

# Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and National Development

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## Abstract

This study is on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and National Development. The objectives of the study are to: determine factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development, ascertain the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises to national development, determine the nature of the relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development. Data for this research were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The study had a population size of 350, out of which a sample size of 186 was realized using Taro Yamane's statistical formula. The total number of 186 copy of the questionnaire was distributed while 177 copies were returned. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. Pearson Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test were used to test the hypotheses. To ensure that the research instruments are valid, a conduct of a pre-test of every question in the questionnaire was carried out. For reliability of the research instruments, a test-re-test method was adopted using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of reliability to calculate the result and the result gave reliability coefficient of 0.77. Findings indicate that: lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development; job creation and employment are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development; there is positive relationship between small and medium scale enterprise and national development. The study concluded that small and medium scale enterprises is an engine room that promote national development and the bedrock of economic development. The study recommends that Government should assist prospective entrepreneurs to have access to finance and necessary information relating to business opportunities, modern technology, raw materials, market, plant and machinery which would enable them to reduce their operating cost and be more efficient to meet the market competitions.

**Keywords:** Small and medium enterprises, National development, Nigeria.

## Introduction

Small and medium scale enterprises constitute essential ingredients in the lubrication and development of any economy. Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) have been recognized as main sustenance of the national development because of their capacity in enhancing the economy output and enhancing human welfare (Akingunola 2011). Muritala Awolaja and Bako (2012), posit that there is the greater likelihood that SMEs will utilise labour-intensive technologies thereby reducing unemployment particularly in developing countries and thus have an immediate impact on employment generation. The role of small and medium scale enterprises in the economic and social development of the country is well established. The sector is a nursery of entrepreneurship, often driven by individual creativity and innovation (Ariyo, 2008; Ayozie and Latinwo, 2010).

The small and medium scale industry is seen as a key to Nigeria's growth and alleviation of poverty and unemployment in the country. Therefore, promotion of such enterprises in developing economies like Nigeria is of paramount importance since it brings about a great distribution of income and wealth, economic self-dependence, entrepreneurial development employment and a host of other positive, economic uplifting factors (Aremu 2004). Small and medium scale enterprises speed up the rate of social economic development of many countries, particularly developing countries. They serve as system for attainment of national objective in terms of employment generation at low investment cost and also the development of entrepreneurial capabilities and indigenous technology.

SMEs not only contribute significantly to improving living standards, they also bring about local capital formation and achieve high levels of production. For these reasons the presence and development of SMEs are desirable for national development. In Nigeria however, the sector remains relatively small in terms of its contribution to GDP or to gainful employment. Although SMEs are seen as veritable and viable engines of

economic development, the growth and development of SMEs in Nigeria have been slow and in some cases even stunted, due to a number of problems and challenges confronting this all-important sub-sector of the economy.

On the other hand, Oluboba (2011), blames the poor performance of the Nigerian small scale enterprises on poor management practices, poor access to funds, low equity participation from stakeholders, poor infrastructural facilities, shortage of skilled manpower, multiplicity of regulating agencies and the over-bearing operating environment, societal and attitudinal problems, little access to markets and lack of access to information.

With regards to linkages, the SMEs sector cuts across all other sectors of the economy and in its growth and developmental process, has the potential to transform these sectors and set them onto the path of sustained growth. There is no doubt that SMEs need to strengthen their linkages to large-scale enterprises as they are key players in the supply of raw materials and distribution of manufactured goods. Small firms are backbone of national development. For a country to reach its full potential in terms of economic and social development, it cannot afford to ignore the importance of its indigenous micro and small scale enterprises (MSEs) and the contributions that they make to the country's economy.

In terms of SMEs contributions to national output in Nigeria, it has been reported that the SMEs, by revenue, contribute about 75 per cent all entrepreneurial activities that make up Nigeria's gross domestic output, 21 per cent within the -enterprises while 4% belong to the large complex organizations. It is also scored high in entrepreneurial dominance because of its potential in pooling skilled and semi-skilled workers. One of the significant characteristics of a flourishing and growing economy is a vibrant and blooming SMEs sector. SMEs play a pivotal role in the development of a nation. They contribute to socioeconomic development in various ways; namely, by creating employment for a rural and urban growing labour force and providing desirable sustainability and innovation in the economy as a whole (Ayozie and Latunwo, 2010).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Small and medium enterprises form an important part of the economy and they play an important role in the growth of both the developed and developing economies. The contribution of SMEs towards national income and creation of employment is enormous. Despite these advantages which SMEs offer and the potential which SMEs have, there are many barriers and risks which SMEs face in today's market which has caused them not to completely contribute to national development, such problems include: lack of fund, political instability, inadequate of managerial expertise, poor record keeping, deteriorated infrastructural facilities etc. Thus the study seeks to investigate small and medium enterprises and national development.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study has the following specific objectives:

1. To determine factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development.
2. To ascertain the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development.
3. To determine the nature of the relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development.

### **Research Questions**

For this study to accomplish desired objectives, some basic research questions which reflect on the objectives of the study are fielded.

1. What are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development?
2. What are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises to national development?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development?

### **Research Hypotheses**

These hypotheses were proposed for the study.

1. Ho: Lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are not the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development.  
Hi: Lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development.
2. Ho: Job creation and employment are not the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development.  
Hi: Job creation and employment are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development.

- 3 Ho: There is no positive relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development.  
Hi: There is positive relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development.

### **Review of the Related Literature**

#### ***Concept of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises***

There is no single, uniformly accepted definition of a small firm (Storey, 1994). Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) as defined by the National Council of Industries (2009), refer to business enterprises whose total costs excluding land is not more than two hundred million naira (N200,000,000.00) only. The individual research unit of Obafemi Awolowo (1987), defines it as "one whose total assets or capital is less than N50, 000 and employee fewer than 50 full time workers."

The Nigerian concepts of SMEs are somewhat divergent but the Central Bank of Nigeria agrees with the Small and Medium Industries and Equity Investment Scheme (SMIEIS) in their definition of a SMEs as any enterprise with a maximum asset base less than N200 million (equivalent of about \$1.43 million) excluding land and working capital, and with the number of staff employed not less than 10 (otherwise will be a cottage or micro-enterprise) and not more than 300 (Sanusi 2003; Udechukwu 2003; Akabueze 2002; SMIEIS 2002; and Sanusi 2004). Moreover, this definition for SMEs was based on the revised definition by the National Council on Industry in 2001. SMEs contribution towards sustainable development is small, taken together SMEs have a very large impact on the development quality of a specific geographic area. The more presence of SMEs in the economy of a particular area, the more important is the SMEs role for achieving sustainability (Welford and Gouldson, 1993). SMEs not only contribute significantly to improving living standards, they also bring about local capital formation and achieve high levels of production. For these reasons the presence and development of SMEs are desirable at the national development. The brain behind every successful small and medium scale enterprises is entrepreneurship which in the words of Olagunju (2004), is an undertaking in which one is involved in the task of creating and managing an enterprise for a purpose. The purpose as further stated may be personal, social or developmental. United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) estimates that SMEs represent over 90% of private business and contribute to more than 50% of employment and of gross domestic product (GDP) in most African countries (UNIDO, 1999). Ekanem (2006), summarizes the importance of SMEs to include ensuring rapid development, increased utilization of local resources and provision of a training ground for indigenous managers and semi-skilled workers, reduction of the rural-urban drift, development of indigenous technology and raising the living standard of rural dwellers and so on. In fact, SMEs accounts for the economic development in most developed economies of the World today. It has helped in the balance of payment position of countries; it reduces over dependence on inputs relative to their capital investment.

#### ***Types of Micro and Small Scale Enterprises***

Fasua (2006), categorizes business that full under small and medium scale as follow: In small scale enterprises, firewood supply, packaging of food items, meat retailing, plantain production, restaurant service, small scale poultry raising, rabbit raising, organizing labour squad, operating a nursery for children, home service, arranging food for parties and host of others.

Business grouped under medium scale according to Fasua are: soap production, acqua culture/fish farming, chalk making, foam production, nylon production, concrete block production, hair/body cream production, chemical production, commercial poultry, professional practice claw, accountancy, education, food and beverage production among others.

#### ***Development***

Gboyega (2003), captures development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material well being of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumption does not imperil the future. It also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihoods and expansion of life chances.

We view development as a process of societal advancement, where improvement in the well being of people are generated through strong partnerships between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society. It is reasonable to know that development is not only an economic exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of societal life.

#### ***National Development***

This refers to the overall development in a nation measured within a given period. The term development according to Awotokun (1989: 411), can be seen as social, cultural, economic and political change which must in fact be accompanied with the ability of the people to control their destiny, relate to the outsider on equal basis

with the capacity of the people to conquer and control their environment without resorting to external aid. The government, economist, business and other components of market economy, utilize the real GDP to hail the economic performance of a country. The assumption is anchored on the precept that a high real GDP is a gross measure of a nation's economic activity in terms of total monetary transactions.

National development therefore can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

### **Importance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises to National Development in Nigeria**

Small and medium firms are backbone of national development. For a country to reach its full potential in terms of economic and social development, it cannot afford to ignore the importance of its indigenous micro and small scale enterprises (MSEs) and the contributions that they make to the country's economy.

**Job Creation:** It is often argued that SMEs are important for employment growth. This conviction has not been supported by empirical evidence. While job creation rates are substantially higher for small firms, so are gross destruction rates. SMEs exhibit high birth rates and high death rates and many small firms fail to grow (Davis, Haltiwagner, Schuh, 1993).

### **Capacity Building**

They provide a training avenue for the creation of local entrepreneurs in several areas of economic activities. They are regarded as the 'university' where a large class of Nigerian entrepreneurs usually receives training. It is therefore more important to lay a good foundation of an industrial class by promoting small entrepreneurs than it is to build a few large factories.

### **Technological Acquisition**

They provide opportunities for the development of local skills and technological acquisition. The "Aba made" syndrome is a clear manifestation of such technological acquisition and if encouraged will give rise to rapid economic development.

### **Facilitate Economic Growth and Bring about Equitable Development**

MSEs by making use of predominantly local resources engage in the production of goods and services of mass consumption and stimulate the growth of the economy. The expansion of MSEs also contributes towards a more equitable regional development and distribution of income and wealth.

Again small and medium scale businesses can help to sustain the economy during an economic recession. State owned industries and other large business concerns are retrenching some of their workers while others are closing down and in some enterprises, workers are sent on forced leaves or production capacity reduced, all to reduce operation costs and stay in business. Small scale enterprises have local raw materials, are not capital intensive and therefore do not rely on foreigners to run their machines. They promote the transformation of the rural areas through the utilization of locally available raw materials and surplus labour force.

### **Problems of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises**

The problems militating against the effective development of small and medium scale businesses in Nigeria, and have adverse effects on their role to national development can be categorised:

**Poor Management Expertise:** Money is not the only crucial requirement for small business survival and growth but its efficient and effective management. Many entrepreneurs lack the managerial skills and talents necessary for planning, organising, directing, controlling and hiring human and material resources.

**Poor Capital Outlay:** Inadequate capital outlay has often affected small scale businesses adversely. Financers often regard the sector as high risk area and therefore feel skeptical about committing their fund to it.

**Poor Infrastructural Problems:** Small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria are confronted with the problem of inadequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity, water supply, transportation, feeder roads, hospitals, schools etc. Where these facilities are available, they are concentrated in the few urban centres, thus denying the rural areas where about 80% of Nigerians live these essential facilities. This inadequacy in infrastructure has retarded the rate of industrialisation and economic development.

**Social Problems:** As an aftermath of our low technological base, our small businesses do not produce goods of high quality and at cheaper prices as those imported from the more technologically advanced countries. This has resulted in unsatisfactory attitudes of most Nigerians toward Nigeria made goods (which they usually refer to as Igbo made or Aba made), hence their preference to foreign or imported goods.

### Method and Material

The study was carried out using descriptive survey design. Primary data was obtained through the use of interviews, questionnaire and observations, while secondary data were obtained through books, journals, and the internet. The population of the study was 350 drawn from employers of some manufacturing firms in Nigeria. A sample size of 186 was determined from the population using Taro Yamane's sample size determination method. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire structured in 4 point Likert Scale and validated with content validity of face to face approach. The reliability test was done using test-retest method. The result gave a reliability coefficient of 0.77, indicating a high degree of consistency. One hundred and eighty six copies of the questionnaire were distributed and one hundred and seventy seven copies were returned. The three hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Pearson chi square was used to test hypothesis one and two and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used in testing hypothesis three. A computer aided Microsoft special package for social science (SPSS) was used to aid analysis.

### Data Analysis and Discussion

The data obtained from the field were presented and analyzed with descriptive statistics to provide answers for the research questions while the corresponding hypotheses were tested with Pearson Chi Square and Pearson's Correlation 0.05 alpha level.

#### 1. What are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development?

**Table 1: Coded Responses on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and National Development.**

S/No	Questionnaire items	S. Agree /Agree Freq.	Disagree/ S. Disagree Freq.	Total
	<b>To determine factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development</b>			
1	Poor infrastructural facilities have contributed to slow growth of SMEs which affect our national development	169 (171)	8 (6)	<b>177</b>
2	Poor capital outlay often hinder smooth operations of SMEs which brings slow growth	174 (171)	3 (6)	<b>177</b>
3	Poor management expertise has caused nightmares to most of SMEs	170 (171)	7 (6)	<b>177</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>513 (97%)</b>	<b>18 (3%)</b>	<b>531 (100)</b>

Source: fieldwork 2013

Table 1 shows that 531(97%) of the respondents indicated s. agree / agree, while 18(3%) indicated disagree/ s. disagree. Based on responses from percentage analysis, it is concluded that lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development

#### 1 Ho: Lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are not the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development

**Table 2: Chi-Square Tests Computed from the Frequency Cross Tabulation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1022.635(a)	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	158.203	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	51.110	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	531		

Source: SPSS Version 15.00.

Table 2 is the output of the computed Chi-Square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies with the response options of agree to disagree based on the responses of the research subjects from the selected manufacturing firms . Pearson. Chi-Square computed value ( $X^2_c = 1022.635$ ) is greater than the Chi -Square tabulated value ( $X^2_t = 21.03$ ) with 12 degrees of freedom (df) at 0.05 level of alpha ( $X^2_c = 1022.635, p < .05$ )

### Decision Rule

The decision rule is to accept the alternate hypothesis if the computed Chi- Square value is greater than tabulated Chi-Square value, otherwise reject the null hypothesis.



**Decision**

Since the Pearson Chi- Square computed  $X^2_c = 1022.635$  is greater than Chi- Square tabulated value  $X^2_t = 21.03$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, we conclude that lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprises in contributing to national development.

**2. What are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises to national development?**

**Table 3: Coded Responses on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises and National Development.**

S/No	Questionnaire items	S.Agree /Agree Freq.	Disagree /S.Disagree Freq.	Total
<b>To ascertain the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development</b>				
1	National development can be achieved through SMEs job creation and employment.	172 (172)	5 (5)	177
2	SMEs facilitate economic growth and bring about equitable development	175 (172)	2 (5)	177
3	SMEs provide opportunities for the development of local skill and technological acquisition	170 (172)	7 (5)	177
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>517 (97%)</b>	<b>14 (3%)</b>	<b>531 (100)</b>

**Source: fieldwork 2013**

Table 3 shows that 517(97%) of the respondents indicated s. agree / agree, while 14(3%) indicated disagree/s. disagree. Based on responses from percentage analysis, it was concluded that job creation and employment are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development

**2. Ho: Job creation and employment are not the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development**

**Table 4 Chi-Square Tests Computed from the Frequency Cross Tabulation**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1224.402(a)	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	821.585	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	437.451	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	531		

**Source: SPSS Version 15.00.**

Table 4 is the output of the computed Chi-Square values from the cross tabulation statistics of observed and expected frequencies with the response options of s.agree to s.disagree based on the responses of the research subjects from the selected manufacturing firms. Pearson. Chi-Square computed value ( $X^2_c = 1224.402$ ) is greater than the Chi –Square tabulated value ( $X^2_t = 21.03$ ) with 12 degrees of freedom (df) at 0.05 level of alpha ( $X^2_c = 1224.402, p < .05$ )

**Decision Rule**

The decision rule is to accept the alternate hypothesis if the computed Chi- Square value is greater than tabulated Chi-Square value, otherwise reject the null hypothesis.

**Decision**

Since the Pearson Chi- Square computed  $X^2_c = 1224.402$  is greater than Chi- Square tabulated value  $X^2_t = 21.03$ , the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, we conclude that job creation and employment are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development.

**3 What is the nature of the relationship between small and medium scale enterprise and national development?**

**Table 5: Coded Responses on Relationship between SMEs and National Development.**

S/no	Questionnaire items	S. Agree /Agree	Disagree /S. Disagree	Total
	<b>To determine the nature of the relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	
1	SMEs promote skill acquisition and raising of living standard which is an element of national development	175 (174)	2 (3)	177
2	SMEs are seen as veritable and viable engines of economic development and national development.	173 (174)	4 (3)	177
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348 (98%)</b>	<b>6 (2%)</b>	<b>354 (100)</b>

**Source: fieldwork 2013**

Table 3 shows that 348(98%) of the respondents indicated s.agree/agree, while 6(2%) indicated disagree/s.disagree. Based on responses from percentage analysis, it was concluded that there is positive relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development.

**3. Ho: There is no Significant Relationship between SMEs and National Development.**

**Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for SMEs and National Development.**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SMEs	1.3785	.77474	177
National development	1.3785	.83134	177

**Table 7 : Correlations for SMEs and National Development.**

		SMEs	National Development
SMEs	Pearson Correlation	1	.870(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	177	177
National Development	Pearson Correlation	.870(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	177	177

**Source: SPSS Version 15.00.**

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics of the relationship between SMEs and national development, with a mean response of 1.3785 and std. deviation of .77474 for SMEs and a mean response of 1.3745 and std. deviation of .83134 for national development. By careful observation of standard deviation values, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst the dependent and independent variables.

Table 7 is the Pearson correlation coefficient matrix of the relationship between SMEs and national development, showing the correlation coefficient, significant values and the number of cases. The correlation coefficient shows 0.870; this value indicates that correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2tailed) and implies that there is a relationship between SMEs and national development ( $r = .870$ ). However, the computed correlations coefficient is greater than the table value of  $r = .195$  with 175 degrees of freedom ( $df = n-2$ ) at alpha level for a two-tailed test ( $r = .870, p < .05$ ). This result indicates that there is positive relationship between SMEs and national development. Therefore, the null hypothesis should be rejected.

**Summary of the Findings**

Lack of management expert and inadequate infrastructural facilities are the factors militating against small and medium scale enterprise in contributing to national development( $X^2_c = 1022.635 > X^2_t = 21.03; df = 12; P < 0.05$ )  
 Job creation and employment are the contributions of small and medium scale enterprises in national development( $X^2_c = 1224.402 > X^2_t = 21.03; df = 12; P < 0.05$ )

There is positive relationship between small and medium scale enterprises and national development ( $r = 0.870; df = 175; P < 0.05$ )

**Conclusion**

Small and medium scale enterprises constitute the dominant group of forms of business organisations, as such it

is the engine that promote national development and the bedrock of any economic development. In spite of the problems militating against the smooth operation of this sector, this sector still contributes more than 65% of national growth.

### Recommendations

Governments should assist prospective entrepreneurs to have access to finance and necessary information relating to business opportunities, modern technology, raw materials, market, plants and machinery which would enable them to reduce their operating costs and be more efficient to meet the market competitions.

It is also recommended that there is need for supporting and strengthening SMEs' productive capacities and market competitiveness in the country.

SMEs owners as a matter of necessity should take insurance policies for their businesses as this may not only help to protect them against uncontrollable risks, but will help to bring them back to their positions whenever they suffer losses, remain profitable and continue to operate in perpetuity at the same time contributing to the economic growth of the nation.

Prospective business operators should conduct extensive feasibility studies to evaluate the viability of any proposed business to avoid investment in unprofitable ventures.

Governments should encourage and continue to build on current programmes and establish new ones if warranted, to improve the levels of managerial competence and skills of the small business owners.

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