UNIZIK Journal of Marketing (UJofM), Vol. 1(4), Nov. 2024

https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/ujofm

The Role of Interpersonal Relation Skills in Enhancing Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Performance in Ekiti State

Akinruwa, Temitope Emmanuel[1]|Bankole, Oluwole Adeniyi[2†]

Article Information

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Development, Interpersonal Relation Skills, Managerial Skills, Performance

Article History
Received: 15 Aug 2024
Accepted: 23 Sept. 2024
Published: 12 Dec. 2024

Copyright
© 2024. The Authors.

Abstract

The study examined interpersonal relation skills in promoting entrepreneurship and private sector performance in Ekiti State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted the entire small and medium scale enterprise owners in Ekiti State. The sample size was 424 which were selected using Yamane sampling model. Primary data used for the study were gathered through a structured questionnaire. Data gathered were analyzed using multiple regression model. The study found that interpersonal relation skills (collaboration, inspiration and behavioural regulation) positively affect entrepreneurship and private sector performance.

Introduction

The twenty-first century has seen an unprecedented global embrace of entrepreneurial development as a more sustainable means of guaranteeing economic growth. This resulted from mass unemployment, low productivity, high inflation, pervasive poverty in Nigeria, and the governments' and large organisations' declining ability to develop and supply job opportunities for the growing number of job seekers (Agbim, 2013). However, it is necessary to address the factors mentioned above and that the perceived solution to these problems is entrepreneurial development to reduce the unemployment rate, boost the economy and embrace innovation. This can be achieved when individuals with business intentions are well equipped with the necessary skills or competence to flourish in the business regardless of the environment and level of competition. Therefore, one of the best techniques to achieve higher performance is interpersonal relation skills. DeTienne and Chandler (2007) also suggest that the decision to launch a firm is preceded by experience and abilities. Human skills, or the capacity to communicate with and inspire workers, are among the most often used abilities (Olowu & Aliyu, 2015).

affiliation: 1Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, Nigeria.

2Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

email: bamikoleoluwole2@gmail.com

† *corresponding author*

One of an organisation's most valuable assets is its managers and management personnel. They used to be regarded as leaders in charge of creating and informing their subordinates of difficult yet attainable, pertinent, and quantifiable work goals. However, in this day and age of contemporary business, managers' and managerial staff's jobs are growing more and more important. The paradigm shift has forced managers to apply the right managerial techniques and leadership philosophies to create an inspiring and healthy work environment within their company. In the workplace, thoughtful, efficient communication is essential. Interpersonal communication is a crucial ability for today's workforce since individuals rarely work in complete isolation; rather, they regularly engage with peers, customers, and management (Devendra & Theavaranjan, 2016).

The practice of human resource management in its pursuit of creating success through people utilises the multitude of activities associated with all elements of how people are employed and managed in enterprises. This method tries to comprehend how social and psychological factors interact with the workplace to affect output. According to Tersoo, Celestine, and Ishongi (2018), the first important strategy for emphasising information on work connections and work satisfaction is interpersonal relations. In Rahim, Rasulong, and Wahjono (2020), makes the case that a manager's ability to function in a complex organisational structure as a perceptive and intelligent individual is a major factor in determining his performance. Effective supervisors, in his opinion, possess innate skills and are educated to recognise the true intentions of workers and help them reach their full potential. This demonstrates the qualities of a great manager, who must be able to interact socially and have situational management skills.

The effectiveness with which employees engage with their superiors, subordinates, and colleagues within the organisation as well as with customers, suppliers, and the public outside determines how well they perform. Thus, interpersonal relationships are a crucial problem for any organisation (Philip, Ishaq, Lawal & Ayi, 2022). Rather than having business issues, some organisations struggle with people issues. Poor working circumstances, poor communication channels, bad interpersonal relationships, and poor working conditions all contribute to employee difficulties and impede the achievement of organisational objectives. The interactions that occur every day between managers and employees or between coworkers make up the interpersonal relationships at work. These relationships, which are a normal component of the workplace and are typically amicable and productive, can occasionally be the cause of conflict, tension, and annoyance (De Dreu, Van & De Best-Waldhober, 2003).

Similarly, Coric, Katavic, and Kopecki (2011) assert that the survival and development of an entrepreneur in their early years, together with the linkage of critical entrepreneurial abilities for beginning enterprises, determine the success of an entrepreneur. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is still no comparable study in the Nigerian environment, specifically in Ekiti State. Furthermore, the research conducted by Undiayaundeye (2015) revealed that graduates lacked entrepreneurial abilities, which ultimately led to their failure as business owners. Even with the boost, though, business enterprise growth remains limited due to the management team's lacklustre managerial abilities, which hinder capital accumulation, increase employee turnover, and make it difficult for the company to keep up with technological advancements and globalisation. As a result, business enterprise growth is either non-existent or very low.

Arthur (2012) provides evidence of this, stating that just 42% of the business companies that registered in 2014 survived, out of 70%. The primary causes of this were identified as being a lack of knowledge and expertise in carrying out appropriate business operations that

guarantee growth in terms of profit margins, market share, and liquidity. As a result, the research currently in publication does not sufficiently describe how precisely integrating interpersonal relations skills could improve the performance of business businesses in Nigeria especially, among entrepreneurship and private in Ekiti State which previous studies have not given enough attention to. It is within this discrepancy that this study seeks to examine interpersonal relation skills in the enhancement of entrepreneurship and private sector performance in Ekiti State, Nigeria particularly.

Literature Review

Managerial Skill

Interpersonal relation skills are an offshoot of managerial skills which makes the concepts of managerial skill so germane to this study. As a fundamental talent, skill is how humans adapt to their surroundings (Adeyemo, 2009). A person's work functions, and attitude are essential, as are the necessary counterexamples that point to the performance and learning of appropriate abilities through a particular work sample. What employees provide at work in return for numbers is their skill. The capacity to do a task is referred to as a skill (McLarty & Dousios 2006). It might be difficult and confusing to define and specify abilities in the field of entrepreneurship (Chell 2013; Morales & Marquina 2013). According to Morales and Marquina (2013), "managerial skills lists were designed inconsistently while trait psychology reduced skills to inherent traits." These contributions stem from practitioner training programs. If this procedure is continued, it will result in productivity through retention, promotion, and extended tenure (Adeyemo, 2003). It is impossible to overstate the importance of managerial talent in an organisation's ability to survive, as resources like money and equipment cannot sustain themselves or generate profits without human labour. In addition, regardless of the kind of business they oversee or their position in the hierarchy, managers need to possess certain managing abilities that impact both their performance and the accomplishments of their team. Skill is the capacity, aptitude, dexterity, proficiency, or competency to carry out particular tasks or activities. Put differently, the abilities needed to execute the managing procedures necessary to produce effective outcomes for the company are known as managerial skills.

A set of competencies known as managing skills is demanded of small business managers and entrepreneurs. The goal of managerial abilities is to foster a company's healthy growth, not to factor it into business mortality statistics (Egwuatu, 2022). Accordingly, Egwuatu (2022) declared that managerial competencies, regardless of whether they are complementary or essential management skills, constitute a list of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are necessary for good business management. When combined, these competencies give management the conditions it needs to overcome challenges, inspire team members, and develop an organisation's capabilities, all while promoting business success.

Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal competence, or the capacity to lead others, is what a manager needs to inspire employees, resolve issues at work, and collaborate with others. The ability to lead others is known as interpersonal relation skills. It allows a manager to inspire staff, find solutions to problems at work, and work cooperatively with others. According to Fonkam (2021), a manager with interpersonal relation skills should be able to comprehend, guide, influence, and control the behaviour of the people and organisations under his supervision. Managers in interpersonal jobs must be able to inspire staff members and create and sustain positive relationships with a range of stakeholders in the business's internal and external environments (Dierdorff, Rubin, & Frederick Morgeson, 2009). Managers that possess interpersonal relation skills are better able to interact with and communicate with both

individuals and groups. A manager with interpersonal relation skills may support each employee in the organisation in having good communication. Managerial interpersonal relation skills can be defined as competencies that help managers understand, communicate, motivate, and influence others, and resolve conflicts directed at achieving organizational goals (Beenen, Pichler & Davoudpour, 2018). Interpersonal relation skills are one of the variables that determine the ability of leaders to distribute the vision, mission, and goals of the organization to its subordinates.

Hayes (2002) and Hunt and Baruch (2003) showed that interpersonal relation skills can increase the ability of top managers which can be achieved if leaders have high social skills. According to Beenen *et al,* (2018), managerial interpersonal relation skills are abilities that assist managers in comprehending, motivating, and influencing people, as well as resolving conflicts in order to achieve organisational goals. One factor that affects a leader's capacity to communicate the organisation's vision, mission, and goals to their subordinates is their interpersonal relation skills. High social skills among leaders can lead to increased ability for top managers, as demonstrated by Hayes (2002) and Hunt and Baruch (2003). Managers must improve their interpersonal communication skills to guide subordinates towards accomplishing organisational objectives, as these abilities also strengthen organisational commitment (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2008; Mitchell, Patterson, Skinner, Ross & White, 2010). Accordingly, interpersonal interactions are the process of integrating individuals into a work environment in a way that encourages them to work together productively and cooperatively with economic, psychological, and social satisfaction (Hicks & Byers, quoted in Tersoo *et al,* 2018). An organisation's human resources and its interpersonal relation relations department work together to create and preserve a mutual channel of communication, understanding, acceptance, and cooperation.

Entrepreneurial Performance

According to entrepreneurship-related literature, an organisation's success is determined by its ability to grow its workforce, improve sales, and boost profitability. A conceptual framework for SMEs' entrepreneurial competencies and business performance metrics was created by Sajilan and Tehseen (2016). Business performance metrics for SMEs include value contributed, industry average, sales growth, staff growth, asset growth for the company, and growth in profit. High productivity, leadership, high profits, high output, low costs, community development, and business growth are a few factors that can be used to assess performance (Muthalib, Harafa, Yani, & Rostin, 2014). One important component of a company's success is its owner. Entrepreneurial-minded business owners expand their companies to maturity because of their administrative competencies, according to the relationship between the business's performance and its owner (Sarwoko, Surachman, & Hadiwidjojo, 2013). Productivity is measured by how successfully a company meets the demands and wishes of its customers through its business operations as well as the productivity of its workforce. According to Muthalib et al. (2014), capital and human resource investments boost physical labourers' productivity. Applying people-based strategies or tactics, such as staff motivation, organisational communication, employee training and development, and involvement in decision-making, can help SMEs reach high levels of productivity (Madatta, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory

In 1992, Bruederl, Preisendoerfes, and Ziegler proposed this idea. The expertise and experiences of small business entrepreneurs are the focus of the theory. Most people assume that a small or medium-sized company's founder's human capital gives it a chance to thrive. Human capital is a resource that helps entrepreneurs organise operations more effectively

and draw in clients and investors. This theory has significant implications since, in addition to focussing on capacities and knowledge, it also suggests procedures. It could also be interesting to assess human capital in SMEs if it serves as a resource. In studies of enterprises, the performance of small and medium-sized businesses is often defined as the business's ability to produce acceptable results and actions when applied to the study. This success in the market can have a variety of outcomes, and it is also referred to as the social phenomenon. The performance of SMEs must improve for any country to grow and for businesses to prosper. It needs to be created by deliberate learning because, in most situations, ineffective management strategies are the reason behind entrepreneurial failure. As a result, it is said that receiving training in management functions can significantly lower the likelihood of business failure and increase the success of an operation. According to this theory, the success of small and medium-sized businesses is determined by several factors, and those factors can be improved when an individual gains specialised experiences through education. Human capital theory, which is concerned with the knowledge and experiences of small business owners, will serve as the theoretical foundation for this study, according to the literature that has been presented. Most people assume that a small or medium-sized company's founder's human capital gives it a chance to thrive. Human capital is a resource that helps entrepreneurs organise operations more effectively.

Empirical Evidence Between Interpersonal Relation Skills and Performance

In insurance firms, Devendra and Theavaranjan (2016) evaluated managers' interpersonal abilities as a factor impacting organisational commitment. The study investigates a favourably significant linear association between organisational dedication and interpersonal abilities. The research by Tersoo, Celestine, and Ishongi (2018) supports this, finding a strong correlation between workers' performance in the Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund, Abuja, and interpersonal relations as well as an important relationship between the two. The impact of interpersonal skills on the performance of the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat Staff was also ascertained by Syahrudin (2018). Employee performance is positively impacted by interpersonal skills, according to the study. The study conducted by Rahim, Rasulong, and Wahjono (2020) in Indonesia aimed to determine the effects of interpersonal skills, commitment, and organisational commitment on management performance. It was found that interpersonal skills significantly impact commitment and performance.

Research Methods

This study was conducted in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This study employed survey descriptive research which focused on assessing interpersonal relation skills in the promotion of entrepreneurship and private sector performance in Ekiti State. Multiple regression was used to analyze the data in order to answer the research questions. The study selected the three basic interpersonal relation skills on small and performance. Primary source of data through a structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the target respondents; questionnaires were administered to owners and managers of private sector businesses in Ekiti State Nigeria.

The population for the study consisted of small and medium scale business owners or managers in Ekiti State Nigeria. There are sixteen Local Government Areas in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Therefore, the total population of small and medium scale enterprises in Ekiti State is one thousand, seven hundred and forty-nine (1749) according to the Board of Internal Revenue Record in Ekiti State. Three hundred and twenty-five (325) respondents were sampled using Yamani (1967) model. Yamane model was employed due to the huge population.

According to Yamane (in Israel, 2013) this was considered to be the lowest level of acceptable responses to maintain a confidence level of 95% and a 5% error level. Meanwhile, to cater for response bias and missing values due to improper filling by the respondents, 30% of the minimum sample provided in the formula was added as suggested by Israel (2013). As such, 98 respondents were added to the calculated sample size of 325 to arrive at 424 questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in this study. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the demographic information of the respondents through frequency tables. To achieve the specific objective of this study, inferential statistics through the use of multiple regression analysis was employed. Therefore, multiple regression line is stated as:

Perf = f (Irs)

Perf = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 Cbt + \beta_2 Ipt + \beta_3 Brt + \mu$..... ..... (3.1)

Where:
Irs = Interpersonal Relation Skills
Perf = Performance
β_0 = Constant
Cbt = Collaboration
Ipt = Inspiration
Brt = Behaviour Regulation
f = Functional Notation
μ = Stochastic or Error Term

Results

Presentation of Respondents' Demographic Data

This segment presents analysis of data, interpretation, and discussion of the findings with regards to the objectives of the study. 424 respondents were sampled, 398 questionnaires were filled and returned which represented 94% of the total questionnaire administered. The response of the respondents is analysed in table 1. Table 1 indicated that the male distribution was 219 (55%), while the female was 179 (45%). This implied that male is more than the female counterpart which shows that male get involve in small and medium business enterprise establishment than female counterpart. Considering the marital status distribution, 144 (36.2%) of the total respondents were single, 232 (58.3%) were married, while only 22 (5.5%) of the total respondents were divorced. The summary of response gathered here shows that larger populations of respondents are married which implied that they are relatively mature, knowledgeable and responsible to effectively handle business enterprise. From the table, it was also revealed that 52 (13.1%) of the total respondents are attended secondary school, 66 (16.6%) of the total respondents attended college of education, 102 (25.6%) of the total respondents attended polytechnic while 178 (44.7%) of the survey respondents attended university which implied that the majority of the respondents under survey attended university. Consequently, the result implies that majority of the business owners have the adequate requirement that is needed for effective business managerial skills in the face of competition. Finally, It was also shown that 79 (19.9%) of the respondents were below the range of 3years of experience, 141 (35.4%) were within the range of 3-6years of experience, 96 (24.1%) respondents were between 7-10years of experience while 82 (20.6%) were 11 years of experience and above. This indicated that majority of the respondents were within the range of 6-10 years of experience which implied that small and medium scale business owners within this range must have been well exposed to different activities and must have gathered enough experience needed.

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Distribution

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	219	55.0
Female	179	44.0
Total	**398**	**100.0**
Marital Status		
Single	144	36.2
Married	232	58.3
Divorced	22	5.5
Total	**398**	**100.0**
Academic Background		
Secondary	52	13.1
College of Education	66	16.6
Polytechnic	102	25.6
University	178	44.7
Total	**398**	**100.0**
Year of Experience		
Below 3	79	19.9
3-6	141	35.4
7-10	96	24.1
11 Above	82	20.6
Total	**398**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Interpretation of Results

The regression table is an important table to explain the relationship of interpersonal relation skills and entrepreneurship and private sector performance. From table 2, the R (Regression Coefficient) gives a positive value of 0.755; this indicates that there is a strong and positive correlation between interpersonal relation skills and entrepreneurship and private sector performance. The R^2 is a portion of the total variation in the dependent variable that is explained by the variation in the independent variables. From the results obtained, R^2 is equal to 0.570, this implies that there is also strong and positive linear relationship between interpersonal relation skills and the entrepreneurship and private sector performance, that is, it can only account for 57% entrepreneurship and private sector performance on interpersonal relation skills, this is further proven by the adjusted R^2 that shows the goodness of fit of the model which gives a value of 0.566, implying that when all errors are corrected and adjustments are made the model can only account for 56.6% of interpersonal relation skills of surveyed private sector. The value of Durbin Watson statistics is 2.285 showed the absence of autocorrelation in the model due to large sample, the result showed that null hypothesis is rejected and accepts otherwise i.e. interpersonal relation skills has significant effect on entrepreneurship and private sector performance in Ekiti State, Nigeria. However, three variables were used to measure interpersonal relation skills which are: collaboration, inspiration and behaviour regulation on entrepreneurship and private sector performance were subjected to multiple regression analysis as shown in table 2.

From the table 2, the unstandardized β co-efficient of collaboration gives a positive value of 0.555 with t= 9.061 and (P= 0.000< 0.05). This result showed that collaboration has a positive effect on entrepreneurship and private sector performance. It was found significant: therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. This means that respondents' reason for entrepreneurship and private sector performance is strongly

influenced by collaboration. The unstandardized β co-efficient of inspiration gives a positive value of 0.533with t= 8.624and (P= 0.000< 0.05). This result showed that inspiration has a positive effect on entrepreneurship and private sector performance. It was found significant: therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis and reject null hypothesis. This means that respondents' reason for entrepreneurship and private sector performance is strongly influenced by inspiration. The unstandardized β co-efficient of behaviour regulation gives a positive value of 0.599 with t= 9.691and (P= 0.000< 0.05). This result showed that behaviour regulation has a positive effect on entrepreneurship and private sector performance. It was found significant: therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept alternate hypothesis. This means that respondents' reason for entrepreneurship and private sector performance is influenced by behaviour regulation.

The multiple regression equation of the model is:

Performance = 1.477 + 0.555Cbt + 0.533Ipt + 0.599Brt

Table 2: Regression Results of Interpersonal Relation Skills on Performance

Model	R	R^2	Adj R^2	DW	B	Std Error	T value	P Value
	0.755	0.570	0.566	2.285				
Collaboration					.555	.061	9.061	.000
Inspiration					.533	.050	8.624	.000
Behaviour Regulation					.599	.058	9.691	.000
Constant					1.477	.228	6.480	.000

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Discussion

Interpersonal skills considered three variables which are collaboration, inspiration and behaviour regulation. The variables were used to measure interpersonal relation skills on entrepreneurship and private sector performance. The entire variables were found positive and significant on entrepreneurship and private sector performance. This might be as a result that interpersonal relation skills provide better understanding in relating with individuals or groups through inspiration or motivation, communication, ensuring better conflict resolution and influential ability which showed the level of managerial competence of private business owners in Ekiti State. However, behaviour regulation was found to have the highest significance on entrepreneurship and private sector performance which tends to be because of manager's ability to change, lead, regulate and influence individual behaviour or orientation towards better performance. It was followed by collaboration and lastly inspiration.

Considering the test of hypothesis, it was revealed that interpersonal skill was significant on entrepreneurship and private sector performance at 0.05 level. Therefore, alternate hypothesis was accepted, and the study rejected otherwise. This implied that interpersonal skill significantly affects entrepreneurship and private sector performance in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The findings correlate the study of Devendra and Theavaranjan (2016) assessed the interpersonal skills of managers that influencing on organizational commitment in relation to Ceylinco Insurance, Janashakthy Insurance, Union Assurance, HNB Assurance, Sri Lanka Insurance Corporation and AIA Insurance using Pearson's Correlation. The study explored a positively significant linear relationship between interpersonal skills and organizational commitment. Furthermore, Syahrudin (2018) determined the effect of Interpersonal Skills

on the Performance of the Kapuas Hulu Regency Regional Secretariat Staff. Based on the results of testing the hypothesis it can be concluded that Interpersonal Skills have a positive direct effect on employee performance.

Conclusion

The study investigated the effects of interpersonal relation skills in the promotion of entrepreneurship and private sector in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study, collaboration, inspiration and behavioural regulation were used to proxy interpersonal relation skills. It was found that interpersonal relation skills have a very strong significant effect on entrepreneurship at 0.05 level of significance. From the findings, alternate hypothesis was accepted while the null hypothesis was rejected thus concluding that interpersonal relation skills is positively related to entrepreneurship and the private sector in Ekiti State, Nigeria. In view of the findings, this will help private business owners to develop innovative ways of expanding their businesses and overcome entrepreneurial challenges in Ekiti State.

Recommendations

Emanating from the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that private sector business policy makers or managers and other senior staff in the organization should create a conducive atmosphere to facilitate good human relations and subsequently teamwork for greater or higher entrepreneurial performance through effective strategies such as training programs in interpersonal communication or mentoring schemes, that could help managers develop these skills.

Suggestion for Further Studies

The present study was carried out on entrepreneurship and private sector in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Further study can be done on the impact of interpersonal relation skills on performance in other Nigerian sectors or other regions in Nigeria for generalization.

References

Adeyemo, S. A. (2003). *Studies of the effects of aptitude, instructional leadership styles, and learning environment on students' achievement in physics* (Doctoral thesis, University of Lagos, Nigeria).

Agbim, K. C. (2013). The relative contribution of management skills to entrepreneurial success: A survey of small and medium enterprises in the trade sector. *International Organization of Scientific Research Journal of Business and Management, 7*(1), 08–16.

Arthur, P. (2012). Rethinking development in Africa through small and medium-scale enterprises. In K. T. Hanson, G. Kararach, & T. M. Shaw (Eds.), *Rethinking development challenges for public policy: Insights from contemporary Africa* (pp. 234–259).

Bambacas, M., & Patrickson, M. (2008). Interpersonal communication skills that enhance organizational commitment. *Journal of Communication Management, 12*(1), 51–72.

Beenen, G., Pichler, S., & Davoudpour, S. (2018). Interpersonal skills in MBA admissions: How are they conceptualized and assessed? *Journal of Management Education, 42*(1), 34–54.

Chell, E. (2013). Review of skill and the entrepreneurial process. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research, 19*(1), 6–31.

Coric, G., Katavic, I., & Kopecki, D. (2011). Sustainable growth of small and medium-scale enterprises in Croatia through development of entrepreneurial skills. In *Conference Proceedings* (pp. 207–242).

De Dreu, C. W. K., Van D. D., & De Best-Waldhober, M. (2003). Conflict at work and individual well-being. In *The handbook of work and health psychology* (pp. 495–515). John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

DeTienne, D., & Chandler, G. (2007). The role of human capital and gender in opportunity identification. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 31*, 424–440.

Devendra, S., & Theavaranjan, D. (2016). Interpersonal skills and organizational commitment. *Journal for Studies in Management and Planning, 2*(1), 117–126.

Egwuatu, C. M. (2022). *Effect of managerial skills on the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Jabi District, Abuja* (Unpublished project). Department of Entrepreneurial Studies, Veritas University, Abuja, Nigeria.

Fonkam, M. N. (2021). Management skills and performance of state-owned enterprises in Cameroon. *Journal of Business and Economic Development, 6*(2), 115–124.

Hayes, J. (2002). *Interpersonal skills at work*. Routledge.

Hunt, J. W., & Baruch, Y. (2003). Developing top managers: The impact of interpersonal skills training. *Journal of Management Development, 22*(7–8), 729–752.

Madatta, J. S. (2011). *The role of entrepreneurial competencies on the success of SMEs in Tanzania: The case study of Ilala and Temeke Municipals* (Doctoral thesis). Open University of Tanzania.

McLarty, R. (2005). Entrepreneurship among graduates: Towards a measured response. *The Journal of Management Development, 24*(3), 223–238.

Mitchell, G. W., Patterson, G. D., Skinner, C., Ross, M. E., & White, B. J. (2010). Essential soft skills for success in the 21st-century workforce as perceived by Alabama business/marketing educators. *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling, 52*(1), 1–23.

Morales, C., & Marquina, P. S. (2013). Entrepreneurial skills: Significant differences between Serbian and German entrepreneurs. *JCC: The Business and Economics Research Journal, 6*(1), 129–141.

Muthalib, A. A., Harafa, L. M., Yani, B. M., & Rostin. (2014). Entrepreneurship and its impact on business performance improvement and poverty reduction: An empirical study in the micro business industrial sector in Kendari. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, 3*(10), 55–65.

Olowu, M. D. Y., & Aliyu, I. (2015). Impact of managerial skills on small-scale business performance and growth in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management, 7*(5), 109–115.

Phillip, O. A., Ishaq, M. F., Lawal, Y., & Ayi, O. J. (2022). Impact of interpersonal relationship skills on organizational performance. *International Journal of Human Capital Management, 1*(1), 1–16.

Rahim, A., Rasulong, I., & Wahjono, S. I. (2020). Interpersonal skills and the impact of managerial performance through organizational commitments. *Global Academic Journal of Economic and Business, 2*(4), 59–67.

Sajilan, S., & Tehseen, S. (2016). A conceptual framework of the impact of entrepreneurial competencies on small and medium enterprises' business performance in the Malaysian hospitality and tourism industry. *Review of Integrative Business & Economics Research, 5*(2), 47–61.

Sarwoko, E., & Frisdiantara, C. (2016). Growth determinants of small-medium enterprises. *Universal Journal of Management, 4*(1), 36–41.

Syahrudin, H. (2018). The effect of interpersonal skills on the performance of regional secretariat employees in Kapuas Hulu Regency. *Jurnal Terapan Manajemen dan Bisnis, 4*(2), 192–201.

Tersoo, A., Celestine, A., & Ishongi, U. B. (2018). The effect of interpersonal relations practices on productivity in Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund, Abuja. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Interdisciplinary, 8*(8), 14–20.

Undiyaundeye, F. A., & Out, E. A. (2015). Entrepreneurship skills acquisition and the benefits amongst undergraduate students in Nigeria. *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research, 2*(3), 9–15.