National College of Ireland

IMPLICATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL
COMPETENCIES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MICRO SMALL AND MEDIUM
ENTERPRISES (MSMES) IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

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A DISSERTATION COMPLETED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
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ABSTRACT

Background: Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises (MSMEs) are the economic nerve of Nigeria. Since the country's rising unemployment ratio and unsavourable economic situation since the COVID-19 outbreak, federal and state governments have been implementing programmes that can boost productivity using entrepreneurship as a vehicle. One of these is the training programmes being run by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), which partners with local and international organizations to train Lagos residents with entrepreneurial skills and support them with an incentive to make them gainfully employed.

Gaps: Few studies have been conducted in Nigeria that look at the implication of government policy and entrepreneurial competencies on the performance of micro, small, and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria, even when they dominate over 80% of businesses operating in Nigeria. Also, no study has looked at the effect of government programs, especially state governments, on the performance of businesses that benefit from the programmes. It is because of the need to fill this gap that this research was conducted.

Methodology: Descriptive and inferential analysis was used in this study. The study used a Abductive research approach to gather data for this study quantitatively. Through convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, two hundred and seventeen (217) sample frames were obtained as respondents.

Results: The study rejects the null hypotheses developed for this research and accepts the new alternate hypotheses. This is because the P-values of the tested null hypotheses were less than the significance level (pv>0.05). The study revealed that Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes significantly impact various entrepreneurial competencies of owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) that were beneficiaries of the programmes. Also, incentive supports such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to workspace made available by Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) to beneficiaries has a direct significance on their business performance. Findings also revealed that Entrepreneurial competencies that owners/managers of MSMEs acquired during LSETF training programmes significantly affect key business performance variables of revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital (funding), therefore entrepreneurial competencies have a significant effect on their business performance.

Contribution: This study's contribution comes from the fact that it shows that Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) was beneficial to Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises' owners/managers and that the incentive supports and training have a significant effect on their business performance.

Conclusion: The study concludes that government policy (incentive support) and entrepreneurial competencies significantly positively impact the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria. Entrepreneurial core competencies, personality traits, and learning capacity positively correlate with business performance; thus, entrepreneurs' skills and competencies improve business performance.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Competencies, Government policy, MSMEs, Business Performance.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Small scale industries constitute the backbone of a developing economy with their effective, efficient, flexible, and innovative entrepreneurial spirit. Small and medium-sized businesses have been around for centuries. They have gone by many names over the years, including cottage industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME), Small Business Firms (SBF), small scale industries (SSI), and small-scale enterprises (SSE) (Ndaghu et al., 2019). Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises (MSMEs) account for 95 per cent of enterprises worldwide, accounting for almost 60 per cent of job creation (Kumar, 2020). SMEs have particular importance for the EU's economy. Approximately 26 million SMEs within the EU employ 109 million people, constituting 2/3 of the European Gross National Product (EuroStat, 2019). Hence, the European Union supports SMEs in preserving their flexible and creative structures and using them as a competitive element. In the United Kingdom in 2019, there were 5.9 million privately-held businesses. According to the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, SMEs make up 99 per cent of privately owned firms in the United Kingdom, accounting for 60 per cent of private-sector jobs.

Similarly, small-business owners employ 48 percent of private-sector workers. They account for 41.2 percent of the total US private payroll. However, half of the new small-business initiatives fail within the first five years (Turner & Endres, 2017). As a result, although accounting for a significant portion of job creation in the United States and the United Kingdom helps the economy, small-business owners fail at alarming rates. Another big economy that small and medium-scale enterprises contributed to was its growth in China. As stated in (Zoaka et al., 2017), since the 1990s, SMEs have contributed 75 per cent of the industrial output value with over 70 per cent of the gross output value in the food, papermaking and printing industries, over 80 per cent in the garment tannery, recreation and sports outfit, plastic and metalwork industries, and over 90 per cent in the wood and furniture industries. Although the industrial revolution's mass manufacturing may have

temporarily overtaken the status quo, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) remain the primary source of employment and chances for entrepreneurial sourcing, training, development, and empowerment. SMEs continue to play a significant part in the economy of industrialised countries such as the United States, where large businesses dominate.

In Third world countries such as India, Subhamoy (2018) stated that SMEs in India create more than 6000 products ranging from traditional to high-tech, consisting of over 36 million units widely dispersed across the country, employ over 80 million persons, contribute about 8% to the country's GDP besides accounting for 45% of manufactured output and 40% to the export from the government. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for more than 90% of firms, more than 50% of GDP, and over 63% of employment in low-income African nations (Ikpor et al., 2017).SMEs are the catalyser of the economy of Turkey as well as in other developed and developing countries. As they have more flexible production opportunities compared to large enterprises, they adapt to the changes in demand in a short time and reach full competition conditions quickly.

There is little doubt that micro, small, and medium firms are the lifeblood of the Nigerian economy (MSMEs). Their tremendous potential is for job creation, local technological advancement, output diversification, indigenous entrepreneurial growth, and integration with large-scale enterprises. Micro, small, and medium companies (MSMEs) have been estimated to account for around 85 per cent of industrial employment in Nigeria (Small and Medium Development Agency of Nigeria, & National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Since gaining independence from British sovereignty in 1960, the country has seen decades of political unrest. This has created an atmosphere of social unrest and an unstable corporate environment. The use of military coups to take over the government and the indigenisation programme of the late 1970s have turned off investors who formerly considered the country as a vast and rising market. Because of these regimes' nature, there is perceived corruption, policy insecurity, inadequate infrastructure development, and a lack of responsibility for public monies (Micah et al., 2017).

1.2 Rationale for the research

In the last five (5) years, the Nigerian government has made different efforts to stimulate the MSMEs sub-sector in the country. In line with the President Buhari administration's medium-term strategy of 2017-2020, titled Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), focuses on raising the country's standard of living and prioritised development under four

key pillars such as agriculture and food security, transport infrastructure (especially roads and rails) as well as energy sufficiency (e.g. power/petroleum products) through integrated people-centred, development planning. Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), synchronised with the administration's campaign against corruption and the Presidential Ease of Doing Business Council (PEDEC), has led to the following programmes: Establishment of a National Collateral Registry for MSMEs; Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN); CBN/Bankers Committee The Agri-Business Small and Medium Enterprises Investment Scheme (AGSMEIS); Establishment of an MSMEs Rating Agency; N-Power Scheme; Tradermoni Scheme; Ease of Doing Business; Anchor Borrowers Programme; Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS); One Local Government One Product Programme (OLOP); Incentivizing Business Registration Compliance for MSMEs; Growth and Employment Mobility in States (GEMS); and Conversion of Twenty-Three (23) Industrial Development Centres (IDCs) to Industrial Parks and Clusters which have contributed to the growth of MSMEs and entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

Thus, SME owners' should have the belief that they are capable of succeeding in any business. They should also be self-starters and flexible to adapt to any changes in the market conditions (Kapkiyai & Kimitei, 2016). Hence, the innovation-oriented policy can only be successful when government policy and entrepreneurial competence have a significant relationship. Owners of SMEs must participate in orientation and educational programs to sensitise, orientate, and transform their thinking patterns and strengthen their management skills and talents to tackle global issues and compete for a long-term competitive edge. Identifying the right product with comparative advantages is also essential in establishing circumstances for improving competitiveness by reallocating resources from low-productive to productive industries (Osita-Ejikeme, & Amah, 2021). For SMEs to be sustained in this challenging environment, they need a systematic analysis of their problems and strategies for survival. Some of these SMEs are thriving in Nigeria despite the challenging environment due to the effective options strategies they have internalised, while others have closed shop. Identifying the significant problems and strategies employed by thriving ones has become critical. For SMEs to grow and execute effectively, there is a need for creative value creation that leads to new ways of doing things, the invention of new customer-focused items, and procedures that benefit enterprises' economic and social fortunes (Tuffour et al., 2018).

Many have attributed favourable government policies backed up by the entrepreneurial talents of SMEs/MSMEs management. This study aims to verify this assumption by determining the influence of government policies and entrepreneurial competencies on the success of SMEs/MSMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. Therefore, the objective of this study is to critically examine the implication of government policy and entrepreneurship competence on the performance of SMEs since they were the variables that have been declared to predict the success or failure of a MSME or SME.

1.3. Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine the implication of the Lagos State Government policies through the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) on Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) operating in Lagos State. Specifically, this study's objectives include:

  i.   To assess the significant impact of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

  ii. To determine whether access to incentive support by MSMEs in Lagos State significantly affects their performance.

  iii. To determine whether various entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MESME owners/managers significantly affect their performance.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is an attempt to achieve the stated objectives and asks the following questions:

  i.   What is the significant effect of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSMEs owners/managers in Lagos State?

  ii. What effect does Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) incentive support policy have on MSMEs in Lagos State performance?

  iii. What effect do entrepreneurial competencies' of MSMEs owners/managers have on their business performance?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses formulated for this study in their null forms include:

  i.   Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training has no significant effect on the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSMEs owners/managers in Lagos State.

ii. Consistency incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has no significant effect on their performance.

iii. Entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers have no significant effect on their performance.

1.6 Significance of Study

The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) under the Lagos State Government has been implementing entrepreneurial policies and training young and enterprising Lagos Residents that have been captured on the Lagos State Residents Registration Agency (LASRRA) database in a bid to improve better and diversify its economy. Various activities include providing low-income loans, accessible operational locations, vocational and digital skill training, and access to mentors, associations, and investors. The significance of this study then is to assess the effect of these activities on the performances of micro, small and medium-scale businesses in the state.

More so, this study will give policymakers insight into what works and what fails and enable them to improve on the existing plans and policies to support better MSMEs growth which will reduce unemployment and the poverty rate in the state. For Academics, this study provides currently empirical data that can be used to discuss the situation of MSMEs in Lagos and Nigeria as a whole and, more so, make a conclusion and recommendations that can be used to improve the status quo better. In addition, it will serve as literature for discourse on the impact of government policies and entrepreneurial competence of MSMEs owners on SMEs' growth in Lagos.

1.7 Structure and Procedures of the Dissertation

The procedures/stages of gathering qualitative and quantitative data for this study will be reflected in the structure of this research. A breakdown of these stages shows that chapter one includes formulating and clarifying the research topic as well as asserting research questions, objectives, and hypothesis; chapter two includes a literature review that includes conceptual definition and explanation, theoretical review, and empirical review of previous relevant studies; chapter three includes the method of gathering, analysing, and presenting data; and chapter five includes a discussion of findings.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this section, the study will define, explain, discuss and reveal the concept of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs); how it is practiced in Nigeria; government programmes and policies towards micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises in Nigeria and the relationship between government policies and programmes and MSMEs performance.

2.1.1 Concept of Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises (MSMEs)

Since the industrial revolution in Great Britain in 1798, the method of managing commercial industries and economic activities worldwide has changed (Taiwo, Falohun, and Agwu, 2016). In a bid to maximise the operation of the formal economy that the industrial revolution brought that made governments started restricting their economy to provide support businesses to these large enterprises. These gave birth to micro, small, and medium-scale businesses as a concept. It tends to modify the operational family-owned businesses to a more robust structure that allows people other than family to be part of the operation and provide services to others. It also removes the lack of organisation and management structure of the previous modus operandi. However, it lacks the organisation and management structure of large-scale businesses. There is also the possibility of using business activities to decentralise large commercial and industrial activities and diluting monopoly(Taiwo, Falohun, and Agwu, 2016). Businesses in this category provide at least 60% of the gross domestic product of the United States of America (Abiola et al., 2021). These businesses were responsible for most technological advancements in the United States. Micro Small Medium-Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) typically evolve and expand into medium and large-sized businesses. This type of expansion leads to economic progress. It is also more reasonable than the path taken by industries to hire more people and increase

output. Bill Gates and Paul Allen created the Microsoft Disk Operating System (MS-Dos) in 1980 when their firm was a small-scale enterprise. It allowed around 80% of the world's PCs to run. This is an excellent example of small-scale industry growth without outside influence (Anga, 2014).

The Micro Small Medium-Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) play an essential role as the world's economic development engine, particularly in emerging nations where most of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector (Asare et al., 2015). The Micro Small Medium-Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) sector is the growth engine of any economy, contributing to its development, job creation, and export, amongst others. According to the World Bank, MSMEs represent about 90% of businesses and more than 50% of employment worldwide (PwC, 2020). These businesses make a significant contribution to the socioeconomic growth and development of numerous countries throughout the world. The contributions and capabilities of these firms to generate employment, decrease poverty, evenly distribute income and resources, increase creative activities, develop entrepreneurial skills, encourage urbanisation, and raise the living standard of our dear society represent their roles (Njoku, Paul, and Agu, 2021; Sani and Sanusi, 2018; PwC, 2020). Formal businesses in these categories contribute up to 40% of emerging economies' national income (GDP). These businesses use innovation to generate high-quality products and services that fulfill individual and social needs (Aper and Ushahemba, 2021).). Small and Medium Enterprises remarkably affect the economies of some European, American, and Asian nations that successfully adopted and adapted it. In the USA, these enterprises formed over 50 percent of the non-farm private G.D.P. (Etale and Light, 2021).

2.1.2 Micro, Small, and Medium-scale Enterprises in Nigeria

The Nigerian socioeconomic imperatives are increasingly favouring the formation of small and medium-sized businesses. One root of this trend is the rapid realisation of significant waste associated with public sector management of the economy. Our public corporations have proven to be vehicles for entrenching mediocrity, inefficiency, and the wealth of a few at the expense of workers (Nwodo et al., 2017). Micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, in particular, have played an essential role in the growth and expansion of most industrialised and developing countries. According to the National Economic Reconstruction Fund (Awoniyi, 2014), these businesses have total assets of less than ten million naira but no yearly sales or worker count.

Bank of Industry (BOI) defines Micro, Small, and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria differently from the previous definition. They believed that the number of employees and total and annual turnover are good indicators of classification and definition of businesses in the MSMEs spectrum. For instance, businesses with less than ten employees, less than 5 million in total assets in naira, and less than 20 million naira in total turnover are micro-enterprises. Small enterprises are businesses that have between eleven to less than 50 employees, have more than 5 million but less than 100 million naira in total assets, and make less than 100 million naira in annual turnover. In comparison, medium-size enterprises have between 51 to 200 employees, 100 to 500 million naira in total assets, and less than 500 million in annual turnover. Using the same parameters as BOI, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), an agency empowered by the Federal Government of Nigeria, businesses with less than ten employees and less than 5 million nairas in assets are micro-enterprises, businesses that have 10-49 employees and between 5 to 50 million nairas in assets are small enterprise. Businesses with 50 to 199 employees and between 50 to 500 million total assets are medium-sized enterprises (PwC, 2020; Njoku, Paul, and Agu, 2021; Sani and Sanusi, 2018).

Presently in Nigeria, these businesses promote the growth of the country's economy; hence, all government levels have policies that promote the growth and sustenance of these enterprises. Small-scale industry orientation is part of Nigerian history. Evidence abounds in the communities of what successes our great grandparents made of their respective trading concerns, yam barns, cottage industries, and the likes(Ayozie et al., 2013). SMEDAN survey in 2018 shows that 41.5 million MSME businesses operate in Nigeria, which shows its importance (PwC, 2020; Njoku, Paul, and Agu, 2021). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria's enterprises have contributed about 48% -on average -to the national GDP in the last five years. Totalling about 17.4 million enterprises, they account for about 50% of industrial jobs and nearly 90% of activities in the manufacturing sector in terms of the number of enterprises(PwC, 2020). About 80% of Nigeria's small and medium enterprises collapsed because of poor financing and other associated problems (Hassan et al., 2020). Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have contributed significantly to Nigeria's employment generation (Olaore, Adejare, and Udofia, 2021). Hence, there is a need to create an enabling environment for these businesses to thrive, thereby increasing employment generation and reducing the country's unemployment burden.

2.1.3 Government Programme and Policies Towards Micro, Small, and Medium Scale Enterprises in Nigeria

Nigeria's government has been keen on developing SMEs; as such, many microfinance agencies have been set up to promote the growth of SMEs in Nigeria. According to Ikpor et al. (2017), In 1962, Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) was established, while Rural Banking Initiative (RBI) was set up in 1977. Also set up were Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund(ACGSF) and the Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative Bank to enhance lending to agriculture and SMEs. In order to cushion the negative impact of structural adjustment programmes in the mid-1980s, the government set up National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) to give SMEs a long-term concessionary loan of five to ten (5 – 10) years (Ojimaojo, Murtadho, and Bhaumik, 2020).

It is discouraging to see that SMEs in Nigeria still face several challenges that impede their daily survival. According to Ikpor et al. (2017), this is reflected by the general decline in the standard of living, low per capita income, and high unemployment rate. Even as discussed above, it shows that SME development worldwide has a positive impact on development through several challenges are imminent. Based on this background, this paper evaluates the impact of SMEs development on Economic growth in Nigeria.

2.1.4 Relationship Between Government Policies and Programmes and SMEs' Performance

Small and medium-sized enterprises account for 95 per cent of the economy, have a very high mortality rate, and are critical to Nigerian economic progress because they create employment and generate innovation, competition, and economic dynamism (Ocheni, 2015). Responses from small business owners indicated that the importance of government in the growth and survival of their companies could not be overstated (Ekwochi, Orga and Okoene, 2019). Government policy and regulations are a significant determinant of small and medium-scale enterprises' start-up, growth and graduation into medium and large-scale enterprises(Simiyu, Namusonge and Sakwa, 2016). Government entrepreneurship development programmes increase the success of small and medium-sized enterprises; thus, firms should create an enabling environment for embracing and implementing government

entrepreneurship development programmes to increase the success of small and medium-sized enterprises (Amadi, Ojiabo and Alagah, 2018). The performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana's agribusiness sector was examined to determine the effect of government and other institutions' support. The researchers (Ntiamoah, Li and Kwamega, 2016) found that government support had a statistically significant and direct impact on the performance of SMEs from other institutions. These assistance programmes often took the form of loans, which recipients used to either develop their businesses or get the necessary training and experience to run their companies. In Nigeria, government regulations on new businesses have a statistically significant impact (Obialor, 2020). Essien et al. (2016) examine the impact of public expenditure on the output and productivity of small and medium-sized enterprises in Nigeria using annual time series data from 1970 to 2015 and find that public expenditure remains a viable short-term instrument for spurring economic growth and development in Nigeria, supporting Keynes' postulation of active government intervention in the economy. According to Anthony and Entebang (2015), the performance of SMEs varies with the choice of government policy, geographical relations and government guidelines, programmes and incentives, and support systems for the specific sector.

In Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Makinde (2019) make the case that government policies have a significant role in reducing the negative effects of environmental variables on the productivity of SMEs in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. Government capacity-building initiatives, the government's supply of infrastructure assistance programmes, and the government's provision of financial assistance have significantly impacted the expansion of SMEs in the Keffi Local Area (Akawu, Agum, and Awogbemi, 2018). However, government entrepreneurship initiatives and programmes in Ondo state do not now affect economic growth (Obamuyi and Elumaro, 2018). More so, inflation, exchange rates, and interest rates substantially negatively impact SMEs' performance in Nigeria's South-East (Okeke et al., 2020). This demonstrates how the government and policymakers handle economic issues that affect the success of businesses, particularly SMEs, in Nigeria. Various taxation must be harmonised in Nigeria to minimise expenses for SMEs since it undermines their production (Hassan et al., 2020). The country's current insecurity situation requires more attention to prevent it from degrading further, and other policy actions must be appropriately structured for higher efficacy. Government policies play a vital role in creating a business-friendly climate (Mwasiaji, 2019). As a result, policy initiatives should focus on

removing bottlenecks, lowering and reforming tax systems, developing flexible customs and port regulations, embracing information technology to reduce bureaucracy and increase transparency, and maintaining transparency and accountability among public officials in charge of SMEs regulation (Mwasiaji, 2019).'

2.2.1 Concept of Entrepreneurial Competencies

Competencies are described as an individual's quantifiable or observable skills, knowledge, capabilities, and conduct that would allow him or her to lead a successful life or job activities (Leithy, 2017). Entrepreneurial competencies are exhibited in this situation by how the entrepreneur organises and utilises inputs and manages outputs to achieve his or her entrepreneurial goals (Wani & Butt, 2017). Audretsch and Belitski (2017) opined that entrepreneurship is an essential organ that propels a country's economic growth. Entrepreneurship and small business are related to each other from a conceptual and functional point of view (Urbano & Apariciom, 2019). Competencies are evaluated in terms of actual working conduct. They are often characterised by the individual managers' underlying personal attributes like traits, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. In many ways, entrepreneurs and managers share comparable responsibilities and tasks, such as organisational and planning skills. In recent years, business school students' competence approach to learning entrepreneurial qualities has grown in popularity. Researchers identified many entrepreneurial characteristics and investigated their links to company performance (Alam et al., 2016; Man, 2001). An entrepreneur has the creative ability, creates something new and different, seeks opportunities, starts a business, takes risks, develops ideas, and manages available resources to succeed (Akeke et al., 2022). Because they earned the highest ratings in these categories, their entrepreneurial abilities, capacity to influence people, and self-reliance may be derived as their strengths. They have a reasonable aptitude for identifying commercial prospects (Duyan, 2019).

According to Sebikari (2019), entrepreneurship and small businesses establish an economic development hub by engaging productive resources. Entrepreneurship is the central determinant of micro-enterprise performance (Sadeghi et al., 2019). From this perspective, entrepreneurship research (Liñán et al., 2020; Ebrahimi et al., 2018) has tried to explain how entrepreneurship determines micro-enterprises performances. Entrepreneurs are agents that overcome obstacles to build their enterprises in an entrepreneurial relationship by being change agents by recognising opportunities and exploring them through innovation and

creativity (Akeke et al., 2022). Anyone with the knowledge, skills, and possess personal qualities, attitudes, values, and behaviours necessary to perform activities and tasks to be self-reliant is known as an entrepreneur. The core of entrepreneurship is to create new values, enhance creative thinking and innovative actions, and create opportunities needed in society. It is needful for an entrepreneur to be competent because customers are looking for satisfaction which cannot be achieved without it. Studies such as (Akeke et al., 2022) and (Ogundele, 2020) investigated the entrepreneurship competencies required by business education students for establishing small-scale ventures in Cross River State and Kwara State, respectively. They discovered a significant difference between students' responses on entrepreneurial skills required for business education graduates' employability in Cross River State (Akeke et al., 2022) and that entrepreneurial skills are required for business education graduates' employability in Kwara (Ogundele, 2020). Students no longer expect to earn work in the official sector (government and business) but are self-sufficient, creative, imaginative, and take steps to generate opportunities in the entrepreneurial sector. As a result, entrepreneurship education is required, which includes paying attention to and emphasising the strength of the indicators of each variable found in this study, such as: fostering cooperation with the business and industrial world, training in production and marketing, organising teaching factories, supporting experts, teacher competencies in learning entrepreneurship, and utilising local potential (Yohana, 2020).

2.2.2 Various Entrepreneurial Competencies of SMEs owners or Managers

A study conducted by (Minimol, 2021) identified six competency areas stated in Man et al. (2002), Bird(1995), and Lau et al. (2000). These competencies are opportunity competencies, relationship competencies, conceptual competencies, organising competencies, strategic competencies, and commitment competencies. They are explained below:

- Opportunities competencies are concerned with identifying and developing market opportunities through various techniques(Minimol, 2021).
- Relationship competencies, which some also refer to as networking competencies, relate to person-to-person or individual-to-group based interaction to build cooperation and trust, build and using contacts and connections, persuasive abilities, communication, and interpersonal skills(Minimol, 2021).
- Conceptual competencies: These comprise distinct conceptual capacities that are displayed in the behaviour of entrepreneurs, such as judgement, the ability to

comprehend complicated information, taking risks, and inventiveness (Minimol, 2021).

- Organising competencies: They include how various internal and external human, physical, financial, and technology resources are organised and include forming teams, managing staff, training, and regulating (Minimol, 2021). It is similar to managerial competencies (Li, 2009).

- Strategic competencies: this involves developing, analysing, and putting into practice the firm's strategies and are comparable to systematic and strategic planning capabilities (Minimol, 2021).

- Commitment competencies: The entrepreneur's commitment competencies propel him or her forward with the business. Successful entrepreneurs are typically regarded as hard workers with a restless spirit.

These competencies have been discussed and researched, especially on how they affect the success of businesses which in this case are micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises. These will be discussed in this work.

2.2.3 Relationship between Entrepreneurial Competencies of MSMEs owners and Business Performance

The competitive climate of our small and medium-sized enterprises requires inventive thinking and innovation to achieve performance. Being proactive, imaginative, and capable of identifying possibilities are all important, but competence is essential for SME performance (Babayayi, Zubairu and Badara, 2021). Business success will be influenced by the skill and the ability (competence) of the owner/manager (Oyeku et al., 2014). Entrepreneurial capabilities are seen as a driving factor that aids in the development of any establishment(Issa and Onuoha, 2020). Understanding the role of an entrepreneur gives a better insight into what competencies are needed by entrepreneurs to ensure the business's survival and success. Entrepreneurial competencies are individual characteristics that include attitudes and behaviours that assist entrepreneurs in achieving and maintaining success in their firms. According to (Minimol, 2021), entrepreneurial competencies encompass the entrepreneur's motives, qualities, self-image, attitudes, behaviours, talents, and knowledge. Entrepreneurs often have more incredible entrepreneurial abilities than non-entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs may be distinguished based on their degree of entrepreneurial competency (Li, 2009). Some scholars (Pramono et al., 2021)

emphasised that company success has a relationship and is based on the supply of capital and education, accomplishment needs, and locus of control. According to Tamyez et al. (2018), small-scale construction firms' success is determined by personal, strategic, learning, devotion, relationships, technical, conceptual, opportunity, organising and leading, familism, and ethics. This study's findings also show how social and organisational networks influence a company's potential to prosper. (Mustapha et al., 2020) discovered that the commitment and opportunity recognition competency of micro-entrepreneurs significantly positively affects micro-enterprise income. However, only the opportunity recognition competency significantly positively affects the net worth of micro-enterprise assets.

In Africa, with particular reference to South Africa, a study (Agbenyegah and Mahohoma, 2020) claimed that opportunity, personal, and strategic competencies impact SMEs' performance. Using empirical data gathered from 248 owner-managers of SMEs selected from a database by the Durban Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), the study found that personal, opportunity, and strategic entrepreneurial competencies are essential for small business performance. According to Zizile and Tendai (2018), women-owned SMMEs in East London, South Africa, perform better when they have entrepreneurial skills. In East London, SMME establishment and survival are also impacted by entrepreneurial skills. The research (Vu and Nwachukwu, 2021) of 200 micro-enterprises in Ghana on the influence of entrepreneurs' competencies on profitability and employee happiness reveals that obtaining and sustaining company success resides within the firm's organisational and management procedures. It went on to say that entrepreneur talents are crucial resources for improving profitability and employee happiness in Ghana's micro-companies. Entrepreneurs are seen as essential members of the organisations they form and as agents of social and economic change (Pepple and Enuoh, 2020). Exploring the environment assists business owners in identifying and locating outstanding opportunities that can help their firm grow. Entrepreneurs must carefully manage their internal and external resources to capitalise on these opportunities. Although some resources are widely accessible, entrepreneurs' ability to acquire and use such resources is nonetheless dependent on them.

 Because the entrepreneurial abilities examined here are positively associated with SME success, entrepreneurs should invest in training and development to better equip themselves with the best competencies (Babayayi, Zubairu and Badara, 2021).

The findings of a study (Adegbuyi et al., 2018) provide a multitude of informative disclosures on the fundamental characteristics of entrepreneurs and the implications these characteristics have for the growth of entrepreneurial activities. Emphasising personality attributes is increasingly becoming an essential preventative measure against business failure. The ability of a potential entrepreneur to effectively prepare for the variety of obstacles in the business world will be influenced by their understanding of their traits. Furthermore, founder's syndrome is strongly linked to the performance of small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria (Gorondutse et al., 2018).

Consequently, entrepreneurial competence is essential to SMEs' export performance in Southwest Nigeria. The ability of entrepreneur to take risk, be persistence, innovative and opportunity competencies all have a positive relationship on SMEs (fast food and bar enterprises) performance (Oyakhire and Makpor , 2021). Entrepreneurs need to be highly strategic to adjust to the changing consumer needs. Business executives have a significant competitive edge for their organisations when they can strategically focus their efforts and judgements (Lawrence-Chuku and Onuoha, 2022).

According to Pepple and Enuoh (2020), entrepreneurial core competencies, character traits, and learning capacity positively correlate with business performance. Organisational and interpersonal skills are necessary for entrepreneurs in managerial roles and are favourably connected with business success. According to Issa and Onuoha's (2020) research, there is a significant linear relationship between organisational performance measures (profitability and innovativeness) and the dimensions of entrepreneurial competence (strategic competence and relational competence). They conclude that as entrepreneurial competence increases in terms of relational and strategic competencies, so does the organisation's overall performance in terms of profitability and innovativeness. Similarly, a study (Okoli et al., 2018) discovered that owners of small and medium-sized enterprises in Anambra State practise most of the identified proper financial management practices to a low extent, except appropriately allocating funds to sections of the enterprises and proper recording of source documents, which were practised to a great extent. It was also discovered that there was no significant difference in the mean evaluations of owners of small and medium-sized businesses in Anambra State on the extent to which they use appropriate financial management methods for their business success based on years of experience.

The outcomes of this literature review confirm Man's (2001) statement that entrepreneurial competence influences business success by indicating standard set skills and their

performance repercussions. It also supports Gibb's (2005) remark that entrepreneurs are at the centre of micro-enterprise adaptation in the face of dynamic changes in the firm's external and internal environments. This study did not include controls for changes in business settings and businesses and the entrepreneur's endowments and qualities (age, education, and experience).

Fig 1: Researcher Conceptual Framework

```
┌──────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Government       │   ───▶ │ Support incentive       │
│ Policies         │        │  • Access to free       │
│                  │        │    interest loan        │
│                  │        │  • Free equipment       │
│                  │        │  • Free access to       │   ┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────────┘        │    mentorship           │──▶│ MSMEs            │
                            │  • Free access to       │   │ performance      │
                            │    workspace            │   │  • Revenue       │
                            └─────────────────────────┘   │    growth        │
                                                          │  • Customer      │
                            ┌─────────────────────────┐   │    growth        │
┌──────────────────┐        │ Entrepreneurial         │   │  • Attracting    │
│ Entrepreneuria   │   ───▶ │ Training                │   │    Capital       │
│ l                │        │  • Opportunity          │──▶│                  │
│ Competencies     │        │  • Relationship         │   └──────────────────┘
│                  │        │  • Conceptual           │
└──────────────────┘        │  • Organising           │
                            │  • Strategic            │
                            │  • Commitment           │
                            └─────────────────────────┘
```
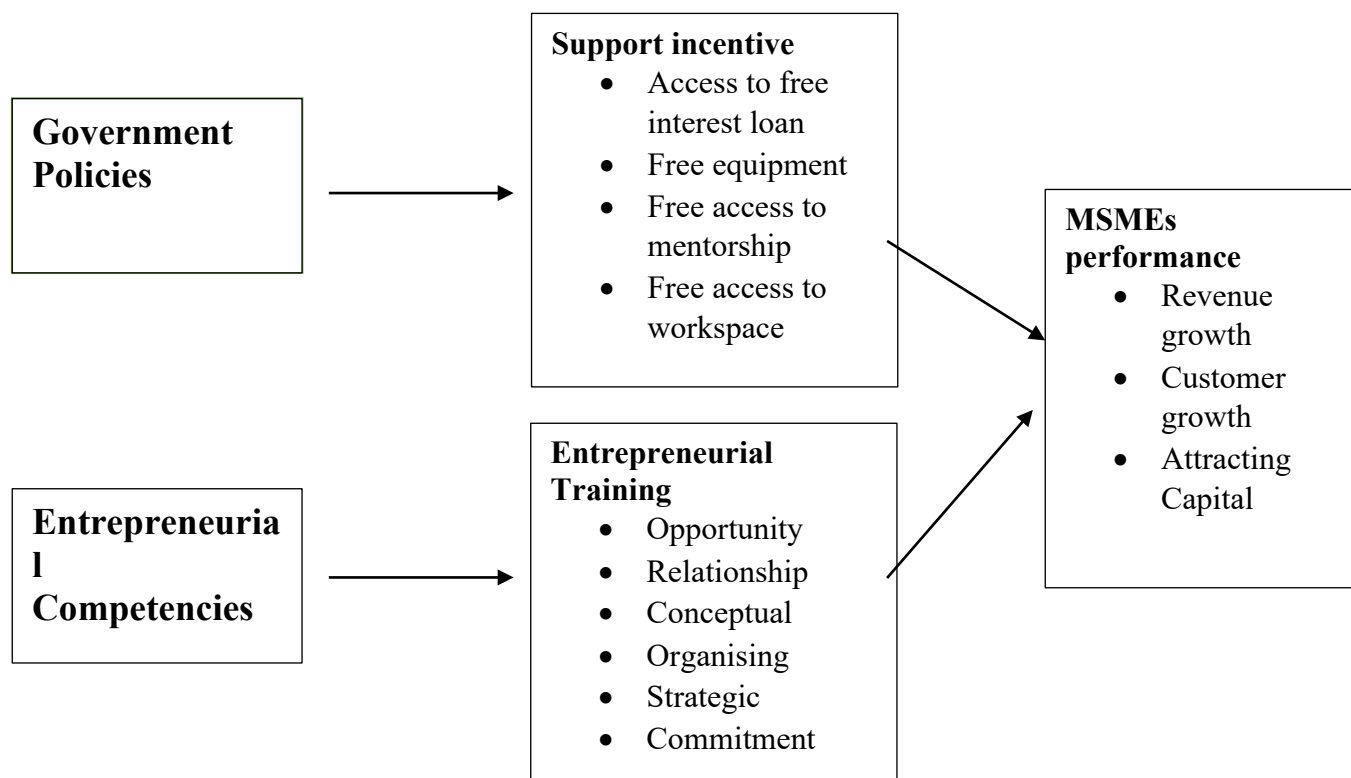
2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on the PESTEL Analysis, and Theory of Regulation. A PESTEL study is a framework or approach used by marketers or business owners to analyse and monitor the macro-environmental impact/effects on a firm or organisation (Makinde, 2019). PESTEL stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal environments. The political environment is concerned with the manner and amount to which the government intervenes in the economy. Government policy, political instability or market instability in other nations, foreign trade policy, tax policy, labour laws, environmental law, trade restrictions, and so on are examples. The list demonstrates that political concerns significantly impact organisations and their business. Economic factors such as economic growth, interest rates, currency rates, inflation, consumer disposable

income, and so on are examples of economic variables. Social factors include population growth, age distribution, health consciousness, career perspectives, and so on. Technological factors include new means of creating products and services, new methods of distributing goods and services, and new methods of connecting with target audiences. Environmental concerns include the danger of depletion of their raw material source, pollution legislation, etc. Legal issues include health and safety, equal opportunity, consumer rights and regulations, advertising standards, etc. PESTEL implies that every business, whether for profit or not, is influenced by and supported by the economic environment in various ways.

Similarly, Gibbs propounded the Theory of Regulation to outline various policies that must be considered when implementing Micro and Small Enterprise Development programmes (Obialor, 2020, p. 7443). The needs of SMEs determine the composition of the support service programs. Garba (2020) cited four SME assistance programs obtained through this model. First, the policy framework measures the impact of policies on Micro and Small Enterprises in various ways. Second, the assistance framework is divided into software and hardware support: software support includes training, counselling, consulting, transportation, and so on, whereas hardware support includes credit provision, infrastructure, and materials. The third model is the needs frame model, which considers the Nation as a whole, the level of participation of local communities, and the requirements of groups or individuals wishing to start new businesses. Finally, the institutional framework comprises various dimensions of the institutional capability to promote SMEs. Owner managers' entrepreneurial capability and the overall growth of their Micro and Small Scale Enterprises for income generation, job creation, and poverty reduction are enhanced by business-friendly government policies and regulatory regimes that include low tax rates and simple business registration and licencing requirements (Garba, 2019).

2.4 Gap in Literature Reviewed

In practically every area of the world, several studies have been conducted on government policies or laws and their influence on enterprises or micro, small, and medium-size enterprise performance (financial or non-financial success). Similarly, entrepreneurial talents and their implications on business performance have been thoroughly researched. Nonetheless, few studies have examined the impact of government regulations and entrepreneurial abilities on the performance of small and medium-sized firms internationally and in Africa. Even while Global Entrepreneurship Monitor reports over the

previous two years highlight how different government policies and regulations implemented since the breakout of COVID-19 in 2020 have influenced company performance throughout the world, nothing is known about these two phenomena. Furthermore, it was said that the abilities of various business owners or managers were critical in the limited failures of enterprises in the MSMEs category.

This dearth of literature, along with the commitment and attention of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund to empowering and assisting Lagosians, made this study necessary. This would also assist policymakers in Nigeria in implementing such policies and programmes on a national scale, as well as urge other state governments to adopt the technique if it is shown to be effective. Furthermore, this study may assess the effectiveness or failure of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies and outlines the research method used for this study. This dissertation research method explains the data gathering, analysis, presentation, and interpretation processes. According to Melnikovas (2018), it comprises ideas and philosophical assumptions that shape one's understanding of study themes and lead to the choice of research procedures. This chapter employs the layers approach that Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill introduced in 2007.

3.2 Research Aim/Objectives

This study was necessary due to the paucity of available material as well as the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund's dedication to empowering and aiding Lagosians. This would help Nigerian officials execute these policies and programmes on a national level and persuade other state governments to use the method if it is proven to be successful. Hence, the purpose of this dissertation is to respond to and examine the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1: What is the significant effect of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State?

H1: Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training has no significant effect on the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State

RQ2: What effect does Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) incentive support policy have on MSMEs in Lagos State performance?

H2: Consistency incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has no significant effect on their performance.

RQ3: What effect do entrepreneurial competencies' of MSMEs owners/managers have on their business performance?

H3: Entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MESMEowners/managers have no significant effect on their performance.

3.3 Research Framework

Using Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill's (2019) research onion outline, the research framework will go thus:

Philosophy	Pragmatism
Approach	Abductive
Methods	Quantitative
Data collection	Primary • Close-ended Questionnaire • Online Questionnaire Secondary • Literature Review
Strategies	Survey
Data analysis	SPSS Use of Frequency and Percentage Means and Standard Deviation
Time frame	Cross-Sectional 26th July-30 August 2022

Table1:Research   Methodology

(Source: Researcher's implication, 2022)

3.4. Research Philosophy

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), cited in Mahesh (2020)., "research philosophy" refers to a set of presumptions and beliefs about how knowledge is created. Research philosophy is a specific method of knowledge generation that establishes the philosophical paradigm (Chettyy, 2016). This growth and comprehension of information depend on certain presumptions based on our worldview, i.e., the practical considerations when choosing a study topic (Saunders et al., 2019). This means the researcher only used the philosophy that enables him/her to answer the research questions and hypotheses of a particular study. In this case, pragmatism is the most appropriate.

Pragmatic refers to focusing mainly on the practical applications of ideas and cognition rather than their theoretical ideology and abstraction, in which solutions to issues are found without focusing too much on the controversial academic theories surrounding the subject (Corporate Finance Institute, 2020). As a result, understanding is established via the practical acquisition and application of reliable information gained through thinking and experiences, necessitating inquiry and study of the topic at hand to discover practical solutions or make appropriate conclusions. Pragmatism in studies Multiple research techniques, including qualitative, quantitative, and action research methods, can be used in research philosophy (Dudovskiy, 2012). This study focuses on ascertaining the effect of government policies and entrepreneurial competencies on the success of MSMEs in Lagos State, Nigeria. To assess this, the study will use various Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programs to support businesses in this category with incentives and training owners/managers to aid their ventures' success.

Also, pragmatism is either deductive or inductive in research technique, objective or subjective in ontology, value-free or biassed in axiology, and qualitative and/or quantitative in research strategy (Dudovskiy, 2012; Wilson, 2014; Collis and Hussey, 2014; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). Hence, this study uses a pragmatic, abductive approach and quantitative survey method to know the impact of support incentives and training given to entrepreneurs by Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) to influence their business. Archival materials reviewed in the literature review sections act as secondary research materials for this study, while data collected through the survey act as primary.

3.5 Research Approach

The approach to research used in this work is abductive reasoning. Since its application focuses on drawing logical conclusions and building ideas, it resembles deductive and inductive thinking. Abductive research methodology begins with surprising findings and focuses on the study process (Bryman and Bell, 2015). This unexpected truth is revealed by empirical occurrences from literature reviews and may be accounted for by various hypotheses. Deductive reasoning is criticised for being ambiguous about which theory to pick to test by constructing hypotheses. However, inductive reasoning is criticised for assuming that any number of empirical information would always allow for the development of theories (Saunders et al., 2012).

In an abductive technique, data is gathered to investigate phenomena, find themes and explain patterns, develop a new theory or alter an existing theory, and then test that theory

by more data gathering (Saunders et al., 2016). Abductive reasoning usually starts with a partial data set and moves on to the most likely explanation for the findings. Abductive reasoning produces the type of decision-making that makes the best use of available knowledge, which is frequently insufficient (Research Help, 2020). Hence, incentives support and various entrepreneurial competencies will be observed to know how they influence business performance and, therefore, either corroborate or refute theories such as PESTEL analysis, Theory of Regulation, Resource Dependency Theory and Boyatzis Model of Effective Job Performance. More so, findings will corroborate or negate the conceptual framework designed from the literature review of this study. In essence, abductive reasoning will help reveal the effectiveness of LSTEF programmes on the target entrepreneur and their businesses and if such programmes should or should not be replicated by other state governments in Nigeria in boosting micro, small and medium-scale enterprises in the country.

3.6 Research Method

The data for this study were gathered and analysed using a quantitative research technique. In quantitative research, measurements are done objectively. Statistical, mathematical, or numerical data are gathered by surveys, polls, or questionnaires or by changing secondary data that already exists using computational techniques (Creswell, 2014; Ware, 2022). It involves gathering numerical data and using it to describe a specific phenomenon or apply it to other groups. Quantitative research approaches often include an introduction, a review of the literature, the application of theory(ies), a method(s), the analysis and discussion of results, a conclusion, a recommendation, and suggestions for further research. Physically self-administered or online questionnaire is used in quantitative research to collect data from participants related to the study's objectives, analyse the data using a statistical package (such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences), and then interpret and present the results using frequency, percentages, and means.

According to Nastasi et al. (2010), pragmatists choose the best technique for the study based on the research question, context, and potential outcomes. Quantitative data provides quantifiable qualities by assigning several variables using a tool like a questionnaire, reducing subjectivity in assigning these numbers. For this research, data will be gathered using a quantitative survey. The data collection instrument was an online questionnaire using Google Form. The choice of the mode of data collection, an online questionnaire, is

due to the COVID-19 restriction put in place in Nigeria to contain the variants; hence, physically self-administering the questionnaire to participants is impossible.

3.7 Research Strategy

This study employed the survey (Makinde, 2019) to collect primary data using a customised questionnaire. In this case, the use of an online questionnaire enables the identification of specific features of the study topic. Hence, an online questionnaire was administered digitally to participants of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programme beneficiaries to investigate the effect of the incentive support and training on entrepreneurial competencies on the performance of their businesses. A questionnaire is a good choice because it fosters anonymity. Because it is digital, it eliminates the possibility of respondents feeling embarrassed or sensitive about their responses. This allows the participants to answer the question as truthfully as possible.

This survey will allow the researcher to collect essential data from a large population sample at a reasonable cost. The questionnaire was sent to the Telegram or WhatsApp community of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programme beneficiaries as provided by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) secretariat. The Telegram and WhatsApp communities are the best way to deliver the questionnaire to the respondents because they are scattered across the state. In addition, COVID-19 measures meant to contain the spread of new variants are in place in Nigeria, making it impossible to physically self-administrate data collection instruments.

The questionnaire is constructed using the research questions as a guide. The questionnaire will contain closed-ended questions and scale questions that will be measured on a 5-point Likert Scale in which participants specify their level of agreement to the statement using either least to highest agreement or on five points. The question in the Likert scale 5-point is selected because they are simple to design and can cover a wide range of topics. The Likert scale with five possible responses and the rating scale were used to build the questionnaire, enabling respondents to rate their thoughts on a range of 1 to 5.

A Professor of entrepreneurship and SME competitiveness will evaluate the questionnaire's content and construct validity. The results will include their suggestions (Olaore, Adejare, and Udofia, 2021). They are also used to assess the strengths of attitudes since respondents are asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with each statement. The forced-choice design successfully constrained the respondents' social desirability bias, as seen by (Saunders et al., 2016). People were more likely to be honest since their anonymity was

assured, and the questionnaires were chosen because they allowed for a more comprehensive survey of the population, were less stressful than one-on-one interviews, and were simpler to analyse (Unachukwu, Ojo, and Oyewole, 2020)

The researcher joins the group, notifies the administrators of his goal, and requests that any interested participants declare their interest in the comment section of a group post in order to get the participant's consent. Another round of consent will be required when users take the SurveyMonkey poll in the preamble. You will have the choice of accepting or declining to participate in the online survey. The questionnaire will include three parts. In the first stage of the study, the participants will be explained the study's aims and objectives before consent is obtained. In the second section, participant demographic data will be gathered. In the last section, data necessary to address the research questions and assertions of the study will be gathered.

3.8 Sample Selection

The study used convenience and judgemental sampling (Olaore, Adejare and Udofia, 2021), a non-probability sampling technique. There are several ways to select samples with non-probability sampling, most of which depend on individual judgement. A non-probability sample may be more helpful when piloting a questionnaire. However, it could make it more challenging to assess the seriousness of the problem (Saunders et al., 2016).

The population of the study was from the 2,890 SMEs registered with SMEDAN in Lagos State in 2015(Ameh et al., 2020, p.90). Most business owners or managers benefited from Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes. However, the convenience or judgemental sampling technique will be used because there are no actual numbers on how many are beneficiaries. Since the research objectives can only be achieved if the participants were beneficiaries, convenience is the most appropriate.

The researcher considers the participants' accessibility and the limited amount of time available while selecting an acceptable sample selection strategy (Saunders et al., 2016). These restrictions led to a non-probability sample selection approach in this study since it does not include random selection, making it appropriate for the research. Though the probabilistic technique is more rigorous, the non-probability sample does not necessarily imply that it is more representative (Saunders et al., 2019).

Micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises' owners or managers, irrespective of their demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational qualification, marital status, and religion, form the population of the study. The key criterion for selection is based on

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the fact that they were beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes and are currently accessible, available, and willing to fill the questionnaire. Convenience sampling was deemed by Bryman and Bell (2015) to be the least trustworthy design technique owing to generalizability issues and imprecision. However, they emphasised that it might still generate relevant data.

Hence, from the population of 2,890 SMEs, 217 were respondents to this study. These are the owners of the SMEs that claimed they are beneficiaries of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes and were accessible and willing to participate in this cross-sectional study.

3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data will be gathered for this project using primary research utilising internet polling tools like SurveyMonkey. It was presented using tables and graphs and descriptive statistics to make the analysis easier to grasp. Regression Model used to test the study's hypotheses (Olaore, Adejare, and Udofia, 2021). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be utilised to analyse the data. The face and content validity tests will be used in this investigation. The researcher will not know the participants' names because the survey will be conducted online. Their personal information will not be linked to them, even if they sign a contract promising not to disclose it publicly. In essence, the researcher consents to a type of "secret-keeping" wherein he or she will hold back on publishing any "he said/she said" findings. The data will be erased by December 2022.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Using questionnaires as a data collection method raises concerns about social scientists' practical or ethical behaviour. This study will strictly comply with all ethical principles and legal requirements related to data protection and the privacy of respondents. Although adult small business owners can understand the purpose of the study, researchers must not compel them to understand the personal opinions of members of the public. To avoid causing them harm or becoming a victim, the researcher will obtain informed consent from the respondents. According to Ruane (2005), the researcher must respect the principles of informed consent, such as participants' competence and providing adequate information about the study to the participants. The participants will have a good understanding of the information received. Survey respondents will be adults without a mental disability. This will be done by requiring participants to complete consent forms. Participants are also members of SMEDAN, and the organisation's competent authority will notify them. In

addition, this study will provide respondents with all relevant information to make an informed decision. Participants must understand this relevant information and help with understanding.

Respondents will be advised also consult with others when they receive the information and decide whether to participate (Ruane, 2005). The researcher will promise confidentiality to the participants, which means that the data/information provided will never be publicly linked to them. This data/information is governed by the General Data Protection Act 2018. The researcher will know which names are linked to specific information due to the internet-mediated survey method but must make a legal promise not to make this information public. The researcher essentially agrees to a form of "secret-keeping" in which they will refrain from making any "he said/she said" revelation.

3.11 Outcome Limitations

The outcome of this research cannot be generalised because of the sampling technique and the focus of the research. This research is specific in measurement; therefore, it cannot be generalised based on the findings that government policies and entrepreneurial competencies gotten through entrepreneurial training have significant effects (either positive or negative) on micro, small and medium-scale enterprises.

Also, the sample size and population do not reflect the actual numbers of MSMEs in Lagos. The study cannot embark on using the actual population and a sample size that reflect the population because of time constraint for this study to be submitted to the National College of Ireland, Dublin, for conferment of my degree before the end of September 2022. Another issue is available. The researcher is also constrained by the restrictions posed by the outbreak of Covid-19 new variants and the measures the Nigerian government took for physical distancing to manage the spread.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter titled data analysis, presentation, and findings revealed how the research analyses the data collated and presentation of the corresponding result through frequency and percentage tables and diagrams/graphs where necessary. This chapter presents the analysis of gathered data and its findings on the Implication of government policy and entrepreneurial competence on the performance of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Lagos State, Nigeria. This chapter is divided into two sections: the first section presents a descriptive analysis measuring the study's research questions. In contrast, the second section consists of inferential statistics used to test the research hypotheses stated in the study.

The questionnaire was administered digitally to participants of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programme beneficiaries to investigate the effect of the incentive support and training on entrepreneurial competencies on the performance of their businesses. The respondents for this study which became the sample frame, are two hundred and seventeen (217) micro, small, and medium business owners participating in any of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training.

4.2. Descriptive Data and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	123	56.7
Male	93	42.9
Prefer not to say	1	0.4
Total	**217**	**100.0**
Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
18-22 years	105	48.4
23-27 years	91	41.9
28-32 years	15	6.9
33 years and above	6	2.8
Total	**217**	**100.0**
Level of Education	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Primary Education	3	1.4
Secondary Education (WAEC, NECO, GCE)	76	35.0
Diploma	77	35.5
BSc. /HND	59	27.2
MA/MSc.	2	0.9
Total	**217**	**100.0**
Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Married	44	20.3
Separated	6	2.8
Single	167	77.0
Total	**217**	**100.0**

Table 1 presents the demography data of this study's respondents (participants). They are micro, small, and medium-scale enterprise owners in Lagos State that benefit from the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes. As seen in the table above, 56.7% (n=123) of the respondents claimed they are females, and 42.9% (n=93) claimed they are male. 0.4% (n=1) of the respondents preferred not to say.

For the age bracket of respondents, 48.4% (n=105) are between the ages of 18-22 years, 41.9%(n=91) are between 23-27 years, 6.9% (n=15) are between the ages of 28-32 years, while 2.8% (n=6) are 33 years and above.

For level of education of respondents, 35% (n=76) have secondary education with certification, 35.5% (n=77) have diploma certificate, 27.2% (n=59) have a Bachelor/Higher Diploma Degrees, whereas 0.9% (n=2) of the respondents have Master of Art/Science certification. Meanwhile, 1.4% (n=3) of the respondents have primary education.

Marital status of respondents includes 77.0% (n=167) claimed being single, 20.3% (n=44) claimed being married while 2.8% (n=6) claimed to be separated.

The demographic data shows that the respondents have a good representation of both genders, male and female. However, there are more females (n=123) than males (n=93). Also, the age brackets of the respondents are between the ages of 18-22 years (n=105) and 23-27 years (n=91) which implies that the respondents' age range is 18-27 years. Most respondents have a reasonable number of secondary education and diploma certificates with a Bachelor/Higher Diploma degree. Lastly, 77.0% (n=167) of the respondents said they are singles. In essence, respondents are young and are educated to the level of understanding of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training curriculum on entrepreneurship.

Table 2: Respondents' Knowledge and Participation in Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) Trainings.

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Do you know about the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF)?	Yes	217	100.0
	No	0	0.0
	Total	**217**	**100.0**
Have you benefited from any of the training?	Yes	217	100.0
	No	0	0.0
	Total	**217**	**100.0**

Table 2 presents data on knowledge and participation in Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) trainings. All respondents (100%) are aware of LSETF trainings and all (100%) claimed they benefited from the trainings.

Table 3: Trainings of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) that Respondents were Beneficiaries

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Which of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes were you beneficiary?	GIZ Vocational Training	20	9.2
	UNDP Vocational Training	64	29.5
	USADF Vocational Training	133	61.3
	Total	**217**	**100.0**
Which Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes were you beneficiaries of?	Beauty	73	33.6
	Business Support	45	20.7
	Construction	39	18.0
	Fashion	60	27.6
	Total	**217**	**100.0**

Table 3 presents data on Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training that respondents were beneficiaries of. According to the table, 61.3% (n=133) of the respondents were beneficiaries of the USADF vocational training, 29.5% (n=64) were beneficiaries of the UNDP vocational training, and 9.2% (n=20) of the respondents were beneficiaries of GIZ vocational training. 33.6% (n=) of the respondents were beneficiaries of Beauty training, 27.6% (n=60) were beneficiaries of Fashion Training, 20.7% (n=45) of the respondents were beneficiaries of Business Support, and 18.0% (n=39) of the respondents were beneficiaries of the Construction training.

Research Question One: What is the significant effect of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State?

Table 4: Skills Acquired by Respondents that Benefit from LSETF trainings.

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Which skill do you acquire in the training programme?	Both	79	36.4
	Soft Skills	76	35.0
	Technical Skills	62	28.6
	Total	**217**	**100.0**

Table 4 presents data on skills acquired by respondents that benefit from LSETF trainings. According to the table, 36.4% (n=79) of the respondents said they acquired both skills (soft skills and technical skills), and 35.0% (n=76) of the respondents said they acquired soft skills. In comparison, 28.6% (n=62) of the respondents said they acquired technical skills.

Table 5: Entrepreneurial Competencies Acquired by Respondents from LSETF Training

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
I learnt how to pursue opportunities	217	1	5	4.14	0.064	0.939
I learnt how to develop new opportunities	217	1	5	3.79	0.046	0.672
Opportunity Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.97*	*0.055*	*0.806*
I learnt how to partner with competitors and suppliers.	217	1	5	3.98	0.061	0.895
I learnt how to network with customers and build contacts	217	1	5	3.89	0.062	0.919
Relationship Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.94*	*0.062*	*0.907*
I learnt how to take and cope with risky decisions	217	1	5	3.81	0.062	0.911
I learnt how to manage time, meet deadlines and work under pressure	217	1	5	3.84	0.059	0.868
Conceptual Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.83*	*0.0605*	*0.890*
I learnt how to manage personnel	217	1	5	3.93	0.057	0.833
I learnt how to manage resources	217	1	5	3.91	0.064	0.946
Organising Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.92*	*0.061*	*0.890*
I learnt how to plan, analyse and predict an outcome	217	1	5	3.98	0.052	0.770
I learned how to set objectives and implement programmes to achieve it.	217	1	5	3.97	0.057	0.833
Strategic Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.98*	*0.055*	*0.802*
I learnt how to be devoted	217	1	5	3.98	0.054	0.802
I learnt how to be persistence	217	1	5	3.89	0.052	0.771
Commitment Competencies	*Weighted*			*3.94*	*0.053*	*0.787*
	Average Weighted			*3.93*	*0.057*	*0.847*

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree

N.B: *When the Average Weighted Mean (W$\bar{x}$)is between 0.01 to 3.00, then competencies were not learnt, whereas when the Average Weighted Mean (W$\bar{x}$)is between 3.01-5.00, competencies were learnt.*

Table 5 presents entrepreneurial competencies acquired by respondents from the LSETF pieces of training. Using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 signifying least agreement with the prompt statement and 5 signifying highest agreement using the ***decision rule*** stated below the table as well as the measurement, the table shows respondents learned opportunity competencies (*W=3.97),* relationship competencies (*W=3.94),* conceptual competencies (*W=3.83*), organising competencies (*W=3.92*), strategic competencies (*W=3.98*) and commitment competencies (*W=*3.94) from the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) pieces of training. The average weighted mean of this table is (*W*x̄=3.93), evidently showing that all respondents agree that different pieces of training they underwent at LSETF programmes contributed to their entrepreneurial competencies.

Summarily, tables 4 and 5 imply that micro, small and medium business owners that participated in any of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes acquired soft and technical skills, which contributed to their entrepreneurial competencies (*W*x̄ =3.93). It was also revealed that entrepreneurial competencies such as opportunity competencies (*W=3.97),* relationship competencies (*W=3.94),* conceptual competencies (*W=3.83*), organising competencies (*W=3.92*), strategic competencies (*W=3.98*) and commitment competencies (*W=*3.94) were acquired by these business owners that attended any of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes.

Research Question Two: What effect does Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) incentive support policy have on MSMEs in Lagos State performance?

Table 6: Incentive Supports Given to Respondents by Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF)

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Do you receive any support from the programme after completion?	Yes	217	100.0
	No	0	0.0
	Total	**217**	**100.0**
Which support did you receive?	Access to free interest loan	74	34.1
	Free access to mentorship	46	21.2
	Free access to workspace	41	18.9
	Free equipment	56	25.8
	Total	**217**	**100.0**

Table 6 presents data on the kind of incentive support given to respondents by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund. All (100%) of the respondents claimed they were supported one way or the other after completing the programme. 34.1% (n=74) of the respondents claimed that they were given access to free interest loan, 25.8% (n=56) claimed they were

given free equipment, 21.2% (n=46) claimed they were given free access to mentorship, and 18.9% (n=41) of the respondents claimed they were given free access to the workspace. Hence, participants/beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes enjoyed incentive support such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to the workspace.

Table 7: Effect of LSETF incentive support on MSMEs performance in Lagos State

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
Revenue Growth	*Weighted*			*3.84*	*0.0682*	*1.005*
Access to free interest loan	217	1	5	3.97	0.080	1.176
Free equipment	217	1	5	3.63	0.060	0.878
Free access to mentorship	217	1	5	3.82	0.066	0.977
Free access to workspace	217	1	5	3.93	0.067	0.988
Customer Growth	*Weighted*			*3.79*	*0.068*	*0.995*
Access to free interest loan	217	1	5	3.92	0.078	1.148
Free equipment	217	1	5	3.67	0.060	0.887
Free access to mentorship	217	1	5	3.70	0.065	0.956
Free access to workspace	217	1	5	3.86	0.067	0.990
Attracting Capital	*Weighted*			*3.85*	*0.065*	*0.960*
Access to free interest loan	217	1	5	3.93	0.074	1.090
Free equipment	217	1	5	3.73	0.062	0.914
Free access to mentorship	217	1	5	3.82	0.063	0.926
Free access to workspace	217	1	5	3.93	0.062	0.908
	Average Weighted			***3.83***	***0.067***	***0.987***

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree

N.B: *When the Average Weighted Mean (W$\bar{x}$)is between 0.01 to 3.00, the incentive support variable has no significant effect on business performance, whereas when the Average Weighted Mean (W$\bar{x}$)is between 3.01-5.00, the incentive support variable has a significant effect on business performance.*

Table 7 presents the effect of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund incentive support given to participants that are micro, small, and medium enterprise owners on their business performance. Using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 signifying least agreement with the prompt statement and 5 signifying highest agreement using the ***decision rule*** stated below

the table as well as the measurement, the table shows respondents agreed (W =3.84) that incentive support such as access to free interest loan, free equipment, free access to mentorship and free access to a workspace with led to revenue growth. Similarly, they agreed (W=3.79) that this incentive supports led to customer growth; likewise, they agreed (W =3.85) that the support aided them in attracting capital.

This analysis implies that respondents agreed ($W\bar{x}$=3.83) that this incentive supports because they contributed to their revenue growth (W =3.84), customer growth (W=3.79), and attract capital (W =3.85) to their businesses have a significant positive effect on their businesses performance.

In summary, participants of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes enjoyed incentive support such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to a workspace that they claimed affected their businesses' revenue growth (W =3.84), customer growth (W=3.79) and capital attraction (W =3.85) which means that the incentive supports have a positive significant ($W\bar{x}$=3.83) effect on their business performance.

Research Question Three: What effect do entrepreneurial competencies' of MSMEs owners/managers have on their business performance?

Table 8: Effect of entrepreneurial competencies' of MSMEs Owners on Business Revenue Growth

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
Revenue Growth	*Weighted*			*3.95*	*0.060*	*0.879*
I learnt how to pursue opportunities	217	1	5	4.30	0.063	0.922
I learnt how to develop new opportunities	217	1	5	3.77	0.052	0.759
I learnt how to partner with competitors and suppliers.	217	1	5	3.86	0.058	0.855
I learnt how to network with customers and build contacts	217	1	5	4.06	0.058	0.853
I learnt how to take and cope with risky decisions	217	1	5	3.91	0.059	0.872
I learnt how to manage time, meet deadlines and work under pressure	217	1	5	3.88	0.059	0.870
I learnt how to manage personnel	217	1	5	3.90	0.057	0.836
I learnt how to manage resources	217	1	5	3.98	0.059	0.866
I learnt how to plan, analyse and predict an outcome	217	1	5	4.00	0.058	0.855
I learned how to set objectives and implement programmes to achieve it.	217	1	5	3.96	0.065	0.964
I learnt how to be devoted	217	1	5	3.88	0.064	0.945
I learnt how to be persistence	217	1	5	3.91	0.065	0.951

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree**

N.B: *When Weighted Mean (W) is between 0.01 to 3.00, the entrepreneurial competencies' variable has no significant effect on Revenue Growth, whereas when Weighted Mean (W) is between 3.01-5.00, the incentive support variable has a significant effect on Revenue Growth.*

Table 8 presents data on the effect of entrepreneurial competencies acquired by owners/managers of micro, small and medium enterprises on the revenue growth of their businesses. According to the table, respondents agreed that entrepreneurial competencies significantly (*W*= 3.95) affect revenue growth.

This implies that owners/managers who benefited from Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training programmes agreed that the entrepreneurial competencies acquired during the training significantly positively (W= 3.95) on their revenue growth.

Table 9: Effect of entrepreneurial competencies' of MSMEs Owners on Business Customer Growth

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
Customer Growth	*Weighted*			3.95	0.061	0.897
I learnt how to pursue opportunities	217	1	5	4.18	0.061	0.898
I learnt how to develop new opportunities	217	1	5	3.85	0.059	0.864
I learnt how to partner with competitors and suppliers.	217	1	5	3.93	0.061	0.897
I learnt how to network with customers and build contacts	217	1	5	3.99	0.066	0.967
I learnt how to take and cope with risky decisions	217	1	5	3.89	0.063	0.926
I learnt how to manage time, meet deadlines and work under pressure	217	1	5	3.89	0.059	0.862
I learnt how to manage personnel	217	1	5	3.96	0.059	0.871
I learnt how to manage resources	217	1	5	3.96	0.060	0.881
I learnt how to plan, analyse and predict an outcome	217	1	5	3.99	0.057	0.836
I learned how to set objectives and implement programmes to achieve it.	217	1	5	3.99	0.066	0.967
I learnt how to be devoted	217	1	5	3.91	0.063	0.933
I learnt how to be persistence	217	1	5	3.88	0.058	0.860

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree

N.B: *When Weighted Mean (W) is between 0.01 to 3.00, the entrepreneurial competencies' variable has no significant effect on Customer Growth, whereas when Weighted Mean (W) is between 3.01-5.00, the incentive support variable has a significant effect on Customer Growth.*

Table 9 presents data on the effect of entrepreneurial competencies acquired by owners/managers of micro, small and medium enterprises on the customer growth of their businesses. According to the table, respondents agreed that entrepreneurial competencies significantly (W= 3.95) affect customer growth.

This implies that owners/managers who benefited from Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training programmes agreed that the entrepreneurial competencies acquired during the training positively affected customer growth (W= 3.95).

Table 10: Effect of entrepreneurial competencies of owners of MSMEs on Attracting Capital for their Businesses

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
Attracting Capital	*Weighted*			3.93	0.062	0.916
I learnt how to pursue opportunities	217	1	5	4.18	0.063	0.926
I learnt how to develop new opportunities	217	1	5	3.84	0.054	0.801
I learnt how to partner with competitors and suppliers.	217	1	5	3.98	0.061	0.905
I learnt how to network with customers and build contacts	217	1	5	3.97	0.065	0.962
I learnt how to take and cope with risky decisions	217	1	5	3.93	0.065	0.959
I learnt how to manage time, meet deadlines and work under pressure	217	1	5	3.91	0.062	0.908
I learnt how to manage personnel	217	1	5	3.94	0.058	0.858
I learnt how to manage resources	217	1	5	3.93	0.063	0.925
I learnt how to plan, analyse and predict an outcome	217	1	5	3.91	0.068	1.000
I learned how to set objectives and implement programmes to achieve it.	217	1	5	3.92	0.060	0.888
I learnt how to be devoted	217	1	5	3.86	0.061	0.899
I learnt how to be persistence	217	1	5	3.83	0.065	0.959

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree

N.B: *When Weighted Mean (W) is between 0.01 to 3.00, then the entrepreneurial competencies' variable has no significant effect on Attracting capital to the business, whereas when Weighted Mean (W) is between 3.01-5.00, the incentive support variable has a significant effect on Attracting capital to the business.*

Table 10 presents data on the effect of entrepreneurial competencies acquired by owners/managers of micro, small and medium enterprises on attracting capital to their businesses. According to the table, respondents agreed that entrepreneurial competencies significantly (*W*= 3.93) positively affect their ability to attract capital to their businesses.

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This implies that owners/managers who benefited from Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training programmes agreed that the entrepreneurial competencies acquired during the training positively affect their ability to attract capital (W= 3.93) to their businesses.

Table 11: Variables affected by MSMEs Owners' Entrepreneurial Competencies' Effect on their Business Performance.

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic
Revenue Growth	*Weighted*			*3.95*	*0.060*	*0.879*
Customer Growth	*Weighted*			3.95	0.061	0.897
Attracting Capital	*Weighted*			3.93	0.062	0.916
	Average Weighted			***3.94***	***0.061***	***0.897***

***Decision Rule if mean is 0.01 to 1.00= Strongly Disagree; 1.01 to 2.00= Disagree; 2.01 to 3.00 =Neutral; 3.01 to 4.00= Agree; 4.01 to 5.00 = Strongly agree

N.B: *When the Average Weighted Mean (W̄x) is between 0.01 to 3.00, then the entrepreneurial competencies' variable has no significant effect on Attracting capital to the business, whereas when the Average Weighted Mean (W̄x) is between 3.01-5.00, the incentive support variable has a significant effect on Attracting capital to the business.*

This table presents data on business performance variables affected by micro, small and medium-scale enterprise owners' entrepreneurial and relationship with business performance. As seen in table 11, revenue growth (W= 3.95), customer growth (W= 3.95), and (W= 3.93) showed that entrepreneurial competencies have a positive significant ($W\bar{x}$= 3.94) on their business performance.

Conclusively, owners and managers of micro, small and medium-scale businesses that were beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training programmes agreed that the entrepreneurial competencies acquired during the training had a significant positive effect on their revenue growth (W= 3.95), customer growth (W= 3.95) and funding (attracting capital) (W= 3.93) for their businesses. These performance variables ($W\bar{x}$= 3.94) have a significant positive effect on their businesses.

4.3 Inferential Data and Analysis

This section employed inferential tools such as Regression analysis and Correlation analysis to examine the significance of the effect variables have on each other and the relationship among the variables and indicators stated to achieve the study's objectives. The hypothesis tested here include:

iv.   Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training has no significant effect on the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

v.   Consistent incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has no significant effect on their performance.

vi.   Entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers have no significant effect on their performance.

4.3.1 Hypothesis One

H_0: Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training has no significant effect on the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

Table 12a: Significance of LSETF training programmes on entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers

Model Summary[b]				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.070[a]	.005	.000	6.10936
a. Predictors: (Constant), LSETF_Programme				
b. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur_Competence				

Table 12b: Significance of LSETF training programmes on entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	39.658	1	39.658	1.063	.04[b]
	Residual	8024.729	215	37.324		
	Total	8064.387	216			
a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur_Competence						
b. Predictors: (Constant), LSETF_Programme						

Table 12a used a regression model to test the null hypothesis that Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training has no significant effect on the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State. The model summary table showed the coefficient of regression, R square of 0.005, as a very weak coefficient of determination; this implies that the regression model is not fit for prediction. The ANOVA table (table 12b) shows the F-test of 1.063 and the significance level of 0.04. These values showed that the LSETF program significantly affects entrepreneur competence (pvalue < 0.05). In summary, LSETF training indeed has significance for various entrepreneurial competence.

Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and uphold an alternate hypothesis that Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training significantly affects the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

4.3.2 Hypothesis Two

H_0: Consistent incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has no significant effect on their performance.

Table 13: Significant of Incentive Support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF on Business Performance

Correlations (N= 217)		Incentive_support	Revenue_growth	Customers_growth	Attracting_Capital
Incentive_support	Pearson Correlation	1	**-.060**	**-.077**	**-.087**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.038	.025	.020
Revenue_growth	Pearson Correlation	-.060	1	**.948****	.907****
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.382		.000	.000
Customers_growth	Pearson Correlation	-.077	.948****	1	.907****
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.258	.000		.000
Attracting_Capital	Pearson Correlation	-.087	.907****	.907****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.203	.000	.000	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The table below shows the correlation coefficients of the variables " Incentive support " and entrepreneur revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital's potential. Between " Incentive support and revenue growth, the correlation coefficient is (r = -0.060, pv = 0.038), a very weak negative correlation depicting an indirect relationship between the two variables and a significant value less than 0.05 implying that there is a significant of Incentive_support on revenue growth. Furthermore, between incentive support and customers growth, the correlation coefficient is (r = -0.077, pv = 0.025), a very weak negative correlation depicting that there is an indirect relationship between the two variables and a significant value less than 0.05 implying that there is the significance of Incentive support on customers growth. Between access to operating capital and the potential of entrepreneurs to attract capital, the correlation coefficient is (r = -0.087, pv = 0.020), a very weak negative correlation depicting that there is an indirect relationship between the two variables and a significant value less than 0.05 implying that incentive support is significant on attracting capitals. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis since incentive supports are significant on the three (3) key business performance indicators. The study then upholds an alternate hypothesis that incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has a significant effect on their performance.

4.3.3 Hypothesis Three

H$_0$: Entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSME owners/managers have no significant effect on their performance.

Table 14: Significant Entrepreneurial competencies in MSMEs performance

Correlations (N= 217)		Revenue_gr owth	Entrepreneu r_Competen ce	Custom ers_gro wth	Attracti ng_Capi tal
Revenue_growth	Pearson Correlation	1	.514**	.948**	.907**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
Entrepreneur_Co mpetence	Pearson Correlation	**.514****	1	**.464****	**.470****
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
Customers_grow th	Pearson Correlation	.948**	**.464****	1	.907**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
Attracting_Capit al	Pearson Correlation	.907**	**.470****	.907**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Table 14 above shows the correlation coefficients of the variables "entrepreneur competencies " and entrepreneur revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital potential. Between entrepreneurs' competencies and revenue growth, the correlation coefficient is (r = 0.514, sig. = 0.00), a moderately strong positive correlation depicting that there is a direct relationship between the two variables and a significant value lesser than 0.05 implying that entrepreneur competencies are significant on revenue growth. The correlation coefficient between entrepreneur competencies and customer growth is (r = 0.464, sig. = 0.00), a moderately strong positive correlation depicting a direct relationship between the two variables and a significant value lesser than 0.05 implying that entrepreneur competencies are significant to customers growth. Between entrepreneur competencies and attracting capital potential, the correlation coefficient is (r = 0.47, sig. = 0.00), a moderately strong positive correlation depicting that there is a direct relationship between the two variables and a significant value lesser than 0.05 implying that entrepreneur competencies are significant on customers growth. In summary, there is a significant effect of entrepreneurs' competencies on the business performance of managers.

Thus, we reject the null hypothesis since entrepreneur competencies are significant on the three (3) key business indicators. Hence, entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers significantly affect their business performance.

4.4 Summary of Findings

This study examines the Implication of the Lagos State Government policies through the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) on Micro, Small, and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs) operating in Lagos State. Precisely, this study's objectives assess the significant impact of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State; determine whether access to incentive supports by MSMEs in Lagos State significantly affects their performance, and determine whether various entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MESMEowners/managers significantly affect their performance. The study's findings were made through analysis of descriptive data and inferential data obtained from research questions, as well as testing the three null hypotheses stated in this study.

The first findings from the objective one revealed that owners of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) who participated in any of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes acquired soft and technical skills that contributed to their

entrepreneurial competencies (Wx =3.93). It was also revealed that these business owners who attended any of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes acquired entrepreneurial competencies such as opportunity competencies (W=3.97), relationship competencies (W=3.94), conceptual competencies (W=3.83), organising competencies (W=3.92), strategic competencies (W=3.98), and commitment competencies (W=3.94). The Pearson Correlations study rejects the null hypothesis. It supports an alternate hypothesis that Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training significantly affects the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

Other findings of this study derived from objective two proved that participants of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes enjoyed incentive support such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to a workspace that they claimed affected their businesses revenue growth (*W* =3.84), customer growth (*W*=3.79) and capital attraction (*W* =3.85) which means that the incentive supports have a positive significant (*W*x̄=*3.83)* effect on their business performance. The study also rejected the null hypothesis of this study to corroborate the above finding that incentive support has significance on the three (3) key business performance indicators. Hence, by upholding the alternate hypothesis, it means that incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has a significant effect on their performance.

The last finding was derived from objective three. It discovered that owners and managers of micro, small and medium-scale businesses that were beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund training programmes agreed that the entrepreneurial competencies acquired during the training have a significant positive effect on their revenue growth (*W*= 3.95), customer growth (*W*= 3.95) and funding (attracting capital) (*W*= 3.93) for their businesses. These performance variables (*W*x̄= 3.94) have a significant positive effect on their businesses. To corroborate this finding, the study rejects the third null hypothesis stated in this and upholds an alternative which states that entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers significantly affect their business performance since it has a significant effect on revenue growth customer growth, and attracting capital (funding).

Conclusively, the study, after analysis of the descriptive data and testing of hypotheses, summarily found that:

1. Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes significantly impact various entrepreneurial competencies of owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) that were beneficiaries of the programmes.

2. Incentive supports such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to workspace made available by   Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) to beneficiaries (owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises) after a training programme has a direct significance on their business performance.

3. Entrepreneurial competencies that owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) acquired during (LSETF) training programmes significantly affect key business performance variables of revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital (funding), therefore entrepreneurial competencies have a significant effect on their business performance.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings made in chapter four and synthesise them with experts and relevant empirical studies as well as theories and model used in this research. It highlights whether the findings of this study are novel or part of an ongoing discussion and showcases insights, especially new ones, during the discourse. It also shows contrary views of experts about the findings.

5.2 Discussion

This study which focuses on examing the implication of government policy and entrepreneurship competencies on the performance of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs), discovered that The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes have a significant impact on the owners/managers of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that have benefited from the programmes. Here, it was discovered that entrepreneurial competencies such as opportunity competencies (W=3.97), relationship competencies (W=3.94), conceptual competencies (W=3.83), organising competencies (W=3.92), strategic competencies (W=3.98), and commitment competencies (W=3.94) were acquired by MSMEs owners who attended any of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes. The alternate hypothesis accepted in this study corroborates the finding that the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training significantly impacts the various entrepreneurial competencies of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State.

This finding is corroborated by studies such as (Akeke et al., 2022) and (Ogundele, 2020) that revealed that entrepreneurial competencies could be acquired through training and education. Since there is an increase in unemployment in Nigeria, it has become pertinent for young people, especially graduates of secondary and tertiary education, to learn how to be self-sufficient, creative, imaginative, and take steps to generate opportunities in the entrepreneurial sector. For this to be achievable, prospective entrepreneurs must acquire the necessary soft and technical skills in their focus industry as well as a complement with entrepreneurial competencies such as opportunity competencies, relationship competencies, conceptual competencies, organising competencies, strategic competencies, and commitment competencies which include fostering cooperation with the business and industrial world, training in production and marketing, organising teaching factories,

supporting experts, teacher competencies in learning entrepreneurship, and utilising local potential (Yohana, 2020). Beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes stated that six competencies identified by Man et al. (2002), Bird (1995), and Lau et al. (2000) were prominent in this study. They claimed that LSETF training programmes had provided them with the necessary entrepreneurial skills. When women-owned SMMEs in East London, South Africa, perform better when they have entrepreneurial skills, Zizile and Tendai (2018) emphasised the importance of entrepreneurial training in acquiring entrepreneurial competencies. This demonstrates the significance of the LSETF training programmes.

This study made another finding while measuring and testing the research question and hypothesis two. It was discovered that incentive supports such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free access to mentorship, and free access to workspace made available by Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) to beneficiaries (owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises) after a training programme has a direct significance on their business performance. The finding demonstrated that participants in Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes received incentives to support, such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free mentorship, and free access to a workspace, which they claimed affected their businesses' revenue growth (W =3.84), customer growth (W=3.79), and capital attraction (W =3.85), indicating that the incentive supports have a positive significant (Wx=3.83). The study also rejected the null hypothesis to confirm that incentive support significantly impacts the three (3) key business performance indicators. Hence, by upholding the alternate hypothesis, it means that incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State by LSETF has a significant effect on their performance. Just like Lagos State Employment Trust Fund was initiated to promote entrepreneurship and MSMEs in Nigeria, the federal government of Nigeria has set up many intervention schemes to provide long-term or specialized funds for promoting businesses in Nigeria (Ikpor et al., 2017). Currently, the Federal Government of Nigeria, led by President Buhari, operates the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), which focuses on raising the country's standard of living and prioritised development under four key pillars such as agriculture and food security, transport infrastructure (especially roads and rails) as well as energy sufficiency (e.g., power/petroleum products) through integrated people-centered, development planning.

Similarly to the Lagos State Government policy, in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, government policies, including a government intervention fund through the Bank of Industry, entrepreneurship education integrated into formal education, and a ban on the importation of locally made goods, among others, have been put in place to mitigate the adverse effects of environmental factors on SMEs productivity (Makinde, 2019) Therefore, it makes the case that government policies have a significant role in reducing the adverse effects of environmental variables on the productivity of SMEs in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. The rise in sales income of SMEs in the states of Ondo and Ekiti was significantly influenced by tax incentives in the form of an investment allowance, tax holidays, tax credits, and tax deferments (Olayemi and Folajimi, 2021).

 Government capacity-building initiatives, the government's supply of infrastructure assistance programmes, and the government's provision of financial assistance have significantly impacted the expansion of SMEs in the Keffi Local Area (Akawu, Agum, and Awogbemi, 2018).

Research question and hypothesis three revealed that entrepreneurial competencies that owners/managers of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) acquired during (LSETF) training programmes significantly affect key business performance variables of revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital (funding), therefore entrepreneurial competencies have a significant effect on their business performance. These performance variables ($W\bar{x}$= 3.94) have a significant positive effect on their businesses. To corroborate this finding, the study rejects the third null hypothesis stated in this and upholds an alternative which states that entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers significantly affect their business performance since it has a significant effect on revenue growth customer growth, and attracting capital (funding). This finding is similar to (Babayayi, Zubairu, and Badara's, 2021) view that entrepreneurial skills of business owners, such as proactiveness, imaginativeness, and ability to identify possibilities, influence the success or performance of the business. Simply put, business success is influenced by the owner/manager's skill and ability (competence) of the owner/manager(Oyeku et al., 2014). Entrepreneurial capabilities are seen as a driving factor that aids in the development of any establishment(Issa and Onuoha, 2020). Understanding the role of an entrepreneur gives a better insight into what competencies are needed by entrepreneurs to ensure the business's survival and success. Entrepreneurial competencies are individual characteristics that include attitudes and behaviours that assist entrepreneurs

in achieving and maintaining success in their firms. Entrepreneurial competencies encompass the entrepreneur's motives, qualities, self-image, attitudes, behaviours, talents, and knowledge (Minimol, 2021). Exploring the environment assists business owners in identifying and locating outstanding opportunities that can help their firm grow. Entrepreneurs must carefully manage their internal and external resources to capitalise on these opportunities. Although some resources are widely accessible, entrepreneurs' ability to acquire and use such resources is nonetheless dependent on them.

According to Pepple and Enuoh (2020), entrepreneurial core competencies, character traits, and learning capacity positively correlate with business performance. Organisational and interpersonal skills are necessary for entrepreneurs in managerial roles and are favourably connected with business success. Similarly to this (Astuti, Supanto, and Supriadi, 2019), the link and effect of entrepreneurial competencies on company success in SMEs are minor. Personal maturity competence has a significant impact on the business success of SMEs. Regardless, the outcomes are remarkable since they have proven beneficial in developing the specific skills for the businesses' distinct goals. When there is an excellent relationship competence, the firm can maintain its present clients and attract new ones, improving its financial well-being.

CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study accompanied by the study findings as well as the conclusion and recommendation of the study.

6.2 Conclusion

This study investigates the impact of government policy and entrepreneurship competencies on the performance of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). The first finding revealed that training programmes funded by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) significantly impact the owners/managers of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that have benefited from the programmes. The tested hypothesis confirms that the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training significantly impacts the various entrepreneurial competencies of Lagos State MSME owners/managers. As a result, LSETF training programmes equipped them with the necessary entrepreneurial skills. Training programmes assist people in developing entrepreneurial skills. As a result, the government should develop more training programmes for entrepreneurs, particularly in developing business plans, proposal writing, project planning, evaluation, and financial management. Entrepreneurial education in secondary and tertiary schools would help young people develop the entrepreneurial skills required to grow MSMEs in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study discovered that access to free interest loans, free equipment, free mentorship, and free access to workspace provided by the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) to beneficiaries (owners/managers of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises) following a training programme has a direct impact on their business performance. Participants in Lagos State Employment Trust Fund programmes received incentives to support, such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free mentorship, and free access to a workspace, which they claimed affected their businesses' revenue growth, customer growth, and capital attraction, indicating that the incentive supports have a positive significant. The alternative hypothesis was supported, implying that LSETF's incentive support of MSMEs in Lagos State significantly affects their performance. As a result, government capacity-building initiatives, infrastructure assistance programmes, and financial assistance have significantly impacted business expansion. According to the findings of this study, government entrepreneurship development programmes increase the success of small and medium-sized enterprises; thus, firms should create an enabling

environment for embracing and implementing government entrepreneurship development programmes to increase the success of small and medium-sized enterprises. Loans were a standard component of these assistance programmes, which recipients used to expand their businesses or gain the knowledge and expertise necessary to run them. Simply put, how well MSMEs perform depends on the choice of government policy, geographic relationships and government regulations, programmes and incentives, and support systems for the specific sector. Without government intervention, the vast majority of small businesses would have disappeared.

Finally, this study discovered that entrepreneurial skills acquired by owners/managers of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) during (LSETF) training programmes significantly affect key business performance variables such as revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital (funding), implying that entrepreneurial skills have a significant impact on their business performance. These performance indicators have a significant positive impact on their companies. To support this finding, the study rejects the third null hypothesis. It supports an alternative that states that entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MSMEs owners/managers significantly affect revenue growth, customer growth, and attracting capital (funding). Entrepreneurial competencies are individual characteristics such as attitudes and behaviours that help entrepreneurs achieve and sustain success in their businesses. The entrepreneur's motives, qualities, self-image, attitudes, behaviours, talents, and knowledge are all part of his or her entrepreneurial competencies. Entrepreneurial core competencies, personality traits, and learning capacity positively correlate with business performance; thus, this study concludes that entrepreneurs' skills and competencies improve business performance.

In conclusion, government policy (incentive support) and entrepreneurial competencies significantly positively impact the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria. This addressed the study's primary goal, which was to investigate the impact of government policy and entrepreneurial competencies on the performance of MSMEs in Lagos State. Entrepreneurial skill is regarded as a prerequisite for enhancing organisational performance.

6.3 Recommendation

This study recommends that prospective entrepreneurs should acquire the necessary soft and technical skills in their target industry, as well as a complement of entrepreneurial competencies such as opportunity competencies, relationship competencies, conceptual

competencies, organizing competencies, strategic competencies, and commitment competencies, which include fostering cooperation with the business and industrial worlds, production and marketing training, or a combination of the two. Government should create enabling environment for young people to go into entrepreneurship. Training, seminars, and mentorship should be accessible to young people from their secondary school years to be equipped with entrepreneurial skills and competencies to help them start and grow a business.

Lagos State Government, through the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), should continue to invest in training Lagosians to equip them with entrepreneurial competencies and also provide incentive support such as access to free interest loans, free equipment, free mentorship, and free access to a workspace to help these entrepreneurs scale their business, especially those that are just starting up. Also, other states in Nigeria, especially the South-West states of Ogun, Osun, Oyo, and Ondo, can copy the Lagos template with some changes to implement the project in their states which will contribute to job creation, reduce unemployment, contribute to economic development as well as position the state for foreign investment.

6.4 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The study is limited to the beneficiaries of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), which are members of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN); hence the findings of this dissertation may be difficult to generalise due to this fact. Also, only a Abductive research approach was used, which limits the insight that would have been obtained from a mixed-method, a combination of deductive and inductive research approaches. Also, the sample frame was small compared to the population. Also, future researchers should use non-restrictive case studies and employ both deductive and inductive research approaches, which means they can use both qualitative and quantitative data mixed methods. A mixed method approach may provide a more in-depth understanding of the subject. Other researchers should consider examining the subject using quantitative and qualitative research methods. Micro businesses in developing countries lack access to reliable financial data. Future studies should make use of available financial data.

Nonetheless, this research adds. Moreover, since this study is cross-sectional, which means that data were retrieved and analyzed in a one-time situation, a longitudinal study could

provide an opportunity to explore the subject much longer over a period of time to compare data or research outcomes.

6.6 Personal Reflection on this Study Journey

I started this study to learn how government programmes on entrepreneurship, especially training for aspiring and established business owners, can help them be more effective in running their companies. Micro, small, and medium-sized businesses are widely acknowledged as Nigeria's economic backbone. Almost 80% of the country's businesses fall into one of these categories. The Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training programmes were used as a case study in this study, which examined the effects of government policy (incentive support) and entrepreneurial competencies on the performance of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. This is because LSETF makes use of the independent variables in this study.

This research is in a relatively new and developing field, which challenged me at the start of the study. However, I was willing to weather the storm and give it my all to make discoveries that would improve and expand my body of knowledge on the subject. The burden became lighter, and the challenge became more exciting for me with excellent supervisory support, access to great materials in Moodle regarding various aspects of the research process, and support from other tutors and colleagues. This research topic has taught me much about micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, particularly the various federal and state government policies and programmes implemented to help these businesses. This programme has also improved my research abilities. Supervisory support, in particular, has helped me understand the nuances of the research and how to put together a solid intellectual effort like this one. Such direction gave me more confidence and pushed me to work harder to achieve the best results possible with this research. I have improved my skills with the Microsoft Office and IBM SPSS software applications and how they will be used in the research process. My time management skills have also improved, and I can confidently multitask better than when I started the programme.

During this study, I encountered some difficulties. First and foremost, I encountered numerous bottlenecks in gaining access to the study's population. Furthermore, the research population was hesitant to complete the questionnaire. Some requested incentives because they saw that I was conducting the research from an overseas institution. They claimed that I had been given money to conduct the research and that I needed to share it with them before they filled out the form. It took the intervention of the group administrator for them

to realise I was a postgraduate student conducting research as part of my postgraduate degree. This contributed to the delay in completing my work and the lack of a large sample frame. Another challenge I faced was gathering material for a literature review. Many relevant studies to this study require me to pay before permission to download, or view is granted, limiting my ability to pursue high-impact studies in high-impact journals. My knowledge of the internet allows me to navigate freemium websites like ResearchGate and Academia, which allow me to send requests to research authors who provide a free copy of their studies. I am grateful to everyone I contacted on Researchgate and Academia. They gave me free copies of their research and allowed me to finish this project.

Also, I was able to improve my managerial and research skills, as well as learn more about correlation analysis. I could analyse and present my research data to the best of my ability by watching research methodology content on YouTube. This was a fantastic learning experience for me. It should be noted that my supervisor painstakingly guided me through all of these processes, advising me on what to try out and what to do, as well as telling me how to do them, which I supplemented by reading bookings and watching YouTube tutorials. I am confident that everything I have learned on this journey will be helpful as I advance my career. My journey of putting this project together was challenging and demanding. However, thanks to my supervisor's professional and fatherly guidance, it became exciting, and I am grateful for all of his help. I am also grateful to all of my classmates who shared one piece of advice or another, as well as all of the faculty members who, directly or indirectly, made this possible through their teachings.

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Questions   Responses 217   Settings

Implication of government policy and entrepreneurial competence on the performance of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Lagos State, Nigeria.

You are being asked to take part in a research study on Implication of government policy and entrepreneurial competence on the performance of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Lagos State, Nigeria. I am Ebube Valentine Onuorah, a post graduate student pursuing Masters in International Business in National College of Ireland. I am being supervised by my Professor Mr Richard Heywood , National College of Ireland. The project has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee for undertaking this research.

What Will Happen

This study will assess the significant impact of Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) training on the various entrepreneurial competence of MSME owners/managers in Lagos State; determine whether access to operating capital by MSMEs in Lagos State significantly affects their performance and further determine whether various entrepreneurial competencies acquired by MESMEowners/managers significantly affect their performance.

Time Commitment

The questions in this form will take between 2-3 minutes and you just have to pick an option. There is no long or short answers.

Participants' Rights

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without any explanation required from you. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn / destroyed.   You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you. You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome. A full de-briefing will be given after the study). If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

Confidentiality/Anonymity

The data I collect does not contain any personal information about you except your age, salary, gender and education level. These information will be considered in the report to justify my research with the appropriate audience. Neither your personal information nor any organisational information will be disclosed to others.

For Further Information

 I, Ebube Valentine Onuorah will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact me at x21108374@student.ncirl.ie

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Sex

○ Male

○ Female

○ Prefer not to say

○ Other...

○ Add option

Age *

○ 18-22 years

○ 23-27 years

○ 28-32 years

○ 33 years and above

Level of Education *

◯ Primary Education

◯ Secondary Education (WAEC, NECO,GCE)

◯ Diploma

◯ BSc./HND

◯ MA/MSc.

◯ PhD

Marital Status *

◯ Single

◯ Married

◯ Separated

◯ Divorced

◯ Widow/Widower

Do you know about the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF)? *

◯ Yes

◯ No

Have You benefited from any of the training? *

○ Yes

○ No

Which of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes were you beneficiary?

○ USADF Vocational Training

○ UNDP Vocational Training

○ GIZ Vocational Training

Which of the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF) programmes were you beneficiary?

○ Construction

○ Fashion

○ Beauty

○ Business Support

Which skill do you acquire in the training programme? *

◯ Soft Skills

◯ Technical Skills Training

◯ Both

On a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 representing the least agreement and 5 representing the highest agreement, rate the following statements as they relate to soft skills you learn during the training. *

	1	2	3	4	5
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Do you receive any support from the programme after completion? *

◯ Yes

◯ No

76

Which of the support did you receive? *

○ Access to free interest loan

○ Free equipment

○ Free access to mentorship

○ Free access to workplace

After section 1   Continue to next section   ▼

Section 2 of 3

Section title (optional)   ⌄⌃   ⋮

On a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 representing the least agreement and 5 representing the highest agreement, rate the following statements as they relate to effect of the support policy of LSETF to the performance of your business.

*

Revenue Growth

	1	2	3	4	5
Access to free ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free equipment	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○

77

*

Customer Growth

	1	2	3	4	5
Access to free ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free equipment	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○

*

Attracting Capital

	1	2	3	4	5
Access to free ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free equipment	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○
Free access to ...	○	○	○	○	○

On a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 representing the least agreement and 5 representing the highest agreement, rate the following statements as they relate to effect of the support policy of LSETF to the performance of your business.

:::

Revenue Growth *

	1	2	3	4	5
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to …	○	○	○	○	○

Customer   Growth *

	1	2	3	4	5
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I learnt how to ...	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Attracting Capital *

	1	2	3	4	5
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○
I learnt how to ...	○	○	○	○	○