

Moderating Role of Firm Size on the Relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and SMBs Development in Kano Metropolis

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Abstract

This study is mainly carried out to assess the Moderating Role of Firm Size on the Relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and Development Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs) in Kano State", using Kano metropolis as a case study. The study aimed to assess the extent to which firm size influences the relationship between entrepreneurship education and development of small scale businesses in the state. Relevant literatures were reviewed and two hundred and sixteen (116) questionnaires were administered in relation to five (55) small businesses engaged in order to ascertain their views. Analysis, presentation and interpretation of data were carried out through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The major findings of the study showed that there is a strong moderating role of firm size between entrepreneurship education and development of small scale businesses in Kano metropolis. The study further revealed that the activities of entrepreneurs served as one of the major mechanisms for increasing per capita income of the state's inhabitants. And while firm size did not moderate the relationship between government policies and programs between activities and entrepreneurship development in Kano state it but have significant moderating role between entrepreneurship education activities and entrepreneurship development in the state. However, the researcher recommended that government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities that would further help Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs) to ensure their success and growth and development in the state. Finally, the research pointed out some areas to consider for future studies.

Keywords: Firm Size, Entrepreneurship, Development, Education, Small Scale Businesses.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide people with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in various situations (Khan, 2021). The contribution of entrepreneurship education to the growth and development of small scale businesses in any country is of immense importance. Their services are treasured to the overall development of an individual, group of individuals, society and even the nation at large (Lin, Tan & Geng, 2018). However, an economy is much dependent upon the performance level of its educated entrepreneurs. This is because it serves as a mechanism used for raising the national as well as per capita income of the people. Experience shows that over the years' entrepreneurship education has been very essential to the speedy growth and development of small scale businesses in every nation and are considered as

one of the most necessary process of attaining industrialization. Entrepreneurs around the world are now considered as primary engine of economic growth thereby utilizing an existing resource with their innovative ideas and add value through commercialization of newly products (Chiou, Chan, Lettice, Chung, 2021).

Furthermore, evidences have shown that global entrepreneurship monitor indicates that nations with high level of entrepreneurial education activities enjoy strong economic stability. In fact, entrepreneurship education helps entrepreneurs link between new ideas and economic growth (Khan, 2021). Empirical evidences also indicated that well educated entrepreneurs can be the bedrock for meeting the growth and equity objectives of small businesses and the government. Therefore, the improvement in government policies, their effectiveness as well as efficiency in designing policies and programs can absolutely serve as an essential instrument for ensuring the quality contribution to the success of entrepreneurship ventures for economic development and ultimate search for being self-reliant which can be achieved in the long run. The progress of a country will depend upon their entrepreneurial skill and talent as well as their hard work to deliver necessary goods and services required by the citizens of the country. This is to say that entrepreneurship activities help in stimulating the economy of a country's investment, employment, and diversity in product and services, international trade and also to gross national product (GNP). The GNP of a country is intended based upon the total number of products and services available in respective country. Thus, the more products and services are available, the higher the GNP. This also shows the wealth of the country. In addition, entrepreneurs' activities significantly contribute to the overall growth of a nation's economy in terms of GDP.

Statement of Problem

It is obvious that entrepreneurs owning small scale businesses in Kano metropolis are facing many obstacles in their operations. These obstacles include inadequate knowledge of managing funds, poor entrepreneurial education and skills, social pressure, technological induced constraints that consist of low indigenous technical based, inadequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity, water supply, transportation roads to mentioned but a few (Nwachukwa, 2020). These challenges need to be addressed by government in order to ensure increase in skills and knowledge of small entrepreneurs for necessary development of smaller businesses and growth of small scale businesses which in turn can serve as solution to the problems facing entrepreneurs in particular and the business sector in general (Anyakoha & Nwolisa, 2019).

Kano state can realize essential and accelerated economic development and sustainable growth if government design, develop and adopt a policy that will address the defined problems which in returns promote entrepreneurial education activities in Kano and result in enhancing the achievement of small business growth and development in the state over time. However, the failure to design such policies and programs in contrast can translate into severe difficulties for small and medium businesses. The entrepreneurs in Kano

metropolis are engaged in too many informal business activities which form a sizeable proportion of domestic economy that plays a vital role in national economic development. The contributions of such entrepreneurs are limited with regards to the state of problems currently bedeviling entrepreneurship educational activities in Kano state as a whole and Kano metropolis in particular.

Therefore, the most fundamental concern of this research is to shed more light on moderating effect of firm size in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and development of small scale businesses in Kano state.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to out to assess the moderating role of firm size on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and development Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs) in Kano State", using Kano metropolis as a case study. Specifically, the objectives are to find out if there is any:

- i. Relationship between government policies and programs and entrepreneurship development of small businesses in Kano metropolis.
- ii. Difference between entrepreneurship education activities and increase in per capita income of the small scale business owners in Kano metropolis.
- iii. Moderating effect of firm size between entrepreneurship education and development of SMBs in Kano State

Research Hypotheses

- i. There is no significant relationship between government policies and programs of entrepreneurship development of SMBs in Kano metropolis.
- ii. There is no significant difference between entrepreneurship education activities and increase in per capita income of SMB owners in Kano metropolis
- iii. Firm size cannot moderate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and SMBs development in Kano state.

Literature Review

Today, nations are being fashioned by entrepreneurs (men and women) who have invested their resources (time, money and energy) in starting and running their own businesses. Entrepreneurship development has been seen as a means of stimulating economic growth through the generation of greater employment opportunities in Nigeria (Orghojafor and Kuye, 2009). The growing rate of unemployment in the country, the low standard of living and growing failure of small scale businesses have led to a renewed interest in entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. Perhaps it is the reason several attempts been made at boosting entrepreneurial activities in the past but failed to produce the desired results. Various constraints such as poor entrepreneurship skills and development, lack of workshops and seminars, poor or non-implementation, inadequate infrastructural facilities and illiteracy on the part of entrepreneurs have been identified as being responsible for this.

It is not a gain saying that entrepreneurs contribute a lot in the economic development of a country. Developing countries like Nigeria have no fully developed strategies to take advantage of this resource (Bala, 2015). Most developing countries have haphazard policies which do not actually reflect the importance of entrepreneurship to the economic development (Orghojafor and Kuye, 2009). National programs have been developed for the purpose of increasing entrepreneurial activity through various reforms, but in vain. Meanwhile, it is seen as a responsibility of government to provide several entrepreneurial training programs that could develop and strengthen small scale businesses but most of the available programs do not adequately involves entrepreneurship education (Nelson, 2003). Today, scholars reached consensus that entrepreneurship education and training help in the development of entrepreneurial boldness and skills. Thus, the establishment of entrepreneurial education is seen as a possible measure to promote entrepreneurship (Shapero, 1975 & Hugba & Njoku, 2018)

Entrepreneurship education is "a program or part of the program that prepares individuals to undertake the formation of and acquisition of small-business" Owuala (1999). Entrepreneurship development education is a planned, systematic and sustained effort at inculcating and nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerians so as to produce a pool of willing, able and successful entrepreneurs (Orghojafor, 2009 & Hugba & Njoku, 2018).

Entrepreneurship training is very vital mechanism to meet national economic development. However, while it is not absolutely necessary for an individual to obtain entrepreneurship training to be successful, obtaining an entrepreneurial education serves as a tremendous advantage to increasing the chances of success as an entrepreneur (Sule, 2018). This is because training is still focused and directed at achieving a purpose while education is all encompassing. Thus, great strides are required to be made towards the goal of educating people to become entrepreneurs to enhance economic growth and development.

In the same vein it is pertinent to note that entrepreneurship programs if successfully implemented will help in making the average entrepreneur discover the entrepreneurial talents in him/her and be guided to take the risk of starting his/her business (Bhhatia-Panthaki, 2019). It will also impact the required skills and knowledge needed to successfully launch and grow a business among other things (Bala, 2015). According to Orghojafor and Kuye (2009), entrepreneurship programs and policies well implemented will open the eyes of small business owners to see the hidden entrepreneurial talents within them and empower them to spot and exploit business opportunities. Having been provided with the needed knowledge of the theories, concepts, and doctrines of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs develop the confidence that enable them succeed in their business. The course will open their eyes to see the latent entrepreneurial talents within them and enable them to exploit business opportunities. Having been armed with the knowledge of the theories, concepts, and principles of entrepreneurship, students develop the confidence that a successful application of these will enable them succeed in business undertakings (Druker, 1983).

Empirical evidence as in the study conducted by Sule (2018), UNESCO revealed that about 92 per cent of Nigerian population survive on less than 2 dollar daily, while about 71 per cent survives on less than 1 dollar daily – a condition many have described as inexcusable judging from the abundant natural deposits and high human population at the country's disposal. With an estimated population of about 180 million people and crude oil selling as high as \$104 dollar per barrel in the global market as at July 2012, the high level of poverty in comparison to the abundant resources available in Nigeria is highly unacceptable (Akeredolu, 1975 & Diyoke, 2020). There is therefore the urgent need for government to provide quality entrepreneurship education to individuals and existing entrepreneurs to create more job opportunities for economic development. This will enable the country join community of industrialized nations by strengthening their small scale industries in general and encourages prospective entrepreneurs in particular. Nigeria is yet to understand the relevance of this sub-sector (Sule, 2013).

Motives for Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

According to Duru (2019) the main motives behind entrepreneurship development in Nigeria includes but not limited to:

1. Entrepreneurship is a main driver of Nigerian Economy.
2. Wealth and a majority of trades or employments are generated by small businesses established by entrepreneurially prepared persons, a lot of of whom go on to create great businesses.
3. People exposed to entrepreneurship regularly conveyed that they have further opportunities to exercise ingenious self-determinations, greater confidence and overall greater sense of control.
4. Experienced businessmen, economists, political leaders and educators alleged that nurturing a healthy entrepreneurial culture will maximize both individual and economic success locally and internationally.
5. It helps in making youths and adults to succeed in an entrepreneurial economy.

Effects of Firm Size on Entrepreneurship Development of SMBs

Entrepreneurship activities have significant effects on SMBs and in large-sized firms that are different (Noori et al. 2017). Innovative projects normally involve large fixed costs. Large firm have a greater ability to access external finance to progress research and development (R&D) project of their enterprises. This capacity can have a positive impact on entrepreneurial development (Almodóvar-González, Fernández-Portillo, 2020). Large-sized firms and SMEs typically undertake different types of Entrepreneurship innovative activities. External innovative activities draw on internal resources and external knowledge as well as technological skills within the enterprises. These activities mainly involve improvements to the productivity of a firm. Internal innovation relates to a company's resources and capabilities that are associated with innovative R&D activities (Kim et al. 2016). The study states that while both external and internal innovative R&D activities

impact the performance of large-sized firms, only internal innovative R&D activities affect the performance of SMEs (Kim et al. 2016). Similarly, Mabenge et al. (2020) state that the effects of firm size seem to be stronger in bigger and younger businesses.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

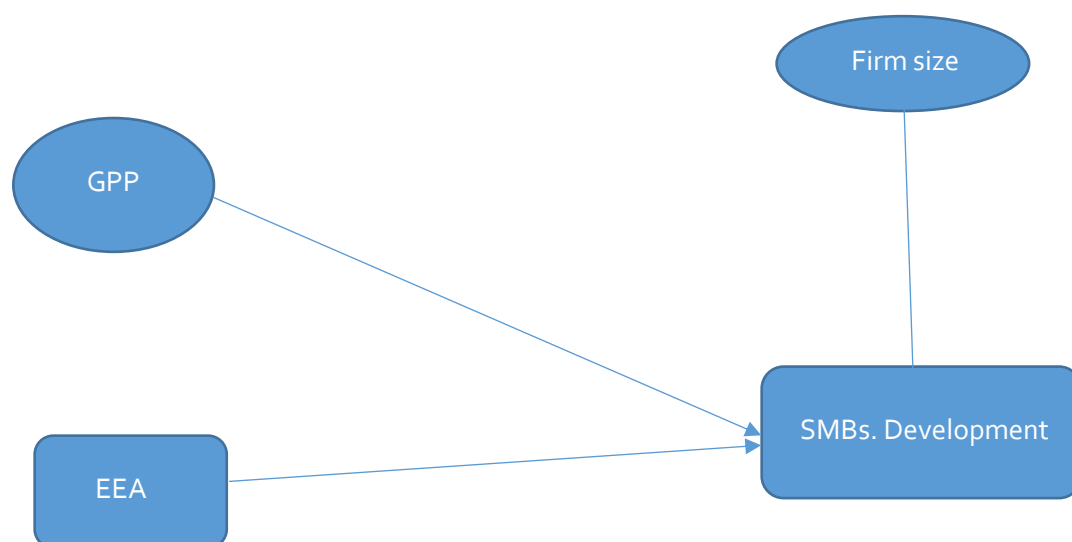


Fig. 2.1 Conceptual Framework developed by the researcher

Methodology

Research Design

A correlational design is employed in this study so as to collect data on government effort in enacting policies and programs that contributes to the success of entrepreneurship in Kano metropolis. The population of this study is made up of entrepreneurs of small and medium business in Kano metropolis. There are approximately fourteen thousand entrepreneurs in Kano metropolis that constitute the population of the study. The study sample consisted of fifty-five branches (55) from the six businesses selected in Kano metropolis. A purposive sampling was used in choosing same. This method was used because all the businesses are located within Kano metropolis. The researchers used Krejcie and Morgan table (1970) to determine the sample size in a given population, 116 entrepreneurs (participants) were selected. Proportionate random sampling technique was used to select the population sample for each business according to the strength of the population of each.

Sample Size/ Sampling Technique

Entrepreneurs of the selected occupations were randomly selected to have a sum of one hundred and sixteen (116) entrepreneurs as a sample size of the study. One hundred and sixty-six (166) questionnaires were administered to ascertain accurate respondents while

fifty (50) for interviews. This is because some of the respondents may not read and write clearly, so the face to face interaction helped to understand their ideas and opinions about the research questions. Probability sampling technique adopted in which the chances of any population being selected is known with a technique called simple-random sampling. Again, SEM-PLS software was used in conducting data analysis for this study. However, it is only the results obtained and the discussions of findings reported in this article.

Table 1: Sample Size of the Study According to the Six (6) Selected Businesses in Kano Metropolis.

S/N	Name of Small Business	Total No. of Branches Selected	Number of Male owners	Male Sample	Number of Female owners	Female Sample	Total Sample Size
1.	Gamji Tailoring Services	6	15	07	07	05	12
2	Hypa Furnitures Kano	9	49	40	40	33	73
3	Millenium Barbing Saloon	12	7	5	5	3	08
4	Modern Dyers	13	9	6	4	4	10
5	A-Z Pharmacy	10	8	6	2	1	7
6	Haske Bookshop	5	7	4	2	2	6
	Total	55	95	68	60	48	116

Source: Researcher, 2022

Instrumentation

The main instrument employed in this study were both questionnaires and verbal interviews due to illiteracy among the sampled respondents used by the researcher. The purpose of adopting such instrument in the course if this study becomes imperative

Data Collection

Survey research method was used to carefully obtain data from selected sample of the population for an intensive analysis of the characteristics of the population.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Discriminant Validity

Discriminate validity demonstrates the extent to which a construct is categorized from other constructs because of either similarity or difference values (Sarstedt et al. 2014).

Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair et al. (2010) suggest that the square root of AVE should be higher than inter-construct correlations, and maximum shared variance (MSV) should be lower than AVE. Table 4.1 demonstrates the Fornell–Larcker test of discriminant validity. This is correspondingly confirmed by cross loadings which are less than all indicator loadings.

Table 4.1 Discriminant validity using Fornell-larcker criterion (with co-worker as Moderator)

	Firm size	GPP	EAA	ED
Firm size	0.935			
GPP	0.565	0.751		
EAA	0.521	0.389	0.909	
ED	0.509	0.356	0.0411	0.89

Source: PLS-SEM Discriminant Validity

In line with correlation matrix depicted in table 4.1, the diagonal elements are the average variance square root extracted from the latent constructs. The discriminant validity exists if the diagonal elements are greater than other off-diagonal elements in the rows and columns. By comparing the square root of each AVE in the diagonal with the correlation coefficients (off-diagonal) for each construct in the relevant rows and columns. As can be seen, discriminant validity can be accepted for this measurement model and supports the discriminant validity between the constructs.

Null Hypotheses Testing

The analysis of the hypotheses is presented below taking the hypotheses one after the other.

- i. **H₀₁**: There is no significant relationship between government policies and programs of entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis.
- ii. **H₀₂**: There is no significant difference between entrepreneurship education activities and increase in per capita income of small scale business owners in Kano metropolis
- iii. **H₀₃** Firm size cannot moderate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and SMBs development in Kano state

Test of Hypotheses

The study tested for the extent of the relationship between government policies and programs entrepreneurship education in Kano State and entrepreneurship education activities and increase in per capita income of SMBs in Kano State Thus, testing hypotheses 1 and 2. See table below.

Table 4.9 Path Coefficient/ Structural Model Assessment without Moderation

Hypotheses Testing (Direct Relationship)	Sample (M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Ha1: GPP -> ED	-0.093	0.123	0.543	0.588	Accepted
Ha2: EEA->ED	-1.019	0.187	5.599	0.000	Rejected

Source: PLS-SEM Path Coefficient, 2022

*** p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p <0.1

Path Coefficient/ Structural Model Assessment with Firm size as a Moderator

Hypotheses Testing (Indirect relationship)	Sample (M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H ₀₃ GPP- FS-> ED	-0.109	0.301	0.46	0.646	Accepted
H ₀₃ EEA-FS-> ED	-1.689	0.441	4.149	0.000	Rejected

Source: PLS-SEM Path Coefficient, 2022

*** p< 0.01; **p< 0.05; *p <0.1

Discussion of Findings

From the stated hypothesis, Hypotheses 1 predicted that there is no significant relationship between government policies and programs and entrepreneurship development of SMBs in Kano state. Result revealed a negative relationship between government policies and programs and entrepreneurship development of SMBs in Kano at ($\beta = -0.093$, $t = 0.543$, $p = 0.588$). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted. The first finding indicated there is no significant relationship between government policies and programs of entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis. Because the p-value is greater than the .05 level of significance. This result is in agreement with studies conducted by John & Joseph (2005) findings on the relationship between government policies and performance of enterprises in North America. The study revealed that there was no correlation between American policies and its entrepreneurs' performance.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that Entrepreneurship education activities has no significant relationship with entrepreneurship development in Kano state. Result indicated significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education activities and entrepreneurship development in Kano state at ($\beta = -1.019$, $t = 5.599$, $p = 0.000$) hence hypothesis 2 is rejected. This shows that entrepreneurship education helps entrepreneurs a lot in Kano metropolis ($\beta = -1.019$, $t = 5.599$, $p = 0.000$). Therefore, there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis. This is because the p-value (0.000) is less than the .05 level of significance. This result is in agreement with the findings of Joshi and Srivastava (2019) which indicated that entrepreneurship education helps towards significant development of entrepreneurship and business owners in sub-Saharan Africa.

On the other hand, on the moderating effect of firm size on the relationship between government policies and programs results indicated that firm size had an insignificant and

negative moderating relationship with government policies and programs and entrepreneurship development at ($\beta = -0.109$, $t = 0.46$, $p = 0.646$). Hence, Hypothesis 3 which predicted that firm size cannot significantly moderate the relationship between government policies and programs and entrepreneurship is hereby accepted. While at the same time firm size was found to have significant influence in moderating the relationship between entrepreneurship education activities and entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis at ($\beta = -1.689$, $t = 4.149$, $p = 0.000$) indicating the significant role of the moderator in influencing such relationships. This means that the larger the firm size the higher the influence of entrepreneurship education activities in improving entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between government policies and programs of entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis. Hence, based on the findings government programs and policies is inadequate towards education of the entrepreneurs thereby draining entrepreneurs' success. This indicates that entrepreneurs' development and performance are independent of government programs and policies if other variables are excluded especially. It is also found that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurship development in Kano metropolis, because entrepreneurship education in Kano helps better in the development of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs. This implies that such education and enlightenment influence the entrepreneurship and performance of entrepreneurs in the metropolis.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. There should be well conducive and secured learning environment with enough motivation from government to support entrepreneurship education pursuit on ground.
2. The parents and government should team up to encourage the young entrepreneurs in building their positive dreams towards managing their business ventures.
3. Entrepreneurship education facilitators in Kano state should find out the strategies to effectively inculcate the needed skills in the current and prospective entrepreneurs at regular intervals in the metropolitan city and neighboring communities.

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