

MANAGERIAL SKILLS AND SUCCESS OF SMALL-SCALE ENTREPRENEURS IN KAMPALA UGANDA

Kibuuka Muhammad
Institute for Social Research
Kampala International University, Uganda East Africa
Novembrieta Sumil, Byamukama Eliab Mpora, Sophia Kazibwe, Manuel Sumil,
Fred Ssemugenyi, Tindyebwa Wilberforce
Kampala International University, Uganda, East Africa

Abstract

A multi-sector coverage of small-scale enterprises was explored in this study to address these research objectives: (1) extent to which managerial skills were possessed; (2) extent to which small-scale entrepreneurs were successful; (3) differences in extent of managerial skills and success among small-scale entrepreneurs; and (4) relationship between managerial skills and success. Employed as strategies to elicit the data were the descriptive comparative, descriptive correlation and ex-post facto designs; administration of validated and tested for reliability researcher devised questionnaires; frequencies, means, t-test, One Way ANOVA and regression analysis. The findings showed moderate extent of managerial skills in terms of conceptual, human and technical skills; less successful internally and more successful externally; the extent of managerial skills and success differed significantly according to gender, education level, business form and years in business; the extent of managerial skills possessed was positively and significantly correlated with all aspects of internal and external success; conceptual and technical skills significantly depicted small-scale entrepreneurs' success. Thus, technical and conceptual skills needed to be more promoted through entrepreneurial and business skills in universities; education of small-scale entrepreneurs on formation of joint ventures and ongoing training programs for skills formation and development.

Keywords: managerial skills, small scale entrepreneurs, success

Introduction

Small-scale enterprises all over the world, contribute enormously to the development of their nations. In Africa it has been generally believed that small-scale enterprises play an important role in poverty alleviation (Jeya, 2009). The development and creation of wealth of a nation depends on the competitiveness of its firms. Of particular importance to this study, is the competitiveness of small-scale entrepreneurs' firms, which according to Alvaro, *et al* (2007), mainly depends on capabilities of entrepreneurs and managers. It is also important to note that the competitiveness of a firm does not depend on the capabilities of the entrepreneur alone, but also on the efficiency and competency of the manager. Entrepreneurial specialists like Alvaro, *et al* (2007) have indicated that, this person called the entrepreneur (especially in small enterprises) on many occasions performs the key managerial functions. This is the very reason why for this entrepreneur to succeed, he or she needs to practice basic business management principles and that is the major attention of this study.

For SSEs to stay alive in both local and international competition, they need management skills and production expertise that matches both product and service quality. Improved quality and quick response to customer demands are key requirements to participate in and exploit global business opportunities. This is the

reason why several governments in Africa have put initiatives to promote their national local entrepreneurs. For example, in Egypt, the government for a long time endeavored to strengthen the competitiveness of local firms through arrangements like the National Suppliers' Development Program (Jeya, 2009). Thus in order to provide active support to these firms, government initiatives have to focus on enhancing their management skills that can enable them be both local and outward oriented, improve quality, lower production costs and be more competitive. This has helped Egypt to attract foreign investors without risking demise of local enterprises. Without such arrangements, many African countries risk their local firms being marginalized in their own markets (Jeya, 2009).

Soni (2005) indicates that small businesses dominate in both developed and developing nations. For example, small businesses contribute over 60% of all companies in Malaysia, Philippines, Brazil and India (Soni, 2005). Small businesses contribute immensely towards employment formation and economic development (Singh, 2004). For example, in the U.S, 90% of the jobs are created by small businesses. In Japan, they contribute over 80% of the national workforce; in Germany, their contribution is over 50%. In developed countries, small businesses contribute over 85% and in Africa, their contribution towards GDP is reported to be at 50%, while in Uganda, their contribution is less than 50% (Ruffing, 2003).

While the role of small-scale entrepreneurs (enterprises) has been remarkably recognized globally, in African context their contribution is still small (2001). This study's specific interest then was in management skills as the key inadequacy hindering the growth and survival of small-scale entrepreneurs, taking the case of those enterprises in Kampala Uganda.

Review of Related Literature

Managerial Skills

Managerial skills according to George & Jones (2001) refer to the ability of a manager (of a small-scale enterprise) to perform managerial tasks and/or roles effectively and efficiently. Boden & Nucci (2000) defined managerial skills as the ability of an entrepreneur to execute managerial roles, which according to them include marketing, financial management, book keeping and supervision.

In particular, business success has been much attributed to financial and management success (Papzan et al, 2009). Both internal and external factors are accountable for success of small-scale entrepreneurs in their business endeavours. Much of the literature of small-scale entrepreneurs' success is on personal traits

According to Katz (1974, in Arul, 2009); Mullins (2002), managerial skills (required for success of managers or entrepreneurs) are simply acquired than innate; such skills enable them direct activities of others and undertake responsibility to achieve objectives; they rest on three skills namely conceptual, human and technical skills. The major hypothesis of this study was that; managerial skills (conceptual, human and technical) of small-scale entrepreneurs are significantly related to their success.

1. Conceptual Skills

Conceptual skills involve the ability (of a manager, in this case an entrepreneur) to see the enterprise as a whole and ability to analyse and diagnose the situation, to distinguish between cause and effect (Daft, 1994; George & Jones, 2001; Mullins, 2002). These conceptual skills (like planning and organising) assumed to affect entrepreneurial success include goal setting, resource allocation and resource mobilisation (planning skills) while organising skills include task

identification, grouping of workers, team building, departmentalisation and delegation. George & Johns (2001) argue that the ability of a manager to organise these aspects is vital in achievement of organisational goals.

Conceptual skills include recognizing how various functions of the organization depend on one another, and how changes in one part affect others. They extend to visualizing the relationship of the individual business to the industry, the community, and the political, social and economic forces of the nation as a whole. They involve thinking in terms of the following: relative emphasis and priorities among conflicting objectives and criteria; relative tendencies and probabilities (rather than certainties); rough correlations and patterns among elements (Kunene, 2008).

According to Katz (in Arul, 2009) training can enhance previously developed conceptual abilities. In developing conceptual skills, coaching can be used and one way a superior can help coach a subordinate is by delegation of responsibility. According to Katz, another way to develop this skill is through trading jobs; by moving promising employees through different functions of the business but at the same level of responsibility. Basing on the conceptualization here, the researcher summarised conceptual skills into two broad categories namely; planning skills (business plan development skills) and organizing skills.

2 Human Skills

Human skills pertain to the ability to understand others, work with others, lead, motivate and control behaviour of others. The ability of entrepreneurs to influence actions and behaviour of others partly explains their success and failure (George & Johns, 2001). Human skills according to Katz are divided into (a) leadership ability and (b) intergroup relationships. Intragroup skills are essential in lower and middle management roles and intergroup skills are important in higher levels of management. They can be acquired through self-development from personal point of view toward human activity so that one will (a) recognise the feelings and sentiments brought to a situation; b) have an attitude about own experience which enables a manager to re-evaluate and learn from them; c) develop ability in understanding what others by their actions and words are trying to communicate; and d) develop ability in successfully communicating own ideas and attitudes to others. It is important that entrepreneurs self-examine their own concepts and values, which may enable them to develop more useful attitudes about themselves and about others. In perspectives of this study, human skills reviewed and empirically investigated included social skills, leading skills, conflict resolution skills, motivation skills and communication skills.

3. Technical Skills

Technical skills refer to one's ability to understand and the proficiency in a specific kind of activity, particularly one involving methods, processes, procedures, or techniques; it involves specialized knowledge, analytical ability within that specialty, and ability in use of tools and techniques of a specific discipline (Katz, in Arul, 2009). Vocational and on-job training programs largely do a good job in developing this skill. According to George & Jones (2001) technical skills refer to job specific knowledge and techniques required to perform a role. They depend on nature of the organisation and task. For example the owner of a restaurant needs cooking skills, a school director needs teaching skills and so on. In case of any problem, the entrepreneur can fill the gap or identify it. They also help evaluate performance of delegated workers. Other technical skills entrepreneurs need are accounting, book-keeping, budgeting.

Technical skills according to Kunene (2008) are also called vocational skills and refer to those specific skills needed to work within a specific occupation, and include expertise, knowledge of the industry, its standards and practices, ability to use tools, procedures and techniques of a specified field, understanding of how specific things work, product/ service specific knowledge that enables one to know what a particular product could do and what it can be used for, process knowledge or how to manufacture relevant products and all steps that need to be taken to develop and produce products or perform tasks necessary to render the service (Tustin, 2003; Perks & Struwig, 2005). Examples of technical skills required by a SSE are those related to job specific knowledge and include professional skills, marketing skills, bookkeeping skills, budgeting skills, time management skills and legal skills (Zuzana & Matej, 2007).

Entrepreneurial Success

Entrepreneurial success is defined as the level and extent to which the entrepreneur's venture meets the objectives of the owner and expectations of the society of operation (Cohen, 1993). Success is thus defined according to individual goals set for a given career. According to Hisrich (2000) and Emeric (1998) the entrepreneurial success construct has two dimensions; economic success and entrepreneur's satisfaction. Regarding the later, some Small-scale entrepreneurs take themselves as successful because their ventures support a certain life style, even though they earn a smaller income than when they were employees (Nieman *et al*, 2003). Adhikary *et al* (1999) in Nieman *et al* (2003) defined successful women entrepreneurs as having a business for longer than two years, having a staff complement of more than five but less than 30, making a profit and expanding in terms of infrastructure and growth.

Economic success is conceptualised by Begley (1995) as the rate of increase in revenue and can be used to differentiate levels of success among different entrepreneurial firms. Another economic measure is increase in sales. Success here can be measured by establishing whether sales have increased, remained constant or declined. However, this measure is limited by the fact that sales growth is not an objective of all firms. In such case however, profits are used as a measure.

According to Barreira (2004) success has different dimensions, including economic and entrepreneurial satisfaction. This is supported by Luk's (1996) argument that the highest level of economic success does not correspond to the highest level of entrepreneurial behaviour. He observed that the individual attitude has twice an effect upon economic success of the venture, as did the firm's characteristics. To him, interpersonal skills are a great asset which facilitates business success. However Hisrich (2000) contends that the firm's characteristics have twice the influence upon entrepreneur's satisfaction as individual attitudes do.

Cohen (1993) showed that success dimensions of an entrepreneur are grouped into personal and environmental factors. Personal factors include challenges one experiences, self-concepts and adaptability, and previous exposure. Environmental factors include relationships with others (e.g. customers, subordinates, colleagues, family and friends), one's training and education and other environmental hardships. This conceptualisation implies that success can be internal and external (or personal and environmental). This study considered personal success as internal and environmental success as external. Internal success involves personal benefits like increased profits, sales, personal

satisfaction, expansion, etc. External success involves increased employment opportunities, output, improved quality, relations, trained people, increased assets, etc. Factors like long-term survival are both internal and external success.

The conceptualisations and assertions discussed above indicate that various factors interact to bring about entrepreneurial success for example personal characteristics, market forces, environmental conditions, industry trends and dynamics (Baron & Markman, 2003). Many researchers have identified various indicators of venture success; for example to Covin & Slevin (1997), venture growth is a crucial indicator of venture success; Hisrich (2000) and Bygrave (2004) looked at increase in sales, income, employment and satisfaction; Newton (2001) considered increased productivity, competitiveness, market share, profit and opening branches; Bosma *et al* (2000) considered increased trained people (human capital), satisfaction and long term survival; while Emeric (1998) considered economic success (including growth in sales, employment and income) and satisfaction. To Emeric (1998) success can be measured subjectively using perceptions of entrepreneurs and objectively using economic performance such as efficiency, growth, profit, size, liquidity, market share and leverage. While the first concept is ambiguous and is difficult to measure, increase in the rest seems to be better measures of success.

Theoretical Perspectives

There are several theories which explain the founding, growth, success and failure of small businesses (e.g. environmental theory, (Hannan & Freeman, 1977) individual theory (Levander & Raccula, 2001), the five stages model (Churchill & Lewis, 1983) and others. However for a long time there has been a problem in arriving at a clear and generally acceptable theory that explain management and functioning of small businesses (Churchill & Lewis, 1983; d'Amboise & Muldowney, 1988). Most of the previous researchers who attempted to develop small business management theories focused on a few dimensions such as business size, survival, risk taking, innovation and other characteristics of the entrepreneur (Churchill & Lewis, 1983; d'Amboise & Muldowney, 1988).

Environmental and Individual Theories

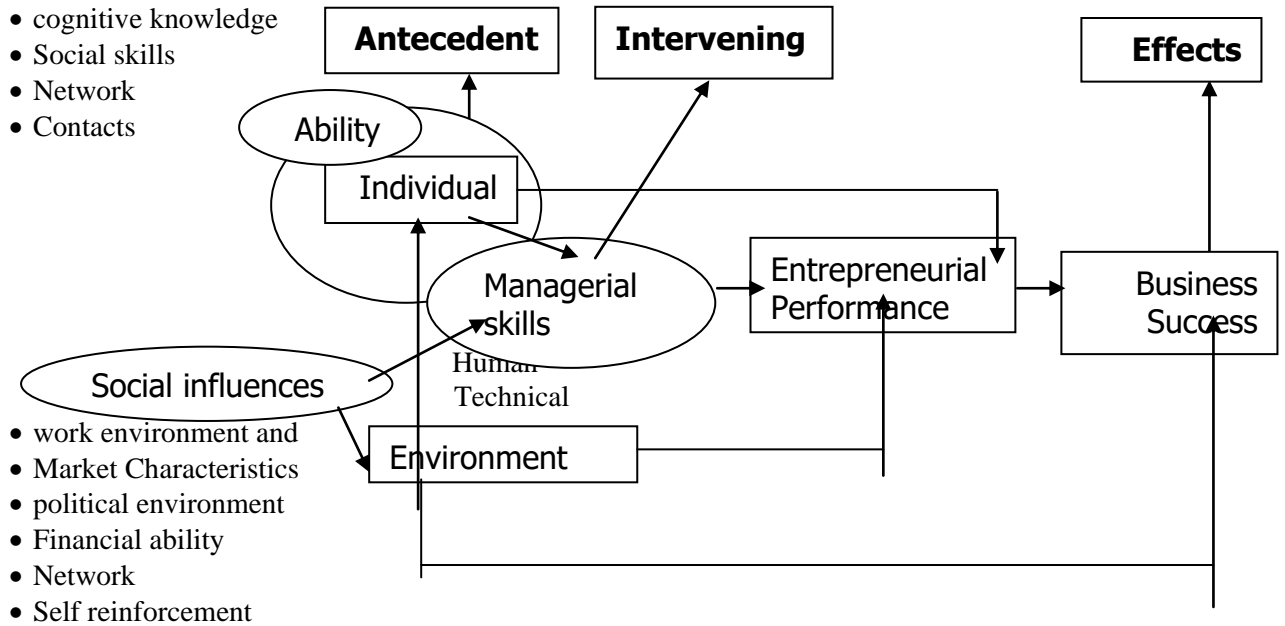
In this study, success of small-scale entrepreneurs was viewed as internal (personal) and external (environmental). Hence the researcher adapts the Environmental and Individual Schools of thought (theories), developed by Hannan & Freeman (1977), cited in Levander & Raccula (2001). These two theories or schools of thought assert that some external (Environmental) and internal (Individual) factors affect entrepreneurial behaviour, which culminate into success or failure. Drucker (2005); Levander & Raccula (2001), assert that environmental factors are grouped into two; 1) social factors and 2) work environment and market characteristics. Social factors include influences from family, relatives, friends and one's childhood; environmental factors and market characteristics include competition, customer care, regulations and political environment. All these are theorized to affect success of Small-scale entrepreneurs. In context of this study, external factors are beyond entrepreneur's personality, so special management skills are required to manipulate them in order to achieve success.

The individual school leans on certain personality traits that successful entrepreneurs must possess. Several traits are suggested by this School including, goal orientation, need for independence and power, (Levander & Raccula, 2001; Baron & Markman, 2003; Delmar, 1996). These two theories are the most popular in explaining entrepreneurial success and are conceptualized by Delmar in what he

called the general model of entrepreneurial and business performance (2001) as in Figure 1;

Procedural and motivation

- cognitive knowledge
- Social skills
- Network
- Contacts



(Adapted from Delmar, in Levander & Raccula, 2001)

Fig. 1: Theoretical Model; Delmar’s General Model of Business and Entrepreneurial Performance, With introduction of Managerial Skills as a moderating factor

The model (Fig. 1) contains three types of variables: antecedents, intervening and the effect. Antecedent variables are present prior to intervening and effect variables (Bakkabulindi, 2007). In this study, antecedents include; 1) individual factors or abilities (e.g. cognitive knowledge, social skills, motivation, etc.) and 2) environmental factors also called social influences (e.g. work environment, market characteristics, political environment, network, etc.). All these are theorized to affect entrepreneurial performance and success. Intervening variables are those factors which speedup entrepreneurial performances, which culminate into venture success. While the original model points out the individual abilities and social influences or environmental factors that affect performance and success of a business, it does not mention any of the conventional management abilities which are known to be central towards success of any organization (whether big or small). Whereas it may be assumed that small businesses owners do not need these formal skills, recent analysis of business performance has indicated that many of them fail to be transformed into large scale enterprises due to management failures. In this study, managerial skills (i.e. conceptual, human and technical) were introduced into the model and are expected to speedup entrepreneurial performance, and determine the end results or venture success (Mullins, 2002). This model implies that factors which propel rise of ventures differ from factors which propel venture success. Thus individual and environmental factors are catalyzed by managerial factors to yield entrepreneurial success. Upon this theoretical basis, the study tested the following hypothesis that managerial skills (conceptual, human and technical) are significantly correlated with small-scale entrepreneurs’ success.

Many recent and previous theoretical investigations have asserted that personal characteristics of entrepreneurs such as their self-efficacy and overall proclivity for entrepreneurship may play important roles in entrepreneurial success (Baron & Markman, 2003). Barreira (2004) adds that high social capital provides entrepreneurs with enhanced access to information and increased cooperation and trust from others. Barreira (2004) and Baron & Markman (2003) conceptualised social capital as involving social networks, favourable reputation, an established record in the field, a degree from a recognised university, status, personal ties, work experience with reputable employers and referrals. Thus entrepreneurs who possess high social capital are more likely to receive funds from venture capitalists than their counterparts who are lower on this dimension.

Even though the environmental and individual schools of thought are popular in explaining the factors responsible for success of small-scale entrepreneurs, they do not indicate which of the two factors (either environmental or individual) are more influential in entrepreneurial success, something that makes policy formulation difficult. However, scholars like Mintzberg have tried to extend the theoretical debate of these two theories. Mintzberg, in further explaining the environmental factors indicates that they are factors outside the venture. Mintzberg's explanations imply that during the time of venture creation, the entrepreneur identifies an opportunity and pursues it in a manner that is dictated by the environment in which the entrepreneur works. According to Mintzberg, the entrepreneur in his venture is a subordinate of the external factors (or the environment), in which the enterprise is assumed to be fashioned in line with the environment. As the venture grows into a bigger organization, the entrepreneur becomes less able to respond to the needs of the environment and yet according to Mintzberg, the growth and survival of the enterprise depends vitally on its ability to respond to the needs of the environment. So the entrepreneur who acted as the leader becomes increasingly incapable of controlling the growth and survival of the venture.

With all these factors in motion, the entrepreneurs require sophisticated management skills, most of which are not naturally given, rather acquired from training institutions or practical experience. The entrepreneur needs to have knowledge in fields of customer care, product quality, demand forecasting and inventory control, market competition, supply chain management and so on. In this study, the researcher empirically tested these managerial skills factors and established the extent to which they influence success of small-scale entrepreneurs.

Empirical Literature Review

Conceptual Skills and Success of SSEs

Martinez *et al* (2007), Rwigema & Ventur (2004) and Ucbasaran *et al* (2004) found positive significant correlations between conceptual skills and success of small scale businesses in South Africa and USA respectively. Their studies, which concentrated on management skills of small businesses, revealed that most owners of such businesses committed serious mistakes in fields of business planning, resource allocation, product design and leadership dominance. Such mistakes are a sign of lack of management skills for example in organising a business venture, especially during its formative stages.

Van Vuureen (2002) showed that conceptual skills enable initiation and development of entrepreneurial activities, which result in success. Simpson *et al* (2003) added that ability to make a proper business plan positively influences

success of small scale entrepreneurs in South Africa. Govender (1994) had also indicated that one way to reduce small business failure is training entrepreneurs into appropriate skills such as conceptual. According to Rwigema & Venter (2004) conceptual skills such as resource mobilisation and allocation skills are a prerequisite for venture success. Their study showed that resource mobilisation and allocation skills enable the entrepreneur to gather and control venture resources, which is necessary in the successful running and growing of a business venture. It is therefore indicated that entrepreneurs who fail to manage business resources are bound to fail, since resources are the blood of the business. This explains the highly significant relationship revealed in this study.

Botha (2006) conducted a study on effectiveness of women entrepreneurship programme as a training intervention on potential start-ups and established women entrepreneurs in South Africa. His findings showed that planning skills are positively and significantly correlated with business success. In particular, he identified the following skills as being important in entrepreneurial success; goal setting skills, careful planning of time, resource utilization skills and business plan development skills. Similar results were also found by Kunene (2008) and Mayanja (2001).

Human Skills and Success of SSEs

A successful entrepreneur requires a set of human skills which include social skills, leading skills, motivation skills, conflict resolution skills and communication skills (George & Johns, 2001). Baron (1998) revealed that human skills involve socialization skills, which have a positive relationship with venture success. This is because tasks of entrepreneurs involve interaction with other people. Human socialisation skills enable entrepreneurs to raise capital, acquire good employees, delegate effectively, establish trust and legitimacy, develop networks, monitor, evaluate and retain workers (Levander & Raccula, 2001). Souza (2001) contend that entrepreneurs' ability to work with others is critical for venture success. In the researcher's literature investigation, no empirical studies in Uganda were found on human skills' impact to success of small-scale entrepreneurs. Most of the available studies are conducted outside Uganda and these are many. For example, Batjargal (2006) conducted a study in Russia on the key aspects and importances of entrepreneurs' networks and the findings indicated that entrepreneurs who carefully identify and developed strong networks were more successful than those who did not. Good networking skills help entrepreneurs to expand their markets, increase their sales and profits, ensure survival and reduce costs, which are important dimensions of success.

Human skills also involve leading skills like listening, giving feedback, honesty, approachability, integrity, flexibility, result orientation, empowerment, collaboration, motivation, uniting, and valuing others (Bolden, 2004). There are contradicting evidences about the effect of this human skill on business success in general and on success of small-scale entrepreneurs in particular. This has even been extended to cultures that dominate in a given community. Some cultures are described as friendly, social and welcoming while others are taken to be opposite. The debate on whether human skills are key has been addressed mainly in marketing and social psychology. But depending on the dominant culture, different people perceive it differently and it is no wonder that different results have risen. For example, Bolden (2004) found out that human skills have a positive effect on venture success, while Keep & Westwood (2003); Burgoyne *et al* (2004) and Boyatzis (1993) showed little evidence that human skills like leading others

increase production. Others like Marshall *et al.* (1993), found a positive correlation between the two and these are empirically supported by the findings of Rucci *et al.*'s (1998) and Baber *et al.*'s (1999) results from 800 Sears stores in USA, which showed one's leading abilities positively impact business success. Similar results are from; Nohrra *et al.* (2003), Cockerill (1993), Lee *et al.* (1993), etc.

It has been indicated that successful entrepreneurs always understand people they work with, their needs and do what they do, to satisfy such needs. This is termed as the human motivation, which is key in many organisations and a major topic of study in human psychology. Since entrepreneurs are dealing with people to achieve their goals and objectives, then achieving such is immensely tagged with the way one is able to manipulate and or work with humans satisfactorily. Therefore successful entrepreneurs have interest in their employees/customers, communicate to them clearly, encourage their workers to have pride and interest in their jobs, respect them, show faith in them, allow and encourage them to speak and are appreciative.

Technical Skills and Success of Small-scale Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs who are professionals in their business fields have higher chances of success than those who are not (Zuzana & Matej, 2007). Bekele & Worku (2008) found that shortage of professional skills was responsible for about 49% failure of small-scale firms in Ethiopia. Raduan *et al.* (2006) found the same in Malaysia, Audretsch & Lehman (2004), Baghai *et al.* (1999), Smith & Schallenkamp (2005) supplement these findings, while Chandler & Jansen (1992) argued that as small ventures grow, founding entrepreneurs should be replaced by professional managers. Contrary, CarolYen-Yun Lin (1998) concluded that professional skills are critical for short term not long term survival, arguing that in the long run, technical skills need to be supplemented by other management skills, such as motivation, delegation and teamwork. Davila *et al.*'s (2003) findings suggested that technical skills are positively correlated with entrepreneurial success and that they are a preliquisite to identification of an appropriate opportunity and pursuing it successfully.

Technical skills can also affect a business in the angle of how a manager handles other technicalities such as marketing, record keeping and legal aspects of the business. For example, Schultz & Robinson (1986) showed that Nelson Company's effective marketing strategy increased its sales, profitability and competitiveness in late 1970's. Managing the marketing aspect well helps to improve product quality and increase customer satisfaction which culminates into increased sales and profits (Price & Ferrell, 2005). Mayanja (2001) found that entrepreneurs who properly managed their marketing were more successful than those who did not. His findings showed that only 29% in a sample of 123 self-employed technicians in Kampala had sound marketing arrangements and out of these, 58% were more successful. The other cause of failure he identified was poor pricing. Ligthelm & Cant (2002) had also found that inappropriate pricing negatively affects performance of a business venture.

Mezher *et al.* (2008) was a report, whose interest among other things was to unearth internal factors explaining success and failure among Small-scale entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Their findings showed that poor product quality is among the most important failure factors. As observed by Price & Ferrell (2005), product quality is a preliquisite for entrepreneurs to enter the market, a vital aspect of marketing. In line with the above findings, Nieuwenhuizen & Kroon (2003) agreed with Rogerson (2000a) that technical knowledge is a key factor affecting

successful business performance. In supplement to this, Cornwall & Naughton (2003), confirmed that entrepreneurs who are incompetent in technical skills cannot be successful because they cannot be able to create excellent products.

Other studies have shown that success of a business relies much on its records management (Australian Government, 2009; Bell *et al*, 2008; Linda & Jerry, 1993). Proper records management helps the manager or founder to monitor business health, make vital decisions, manage cash flows and show business financial position to lenders, which can act as a tool to qualify for financial support from funders and other financing institutions. Bekele & Worku (2008) found that failure to demonstrate standard bookkeeping, auditing and record keeping accounted for 54% failure in micro, small and medium enterprises in Ethiopia.

Raduan *et al*. (2006) presented contradicting findings, when they showed that tasks like record taking and financial control are not significant predictors of business success among entrepreneurs. They however indicated that such tasks pose a big problem to Small-scale entrepreneurs but not to larger businesses, since they hire trained people to manage records.

Kunene (2008) found that legal skills enhance success of small and medium enterprises in South Africa; Tobias *et al*. (2008) showed that legal requirements is among the barriers to entrepreneurial growth internationally; Botha (2006) asserted that without legal skills the business may collapse; Tumbunan (2009) found that legal issues are a vital constraint to women entrepreneurs in Indonesia, however Bushe (2007) & Svensson (2008) did not find a significant correlation between the two.

Methods and Techniques

The study employed a descriptive comparative/correlation, an ex-post facto and cross-sectional survey designs. It was descriptive comparative survey since the researcher described and compared levels of success of a big sample of SSEs, using demographics such as gender, age, education and workers; correlational in a bid to establish the correlation between managerial skills and success; ex-post facto since the researcher had no control over variables and sought to report data as it existed (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

The target population of this study was 11,003 SSEs from five divisions of Kampala (Uganda business register, 2008), from two business fields (5280 services firms; schools, health and 5723 nonprofessional firms; retail and whole sale shop).

Stratified and purposive sampling were used to select 386 owners of professional and nonprofessional ventures. The researcher set up the following criteria; a) from each division, 77 were selected; b) out of the 77 from each division, a proportionate sample size for professional and nonprofessional firm owners was selected; c) for professional owners, the enterprise had to be a primary, secondary school or a health services business; d) for nonprofessional firms, the entrepreneur selected had to own a retail or a whole sale shop or a restaurant.

A researcher made questionnaire was used that consisted of respondents' profile questions, five- point Likert scaled questions/items on managerial skills possessed and on success, in a scale of 1 = very low or nothing at all and 5=very high increase. Construct validity was determined to ensure content validity using factor analysis, results of which showed that success questions had a total variance of 60% while for managerial skills it was 62.563, all above 50% hence the items

were valid in explaining the constructs in the research instruments. Reliability of data collected were tested using Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient, the results of which showed a high degree of reliability at 0.914 (excellent).

Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyse data on profile of SSEs. Means were computed to measure the level of managerial skills possessed and success among SSEs. Item analyses reflected the strengths and weaknesses within each construct. To interpret the means, the following numerical values and descriptions were used:

Mean Range	Description/ Response	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Very high	Very successful
3.41-4.20	high	Successful
2.61-3.40	Moderate	Fairly successful
1.81-2.60	Low	Unsuccessful
1.00-1.80	Very low/nothing at all	Very unsuccessful

At bivariate level, the Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) was used to establish whether the level of managerial skills and level of success of SSEs in Kampala are significantly correlated. At a multivariate level, the causal relationship between success of SSEs and all managerial skills was tested using Multiple Linear Regression analysis.

Findings and Interpretations

Profile of Respondents

The profile or individual characteristics of SSEs in Kampala were of special interest to the researcher because entrepreneurial characteristics (most of which are individual factors) have been theorized to impact on their success.

Table 3: Profile of Small Scale Entrepreneurs in Kampala

Profile Factors	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	196	56
	Female	154	44
Education level	Degree	108	31
	Primary	3	1
Age Group	Below 30 years	164	47
	50 and above	25	7
Business Form	Sole proprietorship	220	63
	Partnership and Limited company	130	37
Number of Workers Employed	Below 5	167	49
	5 - 19 workers	108	30
Years in Business	Below 5years	235	67
	5 - 9 years	84	24
	10 and above	32	9

From Table 3, the findings revealed that more than 56% of the small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala were men, most of them were graduates (31%), majority were below 30 years (47%), 63% were sole proprietors, 50% employed less than 5 people and 67% of them had been in their business for less than five years.

Extent to which Managerial Skills were Possessed by SSEs in Kampala

Managerial skills were conceptualized in terms of conceptual, human and technical skills. Small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala were asked to rate the extent to which they possessed the various elements of managerial skills in the following scale: 1 = very low or no ability at all; 2 = low ability; 3 = moderate ability; 4 = high ability; 5 = very high ability. The following numerical values and descriptions were used to interpret responses;

Mean Range	Response Mode	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Very high ability	Very high skills
3.41-4.20	High ability	High skills
2.61-3.40	Moderate ability	Moderate skills
1.81-2.60	Low ability	Low skills
1.00-1.80	Very low or no ability at all	Very low skills

Table 4: Extent to which Managerial Skills were Possessed by SSEs in Kampala

Type of Skill	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Conceptual Skill	3.23	Moderate	3
2. Human Skills	3.32	Moderate	1
3. Technical Skills	3.29	Moderate	2

The findings implied that small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala were good at socializing and leading other people they work with such as customers and employees. This may however had an effect on the number of customers and other benefits arising from networks. The overall mean response (3.29) for all items in Table 4 suggested that the small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala perceived their level of technical skills as moderate.

A high level of business planning skills may imply that entrepreneurs developed good business plans confirming Balunywa's (2000) contention that a good business plan is essential for developing a business opportunity to success. Balunywa specifically mentioned resource allocation skills as being critical at the beginning of an entrepreneurial venture. Kunene found out that the level of planning skills was lower among the less successful entrepreneurs in South Africa. He showed that the less successful entrepreneurs are less likely to take planning skills as important compared to the more successful ones (2008).

Botha (2006) reflected that the level of organizing skills (in terms of networking, using mentors and counselors, problem solving and recruiting employees) was high among more successful women entrepreneurs in South Africa. Musiime (2007) indicated that young entrepreneurs in Uganda lack the capacity to organize.

While Tushabomwe-Kazooba's (2006) findings showed that inadequate management skills was a big internal problem of small scale business in Western Uganda, when he mentioned troubles among partners as a big hindrance, which showed that entrepreneurs in that area (like those in Kampala) had inadequate human skills. Small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala also exhibited higher levels of human skills such as social skills and leading skills that showed a difference between SSEs in Kampala and those in Western Uganda. This high level of human

skills were attributed to the big number of educated entrepreneurs, unlike rural areas like Western Uganda.

While Botha (2006) found inadequate networking skills among the less successful women entrepreneurs in South Africa, the current study revealed a relatively higher level of networking or social skills among the entrepreneurs in Kampala Uganda. On the other hand, Kunene (2008) noted a high level of motivation and communication skills, among successful small-scale entrepreneurs and a relatively low level for the unsuccessful. The relatively higher level of human skills among SSEs in Kampala were attributed to the behavioral pattern (of many Ugandans in Kampala), which was shaped in the way that they were naturally welcoming and simple hearted.

Where the problem of inadequate technical skills had been documented in many parts of the world, Kunene (2008) observed inadequate technical skills among small and medium entrepreneurs in South Africa. The same results were also revealed by Botha (2006), Berreira (2004) and Bosma et al (2000).

Basil (2005) found low levels of records or bookkeeping skills in Nigeria. He also found an inadequacy in other aspects of technical skills such as professionalism (where many small-scale entrepreneurs were lacking relevant training in their fields of operation), financial or budgeting skills, marketing and legal skills. While this problem had been well documented, Bosma et al (2000) showed that financial management skills were a necessary for entrepreneurial success and unfortunately they found them inadequate among small scale ventures in Netherlands, explaining their low level of success.

Extent of Success among SSEs in Kampala

Success of small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala was broken into two categories of internal or personal and environmental or external success. Small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala were asked to rate the extent to which they had been successful in their entrepreneurial ventures on a scale of five: 1 = very low or no increase at all; 2 = low; 3 = moderate; 4 = high increase; 5 = very high increase. The following numerical values and descriptions were used to interpret responses;

Mean Range	Response Mode	Interpretation
4.21-5.00	Very high increase	Very successful
3.41-4.20	High increase	Successful
2.61-3.40	Moderate	Fairly successful
1.81-2.60	Low increase	Unsuccessful
1.00-1.80	Very low or no increase at all	Very unsuccessful

Table 5: Extent of Success among SSEs in Kampala

Type of Success	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Internal Success	3.06	Fairly successful	2
2. External Success	3.27	Fairly successful	1

Overall Success	3.17	Fairly successful	
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The overall mean for all the two sub components (3.17) confirmed that entrepreneurs in Kampala perceived themselves as fairly successful in their entrepreneurial ventures. These results implied that whereas small-scale entrepreneurs can earn relatively high profits, they always did not put them on improving their life conditions (e.g. buying good food and other home utilities like TVs, radios, building good houses and taking their children to good schools) but rather, they usually focused on expanding their ventures (such as buying business assets and opening up new branches).

Relationship between Managerial Skills and SSEs' Success

A null hypothesis was tested that managerial skills and success of SSEs in Kampala were not significantly correlated, using Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC), as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient Results for Managerial Skills and Success of SSEs in Kampala

Variables Correlated	r-value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Managerial Skills vs Internal Success	0.674	0.000	Positive and significant	Rejected
Managerial Skills vs External Success	0.715	0.000	Positive and significant	Rejected
Managerial Skills vs overall Success	0.740	0.000	Positive and significant	Rejected

Level of significance = 0.001

The results in Table 6 revealed that managerial skills were important for entrepreneurial success. It was also indicated that managerial skills were likely to influence external success ($r=0.715$) more than internal success ($r=0.674$).

Studies like Van Vuuren (2002) showed that conceptual skills enable initiation and development of entrepreneurial activities that resulted into success. Simpson *et al* (2003) contended that the ability to make a proper business plan positively influenced the success of small scale entrepreneurs in South Africa. Govender (1994) indicated that one way to reduce small business failure is training entrepreneurs into appropriate skills such as conceptual skills. Similar results were also found by Kunene (2008) and Mayanja (2001).

This study revealed that the more human skills an SSE possesses, the more he or she is likely to succeed, which is in agreement with the findings of Kunene (2008) and Thornhill & Amit (2003) who argued that adequate skills in such fields, enhances efficiency in work related activities and speeds up activity performance within the organization and brings into high results.

According to Harris & Wheeler (2005) networking skills enable the entrepreneur to define and create links with persons, objects and events which are needed to obtain resources and support for development and growth of the venture. Networking enables the entrepreneur to obtain information related to business opportunities, new business innovations, business linkages, partners and so on, all of which are necessary for success of a venture. This is important because the entrepreneur cannot work in a vacuum neither can they work in isolation. So identifying, linking and networking with resourceful people is therefore itself

resourceful in business success. Batjargal (2006) indicated that entrepreneurs who carefully identify and develop beneficial networks are more successful than those who do not. Good networking skills help entrepreneurs to expand their markets, increase their sales and profits, ensure survival and reduce costs, which are important dimensions of success.

The study also found out that technical skills were important for success of SSEs in Kampala Uganda, which agreed with Davila *et als'* (2003) findings that technical skills were positively correlated with entrepreneurial success and that they were a prerequisite to identification of an appropriate opportunity and pursuing it successfully. Each of the dimensions of technical skills plays its own role and a combined possession or absence of all of them will significantly impact on business success. For example, time management skills are crucial for identifying market opportunities timely. In Kampala and Uganda in general several businesses are immensely affected by time and seasons, such that untimely planning may significantly and adversely affect the sales. For example, opening up a private school in April is poor time planning because, by this time, most pupils would have already enrolled. The same applies to many other small businesses like selling gift cards, which is likely to be more lucrative in November and December and less lucrative in other months.

Marketing skills on the other hand enable the entrepreneur to identify and satisfy customer needs, which leads to increased sales and profits (Price & Ferrell, 2005). The findings of this study substantiated the findings of Kiwanuka (1998) which affirmed that entrepreneurs who are competitively aggressive are more likely to succeed than those who are less. Mayanja (2001) also found that entrepreneurs who displayed sound marketing skills were more successful than those who did not. Similar findings were seen in Mezher *et al* (2008) who indicated that poor product quality was among the most important causes of small business failure.

Regression analysis for Managerial Skills and SSEs' Success

Regression analysis helped to rank the influence of the three types of managerial skills on success of SSEs in Kampala. In this case, the following equations were used to predict the dependent variable (success):

Functional equation

$$Success = f(Cs, Hs, Ts).....1$$

From equation 1, the mathematical equation was formed as;

$$Success = \beta_0 + \beta_1Cs_1 + \beta_2Hs_2 + \beta_3Ts_3 + \varepsilon2$$

Where;

β_0 = the constant, or the level of success which the business owner is expected to be at, when his or her managerial skills are taken to be zero; Cs_1, Hs_2 and Ts_3 refer to conceptual, human and technical skills respectively, also called the predictors or the independent variables. $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ are the regression parameters, measuring predictive strength the respective explanatory (independent) variables (conceptual, human and technical) have on success (dependent variable). ε Is the error term. Actual regression analysis was done using SPSS, results of which are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Regression Analysis for Managerial Skills and SSEs' Success

Variables Regressed	Adjusted r ²	F-value	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Managerial Skills vs.	0.558	104.746	.000	Significant effect	Rejected

Success					
Coefficients	Beta	t			
(Constant)	0.773	4.904	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Conceptual	0.252	2.991	.003	Significant effect	Rejected
Human	0.102	1.220	.223	Insignificant effect	Accepted
Technical	0.445	6.060	.000	Significant effect	Rejected

From the results of the regression analysis, and considering equation 2 ($Success = \alpha + \beta_1Cs_1 + \beta_2Hs_2 + \beta_3Ts_3 + \varepsilon$) the estimated regression model became;

$$Success = 0.773 + 0.252(Cs_1) + 0.102(Hs_2) + 0.445(Ts_3) \dots\dots\dots 3$$

(4.904) (2.991) (1.220) (6.060)

Thus, the results suggest that all the three types of managerial skills can positively and significantly predict success of SSEs ($F=104.746$, sig. = 0.000). These results indicated that all the three managerial skills taken together account for over 55.8% towards variations in success of an entrepreneur (adjusted $R^2=0.558$). The findings have indicated that managerial skills were responsible for more than half variations in the chances of success among SSEs in Kampala. Such a result may not be by accident as many researchers have indicated elsewhere. Since the managerial function of any business whether small or large touches all other factors of the enterprise, then it is no wonder that they take a lion's share in influencing success of the business as a whole and success of the business owner. As indicated by Kunene (2008), successful entrepreneurs consider management skills to be more important than the less successful ones. Again since a very high rate of small business failure is reported in every part of the world, then there must be a some unique cause shared by all failing firms. While other factors like capital have been mentioned, they seem to be of lesser influence than managerial skills because only a small amount of capital raised is enough to start a small business and if management is efficient, the capital can expand even without injecting in more and the business may experience success.

The coefficients indicated that while all the three types of managerial skills when taken together significantly influenced success of an entrepreneur, only two can significantly predict success and these were conceptual skills (Beta = 0.252) and technical skills (Beta = 0.445). Technical skills contributed the biggest percentage towards variations in success as compared to conceptual skills (44.5% > 25.2%). Thus from the estimated regression model (equation 3), a one unit increase in one's conceptual skills is likely to increase success by 0.252, considering other factors constant. But a one unit increase in one's technical skills is likely to increase success by 0.445, considering other factors constant. Therefore it is advisable that SSEs and managers should focus more on acquiring conceptual and technical skills.

The said finding supplement many other findings such as Viviers *et al* (2001) and Clover & Darroch (2005) who noted that failure of small scale businesses is often due to lack of managerial experience. Kunene (2008) echoed these findings among small and medium enterprises in the textile and clothing industry in South Africa. Mayanja (2001) found similar results among the self-employed technicians in Kampala. Kiwanuka (1998) also found significant correlations between management skills and performance of small food processing firms in Kampala.

Conclusions

A positive change/increase in an entrepreneur's conceptual, human and technical skills is likely to bring a positive change/increase in chances of success and vice versa. Success of a SSE can be more predicted by technical and conceptual skills as compared to human skills. A one unit increase in one's technical skills possessed will bring more chances of success as compared to a one unit increase in either human or conceptual skills. But also a one unit increase in one's conceptual skills will bring more chances of success as compared to a one unit increase in human. Therefore whereas both technical and conceptual are important in fostering entrepreneurial success, technical skills are more important than conceptual skills.

From the postulations of the environmental and individual theories, success can be better explained by the way the entrepreneur is able to manipulate the environment in which the business operates and the self. So the biggest challenge of small-scale entrepreneurs seems to be how to manage the venture to lead it to success.

Recommendations

There is need for the Government of Uganda to promote more women entrepreneurs in Kampala, in order to promote gender equality in business and economic growth. This study found that men dominate women in ownership of small-scale enterprises.

The Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) should promote entrepreneurial skills in universities and other training institutions. This study found more graduate entrepreneurs and diploma holders, therefore introducing entrepreneurial skills in training courses will go a long way in boosting performance of these entrepreneurs.

The attention of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and authorities responsible for promoting entrepreneurs in Uganda should be put on young entrepreneurs since they are the majority in Kampala.

There is need to educate Small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala on formation of joint ventures since most of them are still running sole proprietorship business, which are more prone to risks and can hardly get assistance from government, other organizations and loans from financial institutions. This can be done by entrepreneurs' and business associations such as Uganda Investment Authority, KACITA, private sector foundation, Uganda small-scale association and so on.

- a) The government through the private sector foundation needs to devise means to ensure that Small-scale entrepreneurs can be able to employ more workers and survive longer as this will not only uplift them, but also help to solve the high unemployment problem in the country. Policies like reducing taxes, removing some irrelevant licenses and ongoing training programs will go a long way in ensuring small-scale entrepreneurs survival and increasing number of people employed.

- b) Small-scale entrepreneurs need to put much more effort on how to open up branches but must also be careful of when to do it to avoid ruining the mother branch. In all the efforts to open up another branch, the entrepreneur must consolidate the first branch or look for partners in the second branch. Kampala Small-scale entrepreneurs should also emphasize assets acquisition in their businesses as this helps in consolidating the business and increasing their wealth, other than keeping liquid cash, which can lose value and can easily be spent on less important and unplanned things. Kampala Small-scale entrepreneurs also need to look for avenues of increasing their revenue and profits. They can do this by forming strong associations through which they can collectively bargain for higher prices, look for bigger markets and advocate for reduced taxes among other things. The government however also needs to help Small-scale entrepreneurs in Kampala increase their revenue and profits, through reducing taxes and license fees.
- c) Entrepreneurs in Kampala need to consider employing more part time workers than full time employees, as this will reduce their costs but also increase on the number of people they employ. They also need to promote their efforts in training the workers they employ in their businesses, as this will extend more benefits to the society. They should also ensure that they keep adequate level of stock, as this will reduce out of stock claims and boost customer's confidence. Out of stock claims send a bad image to potential customers and therefore they lose their confidence in such a business, which lowers chances of success. Issues like knowing when to stock, how long does the stock take to be sold off, when to re-order, how long will the stock spend in transit and so on can help an entrepreneur solve many of these problems. This means that Small-scale entrepreneurs must strengthen their regular planning for their businesses.
- d) Entrepreneurs in Kampala can also boost their public relations by attending social functions of their customers especially the most important ones like funerals. This increases customers' attachment to the business, which increases chances of success.
- e) To ensure entrepreneurial success in Kampala, Conceptual skills must be emphasised. For example the ministry of education must ensure that Conceptual skills such as business plan development, goal setting, resource mobilisation and allocation, team building, departmentalization and delegation skills core papers taught in schools, universities and other training institutions.
- f) Human skills (such as social skills, leading, motivation, conflict resolution and communication skills) also need to be emphasised in all training programs for Small-scale entrepreneurs.
- g) Training programs for entrepreneurs and among the courses taught at different levels, technical skills like marketing, bookkeeping, budgeting, time management and legal skills should be emphasized.
- h) For all efforts of training small-scale entrepreneurs and reinforcing them, technical skills should be given maximum attention, since they contribute the biggest percentage of success to a business. Special and refresher courses in such fields like marketing and competition techniques, bookkeeping, budgeting, time management and legal aspects need to be ongoing.

Consultancy firms also need to notice this so that they always focus on these skills when they are giving their advices to business owners. All Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in the drive to promote entrepreneurs must also ensure that their attention and resources are invested in boosting people's Technical abilities.

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