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The Influence of Workers' Organizational Culture and Entrepreneurial Skills on Business Performance of Technical Microenterprises in Southwest Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Microenterprises constitute a significant component of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector and contribute substantially to employment generation and economic development in Nigeria. However, the performance and sustainability of these enterprises often depend on internal organizational factors such as workers' entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture. This study examined the impact of workers' organizational culture and entrepreneurial skills on the business performance of technical microenterprises in Southwest Nigeria. The study focused on microenterprises in Lagos, Oyo, and Osun States, which were purposively selected due to their high concentration of microenterprises. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and interviews from 213 respondents, while secondary data were obtained from relevant documents and reports. The data were analyzed using Two-Way ANOVA and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture significantly influence business performance at the 5% level of significance. The regression results further showed that the independent variables jointly explain 68.4% of the variation in business performance. The study concludes that strengthening entrepreneurial competencies and promoting positive organizational culture among workers are crucial for improving the performance and sustainability of technical microenterprises.

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are widely recognized as important drivers of economic growth, employment creation, innovation, and poverty reduction across both eveloped and developing economies. Globally, MSMEs account for more than 95% of businesses and contribute substantially to employment and value creation. In developing countries, microenterprises represent the largest segment of the MSME sector and serve as a major source of livelihood for youth and women.

In Nigeria, MSMEs contribute significantly to national economic development through job creation, income generation, and entrepreneurial development. According to SMEDAN, microenterprises account for the overwhelming majority of businesses operating in the country. Despite their importance, many microenterprises experience challenges related to managerial capability, employee competence, organizational practices, and sustainability (Odafe et. al., 2025).

Among the internal factors that influence enterprise performance, organizational culture and entrepreneurial skills have received considerable attention in the literature. Organizational culture reflects the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that guide employee behaviour and organizational decision-making. Entrepreneurial skills encompass managerial, technical, communication, leadership, and problem-solving competencies that enable individuals to identify opportunities and effectively manage business operations.

Although previous studies have examined organizational culture and entrepreneurial skills independently, limited attention has been given to their combined influence on the performance of technical microenterprises in Southwest Nigeria. This study therefore investigates the extent to which workers' organizational culture and entrepreneurial skills influence business performance among technical microenterprises in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational Culture and Business Performance

Several studies have showed that organizational culture is strong and it is one of the best for business performance (Olu, 2014) as it aids three significant purposes which are;

(i) It is deeply entrenched form of social control which inspires staff behavior and decisions.

(ii) Secondly, it is the social glue that unites members together and gives them the opportunity to have taste of organizational experience. The social glue is very important because it help to retain top official and invite new members;

(iii) Lastly, culture aids staff to communicate more effectively and efficiently and to understand organizational procedures, thus, increasing the rate of cooperation with each member as they share common intellectual model of certainties (McShane and Glinow, 2005).

The persistent and powerful role that culture plays in modeling the organizational life gives credibility to speculations that cultural factors could be associated with outstanding levels of organizational performance. A frequently hypothesized relationship between organizational culture and its performance suggested that for the organizational culture to influence performance, they must be both strong and have particular values, distinctive traits, common behavioral patterns and beliefs. Several researchers have argued that positive organizational culture improves the performance of the organization with respect to the strength of their manifestation. This view has been tagged the "strong culture hypothesis".

Entrepreneurial Skills and Business Performance

In several literature, many authors have explained entrepreneurship with the duty of bearing risk and uncertainty, and some with organization of productive resources, the inception and continuance of innovation, and the provision of technical knowledge (Burnett, 2000).

According to Chukwuka (2016) Entrepreneurial skills are the attitudes and traits that allow people to spot opportunities, generate creative concepts, and successfully start and run innovative businesses or endeavours. Both launching new companies and succeeding in current ones require these skills, which promote creativity and expansion. Entrepreneurial skills are not limited to company owners; they are beneficial in many occupations and promote creativity, flexibility, and problem-solving in a variety of capacities. From top leadership to intermediate supervisors to first leadership, management abilities are essential for a variety of roles and at different levels of an organization (Balogun, 2023). According to Kasongo et. al., (2023), innovative thinking and information acquisition are influenced by managerial skill, which enhances business performance and productivity

Measurement of Organizational Culture

Organizational culture was measured using the cultural dimensions developed by Geert Hofstede. Hofstede (1980) initially identified four dimensions of organizational culture: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity. These dimensions have been widely applied in organizational and management research and have been adopted by several scholars, including Kotter (2012) and Mashal and Saima (2014).

The framework was later expanded by the GLOBE Research Program (1992–2000), which introduced additional dimensions such as gender differentiation, performance orientation, future orientation, human orientation, and assertiveness. However, this study adopted the cultural framework of Hofstede (2011) and Mashal and Saima (2014) due to their extensive use and acceptance in management and organizational studies. The framework has been widely utilized by researchers such as Sivakumar and Nakata (2001), Van Everdingen and Waarts (2003), and Waarts and Van Everdingen (2005).

For this study, four key dimensions of organizational culture were examined:

(a) **Power Distance:** Power distance refers to the extent to which organizational members accept unequal distribution of power and authority. In organizations with high power distance, employees readily accept hierarchical structures and centralized decision-making, whereas low power distance encourages participation, consultation, and open communication across different organizational levels.

(b) **Uncertainty Avoidance:** Uncertainty avoidance describes the degree to which organizational members seek to minimize uncertainty and ambiguity through formal rules, procedures, and structured work practices. High uncertainty avoidance is associated with a preference for stability and clear guidelines, while low uncertainty avoidance reflects greater tolerance for risk and change.

(c) **Individualism/Collectivism:** This dimension reflects whether employees prefer to operate as independent individuals or as members of a group. Individualistic cultures emphasize personal achievement, autonomy, and individual responsibility, whereas collectivist cultures prioritize teamwork, group loyalty, and collective goals.

(d) **Masculinity/Femininity (Assertiveness):** This dimension focuses on the extent to which organizational members emphasize achievement, competitiveness, and results-oriented behaviour versus cooperation, relationships, and concern for others. According to Randolph and Sashkin (2002), this dimension can also be described as assertiveness. Highly assertive cultures prioritize performance and achievement, while less assertive cultures place greater value on interpersonal relationships and employee well-being.

(e) **Orientation:** Orientation is about the choice of focus for people's efforts. The focus on the past, present and future.

Measurement of Entrepreneurial Skills

Entrepreneurial skills are connected with the core competency in the procedure of identification or creation of opportunities, the capacity to capitalize on the identified opportunities, and an array of skills required in implementing and developing successful business plans in order to enable the identified opportunities in business environment to be realized. Several authors like Herron (1993), Eunice (2018) and Apaokueze and Chukwuka (2025) had identified several skills needed for entrepreneurial success. Some of the skills are leadership skills, technical skills, business skills, networking skills and human or interpersonal skills.

According to the works of Mamabolo et. al., (2016), skill is defined as the proficiency performance of a commission due to the outcome of investing in experience and education, which could be better off by practice, training and development. In their work, they concluded that there are about nine entrepreneurial skills that are needed for business success: interpersonal and social skill, leadership skill, technical skill, human resource management skill, marketing skill, business management skill, finance management skill, communication skill, start-up skill, and personal skill. Mamabolo et. al., (2016) finding was based on quantitative and qualitative methods using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This study used Mamabolo et. al., (2016) and Apaokueze & Chukwuka (2025) to measure entrepreneurial skills because they encompass the variables by other researchers.

Communication Skills: the importance of communication skill outside and inside any enterprise so as to have a successful business running is emphasized by Adejimola (2008). Communication must be measured as a multidimensional construct with huge effect on the interrelationship, cognitive and competence of an organization for good entrepreneurial performance. A successful entrepreneur must be a good communicator and any human being that has excellent means of expression is a good leader. Approaching, discussing, and explaining their ideas to others must be done with ease. The communication skill, marketing skill, and technological skill have impact on entrepreneurial success.

Social and interpersonal skill: this skill is a need for an entrepreneur so as to interact with other people. The required skills here are; cultural sensitivity, listening, building relationships, communication skill, and people's skill.

Marketing Skill: involves relating the importance of service and tangible products to clients so as to patronize and buy from the organization. This skill includes, selling skill, positioning the product in the market, benchmarking competition, and market research.

Business Management Skill is needed for daily running of the enterprise. This skill involve; executing and developing a business model, decision-making, strategic competence, legal skill, planning, delegation, business management, and problem solving.

Human Relation Skills: human capital has an important role to play in every organization just like other factors. Human relation skill development influences the opportunity of business success in the context of entrepreneurship. Adejimola (2008) said it is not a good idea for entrepreneurs to have any linkage in other segment like suppliers, society, customers, and other entrepreneurs. The ability of an entrepreneur to maintain and build strong relationship in an organization becomes a challenging duty and improving such duty is essential and it is a primary need. Personal skill brings an entrepreneur success, improves the competency of an entrepreneur, and goodwill to the organization.

Human Resource Management Skill. This skill is about managing people in the organization which also involves implementing and designing the policies of the workplace. Such skill includes performance management, defining jobs duties, payment of salaries, employees' skills assessment, and recruitment of new worker(s).

Personal Skill is targeted at helping worker to interact with stakeholders and achieve maximum results. The stakeholders can either be external (suppliers and customers) or internal (fellow workers). The skill required are, self-motivation, intuition, and hard work.

Teamwork and Leadership Skill - Teamwork and leadership are essential skills for entrepreneurship. Strong teamwork guarantees cooperation and group achievement, while effective leaders inspire and drive their teams. To propel innovation, overcome obstacles, and realize their vision, entrepreneurs require both. Other strategies for becoming a successful entrepreneur include teamwork and taking on leadership roles. Being a business owner will almost probably require you to be both a team player and a supervisor, and you will need to motivate your staff by using your excellent leadership skills.

Technical skill - You can improve your technical skills by having access to so□ware for

financial analysis, marketing, planning, and other business processes. Using software and other digital tools, tech-savvy entrepreneurs may effectively manage projects, track sales and revenue, and evaluate the success of their company's expansion (Chukwuka & Apaokueze, 2025).

Finance management skill – financial skills are essential for successful entrepreneurship. To make wise judgments, efficiently manage funds, and guarantee the longevity of their businesses, entrepreneurs must be knowledgeable about budgeting, financial analysis, cash flow management, and risk assessment (Chukwuka & Boi 2024)

Theoretical Framework

The functionalist paradigm/Schein's Model

The functional studies of organizational culture as argued by Smircich (1983) explain culture as what an organization retain based on agreed beliefs, practices and assumption, therefore, culture is treated as a variable. She explained further that organizational culture scholars who defined culture as functionalist variable have a target of creating a link within culture and other variables like productivity and commitment for the purpose of offering a standard path to the organizations on how culture may be utilized to achieve success in the organization. The approach of functionalist paradigm to the study of culture suggested that a strong culture can be created by the management, that is, creating a wide organization consensus between its members to achieve forecasted results like improved efficiency and productivity. From the functionalist approach, Schein (2011) define organizational culture as common ideologies, norms, myths, philosophies, and beliefs which influence behavior of people and actions taken in an organization. Schein's (2011) theory maintains that organizational culture has three levels which are; artefacts, values or norms, and assumptions or beliefs (Mariama et. al., 2013).

The first level is the basic beliefs/assumptions which are the core of culture, and enhance relationship of individuals within each other and their view of truth and reality. The basic beliefs/assumptions form the foundation for joint actions through cognitive structures that enhance individuals to foresee situations and bring something meaningful from on-going activities and events.

Values/norms as the next level of organizational culture signify an expression of the adopted assumptions/beliefs by recognizing what is peculiar to a particular organization, which dictates and defines their routine practices in communication and action, and social norms of the organization. Corporate values guide the behavior of members and construct the foundation on which the organization is formed (Deal and Kennedy, 2000). Organizations are more aware of these advocated values and they are more visible (Schein, 2011).

The third level of organizational culture is the artefacts. This is the most noticeable expression of culture (Leidner and Kayworth, 2006). They involve things that can be seen and identified with the organization, for example, the myths, art (signs and logos), audible and visible communication patterns, rituals, heroes, technology and language. Also, the company's financial report, layout and design of website are used to denote the organization. The empirical study of Pettigrew (1979) discovered that the British private education headmasters adopted stories and rituals to encourage members' commitment to their schools since they observed that organizational culture is consistent and uniform across their environment from the perspective of Schein's (2011) definition of organizational culture.

In the study by Thomas and Francis (2025) on Effect of Organizational Culture on Employee Performance: A Survey of Selected Public Sector Organizations in Enugu among 100 employees of the Enugu State Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The study makes the recommendation that the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) under review should establish and uphold strong organizational norms that encourage employees commitment with focus on professional growth and development, recognition and reward for good performance, clear communication of organizational goals and values, and a positive work environment that fosters performance.

Empirical Studies on Entrepreneurial Skills, Organizational Culture and Business Performance

Cooney (2012), while analyzing entrepreneurial skills for growth oriented business found that entrepreneurial skills are critically important for business growth. Macheke (2012) also conducted an analysis of training, business skills and entrepreneurial needs in plastic manufacturing industry in South Africa. Skills studied included; financial, legal, communication, strategy among others. After collecting data from 74 respondents, the result revealed a strong relationship between organizational success and training in entrepreneurial skills. The respondents are too small to represent the entire manufacturing firms in the whole of South Africa. Kinyua (2014) investigated the factors influencing the performance of small businesses among 275 micro and small businesses in Limuru town market of Kenya. It was established that availability of management experience and access to finance are the key determinants of business performance. Some other factors that were discovered to influence business performance are; government policy and regulations, access to infrastructure, and access to business information. The finding was restricted to micro and small business while other scales of businesses were not included.

Mohammed and Obeleagu-nzelibe (2014) studied entrepreneurial skills and profitability among 250 MSMEs in Nigeria. Entrepreneurial skills including record keeping, communication, and relationship were discovered as important factors needed for profitability and business success in Nigeria. This study focused on only profitability as a performance indicator; however, other non-financial measures may have provided a better assessment.

Dikid et. al., (2013) researched on the effect of organizational culture on firm performance: empirical research on Indonesia Manufacturing Firms. One hundred and fifty-one (151) organizations were used as respondents. The study was analyzed with structural equation modeling. The outcome confirms that organizational culture has significant impact on firm's performance.

Series of studies have been carried out to determine the relationship between organizational culture and performance. Kuratko (2005) measured entrepreneurs from North America to assess their encouragement categories which lead to business performance. Result from these findings shows that what encourage entrepreneurs can be divided into four stages, which are, extrinsic rewards, independence/autonomy, intrinsic rewards, and family security. These four stages explain the spur level of entrepreneur which have impact on business performance. The study of organizational culture and business performance is important because cultural values are measurable and observable. Therefore, in such studies, it is of paramount importance to use both financial and non-financial (i.e. norms and cultural values) means to measure organizational culture and performance so as to have a detailed result (Muya and Wesonga, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

The study focused on technical microenterprises in Southwest Nigeria. Three states; Lagos, Oyo and Osun states were purposively selected because they have highest number of microenterprises in southwest Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2013). Using population proportion to size to determine the sample selected by the outcome from Cochran formula used to determine the sample size from a known population. Therefore, 106 microenterprises from Lagos, 62 from Oyo state and 45 from Osun state were used as respondents. Data was collected through primary (structured questionnaire and interview) and secondary (SMEDAN, journals, and others) means. The micro enterprises used for the study are those with less than 10 employees and assets of less than ₦1.5 million.

RESULTS

Two-Way ANOVA

The Two-Way ANOVA (Table 1) results showed that entrepreneurial skills significantly influenced business performance (F = 1.297, p = 0.026). This finding suggests that workers possessing stronger entrepreneurial competencies contribute positively to enterprise performance. Organizational culture also had a significant effect on business performance (F = 1.662, p = 0.008), indicating that workplace values, norms, and behavioural practices play a critical role in determining organizational outcomes.

The interaction effect between entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture was not statistically significant at the 5% level (p = 0.091), although it became significant at the 10% level. This suggests that while both variables independently affect performance, their combined influence is relatively weak under stricter significance criteria.

Table 1: Two-Way ANOVA Table Tests of between – subject's effects

Sources	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.
ES	1.637×10^{14}	32	5.116×10^{12}	1.297	0.026*
OC	2.361×10^{14}	36	6.558×10^{12}	1.662	0.008*
ES * OC	4.059×10^{14}	68	5.970×10^{12}	1.513	0.091**
Error	1.381×10^{14}	35	3.945×10^{12}		
Total	2.885×10^{15}	172			

*Significant at 5%

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** Significant at 10%

Dependent variable is BP = Business Performance

Independent Variables: ES = Entrepreneurial Skills and OC = Organizational Culture

Therefore, the study shows that at the 5% level of significance, business performance has a positive but not significant relationship with the interaction between entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture, while at the 10% level of significance, there is a positive and significant relationship within the interaction of organizational culture, entrepreneurial skills, and business performance.

Multiple Regression Analysis for workers

Multiple regression analysis: Tables 2, 3, and 4 present the results of the multiple regression analysis for workers in microenterprises. Table 2 is the model summary of the analysis. The regression analysis revealed that entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture jointly explained 68.4% of the variation in business performance ($R^2 = 0.684$). The overall model was statistically significant, indicating that the predictors collectively provide substantial explanatory power for enterprise performance. It means that about 68.4% of the variation in business performance can be explained by entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture. The regression outcome from the result is very useful since R Squared is closer to 1.

Table 2: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.837	0.684	0.562	7. 7597

Predictors: (Constant), OC, ES. Dependent Variables: BP

Key - OC – Organizational Culture: ES – Entrepreneurial Skills: BP - Business Performance

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Square	F	Sig
Regression	2.925×10^{11}	2	1.462×10^{11}	182.89	0.029
Residual	1.018×10^{14}	169	6.021×10^{11}		
Total	1.021×10^{14}	171			

ANOVA: Table 3 shows the ANOVA outcome with F value = 182.89, p-value = sig value = 0.029 which is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the study then reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis. This can be explained that at least one of the predictors will be useful to assume positive and significant effect on business performance.

Multiple regression coefficients: Table 4 shows the multiple regression coefficients. From this table, the study explained the effect of each predictor (independent variables) on the dependent variable. The values of B in the unstandardized coefficients are the coefficients that will be used to formulate the regression equation for workers.

At t-test = 0.066, p-value = 0.043 for entrepreneurial skills. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the study will accept alternative hypothesis that entrepreneurial skills have positive and significant effect on business performance while for organization culture at t-test = -0.513, p-value = 0.022, p-value is less than 0.05, the study conclude that organizational culture is negatively and significantly affecting business performance.

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Table 4: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.27×10^6	4.36×10^5		2.923	0.004
ES	10608.427	160165.499	0.008	0.066	0.043
OC	-70208.460	136822.341	-0.059	-0.513	0.022

The regression model for workers of microenterprises is:

$Y = f(x) = \beta_o + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + E$

Where;

$Y=$ business performance,

$X_1=$ entrepreneurial skills

$X_2=$ organizational culture

$\beta_0=$ Constant

$\beta_{1,2}=$ Regression coefficients ranging from 1 to 2

$E=$ Error term.

$\bar{Y}= 1.27 \times 10^6 + 10608.427X_1 + (-702208.460)X_2 + E$

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results showed how the independent variable interact within variables that affect the dependent variable of workers. The results showed that organizational culture of workers have positive impact on business performance, also the interaction among the variables jointly determines the level at which an organization can perform to attain some degree of success at 5% level of significance.

The study examined the influence of workers' organizational culture and entrepreneurial skills on the business performance of technical microenterprises in Southwest Nigeria. The findings showed that entrepreneurial skills and organizational culture significantly influence business performance. Entrepreneurial skills contributed positively to organizational outcomes, while organizational culture also played a significant role in determining performance. Furthermore, the explanatory variables jointly accounted for 68.4% of the variation in business performance.

The study concludes that improving workers' entrepreneurial competencies and fostering supportive organizational cultures are essential strategies for enhancing the productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability of technical microenterprises in Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Microenterprise owners should invest in continuous entrepreneurial and managerial training for workers
2. Organizations should develop cultures that encourage innovation, teamwork, accountability, and effective communication.

3. Government agencies and SME support institutions should strengthen capacity-building programmes for technical microenterprises.
4. Future studies should investigate additional organizational factors that may influence enterprise performance.

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