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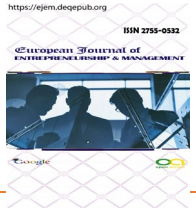

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Managerial Skill and Entrepreneurship Performance in Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises in Anambra State

Authors

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Abstract

The study examined Managerial Skill and Entrepreneurship Performance in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Anambra State. The specific objectives were to examine the impact of technical skills on product innovation and the impact of conceptual skills on product development. A sample size of 326 was derived from a population of 2,147. A descriptive survey design was utilized. The analysis was done using a table; frequencies, and standard deviation with correlation analysis (r), coefficient of determination (R2), and F-test. The findings revealed that technical skill has a significant impact on product innovation with (R=0.824, p-value<0.001), F value and the p-value (583.224, 0.000) shows that these results are significant. It was also indicated that conceptual skill has a positive impact on product development (R=0.903, p-value<0.001). In conclusion, the entrepreneurial development process, procedures, and skill acquisition must entrench certain skills which will transform the entrepreneur into an innovator, taskmaster, mediator, and motivator. It was recommended that SMEs policies should make specific provisions to complement existing training initiatives with new strategies aimed at facilitating access to training by SMEs. Training must become more sector-specific, focusing on the particular needs and practical problems of SMEs.

Keywords: *Managerial Skill; Entrepreneurship Performance; Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises*

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is regarded as the ability and willingness to enhance, hold and manage a business venture while being prepared for taking risks to get the highest profit (Raihan, 2021). The entrepreneurship development process is about sustaining entrepreneurs to enhance their skills with the help of training and coaching classes. It encourages them to make better judgments and take sensible decisions for all business operations. Another essential factor of this process is to advance the capacity to manage, develop, and build a business enterprise keeping in mind the risks related to it. SMEs make up more than 90% of all businesses worldwide and are essential to the 'path out of poverty for many developing countries (UNIDO, 2022). The evolution of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria proves that even small-scale businesses can improve employment, reduce poverty, enhance the development of social infrastructure and drive the economy of Nigeria positively.

Many managers of SMEs in developing countries like Nigeria lack access to modern education on business development and the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). This makes it hard for the growing numbers of entrepreneurs to successfully compete in the job market and contribute to their country's economic development. The greatest challenges faced are a lack of finance, high raw material prices, and high-interest rates. Most entrepreneurs had no training before starting businesses (Al-Shaikh, 2013). Even when entrepreneurs take all the right steps in selecting a business model,writing a detailed business plan to attract potential investors, leveraging social media to build a customer base, and focusing on cash flow, their small business may still struggle along the way (Boitnott, 2022).

Mahmood & Hanafi (2013) opined that enterprises contribute positively to an economy locally and globally, especially to GDP and employment at the grassroots. Entrepreneurship helps to create wealth and reduce unemployment, produce creativity and innovation, and increase the total production of a country (Shane, 2003). Arguably, technological advancement or transformation in any country mostly can be made possible through innovative sciences, and ideas and utilizing uncommon opportunities; and entrepreneurship is the best way to achieve this. People become gainfully employed through vocational training and skill acquisition (Ikegwu, Ajiboye, Aromolaran, Ayodeji & Okorafor, 2014).

In Nigeria, as well as in other developing economies, several measures that include technical/managerial training, provision of credit facilities (establishment of various financial institutions), the establishment of industrial estates, and recent, the establishment of business incubators, physical facilities, and many other developmental plans are being put in place to ameliorate these challenges. In recent times, various fiscal and monetary measures have been established for investors and entrepreneurs in the small-scale sectors of the economy. This included the strategy adopted by the Federal Government of Nigeria towards the training and motivation of unemployed graduates, to be gainfully employed in out-of-school entrepreneurship development programs.

Micro-level studies in developing countries suggest managerial skills play a key role in the adoption of modern technologies. The human resources literature suggests that managerial skills are difficult to codify and learn formally, but instead tend to be learned on the job. Managerial skills are the knowledge and ability of the individuals in a managerial position to fulfill some specific management activities or tasks**.** This knowledge and ability can be learned and practiced. However, they also can be acquired through the practical implementation of required activities and tasks. Katz (2019) identifies three types of skills that are essential for a successful management process: Technical skills, Conceptual skills, and Human or interpersonal management skills.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship development is considered a vital link to the largest economic growth of a nation through its positive impact on economic development, especially at the grassroots. Managers need skills that will help them manage people and technology to ensure an effective and efficient realization of their working duties**.** Nigeria has a very high rate of private business failure. This is largely due to the lack of entrepreneurial skills, lack of access to high-quality and affordable business development services, limited access to finance, lack of adequate technical and management support services, and limited access to information on market opportunities.

Major challenges of the entrepreneurial development on managerial skill acquisition in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) have been the inability of would-be entrepreneurs to stay long and acquire required skills from established entrepreneurs before embarking on their own. SMEs in Nigeria face a lot of challenges ranging from lack of managerial skill in marketing and technical expertise; limited applications of new technology; poor management, lack of capital and credit facilities; shortage of skilled workers and raw materials; lack of business information to inadequate infrastructure. Lack of effective management during their early stages is also a major cause of business failure for small businesses. With the foregoing, it is pertinent to examine the effect on managerial skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development in small and medium-scale enterprises in Anambra State, and providing a solution will be worthwhile.

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study was to examine Managerial Skill and Entrepreneurship Performance in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Anambra State, specifically, the objective was to;

I. Examine the impact of technical skills on product innovation on SMEs in Anambra State
II. Determine the impact of conceptual skills on product development on SMEs Anambra State

Statement of Hypotheses

I. Technical skill has a significant impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.
II. A conceptual skill has a significant impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State.

Review of Related Literature
Conceptual Framework
Entrepreneurial Development

Entrepreneurship development is the means of enhancing the knowledge and skill of entrepreneurs through several classroom coaching programs, and training. The main point of the development process is to strengthen and increase the number of entrepreneurs (Raihan, 2021). Entrepreneurship Development (ED) refers to the process of enhancing entrepreneurial skills and knowledge through structured training and institution-building programs. ED aims to enlarge the base of entrepreneurs to hasten the pace at which new ventures are created (Samian & Buntat, 2012). Entrepreneurial development focuses on the individual who wishes to start or expand a business. Furthermore, entrepreneurship development concentrates more on growth potential and innovation. Essentially this means the acquisition of skills that will enable an entrepreneur to function appropriately. The entrepreneurship development process is about supporting entrepreneurs to advance their skills with the help of training and coaching classes. It encourages them to make better judgments and take a sensible decision for all business activities. To be successful in planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, managers must use a wide variety of skills. A skill is abelian to do something proficiently. Managerial skills fall into three basic categories: technical, human relations, and conceptual skills. The degree to which each type of skill is used depends upon the level of the manager's position.

Managerial Skills: Managerial skills are the knowledge and ability of the individuals in a managerial position to fulfill some specific management activities or tasks**.** This knowledge and ability can be learned and practiced. However, they also can be acquired through the practical implementation of required activities and tasks.

Conceptual Skill: Conceptual skill involves the ability to see the enterprises as a whole. It includes recognizing how the various functions of the organization depend on one another and how, changes in any one part affect all the others and it extends to visualizing the relationship of the individual business to the industry, the community, and the political, social, and economic forces of the nation as a whole, recognizing these relationships and perceiving the significant elements in any situation. The entrepreneur should then be able to act in a way, which advances the overall welfare of the total organization. Hence the success of strategic decision-making depends on the conceptual skill of the entrepreneur who makes the decision and those who put it into action. When for example an important change in making policy is made; it is critical that the effects on production, control, finance, research, and the people involved be considered. And it remains critical until the new policy is successfully implemented. Conceptual skills

provide the ability to develop solutions regarding high-level theories, ideas, and topics. This quality also involves addressing challenging scenarios with a creative, innovative approach. With conceptual skills, it becomes easier to understand abstract or complicated ideas.

Human Skill: Human Skill is the entrepreneur's ability to work effectively as a group member and to develop cooperative effort within the term the entrepreneur leads. As technical skill is primarily concerned with working with "things" (processes or physical objects), so human skill is primarily concerned with working with people. By accepting the existence of viewpoints, perceptions, and beliefs which are different from his own, the entrepreneur is skilled in understanding what others mean by their words and beliefs, and behavior (Weirich, Cannice& Koontz; 2008).

Technical Skill: Technical skills imply an understanding of, and proficiency in, a specific kind of entrepreneurial activity, particularly one involving methods, processes, procedures, or techniques. Technical Skill involves specialized knowledge, and technical ability within that specialty and facility in the use of the tools and techniques of the specific discipline of the three skills described already. Technical Skill is perhaps the most familiar because it is the most concrete, and because in our age of specialization, it is the skill required of the greatest number of entrepreneurs. Most of our vocational and on-the-job training programs are largely concerned with developing this specialized Technical Skill.

Innovation

Innovation is a change in a product offering, service, business model, or operations which meaningfully improves the experience of a large number of stakeholders. (Hutch, 2010)

Product Innovation

Product innovation is the creation and subsequent introduction of a good or service that is either new or improved on previous goods or services of its kind. Product innovation is a process that includes: technical design, research and development, production, management, and commercial activities associated with marketing a new product (Hamid & Mohammad 2012). To reduce business risk, SMEs must innovate products to enter new markets and utilize resources (Omar & Morales, 2021). An innovation strategy for a business, must have advantages and be able to have strong competitiveness. Baek & Lee (2018) provides insight into the comparative value of alternative accommodation for SMEs. Innovations that generate high-added value, and are carried out sustainably, can enter the market and become market leaders. Cho and Pucik (2005) say that companies always innovate as one of the main factors for the success and survival of a company.

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Product Development

Product development is the complete process of taking an idea from concept to delivery and beyond. It encompasses everything from brainstorming the initial concept to strategically planning, building, and releasing it to market and then measuring its success. Product development is the process required to bring a product from being a concept to reaching the market. There are many steps required to take a product from the early stages in the product development process, from product idea generation and market research through to research and development, manufacturing, and distribution. On the business side of things, a new product can improve market share and create growth in a company, providing economic sustainability through new revenue streams.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

The definition or classification of small and medium enterprises differs from country to country. There is no generally accepted definition or classification of SMEs. Different authors, scholars, and schools have different ideas as to differences in terms of capital outlay, the number of employees, sales turnover, fixed capital investment, available plant and machinery, market share, and the level of development (Ogechukwu, 2009). In countries like the USA, Britain, and other European countries, Small and medium-scale enterprises are defined in terms of turnover and number of employees.

The definition and classification of SMEs in Nigeria are in terms of capital employed, turnover, and the number of employees. The CBN communiqué No 69 of the special monetary policy committee meeting of April 15, 2010, acknowledged the existence of several definitions of SMEs. One such definition/classification states that an enterprise that has an asset base (excluding land) of between N5 million to N500 million and labour force of between 11 and 300 belong to the SME sub-sector. This definition is what the Small and Medium Enterprises Credit Guarantee Scheme (SMECGS) adopted. SMEs have also been broadly defined as businesses with a turnover of less than N100million, for the Small and Medium Enterprises Equity Investment Scheme (SMEEIS), a small and medium enterprise is defined as any enterprise with a maximum asset base of N1.5 billion (excluding land and working capital) with no lower or upper limit of staff. In the 1990 budget, the Federal Government of Nigeria defined small-scale enterprises for the purpose of the commercial loan as those enterprises with annual turnover not exceeding N500, 000 and for merchant loan as those for the purpose of the commercial loan as those enterprises with capital investment not exceeding N 2 million (excluding the cost of land or a maximum of N5 million).

SMEs exist in the form of sole proprietorship and partnership, though some could be registered as limited liability companies and characterized by: a simple management structure, informal employer/employee relationship, labor intensive operation, simple technology, a fusion of ownership and management, and limited access to capital.

Theoretical Framework
Innovation Theory

This theory was propounded by Joseph Alois Schumpeter in 1934. According to Schumpeter, the effective function of an entrepreneur is to start innovation in a venture. This theory is also called innovation theory or dynamic theory. According to this theory, entrepreneurs emerge because of individuals have certain psychological elements i.e., willpower, self-intuitions, and tolerance capacity. An entrepreneur is a person who has creative nature (Rachit, 2021).

The Innovation Theory believed that an entrepreneur could earn economic profits by introducing successful innovations. That the main function of an entrepreneur is to introduce innovations and the profit in the form of a reward is given for his performance. According to Schumpeter, innovation refers to any new policy that an entrepreneur undertakes to reduce the overall cost of production or increase the demand for his products. Thus, innovation can be classified into two categories; The first category includes all those activities which reduce the overall cost of production such as the introduction of a new method or technique of production, the introduction of new machinery, innovative methods of organizing the industry, etc. The second category of innovation includes all such activities which increase the demand for a product, such as the introduction of a new commodity or new quality goods, the emergence or opening of a new market, finding new sources of raw material, a new variety or a design of the product, etc. According to Schumpeter, the entrepreneur is basically an innovator and an innovator is one who introduces new combinations.

Empirical Review

Ikupolati; Adeyeye; Oni; Olatunle, & Obafunmi, (2017) examined Entrepreneurs' Managerial Skills as Determinants for the Growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted. Data was collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using the SPSS software version 23. Linear regression was the tool used. The findings have shown that both the entrepreneurs' conceptual and technical skills contribute to the managerial skills of the entrepreneurs which have brought about growth in SMEs in Nigeria

Malachy, Yini, & Ibrahim (2015) examined the impact of managerial skills on SSBs performance in the Bauchi state of Nigeria. The questionnaire technique was used to collect data from 58 SSBs in the state and analyzed using simple linear regression to test the hypothesis on the relationship between the two variables. The study found that managerial skills have a significant impact on SSBs' performance.

Haris, Shirley &Mohd (2020) investigated the Knowledge and Skills Necessary for Product Innovation in SMEs Manufacturing Industry in Malaysia. This research was conducted using a quantitative approach, where a questionnaire was used as the major instrument in data collection. The data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program. The research analysis outcomes showed that customer and market knowledge is the most dominant knowledge necessary for product innovation.

Vitor, Rocha, Bárbara & Jorge (2021) examined Design Management and the SME Product Development Process: A Bibliometric Analysis and Review. This study is part of a broader investigation seeking to improve and optimize the process of design integration and management inside Indian SMEs with little or no prior experience in design and who collaborate with external designers. Here we present a bibliometric analysis methodology and review of the main contributions to the literature in SME design management. Their findings contribute to the analysis of the evolution and quality of research in the field of SME design management and can support future methodological research

Ferreras-Méndez, Olmos-Penuela, Salas-Vallina, & Alegre (2021) analyzed the link between EO and New Product Development (NPD) performance, considering Business Model Innovation (BMI) as a mediating variable. A sample of 400 Spanish SMEs is used to test the proposed research model through structural equation modeling and partial least squares analyses. Results reveal that EO contributes to BMI and NPD performance. Moreover, BMI is found to have a partial mediating role between EO and NPD performance.

Muhammad, & Amalia (2021) examined New Product Development Process Design for Small and Medium Enterprises in Japan. Content analysis, bibliographic analysis, and clustering method (based on Pearson's correlation coefficient) are used to conduct the identification. Less-formal processes, informal strategic planning, limited resources, need for technical support, and lack of capabilities in certain fields are some of the characteristics of SME's NPD. Design activities in NPD, collaboration and source of innovation, and process modeling, tools, and techniques appear to be important aspects related to the SME's NPD process.

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was utilized for the study. Descriptive research is concerned with the description of data and characteristics of a population. The goal is the acquisition of factual, accurate, and systematic data and to describe the data and characteristics of what is being studied. It is also useful because of the relatively large population from which the information was collected. Primary data was adopted for the study. The primary sources are those that the researcher generated directly through investigation and survey using instrument administration administered to respondents.

The study was conducted in Anambra state of Nigeria with reference to selected small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) located in Awka North local government area who registered with Anambra State Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. The occupations of the indigenes were predominantly farmers, traders, and Industrialists. The population of the study is designed to include all the SMEs operating within the Awka North and Ogbaru local government areas. The instrument for data collection utilized for the study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured in line with the variables of the study already stated in the hypotheses. The Likert-type scale or category was adopted for analysis, namely: strongly agree; (SA); Agree (A); Undecided (UD); Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Each level is assigned a number ranging from 5 (SA) to 1 (SD). The data were analyzed descriptively using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) versions 21.0 were used to aid in coding, entry, and analysis of quantitative data obtained from the closed-ended questions with emphasis on correlation analysis (r), coefficient of determination (R^2), F-test (ANOVA).

Williams's (1986) statistical sampling formula was applied to obtain the sample size from the population. The formula is given thus;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 Npq}{Ne^2 + Z^2 pq}$$

Where,

Z = Probability given under 95% reliability
N = Population of the study
e = Sampling error
p = proportion of success
q = proportion of failure
n = sample size sought

Substituting the value into the formula, we have:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)2\ (2147)\ (0.5)\ (0.5)}{2147(0.05)2 + (1.96)2(0.5)\ (0.05)}$$

$$n = \frac{(3.8416)\ (2147)\ (0.25)}{2147(0.0025) + 3.8416\ (0.25)}$$

$$n = \frac{2061.9788}{5.3675 + 0.9604}$$

$$n = \frac{2061.9788}{6.3279}$$

$$n = 325.875$$

$$n = 326$$

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected with regards to each of the questions were analyzed using in tables, frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation and Pearson Correlation coefficient.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution and Return Rate of Respondents

Category	Copies of questionnaire sent out	Copies of questionnaire returned	Copies of questionnaire not returned	Percentage of returned and verified copies
Agro-base	96	85	11	29
Service	151	100	51	31
Manufacturing	79	60	19	18
Total	326	245	81	78

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From table 1 it was shown that out of the total number three hundred and twenty-sixty (326) questionnaires administered to the respondents, two hundred and forty-five (245) of them were returned giving a percentage of 78% while eighty (81) of them were not returned giving a percentage of 20%.

Data Analysis

Table 2: Technical Skills Have Impact on Product Innovation on SMEs in Anambra State

STATEMENT	SA	A	UD	SDA	DA	MEAN	ST.DEV
Technical skills have a positive impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State	128	81	4	26	6	1.747	1.049
Technical skills have a negative impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State	66	20	2	107	1 50	3.861	1.224
Technical skills do not have an impact on product innovation on SMEs in Anambra State	11	45	9	100	80	4.117	0.865

Source: Field Survey 2022

The response in table 2 reveals that 128 respondents indicated strongly agree that technical skills have a positive impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State. 81 respondents assert that it has a positive impact, 4 respondents were undecided, 26 respondents opine strongly agree; while 6 respondents consider disagree. With a mean score of 1.747±1.049, the respondent is of the opinion that technical skills have a positive impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.

The study found out whether technical skills have a negative impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State. This is predicated upon with mean score of 3.861±1.224. 66 respondents assert strongly agree, 20 respondents agree, 2 respondents are undecided, 107 respondents indicated strongly disagree; while 50 respondents assert disagree that technical skills have a negative impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.

Out of 245 respondents, 11 respondents and 45 respondents indicated strongly agree and agree respectively that technical skills do not have an impact on product innovation; while9 respondents were undecided, 100 respondents and 80 respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that technical skills do not have an impact on product innovation on SMEs in Anambra State with a mean score of 4.117±0.865.

Table 3: Impact of Conceptual Skills on Product Development on SMEs in Anambra State

STATEMENT	SA	A	UD	SDA	DA	MEAN	ST.DEV
conceptual skill has a positive impact on product development on SMEs Anambra State	115	93	2	28	7	1.71	0.797
Conceptual skills have a negative impact on product development in SMEs Anambra State	53	23	5	104	60	3.98	1.279
Conceptual skills do not have an impact on product development in SMEs Anambra State	55	35	4	121	30	3.06	1.404

Source: Field Survey 2022

The response in table 3 reveals that 115 respondents to strongly believe that conceptual skills have a positive impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State. 93 respondents agree that it has a positive impact, 2 respondents were undecided, 28 respondents indicated strongly disagree; while 7 respondents accepted disagree. With a mean score of 1.71±0.797, the respondents are of the opinion that conceptual skills have a positive impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State.

It is of the opinion that conceptual skills have a negative impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State. This is predicated upon the mean score of 3.98±1.279 and the responses of 53 respondents to strongly agree, 23 respondents indicated agree, 5 respondents were undecided, 104 respondents assert disagree; while 60 respondents strongly disagree that conceptual skills have a negative impact on product development on SMEs in Anambra State.

It was indicated that 55 respondents and 35 respondents opine strongly agree and agree respectively that conceptual skills do not have an impact on product development on SMEs in Anambra State; while 4 respondents

were undecided, 121 respondents and 30 respondents indicated strongly disagree and disagree respectively that conceptual skill has an effect on product development on SMEs in Anambra State with a mean score of 3.06±1.404.

Test of Hypotheses
Hypothesis One

H_o: Technical skill has no significant impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.
In testing the hypothesis, the data presented in table 4.2, was tested using regression analysis and the result is shown below.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.824	.589	.588	.33439	
ANOVA					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	65.216	1	65.216	583.224	000
Residual	102.427	916	.112		
Total	167.643	917			
COEFFICIENTS					
Model	**Coefficient**	**Std. Error**		**T**	**Sig**
Constant	1.958	.026		74.865	0.000
Technical skill	.335	.014		24.150	0.00

Source: SPSS result

The result of the regression analysis summarized in table 4.4 shows that the model for the relationship technical skill has significant effect on product innovation on SMEs in Anambra State with SP = 1.958+0.335HC

This reveals that technical skill has a positively significant impact on product innovation on SMEs in Anambra State. Furthermore, the p-value < 0.05 indicates a significant impact at 5% level of significance. Also, the regression coefficient (R) of 0.824 indicates a strong positive relationship between the independent variable (technical skill) and the dependent variable (product innovation). The coefficient of determination which is 0.589 reveals that 59% of the variation observed in the dependent variable is caused by the independent variable. The F value and the p-value (583.224, 0.000) show that these results are significant. Based on this we can say that technical skill has a significant impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two
Ho: Conceptual skill has no significant impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State.
In testing the hypothesis, the data presented in table 4.3 was used tested using correlation analysis and the result is shown below.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation coefficient

	Conceptual Skill	**Product Development**
Conceptual skill ***Sig(1-tailed)*** ***N***	1 918	.903 .000 917
product development ***Sig(1-tailed)*** ***N***	.903 .000 917	1

*****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).***

Table 5 presents the result from the person product moment correlation. The correlation coefficient (R) between conceptual skill and product development is 0.903. This shows that there is a very strong positive relationship between conceptual skill and product development in SMEs in Anambra State. This also indicates that when conceptual skill increases, product development is enhanced. With p-values < 0.001, this result is significant and did not occur by chance. Therefore, the results indicate that conceptual skill has a strong positive relationship with product development in SMEs in Anambra State.

Discussion of the Findings

The coefficient of determination which is 0.589 reveals that 59% of the variation observed in the dependent variable is caused by the independent variable. The F value and the p-value (583.224, 0.000) show that these results are significant. This is in support of Anumnu (2015) that there is a significant relationship between knowledge management and the development of entrepreneurial skills. Based on this we can say that technical skill has a significant impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State.

The correlation coefficient (R) between conceptual skill and product development is 0.903. This shows that there is a very strong positive relation between conceptual skill and product development in SMEs in Anambra State with p-values < 0.001. This supported Muhammad, & Amalia (2021) that design activities in new product development collaboration and source of innovation, and process modeling, tools, and techniques appear to be important aspects related to the SME's NPD process.

Summary of Findings

I. It was found that technical skill has a significant impact on product innovation in SMEs in Anambra State with (R=0.824, p-value<0.001) while the F value and the P-value (583.224, 0.000) show that these results are significant.
II. The study revealed that conceptual skill has a positive impact on product development in SMEs in Anambra State (R=0.903, p-value<0.001)

Conclusions

Technical and conceptual skills have a strong positive impact on product innovation and development in SMEs. The entrepreneurial development process, procedures, and skill acquisition must entrench certain skills which will transform the entrepreneur into an innovator, taskmaster, mediator, and motivator. In order to be successful in planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, managers must use a wide variety of skills. Managerial skills fall into basic categories and the degree to which each type of skill is used depends upon the level of the manager's position and experience.

Recommendations

I. SMEs Policy should make specific provisions to complement existing training initiatives with new strategies aimed at facilitating access to training by SMEs. Training must become more sector-specific, focusing on the particular needs and practical problems of SMEs.

II. Managerial skill acquisition in small and medium would be enhanced if greater attention is directed towards entrepreneurship training in social gatherings, and secondary and tertiary institutions to enable increased managerial skill acquisition.

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