Entrepreneurial Competency and Business Success Among Indigenous Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises

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Abstract

Globally, indigenous views and values have been documented as impacting enterprise and "competencies" and as such, practical means of addressing entrepreneurial impact. In spite of this, indigenous micro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs) are faced with lack of appropriate knowledge, limited skills, limited access to information technology and modern production technology, all of which inform competency. This paper therefore assessed the extent to which entrepreneurial competence influenced business success in MSMEs using between 50% and 80% indigenous materials. The study was conducted in Ogun, Oyo and Lagos states in Southwestern Nigeria. The MSMEs in the study area were stratified based on industrial capacity and from the light manufacturing segment. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 3 states and 20 MSMEs across different indigenous enterprises in the selected states. A well-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Data generated were analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that lack of or limited entrepreneurial competencies are a result of lack of entrepreneurship education. Impediments to indigenous enterprise development were observed to be: limited exposure and entrepreneurial skills of people who start and

operate businesses which limit the success of their businesses. It is therefore recommended that entrepreneurship education and training should be incorporated into the vocational training curriculum to improve entrepreneurial competencies in the study area, and other environments with similar characteristics to ensure the success of indigenous enterprises.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Indigenous Business Success

Introduction

Over the past decade, literature has confirmed the significance of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the sustainable economic growth and development of most nations around the world. They are said to be important to the development of the entrepreneurship culture, creating employment, creating new business opportunities and improving human resources (Weerakkody, 2013). Soomro and Aziz (2015), Majama and Magang (2017), as well as Agwu (2018), posited that SMEs are the base of the industrial sector and constitute the main force of the economy. This fact has been acknowledged by growth experts and governments in various countries of the world. SMEs were observed by Gunasekaran et al. (2011) and Adeyemi et al. (2017) to make up the majority of private companies in the world's economies (95%) and generate a large proportion of new jobs (60–70% of jobs). Hoque and Awang (2016) and OECD (2017) reported SMEs as owned and managed by youth, women and the vulnerable, who are partly pursuing their ability to promote pro-poor growth and the production of a wide variety of indigenous goods with tremendous foreign exchange ability throughout the world.

According to Tehseen et al. (2019), SMEs are linked directly to the economic well-being of entrepreneurs who were expected to equally prioritized the growth, performance and sustainability of the firm above any other activity (Abdullah and Rosli, 2015). As a result, a central focus for researchers, governments and policymakers has been the creation of a productive and competitive private sector in which MSMEs play a major role. For academics, governments, development aid partners and policymakers, the successful creation of MSMEs and their subsequent

evolution and development have long been a focus of interest and a challenge, as MSMEs are becoming increasingly important for the economic growth of the economy. In reaction, governments of countries around the world have implemented structural and market-based economic reforms to boost the productivity of domestic businesses, with a focus on improving MSMEs as a key means of reducing poverty, particularly among urban residents (Chadee and Roxas, 2013; Egena et al., 2014).

A number of initiatives and measures have been put in place by governments, including the provision of advisory services, the provision of distribution and working facilities, the facilitation of the development of new companies, access to funding and marketing, the provision of training and extension services to the industry, and the provision of direct resources to MSMEs to ensure their sustainability and stimulate improved growth rates.

However, according to existing literature (Tefera et al., 2013; Assefa et al., 2014), most countries in Africa have failed to maximize the benefits derived from the sector. The private sector of some countries, Nigeria inclusive, are underdeveloped with limited competitiveness (Mohammed et al., 2015). Most of the SMEs are informal operators, characterized by low productivity and growth, generating meagre profit where survival in business is difficult (Assefa et al., 2014). Generally, very high failure rates for small enterprises have been quoted (Tefera et al., 2013); 80% of new businesses fail within three to five years of starting (Adebisi and Gbegi, 2013), while a few SMEs are performing exceptionally and growing to large-scale enterprises (Talegeta, 2014; Mohammed et al., 2015 and Wondwossen, 2015).

Business success has been a central phenomenon in business studies across time and remains a major concern across nations (Yıldız and Karakaş, 2012; Sarasvathy et al., 2013; Seyoum et al., 2016). Many factors are responsible for business success. On one hand, MSMEs must compete with counterpart large-scale firms and strive to meet the dynamic and rising demands of their customers (Ndubisi and Iftikhar, 2012). On the other hand, they must face many internal and other external challenges. Some internal challenges include chronic shortage of technical know-how, experience, entrepreneurship skills and enterprise management competencies (Storey, 2004); lack of knowledge, attitude and skills to cope and direct the finances

of their organization in a hardy, transparent, and professional way (Eniola and Entebang, 2016); and lack of marketing competencies (Morgan et al., 2009).

As such, business success is the result of the interplay of many factors, but according to Oyeku et al., (2014) "the greatest determinant of business success could be the entrepreneur, viz. his/her strength, which, combined with the ability to build a winning team with complementary skills and talents, will take care of the entrepreneur's weaknesses". Similarly, Schneider and Albornoz (2018) stated that the success of a business is fundamentally dependent on individual capabilities and behaviours/actions.

Just as indigenous economic development is the involvement by indigenous people in employment, business, asset and wealth creation in the communities and regions where they live (HRSCATSIA, 2008), indigenous entrepreneurialism (or 'entrepreneur') refers to indigenously-owned private and commercial businesses that are run for profit. One key aspect of improving indigenous economic development is through indigenous people operating their own private businesses or community-based enterprises. In the case of successful indigenous entrepreneurs, self-employment and ownership of enterprises is believed to help individuals, families and communities improve self-sufficiency and decrease reliance on government welfare (Hindle and Moroz, 2010). Past research, for the most part, has focussed on the role of external factors affecting indigenous micro, small and medium enterprise business success. Yet such focus on external factors, although important to enhance our understanding of the entrepreneurship phenomenon, overlooks the role played by the entrepreneur's competencies and behaviour.

Studies have shown that most SMEs are managed by owners and as such their performance is dependent on the competency of the entrepreneur (Nasuredin et al., 2016 and Umar et al., 2019). Tehseen and Ramayah (2015) were however of the opinion that lack of entrepreneurial competencies hinders SMEs success while Mitchelmore and Rowley (2010) and Sánchez (2013) reported entrepreneurship education and training as having positive impact on individual motivation, personality trait, knowledge and skills, and by extension increase competencies. However, not much work has been done to ascertain the availability and impact of entrepreneurship education

and training to improve the entrepreneurs' competencies and ensure the growth and success of their firms.

It is in recognition of the strategic role of the SMEs and entrepreneurs in national development that this study was conducted to document the extent of training given to entrepreneurs to ensure the development of their entrepreneurial competencies as required for sustainable indigenous entrepreneurial development in Southwestern Nigeria.

Methodology

This study was carried out among micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Ogun, Oyo and Lagos states in Southwestern Nigeria (Figure 1). These three (3) states were purposively selected based on the availability of MSMEs. This was followed by a simple random selection of MSMEs across different indigenous enterprises in the selected states. Five (5) respondents from were selected from Oyo State, three (3) from Ogun State and twelve (12) from Lagos State. They are all businesses classified under the micro light manufacturing segment of small and medium enterprises according to the Bank of Industry analysis (see table 1).

Nigeria's economy is dominated by micro, small and medium scale enterprises in agriculture, manufacturing, commerce and industry, and services. The owners may or may not be poor, but the firms operate in very different markets (urban, rural, local, national, regional and international); embody different levels of skills, capital, sophistication and growth orientation, and may be in the formal or informal economy.

The MSMEs were stratified by industry into hospitality and entertainment, construction, information and communications technology and light manufacturing. However, for this study, 20 MSMEs that were using indigenous methods and materials (made up of the food processing and body care products that use between 80% and 90% indigenous materials, as well as shoes, bags, belts and purses; and garments and accessories production categories that use 50% and less indigenous materials, respectively) from the light manufacturing segment pool were purposively selected. Twenty (20) sets of well-structured questionnaires were sent out online to the operators of the firms, which were completed and returned. Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out on the data garnered from the test instrument.

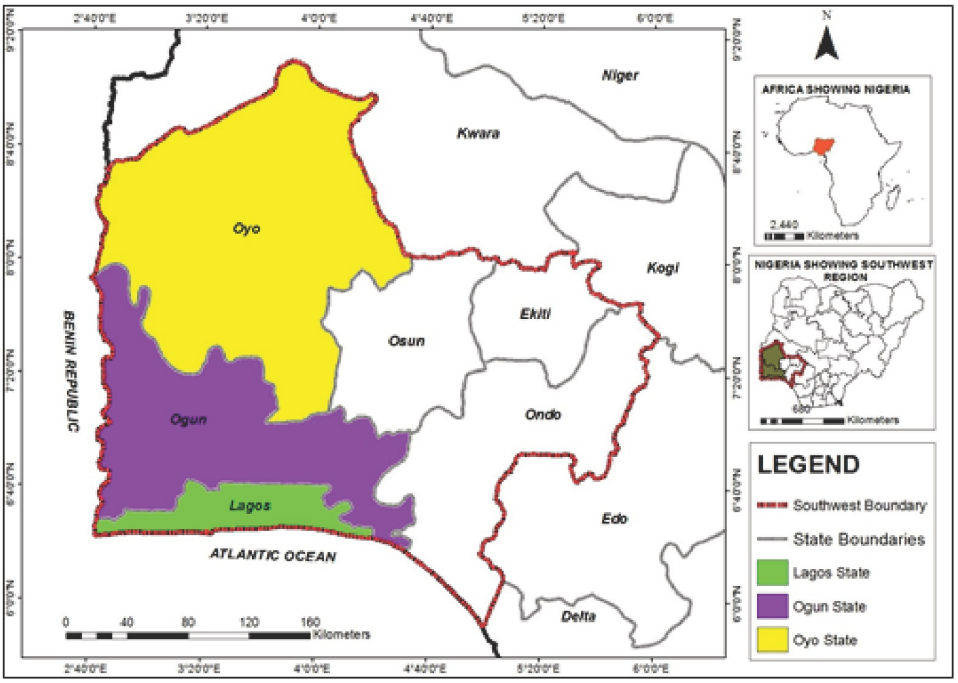

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing the Southwestern states.

Table 1: The Bank of Industry analysis of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)

Enterprise Category	Number of Employees	Total Assets (₦'million)	Annual Turnover (₦'million)
Micro	≤ 10	≤ 5	≤ 20
Small	>11 ≤ 50	> 5 ≤ 100	≤ 100
Medium	> 51 ≤ 200	> 100 ≤ 500	≤ 500

Source: Bank of Industry, 2009.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic characteristics of operators of indigenous SMSEs

The socio-economic background of the entrepreneurs and their firms is presented in Table 2. The data reveals that 80.0% of the respondents were females, a finding that complements the assertion of Hisrich et al., (2007)

that most SMEs involve the "broader society" including the youth, women, and the disadvantaged others. Almost all (95.0%) the respondents were aged between 20 and 50 years, which put a majority of the indigenous business operators within the productive age of the economy. The majority of the respondents were literate; 85.0% had post-secondary education and only 10.0% had only secondary school leaving certificates. Hunter (2013) identified indigenous education outcomes as one of the important characteristics of note in areas where SMSEs are localized in Australia. All the identified businesses for this study were micro and small businesses. However, 80.0% of the respondents made less than ₦1m as revenue in a month and did not have more than 3 staff.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of the socio-economic background of firms/operators

Background	Frequency	Percentage	Mode
Sex			
Male	4	20	
Female	16	80	Female
Age			
>20-30years	3	15	
31-40years	10	50	31-40years
41-50years	6	30	
>50years	1	5	
Native of Enterprise Location			
Yes	5	25	
No	15	75	No
Length of Residence in Enterprise Location			
>2-5 years	1	5	
6-10 years	4	20	>15 years
11-15 years	5	25	
>15 years	10	50	
Level of Formal Education			
Secondary	2	10	
HND/First Degree	8	40	Higher Degree
Higher Degree	10	50	

Background	Frequency	Percentage	Mode
Marital Status			
Married	13	65	
Single	6	30	Married
Separated	1	5	
Religion			
Christianity	13	65	Christianity
Islam	7	35	
Business Type			
Food processing	9	45	Food processing
Artisan	2	10	
Body care processing	6	30	
Others	3	15	
Business Monthly Revenue			
<1₦m	16	80	<1₦m
1-2₦m	0	0	
>2≤4₦m	1	5	
>4≤6₦m	3	15	
>6₦m	0	0	
Number of Staff Employed			
1-3	15	75	1-3
4-7	3	3	
8-15	2	2	

Entrepreneurial competency and indigenous business success

Available literature indicates that there are likely areas where entrepreneurs have competitive advantage over neighbouring industries. For example, in Australia, indigenous MSMEs have commercial or competitive advantage in the uniqueness of culture-based products, not the quality or price (HRSCATSIA, 2008). The Australia Government (2014) also identified land ownership and land resource management as other areas where indigenous entrepreneurs can enjoy competitive advantage. About 45.0% of the businesses were into production of food and essentials, 25.0% produce body and health care products, 15.0% are into leatherworks and accessories while the other 15.0% were into garment making and accessories

(Tables 2 and 3). This negates the assertion by Hunter (2013) that in Australia, the most popular industries for indigenous self-employed businesses included freight transport, construction, building and cleaning services, carpentry, creative arts and other domestic or personal services. Examining the motivating factor among firm operators, 80% of them were found to be inspired by personal interest in entrepreneurial development. This is not too far from the key drivers of indigenous entrepreneurs from literature, viz.

i. the desire for succession planning by indigenous entrepreneurs (HRSCATSIA, 2008; ATO, 2009);

ii guarding against future generations experiencing the same hardships passed through by indigenous entrepreneurs and their predecessors (HRSCATSIA, 2008; ATO, 2009);

iii. the desire to give something back to the community of the indigenous entrepreneurs (HRSCATSIA, 2008; ATO, 2009);

iv. to escape, individually or communally, from poverty (Foley, 2006); and

v. the desire of indigenous entrepreneurs to provide for family needs (Foley, 2006).

Among these categories, the food processing and body care products used between 80% and 90% indigenous materials while the other two categories used 50% and less (Table 4). The MSMEs were broadly defined as businesses with turnover of less than ₦100m per annum and/ or less than 300 employees. Studies by the IFC show that approximately 96% of Nigerian businesses are MSMEs compared to 53% in the US and 65% in Europe. The MSMEs represent about 90% of the manufacturing/industrial sector in terms of number of enterprises and they contribute approximately 1% of GDP compared to 40% in Asian countries and 50% in the US or Europe. In Nigeria, SMEs are distributed in clusters within regions. This is similar to the Australian experience where the majority of indigenous SMEs, according to Hunter (2013), were located in the south east corner of the country, which houses the best indigenous education outcomes, higher general population densities and demand for goods and services.

Table 3: Summary of firm products, materials used and production methods

S/No.	Products	Materials Used	Method of Production
1	Fabrics	Machine, Thread, Needle	Cut and Sew
2	Fruit Milk Yogurt, Tiger Nut, Fruit Juice and Soya Milk	Fruit Milk Yogurt, Zobo Leaf, Dates Tiger Nut, Coconut Soya Beans Ginger Cloves	Blending of Fruits, Fruit Extraction, Boiling of Zobo Leaf, Grinding of Tiger nut and soya beans
3	Local dye	Fabric, dye, candle wax, twine, wool, paste, patterns, macko, Caribard, leathers, accessories	Fabrics are tied or designed with candle wax to create a resisted after which they are dyed systematically to achieve a particular design/colour. These finished fabrics are either sold, sewn or used in producing other products such as bags, shoes, duvets, souvenirs, hair accessories
4	Sausages	Minced beef, Bacon, Salami, Chicken fillet, Beef, Pork, Casings (imported), Preservatives (imported), Spices, packing materials	Mincing, adding of the ingredients, smoking or boiling, packaging
5	Shoes, Pams, belts, bags	Nora, mako, gum	Can't explain
6	Herbs and spices such as ginger, garlic, tumeric, cayenne pepper, baobab, tiger nuts, coconut tamba (finger millet) sweet potatoes	The farm produces cellophane, spice PET bottles	Sort. Destone. Clean. Wash. Dry. Powderise. Package
7	Native Soups	Fresh food products from the general market	Cooking
8	Sliced and packed local and exotic vegetables and blended food crops	(Crayfish, Melon, Ogbono) sorted and packed exotic vegetables Land, irrigation equipment, vegetables seeds, farm machinery, slicing machine,	Organic field & greenhouse cultivation

S/No.	Products	Materials Used	Method of Production
		packaging machines and materials, vegetables chilled, organic manure	
9	Hair oil, Body soap	Coconut oil, palm kernel oil	Manual
10	Soap, Body creams	Coconut Oil. Shea Butter. Palm Oil.	Cold process
11	For Fish Farming	Fingerlings, Water for Fish Processing - Fish, Charcoal (For the Smoking Kiln), Salt & Water (For Cleaning) For Packaged Food Stuff - Crayfish, Melon (Egusi), Dry Pepper & Ogbono, Packaging	Fish Processing = Cleaned-Smoked - Cooled - Weighed - Packaged (In branded nylons & Cartons) Food Stuff = Ground into Powder - Packaged (In branded Nylons)
12	Furniture (tables, chairs, beds)	Wood, chemicals, gum and glue, bolts and nuts, castor	Wood drying, cutting, mortising, soothing, clamping, spraying and finishing
13	Raw rice 30%, Honey 30%, Yam 25%, Groundnut 15%	Raw rice, Honey, Dried yam, Groundnut	Manual processing and semi-automated
14	Herbal glowing soap, herbal brightening soap, kids organic soap, hair and body butter, hair shampoo, hair serum	Aloevera, black soap, turmeric, neem leaves, basil leaves, Curry leaves, honey, Shea butter, cocoa powder and butter, coconut oil, palm kernel oil, lemon and lime, camwood powder, moringa, ginger and garlic, sandalwood powder, baobab powder and oil	The raw materials are mixed together by hand/mixer after which some would have been dried and grind to powder to achieve final result
15	Oil	Coconut	Traditional
16	Black soap	Eeru (Potash), Ose dudu	Manual preparation
17	Chinchin	Flour, butter, vegetable oil, nutmeg, eggs, milk, sugar	Manually done presently but with plans to scale up to use machines such as mixers, cutters and deep fryers
18	Zobo and Chapman drinks	Sorrel leaves, ginger, cloves, fruits, grenadine syrup, preservative	Cooking, sieving, brewing, bottling and packaging

S/No.	Products	Materials Used	Method of Production
19	Herbal glowing soap, body and hair butter, coconut oil, black soap hair shampoo, face and body scrub	Shea butter, palm kernel oil, coconut oil, cocoa powder & butter, neem leave, basil leave, curry leave, moringa leaves & powder, lemon juice & powder, ginger, garlic, honey, raw black soap, tumeric, olive & avocado oil	The raw materials pass through various stage from sun drying, grinding, mixing, milling before final products are produced
20	Shoes, Bags and Accessories	Leather, fabric, fiber, gum and foam	Cut and sew

Challenges associated with entrepreneurial competencies among indigenous businesses

Among the firms used for this study, only 4.5% of the firm operators made use of 90.0% materials from outside the country. Some of the food processing enterprises were still using imported machines to process some of the raw materials which needed to pass through various stages, such as grinding, mixing and milling before final products could be produced. Further, 45.0% of these firms used indigenous materials only. Fifty-five per cent (55.0%) of the operators indicated that they had attended vocational training, while 65.0% had attended other business management training. Invariably, 35.0% of the indigenous firm operators had no formal training for their businesses at all. Little wonder, therefore, that 80.0% of new businesses fail within the first three years of existence in Nigeria as they do not have a business plan before starting the business (Table 4).

This finding is supported in existing literature (Tefera et al., 2013) that, generally, small enterprises have very high failure rates. However, although 80.0% indicated business growth over 3 years, they have however never moved from being micro and small businesses (Table 4) because their staff strength has remained below the Bank of Industry's classification of SMEs (Table 1). Only a few SMEs are performing exceptionally and growing to medium and then to large-scale enterprises (MoUDH, 2013; Mohammed et al., 2015).

Table 4: Frequency distribution of operator's perception of some firm status indices

	Frequency	Percentage	Mode
Percentage of Raw Materials Imported			
None	10	45.5	None
10	2	9.1	
20	2	9.1	
30	3	13.6	
50	4	18.2	
90	1	4.5	
Consent to Attendance of any Vocational Training			
Yes	11	55	Yes
No	9	45	
Consent to Attendance of any other Business Management Training			
Yes	13	65	No
No	7	35	
Consent to Having a Business Plan before Starting Firm			
Yes	4	20	No
No	16	80	
Consent to Business Growing in the Past Three Years			
Yes	16	80	Yes
No	3	15	
Can't Say	1	5	

Access to business management skills, information technology and modern production facilities

Some of the entrepreneurs learnt their business from vocational training centres (35.0%), parents (10.0%) or peers (15.0%), but most (90.0%) of the respondents were not given business entrepreneurship education to develop entrepreneurial competencies to prepare them for the world of business; they just ventured into it without formal or informal training about business (Table 5). The analysis revealed that although operators of these MSMEs are mostly graduates who took personal interest in business using indigenous materials and technology for food, body-care accessories production, their businesses remained micro as many of them were weak in or lacked entrepreneurial competencies. This can be said to be due to the fact that though vocational skills were acquired from vocational centres, parents and peers, this learning did not come with entrepreneurial training on how

to do business through the development of entrepreneurial competencies. As indicated in the bouquet of competencies possessed, 30.0% of the firms indicated possessing some levels of skill in marketing and sales, 26.0% in operational management, 16.0% in strategy development and execution, 14.0% in human resources management, while 10.0% had skills in financial records and management.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of operator's perception of some entrepreneurial competence indices

	Frequency	Percentage	Mode
Source of Indigenous Business Management Skill			
Mothers	2	10	Others
Fathers	-	-	
Peers	3	15	
Vocational Centres	7	35	
Others	8	40	
Source of Inspiration on Indigenous Business Establishment			
Inheritance	-	-	Personal Interest
Personal Interest	17	85	
Opportunity	3	15	
Institutional Support	-	-	
Consent to being taught entrepreneurial skill on how to run a business			
Yes	2	10	No
No	18	90	
Frequency Distribution of Firm Operators' Entrepreneurial competencies			
Marketing & Sales	15	31.2	Marketing & Sales

The study revealed that more than half of the indigenous firm operators have access to different social media (31.0%) and email facilities (26.0%) but only 15.0% have private websites, and 15% are engaged in internet adverts placement (see Figure 2) . Generally, some of the MSMEs operators have access to various forms of technology that have the potential to grow their businesses.

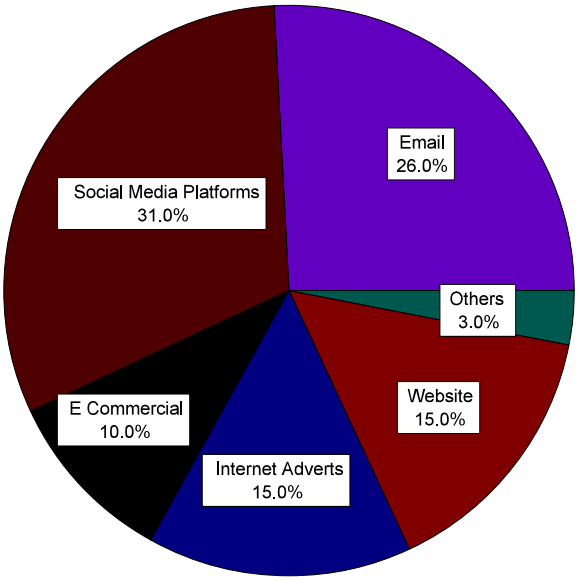

Figure 2: Distribution of access to information technology among indigenous business owners.

Self-rating entrepreneurial competencies among MSMEs operators in Southwestern Nigeria

The results of the self-rating of entrepreneurial competencies among SMSEs operators in Southwestern Nigeria is revealed in Table 6. Self-rating subjective measures were used to determine entrepreneurial competencies/ performances in past research. SMEs often were not willing to divulge objective figures, such as the amount of profit. And even the actual figures were hardly found in SMEs, because they did not have the habit of keeping records of financial matters for decision-making and the human resource necessary to establish performance standards. Indeed, though criticised by some, the subjective measures were found to be as valid as objective measures (Nur and Zulkiffli, 2014). The self-rating subjective measure has also been used in many SMEs studies (Flatten et al., 2011).

Table 6: Entrepreneurial competencies among SMSEs operators in Southwestern Nigeria

S/No.	Firm Products	Identified Entrepreneurial Competencies of Operators
1	Fabrics	(b) Marketing and Sales
2	Fruit milk, Yoghurt, Tiger nut milk, Fruit juice and Soya milk	(b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management
3	Local dye	(b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management
4	Sausages	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales
5	Shoes, Palm slippers/ sandals, Belts, Bags	(f) Others, please specify
6	Herbs and Spices	Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management
7	Native soups	(d) Operations Management
8	Sliced and packed local and exotic vegetables and Blended food crops	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales
9	Hair oil, Body soap	(b) Marketing and Sales, (d) Operations Management, (e) Financial Records and Management
10	Soap, Body creams	(b) Marketing and Sales
11	For Fish farming	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales, (d) Operations Management, (e) Financial Records and Management
12	Furniture (tables, chairs, beds)	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management
13.	Raw rice 30%, Honey 30%, Yam 25%, Groundnut 15%	(d) Operations Management
14	Herbal glowing soap, Herbal brightening soap, Kids' organic soap, Hair and body butter, Hair shampoo, Hair serum	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management, (e) Financial Records and Management
15.	Oil	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution
16.	Black soap	(f) Others, please specify

S/No.	Firm Products	Identified Entrepreneurial Competencies of Operators
17.	Chinchin	(b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management, (e) Financial Records and Management
18.	Zobo and Chapman drinks	(b) Marketing and Sales, (d) Operations Management
19.	Herbal glowing soap, Body and hair butter, Coconut oil, Black soap hair shampoo, Face and body scrub	(a) Strategy Development Implementation and Execution, (b) Marketing and Sales, (c) Human Resources Management, (d) Operations Management, (e) Financial Records and Management
20.	Shoes, Bags and Accessories	(b) Marketing and Sales, (d) Operations Management

Suggestions on growing and sustaining indigenous MSMEs in Nigeria

Firm operators' opinions were sought on ways of sustaining indigenous MSMEs in the study area. The majority of the operators were of the opinion that training as well as financial and fiscal support from the government were germane to encouraging and sustaining indigenous entrepreneurship. Firm operators expatiated on the types of training that would be beneficial to them, such as mentorship of upcoming entrepreneurs by experienced captains of industry, access to business strategy education, and localized entrepreneurial training. Moreover, on fiscal support, the operators suggested: government patronage of Nigerian-made products; availability of stable electricity; globally competitive foreign exchange tariff, which will have multiplier effect on machine and tool access by entrepreneurs; simplified firm registration and documentation process; heavy equipment for rental from the government; establishment of affordable incubation business centres; and the organisation of trade fairs where indigenous products can be introduced to the general public. Furthermore, the firm operators also seek financial support from the government through the timely assessment of government grants, access to finance at single digit interest and access to financial aid.

On the part of firm owners, for the sustainability of the indigenous business empire, it is imperative that they have the entrepreneurial zeal and will to succeed in their respective businesses. Firm operators are also expected to have detailed and comprehensive business plans before start-up. Cooperation among members was also identified as the key to the

sustainable growth and development of MSMEs in Nigeria as no single entrepreneur can survive alone. This is supported by ATO (2009) that perceived cooperation as an important avenue for business advice, increased access to suppliers and customers' as well as the building block for business networks. The lack of cooperation among indigenous entrepreneurs particularly in remote and even in regional areas was also observed by ATO (2009) and HRSCATSIA (2008) as responsible for the non-sustainability of indigenous MSMEs

Conclusion and Recommendation

The entrepreneur had been suggested as an important agent of change, contributing significantly to the economic development of Nigeria in terms of wealth and employment creation, the stimulation of indigenous entrepreneurship and so on. Nigeria is also observed to be endowed with abundant indigenous materials, which if properly harnessed and put to productive use could have significant positive impact on her economy. The use of indigenous raw materials and technology for production should therefore be encouraged to maximize the latent potential economic strength of the country. The government on her part recognizes the strategic and economic role of the entrepreneur and has continuously crafted policies that would enhance the development of entrepreneurship in the country. However, government policy initiatives have tended to emphasize financial resources more than other factors critical to entrepreneurial success.

These other critical factors are the entrepreneurial competencies, which have been neglected for long and should be considered as very essential variables in entrepreneurial development. The entrepreneur needs to acquire competencies in such areas as effective time and human resource management, communication, adherence to business ethics and social responsibilities, effective leadership qualities development, decision making skills, marketing and financial management. These entrepreneurial competencies, which are rooted in effective training and development, can serve as the needed tonic for the enhancement of indigenous business success, which will in turn impact the Nigerian economy towards achieving the SDGs. This can best be achieved by integrating not just vocational but also entrepreneurial competencies into the entire nation's educational system. The study recommends that all vocational centres, starting with government-owned centres, should include development of entrepreneurial

competencies in their curriculum to ensure sustainable indigenous enterprise growth to achieve prosperity in pursuance of the SDGS. However, for formal education to be functional, vocational skills and entrepreneurial competencies must be inculcated into all levels of education. In line with this, faculties for developing entrepreneurial competencies must be established and equipped. Also, there should be public enlightenment on the availability of indigenous materials and technology to foster the interest of the populace in their utilization.

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