

**AFRICAN SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL
FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
IMO STATE UNIVERSITY
NIGERIA**

VOL. 9 NO. 1 MARCH 2020

**ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION AND BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF SMALL
SCALE ENTERPRISES' PERFORMANCE IN ILORIN METROPOLIS**

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Abstract

Small scale enterprises are often faced with challenges of performance such as the absence of orientation, innovation, low level marketing and managerial skills; financial support; mentorship; and competencies. However, this study was aimed at examining the entrepreneurial orientation and business performance through sales performance and profit making in Ilorin metropolis. Additionally, this study adopted the survey method and 240 population was targeted while 150 was arrived at using Taro Yamane and a close ended copies of questionnaire was administered on the targeted respondents and the simple regression analysis was employed in analysing the collected data. However, this study found that entrepreneurial orientation does have significant effect on the business performance of block molding companies through sales performance and profit making in Ilorin metropolis. In addition, this study recommends that immense efforts should be placed on improving entrepreneurial orientation so as to attain improvement in sales performance and profit making in Ilorin metropolis.

Keywords: Business performance, entrepreneurial orientation, sales performance, profit making

Introduction

Entrepreneurship in the world today, has contributed immensely to economic growth, creativity, innovation, proactiveness and alleviation of poverty through entrepreneurial orientation (EO). Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) according to Lee (2000) is described as the involvement of a firm to enter a new market (Elsevier). It is mostly regarded as an antecedent of growth, competitive advantage and superior performance. Previous empirical researches had shown that there is a positive relationship between EO and business performance (Springer). The impact of EO on business performances had greatly affected the block molding enterprise (BME) in Nigeria. Block molding enterprise (BME) is one of the largest production sectors of the construction industry in Nigeria (sandcrete). Virtually every Local Government Area has one or more small or large scale block production factories.

BME is a very lucrative business serving millions of less privilege people in Nigeria. It is an area with awesome business opportunity as there are no laid down guidelines regarding who is qualified to produce blocks for use in Nigeria (Abdullah, 2012; Anthony 2015) According to Alutu (2017) BME has gained pre-eminence over traditional bricks because of the abundant availability of sand and cement. The process involved in the making of concrete blocks include the mixture of hard, durable and clean sand, cement and water (Olateju 2004). The blocks usually have the densities of between 1820 to 2080kg/m³ (Alutu 2017). Most of the block molding processes is carried out manually and workers employed are usually unskilled.

Although, BME is a virgin area of job creation as far as professionals, certified and most enlightened people are concerned because of the inbuilt thought that it's not a white collar job avenue and the fact that the initial labour needed to float the business is highly demanding. Yet, it's an area through which many with vision have had their life breakthrough as they have been able to build houses of their own and did some other great feats without tears (empirical). BME naturally has both direct and indirect employment Creation Avenue. The direct avenue is in the area of molding and selling blocks to the public. The indirect has to do with people producing the molding machine, sand tippers, those involved in the curing or seasoning and other engineering hands involved in the manufacture of molds.

Generally, many challenges exist that inhibit the performance of SSEs, such as the absence of innovation; low-level marketing and managerial skills; financial support; mentorship; and competencies (Dyer & Ross 2008). Existing literature suggests that entrepreneurial orientation is a driver and predictor of SME performance (Covin & Slevin 1991; Wiklund 1999); competitiveness and profitability (Gupta & Batra 2015). Some extant studies find that entrepreneurial orientation enables small firms to perform better than their competitors and enhance firm performance (Lumpkin & Dess 2001; Wiklund & Shepherd 2005). Hence, this study was aimed at examining the effect of EO on the performance of SSEs in Ilorin metropolis through sales performance and profit making.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurial Orientation can be described as the success which is driven by the entrepreneurial orientation (Covin and Slevin 1991; Lumpkin and Dess 1996; Wiklund and Shepherd 2004). According to Lumpkin and Dess (2001), the concept of entrepreneurial orientation consists of five dimensions: autonomy, innovativeness, risk taking, proactiveness,

and competitive aggressiveness. Autonomy is defined as an independent action by an individual, family member (Parent) or a team aimed at bringing forth a business concept or a vision, and carrying it through to completion. Innovativeness refers to the willingness to support creativity and experimentation. Risk taking means a tendency to take bold actions, such as venturing into unknown new markets. Proactiveness is an opportunity-seeking and forward-looking perspective. The fifth dimension, competitive aggressiveness, reflects the intensity of a firm's efforts to outperform the industry rivals (Lumpkin & Dess 2001).

Concept of Entrepreneurial Orientation and its Dimensions

According to Wiklund (1999), Arogundade (2011) most researchers agree that EO is a combination of three dimensions: innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking. Indeed, many studies (Covin & Slevin, 1989) follow this three dimensional model created by Miller (1983). Research by Stetz (2000) and Hughes and Morgan (2007) have shown that the dimensions can vary independently from each other and should also be allowed to vary (as proposed by Lumpkin and Dess 1996). However, only a few researchers allow the dimensions described above to vary within their model and create a truly multidimensional EO model. The discussion lies in not whether the dimensions can differ from each other but is based on the belief that an entrepreneurial firm should score on all three dimensions (Covin 2006). This issue is an important one because Lumpkin and Dess (1996) posited that not all of the dimensions of EO would directly or positively affect business performance under different circumstances. Thus, to more fully appreciate the influence of EO, assessing the relative impact of each dimension of EO separately is arguably necessary.

Schumpeter (1942) was one of the first to point out the importance of innovation in the entrepreneurial process. He called the disruptive innovation process 'creative destruction', a process that occurs when wealth is created by the introduction of new products or services that disrupt the current market and causes a shift in the use of resources. Extrapolating this view further, the EO dimension of innovativeness is about pursuing and giving support to novelty, creative processes and the development of new ideas through experimentation (Lumpkin & Dess 1996).

The second dimension is proactiveness. Proactiveness refers to processes which are aimed at seeking new opportunities which may or may not be related to the present line of operations, introduction of new products and brands ahead of competition and strategically eliminating operations which are in the mature or declining stages of the life cycle (Venkatraman 1989). Indeed proactiveness concerns the importance of initiative in the entrepreneurial process. A firm can create a competitive advantage by anticipating changes in future demand (Lumpkin & Dess 1996), or even shape the environment by not being a passive observer of environmental pressures but an active participant in shaping their own environment.

The third dimension, risk-taking, is often used to describe the uncertainty that follows from behaving entrepreneurially. Entrepreneurial behaviour involves investing a significant proportion of resources to a project prone to failure. The focus is on moderated and calculated risk-taking instead of extreme and uncontrolled risk-taking (Morris et al. 2008) but the value of the risk-taking dimension is that it orients the firm towards the absorption of uncertainty as opposed to a paralyzing fear of it.

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) posited that the dimensions of EO can vary independently and proposed that each dimension might not necessarily contribute to business performance in each instance. Despite the caution advocated by Lumpkin and Dess (1996), most studies have used a combined measure of risk taking, innovativeness and proactiveness to capture EO. For example, in the meta-analysis performed by Rauch et al. (2009), only 25% of the articles included in their analysis use a multidimensional model in which the dimensions of EO can vary from each other.

The authors conclude that the dimensions are of equal value to the EO-performance relationship and therefore can be indexed into one variable. Other studies like Yoo (2001) and Covin (2006) confirm this, but some studies suggest otherwise (Hughes and Morgan 2007). Swierczek and Ha (2003) for example found in a sample of firms from Vietnam and Thailand, that the EO dimensions of proactiveness and innovativeness were positively related to firm performance, while risk-taking was not. Hughes and Morgan (2007) show similar results in the UK while investigating incubating firms. In their sample, both risk taking and innovativeness is not significantly related to customer performance.

Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance

Entrepreneurial orientation capabilities involve three main aspects i.e. proactive, risk taking and innovative. Resource based view theory suggested that resource possession and resource utilisation via organisational capabilities can lead to superior business performance. Entrepreneurial orientation can be regarded as one of the organisational capabilities and such capability can differentiate a firm from its rivals and achieve superior business performance. Firms with entrepreneurial orientation have the capabilities to discover and exploit new market opportunities, respond to challenges and willing to take risk under uncertain circumstances. Entrepreneurial orientation is closely knitted to management capabilities as an entrepreneur and on how to make right decisions with various calculations and reasoning (Hassim, Asmat-Nizam, & Bakar, 2011).

The importance of entrepreneurial orientation to the survival and performance of firms has been acknowledged in the entrepreneurship literature (Huang, Wang, Tseng and Wang, 2010). Researchers seem to agree conceptually that entrepreneurial orientation should contribute to a firm's superior performance. Empirical evidences also showed the positive influence of entrepreneurial orientation various performance measures such as financial performance, growth of the firm and overall business performance (Rauch, Wiklund, Lumpkin and Frese, 2009). Previous studies also suggested that SME exhibiting high levels of entrepreneurial orientation will achieve superior performance compared to those possessing low levels of entrepreneurial orientation (Lio, 2008; Keh, 2007). Awang (2009) examined Malaysian Bumiputera SBEs and found that entrepreneurial orientation contributes in explaining their business performance. Fairoz (2010) study of Sri Lankan SBEs noted positive correlations between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance.

Theoretical Relevance

Contingency and Organisational Theory

Environmental uncertainty and organisational change are factors underlying the effectiveness of organisational establishment. From the contingency perspective, a mechanistic

structure emphasizing centralisation, formalisation, standardisation and specialisation towards achieving efficiency and consistency is suggested. Certainty and predictability permit the use of policies, rules and procedures to guide decision making for routine tasks and problems. Under unstable environments, it is suggested that organic structures emphasizing decentralisation will achieve flexibility and adaptability. Thus, general problem-solving methods for non-routine tasks and problems are required under uncertainty and unpredictability. It is proposed that organisational units operating in differing environments develop different internal unit characteristics, hence the greater the internal differences, the greater the need for coordination between units (Josien, 2008).

Size of organisation is a contingency variable; if it is small it can operate more informally, while larger firms need more formality. The owner of a small organisation tends to have more command in the organisation without a proper divisional structure, while a large firm behaves in a more complex way using indirect control mechanisms, such as specialised divisions and resources to ensure that the job is done. Customer diversity across the globe may need different product and support service facilities. Operating in another country, an organisation must abide by the laws imposed in that country. Organisations operating across borders may have to adopt different organisational structures, managerial practices, procedures, products and services to comply with the host country's cultural values, preferences and expectations (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; Josien, 2008).

The idea of organisational size and level of efficiency is further supported by Miller (1983) who suggested that there are three types of firm found in the study of entrepreneurial determinants. Unlike Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), Miller divided entrepreneurial firms into „simple“ firms which are small but their power is centralised at the top, while „planning“ firms are bigger, their goal being well planned and efficient by using more formal controls and plans. The third type are 48 „organic“ firms which strive to be more adaptive to their environments, emphasizing expertise-based power and more open communication.

Empirical Review

In a more recent research conducted by Taiyuan, Stewart and Julio (2017) titled “Entrepreneurial Orientation, Legitimation, and New Venture Performance” The study was aimed at how entrepreneurial orientation and legitimation jointly enhance New venture performance. The design of the study was Qualitative research and data was analyzed on 149 new ventures and they found out that to create value from an entrepreneurial orientation, firms need to possess necessary resources and capabilities, which new ventures often lack due to their liability of newness. They posit that legitimation helps overcome these constraints by enabling new ventures to acquire necessary resources and develop essential capabilities. They found that new venture with entrepreneurial orientation as demonstrated by innovative, proactive, and risk-taking decisions and behaviors can achieve superior performance if they also actively undertake legitimation efforts to meet stakeholder's cognitive, regulative and normative expectations. The study suggests that neglecting legitimation as an important competitive tool may be a greater mistake than previously has been realized, especially for new ventures with an entrepreneurial orientation.

In a recent study conducted by Yoshihiro and Anderson (2016) titled “Firm growth, adaptive, capability and entrepreneurial orientation”. The paper posits adaptive capability as a mechanism through which a firm's prior growth influences the exhibition of future

entrepreneurial action. Defined as the firms proficiency in altering its understanding of market expectations, increased adaptive capability is a consequence of the new resource combinations that result from expanding organization boundaries, increased adaptive capability in turn corresponds to expansion of entrepreneurial activity, as firms increase their entrepreneurial orientation as the strategic mechanism to capitalize on their improved understanding of market conditions. The research model was in a two-study series conducted in South Korea and the United Kingdom.

In addition a work done by Karimi and Rahamani (2016) titled "The influence of Entrepreneurial orientation on Business Performance by the mediation process of Knowledge creation(Case study: Small and Medium Businesses)" the main purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on performance of small medium businesses by the mediation process of knowledge creation. 392 managers of small and medium businesses of Qazvin were selected, 201 questionnaires were collected and were analysed using SPSS and LISREL software. The result shows mediating role of knowledge creation in the impact of entrepreneurial orientation components "innovation, risk taking, leadership, new business on performance in business. They conclude that entrepreneurial orientation and knowledge creation have fundamental role in business and educational policy.

In a similar work by Fais Ahmed (2015) the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the organizational performance: A case study on Banks in Libya. The study aim to examine the effect of the entrepreneurial orientation on Organizational performance. 300 questionnaires were distributed and 200 were returned. Hypothesis was tested through PLS_SEM and the study result showed that EO positively predicted organizational performance. Also in a study by Tayebeh and Shanly (2017) titled "the effect of entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation and learning orientation on performance of ICT business" the purpose of the study was to examine the antecedents of, and the relationship between, entrepreneurial, market and learning orientation on business performance. Questionnaire data collected from 384 senior managers in Iran. The results show that market and learning orientation have positive effects on performance. The findings show that learning orientation is the most important predictor among all other antecedents of business performance. Because the data limited to the ICT industry, future studies need to confirm the findings in other industries.

Aluisius, Hery, Nik and Andhyka (2013) in their work "the direct effect of entrepreneurial orientation and innovation success on firm performance" the research aim to examine the impact of innovation success as mediator variables on relationship among entrepreneurial orientation, human capital, social capital, and firm performance. The research work employs samples of small businesses from Malaysia and Indonesia through employed innovation success as moderator variable; the research indicates positive relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance. It also evident negative relationship between human capital and firm performance as well as social capital and firm performance.

Also, Asmat-Nizam, and Farid, in 2015 carried out a study titled "Entrepreneurial orientation Effects on Market Orientation and SBEs Business Performance-A SEM Approach" The purpose of the paper was to explore how entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation influenced firm performance. A response from sample of 386 management of SBEs in Malaysia which were obtained by mail survey are tested on their Hypothesized relationship

using SEM analysis method with SEM AMOS 18 and SPSS 17 applications. The findings show that the entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation exert a positive effect on firm business performance. The reported results in the paper present an important ground for SBEs management in formulating and implementing strategies to improve their business performance.

In a similar study conducted by Nofal Nur, Surachman, Ubud Salim and Djumahir (2014) titled "Entrepreneurship Orientation, Market Orientation, Business Strategy, Management Capabilities On Business Performance; Study At Small And Medium Enterprise Printing In Kendari". The study was aimed to measure and analysing effect of Entrepreneurship Orientation, Market Orientation, Business Strategy and Management Capabilities on Business Performance at Printing Small and Medium Enterprises (SBEs) in Kendari. Research objects are Printing SBEs in Kendari. The study uses primary data with a total population of 103 printing SBEs the Sampling technique use is census method. Data was analysed with SEM (Structural Equation Model) with AMOS 16 program. The Research results show that: Orientation Entrepreneurship plays an important role to improve market orientation, business strategy, management capabilities and business performance. High market orientation can improve business performance. Appropriate business strategies can improve business performance. Management capabilities can affect business performance although at insignificant level.

Syed, Muzaffar and Minaa (2017) "Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance of Manufacturing Sector Small and Medium Scale Enterprises of Punjab Pakistan" The study investigated the three dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) of manufacturing sector SBEs in Punjab, Pakistan. In the study the effects of three EO dimensions including innovativeness, pro-activeness, and risk taking was analysed with regard to business performance. Questionnaire was used as the main instrument of data collection. Quantitative techniques were applied for analysing the data. Innovativeness, pro-activeness, and risk taking have a significant impact over business performance of manufacturing sector SBEs. Results further indicated there were positive correlations among innovativeness, pro-activeness and risk taking with business performance of SBEs.

Methods

This study is descriptive in nature as it tries to analyse the existing phenomenon in the subject matter (entrepreneurial orientation and business performance). Additionally, this study also adopted the survey method in order to be able to ascertain the targeted quantum among the entire population which is given to be 240 Block molding companies. Furthermore, this study adopted the Taro Yamane sample method in arriving at 150 selected sample size and further substantiated with Bartlett table of sample size (See formula below). In addition, this study has employed the primary means of data collection using a structured close ended questionnaire in gathering the data. Moreover, this study employed the regression analysis in analyzing the gathered data for clarity purpose. Finally, this study employed the content validity and test retest reliability test in substantiating the adopted instrument and all research ethics were strictly abide by for scientific purpose.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n= Sample size

N= Population of the study
 e= level of significance (0.05)

e = Level of significance
 Therefore, the population = 240

$$n = \frac{240}{1 + \frac{240}{240}(0.5^2)}$$

$$= 1 + \frac{240(0.0025)}{240}$$

$$= \frac{240}{1 + 1.6} = 150$$

1. Yard .formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + a^2 N}$$

Where n = sample size
 N = population

$$n = \frac{a^2 - \text{error tolerance}}{1 + (0.5^2) \frac{240}{240}}$$

$$= \frac{240}{1 + (0.0025)240}$$

$$\frac{240}{1+0.6} = 150$$

This is also supported by Bartlett table which is 150. The average sample size determination is = 150.

Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the findings of the study after due process of research. It further contains the demographic analysis and hypothesis statement solution.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the respondents

Respondent's Characteristics	Levels	Number of respondents	Percentage (100%)
Gender	Male	105	76.6
	Female	29	21.2
	Missing	3	2.2
	Total	93	100.0
Age	Less than 20	12	8.8
	21-30	34	24.8
	31-40	44	32.1
	41-50	21	15.3
	51-60	17	12.4
	61 and above	6	4.4

	Missing	3	2.2
	Total	93	100.0
Level of Education	Pri_Sch_Cert	27	19.7
	O'Level	24	17.5
	OND/NCE	51	37.2
	B.SC/HND	24	17.5
	Postgraduate	11	8.0
	Total	93	100.0
Business Span	1-5 years	54	39.4
	6-10 years	51	37.2
	11-15 years	18	13.1
	Above 16 years	14	10.2
	Total	93	100.0
Unit Staff Strength	3 or less	72	52.6
	4-8	47	34.3
	9 and above	15	10.9
	Missing	3	3.2
	Total	93	100.0

The table 1 shows the different demographic variables in the research with their corresponding levels. It was observed most of the respondents are males with few females, whereas 3 of the respondents did not specify their gender and is declared missing.

Again, the respondents with ages in the interval 31-40 occurred mostly in the study while others have a lower frequency and 3 of them did not specify their age group. In addition, majority of the respondents has OND/NCE and other classes of level of education have a lower percentage.

Respondents who have been in the business for the past 1-5 years occur mostly in the study followed by the remaining groups according to the way they occur. Finally, the respondents who have less than or equal to 3 unit staff strength are quite larger than those with 4-8 or 9 and above.

However, below is the proposed hypothesis of the study;

H₀₁ Entrepreneurial orientation has no significant effect on the business performance of selected SSEs in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.783 ^a	.613	.609	.31898

a. Predictors: (Constant), EO

From the regression analysis result shown in table 2, it was found that: R value is (0.783), R-square (0.613), adjusted R-square (0.609) and the standard error of estimate is (0.31898). The value of R-square indicates a strong relationship between the observed and predicted values of the variables. In other words, the R-square value (0.613) means that 61.3% of the variation in business performance was explained by the predictors. This implies that the

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model formulated for testing the relationship between EO and business performance is effective, as R-square value of (0.613) is close to 1. The remaining 39.7% is explained by other variables outside the regression model.

Table 3 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.495	1	14.495	142.465	.000 ^b
	Residual	9.157	90	.102		
	Total	23.652	91			

a. Dependent Variable: BP

b. Predictors: (Constant), EO

In table 3, F-statistics shows that the model is effective in determining the business performance of the selected businesses. The computed F-statistics (142.465) is greater than the tabulated F-statistics value at (23.652), with p-value (0.000), which is less than the critical value 0.05. This validates the rejection of the null hypothesis that “EO has no significant effect on business performance of Block Moulding Enterprise in Ilorin metropolis. Hence, we conclude that EO has effect on business performance of Block Moulding Enterprise in Ilorin metropolis.

Table 4 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.896	.447		2.004	.048
	EO	.840	.070	.783	11.936	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BP

Table 4 shows the coefficients (Beta) for each predictor on business performance. Results indicate that EO enhancing competency has a positive and significant effect on performance of the business. The coefficient has the value 0.783 and a critical value of t=11.936, p-value (0.000) < 0.05. this by implication means that the null hypothesis be rejected and the alternate accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In light of the above findings, the following conclusion was made in relations to the study;

It was concluded that entrepreneurial orientation does significantly affect the business performance of the selected SSEs (Block Molding Companies in Ilorin metropolis). This was substantiated with statistics and facts discovered in the study which further explained in the research findings.

In relations to the above conclusion, this study recommends that block moulding companies should increase their level of orientation gathering perhaps through training and development and continuous improvement in skills. By so doing, more insight would be gained and improvement in business performance would be attained.

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