
Entrepreneurial Competencies Needed for Effective Performance of Small Scale Business Owners in Kwara State

Bashiru Babatunde LAWAL and Prof. T. A., UMORU

Department of Business and Entrepreneurship Education, Kwara State University, Malete
Corresponding Email: Lawalbashir96@gmail.com or titus.amodu@kwasu.edu.ng | +2348032232959 or +2348033519030

Abstract: *The study was carried out to determine entrepreneurial competencies needed for the effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study stated two specific purposes to determine entrepreneurial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria from which two research questions were raised and answered and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested. The study adopted descriptive research survey design. The population of study consisted of 4,170 business owners/managers. From the population of study, the samples were drawn using multi-stage sampling technique to select two local governments from the three senatorial districts of Kwara State and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sampled business owners/managers and a sample size of 370 business owners/managers was obtained using Taro Yamani formular. A 58-item structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher titled; Questionnaire of entrepreneurial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State (QECNEPSSB) was used to gather data from business owners/managers. The questionnaire was conducted on the basis of research questions on a four point rating scale. A pilot test of the instrument was conducted at Oyo state with 20 business owners/managers. Cronbach Alpha method was used for the purpose of establishing the reliability of the instrument; the result yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.873. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using independent t-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that managerial competencies and marketing competencies, are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. The study concluded that managerial competencies and marketing competencies are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. The study concluded that managerial competencies are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. The implication of the aforementioned revealed that there is significance relationship between entrepreneurial competencies needed and effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. The study recommended that entrepreneurs (business/owners managers) should be trained on managerial competencies as it helps those in authority to plan, organize and control a business; there is the need for constant training of entrepreneurs on marketing skills because it is a societal process by which individuals and group obtained what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchange of products and services for value with others.*

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Small scale Business, Managerial competencies and marketing competencies.*

Introduction

In recent years unemployment has become a global problem in which many countries more especially developing countries instituted many programmes and policies to salvage this perennial problem. Entrepreneurship is one of the programmes supported by government at all levels considering the role of small scale business as a major employer of labour. (SMEDAN,2013). Entrepreneurship is the willingness, enthusiasm and ability of an individual to discover or seize any available business opportunity and transform it in a way that will better not only the lot of such individual but the society at large profitably. This can only be successful if

the entrepreneur possesses certain entrepreneurial competencies that can enable him/her explore business ideas, establish and sustain business venture profitably. Entrepreneur is an individual who possess the skills necessary to anticipate current and future needs and bring good new ideas to market. Successful entrepreneur is commonly seen as an innovator, a source of new ideas that can make the business aims and objectives realizable. Success in business environment largely depends on entrepreneurs' characteristics and these characteristics are embedded in entrepreneurial competencies that every entrepreneur must possess if he/ she must survive and grow in the business paradigm (Gupta and Khanka, 2010).

Competency is a combination of knowledge, skills, ability, attitude, and behaviour used to improve performance or as the state or quality of being adequately qualified and capable of performing a given role. Competency refers to behaviours that one demonstrates to meet the minimum performance standards (Phelon & Sharpley, 2012). Sanchez (2011) sees competencies as characteristics, which enhance an individual's performance or effectiveness at work while, entrepreneurial competencies are specific competencies relevant for the implementation of successful ventures. Mitchelmore and Rowley (2013) suggest that a key element of business success is presence of strategic planning. Furthermore, strategic planning is defined as a continuous process of monitoring and evaluating strategic goals of the business. A strategic goal entails the business goals (vision, mission and objectives), such as identifying long term and short term issues, problems and opportunities (Mitchelmore & Rowley, 2013).

Brits and Veldsman (2014), described competencies as a composite of the skills, attributes and knowledge needed to perform a specific job. There are set of knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitude that a person needs to be effective in a wide range of positions and various types of organizations (Pareek,2014) and they include planning competencies teamwork competencies, strategic action competencies, global awareness competencies, self- management competencies and communication competencies.

Competencies enable the staff of an organization to have a clear understanding of the behaviours to be exhibited and the levels of performance expected in order to achieve organizational results. They provide the individual with an indication of the behaviours and actions that will be valued, recognized and rewarded (Free Dictionary Online).

Using a competency framework enables an organization to successfully align its staff's skills, capabilities and knowledge with organizational priorities, resulting in business improvement and efficiencies (Free Dictionary Online).

Entrepreneurship competence is defined as the entrepreneur's ability to face critical situations effectively by considering environmental constraints and establishing relationships and internal resources (Iandoli, 2007: 17 in Solesvic, 2012). Entrepreneurial competency is referred to as an underlying characteristic such as specific knowledge, motives, traits, self-images, social roles, and skills that result in venture birth, survival and or growth. This includes the ability to multi-task, promote interest, initiative, creativity, ability to set job requirements at the corporate level, take risk and be able to solve various problems associated with the business (Ahmad, Halim and Zainal (2010).

Managerial competency refers to knowledge, abilities, skills and behaviours required for effective job performance in managerial occupations. It is very important for a business organization to identify, develop, and retain talented people. Every successful and effective manager possesses several competencies that enabled him to perform efficiently and effectively at different managerial levels. Managerial competencies today play an important role in different types of organizations as it detects the differences between average and excellent managers in an organization for marketing purposes. (Ibe, 2009).

Competence indicates the availability of knowledge and skills that enable a person to make decisions in various situations. Competence may occur at any stage of life or career and it can be acquired through formal education, and also through life, career and experiences. The roles and tasks of entrepreneurs and managers are identical in some aspects, such as organisational abilities, and personal management. Entrepreneurial competencies are generally found to be higher than those of business owners/managers (Xiang, 2009).

Marketing is a societal process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services for value with others. (Kotler, 2012). He further explains that marketing skills is another important and essential skill which depends on the very success or failure of a business. Marketing is a common phenomenon but it is a very complex and elusive subject matter. Kotler (2012) affirms that marketing competency refers to the ability of identifying with the wants and needs of the target customer and communicates the company's brand image and product value in such a way as to elicit a favorable reaction from that target customer. The activities of marketing are so diverse that it is difficult to say exactly what marketing is. Ezeani (2012) sees marketing as consisting of all profitable human activities undertaken by the firm towards the creation of goods and services.

Regardless of SME contributions to economic development and social interventions, the sector faces many challenges, such as finance, resource management, strategic planning, and the lack of appropriate platforms to enable innovations in products, process, organization, and marketing capabilities SME managers of many of these firms have little or no technical or managerial experience. Most SME is generally unstable and does not survive after 3 years. The survival of SME is subject to many constraints, particularly in Africa. These constraints include weak management capacity, lack of market information, inadequate resources such as human and financial resources, low level of innovative capabilities, and inability to improve innovation and performance (Obeng et al. 2014)

Ezeani (2012) states that marketing competency refers to the ability of identifying with the wants and needs of the target customer and communicates the company's brand image and product value in such a way as to elicit a favorable reaction from that target customer. Marketing competence can lead an entire marketing functions to great effectiveness by rebuilding the processes for higher performance and then, monitoring the progress and measuring outcomes. The marketing function requires accounting skills for effective recording and analysis of financial records (Murray et al., 2011).

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are generally regarded as the engine of economic growth in developing economies (Agwu & Emeti, 2013) and developed nations (Alese, 2017). Specifically, Alese (2017) states that this argument stems from the realization that almost all countries that have focused on SMEs sector have ended up in the significant reduction in poverty level and its attendant enhancement in the quality and standard of living, reduction in crime rate, increase in per capita income as well as rapid growth in national output among other salutary effects. The SMEs remain an important sub-sector in a nation' economy. The contribution of SMEs has been recognized as critical to the development of an economy as they possess great potentials for employment generation, improvement of local technology, output diversification, development of indigenous entrepreneurship and forward integration with large scale industries. (CBN, 2018). The SME sector is strategically positioned to absorb up to 80% of jobs, improve per capita income, increase value addition to raw materials supply, improve export earnings and step up capacity utilization in key industries.

SMEs have played and continue to play significant roles in the growth, development and industrialization of many economies the world over. In the case of Nigeria, SMEs have performed below expectation due to a combination of problems which ranges from attitude and habits of SMEs themselves through environmental related factors, instability of governments and frequent government policy changes etc.

The top ten problem areas of SMEs in Nigeria in decreasing order of intensity include: management, access to finance, infrastructure, government policy inconsistencies and bureaucracy, environmental factors, multiple taxes and levies, access to modern technology, unfair competition, marketing problems and non-availability of raw materials locally. Thus managerial problems represent the greatest problem facing SMEs in Nigeria while non-availability of raw materials locally is the least problem (Aremu, 2004).

The crucial role of engine of growth, development and industrialization, wealth creation, poverty reduction and employment creation are enormous. The realization of this requires a paradigm shift from paying lip service to a practical radical approach and focus on this all-important sector of the economy by the government realistically addressing the identified problems. While SMEs themselves need to change their attitude and habits relating to entrepreneurship development, the governments (Local, State and Federal) need to involve the SMEs in policy formulation and execution for maximum effect. There is also the dire need to introduce entrepreneurial studies in our Universities in addition to emphasizing science, practical and technological studies at all levels of our educational system. Promoters of SMEs should thus ensure the availability or possession of managerial capacity and acumen before pursuing financial resources for the development of the respective enterprise (Adebisi & Gbegi, 2013).

Ojeifo (2012) in his book, a "Handbook on Entrepreneurial development in Nigeria" defined an entrepreneur as the owner or the manager of a business enterprise who through risks and initiatives, attempts to make profit. He assumes the risks involved in pursuing the opportunity and also takes credit for the reward that may accrue from taking such risk. He however, ensures that the risk is well calculated before venturing into it (Timmons, 1978; Lynskey, 2002). Entrepreneurs identify new markets; alter existing processes and ways of doing business in order to create something new, with improved value for the community within which

the entrepreneur carries out his business (Hitt, Ireland, Camp & Seton, 2001). The entrepreneur is quick to identify opportunities within a given market (Sull, 2004).

The contributions of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to economic growth and development of nations have been widely acknowledged and well documented by researchers and policy makers globally (Kalpande, Gupta & Dandekar, 2010; Shastri, Tripathi, & Ali, 2011). Countries all over the world constituting the developed and developing ones have moved away from the former approach to economic growth and development which focuses on large scale enterprises (LSEs) to SMEs which are considered contributing higher to their economic wellbeing. According to the National Enterprise Development Programme (NEDEP, 2011), SMEs contribute 40-55% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 50-80% of the world's employment.

The business environment is determined by personality characteristics and motives of individual entrepreneurs. Business situations are often unique in their unpredictability, complexity and changing requirements during the business process. Entrepreneurs must be able to have the features of several personalities at once and as one person to demonstrate the ability to act as investors, accountants, dispute investigators, leaders, technologists, marketing specialists and top sellers. For this reason, the more knowledge and skills the entrepreneur is capable to demonstrate the better. (Frese, gielnik, 2014). According to Hvide and Panos, 2014, the individuals who are more risk tolerant are more likely to startup firm. A significant part of the motivation to take risks in business follows from the success motivation. To achieve the set goals, successful people are willing to take on reasonable risks associated with feedback about the level of achieved result.

In recognition of the enormous roles SMEs play in the economy, successive governments have adopted different mechanisms aimed at entrenching the sector into the main stream of the Nigerian Economy. The government had accorded and gave priority to them through the introduction of different policies, incentives, subsidies, programs and agencies aimed at providing a favourable environment for businesses to flourish. Some of these establishments include: National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) in 1990, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 1996, Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in 2003, Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) in 2005 and Small and Medium Industries Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) in 2006. Other recent ones include Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOU WIN), Train to Work (TRATOW) initiative and so forth. The cardinal points of all these development initiatives were to accelerate the pace of industrialization, complement LSEs and promote entrepreneurship among the populace (Macheke, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Small business owners provide about 70% job opportunity and wealth creation in Nigeria making up 97% of the total economy (Shehu et al., 2013). Yet, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) reported that 80% of small and medium scale enterprises do not sustain the business beyond 5 years (Adebisi & Gbegi, 2013). The general business problem is that most small businesses fail within the first 5 years. The

specific business problem is that some small owners have limited information on factors that might contribute to business sustainability longer than 5 years.

Research studies have proved that SME is a major instrument for economic growth and development all over the world. To this effect entrepreneurship has taken integral part of governance at all levels of government. However it is disheartening as proved by many researchers that 90% of SME ceased to function in first five years of their establishment. Indeed the rate at which SMES are folding up in the recent years in Nigeria is alarming. Many scholars like (Moses & Adebisi 2013; Etebefia & Akinkumi 2013) have conducted studies on the causes of business's failure in Nigeria but still many SME more especially in Ilorin are still folding up.

However, despite the deluge of studies on the SME sector in Nigeria, few studies have critically investigated effect of how finance when acquired are used on the performance of SME since the skills needed to set up a business is not same as those needed to run a business (Edward, 2012). Most of the existing studies often focus on Commercial Banks' Credit and SMEs Development (Dada, 2014), impact of micro-finance on small scale business (Ashamu, 2014); effect of SMEs financing on economic development (Taiwo, Falohun & Agwu, 2016) among others. Therefore, there is need to understudy the impact of finance on business performance of small and medium scale businesses. Specifically, the study examines the relationship between entrepreneur's level of access to credit facilities and business performance, relationship between financial management ability of an entrepreneur and business performance and ascertain if there is a correlation between entrepreneur's limited sources of finance and degree of business success.

Despite all government interventions and supportive mechanisms, SMEs fail to grow from micro to small and small to medium and finally large enterprise as it is expected. This explains that SMEs in Nigeria are characterized by low performance and therefore are unable to grow from one scale of business to another. Also, in an international conference on SMEs (SMEDAN, 2012), Oyelaran (2010) posited that SMEs contribute approximately 1% of the country's GDP compared to 40% in Asia and 50% in the USA. This implies that there are some forces behind their low performance in Nigeria.

It is good to note that the essence of creating any form of business is for it to survive for a long period of time. Therefore, one is inclined to ask how SME operators in Ilorin manage their businesses. Do they have the skills and attributes of entrepreneurship? This study intends to examine the entrepreneurial competencies required for the performance of SME in Ilorin.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the entrepreneurial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. Specifically, the study intends to:-

- (i) determine the managerial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners.

- (ii) find out the marketing competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

- (i) What are the managerial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners?
- (ii) What are the marketing competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners?

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on managerial skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State.
- Ho₂** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female respondents on marketing skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State.

The design of the study was descriptive survey research design. The design involves collecting and analyzing the data gathered. The choice of the design was based on the opinion of Martyn (2008) who stated that descriptive survey research design is often used because of its easy access to the required information and to understand the social phenomenon from the participants' perspective. The design is suitable for this study because it involves the use of structured questionnaire to gather the required data from respondents on the entrepreneurial competencies and performance of small business owners in Kwara state. The population of this study consists of only SMEs that are registered with Kwara State Chamber of Commerce. Thus, a total of 4,170 registered SMEs as at the 30th Nov (2021) formed the population of the study. A multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting 364 respondents through research advisor. Stratified sampling technique was employed to divide the sample size into stratum- senatorial zones (Kwara north, Kwara central and Kwara south senatorial zones). Two local governments were selected through purposive sampling technique from each zone to participate in the study and the respondents were drawn proportionately from the three senatorial zones. To obtain true representation of the population, Taro Yamani formula was employed to draw the sample size of 364.

The major instrument for data collection was questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Entrepreneurial Competencies needed for effective Performance of Small Scale Business Owners Questionnaire (ECPSSBOQ). The (ECPSSBOQ) was divided into two parts. Part 'A' elicited information on the general characteristics of the respondents. Part 'B' was divided into two sections (1 - 2) in line with the specific purposes of the study. Section 1 will require information on the managerial competencies needed by small scale business owners for effective performance in Kwara State, section 2 required information on the marketing competencies needed by small scale business owners for effective performance in Kwara State. Each of the Sections (1 - 2) was assigned four response options of Highly Needed (HN), Moderately Needed (ME), Slightly Needed (SN), Not Needed (NN). Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine

the internal consistency of the instrument. The result gave reliability co-efficient of 0.87. Thus, the instrument was considered reliable. The researcher made use of three research assistants. The research assistants were trained on how to administer the questionnaire under the supervision of the researcher. 396 copies of the questionnaires were administered to the respondents across the three senatorial zones and 370 were collected for data analysis. The exercise last for six weeks. The data collected for this study were analyzed using mean to answer the research questions and standard deviation to determine the closeness or otherwise of the responses from the mean, while independent samples t-test was used to test the null hypotheses of no significant difference at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Data to answer the research questions were analyzed and presented in Table 1 and 2 as follows:

Research Question One: What are the managerial competences needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State?

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation showing managerial competences needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Ability to identify investment opportunities	3.65	0.78	Highly Needed
2.	Ability to generate ideas suitable to the opportunities identified	3.64	0.76	Highly Needed
3.	Ability to translate business ideas into business venture	3.63	0.69	Highly Needed
4.	Ability to set appropriate business goals	3.69	0.83	Highly Needed
5.	Ability to look for business plans	3.77	0.89	Highly Needed
6.	Ability to take decision on business venture	3.65	0.72	Highly Needed
7.	Ability to organize resources for goal attainment	3.60	0.63	Highly Needed
8.	Ability to implement plans for goal attainment	3.63	0.92	Highly Needed
9.	Ability to coordinate activities based on the set goals	3.59	0.68	Highly Needed
10.	Ability to manage risk in business	4.45	0.36	Highly Needed
11.	Ability to manage time productivity	3.60	0.84	Highly Needed
12.	Ability to solve problems in business operation	3.62	0.91	Highly Needed

13.	Ability to accept failure(s) as business challenges	3.71	0.93	Highly Needed
14.	Ability to motivate workers	4.49	0.32	Highly Needed
	Weighted average	3.77	0.73	Highly Needed

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Analysis of data in Table 1 reveals that the respondents unanimously chose the option “highly needed” managerial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners. The respondents indicate that ability to identify investment opportunities is highly needed and ability to generate ideas suitable to the opportunities identified is also highly needed (mean = 3.65 and 3.64). In the same way, the respondents indicate that ability to translate business ideas into business venture is highly needed (mean = 3.63). In addition, the respondents indicate that ability to set appropriate business goals is highly needed and ability to look for business plans is highly required (mean = 3.69 and 3.77). The respondents also indicate that ability to take decision on business venture and ability to organize resources for goal attainment are highly needed (mean = 3.65 and 3.60). Also, the ability to implement plans for goal attainment is highly required and ability to coordinate activities based on the set goals as well (mean = 3.63 and 3.59). In addition the respondents indicate that ability to manage risk in business as well as the (mean = ability to manage time productivity are highly needed (mean =4.45 and 3.60). The same way the respondents indicate that ability to solve problems in business operation, and ability to accept failure(s) as business challenges are also highly needed (mean = 3.62 and 3.71). In addition, the respondents indicate that ability to manage workers is highly needed (mean = 4.49). All the 14 items have standard deviation ranging from 0.36 to 0.92. This means that the responses of the respondents are not wide spread as it is close to the mean.

Table 1 shows a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation of 3.77 and 0.73 which means that the respondents indicate highly needed for all the constructs. This generally implies that managerial competencies are needed for effective performance of small scale business in Kwara State, Nigeria (mean = 3.77, SD = 0.73).

Research Question Two: What are the marketing competences needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State?

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation showing marketing competences needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	REMARKS
15	Ability to determine customer needs and supply base on the identified needs	3.71	0.94	Highly Needed
16	Ability to identify target markets	4.44	0.26	Highly Needed
17	Ability to create product awareness to win customers loyalty to the enterprise	4.46	0.32	Highly Needed

18	Ability to determine the extent to which product will sell	3.59	1.03	Highly Needed
19	Ability to develop market strategies to penetrate competition	3.65	0.89	Highly Needed
20	Ability to analyze customer behavior	3.95	1.12	Highly Needed
21	Ability to determine fluctuations in market demands	3.91	0.98	Highly Needed
22	Ability to stimulate customers purchasing intentions	3.82	0.88	Highly Needed
23	Effectiveness in negotiating sales	3.74	0.79	Highly Needed
24	Ability to set right price for a product	3.39	0.82	Highly Needed
25	Ability to develop effective distribution network	4.58	0.34	Highly Needed
26	Ability to develop strategies to stabilize sales during turbulent period	4.59	0.28	Highly Needed
27	Ability to determine yearly budget of the business	3.62	1.07	Highly Needed
28	Ability to develop good marketing plans	4.58	0.22	Highly Needed
	Weighted average	4.00	0.71	Highly Needed

Source: Field survey, 2021

From Table 2, the respondents indicate that ability to determine customer needs and supply base on the identified needs is highly needed as well as ability to identify target markets (mean = 3.71 and 4.44). In the same way the respondents indicate that ability to create product awareness to win customers loyalty to the enterprise and ability to determine the extent to which product will sell are equally highly needed (mean = 4.46 and 3.59). In addition, the respondents indicate that ability to develop market strategies to penetrate competition (mean = 3.65) and ability to analyze customer behaviour as well as ability to determine fluctuations in market demands are all highly needed (mean = 3.95 and 3.91). The way the respondents indicate that ability to stimulate customers purchasing intentions and effectiveness in negotiating sales are also highly needed (mean = 3.82 and 3.74). Moreover, ability to set right price for a product and ability to develop effective distribution network are all highly needed (mean = 3.39 and 4.58). In addition, the respondents indicate that ability to develop strategies to stabilize sales during turbulent period as well as ability to determine yearly budget of the business are highly needed and also ability to develop good marketing plans (mean = 4.59, 3.62 and 4.58). All the 14 items have standard deviation ranging from 0.26 to 1.12. This means that the responses of the respondents are not wide spread as it is close to the mean.

Table 2 shows a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation of 4.00 and 0.71 which means that the respondents chose option “highly needed” for all the constructs. This

implies that marketing competency is highly needed for effective performance of small scale business in Kwara State, Nigeria (mean = 4.00, SD = 0.71).

Testing of Hypotheses

The four null hypotheses generated for the study were tested using independent sample t-test. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The summary of the test of hypotheses are presented in Table 12 to 15 as follows:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of female and male respondents on managerial skills needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

Table 3: Summary of Independent Sample t-test of the difference between the mean ratings of female and male respondents on managerial skills needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-Cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Managerial Skills	Female	278	2.92	1.576	122	0.118	Ho ₁ Not Rejected
	Male	92	2.74				

p > 0.05

Source: Field survey, 2021

Data in Table 12 reveal that there are 278 female entrepreneurs and 92 male entrepreneurs. The response of the female and male entrepreneurs shows that managerial skills are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners (x = 2.92, SD – 0.27) and (x = 2.74, SD = 0.45). Their responses are close to the mean as the standard deviations are very low. The Table reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of female and male entrepreneurs on the managerial skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners (t₁₂₂ = -1.576, P>0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This implies that female and male entrepreneurs do not differ in their responses regarding the extent of managerial skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners. Their responses show that male respondents rated extent of managerial skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners higher than female respondents did (mean difference = 0.18).

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of female and male respondents on marketing skills needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

Table 4. Summary of Independent Sample t-test analysis of the difference between mean ratings of female and male respondents on marketing skills needed for effective performance of small-scale business owners in Kwara State

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Cal	Df	p-value	Decision
Marketing Competences	Female	278	3.04	0.75	1.738	122	0.086
	Male	92	2.78	0.92			

p < 0.05

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Data in Table 13 reveal that there are 278 female entrepreneurs and 92 male entrepreneurs. The responses of female and male entrepreneurs show that marketing competences is highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners ($x = 3.04$; $SD = 0.75$) and ($x = 2.78.52$; $SD = 0.92$). Their responses are close to the mean as the standard deviations are very low. The Table reveals there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male entrepreneurs on the marketing skills needed for effective performance of small scale business owners ($t_{122} = 0.086$, $P > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

This implies that female and male entrepreneurs did not differ in their responses regarding the extent of marketing competences needed for effective performance of small scale business owners. Their responses show that female entrepreneurs rated the extent of marketing competences needed for effective performance of small scale business owners higher than male entrepreneurs did (mean difference = 0.17).

Discussion of Findings

With reference to research question one which sought to establish the extent of managerial competences needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria, the results of research question one showed that small scale business owners highly needed managerial competences for effective performance and there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male entrepreneurs on the extent of managerial competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners, indicating that the null hypothesis was not rejected. The data collected showed that managerial competencies are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria. This is due to the fact the managerial competencies have positive impact on performance of small scale business owners.

These findings were in agreement with the opinions of Rydehell, Isaksson and Lofsten (2018); Shehnaz, Farhad, Zuhaid, Mahammad and Ramayah, (2018); and Bushe, 2019) that the managerial competencies of both managers and owners have an effect on the performance of firms. Similarly, Burritt, Herzig, Schaltegggers and Viere (2019) buttressed the point that SME owners and managers need management skills in areas such as financial management, personnel management, sales management and production management. This view is supported by Yahya

and Elsayed (2012) when they opined that a key competency for SMEs today is training employees to be inclusive of cultural diversity. This is in line with opinion of Nicolaides (2010) that observed entrepreneurs need management competencies so as to be able to deal with array of foreign colleagues and clients.

Entrepreneurial skill of management is highly needed by every individual carrying out business activities. This was corroborated by Ibe (2009) who noted that business education graduates must be competent and acquire the requisite managerial skill. Management competency is indispensable. The author further explained that the application of management competency enables entrepreneur plan objectives, organize resources, and lead effectively, coordinates the human resource and also relate well with customers. This is in line with Anyakoha and Nwolisa (2017) who identified some important management skills required by the entrepreneurs-business education graduate to be able to establish, run and manage a business enterprise, these include the ability to: set appropriate business goal; plan effectively for attainment of business goal; organize resource (human and materials) for goal attainment; implement plans for goal attainment; evaluate all activities/operations on the process of goal attainment; and make appropriate use of feedback. The result of the study revealed that entrepreneurs (managers/small scale business owners) highly require managerial competencies for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria at $P \leq 0.05$.

Responses to research question two which investigated the extent at which marketing competencies are needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State revealed that marketing competencies are highly required for effective performance of small scale business owners. There was also no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female managers/owners of businesses in Kwara State on the extent of marketing competencies needed for effective performance of small scale business owners, indicating that the null hypothesis was not rejected. The data analyzed showed that managers/business owners need marketing competencies for effective performance of small scale businesses in Kwara State. The findings are in line with the view of Kotler (2012) when he opined that marketing skill is another important and essential skill which depends on the very success or failure of a business. Similarly, Ezeani (2012) posited that the survival of SME is subject to many of market information. As a marketer, one needs to keep up with trends and consumer attitudes. In the same view, Ezeani et al. (2012) affirmed that marketing competencies can lead an entire marketing functions to great effectiveness by rebuilding the processes for higher performance and then, monitoring the progress and measuring outcomes. He added that the products, ideas, or services you develop and the way you price, promote, and distribute them should reflect these trends and attitudes. Business related graduates require these marketing skills in order to enable them identify their potential customers; persuade them to buy their product or services and by so doing also maintain good accounting practice and efficient keeping of records of the activities of the business as mishandling or negligence can lead to failure. The study is in agreement with Turton and Herrington (2012) that business related graduates require marketing skills in order to enable them identify their potential customers; persuade them to buy their product or services. He explained that marketing skills and competencies, which are needed for effective entrepreneurship by business related graduates: salesmanship, negotiation, sales record keeping, sales promotion, stock record keeping, pricing, advertising channels, advertising media, consumer behaviour appreciation and transportation. It appears obvious from the findings of this

study that marketing competencies are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State, Nigeria at $P \leq 0.05$.

Conclusion

Managerial competencies are highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. Also, marketing competences is highly needed for effective performance of small scale business owners in Kwara State. This could be through the acquisition of abilities to determine customers' needs and supply based on the identified needs, identify target market, create product awareness to win customers loyalty to the enterprise and determine the extent to which products will sell. Other implications are developing market strategies to penetrate competition, analyse customers behaviour, stimulating customers purchasing intentions for effective networking.

Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained and conclusion drawn, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Entrepreneurs should be trained on managerial competencies as it helps those in authority to plan, organize and control a business in an effort to make it successful
2. There is the need for constant training of entrepreneurs on marketing skills because it is a social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, and freely exchanging products and services for value with others.

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