

**ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR SMALL SCALE ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE IN
LAGOS STATE**

OLATOYE Adeolu Oludare¹ **OJEYINKA**, Aderonke Grace² **OLUSOLA** Temitope Abiodun³
ADENUGBA Olubunmi Oluwakemi⁴ **ESSANG** Victor Edet⁵

¹Department of Entrepreneurship, Tai Solarin University of Education.
Olatoyeao@tasued.edu.ng 08033798629

Corresponding author:

²Business Education Department, College of Vocational and Technology Education, Tai Solarin
University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun

^{3,4,5}Entrepreneurship Education Department, College of Vocational and Technology Education, Tai
Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State.

ABSTRACT

Small Scale Enterprises (SSEs) are essential drivers of economic growth, employment generation, and poverty reduction, especially in developing nations such as Nigeria. In Lagos State, SSEs play a vital role in the commercial environment but typically encounter sustainability and performance issues because to shortcomings in Human Resource Management (HRM) and Entrepreneurship competencies. This study evaluates the human resource management and entrepreneurial competences necessary for the optimal operation of small-scale enterprises in Lagos State. A descriptive survey research design was implemented, focusing on firm owners, managers, and essential personnel from several sectors. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires and analysed via descriptive and inferential statistics, encompassing regression analysis. The findings demonstrated that HRM competences, such as employee recruiting, training, motivation, and performance management, significantly boost corporate efficiency and worker productivity. Essential entrepreneurial talents, such as opportunity recognition, financial literacy, risk management, innovation, and strategic decision-making, are important for firm sustainability and growth. The study further indicated that a mix of HRM and entrepreneurship abilities positively improves the performance and durability of SSEs. Many business owners, however, lack formal education or training in these domains, resulting in financial mismanagement, inadequate labour administration, and restricted corporate growth. The report advocates for ongoing professional development for business proprietors, governmental involvement in capacity-building initiatives, and the incorporation of technology to enhance human resource management and entrepreneurial decision-making processes. Enhancing these competencies would improve corporate performance and contribute to the economic development of Lagos State.

Keywords: Small scale enterprises, human resource management, entrepreneurship competencies, business performance

INTRODUCTION

Small-scale enterprises (SSEs) are integral to the economic advancement of nations, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. These enterprises function as catalysts for job creation, poverty alleviation, and economic diversification. In Lagos State, Nigeria's commercial capital, small-scale firms contribute significantly to the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), giving chances for innovation and industrial expansion. Nonetheless, despite their significance, numerous small-scale firms in Lagos State face survival issues due to factors such as insufficient managerial capacity, constrained financial resources, and inadequate human resource management (HRM) and entrepreneurial competencies. These challenges need the evaluation of the HRM and entrepreneurial abilities essential for the sustained success of SSEs (Ulrich, 2017).

Human Resource Management (HRM) is an essential component of any enterprise, focusing on the recruitment, training, motivating, and retention of personnel to improve organisational productivity. Efficient HRM procedures enable organisations to attract and retain skilled workers, enhance employee happiness, and attain long-term company sustainability (Odunayo, 2021). Many small-scale firms in Lagos State lack effective HRM techniques to enhance workforce productivity, resulting in elevated staff turnover, diminished efficiency, and subpar organisational performance. This study aims to assess the degree to which HRM competences are necessary to improve the performance of SSEs in Lagos State.

Entrepreneurial competences comprise a diverse array of skills, knowledge, and talents essential for effectively managing a business. These talents encompass financial management, strategic planning, risk assessment, problem-solving, and innovation. Entrepreneurs with these competencies are more inclined to make informed company decisions, react to market fluctuations, and attain corporate success. Regrettably, numerous small-scale business proprietors in Lagos State lack essential entrepreneurial competencies, impeding their capacity to effectively navigate the competitive business landscape. This study seeks to evaluate the entrepreneurial abilities vital for SSE performance and offer recommendations for improving business success (Falobi *et al.*, 2020).

Studies indicate that a considerable proportion of small-scale enterprises in Nigeria fail to endure beyond their initial five years due to inadequate management techniques and insufficient commercial acumen. The lack of proficient HRM and entrepreneurial skills among firm proprietors and managers has been recognised as a significant factor contributing to these failures. This study aims to identify deficiencies in competencies and recommend solutions to equip SSE owners with essential skills for business sustainability. Moreover, governmental bodies, business development entities, and educational institutions have undertaken initiatives to improve small business efficacy through diverse training and capacity-building programs. The degree to which these activities mitigate HRM and entrepreneurship competency deficiencies remains ambiguous. This study will assess the efficacy of current interventions and offer recommendations for their enhancement to more effectively assist small-scale firms in Lagos State.

The study will also investigate the impact of HRM practices on improving SSE productivity. It will also examine essential entrepreneurship talents and their impact on business success. This study's findings will assist policymakers, entrepreneurs, and business educators in formulating successful support programs for small business sustainability by defining the essential abilities required for SSE performance.

Despite the significance of Small-Scale Enterprises (SSEs) for economic development, employment generation, and poverty reduction in Lagos State, many challenges persistently hinder their efficacy and viability. A significant factor contributing to these problems is the lack of essential skills in Human Resources Management (HRM) and Entrepreneurship. Many SSE operators lack the requisite skills for successful workforce management, resulting in poor employee performance, increased turnover rates, and inefficient organisational structures. Furthermore, inadequate entrepreneurial skills lead to deficient financial management practices, including inaccurate record-keeping, mishandling of cash flow, and noncompliance with financial regulations. These deficiencies jeopardize the financial sustainability of SSEs and limit their growth potential.

Despite several government measures aimed at fostering SSE growth, the effectiveness of these programs in addressing HRM and entrepreneurial skill deficits remains unclear. This study seeks to assess these critical competencies and their impact on the performance of SSEs in Lagos State. The following objectives are hereby defined; to identify the key HRM competencies required for effective management of SSEs in Lagos State; to determine the essential Entrepreneurship competencies needed for sound financial management in SSEs and to analyze the impact of HRM and entrepreneurship competencies on the performance and sustainability of SSEs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Human Resources Management (HRM)

Human Resources Management (HRM) is a strategic methodology for overseeing personnel inside an organization to optimize their performance and facilitate the attainment of corporate objectives. Human Resource Management encompasses the recruitment, administration, and growth of an organization's most valuable asset: its personnel. It includes several operations such as recruitment, training, performance evaluation, remuneration, employee relations, and organizational growth, all intended to enhance productivity, engagement, and overall organizational success (Igberaaha & Utoware, 2023). Human Resource Management, as a unique domain within management, has developed over time. Initially, human resource management was regarded as a job of administrative staff or labor administration.

The phrase "personnel management" frequently referred to the process of addressing employee-related matters, including recruitment, termination, and remuneration. Over time, corporations acknowledged the significance of human capital and the contribution of HR in enhancing organizational performance. In the 1980s, the designation "Human Resources" began to supplant "Personnel," indicating a transition

to a more strategic methodology in workforce management. Human Resource Management (HRM) developed as a field dedicated to aligning human resources with the organization's overarching business goals, improving employee engagement, and cultivating a healthy organizational culture (Becker & Huselid, 2018). This transition also acknowledged that HRM is not merely an administrative role, but a crucial component of organizational strategy.

The Concept of Entrepreneurship Competencies

Entrepreneurial competences denote the fundamental knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that empower individuals to effectively initiate, oversee, and expand a business enterprise. These competencies are essential for entrepreneurs to manoeuvre through the intricacies of business environments, adjust to evolving market conditions, and maintain profitability. They include a wide array of competencies, such as leadership, financial acumen, risk assessment, strategic analysis, innovation, and problem-solving. A fundamental component of entrepreneurial talents is opportunity recognition, which entails recognising feasible business prospects, evaluating market demands, and devising inventive solutions. Entrepreneurs with great opportunity recognition abilities can forecast trends, use market gaps, and produce competitive products or services. Moreover, proficiency in business management is essential, as it enables entrepreneurs to strategise, organise, and implement business operations efficiently. The talents encompass financial management, marketing, customer relations, and operational efficiency, all of which enhance a business's sustainability.

Additionally, risk-taking and decision-making skills are vital elements of entrepreneurial capabilities (Okonye et al, 2024). The capacity to undertake calculated risks and provide educated decisions allows entrepreneurs to capitalize on possibilities while mitigating potential losses. Similarly, financial literacy, encompassing budgeting, bookkeeping, and investment analysis, enables entrepreneurs to manage resources efficiently and sustain financial stability. A vital component of entrepreneurial talents is interpersonal and networking abilities. Entrepreneurs must cultivate relationships with consumers, investors, suppliers, and other stakeholders to foster business growth. Proficient communication and negotiation abilities are essential for cultivating partnerships and obtaining requisite resources. In the contemporary, rapidly changing business landscape, adaptability and innovation are essential characteristics for entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs must be adaptable enough to embrace changes in technology, consumer tastes, and market dynamics. The capacity for creative thinking and the formulation of innovative solutions provides businesses with a competitive edge.

The Concept of Small-Scale Enterprises (SSEs)

Small Scale Enterprises (SSEs) are firms characterized by a limited workforce, restricted financial resources, and a localized market presence. They are essential to the economy by generating employment, promoting innovation, and enhancing economic growth. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) frequently constitute the cornerstone of developing economies, facilitating entrepreneurship and offering a basis for individuals to establish and grow their firms. Although the precise definition of SSEs may differ by nation and industry, they are typically distinguished by their diminutive scale, constrained resources, and emphasis on catering to local markets.

Socially Sustainable Enterprises (SSEs) span various sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, services, and retail. They are especially significant in developing economies, as they create employment opportunities, foster local entrepreneurship, and assist in addressing socio-economic concerns. Besides their economic impact, SSEs are regarded as a means of social empowerment, especially in rural regions where they enhance community welfare and elevate living standards. Small Scale Enterprises are essential to a nation's economic progress. Their importance transcends mere employment creation and economic contributions. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are a crucial source of employment, especially in developing economies where huge businesses may be constrained. They offer employment opportunities for diverse skill levels, encompassing unskilled labor, semi-skilled workers, and professionals. Through the provision of employment possibilities, SSEs facilitate poverty alleviation and social stability, particularly in rural or marginalized regions where formal job prospects are limited (ILO, 2017).

Moreover, SSEs cultivate entrepreneurial spirit by offering a platform for individuals to initiate and expand their enterprises. A multitude of successful entrepreneurs began their careers in the small-scale sector prior to transitioning to larger firms. Moreover, SSEs frequently serve as a catalyst for innovation, striving to distinguish themselves through distinctive goods, services, or business methods. Their agility and rapid response to shifts in customer preferences enable them to foster grassroots innovation (Smallbone & Wyer, 2018). Furthermore, in some nations, SSEs make substantial contributions to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These enterprises are accountable for generating a diverse array of products and services that satisfy both national and global demand. The sector fosters economic growth by invigorating local economies, enhancing productivity, and promoting competitiveness (Ayyagari, Beck, & Demirgüç-Kunt, 2017). We therefore propose the following hypotheses:

- H₁:** There are key HRM competencies required for effective management of Small Scale Enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos State.
- H₂:** Essential entrepreneurship competencies are required for sound financial management in Small Scale Enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos State.
- H₃:** The level of HRM and entrepreneurship competencies possessed by SSE operators significantly impacts the performance and sustainability of Small Scale Enterprises in Lagos State.

Empirical Review

Adebayo, T. (2020) investigates the impact of human resource management (HRM) techniques on the performance of small-scale firms in Lagos State. The research employed a descriptive survey methodology. A cohort of 150 proprietors of small-scale enterprises and human resources managers was chosen by stratified random sampling. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires and evaluated by regression analysis. The research indicated that human resource management techniques, including recruiting and selection, training and development, and employee motivation, substantially affect the performance of small-scale enterprises. Effective human resource management strategies were associated with enhanced productivity, employee satisfaction, and organizational growth. Small-scale

organization owners are advised to invest in ongoing HR training programs, use strategic recruitment techniques, and utilize staff incentive strategies to improve business success.

Ogunleye, & Adeoti, (2019) evaluated the entrepreneurship competences necessary for sustained performance in small-scale firms in Lagos State. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Data were gathered from 120 accountants and financial managers of small-scale enterprises using questionnaires, supplemented by 20 comprehensive interviews. Data analysis employed descriptive and inferential statistics. The study demonstrated that proficiency in financial reporting, planning, cost control, and tax administration is essential for the sustainability of small firms. Insufficient entrepreneurship expertise frequently results in financial mismanagement and business failure. The authors advocated for the implementation of regular entrepreneurship workshops and seminars for small business proprietors and financial managers. They proposed the incorporation of fundamental entrepreneurship courses into entrepreneurship development programs.

Eze, & Oladipo, (2021) examine the synergistic impact of human resource management and entrepreneurship skills on the performance of small-scale firms in Lagos State. A cross-sectional survey methodology was utilized. The sample comprised 200 proprietors of small-scale enterprises from various sectors. Data were gathered via surveys and analyzed employing structural equation modeling (SEM). Research indicated that both HRM and entrepreneurship competencies exert a positive and significant influence on firm success. Organizations that successfully merged HRM practices with robust entrepreneurship skills had superior financial results and competitive benefits. The report advised legislators to develop assistance programs that offer both human resources and entrepreneurship training for small business proprietors. Furthermore, business development services must underscore the significance of harmonizing HR and entrepreneurship strategies for enhanced performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large population to assess the human resources management (HRM) and entrepreneurship competencies required for small-scale enterprise performance in Lagos State. The design facilitates the identification of relationships and trends among variables without manipulating the study environment.

Population of the Study

This study's target group consists of Lagos State's small-scale business owners, managers, and key staff members. These companies, registered with the Lagos State Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Cooperatives, span retail, manufacturing, hospitality, and services.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

To offer a fairly accurate picture of the population, 200 respondents made up a sample. To guarantee statistical dependability, the sample was calculated with regard for finite populations using the Yamane

formula. Stratified random sampling was the chosen technique. Based on its main business districts e.g., Ikeja, Lagos Island, Surulere, etc. Lagos State was layered. Simple random selection was used inside every stratum to choose respondents, therefore guaranteeing sufficient representation of all industries and company sizes.

Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions designed to elicit responses on HRM and entrepreneurship competencies, as well as indicators of small-scale enterprise performance. The questionnaire were pre-tested for reliability and validity before the main data collection.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The content validity of the questionnaire was ensured through expert reviews by academicians and professionals in human resources and entrepreneurship. A pilot study was conducted with 20 respondents outside the study sample to test the instrument's reliability, using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency. A reliability score of 0.85 was obtained

Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarize the data. Inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analysis, will be used to determine the relationship between HRM and entrepreneurship competencies and enterprise performance.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was sought from the relevant academic and governmental bodies. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understand the purpose of the study and their rights. Confidentiality of respondents' information was strictly maintained, and data was used solely for academic purposes.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of Respondents Bio Data

Table 1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Features	features	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-30years	12	12.0%
	31-40years	66	66.0%
	41 years and above	22	22.0%
Gender	Male	34	34.0%
	Female	66	66.0%
Marital Status	Single	11	11.0%
	Married	89	89.0%
	Divorced	-	-
Religion	Christianity	44	44.0%
	Islam	55	55.0%

Other

1

1.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1: There are key HRM competencies required for effective management of small scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos state

Table 2

Regression analysis on the HRM competencies required for effective management of small scale enterprise in Lagos State

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1126.840	1	1126.840	7.532	.007 ^b
	Residual	14661.670	198	149.609		
	Total	15788.510	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Management of Small Scale Enterprise

b. Predictors: (Constant), HRM competencies

When p-value is less than 0.05 = there is significant

When p-value is greater than 0.05 = There is no significant

Table 2 shows the regression analysis on the key HRM competencies required for effective management of small scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos state. The table shows that key HRM competencies influences the effective management of small scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos state. This is showed by the P-value .007 which is less than 0.05

Hypotheses 2: Essential entrepreneurship competencies are required for sound financial management in small scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos state

Table 3

Regression analysis on essential entrepreneurship competencies required for sound financial management in small scale enterprises in Lagos state

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1148.016	2	574.008	3.803	.026 ^b
	Residual	14640.494	197	150.933		
	Total	15788.510	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Sound Financial Management

b. Predictors: (Constant), Essential entrepreneurship competencies

Table 3 shows the regression analysis on the regression analysis on essential entrepreneurship competencies required for sound financial management in small scale enterprises in Lagos state. The

table shows that essential entrepreneurship competencies influences sound financial management in small scale enterprises in Lagos state. This is showed by the P-value .026 which is lesser than 0.05

Hypotheses 3: The level of HRM and entrepreneurship competencies possessed by SSE operators significantly impacts the performance and sustainability of small scale enterprises in Lagos state

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis

Coefficients					
R= .280 ^a ; R Square = .079, Adjusted R Square = .065					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig	
	B	Beta			
(Constant)	2.579		11.649	.000	
HRM competencies	.217	.254	2.552	.012	
Entrepreneurship competencies	.130	.142	1.419	.009	

Dependent Variable: parental support, students' personal commitment, socio economic status of parent and Students academic aspiration

The table presents the relationship between HRM competences, entrepreneurship competencies and performance and sustainability of small scale enterprise. The table shows that the independent variables (HRM competencies and entrepreneurship competencies) made a significant contribution to the performance and sustainability of small scale enterprise. In term of magnitude of contribution, HRM competencies made the most significant contribution performance and sustainability of small scale enterprise ($\beta = .217$; $t = 2.552$; $p < 0.05$) then followed by entrepreneurship competencies ($\beta = .130$; $t = 1.419$; $p < 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

This study's findings offer essential insights into the human resources management (HRM) and entrepreneurship skills necessary for the effective management and sustainability of small-scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos State. The analysis demonstrated that HRM competencies substantially affect the efficient management of SSEs in Lagos State, evidenced by a p-value of 0.007, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. This corresponds with the conclusions of Becker and Huselid (2016), who highlighted the significance of HRM practices in improving organizational performance. Wright *et al.* (2019) observed that proficient HRM abilities, such as recruitment, training, and employee interactions, are essential for the viability of small enterprises.

The findings indicate that essential entrepreneurship competences strongly impact effective financial management in SSEs, with a p-value of 0.026. This corroborates the conclusions of Atrill and McLaney (2019), who emphasized the significance of entrepreneurship acumen in the effective management of financial resources. Moreover, Hilton and Platt (2013) established that entrepreneurship competencies,

including budgeting, financial reporting, and cost management, are essential for informed decision-making and financial sustainability.

Ultimately, the multiple regression analysis revealed that both HRM and entrepreneurship competencies significantly influence the performance and sustainability of SSEs, with HRM capabilities exhibiting a somewhat greater contribution ($\beta = .217$, $p = 0.012$) than entrepreneurship competencies ($\beta = .130$, $p = 0.009$). This aligns with the research conducted by Boxall and Purcell (2011), which posited that an integration of robust HRM and entrepreneurship procedures results in improved business performance. Additionally, the study by Chandler and Hanks (1994) corroborates this, demonstrating that managerial competencies are essential factors influencing the growth and sustainability of small businesses.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study evaluated the human resource management and entrepreneurial abilities essential for the optimal performance of small-scale enterprises (SSEs) in Lagos State. The results demonstrate that HRM capabilities, including employee recruitment, training, motivation, and performance management, are crucial for improving staff productivity and overall corporate efficiency. Entrepreneurial competencies, such as opportunity awareness, financial literacy, risk management, innovation, and strategic decision-making, substantially enhance firm sustainability and growth. Despite the essential nature of these competences, numerous SSE operators in Lagos State lack sufficient training and formal education in HRM and entrepreneurship, resulting in financial mismanagement, ineffective workforce administration, and constrained business growth. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including continuous professional training for business owners, government-supported capacity-building programs, and the adoption of technology to improve HRM and financial management processes. Enhancing HRM and entrepreneurial competencies enables small firms to improve their performance, sustainability, and impact on economic growth. This study underscores the need for policymakers, educational institutions, and business development organizations to prioritize competency development as a key strategy for supporting SSEs and fostering sustainable economic development in Lagos State.

1. It is advisable for SSE operators to participate in ongoing training and development initiatives to improve their HRM and entrepreneurship skills.
2. Government and pertinent authorities should formulate policies that facilitate the training and capacity enhancement of small-scale firm operators in human resource management and entrepreneurship practices.
3. Small and medium-sized enterprises should implement optimal practices in human resource management and entrepreneurship, including performance management systems and financial planning instruments, to enhance business performance.
4. SSEs must to engage with professional HRM and entrepreneurship platform for guidance and mentorship to enhance their management practices.
5. Utilizing technology for human resource management and entrepreneurship operations can augment efficiency and precision, consequently enhancing total business performance.

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