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**ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT AND THE GROWTH OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE
ENTERPRISES IN FCT ABUJA, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Over the years, risk management has become a priority for all sectors of the economy. Through risk management, organizations can ensure that they will achieve the desired results, reduce the impact of threats to acceptable levels, and increase opportunities to seize opportunities. Based on this, the study examined the effect of enterprise risk management on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. The study adopted a descriptive research design to determine the relationship between the variables using multiple regression analysis. The study found that risk assessment, risk mitigation and risk implementation have positive effects on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. From the findings, the study recommends that SMEs need to educate their employees about the importance of enterprise risk management. To ensure efficient and effective risk management, since the risk management process is performed by the employees in the enterprises. Highly qualified personnel serve as the first line of defence to protect the organization and reduce risk. No matter how many processes and procedures in the SMEs sector have been developed and enhanced, they will not protect the organization unless performed by qualified personnel.

Keywords: Risk Management, SMEs Growth, Risk Assessment, Risk Mitigation, Risk Implementation

1. Introduction

The life of a man and his activities are full of risk as everything that exists in the world is automatically exposed to risk and man cannot successfully operate without being faced with the risk around. Risk is part of every activity of life, as reputable business enterprises include risk as part of their daily operation likewise every individual has to consider risk as part of the percale of existence. It means that it is a risk to accept taking a risk or not to accept risk and other unaware risks that may occur as nature permits. But the management of risk has exposed determines that will permit the survival, continuity and development of business enterprise and the environment.

Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic growth and

development of many countries in the world. The roles of SMEs are reflected in their contributions and capability to create employment, reduce poverty, equitably distribute income and resources, enhance innovative activities, develop entrepreneurial skills, encourage urbanization and improve the living standard of our dear society (Aigboduwa & Oisamoje, 2013).

Multinationals are gradually reaching their optimum growth and competitive capacity, with small enterprises facing formidable market share challenges across the world. By sheer numbers, ubiquity, and penetration of all sectors and industrial niches, the SMEs proved to be uncontainable contenders in the market economy compared to other sectors of the economy. The other factor was globalization which contributed immensely to the

empowering of private initiative, innovation and entrepreneurship development. Trade liberalization was part of the globalization process that led to the massive development; of entrepreneurial activities in society. The SMEs' challenge might have caused the bandwagon re-organization of many giant companies throughout the late '80s and '90s by way of countless notable global mergers and acquisitions and reengineering processes of positioning better appreciable commercial activities (Okoye & Amu-Nnadi, 2013)

In Nigeria, the significance of the contribution of SMEs is evidenced in the survey conducted by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2013) which revealed that over 37 million SMEs are existing and operating in Nigeria, employing 84.02% of the total workforce, and contributing 48.5% and 7.3% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and exports goods and services respectively.

Small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) provide a big portion of jobs in many economies of the world. However, in the course of SMEs operations, they encounter many risks such as political, natural disaster, credit and operation risks, especially during the start-up and growth stage. They usually confront these risks offensively to growth which is in contrast with large firms that usually take risks defensively to ensure operation strength. Though, the ability of SMEs to withstand risks is lesser compared to that of the larger firms.

Enterprise risk management is a system that works proactively by examining the various risks that may arise and defining procedures and measures that increase the organization's ability to avoid or mitigate the impact of risk processes over a period of time. At an acceptable level, enterprise risk management is the process through which an organization can evaluate risks associated with operations, define and develop strategies for managing and maintaining those risks so that it does not pull down the system (Berg, 2010).

Every business, irrespective of its status, must manage its risks to minimize the loss of exposure that may cause

damage or setback to the progress and development of the enterprise. Kagwathi et al. (2014) argued that risk management should be an issue of concern for SMEs because they are more sensitive to business risk and competition than other businesses. They opined that enterprise risk management will always assist in the development of contingency plans that can help to stop the erosion of organizational income and consequently improve performance. In this regard, SMEs thus require accessible and standardized tools for the identification of risks and matching them with appropriate techniques that will yield progress for firms always.

According to Yusuf and Dansu (2013), efficient risk management would constantly improve SMEs' performance and subsequently position them stronger in the competitive market. On the other hand, poor management of risk will jeopardize performance and may threaten the firm's progress though, the risk is often viewed as a threat to the development of firms and therefore, only the adoption of efficient and effective enterprise risk management can turn into a positive opportunity, better performance and their sustainability (Kagwathi et al., 2014).

Enterprise risk management emphasizes the capabilities of a business to anticipate changes, not to avoid risk. Avoidance of risks means waiting for the event to happen then reacting to it rather than preparing for the changes. In reality, many organizations choose to avoid risk; as their risk management strategy. This strategy allows protection from particular losses, on the other hand, deprives them of profit and can cause other risks to take place in the organization (Yusuf & Dansu, 2013).

The study of Amenawo, et al., (2019) used data from the listed SMEs while there are many SMEs that are not listed as such, their information cannot be easily obtained. This study used SMEs in Abuja instead of the listed SMEs in Nigeria. Furthermore, Mbuva, et al. (2018) conducted a study to determine the extent to which risk assessment influences the performance of SMEs projects in Machakos County while Jaber (2020) assessed the impact of risk management practices on the organizational performance

in insurance companies in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jordan. The studies found that enterprise risk management practices have an impact on organizational performance, as risk mitigation was the most influencing organizational performance, followed by risk identification, risk assessment, and risk control, and the least impact was the implementation of risk management. Although, there are studies that linked enterprise risk management and the performance of small enterprises. For an instant, the works of Schieg (2006); Wu et al. (2014); Drari (2018); Sand and Nixon (2021) and Zerihun and Emnet (2021) among others were conducted outside Nigeria except for the work of Salaudeen et al. (2018) who focused on selected listed companies. However, the growth of small and medium enterprises is the concern of this study. On this basis, this study found it demanding to examine enterprise risk management and the growth of small and medium enterprises in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Nigeria.

The study examines enterprise risk management on the growth of SMEs in FCT Abuja, Nigeria. However, to achieve this, the specific objectives are to:

- i. Evaluate the extent to which risk assessment affects the growth of SMEs in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the impact of risk mitigation on the growth of SMEs in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.
- iii. Analyze the impact of risk management implementation on the growth of SMEs in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

Enterprise Risk Management

The concept of enterprise risk management is viewed, as practices that are carried out as a way of enhancing the enterprise's financial and operational health situation through seeking and seizing opportunities and structuring how the organization runs its commercial activities; hence giving the business organization a customized way to manage risk once it occurs at all levels. Enterprise risk management is the anticipation of possible threats and hazards that generate ways of coping with them and also create reliable forms of business value for enterprises (Crouhy et al., 2000).

Dionne (2013) viewed risk management as the management activities organized, designed and programmed to predict measure, and evaluate risks when occurred in order not to allow a stop to business activities. It is also considered the process of managing risk by avoiding risks, reducing negative impacts, as well as reducing impacts to acceptable and bearable levels, and developing management strategies that accept all or part of the risk outcome in a business organization.

According to Lam (2014), enterprise risk management is a procedure of resolution and examination of insecurity from a coherent point of view that keeps in mind the entire firm to strategize and re-strategize for a befitting action. Ariff, et al. (2014) asserted that ERM is one of the basic building blocks of new-age enterprises. Where the emphasis on risk managing risk has morphed into a more calculated way of looking at chances and hazards. They further asserted that ERM is a serious and forceful method of managing risk, and it increases the craving for positive stability.

Enterprise risk management encompasses methodologies and practices that companies use for risk management and to take advantage of any current prospects in attaining their objectives (Eckles, et al., 2014). ERM takes care of many necessities of investors who want to know about the various insecurities faced by the company, all to make sure that the company runs well (Ariff, et al., 2014).

Moeller (2007) described enterprise risk management as a process affected by the entity's board of directors, management, and other personnel, applied in strategy setting and across the enterprise, designed to identify potential events that may affect the entity and manage risk to be within the risk appetite, to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of entity objectives. Enterprise risk management can also be defined as the aspect where firms irrespective of the industry can make an assessment, conduct control activities including exploitation of possible financing mechanisms and monitor the risks arising from different dimensions to enhance the strategic plans of the organization's short term and long-term values to its stakeholder for adequate direction and

straightforward decision and take (Casualty Actuarial Society Forum, 2003).

Concept of SMEs and Micro Enterprises

SMEs and micro-companies are business terms defining companies with many personnel stay small, practically around ten contracted staff for micro-entities, up to 50 workers as a small company, and round at approximately 250 employees to be a medium-sized enterprise. The abbreviation “SME” is used internationally nowadays. In a report on a new definition of SME, the European Commission specified that SMEs contribute a major source of entrepreneurial skills, innovation and employment (2004). Accordingly, to be considered an SME, first, the business must be considered as a legal entity, and then the enterprise will be assessed and levelled by three criteria: staff headcount, annual turnover, and annual balance sheet (2004).

As it is significantly concerned with the number of employees, however, clarifying the size of an organization by merely the staff number is vague. The key differences between micro-companies or SMEs and larger firms lie in various aspects: - Decision-making process. Larger corporations with their bureaucratic levels require considerable time for the decision-making process, in comparison to the speedy process of SMEs. Level of risk embracement. Generally, SMEs, especially start-ups or small businesses in an expanding stage reckon themselves as a risk. Thus, SMEs regularly confront risks offensively to grow; while larger firms take risks defensively, to ensure the operation strength. - Resource allocation. When it comes to budget, every penny counts for a small company. Even though larger corporations are not always in a better position with resources, their limits to allocate resources are more open than the capability of smaller businesses.

2.1 Empirical Review

Mbuva, Charles and Oketch (2018) conduct a study to determine the extent to which risk assessment influences the performance of SME projects in Machakos County. The study applied a pragmatism philosophical approach and descriptive survey research design. A sample size of 265 SMEs was drawn from a target population of 5311

operating in Machakos County using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula (Yamane, 1967). The study used both stratified and convenience sampling methodology and a structured questionnaire were used to collect the data which was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential approaches. For the descriptive, the study used frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation whereas inferential statistics used were F, R² and t-test. The study finding revealed that risk assessment significantly influences the performance of SME projects in Machakos County. The top management has established attainable objectives for all key activities including operations, financial reporting and compliance considerations. Also, the process of identifying, evaluating and mitigating risks inherent to the operations of the SME projects is effective hence minimizing financial losses. It was recommended that the Top management of small and medium enterprise projects should implement the five internal control system components for it is more advantageous as compared to a case where some of them are given more emphasis. The sample size is just 4.98% which is not representing the total population. There is a need for further studies that have a reasonable representation of the total population.

Mouni, et al., (2014) subsequently conducted a study on the effects of firm size on enterprise risk management of 33 listed firms In Kenya. The result indicated that there was a high correlation between firms’ characteristics and enterprise risk management revealing that there was a proportionate increase in firm size to the efficiency of ERM. These results were consistent with those of Gordon, Loeb and Tseng (2009) who concluded that there was a relationship between ERM implementation and firm size. However, they used ERM as a dependent variable while my study used it as the independent variable.

Jaber (2020) assessed the impact of risk management practices on the organizational performance of insurance companies in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Jordan. In order to implement this study, data were collected from 120 managers who work in Jordanian insurance companies by the questionnaire. The study found that risk management practices have an impact on organizational performance, as risk mitigation was the most influencing organizational performance, followed by risk

identification, risk assessment, and risk control, and the least impact was the implementation of risk management. All risk management practices have a positive impact on organizational performance. The study is current but the finding cannot be applied in Abuja because of the difference in the area of the study.

Njeri (2014) carried out a study to examine the effects of risk mitigation strategies on the financial performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive approach in trying to focus on large manufacturing firms in Nairobi. The population of the study in this research is comprised of large-scale manufacturing companies that are based in Nairobi. The study, therefore, involved 46 large manufacturing companies in Nairobi. Table 3.1 shows how 46 firms that form the sample size were arrived at. The study used primary data that was collected through a self-administered questionnaire that consisted of both open and closed-ended questions that were designed to elicit specific responses for qualitative and quantitative analysis respectively. The research deployed both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study found out that the most frequently occurring risk is Production (failures in internal systems, processes and people, or from external factors). Further respondents indicated that Economic (associated with commercial and business performance) risk; occupational risk (health and safety of employees) and operational risk, (fraud, oversight failure, lack of control, and managerial limitations, human error or omission, design mistakes unsafe behaviour, employee practice risks, and sabotage) occurs frequently. The study concludes that the most frequently occurring risk is Production (failures in internal systems, processes and people, or from external factors). The study recommends proper risk mitigation planning. The study is obsolete and the finding cannot be used for a policy as at the current period.

Zerihun and Emnet (2021) conducted a study on assessing the factor that determines enterprise risk management: with special emphasis on tomato production value chains in East Showa Zone, Ethiopia. The study aims at assessing the factor that determines enterprise risk management. The target population of this study were those actors in Tomato production value chains in the East Showa zone, Ethiopia.

It was a cross-sectional survey design that was deployed to undergo the study. Also, stratified random sampling was deployed in selecting target respondents. Therefore, based on two hundred seventy-three (273) respondents responded to the questionnaire. Accordingly, the study found that maintaining a sound enterprise risk management is a function of setting sound strategic planning, exercising participatory leadership and management style and rendering effective marketing services to firms' output.

2.2 Portfolio Theory

Harry Markowitz first developed the basis of portfolio theory in the year 1959. The common sense behind the portfolio theory; is based on the adage that says do not put all your eggs in one basket. This assertion explains the risk-reducing effect of spreading investment across a range of assets that affect a portfolio unexpected bad news concerning one company will be compensated to some extent; by the expected good news about another. Markowitz (1959) has given the tools for identifying portfolios that give the highest return for a particular level of risk. The investors can then select the optimum risk-return trade-off for themselves which is depending on personal risk aversion. These portfolios of different proportions satisfy a particular level of investor risk tolerance. According to the portfolio theory, there is a risk-reducing effect of spreading investment across a range of assets rather than running a single investment.

3. Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive survey design. The design is considered appropriate and suitable for the study because it involves gathering data from members of the study population to determine its current status regarding one or more variables. The survey study utilizes tools like a questionnaire. The target population for this research work is 3500 small and medium scale enterprises in Abuja FCT, Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2020). The sample size is drawn from the target population. This research adopts the Taro Yamane formulation of sampling size.

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \dots\dots\dots 1$$

$$N = \frac{3500}{1+3500(0.05)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{3500}{1+3500(0.0025)}$$

$$N = \frac{3500}{9.75} = 358.97$$

$$SMEG = a + \beta_1 RA + \beta_2 RM + \beta_3 RMI + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 2$$

Where;

RA = Risk assessment

RM = Risk mitigation

RMI = Risk management implementation

SMEG = SMEs growth

a= Constant term

$\beta_1 - \beta_3$ = Estimates of the regression parameters

ε = Stochastic error

The sample size of this study is three hundred and fifty-nine (359) respondents. A random sampling technique was employed in attending to the sampled small and medium enterprises within the study area. The data collected for this study were analyzed using the regression method through SPSS Ver. 20. The various models for each hypothesis are presented below:

4. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Correlation Result

		SMEG	RA	RM	RMI		
SME G	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	350					
RA	Pearson Correlation	.983**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	350	350				
RM	Pearson Correlation	.989**	.990**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	350	350	350			
RMI	Pearson Correlation	.908**	.873**	.900**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	350	350	350	350		
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

Pearson Bivariate Correlation test has been used to test the relationships between variables and sub-variables. The result above shows that the relationships among the variables are strong, where risk assessment has a positive correlation with SMEs growth to the extent of 98.3%. In the same way, the result shows that risk monitoring has positive correlation with SMEs growth to the extent of 98.9%. Also, the result shows that risk monitoring

implementation is positively correlated with SMEs growth to the extent of 90.8%. The result indicates high correlation between the variables.

Test of Hypothesis

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.994 ^a	.988	.988	.10930
a. Predictors: (Constant), RA, RM, RMI				

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

The model shows that risk management variables explained 98.8% variation on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja while the remaining 1.2% variation is explained by other variables not included in the model of this study.

This therefore means that SMEs in FC, Abuja should management its risk effectively because it affects their growth rate.

Table 3: ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	333.750	5	66.750	5587.241	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.110	344	.012		
	Total	337.860	349			
a. Dependent Variable: SMEG						
b. Predictors: (Constant), RA, RM, RMI						

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

The result above shows the significant level of the enterprise risk management with the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. The result shows that the model is fit at less

than 5% level of significance (95% level of confidence) which means that all the variable are well stated and they have significant effect on the growth of SMEs.

Table 4: Coefficient

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.061	.031		-1.926	.055
	RA	.097	.101	.092	.961	.337
	RM	.033	.019	.049	1.696	.091
	RMI	.154	.060	.211	2.556	.011
a. Dependent Variable: SMEG						

Source: SPSS Output, 2022

The result above is used to test the hypotheses. The result found that risk assessment has a positive but insignificant impact on the growth of SMEs in Abuja, FCT Nigeria, with a p-value greater than a 5% level of significance. It,

therefore, signifies that risk assessment had not significantly affected SMEs' growth in FCT Abuja.

Risk mitigation has a positive but insignificant effect on the growth of SMEs in Abuja, FCT, with a p-value greater

than a 5% level of significance. However, risk management implementation has a positive significant effect on the growth of SMEs in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria. This signifies that any increase in risk management implementation will improve the growth of SMEs by a .154 coefficient.

4.1 Discussion

Risk assessment has no significant impact on the growth of SMEs in Abuja

Risk assessment has a positive effect on the growth of SMEs in Abuja. The study accepts the hypothesis that risk assessment has no significant effect on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. The risk assessment process begins with the identification, analysis, and assessment of risks, recording the results of the assessment and creating a risk record to keep all control and mitigation measures intact. The managers mostly agreed highly on the risk of a potentially significant loss, and the likelihood of its occurrence is small, and then risks are categorized into levels for further analysis, respectively. Top risk management reviews the registry to assess the costs and resources required to implement the proposed control and mitigation measures. Because risk management is an ongoing process, implementation of the risk management process begins with senior management approval. It is important; to record and document each step of the process, send notes to the board through senior management, and make the necessary adjustments to improve and improve the risk management process. This comes in line with all the previous studies that have been reviewed such as Jaber (2020), Altanashat, Al Dubai and Alhety (2019), Owolabi et al. (2017), Eze and Okoye (2013), Eze and Okoye (2013).

Risk mitigation has no significant impact on the growth of SMEs in Abuja.

Risk mitigation has a positive effect on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja however, the study accepts the hypothesis that risk mitigation has no significant effect on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. Risk mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the impact of risks. This means that mitigation risks are taken very high by the SMEs, they have a mechanism for estimating & calculating

potential losses when signing insurance contracts very high level. This is very important because they have the right measures to mitigate risks when estimating them. Mitigation strategies define measures that can mitigate or eliminate risks before they occur. Risk includes mitigation activities that attempt to balance the probability and severity of the risk with the growth of the mitigation strategy. It is necessary to identify risk factors that indicate that mitigation strategies are no longer effective, and contingency plans must be implemented. This is in line with Suárez (2016), Thabet and Alaeddin (2017), Altanashat, Al Dubai and Alhety (2019), Owolabi et al. (2017), Rasid et al. (2014), Eze and Okoye (2013), Eze and Okoye (2013), Avdalović and Obadović (2015).

Risk management implementation has no significant impact on the growth of SMEs in Abuja.

Risk management implementation has a positive significant effect on the growth of SMEs in Abuja. This signifies that any increase in risk management implementation will improve the growth of SMEs. This leads the study to reject the hypothesis that risk management implementation has no significant effect on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja.

In most cases, the implementation of risk management involves determining risk thresholds, identifying risk factors, planning mitigation strategies and developing contingency plans. The risk implementation increased for each unit of organizational performance. Most managers agreed that risk management efforts are supported by senior management and employees have received appropriate training on the company's risk management policies. However, they also agreed that every employee's role and responsibilities in the company's risk management work are duly communicated. This is beneficial for companies because not all companies have the technical capabilities to implement and manage the risks they face. These came in line with some previous studies by Altanashat, Al Dubai and Alhety (2019) and Tuncel and Alpan (2010). Jaber (2020), Amenawo, Chris and James (2019), Suárez (2016), Thabet and Alaeddin (2017), Eze and Okoye (2013).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The essence of this study is to determine the effect of enterprise risk management practices on the growth of SMEs in FCT, Abuja. In this study, several SMEs adopted three risk management practices. The researcher has found that risk mitigation has a positive impact on the growth of SMEs. Overall, the results of this study show that the use of risk management practices has a significant positive impact on the growth of SMEs. This means that better business risk management can improve SMEs' performance.

The study also concluded that identifying and mitigating risk plays the most important role in influencing SMEs' performance. Therefore, risk identification is a major starting point in the risk management process where companies cannot manage unknown risks. On the other hand, once the risks are identified, they need to be mitigated based on previous and ongoing research to

reduce the impact on the enterprise. From the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were provided:

1. SMEs need to educate their employees about the importance of risk management. To ensure efficient and effective risk management, since the risk management process is performed by employees. Highly qualified personnel serve as the first line of defence to protect the organization and reduce risk. No matter how many processes and procedures in the SMEs have been developed and enhanced, they will not protect the organization unless performed by qualified personnel.
2. The study found that identifying and mitigating the impact of risk has a significant impact on a SMEs performance. Therefore, research shows that SMEs management needs to take cost-effective measures to identify risks promptly, effectively mitigate the risks, and not adversely affect their growth.

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