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ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND PERFORMANCE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES (SMES) IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effect of entrepreneurial education on performance of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), using 393 respondents selected from manufacturing, education, trade and other services in Kano state, Nigeria. SMEs' efforts toward providing solution to the problem of unemployment in Nigeria and the world at large face stiff opposition from their conception as a result of many factors being responsible. The study employed cross sectional research design in which data was collected using mixed strategies, interview and questionnaire, results using Pearson's linear correlation and regression analysis is positive and significant relationship between SMEs performance and entrepreneurial education. Entrepreneurial education on SMEs performance had a significant effect ($F - \text{statistic} = 13.101$; $t - \text{statistic} = 3.620$) was significant at $P < 0.001$. The study adds value to the growing body of knowledge in the field of entrepreneurial development activities. The study recommends that entrepreneurial education should be encouraged by inspiring deserved workers/operators to acquire more knowledge while in service by attending workshops, conferences and leadership training and ensure that such trainings are done frequently so that their abilities can be broadened and improve their performance, the study serves as a reference to anyone who is interested in establishing his personal business as it provides insight into the improvement of entrepreneurial education in starting a new business and also for any organization that is interested in achieving profitability or continue sustaining effective business venture.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Education, Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (SMEs), Performance of SMEs.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The explosion and growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) undoubtedly has positively affected bottom-line economic activities. The upward economy boom has led to the creation of employment, alleviation of poverty, improved standards of living, generated more revenue for governments, enhanced the use of local raw materials, creating viable markets, act as a training ground for future entrepreneurs and reduction in crime rate (Kunday, 2014). Kano State in Nigeria has been a center of industrial and commercial activities for centuries and has greatly contributed to the economic development of Nigeria (K-SEEDS, 2004; Harvie *et al.*, 2010). SMEs in Kano for some years now have not performed creditably well and hence have not played the expected vital and vibrant role in the economic growth and development of Nigeria (Taiwo, Agwu and Falohun, 2016; Kabiru and Kabir, 2014). Although the Nigerian government is turning to SMEs as a means of economic development and solving problems of unemployment, several challenges are currently facing Nigerian SMEs such as lack of necessary business ideas (Adesanya, 2014), lack of appropriate and adequate managerial and entrepreneurial investment (Gbandi and Amissah, 2014), poor funding (Aminu, *et al.*, 2013), lack of infrastructure (SMEDAN, 2013), government policies (Nevin, Olatunji and Akinbiyi, 2016; Abeh, 2017), lack of action plan to deal with eventualities (Ebitu *et al.*, 2016), inadequate preparation of the entrepreneurs in form of training (Oyebola, Irefin and Olaposi, 2015), inexperience (Darus *et al.*, 2017) and widespread corruption and harassment of SMEs in the country by some agencies of government over unauthorized charges and levies which have plagued performance of SMEs in the country (Aminu, Salau and Pearse, 2013). SMEs performance is also constrained by internal and external factors, such as the carrying capacity of the environment, competition, government regulations and bureaucratic procedures (Ebitu, Basil & Alfred, 2016; Eniola and Entebang, 2015; Adisa, Abdulraheem and Mordi, 2014; Bubou *et al.*, 2014; Oni and Daniya, 2012).

These challenges have led to gradual collapse of the sector according to Olubukola (2013) and so no vibrant SME sector with capacity to absorb unemployed youths (Ayozie *et al.*, 2013; Olubukola, 2013; Nigerian Bureau of statistics News, 2016). This unemployment has led to serious current wave of kidnappings, political thuggery and youth restiveness in the nation as reported by Nigerian Bureau of statistics (News, 2016). Previous studies showed that many factors responsible for SMEs performance are lack of necessary business ideas, lack of appropriate and adequate

managerial and entrepreneurial skills, low funding, poor infrastructure, unsupportive government policies, poor planning, and inexperience. No study has been conducted to specifically establish the effect of entrepreneurial education on performance of SMEs particularly in Kano state Nigeria. Therefore, the need for this study to answer the following research question “What is the effect of entrepreneurial education on the performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria?” and hence the following null hypothesis (*H₀*) “Entrepreneurial education has no significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria”.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Entrepreneurial Education

Entrepreneurial Education is the process or series of activities which aim to enable an individual assimilate and develop knowledge, skills, values and understanding which allow a broad range of problems to be defined, analyzed and solved (Njoroge & Gathungu, 2013). Njoroge, *et al* (2013) emphasized that it is more planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge, skills through learning experiences to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Entrepreneurial education according to Wanger (2010) incorporates both informal and formal methods. The methods used content delivery and it varies depending on the learner’s group. The formal aspects of entrepreneurial education focus on providing the theoretical and conceptual frameworks which underpin entrepreneurship for example primary, secondary school studies, vocational education and education at tertiary studies (colleges and university). The educator acts as an expert by instructing and facilitating the learning process. The informal aspects of entrepreneurial education focuses on skills building, attribute development and behavioral change (practical) for instant, learning at capacity building center, incubation centers training, experts’ visiting at work stations, TV/Radio talk shows, newspapers articles or related studies. To Wanger (2010), the informal education combine and integrate with the formal aspects of education to enhance performance. Wanger (2010) emphasized that entrepreneurial education and training reinforce knowledge, skills and attitudes.

To Ganyaupfu (2013) entrepreneurial education includes managerial competence and industry experience. Experience is the significant characteristic that leads the entrepreneur to manage resource toward the set goal of the enterprises, (Akinruwa, 2013). Entrepreneurial experience is relevant to the growth of the firm, ownership position (Peake & Marshall, 2009). Manager’

experience has an impact on the growth of a company performance, it also brings about perfect corporate governance (Li-Jen, Chao-Jung & Chiang, 2015). Entrepreneurial competence is defined as the individual characteristics including attitude and behavior, which allow the entrepreneur to achieve business success (Sarwoko *et al.*, 2013). Kiggundu (2012) noted that entrepreneurial competency is the sum total of the entrepreneur's requisite attributes for successful and sustainable entrepreneurship which includes attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, abilities, personality, wisdom, expertise (social, technical, managerial), mindset and behavioral tendencies. Han (2016) defined entrepreneurial competencies as the capability of entrepreneurs to face effectively a critical situation by making sense of environmental constraints and by activating relational and internal specific resources. Nerisa (2015) argued that entrepreneurial competencies are strongly associated with managerial competencies.

According to Rauch and Rijdsdijk (2013), people with higher level of entrepreneurial education are more interested in having their own businesses and can attract more educated workers to their businesses and educated workers can positively affect the output as well as productivity of the business. Van der Sluis and Van Praag (2008) found that higher levels of entrepreneurial education such as university or college level education are significantly related with higher performance of the venture in relation to sales or profitability and which was also true for sustainability. People with higher entrepreneurial education actively search for new opportunities, which are positively related to higher growth. To Van der Sluis, *et al* (2008) higher formal education of entrepreneurs is in negative relation with their company's business failure. A firm's capacity to compete is embedded in incumbents' education, which is related to knowledge, skills, problem-solving ability, discipline, motivation, self-confidence and behavior of entrepreneurs that allow them to identify market opportunities and gather resources required to carry out business activities. Entrepreneurial education itself is a means through which knowledge can be gained and includes all the teaching, formal and informal learning, tutoring and instructing individuals receive in their background years Rwigema & Venter 2004; Ucbasaran *et al.*, 2004; GEM, 2006 (as cited in Kunene 2008). Charney and Libecap 2000 (as cited in Islam *et al.*, 2011) found that entrepreneurial education produces self-sufficient enterprising individuals. Furthermore, Islam, *et al* (2011) found that entrepreneurial education increases the formation of new ventures, the likelihood of self-employment, the likelihood of developing new products and the likelihood of self-employed

graduates owning a high-technology business. Also, the study revealed that entrepreneurial education of employee increases the sales growth rates of emerging firms.

This present study therefore investigated both the formal and informal levels of entrepreneurial education as defined by Wanger (2010) and Sarwoko, *et al* (2013) because they combined both learning at conventional schools setting such as primary school, secondary school studies, education at tertiary studies (colleges and university) and trainings /learning at capacity building center, experience and competencies, incubation centers training, experts' visiting at work stations, TV/Radio talk shows, newspapers articles or related studies and vocational training. All these can be blended together to give customer satisfaction in the firm thereby leading to firm's success.

2.2 Small and Medium-Scale Enterprise (SMEs)

There is no single definition of small and medium scale enterprise business that is universally accepted. For instance, different sectors of the economy have different interpretations of the SMEs business. Although different countries define SMEs businesses differently, it is accepted practice to make use of quantitative and qualitative criteria when attempting to define small and medium scale enterprise business (Gibson and Holmes, 2001). In the European union the most frequent upper limit designation of SME is 250 employees, but some countries set the limit to 200, while the United States consider SMEs to include firms with fewer than 500 employees (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005). In South Africa, SME is regarded as the ones with the potential for job creation and makes a substantial contribution of 35% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of South Africa, thus classifications are small firm: 10 - 99 employees, medium firm: 100 - 249 employees (Rwigema and Venter, 2004). SMEs from Nigeria context are described thus: The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Nigeria described SMEs as firms with a total investment N750, 000 as capital but excluding costs of land and paid employee of up to fifty (50) persons (Osamwonyi, 2010). Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) defined SMEs as those enterprises with turnover of up to N500, 000 only. National Council on Industry Nigeria (2001), defined SMEs as enterprises with a labour size of 11-100 workers or a total cost of not more than N50 million, including working capital but excluding cost of land. The study adopted the definitions given by the National council of industry (NCI, 2001) as the operational definition of SMEs. The choice was made considering the total cost (#50 million) employed and the number of

employees (11- 100) as measuring indicators and also as they enabled the researcher to capture several SMEs at the grass root level of the areas.

2.3 SMEs Performance

In the field of entrepreneurship, SMEs performance has been considered as an important construct. There has been no agreement, however, among researchers on the appropriate measure of performance. Previous studies have suggested that growth and financial measures are important performance measures for small and medium enterprises (Parker, 2000; Garrigos-Simon *et al.*, 2005; Soriano, 2010; Sefiani & Bown, 2013). A few studies have used non-financial measures of SMEs performance such as customer and product performance, customer satisfaction and employee turnover (Omar, 2010; Wolff and Pett, 2006; Gorgievski and Ascalon, 2005). Gorgievski and Ascalon, (2005) on their definition revealed nine important criteria that are often used as indicators of business success thus: Profit, growth and innovation, firm-survival or longevity, contributing back to society, personal satisfaction, satisfied stakeholders, in particular customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction, achievement of work-life balance and public recognition. Financial measures are considered critical in determining the survival and success of the firm (Wolff and Pett, 2006). Garrigos-Simon, *et al* (2005) also categorized SMEs performance measurement into four, namely: (i) Profit which include: return on assets, return on investment and return on sales (ii) Growth in term of: sales, market share and wealth creation (iii) Stakeholder satisfaction which include: customer satisfaction and employees' satisfaction and (iv) competitive position which include: overall competitive position and success rate in launching new product. This study adopted profit, (Parker, 2000; Garrigos-Simon *et al.*, 2005; Gorgievski *et al.*, 2005) sales growth (Dobbs and Hamilton, 2007; Soriano 2010), innovation (Omar, 2010; Soriano, 2010), years of survival (Gorgievski *et al.*, 2005; Wolff and Pett, 2006; Soriano, 2010) and personal satisfaction (Gorgievski *et al.*, 2005; Soriano, 2010) from the literature as measures of SMEs performance.

2.4 Empirical Review

Prior empirical studies have established a positive relationship between entrepreneurial education and SMEs performance. For example, Van der Sluis and Van Praag (2008) reported that higher levels of entrepreneurial education such as university, or college level education were significantly related with higher performance of the entrepreneurs in relation to sales or profitability and which

was also true for sustainability. The implication of Van der Sluis and Van Praag (2008) finding is that for an entrepreneur to succeed, university or college level education acquired are put in use in his business as it is very important and the rate of company's business failure will be low. People with higher university or college level education actively search for new opportunities, which are positively related to higher growth. Higher university or college level education of entrepreneurs is in negative relation with their company's business failure. Higher university or college level education is an advantage for the entrepreneur to maintain the sustainability of the company and which is the opposite case for those without a higher formal educational background (Rauch & Rijdsdijk, 2013). From Rauch and Rijdsdijk, (2013) findings, its implication is that higher university or college level education has connection with searching for new opportunities in business which relate positively to growth and negatively to failure. Also individuals with advanced educational backgrounds develop more intellectual capability and knowledge that can aid them in making strategic choices which can lead to firm performance in any business environment.

In a similar study conducted by Kasseeah (2012), it was found that there is a direct relationship between education possessed by owner-managers of SMEs in Mauritius and their business success and that entrepreneurial education has always been regarded as an important factor that influences growth of business. This indicates that success of SMEs business depends largely on education possessed by owner-managers. Though Van der Sluis and Van Praag (2008) focused on formal education as a core variable, this present study adopted a more holistic approach and covered broader aspect of entrepreneurial education both formal and informal. Kasseeah, (2012) carried out the study to establish the relationship between education and business success at macro level of owner-managers, this present study examined the effect of entrepreneurial education of owner, managers and staff of SMEs performance in Kano state, Nigeria.

Njoroge and Gathungu (2013) examined the effect of entrepreneurial education and training on development of SMEs in Githunguri district- Kenya. The results revealed that the entrepreneurs were able to do simple daily book keeping of business transactions but were not able to do complex financial statements. This was as a result of lack of training on financial, strategic management and marketing. This means that the SMEs will not grow beyond the first stage of enterprise development to other stages and will eventually fail within its first five years of existence. This suggests that performance of SMEs depends on book keeping of business transactions which an

entrepreneur will acquire through formal education, it becomes pertinent that SMEs owners, managers and staff that do not adhere to such education for effective competence to carry out the accounting performance as cited in Akinruwa, *et al* (2013) will not improve the performance of their firms. Mmari (2014) investigated the influence of education on performance of SMEs, from 245 owner managers of vehicle garages in Arusha city and Moshi municipality, Tanzania. His results showed that the owner-managers who possessed low levels of education and that majority of their vehicle garages experienced low levels of success. Success of the garages was positively influenced by: levels of credit accessed by the owner-managers; highest levels of education possessed by the owner-managers; and levels of innovation achieved in the garages. Also the result showed that success of the garages was negatively influenced by levels of financial management skills possessed by the owner-managers. These imply that formal education that is university or college level could be a motivator. It enables one to see opportunities more clearly, through both informal and formal interactions. A skill in the area of specialization enhances the chances of identifying available opportunities in their areas of specialization which can be through innovation. Acquiring education will enable entrepreneurs achieve success in their firms. This also indicates that innovation is very important for success of business, entrepreneurs that acquire education are creative in initiating actions and carrying out their business performance as growth and business success are related to educated labour force which assist businesses to gain some competitive advantage. This study unlike Njoroge and Gathungu (2013) and Mmari (2014) which were conducted in East Africa, was conducted in West Africa, more specifically Nigeria, but adopted a cross sectional design unlike as the case in Mmari (2014) as well as a multiphase sampling which included stratified, purposive and systematic random sampling techniques. Though the data analysis adopted in the two studies was also adopted by this present study but focused more on the use of means, standard deviations, correlations and linear regression.

Similarly, Zannah, Mahat, Ariffin and Ali (2017) examined the role of demographic factors of owners- managers on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) performance in Yobe State, Nigeria. Results indicated that education and other variables had a positive and significant relationship with the SMEs performance. The implication in Zannah, *et al* (2017) findings is that entrepreneurs in SMEs acquired education that relates to their entrepreneurial business activities as their findings have positive and significant relationship with the SMEs performance. These enabled the entrepreneurs set clear goals at the beginning of their business venture which made them have

higher chances of competing and even perform better than those who do not. In a related study, Ajani and Oluyemi (2016) examined the relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and performance of small and medium scale enterprise (a study of SMEs in Yaba LCDA). Results revealed that entrepreneurial characteristics, entrepreneurial competency, orientation, and the level of education of an entrepreneur all had a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Yaba, Nigeria. This implied that acquiring education enabled the entrepreneurs to achieve success in their firms which enable them set goals, write their business plans, evaluate staff, communicate views and ideas, and networking's which lead to their business success. Ndungu (2017) studied factors affecting the successful growth and survival of SMEs in the Zimmerman ward, Nairobi, Kenya, using descriptive survey and convenient. The result showed that higher educational levels have a negative influence on SME's performance as most of the respondents had the highest level of education as O' Level. While most of these studies report that entrepreneurial education has a positive relationship with the performance of any given target, Ndungu (2017) reported a negative correlation between the two variables, although his study had a very small sample size and was conducted at the district level in Nairobi, Kenya. Though Ndungu (2017) studied factors affecting the successful growth and survival of SMEs, Zannah, *et al* (2017) examined the role of demographic factors of owners- managers on small and medium enterprises, Ajani and Oluyemi (2016) examined the relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and performance of small and medium scale enterprise, but the present study focused on entrepreneurial education of owners, managers and employees and performance of their SMEs.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from a sample of 393 owners, managers and staff in Kano state, selected using purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. Only those SMEs registered with the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industries Kano state and had operated for two years and above and were in manufacturing, education, trade and other services were selected. Data was collected using a questionnaire and an interview guide. The instrument/questionnaire was based on a five point Likert scale as used Morgan and Hunt (as cited in Zainudin, 2014) where 1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = moderate; 4 = high; 5= very high. The questionnaire had seven items on IV entrepreneurial education and 13 items for DV SMEs performance formulated by the researcher using literature. The questionnaire was tested for

validity and reliability using face validity, content validity, construct validity, convergent validity and internal reliability. Cronbach alpha test average was 0.752 for entrepreneurial education and 0.952 for SMEs performance meaning that the instrument adequately measured what was intended since it was above the recommended value of 0.70 (Zainudin, 2014). Data were analyzed using means, standard deviations, Pearson’s linear correlation coefficient and linear regression. Data cleaning was through checking for multi collinearity, missing values, checking outliers, testing for normality, linearity, sampling adequacy and test for sphericity. All these tests were first confirmed with the required rules of thumb before final analysis was done.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of entrepreneurial education on the performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria. Data on entrepreneurial education and SMEs performance were collected using seven and 13 questions/items respectively in the questionnaire. Respondents rated the extent of their entrepreneurial education exposure and SMEs performance on a five-point scale, where 1 = very low; 2 = low; 3 = moderate; 4 = high; 5 = very high. Their responses were summarized using descriptive statistics as presented in table 1.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations on Entrepreneurial Education and SMEs’ Performance of Owners, Managers and Staff in Kano State, Nigeria

Entrepreneurial education elements	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Tertiary studies (colleges and university)	2.89	1.273	Moderate extent	1
Newspapers	2.75	1.263	Moderate extent	2
TV/Radio talks	2.58	1.305	Low extent	3
Secondary school	2.51	1.123	Low extent	4
Capacity building, seminars/workshops	2.37	1.182	Low extent	5
Expert visit	2.23	0.927	Low extent	6
Business incubation	2.09	1.087	Low extent	7
Average mean	2.49	0.743	Low extent	
SMEs performance indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Rank
Competitive strength	3.63	0.833	High performance	1
Customer satisfaction	3.54	0.707	High performance	2

Sales volume	3.48	0.932	High performance	3
Increase in number of customers	3.45	1.042	High performance	4
Increase in profit	3.42	0.989	High performance	5
Supply of inputs	3.36	0.808	Moderate performance	6
Meeting benchmark	3.31	0.852	Moderate performance	7
Personal satisfaction	3.26	0.718	Moderate performance	8
Constant innovation	3.17	0.711	Moderate performance	9
Business survival	3.16	0.836	Moderate performance	10
High business asset	3.16	1.111	Moderate performance	11
High working capital	3.10	0.862	Moderate performance	12
Staff strength	3.04	0.740	Moderate performance	13
Average mean	3.31	0.690	Moderate performance	

Source: Researcher's Computation from primary data (2017)

Mean range

1.00 – 1.79

1.80 – 2.59

2.60 – 3.39

3.40 – 4.19

4.20 – 5.00

Interpretation

very low

low

moderate

High

Very high

The results in Table 1, reveal that respondents rated their entrepreneurial education exposure to be generally low. This was indicated by an overall average mean index for entrepreneurial education

of 2.49, falling under low extent on the interpretation scale. The low rating suggested that respondents were not acquainted with the entrepreneurial education at these levels, most especially on five elements of entrepreneurial education whose mean scores fell under low extent and these included exposure to secondary school (mean = 2.51); exposure to capacity building/seminar/workshops (mean = 2.37); exposure to business incubation (mean = 2.09); exposure to expert visit (mean = 2.23) and exposure to TV/Radio talks (mean = 2.58). The moderate levels of exposure rating in the interpretation guide were exposure to tertiary studies (colleges and university) and exposure to newspapers with mean scores of 2.89 and 2.75 respectively. This indicates that SMEs owners, managers and staff in Kano state, Nigeria that had moderate exposure of entrepreneurial education acquired that at tertiary studies (colleges and university) and their ability to read newspapers implying that majority of the SMEs operators lacked expertise from these two areas as they never underwent any training on such levels. Generally, respondents rated their SMEs performance as being moderate, as indicated by the average mean of 3.31, with a low score on standard deviation, suggesting that scores did not deviate much from the mean. The highest scored aspect of SMEs performance was competitive strength, with a mean of 3.63 and standard deviation of 0.833 suggesting that SMEs viewed their business competitive strength as being the best asset they had. The overall picture on SMEs performance suggested that the owners, managers and staff were not very satisfied with the current level of their performance, since they were not able to rate any aspect of the performance variables very high. It is also important that the SMEs were able to identify what was not doing well in their enterprises, an indication that they could improve.

Relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and Performance of SMEs in Kano state, Nigeria

Under correlation analysis, the researcher wanted to ascertain the extent to which performance of SMEs was correlated with the entrepreneurial education in Kano state, Nigeria. The two variables were correlated using Pearson's linear coefficient correlation and it show that the correlation coefficient was 0.18 and significant at $P < 0.000$ as indicated in table 2.

Table 2: Correlation matrix for Entrepreneurial Education and Performance of SMEs in Kano state Nigeria

Variables correlated	R- value	Sig	Interpretation
Entrepreneurial education Vs Performance of SMEs	0.18	P<0.001	Significant correlation

Correlation Sig. (1-tailed). Source: Researcher’s Computation from primary data (2017)

By this result in Table 2, entrepreneurial education positively and significantly correlate with performance of SMEs since the sig value is below 0.05. This implied that an improvement on entrepreneurial education is likely to increase performance of the SMEs in Kano state, Nigeria.

Testing the null hypothesis

Null hypothesis was stated that entrepreneurial education has no significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria. To test this, data on entrepreneurial education (Table1) was regressed with the data on small and medium scale enterprises performance. Results are indicated on table 3.

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Entrepreneurial Education and Performance of SMEs in Kano state Nigeria

Variables Regressed	Adjusted R square r^2		F-value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho1
Entrepreneurial education Vs SME performance	.030		13.101	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Coefficients	B	Std. Err.	t			
(Constant)	2.873	.125	23.065	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Entrepreneurial education	.171	.047	3.620	.000	Significant effect	Rejected

Source: Researcher’s Computation from primary data (2017)

The results of linear regression in Table 3 show that the model was significant since the sig value (0.000) was less than 0.005. The adjusted r square (r^2) indicate that the predictor (entrepreneurial education) explains 3% variations in SME performance (Adjusted r square = 0.030). The F statistic

and p- value show that the model is significant at 0.000. Based on these results the null hypothesis is rejected and we infer that entrepreneurial education can significantly affect SME performance in Kano state Nigeria. The coefficients suggest that a one unit increase in entrepreneurial education can bring a 0.171 improvement in SME performance and vice versa (Beta = 0.171) and this is statistically significant (sig = 0.000, t = 3.620).

Regarding the interview on entrepreneurial education exposure and its' effects on performance of their businesses, the researcher from the responses is of opinion that entrepreneurial education at different levels supported the respondents in their duties, more specifically education at tertiary studies. On their performance, they perceived low improvement during the years under study from the discussion. Therefore, if all the SMEs owners, managers and staff in Kano state are expose to these forms of entrepreneurial education before carrying out their activities there will be improvement in their firms.

Discussion

The study intended to establish whether entrepreneurial education can significantly influence performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria. The findings supported the hypothesis that entrepreneurial education significantly affect performance of SMEs in Kano State, Nigeria. This finding is consistent with many prior empirical studies. Specifically, the positive effect between entrepreneurial education and SMEs performance is consistent with the findings by Akinruwa, Awolusi, and Ibojo (2013) who indicated that possession of adequate entrepreneurial education results into enhanced performance of SMEs entrepreneurs; founder's level of education are prerequisite for successfully business running (Gerry, Dan & Jerry, 2015); qualification of entrepreneur is associated with performance and growth (Mothibi, 2015); level of formal education and level of participation in trade fairs and exhibitions are the key options of human capital development that improve SMEs performance (Ojokuku & Sajuyigbe, 2015); educational qualification gives business manager or owner the direction on resource mobilization (Ganyaupfu, 2013); higher education is an advantage for the entrepreneurs to maintain the sustainability of their companies and which is the opposite case for those without a higher formal educational background (Rauch & Rijdsdijk, 2013); education possessed by owner-managers of SMEs influences growth of business (Kasseeah, 2012); higher levels of entrepreneurial education

enhances performance of the entrepreneurs in relation to sales or profitability and which is also true for sustainability (Van der Sluis & Van Praag, 2008).

Likewise, Mmari (2014) who found results similar to those of the present study. He reported that owner-managers who possessed low levels of education, that majority of their vehicle garages experienced low levels of success where he investigated the influence of education on performance of SMEs, from 245 owner managers of vehicle garages in Arusha city and Moshi municipality, Tanzania. The present study's finding is in line with Ajani, *et al* (2016) who reported that level of education of an entrepreneur have significant effect on the performance of SMEs when they investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial characteristics and performance of small and medium scale enterprise (a study of SMEs in Yaba LCDA), also Zannah, *et al* (2017) in Yobe State, Nigeria who reported that demographic factors of owners/managers especially education significantly and positively influenced SMEs performance. The present study's finding is somewhat not consistent with prior research showing that higher educational level has a negative influence on SMEs performance (Ndungu, 2017). A plausible reason for this inconstancy could be due to the fact that sample size of Ndungu, (2017) was very small (33), which made it difficult to generalize.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurial Education if well-developed can positively and significantly influence performance of SMEs in Kano state, Nigeria. The results of this study serves as reference to anyone who is interested in establishing his personal business which will provide insight into entrepreneurial education in starting a business and also for any organization that is interested in achieving profitability or continue sustaining effective business to achieve growth and sustainable development.

Recommendation

Entrepreneurial education should be enhanced by putting measures for acquiring more knowledge while in service. The in service training measures such as encouraging deserved workers to attend workshops, conferences and inviting experts for talks, leadership training for owners and managers

and so on, where sustained and continuous, the operators' capabilities will be enhanced which will continue to positively influence performance of their SMEs.

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