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Small and Medium Enterprises and the Challenge of Basic Infrastructure in Southeastern Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines Small and Medium Enterprises and the Challenge of Basic Infrastructure: in South Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, this study intends to: Ascertain the effect of the good road network on the growth of small and medium scale enterprise in southeast Nigeria.
Examine the impact of regular electricity supply on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria. A Survey of randomly selected Small and medium-scale enterprises in the three most industrially states (Enugu East of Enugu State, Nnewi of Anambra State, and Aba of Abia State) in Southeast Nigeria, was selected for the study. The study makes use of secondary data from the selected small and medium-scale enterprises. The Data were analyzed using Linear Regression Analysis. Pearson Correlation analysis was used as the main statistical tool of analysis. It was supported by descriptive statistics. Pearson Correlation was then used to test the two null hypotheses formulated for the study. linear regression analysis was used to compare the results obtained from the correlation analysis. The results reveal that a good road network is significantly positive on the growth of a small and medium-scale enterprise. at 0.848 while the sig-value is 0.001. while good electricity supply is significantly positive on the growth of a small and medium-scale enterprise.at 0.854 while the sig-value is 0.001. The result is also corroborated by the result of the R2 (0.733) and the Adject R2 (0.656) that measure the goodness of the model fitness.

Keywords: *Small, Medium, Enterprises, Basic Infrastructure, South Eastern Nigeria.*

1. Introduction

Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs) whether in development or undeveloped countries play a mighty role in developing the economies, more especially in developing economies. Nevertheless, it is so unfortunate that in developing countries, Small and Medium Enterprises are faced with numerous challenges in the area of infrastructure. Even with those challenges, the Small and Medium-scale Enterprises is labour intensive because it contributes up to 60% of total employment and up to 40% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which is the national income in emerging economies. The small and medium-scale are highly regarded as the engine of both developed and developing economies globally. It represents more than 90% of all businesses and about 60% of global employees across the world. These numbers are highly significant when compare with the informal of Small and Medium Enterprise are included. The workforce is growing globally and, is highly coming from the development of Small Medium-scale Enterprise. It is now a basic priority for every government around the world. In emerging labour markets, most official jobs are created by SMEs, which in turn generate 8 out of 10 jobs. Nevertheless, poor infrastructure is one of the key challenges facing the growth of small and medium-scale businesses in developing countries.

One of the major economic factors needed for economic development is Infrastructure because of its interrelation with production. Entrepreneurial to effectively embark on production they need to be equipped with adequate infrastructure. The development of the economy through the production processes is practically base on the quality of infrastructure available for production and it will significantly impact the quality of production and performance of the small and medium-scale business in the area of employment creation in the economy because they shall experience higher turnover. The accessibility of infrastructure in most developing countries particularly in wester African leaves much to be anticipated (World Bank 2013, 2014). The gap in the accessibility of infrastructure in Nigeria has a significant effect on the production processes in the industrial sector, more especially the aptitude of the Small and Medium-scale enterprises to compete in the world market. The lack of infrastructure in Nigeria can be traced back to the 1980s when the government approved the Structural Adjusted Programme (SAP). SAP encouraged a series of economic reforms in Nigeria that bring about the liberalization in the economy by the government. The policy was adopted as a result of the economic downturn in the1980s that bring about the balance of payment problems in Nigeria Obokoh and Geoff (2016).

1.2 Statement of Problem

Small and Medium Enterprises can make a meaningful reduction in the high level of unemployment and contribute to the GDP of the economy. The failure of Small and Medium Enterprises may be attributed to many challenges and entrepreneurial culture. Given this state of Small and Medium Enterprises, the need exists to establish the hindering challenges to improve Small and Medium Enterprise performance. Those hindering challenges in this study are poor infrastructures. Those challenges of poor infrastructures include; poor road network and irregular of electricity supply in southeast Nigeria.

1.3 Objective of the Study:

The main objective of this study is Small and Medium Enterprises and the Challenge of Basic Infrastructure in South Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, this study intends to:

i. Ascertain the effect of a good road network on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

ii. Examine the impact of regular electricity supply on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

i. Does a good road network have a significant effect on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria?

ii. Does the regular of electricity supply have a significant impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

i. H_0: Good road network does not have a significantly positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

ii. H_0: Regular electricity supply does not have a significantly positive impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is the true backbone of economic development in all state or nations Rajesh, Suresh, and Deshmukh, (2008). In Nigeria, SMEs play a vital role in developing the economy because it constitutes 98.2% of the firms in the country. The SMEs as well contribute to national growth by influencing the distribution of national income in both nominal terms and functional Uzor, (2004). Rogers (2002), emphasized that: SMEs enhance capacity building by serving as entrepreneurial training central which enables them to create more job opportunities per each unit of every venture because of their mood of operations in labour intensive. The achievement is much more in greater value because of the push that encourages the basic economic activities in the country. it depends mostly on locally sourced raw materials. The SMEs provide the service industry with feeders to enable them to serve as the main suppliers of intermediate goods and components to large-scale manufacturers and also serve as the main agents for the supply of final goods. The SMEs also offer opportunities for the development of upcoming homegrown, technology acquisition and skills through adaptation.

Small and Medium Scale firms in Nigeria

In Nigeria, small and medium scale firms are always regarded as the pillar of economic growth and a key source of development, flexibility, and dynamism. In the Federal Office of Statistics, a study was carried out and the result of the study revealed that 97% of all businesses in Nigeria that recruited no less than 100 staffs are small firms. The Small and Medium-scale firm sector in Nigeria provides, an average of 80% of employment. Mahmoud, (2005) opines that in Nigeria, the development of Small and Medium firms is a big step towards diversifying and building a vibrant economy. The definition of Small and Medium-scale firms is mainly depending on the country level of development. The Small and Medium Industries Enterprises Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) describes Small and Medium-scale Enterprises to be as an enterprise with a maximum asset base of two hundred million (N200, 000,000) without working capital and land and with a minimum of no less than 10 and no more than 300 employed staffs. Nwokoye (1988), opines that Small and Medium-Scale businesses are enterprises with a minimum of 5 to 100 employees with a yearly turnover of about ₦400, 000. The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry describes a Small and Medium-scale firm as an enterprise with a total capital investment of up to ₦750,000 without land and a minimum number of 50 employees.

The Formation of Small and Medium-Scale Firm

Small and Medium-scale business, in most case, it starts operation in the form of single man business. although some could be registered as a sole proprietorship or limited liability companies usually by share. The management structure is usually very simple with informal employee/employer relationships, high labour intensive, simple technology, a fusion of ownership, and limited or unlimited access to capital. In Nigeria, SMEs have seven means of sourcing funds; personal means of resources, family means of resources, through business means of associates or partners, through friends, through informal financial markets, banks, and obtaining a loan from other financial institutions Owualah (1999). They play a vital role in economic development which may include the development of industry/technology, creation of jobs, capacity building, promotion of economic growth, export promotion, increased standard of living, structural transformation of rural areas, flexibility, and low take-off requirements Odubanjo (2000).

Inadequate Basic Infrastructure in Nigeria

The Government in Nigeria has not done enough to establish a conducive environment for the growth of Small and Medium-scale industries. The system lacks basic infrastructures which are ranging from the poor road network, lack of water supply, lack of building infrastructures, inadequate transport systems, irregular electricity supply, poor solid waste management, etc. Tendler, and Amorim (1996) posit that Nigeria as an underdeveloped country has created physical and social infrastructures that have a binding constraint on the growth of Small and Medium-scale businesses.

The stores in the market have been dominated by absentee landlords whose charging's are too exorbitant. The possession of stores in the marketplace are politicians and it is a binding constraint to the small-scale operators who are out to market their product. It is affecting the development of the industry. Osamwonyi, (2005) posits that the high rents place on those shops by those stores possessors in locative's areas have directly forced real small-scale operators into the streets. Also, domestic economic problems of deregulation and removal of protection as well as the global financial crisis have been detrimental to SMEs.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This is a research-based theory on the active learning model, it is propounded by Erickson and Pakes (1995). The theory states that an organization can explore its economic environment vigorously and as well try to invest to enhance its rapid growth under competitive pressure from both inside and outside of the firm. The actual growth and potential change over time in reply to the results of the firm's investment and those of other actors in the same market. Based on this model of learning, holders or managers of Small and Medium-scale Enterprises might raise their competence through effective training and formal education that increases their endowments while the government may empower their activities through the creation of the enabling environment. Entrepreneurs or bosses of Small and Medium-scale Enterprises with training, work experience, higher formal education, and government support would therefore be likely to grow faster than those without these potentials. This implies that Small and Medium-scale Firms in Nigeria have prospects of experiencing growth and contributing meaningfully to the creation of jobs and this can only achieve when proper investments are made by the stakeholders into the firm. This might best be accomplished through government intervention by financial support, social infrastructures, capacity building of Small and Medium-scale industry operators, and promising taxation policies.

2.3 Empirical Review

Mba Okechukwu Agwu and Cletus Izunwanne Emeti (2014), investigate the Issues, Challenges, and Prospects of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Port-Harcourt city, Nigeria. The study adopts a descriptive research design using 120 randomly selected registered operators of SMEs in Port-Harcourt City. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics while formulated hypotheses were tested using z-test. Results from the data analysis indicated that poor financing, inadequate social infrastructures, lack of managerial skills, and multiple taxations were major challenges confronting SMEs in Port-Harcourt City, thus recommended: provision of soft loans to SMEs operators, government guaranteeing of long-term loans to SMEs operators, the establishment of SMEs funding agency, public/private sector partnership in the infrastructural provision, capacity building for SMEs operators and provision of tax incentives for SMEs operators.

Sharmilee Sitharam and Muhammad Hoque, (2016). Study the Factors affecting the performance of small and medium enterprises in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It was a cross-sectional study conducted among 74 SMEs owners/managers who were members of the Durban Chamber of Commerce online using an anonymous questionnaire. The results revealed technological advancement would improve the performance of the business. With regards to the challenge, the majority of the respondents viewed competition as a major challenge. Almost all the respondents indicated that crime and corruption affecting business performance. The competition was the only factor amongst the studied internal and external factors that revealed a significant association with the performance of SMEs in KwaZulu-Natal ($p = 0.011$). SMEs need to recognize they must prepare for both domestic and international competition. Collaboration between SMEs could be a way for SMEs to confront competition.

Ayozie Daniel Ogechukwu, Jacob.S. Oboreh, Umukoro. F and Ayozie Victoria Uche (2013), study Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMES) in Nigeria the Marketing Interface. The study is a theoretical review. It reveals A business whether small or big, simple or complex, private or public is created to provide competitive prices. Business in Nigeria has been classified as small, medium, and large. In both the developed and developing countries, the

government is turning to small and medium scale industries, as a means of economic development and a veritable means of solving problems. It is also a seedbed of innovations, inventions, and employment. Presently in Nigeria, SMEs assist in promoting the growth of the country's economy, hence all the levels of government at different times have policies that promote the growth and sustenance of SMEs. Small scale industry orientation is part of Nigerian history. Evidence abound in the communities of what successes our great grandparents, made of their respective trading concerns, yam barns, cottage industries, and the likes.

Akhamiokhor Sunday, and Adanikin Ariyo, (2017). This study empirically examined entrepreneurial strategies and small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) development in Ogun State, Nigeria. using Taro Yamane formula for sample size. A structured questionnaire titled 'Entrepreneurial Strategies and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) Development in Ogun State, Nigeria' was validated and administered with a ninety-one-point nine percent response rate. Cronbach Alpha reliability for major constructs had an average value of 0.83. The data collected was analyzed using linear and multiple regression analysis. Findings reveal there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial strategies and SME development ($R = 0.535$, at $p < 0.05$). The model R2 (coefficient of determination) was 0.287, a constant value (alpha) of 44.670, the coefficient of the independent variable (beta = 0.491) and F-Value yielded 163.890. Competitive strategy had significant effect on return on investment and this effect was statistically significant at ($R = 0.400$, $R2 = 0.160$, $p < 0.05$, $B = 0.360$, $F = 77.727$). There is also a significant and positive relationship between human resource strategy and employee productivity ($R = 0.4429$, $R2 = 0.184$, $p < 0.05$, $B = 0.385$, $F = 91.833$). In conclusion, entrepreneurial strategies have a strong positive relationship with the development of SMEs in Ogun State, Nigeria. The adoption of these strategies is germane for SMEs to enable them during the intense competition for their firms to still be sustained, survive and grow consistently. The study has recommended that SMEs should adopt entrepreneurial strategies to enable them to increase their returns on investment, employee productivity, which when engaged in their firms enhances SME development.

3. Methodology and Data Analyses

A survey of randomly selected Small and medium-scale enterprises in the three most industrially states (Enugu East of Enugu State, Nnewi of Anambra State, and Aba of Abia State) in Southeast Nigeria, was selected for the study. The study sample was drawn from bread bakeries industries, water packaged industries, block-making industries, fashioners industries, and fast food industries. The selection of the Small and medium-scale enterprises firms was based on the Nigerian National Council of Industry definition that state, small and medium-scale enterprises are a firm with no less than 11-100 employees. But the researchers considered small and medium-scale enterprises with 11- 25 employees. The key instrument for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The instrument was designed in four Likert scale formats, with responses ranging from Agree, Strongly Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. A test-retest method was used to establish good reliability for the research instrument. An expert from business administration verifies the content validities of the instrument. Small and medium-scale enterprise performance was measured through the economic goals of the firms. Employee's performance was measure base on the firm turnover such as return on investment of the firms. The study makes use of secondary data from the selected small and medium-scale enterprises. The Data were analyzed using Linear Regression Analysis, SPSS vision 21.

Model Specification

Good road networks and Regular electricity supply were used as the independent variables while the growth of a small and medium-scale enterprise is the dependent variable for the study.

Using Y and X as an expression for the variables.

$Y = f(X)$

Y= Dependent Variable

X= Independent Variable

Where

Y = growth of small and medium-scale enterprise

X = Good road network and regular electricity supply

Y = (y1)

X = (x1, x2)

Y= ƒ(X)

y= f(x1) ……. …….Equation 1

y= f(x2) ……..Equation 2

$Y = a0 + \beta_1 1x1 + \beta_2 1x2 + e$……Equation 3

Therefore;

$PRN = \beta_0 + (\beta_1 GRN + \beta_2 RES) + \varepsilon$

Where:

GSMSE= Growth of Small and Medium-Scale Enterprise

GRN= Good Road Network

RES= Regular Electricity Supply

4. Presentation and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Data Presentation

The study was conducted to determine Small and Medium Enterprises and the Challenge of Basic Infrastructure in South Eastern Nigeria. Secondary data was used and it was obtained from the selected small and medium-scale enterprises.

Table 4.1 present the data.

YEAR	GROWTH OF SMEs (KOBO)	GOOD ROAD NETWORK NGN (000)	REGULAR ELECTRICITY SUPPLY NGN (000)
2018	61.50	266	**131**
2017	44.50	244	121
2016	10.00	181	72
2015	29.00	151	50
2014	27.50	143	45
2013	25.50	133	43
2012	20.00	116	36
2011	12.55	97	32
2010	12.55	80	25
2009	12.55	65	23

Source: research field survey

4.2 Data Analysis

The secondary data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics, linear regression, and correlation analysis and the results presented.

Table 4.2.1

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Growth of SMEs	25.5650	16.48843	10
Good Road Network	147.6000	66.35293	10
Good Electricity Supply	57.8000	38.62296	10

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Table 4.2.1 presents the descriptive statistics describing the characteristics of the variables used in the study. The descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency, which are the mean and median, and measures of dispersions which include standard deviation. The results show the mean of the variables are: Growth of SMEs= 25.5850, PRN= 147.6000 and LES= 57.8000 and standard deviation, Growth of SMEs= 16.48843, PRN= 66.35293 and LES= 38.62296 etc.

Table 4.2.2

Variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Good Road Network, Regular Electricity supply	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

b. All requested variables entered.

Table 4.2.3

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.856[a]	.733	.656	9.66652	.733	9.593	2	7	.010

a. Predictors: (Constant), Good Road Network, Regular Electricity Supply

b. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

Table 4.2.4

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1792.724	2	896.362	9.593	.010[b]
	Residual	654.091	7	93.442		
	Total	2446.815	9			

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Good Road Network, Regulars Electricity Supply

Table 4.2.5

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.645	13.170		.049	.962
	Good Road Network	.076	.235	.308	.325	.755
	Regular Electricity Supply	.236	.404	.552	.583	.578

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

Table 4.2.6

Residuals Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	11.0402	51.8844	25.5650	14.11352	10
Residual	-21.46848	9.61562	.00000	8.52507	10
Std. Predicted Value	-1.029	1.865	.000	1.000	10
Std. Residual	-2.221	.995	.000	.882	10

a. Dependent Variable: Growth of SMEs

Table 4.2.7

Correlations

		Growth of SMEs	Good Road Network	Good Electricity Supply
Pearson Correlation	Growth of SMEs	1.000	.848	.854
	Good Road Network	.848	1.000	.978
	Regular Electricity Supply	.854	.978	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Growth of SMEs	.	.001	.001
	Good Road Network	.001	.	.000
	Regular Electricity Supply	.001	.000	.
N	Growth of SMEs	10	10	10
	Good Road Network	10	10	10
	Regular Electricity Supply	10	10	10

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).
Source: SPSS vision 21

Test of Hypotheses

The test of hypothesis Presented in table 4.2.7 is the correlation analysis of the variables. The correlation results were used to test the two null hypotheses formulated for the study. In deciding for the hypotheses, the following steps were taken:

i. The hypotheses were restated in null and alternate forms

ii. The decision criterion or criteria were stated

iii. The presentation of the correlation result

iv. The null hypothesis is rejected or accepted based on the decision criterion or criteria.

Test of Hypothesis One

Step One: Restatement of hypothesis in a null and alternate form

H_0: good road network is not significantly positive on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

H_1: good road network has a significantly positive on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

Step Two: Decision Rule/Criteria: Reject H_0 if Sig-Value is less than 0.05, otherwise accept H_0.

Table 4.2.7 presents the result of the correlation analysis used to test the hypothesis formulated for the study. From the table, the correlation coefficient of a good road network (GRN) is positive 0.848 while the sig-value is 0.001. Therefore, the good road network is significant at 0.05, level of significance is (0.001 < 0.05). Based on this result, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative that state good road network has a significantly positive effect on the growth of small and medium scale enterprise in southeast Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Step One: Restatement of hypothesis in a null and alternate form

H_0: Regular electricity supply does not have a significantly positive impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

H_1: Regular electricity supply has a significantly positive impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

Step Two: Decision Rule/Criteria: Reject H_0 if Sig-Value is less than 0.05, otherwise accept H_0.

Table 4.2.7 presents the result of the correlation analysis used to test the hypothesis formulated for the study. From the table, the correlation coefficient of regular electricity supply (GES) is positive 0.854 while the sig-value is 0.001. Therefore, a regular electricity supply is significant at a 0.05 level of significance (0.001 < 0.05). Based on this, we reject the null hypothesis that a regular electricity supply does not have a significantly positive impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria. Therefore, we accept regular electricity supply have a significant positive impact on the growth of small and medium scale enterprise in southeast Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

Discussion of Hypothesis One

The test of hypothesis one reveals that the null hypothesis was rejected. The result, thus, shows that a good road network is significantly positive on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises and it has a strong significantly positive effect on the growth. The result was corroborated by the result of the R^2 (0.733) and the Adject R^2 (0.656) that measure the goodness of the model fitness in table 4.2.3. From the regression result in the table, the regression coefficient of a good road network is 0.076 while the significant value is 0.755. Thus, in both the correlation and regression results, the good road network is positive and significantly related to the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in Southeast Nigeria.

Discussion of Hypothesis Two

The test of hypothesis two indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. The result shows that a regular electricity supply is significantly positive on the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises and it has a strong significantly positive effect on the growth. The result was corroborated by the result of the R^2 (0.733) and the Adject R^2 (0.656) that measure the goodness of the model fitness in table 4.2.3. From the regression result in the table, the regression coefficient of Regular electricity supply is positive at 0.236 while the significant value is 0.578. This implies that regular electricity contributes to the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in Southeast Nigeria.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, we conclude that a good road network and regular electricity supply have a great significant impact on the rapid growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in Southeast Nigeria. In Southeast Nigeria, we have poor infrastructure, no good road network across the states, and the rate of electricity supply is very low and it is affecting the growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in southeast Nigeria.

Recommendation

Base on the finding, we hereby recommence that, the Government should enable to provide good infrastructure such as;

i. A good road network should be provided across states to encourage the rapid growth of small and medium-scale enterprises not just for the southeast but for the entire country.

ii. The government should enable to increase energy capacity to improve regular electricity supply across the country.

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