Ahmad (2021) who posits that risk management contributed to the financial and non-financial performance and also help the firm to gain a competitive advantage and superior performance.

Business Skills
Business skills are needed by managers for the development and running of their businesses (Papulová, 2007). It has been defined by Reza, Javadin, Amin, Tehrani and Ramezani (2010) as specialized technical knowledge that entrepreneurs should possess to perform their roles and these skills are acquired through learning and experience. This view looks at a large organization having different levels of management where a manager at each level is expected to possess a specific skill. Nurach, Thawesaengkulthai and Chandrachai (2012) also conducted a survey of some selected SMEs in Thailand and measured skills in terms of leadership; Functional skills; Team selection and team development: Communication. Decision-making and problem-solving skills: Managing cross-geographical team members are highlighted which might be irrelevant as SMEs involve a small number of employees who are largely from the same geographical location. Lowden (1988) in his study titled "managerial skills for the entrepreneur" came up with four areas an entrepreneur needs to develop in order to be a strong and successful manager; they include planning, organizing, leading and controlling. He concludes that an entrepreneur needs to have the following skills; planning skills; deals with establishing goals and ways of achieving them, organizing skills; arranging work and people to accomplish set objectives, controlling skills; making sure that performance conforms with plans and leading skills; encouraging the human factor in performance. Based on the above review, we can conclude that much taxonomy of business skills is ambiguous to be useful, others cover similar skills but different terms were used to describe them and there is no absolute set of skills.

Mentorship
Arogundade (2013) defines a mentor as the person that facilitates personal and professional growth of an individual by sharing the knowledge and insight that have been learned through the years. Mentoring is a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or
more knowledgeable person helps less experienced ones (Kram, 1985). Ojedokun (2013) while citing Galbraith (2001) views mentoring as a process by which persons of superior rank and prestige instruct, counsel, guide, and facilitate the intellectual and/or career development of persons identified as protégées. Mentoring is a close, developmental relationship between two people in which a partner willingly avails him/herself of the full range of superior experience, knowledge, skills, or status of the other partner in all spheres of human endeavour (Okurame, 2013). Bilesanmi (2013) posits that mentoring is a set of tailor-made advice and incentive that more experienced staff, in an innovative way can offer less experienced members in a plethora of ways and a range of competencies. Mentoring is therefore a process in which mature and more experienced managers share their wisdom and experience with the younger employees on a one on one basis. Mentoring is a method growing in use for establishing the relationship between junior and senior employees, a method gaining popularity in facilitating both employee and management development in the organization (Russel, 2004).

Mentoring relationship involves the exchange of wisdom, learning and developing of skills and knowledge about the organization for the protégé’s career growth (Akinbobola, 2013). There are two major dimensions of the mentoring relationship which are career support and psychosocial support functions. Career support functions include sponsorship, coaching, exposure to important contacts and resources, visibility, facilitating the protection of the mentee and assignment of challenging work to enhance the protégé’s career. Psychosocial support functions embrace role modelling, friendship, counselling, acceptance, and confirmation of the mentee (Clutterbuck, 2004). Mentoring is among the few tools used/needed for preparing tomorrow's skilled employees and is also used to strengthen organizational capabilities, and intelligence, build organisation knowledge and sustain the organization's competitive advantage (Adeyemi, 2013). Organisations whether public or private have two distinguishable resources; human and material. The former are the people, workforce, manpower or employee of such organisations without whom the latter becomes useless. Mentoring covers the activities often designed and encouraged by management to develop its personnel and ensure that they improve and maintain the organisation's competitive advantage (Okurame, 2013). The interest in mentoring made Yarmohammadian (2006) to state that organizations are social systems where human resources are the most important factors for effectiveness and efficiency.

**Business Communication**

Communication refers to the process by which information is transmitted and understood between two or more people” (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). Communication is an integral part of the organizational process as the flow of communication up and down the organizational hierarchy has its effects on efficiency, decision-making and morale of organizations. Thus, effective communication is regarded as the foundation of organizations today (Witherspoon, 1997; Von Krogh e al., 2000). Communication strategies are common in the business world, where they are used as part of a business plan, detailing how to communicate with various groups of people. A single business may have multiple strategies for different categories of people, such as clients, investors, competitors or employees. Some companies even have an internal communication strategy for communicating within the
business itself. These strategies are used to determine things like what information to share with the clients or investors, as well as how that information should be presented.

All human interactions are forms of communication. In this business world, nothing can be achieved without effectively communicating with employers, employees, clients, suppliers, and customers. If you look at the most successful business people in the world, you will see people who have mastered the art of communication. Business all over the world today is very challenging. To stay profitable in the highly challenging and competitive global market economy all factors at production (i.e men, machines and materials), should be wisely managed. Among the factors of production, human resource constitutes the biggest challenge because, unlike inputs, employee management demands skilful handling of thoughts, feelings and emotions to secure the highest productivity. Effective organizational communication plays an important role in this challenge. Communication has a crucial impact among workgroups in that organizational communication is a channel to flow information, resources, and even policies. “Organizational communication can be broadly defined as communication with one another in the context of an organization

Business Tolerance
To act entrepreneurially is neither a miracle nor is it merely necessitated by circumstances of deprivation or any conditions of living. It is an inevitable challenge – and one must encounter these challenges and failures unless one looks for a salaried job. In essence, entrepreneurship is about successes and failures, bearing in mind that a small start-up will have to compete with established giants for quality products in the same marketplace. Many firm managers might confess willingness to take risks at some point, but few would consider tolerating failure as a risk worth taking. In fact, few would consider the tolerance of failure as a risk rather than a potential loss of business. Yet, the ability to tolerate failure would determine the extent to which a firm is prepared to take risks and enhance its entrepreneurial behaviour for better performance (Kang 2013; Zimmerman 2010).

Performance
Academic literature is replete with several definitions of performance and business performance in particular. Generally, performance is understood as the ability of a company to achieve goals, i.e. meet expectations, and is therefore influenced by results in a wider sense, but also by the corresponding goal setting. However, to measure business performance, you need to track relevant business metrics, also known as key performance indicators, that display a measurable value and show the progress of the business goals. It entails measuring the actual performance of a business against intended goals. It is important to remember that business performance can also be defined as the ability of a company to generate maximum commercial profitability from the material and human resources at its disposal. Grüning (2002) posits that performance is understood as the ability of a company to achieve goals, i.e. meet expectations, and is therefore influenced by results in a wider sense, but also by the corresponding goal setting. Krause (2005) states that performance refers to the degree of the achievement of objectives or the potentially possible accomplishment regarding the important characteristics of an organization for the relevant stakeholders. Performance is therefore principally specified through a multidimensional set of criteria. The source of the performance is the actions of players in the business processes.
Theoretical Framework
This study is anchored on the Behaviorist Learning Theory by Greeno, Collins and Resnick (1996). The theory assumed that behaviour is to be understood as a response of an organism to stimuli in a situation. What one learns is influenced by elements in the environment not by the individual learner. Theorists influenced by this paradigm concentrate on changes in observable behaviour as evidence of learning. Essentially, this understanding of learning does not address what is going on in the head of the student or trainee as the focus is more on learners appropriating a routine (Torrington, Hall and Taylor, 2005). Learning theories in the behaviourist tradition make varying assumptions about the processes by which stimulus-response associations are strengthened and weakened in the events of an organism’s activity and experience (Greeno, Collins and Resnick, 1996). What someone knows is often a reflection of that person's experience and coming to know something requires an experience in which that knowledge can be acquired. The teacher's role is to design an environment that 'elicits desired behaviour and extinguishes undesirable behaviour' (Merriam et al, 2007).
Applying the theory to this study, we can deduce that Igbo enshrine a legacy of the behavioural approach into an apprentice which can be seen in the apprenticeship training process where the master layout explicit 'behavioural objectives that are to be reproduced by the apprentice as a daily routine exercise during apprenticeship. Behaviourist approaches to business learning legitimize learning as a 'process that enables business owners to detect and prevent errors, accurately transfer information, or successfully achieve goals.'

Empirical Review
Nnonyeluand Onyeizugbe (2020) did a study on reimagining Igbo Apprenticeship, bringing it up to speed with contemporary realities. The paper sought to interrogate the practice and direction of Igbo apprenticeship, with a particular interest in unravelling the reasons for the declining interest in apprenticeship generally among Igbo youths in South East, Nigeria. The paper was an exploratory, qualitative research paper premised on desk research encapsulating a comprehensive review of ethnographic and historical records while also utilizing the observation method in informal workplaces and trading sites spread across diverse work settings. The findings indicated that the much talked about Igbo apprenticeship is facing significant challenges, and several factors have combined to demarket Igbo apprenticeship, making it less appealing to unemployed youths, with grave implications for unemployment, wealth creation and poverty reduction.
Iwueke, Halima and Oparaku (2020) examined apprenticeship training system and business sustainability in Anambra State. The researcher used a population of 1000 respondents from different trades/ crafts/businesses. Questionnaire was the main instrument of data collection while Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses. Findings reveal that the level of education of the apprentices determines the acquisition of the trade knowledge and also the Masters' willingness to mentor the apprentices who must be ready and can learn.
Orugunand Nafiu,(2014) carried out an exploratory study of Igbo entrepreneurial activity and business success in Nigeria as the panacea for economic growth and development. Both primary and secondary source for gathering reliable and adequate data and information was adopted by the study. Taro Yamane sampling method was adopted to determine the sample size, and Bowler's proportional allocation method to distribute questionnaires. Descriptive
statistical tool, tables and Lakers Scale method were used. The study revealed that the Igbo entrepreneurial activities are the panacea for the Nigerian economic growth and development, Ekesiobi and Dimnwobi (2020) wrote on the economic assessment of the Igbo entrepreneurship model for entrepreneurial development in Nigeria: Evidence from Clusters in Anambra State. This study presented an economic investigation of the entrepreneurship practice of the Igbos of South-Eastern Nigeria. It was intended to deepen entrepreneurial development and employment generation in the country. The study adopted a quantitative approach to examine 1187 responses carefully drawn from the Onitsha and Nnewi business clusters in Anambra state. In addition to descriptive demonstrations, the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) technique is employed to estimate the effects of treatment on the treated by pairing treatment and control units with similar attributes on the propensity score and other likely covariates.

Khan, Rathore and Sial (2020) examined the entrepreneurial orientation and performance of small and medium enterprises. The researchers collected data from SMEs in Pakistan using a simple random sampling technique. Partial least square based structural equation modelling was used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses. Analysis revealed positive relationships between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial competencies, entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurial performance, entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial performance. Moreover, entrepreneurial competency has proved to be a mediator between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial performance.

Ishmael, Kingsley and Vhonani (2019) examined igba-boi apprenticeship approach: arsenal behind growing entrepreneurs success in Nigeria. The study was carried out using a survey research design grounded on a qualitative method. Purposive sampling was used to identify individuals with in-depth knowledge about this approach for a one-on-one interview and focus group discussion in selected regions of Nigeria. The data analyses were performed using Atlas. ti v8, through a thematic approach. The study revealed the approach involves three main stages: talent identification, the learning stage and the settlement/start-off stage.

Anigbogu, Onwuteaka and Okoli (2019) examined the Igbo man’s perspectives of apprenticeship and entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria: Implications to economic growth using the Principal Components Analysis (PCA) and the regression model of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS). A total sample of four hundred and eighty-two (482) SMEs owners of Igbo extraction were the respondents of this study. From the result of the PCA, the principal component that serves as motivation for apprenticeship by Igbo entrepreneurs is the cash infusion given to the apprentice as start-up capital. Secondly, the principal component from the Igbo man’s perspective of factors influencing entrepreneurial development is risk tolerance and thirdly, the principal component from the challenges in the Igbo man apprenticeship system is that apprentices sometimes steal from their masters and add to their start-up capital. Regression results revealed that all the three coefficients (The motivations for apprenticeship by Igbo entrepreneurs; Igbo man perspective of factors influencing entrepreneurial development; and challenges in the Igbo man apprenticeship system) have a significant effect on entrepreneurial development in southeast Nigeria.

Ezenwakwelu, Egbosionu and Okwo (2019) examined apprenticeship training effect on entrepreneurship development in developing economies: The study sought to ascertain how apprentices acquire technical and entrepreneurial skills for self-employment; assess the extent
to which apprentices acquire entrepreneurial skills and knowledge for entrepreneurship development, and also identify the challenges encountered by apprentices in course of skill acquisition. The study adopted the survey design and interviewed apprentices in specific vocations. The sampled data were analyzed using the Chi-square technique on Statistical Package for Social Science. The results revealed that apprentices acquire technical and entrepreneurial skills for self-employment through formal and informal apprenticeship training systems; lack of qualified manpower, insufficient training tools, inadequate infrastructure facilities and lack of start-up capital impede the course of skill acquisition and apprentices do ultimately acquire sufficient entrepreneurial skills and knowledge for entrepreneurship development.

Adebiyi, Banjo and Regin (2017) examined the performance of small and medium enterprises in Lagos State: The Implications of Finance. The research design adopted for this study is a survey research design. Data analysis and hypotheses test from 250 SME owners and operators using Pearson correlation and regression analysis indicate that there is a relationship between SME finance and business performance. Limited information on loan qualification criteria and high interest rates mostly posed a challenge to SMEs in their quest to access finance. Results also showed there is a significant relationship between financial management practices and the performance of SMEs.

Chinweuba and Ezeugwu (2017) examined the ontological foundation of Igbo entrepreneurship, The paper analytically investigated peculiar sources, circumstances and skills that are the fulcrum of increasing socio-economic performance of the Igbo people. The study found that the entrepreneurial performance of the Igbos is underscored by their economic culture and value, which are highly existential in their traditions and belief system. These are however fostered by the long years of marginalization by successive Nigerian governments, as well as other prominent factors in pre and post-independence Nigeria.

Nwanne and HCIB (2016) investigated the Implications of SMEs On South East development In Nigeria. The study empirically examined the relationship between small and medium enterprises Output and Igbo development in the South-Eastern part of Nigeria. Empirical evidence from the developed and developing economies has shown that small and medium enterprises have the capacity to influence the entire socio-economic development in Igbo land if it is well managed. Quantitative research design and multiple regressions were used to carry out this study. The results of the study indicated that SMEs contribute significantly to the development of Igbo land based on the magnitude and the level of significance of the coefficient and p-value. And there is a significant and positive relationship between Igbo development and small and medium enterprises output.

Sharmilee and Muhammad (2016 ) examined factors affecting the performance of SMEs in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The study was a cross-sectional study conducted among 74 SMEs owners/managers who were members of the Durban Chamber of Commerce online using an anonymous questionnaire. The results revealed technological advancement would improve the performance of the business. With regards to the challenge, the majority of the respondents viewed competition as a major challenge. Almost all the respondents indicated that crime and corruption affect business performance. Competition was the only factor among the studied internal and external factors that revealed a significant association with the performance of SMEs in KwaZulu-Natal (p= 0.011).
Summary of Literature
Related available studies on entrepreneurial training are rife with robust and insightful findings. Several studies on entrepreneurial training among Igbo traders have been conducted by researchers from various standpoints and varying literary perspectives. This study is however distinct from other studies because it investigated core variables like how to take business risks, develop business skills, how to go through mentoring, and achieving business communication are inculcating business tolerance into an apprentice. These core variables are not completely investigated by available works. Consequently, this study has modelled the variables to find out their effect on the performance of Igbo traders in Anambra State.

METHODOLOGY
This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design can be quantitative or qualitative, but this study is quantitative in nature. The population of the study consists of all the registered SMEs owned by traders from Igbo extraction in Anambra State. Multi-staged sampling technique was used to determine the sample size of the study. Data were collected from registered SMEs owned by traders from Igbo extraction in Anambra State. The study made use of primary data, using a well-structured questionnaire to obtain information from the respondents in the study area. The research instrument used for data collection is the structured questionnaire. It was used to obtain data from registered SMEs owned by traders from Igbo extraction in Anambra State. A total of 500 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. However, only four hundred and eighty-two (482) SMEs responded to the questionnaire. In order to validate the instrument, the questionnaire was given to three research and measurement experts to validate. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test re-test method. Forty copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered to randomly selected Igbo traders from timber market, Umuokpu-Awka, Anambra State. The same instrument was administered to the same respondents after two weeks. The coefficient of reliability for their responses was established using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. The result of the correlation analysis revealed a correlation of 0.961.

Frequency tables, simple percentages and regression analyses of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) were used to conduct the various analysis of this study. Regression technique of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) was applied using the t-statistic to test the hypotheses of the study. All the analyses were done using SPSS version 23.

Model Specification
The active learning model was modified by Akinruwa, Awolusi and Ibojo (2016) to examine the determinants of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) performance in Nigeria. The research employed funds, managerial skills, government policy, education and facilities as the determinants of SMEs. The study empirically stated its model as follows:

\[
SME = f(FND, MAS, GOP, EDN, FAC) \\
SME = \text{Small and medium enterprises proxied by industrial growth rate} \\
FND = \text{Funds} \\
MAS = \text{Managerial skills proxied by expenditure on skill acquisition} \\
GOP = \text{Government policy} \\
EDN = \text{Education} \\
FAC = \text{Facilities proxied by government expenditure on power}
\]
Using the knowledge gained from the above theoretical model, this study examined entrepreneurial training and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State by adopting Akinruwa, Awolusi and Ibojo’s type of model and modifying it to incorporate the weighted mean of business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and business tolerance among Igbo traders as explanatory variables while sales performance was used as explained variable or the dependent variable. Thus, the model for the study is stated as follows:

**Model:** entrepreneurial training and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State

The structural form of the model

\[ SP = f (BR, BS, MS, BC, BT) \]

The mathematical form of the model

\[ SP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BR + \beta_2 BS + \beta_3 MS + \beta_4 BC + \beta_5 BT \]

The econometric form of the model

\[ SP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BR + \beta_2 BS + \beta_3 MS + \beta_4 BC + \beta_5 BT + \mu \]

Where:

- \( SP \) = Sales Performance
- \( BR \) = Business Risk
- \( BS \) = Business Skills
- \( MS \) = Mentorship
- \( BC \) = Business Communication
- \( BT \) = Business Tolerance
- \( f \) = Functional relationship
- \( \beta_0 \) = the intercept or the constant
- \( \beta_1 - \beta_3 \) = the co-efficient of the explanatory variables
- \( \mu \) = Stochastic error term.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

The presentation and analysis of data collected from the field were carried out in this chapter. The aim is to present the data in an interpretable form so that the variables of the study can be well understood.

**Demographic Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1 shows that four hundred and ninety-six of the respondents representing 99.4% of the respondents are males while three of the respondents representing 0.6% of the respondents are females.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

As shown in table 2, twenty-three respondents, representing 4.8% of the respondents are between the ages of 18-32. Forty-eight respondents, representing 10.0% of the respondents, are between the ages of 31-40. Two hundred and thirty-eight respondents, representing 49.4% of the respondents, are between the ages of 41-50. Ninety-three respondents, which account for 19.2% of the respondents are between the ages of 51-60, while eighty respondents which account for 16.6% of the respondents are between the ages of 61-70.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td>94.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From table 3, all the respondents had formal education. Fifteen respondents representing 3.1% of the respondents had primary education. Four hundred and thirty-nine respondents representing 91.1% had secondary education while twenty-eight respondents representing 5.8% had tertiary education.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-30</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2021

With respect to business experience in private label, table 4 reveals that fifteen respondents representing 3.1% of the respondents had 1-5 years of business experience. Eighty-five respondents representing 17.7% of the respondents had 6-10 years of business experience. Ninety-seven respondents representing 20.1% of the respondents had 11-15 years of business experience, while two hundred and eighty-five respondents representing 59.1% of the respondents had 15-30 years of business experience.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Cumulative (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow/Widower</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2021
From table 5, three hundred and ninety-six respondents representing 82.2% of the respondents are married. Sixty-eight respondents representing 14.1% of the respondents are single, while eighteen respondents representing 3.7% of the respondents are widow/widower

**Regression Analysis Result**

Table 6

*Regression Result on entrepreneurial training and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant(C)</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>1.324</td>
<td>0.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Risk</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>7.887</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Skills</td>
<td>0.614</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>11.585</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>0.595</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>7.829</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Communication</td>
<td>0.565</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>7.062</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Tolerance</td>
<td>0.539</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>8.694</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0.921</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.898</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R²</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-statistic</td>
<td>111.401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2021

Dependent Variable: Sales Performance

Table 6 revealed the standard error, t-statistics and the probability value of each of the regression coefficients included in the model. It also reveals the R, R², adjusted R² and F-Statistics. The probability values revealed that all the regression coefficients - business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and business tolerance - are statistically significant in explaining the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State. From the result, all the regression coefficients have a positive relationship with the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State. Again, the table revealed that a year increase in training on business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and business tolerance will bring about an increase in the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State by 48.9%, 61.4%, 59.5%, 56.5% and 53.9% respectively. However, all the coefficients collective influence the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State by 87.1% thus indicating that increased training on business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and business tolerance have explained the variation in the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State by 87.1% while 12.9% is explained by other variables not captured in the model. This is explained by the coefficient of determination (Adj. R²) and the F–test explained the fitness of the model for the study which was also shown to be statistically significant.

**Summary of Findings**

From the analysis of the study, findings revealed that:

1. Business risk has a significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.
2. Business skills was found to be statistically significant in influencing the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.
3. Mentorship has a significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.
4. Business communication has a significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.

5. Business tolerance has a significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examined entrepreneurial training and performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State. The study specifically ascertained the effect of business risk, business skills, mentorship, business communication and business tolerance on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State. All the entrepreneurial training constructs were found to be significant and also have a positive relationship with the significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) among Igbo traders in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Owners of SMEs particularly should strive to learn enterprise risk management as findings revealed that it was associated with superior performance.

2. Business owners training on business skills is imperative. This could be achieved through apprenticeship.

3. Business owners should seek mentors in the same line of trade. This will enhance business collaborations and support.

4. Business communication was found to significantly influenced performance, therefore business owners should develop communication skills.

5. To enhance business tolerance, business owners should undergo tutelage and apprenticeship in the desired line of trade before venturing into the trade.

References


