



Business Process Management and Performance of SMEs in Enugu State

Authored by

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Abstract

The study evaluated the business process management and performance of SMEs in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to: examine the relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error and evaluate the relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State. The area of the study was the SMEs in Enugu State. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. A total population of 1102 staff was used. The adequate sample size of 284, using Freund and William's statistic formula at 5 percent margin of error was used. 244 staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. Data was presented and analyzed using Likert Scale and the hypotheses using Pearson correlation coefficient (r). The findings indicated Simplified operations had positive relationship significance with minimization of error state ($r = .418 < .983$, $p < .05$) and Product safety had positive significant relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State as reported in the probability value of ($r = .386 < .969$, $p < .05$). The study concluded that simplified operations and product safety had positive relationship significance with minimization of error and increased profit in small and medium enterprises (of SMEs) in Enugu State. The study recommended among others that Employees should be trained in every aspect of organizational activities in other for the organization not to lack capable employees in any department of the organization.

Keywords: Business Process Management Performance of SMEs; Enugu State; Product Safety; Simplified Operations

Introduction

Managing business processes is a huge challenge in most organizations. Managers and business owners always assume that it involves huge expenses that it is only worth it for massive processes. However, business process management is important no matter the size of the business (Kiss, 2023). By incorporating advanced analytics, activity monitoring, and decision management capabilities, business process management suites are able to coordinate people, systems, and information and material to achieve business outcomes. As a result, they have been particularly helpful in accelerating digital transformation strategies. Business processes represent a core asset of corporations. They have direct impact on the attractiveness of products and services as perceived by the market; determine tasks, jobs and responsibilities and by this, shape the work of every employee. Processes integrate systems, data, and resources within and across organizations and any failure can bring corporate life to a standstill. Processes determine the potential of an organization to adapt to new circumstances and to comply with a fast-growing number of legislative requirements (Dumas, Marcello, Mendling & Reijer, 2012). Processes adopted by business organizations influence the revenue potential of the business as much as they shape the cost profile of an organization.

The concept of business process may be as traditional as concepts of tasks, department, production, and outputs, arising from job shop scheduling problems in the early 20th century. Business process management (BPM) is a structured approach to improving the processes organizations use to get work done, serve their customers and generate business value. It is a broad discipline and, by definition, a dynamic one given how the organizational roles, rules, tactics, business goals and other elements it encompasses are constantly changing (Tucci, 2022). Business process management works its magic is through analysing, testing, documenting, collaborating, and potentially, automating certain parts of a process to make it more efficient. A truly efficient process can be reduced to a “single source of truth”, otherwise known as a set of guidelines or steps for how an operation should be carried out. Business process management enables businesses to structure these guidelines so that an end-to-end process can be executed in the same way, every time. This is especially important during a crisis, as it ensures consistency and efficiency or “business as usual”, no matter the circumstances (Andrew, 2020).

Business performance management refers to a range of methods, metrics and tools for tracking and optimizing business performance. Also known as enterprise performance management (EPM) and corporate performance management (CPM), BPM involves establishing quantifiable business goals and tracking progress toward those goals (Jenkins, 2023). Business performance management is a continuous cycle of planning, tracking, analyzing performance, and making adjustments. The cycle begins with defining strategic business goals, which are then translated into operational plans and goals for individual departments within the organization. A good performance management system helps employees to understand the goals of the company and what they are expected to do to achieve these goals. This means they understand how their contributions affect the overall growth of the business. Hence, the study aims to evaluate the business process management and performance of SMEs in Enugu state.

Statement of the Problem

Business process management as the supportive power to the management system which leads efficiently the organization and it is the creativity language to achieve the strategic results which its value is seen in supporting the change processes. Process is as a series of tasks or activities that are linked by numerous people or systems. The business processes management helps in achieving the organization’s competitive advantage which is linked with the organization’s processes’ efficiently and its products’ quality in addition to its services’ performance.

Business process management is an organized management method that aims at improving the quality and services’ development through identifying, designing, modeling, documenting, controlling and improving the organizational processes to achieve integrated operational results that can link the resources and guide them towards achieving the organization’s strategic goals. Nevertheless, the organization still suffers the consequences of poor business process management as a result of unsimplified operations and lack of safety in the organization.

The importance of performance management goes beyond evaluations, raises, and promotions. It has the propensity to make or break an organization. Performance management has the capability of engaging employees fully and making them feel invested in the company, thereby leading to job satisfaction and employee loyalty, all of which increase productivity. Therefore, business organization ought not to neglect the strategies adopted in the organization in order to overcome poor rate of minimizing error, meager increase in profit and other acts that can reduce the organizational performance. It is at this end that the study tends to evaluate the business process management and performance of SMEs.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the Business process management and performance of SMEs in Enugu state. The specific objectives were to:

- i. Examine the relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State.
- ii. Evaluate the relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

- i. What is the relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State?
- ii. What is the relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State?

Statement of the Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study

- i. Simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State.
- ii. Product safety has no relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State.

Significance of the Study

The knowledge of this study will be beneficial to small and medium enterprises as it will help organizations determine the best management process that is in alignment with the organization objectives and how to adopt it in order to favour the organization and employees. It will also help organizations determine that the best management process to use in the organization ranging from leadership style to adopt, types of incentives to use in the organization and disciplinary action to adopt as all this contribute to the performance of the employees and the organization.

Review of the Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Business

Business is an economic activity that involves the exchange, purchase, sale or production of goods and services with a motive to earn profits and satisfy the needs of customers. Businesses can be either profit or non-profit organizations that function to gain profits or achieve a social cause respectively. It is not concerned with the achievement of social and emotional objectives. Every business activity includes an exchange or transfer of services and goods to earn value (Byju's, 2022). Business process management (BPM) is a holistic management approach focused on aligning all aspects of an organization with the wants and needs of clients. BPM attempts to improve processes continuously. It can, therefore, be described as a "process optimization process". Good business describes companies that have broadened the definition of success beyond the bottom line to include the

impact the organization has on all constituents, their communities, and even the world. In other words, it is an outward focus.

Process

A process is a flow of business activities that are connected toward the achievement of a business outcome, whereas a procedure is a prescribed way of undertaking a process or part of a process. While a process is a set of defined actions, a procedure is a set of instructions that are detailed in nature. For instance, on-boarding a new employee in your organization is a process. It is focused on introducing the company to the new person and familiarizing them with company policies, culture, and teams. Whereas on boarding documentation is a procedure. It has a detailed set of instructions related to documents, signatures, and agreements. To manage and improve your business processes, you must understand them better. Processes vary depending upon the type, industry, location, etc., of a business, but there are a few processes that are practiced across all these segments of businesses around the globe (Madhura, 2023). A process is a program in execution. A process is more than the program code, which is sometimes known as the text section. It also includes the current activity, as represented by the value of the program counter and the contents of the processor's registers (PadaKuu, 2023). Process includes activities that establish the business goals of the organization and develop process, product and resource assets which, when used will help to achieve business goals. Managerial processes, resource and infrastructure processes are all in organizational process category. A process is defined as an entity which represents the basic unit of work to be implemented in the system.

Management

Management is a process of planning, decision making, organizing, leading, motivation and controlling the human resources, financial, physical, and information resources of an organization to reach its goals efficiently and effectively (Dill, 2021). Management (or managing) is the administration of organizations, whether they are a business, a non-profit organization, or a government body. It is the art and science of managing resources of the business. Management includes the activities of setting the strategy of an organization and coordinating the efforts of its employees (or of volunteers) to accomplish its objectives through the application of available resources, such as financial, natural, technological, and human resources (Dubrin, 2009). "Run the business" and "Change the business" are two concepts that are used in management to differentiate between the continued delivery of goods or services and adapting of goods or services to meet the changing needs of customers.

Business Process Management

A business process is a set of activities that help a business reach a specific goal. Business Process Management (BPM) is the management of business processes inevitably get created and exist in any business. Business Process Management is a functional discipline for business process owners and operational teams to discover, document, analyze, audit, and optimize existing processes and implement new ones for better operational performance, improved risk management, and streamlined governance of the entire process (Casey, 2020). BPM is a methodical, one-step-at-a-time plan for meeting specific business objectives. By injecting more defined planning and technical automation into existing business processes, the goal of BPM is increasing operational efficiency. The promise of a successful BPM strategy is the ability to deliver services and products faster. Hat (2022) defined business process management (BPM) is the practice of modeling, analyzing, and optimizing end-to-end business processes to help meet your strategic business goals, such as the improvement of customer experience framework. BPM methodology can be applied to tasks and processes that are often repeated, ongoing, or predictable.

Simplified Operations

Operations management is an area of management concerned with designing and controlling the process of production and redesigning business operations in the production of goods or services. It involves the responsibility of ensuring that business operations are efficient in terms of using as few resources as needed and effective in meeting customer requirements. Simplified business operations are the key to building a reliable brand image. A great way to simplify business operations is through leveraging the right technology and streamlining business operations and processes for the employees (Gayatri, 2021). Internal employees of business organizations

often deal with multiple interruptions. These interruptions can be due to professional or personal reasons, but they surely slow down employee productivity. Business users are often left overwhelmed with too many tasks and decisions to make. Hence to ensure a stress-free work environment, businesses should put efforts into simplifying business processes. Operations management is an area of management concerned with designing and controlling the process of production and redesigning business operations in the production of goods or services. Simplified operations are the administration of business practices to create the highest level of efficiency possible within an organization. It is concerned with converting materials and labor into goods and services as efficiently as possible to maximize the profit of an organization (Adam, Drury & Jackson, 2023).

Product Safety

Every business's stage of the production process is critical to a company's commitment to product safety. When it comes to safety and preventing injuries, it's always essential to take precautions. Products must be safe and comply when they are available for supply, or 'placed on the market'. Product safety is the ability of a product to be safe for intended use, as determined when evaluated against a set of established rules. Product safety systems are designed to prevent dangerous products from reaching the market or the consumer, as well as informing the user how to use the products safely, as intended. It is not enough just for producers to design, create and sell products that are intended to be safe (Ali and Qader, 2017). Product safety is the capacity of a product to be considered safe for its intended use. Product safety is the potential of a product to be safe for consumers. A safe product is one that provides either no risk or a minimum acceptable level of risk, taking into account the normal or reasonably foreseeable use of the product and the need to maintain a high level of protection for consumers. Consumers and sellers alike benefit from product safety (Watts and Rea, 2022).

Performance

Performance is a subjective perception of reality, which explains the multitude of critical reflections on the concept and its measuring instruments. The term performance emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and was first used in defining the results to a sporting contest. In the twentieth century, the concept has evolved and developed a series of definitions that were meant to encompass the widest sense of what is perceived through performance (Ion and Criveanu, 2016). Performance means the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives). Performance involves analyzing an organizations performance against its objectives and goals. In other words, organizational performance comprises real results or outputs compared with intended outputs. Performance is a relation between cost (operation cost the organization) and the value of benefits obtained (Cosmin, Gheorghe and Raluca, 2012).

Minimization of Error

In organizational behavior the norms or expectations for behavior or its consequences can be derived from the intention of the actor or from the expectations of other individuals. Errors are a recurring fact of organizational life and can potentially yield either adverse or positive consequences. Every organization is confronted with errors. Errors can result in negative consequences as well as positive ones. One way to contain the negative and to promote the positive consequences of errors is to use error management. The error management approach distinguishes between errors and their consequences. Error management culture implies that a firm accepts that people make errors and uses "organizational practices related to communicating about errors, to sharing error knowledge, to helping in error situations, and to quickly detecting and handling errors" to deal with errors (Fischer, Frese, Mertins and Hardt-Gawron, 2018).

Increased Profit

Businesses can be for-profit entities or non-profit organizations fulfilling a charitable mission or furthering a social cause. Business is an economic activity that involves the exchange, purchase, sale or production of goods and services with a motive to earn profits and satisfy the needs of customers. Profit is the money a business pulls in after accounting for all expenses. In any organization, the major objective is to maximize profit, but the main constraints facing them are the rise in cost of operation. Profit describes the financial benefit realized when revenue generated from a business activity exceeds the expenses, costs, and taxes involved in sustaining the

activity in question (Will, Barnier & Schmitt, 2022). Increasing profitability is about increasing the net profit margin. Profit is not the same as profitability. It is possible to increase your business profits, but have a lower net profit margin – this happens if you spend a relatively large amount of money in order to increase your sales.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

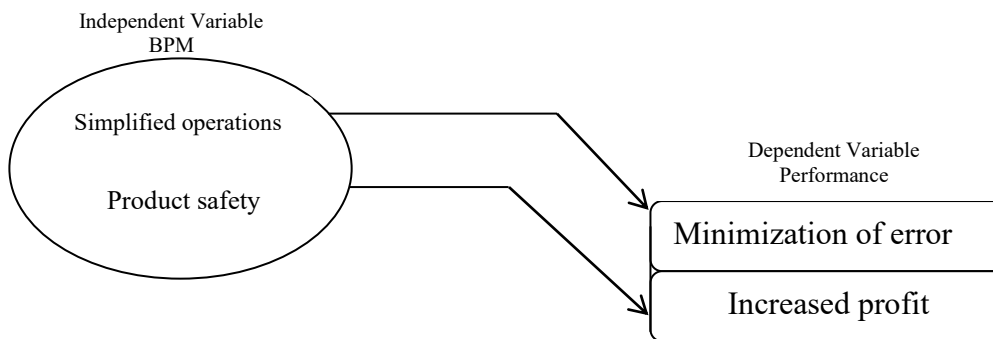


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's compilation, 2023

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the ability-motivation-opportunity theory and the social exchange theory. The study anchored on Ability-Motivation-Opportunity Theory. The theory proposed that organization utilizes the AMO theory to provide organizational leaders with a management tool that can impact performance.

Ability-Motivation-Opportunity Theory

The AMO framework was initially proposed by Bailey (1993), who suggested that ensuring the employee's discretionary effort needed three components: employees had to have the necessary skills, they needed appropriate motivation and employers had to offer them the opportunity to participate. Sustainability has led to soaring growth of literature on green marketing, green accounting, green retailing, green supply chain management and green general management. The AMO theory suggests that there are three independent work system components that shape employee characteristics and contribute to the success of the organization. According to the theory, organizational interests are best served by a system that attends to the employee's ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO). Organization need to align well with the AMO theory to: Increases the ability of the employee; Motivates employees and Provides opportunities to contribute to the company. If any one of the three characteristics is missing, performance is likely to be inhibited, but if all three are present, then performance is likely to be enhanced. High employee performance is a strong factor that contributes to organizational success (Amber, 2019).

Social Exchange Theory

The genesis of social exchange theory was propounded in 1958 by when American sociologist George Homans. He devised a framework built on a combination of behaviourism and basic economics. In the immediate years that followed, other studies expanded the parameters of Homans' fundamental concepts. Social exchange theory is a concept based on the notion that a relationship between two people is created through a process of cost-benefit analysis. The theory proposes that social behaviour is the result of an exchange process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. According to this theory, developed by sociologist George Homans, people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships. When the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship. Most relationships are made up of a certain amount of give-and-take, but this does not mean that they are always equal. Social exchange suggests that it is the valuing of the benefits and costs of each relationship that determine whether or not we choose to continue a social association. Social exchange theory suggests that we essentially take the benefits and subtract the costs in order to determine how much a relationship is worth.

Empirical Review

The relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State

Subairu (2016) conducted a study on the Analysis of Relationship Between SME'S Employment Growth and Firm Specific Characteristics. This study examined the relationship between of firm specific characteristics and employment growth of SMEs. The objective of the study was to investigate specific characteristics of a firm that influences its employment growth with particular reference to the SME sub sector. Questionnaire administration technique via a structured questionnaire was used to source for data and information from 200 SMEs owners that have been registered with National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASMEs) in Kwara Central Senatorial district comprising Ilorin West, Ilorin East, Ilorin South and Asa Local Government Areas and had been active since the past five years (2010–2014). Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data with the aid of Stata 11 computer statistical package. The study revealed that the number of firms in a geographic cluster, access to formal finance, firm technology innovation which constitute firms specific characteristics were all significant at 1%. The study concludes that employment growth of SMEs is affected by a web of factors namely age of firm, number of firms in a geographic cluster, access to formal finance, firm technology innovation. It recommends that in order to close this gap and counter SMEs finance malaise; SME development fund should be created and made available through development institutions, commercial banks and micro finance banks. Also, entrepreneurs should adapt new technology system in their business operations.

Agburu, Nyianshima and Akuraun (2017) conducted a study on the Effect of outsourcing strategies on the performance of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs). Several organizations have embarked on outsourcing strategies over the years but many still suffer in terms of their goal achievement; some have experienced low productivity both in terms of quality and quantity, their profitability has not been stable, and their capacities are grossly underutilized. This research work determined the effect of outsourcing strategies (back-office activities, primary activities, accounting activities and supporting activities) on the performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs). Survey research design was adopted in Benue State, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting respondents for a primary source data gotten through a well-designed and self-administered questionnaire. Also, secondary data was sourced from the financial records of ten (10) selected SMEs. The variables were statistically analyzed using multiple regression technique. At the end of the research, the study found that; outsourcing of back office activities (such as bookkeeping, payroll, billing, order processing, payment processing, cleaning services, security services and other administrative activities); outsourcing of primary activities (such as manufacturing, purchases, warehousing, Sales force and customer service); outsourcing of Supporting activities(such as shipping, IT services/system, training, advertising, legal services, transport services, public relations) has a significant effect on organizational profitability of SMEs whereas, outsourcing of accounting activities(such as financial reporting, tax processing) has no significant effect on performance of SMEs.

Ekwochi, Orga, & Okoene (2019) conducted a study on the Role of Government in Development of Small-Scale Business in Enugu Metropolis. This study assessed the role of government in developing small scale businesses in Enugu metropolis. The objectives of the study were to assess the pilot role of government and its institution towards the development of small-scale business; to examine the challenges facing small scale business in Enugu State. Survey method was used in the research. Data for this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The sample size used was 167. The data obtained were presented in tables using frequencies and percentages and analyzed using inferential statistics. The findings show that there was pilot role of government and its institution towards the development of small-scale business and that there was challenges facing small scale businesses in Enugu metropolis such as under capitalization, inadequate planning, inadequate infrastructure facilities etc. The government should take a far-reaching measure aimed at encouraging mass acceptance of made in Nigeria goods was recommended.

Nwokocha and Madu (2020) carried out a study on Strategic Alliance and Its Influence on the Performance of Small-and Medium-scale Enterprises in Enugu State, Nigeria. Small-and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) are the engine of economic growth and equitable development in emerging economies such as Nigeria. Their role in emerging market development can be seen in the areas of capital saving, utilization of local resources, and job creation among others. Enugu State is one of the emerging industrial hubs in Nigeria with SME base of 1,366. The

activities of these enterprises have significantly increased the revenue base of the government, making the area an emerging market economy. This study assessed the influence of strategic alliance on the performance of SMEs in Enugu State. A quantitative approach comprising of field observations, reference to relevant literature, and questionnaire survey of 137 SMEs was adopted for the study. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results revealed that strategic alliance cumulatively led to 0.55 unit increase in sales growth, 0.58 unit increase in growth in market share, and 0.56 unit increase in product success. The result also revealed that that strategic alliance led to 0.76 unit increase in growth in profit, 0.62 unit increase in the number of employees, and 0.73 unit increase in labor productivity at 0.05 level of confidence.

Gherghina, Mihai, Hosszu, and Liliana (2020) carried out a study on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs): The Engine of Economic Growth through Investments and Innovation. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are crucial for local economic development, playing a noteworthy role in job creation, poverty alleviation and economic growth, but they encounter many funding barriers. The purpose of the current paper is to investigate the impact of investments and innovation on territorial economic growth, as measured by turnover, for Romanian active enterprises, especially SMEs, over the period 2009–2017. By estimating several log–log linear regressions, the quantitative outcomes provide support for a positive influence of investments on turnover. The association was confirmed both for all active enterprises at the national level, as well as for micro, small, middle-sized and big companies. As regards expenditures on innovation, a positive impact on turnover was acknowledged for all enterprises and particularly for big companies, but there was an absence of any statistically significant relation in the case of SMEs. The impact of firm size on turnover was positive for all active enterprises at the national level, along with active micro-units. Also, the estimation results show a positive impact of the number of active micro-units on territorial economic growth. The empirical findings are relevant to managers and policymakers in order to stimulate, encourage and offer support to SMEs' development through their strategies.

Iyke-Ofoedu, Onodugo and Umeh (2022) conducted a study on the Effect of internet banking on the performance of small-medium enterprises in Enugu Metropolis. The study examined the effect of internet banking on small and medium enterprises performance in Enugu Metropolis. Specifically, this study aims to determine the (i) the effect of internet effectiveness on small and medium enterprises business expansion in Enugu Metropolis, and (ii) the effect of internet convenience on small and medium enterprise quality of job delivery in Enugu Metropolis. The study made use of descriptive survey design. The study used structured questionnaire to obtain data. The population of the study is 650 with sample size of 264. Summary of the study includes: the findings of the study revealed that internet effectiveness has significant effect on small and medium enterprises business expansion in Enugu metropolis (t – statistics (38.887) > P – value (0.000), the findings of the study also revealed that internet convenience has significant effect on small and medium enterprise quality of job delivery in Enugu metropolis (t – statistics (33.446) > P – value (0.000), and the findings of the study revealed that internet accessibility has significant effect on small and medium enterprise expansion of income base in Enugu metropolis, because internet accessibility enables to conduct banking business over the internet where costs are minimal, since (t – statistics (51.826) > P – value (0.000).

Okolocha, Onwuchekwa and Anugwu (2022) conducted a study on the Effect of Inventory Resource Management on Sustainable Development of SMES in Enugu State Nigeria. This study determined the effect of inventory resource management on sustainable development of SMEs in Enugu State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted. Data were generated through distribution of questionnaire to the targeted respondents. Purposive sampling was applied to select 760 SMEs in Enugu State. Data were analyzed and tested with regression analysis via SPSS version 20.0. Based on the empirical evidence, hypothesis upheld that inventory resource management had a significant positive effect on sustainable development of SMEs in Enugu State, Nigeria at 5% level of significance. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that in order for firms to improve their storage system and proper control management, it becomes essential to implement inventory control management system.

Tunde, Babatunde, Olaleye and Kehinde (2023) carried out a study on the Internal control systems and organizational performance in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. Research on the effects of internal control systems on organizational performance have been concentrated on large firms with little attention given to Small and Medium Scale Enterprises. To this end, the study examines the effect of internal control systems on the

organizational performance of SMEs in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study employs survey primary data which are collected from 323 SMEs that were selected using stratified and random sampling techniques. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The results show a significant positive relationship between internal control and all proxies of organizational performance which are business growth, survival and operational efficiency. Furthermore, internal control systems and organizational performance when all the three proxies are aggregated have positive relationship. The findings of this study suggest that internal control systems are necessary, and they should be established in SMEs' business operations for enhanced productivity, business growth and organizational performance.

The relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State

Effiom and Etim (2018) carried out a study on the Success of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria: Environmental Factors Matter. This paper provides empirical evidence to support the thesis that both internal and external factors are critical success determinants of SMEs in Nigeria. Relying of primary survey instrument, and analysing the data utilizing the multiple regression analysis, findings indicate that external environmental factors of infrastructure and institutions matter for SME success, though they were constraining variables to SMEs' performance. Marketing practices indicated a negative and insignificant relationship with SMEs' profitability. Policy actions are required on the part of both government and the private sector to address the yawning deficit in infrastructure and institutional efficiency.

Akinyele, Akinyele and Ajao (2019) carried out a study on the Influence of Market Research on Entrepreneurial Ventures in Lagos State, Nigeria. In recent years a market oriented corporate culture increasingly has been corseted a key element of superior corporate performance. Although organizational innovation is believed to be a potential mediator of this market orientation- corporate performance relationship, much of the evidence to date remain speculative. In this context the researchers takes a component wise approach and examines how some component of market research affects the two core components of organizational innovativeness enroot to affecting corporate performance. Using the data, the researchers empirically test and substantiate innovations mediating role in the market research performance relationship of an organization. The study was conducted in Lagos State, South West Nigeria with the use of questionnaire and interview to collect data that were statistically analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS). The result of the study showed that marketing research plays a significant influence in the performance of business organizations which means that there is a positive relationship between marketing research and the performance of business organizations.

Ojiagu, and Nzewi, (2019) conducted a study on a Physical Security and Survival of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast, Nigeria. The study explored the relationship between physical security and survival of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast, Nigeria. The objectives of the study are to determine the nature of relationships that exist between fire outbreak and entrepreneurial vision, burglary attacks and delivery-time of products by SMEs in Southeast, Nigeria. Correlation survey research design was employed in the study. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 5% (percent) level of significance. Findings revealed that there were negative significant relationships that exist between fire outbreaks and entrepreneurial visions of SMEs' owners, burglary attacks and delivery-time of products to customers by SMEs in the region. In addition, the constructs were significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed). It is recommended that owners of businesses should ensure commitment to fire safety by putting necessary resources for fire control (suppression agents and personnel training) and procedures (compliance with fire disaster preparedness bylaws). Further, business owners need to provide multiple layers of security (defense in depth) around business areas. We therefore advocate that for business continuity in the region, rapid response to fire outbreaks, burglary attacks and comprehensive preventive strategies are vital.

Ugwu (2020) conducted a study on the Effect of Collaboration Strategy on the Performance of Small Business in Enugu State. The study evaluated the effect of collaboration strategy on the performance of Small Business in Enugu State. The specific objectives are to; examine the effect of workforce diversity on the profitability of Small Business in Enugu State and evaluate the effect of communication on the quality of service of Small Business in Enugu State. The population of the study consists of three hundred and eleven (311) small business owners. The whole population was used due to small number. Two hundred and sixty-two (262) returned their questionnaire

and accurately filled representing 84 percent response rate. The instrument for data collection used in the study was structured questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was ascertained with a proper structuring of the questionnaire and a conduct of a pre-test of every question contained in the questionnaire to ensure that they are valid. The reliability was tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). It gave reliability coefficient of 73.0. Data were presented and analyzed by mean score (3.0 and above agreed while below 3.0 disagreed) and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. Z-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings indicated that Workforce diversity had positive effect on the profitability of Small Business in Enugu State $Z(95, n = 262) = 7.445 < 8.958, p > 0.05$. Communication had positive effect on the quality of service of Small Business in Enugu State $Z(95, n = 262) = 6.147 < 7.753, p > 0.05$. The study concluded that Workforce diversity, and Communication had positive effect on the profitability and quality of service of Small Business in Enugu State.

Idehen and Oyarebu-Shaibu (2021) conducted a study on the Impacts of Diversification on the Performance of SMES in Benin City, Edo State (A Case Study of Nadia Bakery). This study examined impact of diversification on firm performance. There has been upsurge in business failure in Nigeria. Many have attributed management and financial inept as major contributions. Many of these businesses focus on their core competences without desire to leverage on improved performance of their core competence and probably diversified into related or unrelated business for efficient performance. The objective of the study is to ascertain the impact of diversification on performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The research design is both exploratory and descriptive. Primary data were elicited through the use of questionnaire. The result revealed that on a scale of 1-5, the profitability and performance level of the firm (Nadia Bakery) before diversification increase from fairly good to very good after diversification.

NuelOkoli, Nwosu and Okechukwu (2021) carried out a study on the Entrepreneurial Orientation and Performance of Selected SMEs in Southeast, Nigeria. This study examines the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on performance of selected small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast Nigeria. The problems that led to this study include, inadequate access to finance, poor infrastructure, inconsistency with government policy, poor support (business development work), inadequate sales, too many taxes and obsolete technologies leading to massive failures. It has not been found that the epileptic growth of SMEs in Southeast Nigeria is not only due to the problems but also from the entrepreneurial orientation. The survey research method was employed in this study and the study relied on secondary and primary data. The population of this study was drawn from SMEs in the five states in the Southeast Nigeria. The study was done using three hundred and sixty six small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Complete enumeration was adopted. Simple regression analysis was used to analysis the hypotheses. The study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between pro-activeness, innovativeness and risk taking on performance of SMEs in Southeast Nigeria. The study concluded that entrepreneurial-oriented firms tend to lead the industry with innovations, performing things in a better approach to satisfy customers and give the firm a better leverage.

Nwokocha (2022) carried out a study on the Influence of Location Decisions on the Performance of Women-owned small and medium scale Enterprises in Nigeria. The importance of location decisions has been assessed vigorously by a number of studies but these studies have not been able to examine the impact of this variable on the performance of Women-owned small and medium scale enterprises (WSMEs). This paper examined the influence of location decision on the performance of WSMEs. The study adopted a quantitative approach and used a number of methods such as field observations, reference to relevant literature and a questionnaire survey of 58 WSMEs for the study. The study used principal component analysis (PCA), simple mean and standard deviation to analyze the data. The result of the study showed that 41.10% and 29.14 of the WSMEs had experienced a significant increase and relative increase in the performance of their enterprises based on their location while 14.59% of the respondents had not experienced changes in the performance of their enterprises. The PCA result also showed that availability of traditional/economic factors of location (24.97%), infrastructural (21.32%), agglomeration and economies of scale (12.38%), personal interest (9.50%), and Government policy (8.06) were the factors that influenced the location of WSMEs in the study. Location is therefore, an important variable in citing WSMEs.

Arifin, Bangkara and Manullang (2022) conducted a study on Understanding Business Management Strategies in Enhancing Profitable and Sustainable SMEs. The purpose of this research was to get deeper understanding on management of SMEs to win profitable and sustainable business. The publication of books, journal, and websites

were become the main sources of the data that we got electronically. Because of this reason, several literatures related to profitable business strategies have been carefully studied to understand superior and sustainable governance and business strategies. The literature included is the electronic literature such as books and scientific articles. After reviewing and obtaining the valid answers, we discussed them carefully. Finally, we find several business management strategies to increase the profitability and sustainability of SMEs such as strategies to attract customers, continue to use various promotional methods, seek to increase subscriptions, add new items, and increase discounts.

Summary and Gap in Empirical Review

The study reviewed business process management and performance of SMEs. The study reviewed related literatures which were of great importance in establishing knowledge in the present. Nevertheless, there exist gaps in the reviews as the studies were indirectly related to the present study this was because the objective of the present study was on simplified operations, minimization of errors, product safety and performance where as that of the reviewed studies were on profitability, sustainability, Entrepreneurial Orientation and collaboration strategy e.t.c. Gap also exist a gap in the area of the study as the present study was conducted in a different location from the reviewed studies. This study tends to be the most recent study from the reviewed works and as such would be found worthy to fill in this gap.

Methodology

The area of the study comprised of five (5) selected Domestic & Industrial Plastic Rubber and Foam Firms in Enugu metropolis and Member Companies of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) South-East Geo-Political Zone. These firms were: Crystal Chemical Ltd., Km 10 Abakaliki–Enugu Expressway, DVC Plastics Ltd., Plot 34 Emene Industrial Layout, Enugu; General Tire & Tubes Ltd Co. Ltd., Plot IN30/31 Gen. Tyres & Tubes Road, Emene Ind. Layout Ext; Innoson Technical & Ind. Co. Ltd, Km 11 Enugu/Abakaliki Expressway, Emene Industrial Layoput; Juhel Nig. Ltd, 35 Nkwubor Road Emene Enugu. The choice of these firms was due to high number of staff, Capital base above 10 million naira. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. A total population of 1102 selected staff of the study organisations. The adequate sample size of two hundred and eighty four (284) using Freund and William's statistic formula at 5 percent margin of error. Two hundred and forty four (244) staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. That gave 86 percent response rate. The validity of the instrument was tested using content analysis and the result was good. The reliability was tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). It gave a reliability co-efficient of 0.760 which was also good. Data was presented and analyzed by mean score (3.0 and above agreed while below 3.0 disagreed) and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using Z – test statistic tool.

Data Presentation and Analyses

Data Presentation

The relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State

Table 1: Responses on the relationship between simplified operations and minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	Accuracy is aimed at in handling activities	425	240	72	48	51	836	3.43	1.550	Agree
		85	60	24	24	51	244			
		34.8	24.6	9.8	9.8	20.9	100%			
2	Applying precision in the organisation reduces error.	305	240	90	50	60	745	3.09	1.570	Agree
		61	60	30	25	60	244			
		25.0	24.6	12.3	10.2	27.8	100%			
3	Growth opportunity in is maximized and revenue	370	264	117	30	50	831	3.41	1.486	Agree
		74	66	39	15	50	244			

	increased.	30.3	27.0	16.0	16.0	20.5	100%			
4	There is maintaining of cost objectives through strategic sourcing.	430	264	63	94	24	875	3.59	1.390	Agree
		86	66	21	47	24	244			
		35.2	27.0	8.6	19.3	9.8	100%			
5	Simplifying operations enhances the reliability and more effectiveness.	370	264	117	74	28	853	3.50	1.362	Agree
		74	66	39	37	28	244			
		30.3	27.0	16.0	15.2	11.5	100%			
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.404	1.4716	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1, 145 respondents out of 244 representing 59.4 percent agreed that accuracy is aimed at in handling activities with mean score 3.43 and standard deviation of 1.550. Current Applying precision in the organisation reduces error 121 respondents representing 49.6 percent agreed with mean score of 3.09 and standard deviation of 1.570. Growth opportunity in is maximized and revenue increased 140 respondents representing 57.3 percent agreed with mean score of 3.41 and standard deviation of 1.486. There is maintaining of cost objectives through strategic sourcing 152 respondents representing 62.2 percent agreed with mean score of 3.59 and 1.390. Simplifying operations enhances the reliability and more effectiveness 140 respondents representing 57.3 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.50 and standard deviation 1.362.

The relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State

Table 2: Responses on the relationship between product safety and increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	Product safety increases reliability and retain customers	325	420	63	82	12	902	3.70	1.175	Agree
		65	105	21	41	12	244			
		26.6	43.0	8.6	16.8	4.9	100%			
2	Consistency in products increases the number of sales.	285	420	9	78	40	832	3.41	1.421	Agree
		57	105	3	39	40	244			
		23.4	43.0	1.2	16.0	16.4	100%			
3	Being under regulatory compliance more product are sold.	285	422	54	106	8	875	3.63	1.157	Agree
		57	108	18	53	8	244			
		22.2	43.6	9.3	21.8	3.1	100%			
4	Protecting consumers from harm through product safety increases the value of the products.	168	264	63	102	24	621	3.27	1.443	Agree
		49	87	48	41	19	244			
		20.1	35.7	19.7	16.8	7.7	100%			
5	Legal action is avoided through product safety.	435	240	126	94	8	903	3.70	1.229	Agree
		87	60	42	47	8	244			
		35.7	24.6	17.2	19.3	3.3	100%			
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.542	1.285	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2, 170 respondents out of 244 representing 69.6 percent agreed that product safety increases reliability and retain customers with mean score 3.70 and standard deviation of 1.175. Consistency in products increases the number of sales 162 respondents representing 66.4 percent agreed with mean score of 3.41 and standard deviation of 1.421. Being under regulatory compliance more are sold 165 respondents representing 65.8 percent agreed with mean score of 3.63 and standard deviation of 1.157. Protecting consumers from harm through product safety increases the value of the products 136 respondents representing 58.8 percent agreed with mean score of 3.27 and 1.443. Legal action is avoided through product safety 147 respondents representing 60.3 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.70 and standard deviation 1.229.

Test of Hypotheses

Simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu State

Table 3: Pearson correlation of simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error of SMEs in Enugu

		Accuracy is aimed at in handling activities.	Applying precision in the organization reduces error.	Growth opportunity in is maximized and revenue increased.	There is maintaining of cost objectives through strategic sourcing.	Simplifying operations enhances the reliability and more effectiveness.
Accuracy is aimed at in handling activities.	Pearson Correlation	1	.658**	.648**	.699**	.615**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Applying precision in the organization reduces error.	Pearson Correlation	.658**	1	.599**	.418**	.584**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Growth opportunity in is maximized and revenue increased.	Pearson Correlation	.648**	.599**	1	.787**	.983**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
There is maintaining of cost objectives through strategic sourcing.	Pearson Correlation	.699**	.418**	.787**	1	.765**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Simplifying operations enhances the reliability and more effectiveness.	Pearson Correlation	.615**	.584**	.983**	.765**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	244	244	244	244	244

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 showed the Pearson correlation matrix simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error showing the correlation coefficients, significant values and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shows .418 < .983. This value indicates that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error ($r = .418 < .983$).

The computed correlations coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = .000$ with at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = .418 < .983$, $p < .05$).

Decision Rule

The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis if the computed r is less than the tabulated r otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the computed ($r = .418 < .983$) is greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that simplified operations had positive relationship significance with minimization of error state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .418 < .983$, $p < .05$).

Product Safety has no relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State

Table 4: Pearson correlation of Product safety has no relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State						
		Product safety increases reliability and retain customers	Consistency in products increases the number of sales	Being under regulatory compliance more product are sold	Protecting consumers from harm through product safety increases the value of the products	Legal action is avoided through product safety
Product safety increases reliability and retain customers	Pearson Correlation	1	.838**	.834**	.461**	.655**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Consistency in products increases the number of sales	Pearson Correlation	.838**	1	.969**	.627**	.567**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Being under regulatory compliance more product are sold	Pearson Correlation	.834**	.969**	1	.578**	.584**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Protecting consumers from harm through product safety increases the value of the products	Pearson Correlation	.461**	.627**	.578**	1	.386**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	244	244	244	244	244
Legal action is avoided through product safety	Pearson Correlation	.655**	.567**	.584**	.386**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	244	244	244	244	244
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Table 4 showed the Pearson correlation matrix on Product safety has no relationship significance with increased profit showing the correlation coefficients, significant values and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shows $.386 < .969$. This value indicates that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that product safety had positive significant relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State ($r = .386 < .969$). The computed correlations coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = .000$ with at alpha level for a two-tailed test ($r = .386 < .969$, $p < .05$).

Decision Rule

The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis if the computed r is less than the tabulated r otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the computed ($r = .386 < .969$) is greater than the table value of $.000$, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we concluded that product safety had positive significant relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State as reported in the probability value of ($r = .386 < .969$, $p < .05$).

Discussion of Findings

Simplified operations have no relationship significance with minimization of error state

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are crucial for local economic development, playing a noteworthy role in job creation, poverty alleviation and economic growth, but they encounter many funding barriers. Nwokocha and Madu (2020) carried out a study on Strategic Alliance and Its Influence on the Performance of Small-and Medium-scale Enterprises in Enugu State, Nigeria. Small-and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) are the engine of economic growth and equitable development in emerging economies such as Nigeria. Their role in emerging market development can be seen in the areas of capital saving, utilization of local resources, and job creation among others. Enugu State is one of the emerging industrial hubs in Nigeria with SME base of 1,366. The activities of these enterprises have significantly increased the revenue base of the government, making the area an emerging market economy. This study assessed the influence of strategic alliance on the performance of SMEs in Enugu State. A quantitative approach comprising of field observations, reference to relevant literature, and questionnaire survey of 137 SMEs was adopted for the study. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regressions. The results revealed that strategic alliance cumulatively led to 0.55 unit increases in sales growth, 0.58 unit increases in growth in market share, and 0.56 unit increases in product success. The result also revealed that that strategic alliance led to 0.76 unit increases in growth in profit, 0.62 unit increases in the number of employees, and 0.73 unit increases in labor productivity at 0.05 level of confidence. In line with this review the result of hypotheses one showed the computed ($r = .418 < .983$) was greater than the table value of $.000$, the study concluded that simplified operations had positive relationship significance with minimization of error state as reported in the probability value of ($r = .418 < .983$, $p < .05$).

Product safety had positive significant relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State

Hypotheses two revealed that the computed ($r = .386 < .969$) was greater than the table value of $.000$. The study concluded that product safety had positive significant relationship significance with increased profit of SMEs in Enugu State as reported in the probability value of ($r = .386 < .969$, $p < .05$). In line with this hypotheses, Ojiagu, and Nzewi, (2019) conducted a study on a physical security and survival of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast, Nigeria. The study explored the relationship between physical security and survival of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Southeast, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to determine the nature of relationships that exist between fire outbreak and entrepreneurial vision, burglary attacks and delivery-time of products by SMEs in Southeast, Nigeria. Correlation survey research design was employed in the study. Findings revealed that there were negative significant relationships that exist between fire outbreaks and entrepreneurial visions of SMEs' owners, burglary attacks and delivery-time of products to customers by SMEs in the region. In addition, the constructs were significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion

The study concluded that simplified operations and product safety had positive relationship significance with minimization of error and increased profit in small and medium enterprises (of SMEs) in Enugu State. Performance management practices are of vital importance for firms to perform well and achieve sustainable economic performance an effective performance management system requires commitment and dedication from the department of human resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Employees should be trained in every aspect of organizational activities in other for the organization not to lack capable employees in any department of the organization.
- ii. Production managers should ensure that the products are of high quality in other to boost profit and customer satisfaction.

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