

Influence of Content of Entrepreneurship Training on Performance of Small and Micro Enterprises in the Information and Communication Technology Sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of content of entrepreneurship training on performance of the Small and Micro Enterprises in the Information Communication Technology sector in Nairobi, City County, Kenya. Descriptive research design was adopted. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected from a population of 273 small and micro enterprises that successfully received entrepreneurship training prior to the year 2012 from the Information Communication Technology Authority. Systematic random sampling technique was used to select 73 respondents. Descriptive statistics included percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviations while regression analysis was used for inferring meaning to the entire population. The study established a positive significant influence of content of entrepreneurship training on performance. The study recommends broadening of the curriculum of entrepreneurship training beyond the entrepreneurial skills, curriculum development to include technical and managerial skills. Moreover, project management, life skills, legal, international trade, partnerships and collaborations needs to be incorporate in entrepreneurship training programs.

Keywords: Content of entrepreneurship training, Entrepreneurship Training, Performance of SMEs in ICT.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Strategic human resource development has been identified as one of the strategies to enhance organizational capability for successful performance (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2010). Specifically Lewrick (2011) identifies entrepreneurship training as key enabler of innovativeness, risk taking, opportunity identification, business management and technical skills development. This forms the basis for developing sustainable competitiveness for long term growth and survival of small and micro enterprises. The realization of the critical role played by entrepreneurship training on the success of SMEs, has necessitated the Government of Kenya (GoK) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) to conduct numerous entrepreneurship trainings. Despite this, there lacks sufficient empirical evidence to show how these trainings have helped SMEs improve their performance. This study focused on establishing the influence of content of entrepreneurship training on performance of SMEs in the Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

A study by study by Azim and Al-Kahtani (2014) established that depending on the duration, target audience, resource availability and perceived efficacy of the training's multiplicity objectives for different entrepreneurs, different training content can be observed. In this respect, objectives determine the contents of the training program. Al-Kahtani (2014) further indicated that at different development stages, the firm requires different knowledge and skills such that during the formation stage the focus should be on understanding the nature of entrepreneurship, characteristics of an entrepreneur, importance of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation skills, business idea generation, opportunity identification, entrepreneurial and ethical self-assessment. During the development stage, the focus should be on product identification, business planning, market selection, financial planning, and making financial presentations. During the implementation stage, entrepreneurship training should lay emphasis on communication skills, especially persuasion;creativity skills; critical thinking and assessment skills; leadership skills; negotiation skills; and problem-solving skills.

Further, empirical study by Mayuran (2016) in Jaffna district in Sri Lanka established a positive correlation between content of entrepreneurship training and firm performance. Study by Ladzani and Vuuren (2016) explored the entrepreneurship training for emerging SMEs in South Africa and recommended strengthening of entrepreneurial skills for the emergining entrepreneurs to understand how to generete business ideas, screen the ideas and identify business opportunities from the generated business ideas. In Kenya, a study by Munene (2008) investigated the nature and content of entrepreneurship trainings offered by Kenya Institute of Business Training and Joint loans to SMEs in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study recommended inclusion of risk management, business expansion strategies and management of loan delinquency and default in the content of

entrepreneurship trainings. Despite these insightful findings, these studies were context specific. This called for further investigation on the content of entrepreneurship trainings offered by other organizations. This study explored the influence of the of entrepreneurship training content on performance of SMEs in the ICT sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Micro enterprises are those firms with employees ranging between one and nine while small enterprises are those firms having 10 to 49 employees (GOK, 2005). In Kenya, small and micro enterprises comprises about 75 % of all businesses, employing 4.6 million people, account for 87% of new jobs created and contribute to 18.4 % of the GDP (GOK, 2009).The Kenyan government considers the sector as the center of industrial development and has hinged several development strategies to improve performance of SMEs (Kiveu & Ofafa, 2013).

1.2 Problem Statement

SMEs sector is critical in the economic development of developing countries such as Kenya. In Kenya, SMEs are key sources of employment and significantly contributes to poverty reduction and stimulation of trade (GOK, 2014). However, SMEs are faced with premature closures as every three out of five SMEs in Kenya fail within the first year of opening (Kamunge, Njeru & Tirimba, 2014). This high failure rate is mainly attributed to lack of skilled work force and stiff competition in the market (Oteri, Kibet & Ndungu, 2015). Entrepreneurship training has been identified as a major enabler of capacity developed and competitive advantage (Mugai, 2012; Sambo, Gichira, & Yusuf, 2015).

Several studies have been carried out to establish the relationship between the content of entrepreneurship training and performance (Munene, 2008; Mayuran, 2016; Ladzani & Vuuren, 2016). However, these studies fail to explicitly evidence the specific roles played by content of entrepreneurship training on performance of small and micro enterprises in information communication technology sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This descriptive research study investigated the influence of content of entrepreneurship training on performance of SMEs in the ICT sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Objectives

To determine the extent to which the content of entrepreneurship training influences the performance of Small and Micro enterprises in ICT sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

Ho: Content of entrepreneurship training does not influence performance of the Small and Micro ICT enterprises in Nairobi, City County, Kenya.

Ha: Content of entrepreneurship training has a positive influence on performance of the Small and Micro ICT enterprises in Nairobi, City County, Kenya.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Schumpeter (1943) economic development theory. The theory looked at entrepreneurship as an innovation and not an imitation. Innovation in this theory is viewed as a novelty-creating economic activity which generates new sources of value-adding productive endeavor, and which disturbs the circular flow of income. In this context, performance must be understood as an inherently disruptive rather than as a smooth process, what is termed as creative destruction. The disruption relates to the circular flow and established market structures, while the creative process is likely to be cumulative and incremental. Therefore, value created by the collective operation is greater than the sum of the parts, and the individuals concerned could not get a higher return on their own particular knowledge or contribution were they to set up independently. Focus of Schumpeter's innovator as an economic and social leader is more on the joy of being an innovator and being a server to the society. Schumpeter's entrepreneur is an innovator in an entrepreneurship era. The entrepreneur is not necessarily the one who invents a new product but one who identifies how new combinations that can be applied in production. In this line of reasoning, it implies that a business owner is to be considered an entrepreneur only if the owner is carrying out new combinations.

From the trainers' perspective, different firms are faced with different circumstance. Further firms require a combination of diverse competencies that stimulate innovative ways of addressing the unique needs of different SMEs. At the same time, the competences such as managerial skills, technical skills and personal traits required for successful entrepreneur also vary with the needs of the business. According to Drucker (1999) the ability to develop new ideas and innovation has become a priority for many organizations. Intense global competition and technological development have made innovation be a source of competitive advantage for the success of an enterprise (Hollenstein, 1996).This theory addressed the content of training. From the trainee' perspective, the study investigated how entrepreneurship training enables the entrepreneurs to come up with new combinations

that can be applied in production. The study presumed that entrepreneurship training triggers behavioral change of an individual towards generating new sources of value-adding productive endeavors. This change creates a positive impact on organizational performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

According to The Foundation of Economic and Business Development (2006), for entrepreneurship training to be effective, it must not only be through factual knowledge and limited to skills acquired in the classroom, but also through other more practical interventions. Dewhurst, Dewhurst and Livesey (2007) asserts that entrepreneurship training programmes mostly focus on two areas; training for business start-ups, which centers mainly on the domain of knowledge, experience and aptitudes of entrepreneurs and training those who will start-up businesses by creating entrepreneurs. GEM (2010) states that some common cited objectives of entrepreneurship training include; to acquire knowledge relevant to entrepreneurship; to acquire skills and synthesis of action plans; to identify and stimulate entrepreneurial drive, to develop empathy and support for all unique aspects of entrepreneurship; to devise attitudes towards change and to encourage new start-ups and other entrepreneurial ventures.

The debate on what should constitute the entrepreneurship training content continuous as various empirical studies continues to have different views. A study by Azim and Al-Kahtani (2014) established that depending on the duration, target audience, resource availability and perceived efficacy of the training's multiplicity objectives for different entrepreneurs, different training content can be observed. In this respect, objectives determine the contents of the training program. Consequently, different scholars have put forward different objectives, contents and modalities for entrepreneurship training programs to be effective (Jayawarna, Macpherson & Wilson 2007; Kotey & Forker, 2007; Patton & Marlow, 2002). Empirical study by Mayuran (2016) in Jaffna district in Sri Lanka on the impact of entrepreneurship training on performance of small enterprises established a positive correlation between entrepreneurship training and firm performance. The study found out that customer care, marketing, quality maintenance and financial management were being taught as the content of entrepreneurship training. The content was basically business management skills and the effect of the other entrepreneurial skills on performance were not addressed. The methodology focused only on the correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This study focused on the content of training to include managerial skills, technical skills and entrepreneurial skills. The study also used descriptive and inferential statistics.

Study by Ladzani and Vuuren (2016) explored the entrepreneurship training for emerging SMEs in South Africa. The study analysed the course content to include motivation, entrepreneurship skills and business skills. Motivation content included; need for achievement, ability to inspire and ability to cope with failure. Entrepreneurship skill included; creativity, innovation, ability to take risks, idea generation and opportunity identification. Business skills included; management, leadership, financial management, marketing skills, human resource skills, business planning and operational skills. The study recommended the need to strengthen entrepreneurial skills for the emerging entrepreneurs to understand how to generate business ideas, screen the ideas and identify business opportunities from the generated business ideas. However the study did not collect data from business entrepreneurs but from periodic employees and trainers. The data collection was through interviews and lacked quantitative data. Hence, the findings can not be generalized.

A study by Munene (2008) on the impact of entrepreneurship training on performance of micro, small and medium enterprises in Nakuru County, investigated the nature and content of entrepreneurship trainings offered by Kenya Institute of Business Training and Joint loans. The study found out that the trainers focused on management of working capital, record keeping, and marketing. The study however, recommended inclusion to the content of training; risk management, business expansion strategies and management of loan delinquency and default. These components are part of business management skills and it is clear that the curriculum used was not comprehensive. Despite this, the study used a small response rate of 37 SMEs operators. The study was also limited in scope to Nakuru County and programs offered by Kenya Institute of Business Training and Joint loans. This calls for further investigation on the content of entrepreneurship training offered by other organizations.

According to ILO (2004) the content of entrepreneurship training should include; Managerial Skills, Technical Skills, and Entrepreneurial skills. Managerial Skills include competencies in, Business Management, Marketing, Record keeping, Financial Management, and Human Resource Management. Technical Skills include; ability to practice competences acquired such as; Computing, Tailoring, Mechanical and Motor Vehicle Skills, Carpentry among others. Entrepreneurial skills include; abilities such as; creativity, innovativeness, risk taking, persistence, self-drive among others. Business management skills are required to run the business on a daily basis (Botha, 2006). One of the dictionary definitions of good management is the skilful use of materials and time towards the achievement of business objectives (Sackett, Rose & Adamson, 2003). Business management skills cover all the conventional management-training areas in a business (Monk, 2000).

Organizations that are well managed develop a loyal customer base, grow and prosper (Nieman, 2006; Mughan, 2004). Having inadequate business management skills is one of the most prominent reasons for failure of SMEs (Viviers et al, 2001; Monk, 2000).

Technical skills are defined as those specific skills needed to work within a specific occupation. Technical skills include expertise in:- the knowledge of the industry, its standards and practices; the ability to use the tools, procedures and techniques of the specified field, the understanding of how specific things work; product/service-specific knowledge that enable one to know what the particular product could do and what it could be used for; process knowledge or how to manufacture the relevant product and all steps that need to be taken to develop and produce the product or perform the tasks necessary to render the service (Tustin, 2003; Perks &Struwig, 2005; Gartner, 1999;Nieuwenhuizen& Kroon, 2003; Honig, 1998; LeBrasseur, Zanibbi&Zinger,2003).

GEM (2010) identified the essential traits of successful entrepreneurs to include; ability to be innovate and creative, ability to recognize business and social opportunities, resourceful in solving problems; Self-confidence-believes in his or her abilities, has positive attitude, ability to cope with failure, understands and manages risks, values independence; Drive to successes- persistent, ability to take initiative, has high energy level, is able to focus intensely; Curiosity- possesses a deep curiosity about how thing work, has a passion for learning; Strong people skill- can motivate others, is a team builder. The attributes underlying these traits include; imagination, creativity, tolerance for risks, divergent thinking ability, analytical skills, passion, self-assurance, interpersonal skills, self-drive. Thus, emperical review outlines the importance of managerial skills, technical skills and entrepreneurial skills.This study established the content of entrepreneurship training tought to SMEs in ICT sector and how the content influenced their performance. The study gave reccommendations on what the trainees felt needed to be included in the content of training.

2.3 Research gaps

The conceptual and empirical reviews demonstrated a relationship between content of entrepreneurship training SMEs performance. Despite this, the context of the reviewed literature was general on SMEs performance and did not explicitly refer to the ICT sector in Kenya. Financial and non-financial indicators were used to measure SME performance. Sales turnover and profit margins were used to measure financial indicator since they were more specific to measure and made the study remain objective. While number of new products introduced and customer satisfaction were used to measure the non-financial indicators.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative and quantitative data was used to describe the relationship between the content of entrepreneurial training and performance of SMEs in Nairobi, City County, Kenya.

3.2 Study Population

Two hundred and seventy three (273) small and micro enterprises in the ICT sector in Nairobi County, Kenya which had undergone entrepreneurial training by ICT Authority prior to 2012 comprised the study population. Data was also collected from three training managers who implemented the trainings for ICT Authority.

3.3 Sampling and Sampling Frame

Sample frame consisted of a listing of all the 273 SMEs in the ICT who had received entrepreneurship training from ICT Authority prior to 2012. Systematic random sampling was used to sample 73 firms to participate in the study. From a randomly selected point, every other fourth organization was selected to participate in the study. Data was collected from the sampled 26% of the entire population. This was in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) recommendation of sampling between 10 to 40% of the target population. Secondary data was obtained from the ICT Authority and SMEs in the ICT database through document analysis, brochures, curriculum analysis as well as the SMEs financial reports.

3.4 Data Collection

A survey questionnaire was used to collect primary data while document analysis guide was used to collect secondary data from the respondents. Secondary data included records of sales volumes and profit margins from the SMEs. Secondary data also included brochures and training curricula from ICT Authority. Kiess and Bloomquist (1985) observed that questionnaires offer considerable advantage in administration; presents an even stimulus potentiality to large numbers of people simultaneously and provides the investigation with an easy accumulation of data. Gay (1992) maintains that questionnaires give respondents freedom to express their views or opinion and make suggestions.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was grouped into common themes for ease of understanding. While quantitative data analysis involved descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation as well as regression analysis for drawing inferences to the entire population.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response rate

Out of the 73 sampled firms, 51 returned duly completed questionnaires. This translated to a response rate of 69.9%. In line with Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) recommendation of a minimum response rate of 50%, the response was considered adequate.

4.2 Descriptive Findings

The content of training was analyzed with respect to management skills, technical skills and entrepreneurial skills in the SMEs ICT sector. On a five point scale, where 5=very large extent; 4=large extent; 3=some extent; 2=little extent; and 1=very little extent, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which the following were captured in the ICT authority entrepreneurial trainings they attended. Table 1 presents the finding.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Content of Training

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Coefficient of Variation
Management Skills			
Resource management (Financial and HR)	3.78	0.90	0.24
Process management (Business Planning)	3.90	0.71	0.18
Aggregate Score for Management Skills	3.84	0.85	0.22
Technical Skills			
Marketing skills (Procurement and marketing)	3.94	0.82	0.21
Production skills (ICT)	3.48	0.90	0.25
Aggregate Score for Technical Skills	3.71	0.81	0.21
Entrepreneurial Skills			
Opportunity Identification and Implementation	4.03	0.82	0.20
Creativity and Risk Taking	4.07	0.92	0.23
Aggregate Score for Entrepreneurial Skills	4.05	0.84	0.21
Aggregate Score for Content of Training	3.86	0.86	0.22

Source: Survey Data (2016)

First, as shown in Table 1 Management skill was measured using two dimensions. That is, inclusion of resource management skills (financial and human resource skills management) and process management skills (business planning) in the training content. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that these items of management were acquired after attending entrepreneurship training. Table 1 shows that the overall mean for management skills was 3.84. Resource management skills (financial and human resource skills management) had a mean score (M=3.78). This means that the respondents agreed that entrepreneurial trainings offered to them by ICT Authority improved their resource management skills to a large extent. The trainings also improved the respondents' process management skills (business planning skills) (M=3.90) to a large extent. This shows that the impact of the entrepreneurship trainings was more on the process management compared to resource management. Table 1 also shows low (CV<0.25) variability among the test items in all the scales.

Second, as shown in Table 1, inclusion of technical skills in the content of training was measured using two dimensions. These were, inclusion of production skills (ICT skills), and marketing skills (procurement and marketing skills). Table 1 shows that the aggregate score for technical skills was 3.71. This implies that the respondents agreed that entrepreneurial training improves technical skills to a large extent. Among the dimensions of technical skills, the one with the highest score was marketing skills (M=3.94). Entrepreneurial trainings improve ICT skills to some extent (M=3.48). This meant that the training syllabus laid more emphasis on marketing skills than production skills.

Third, entrepreneurial skills were measured using two dimensions. Opportunity identification and implementation; and innovation (creativity and risk taking). Table 1 shows that the aggregate score for entrepreneurial skills was 4.05. This implies that the respondents agreed that entrepreneurial training improves entrepreneurial skills to a large extent. Among the dimensions of entrepreneurial skills, the one with the highest score was creativity and risk taking (M=4.07). The entrepreneurial trainings also improve opportunity identification and innovation to a large extent (M=4.03).

In summary, Table 1 indicates that the overall score for content of training was M=3.86, CV=0.24. This means that the respondents agreed to a great extent that the content of entrepreneurial training offered to them by

ICT authority was broad enough to include management skills, technical skills and entrepreneurial skills. A low coefficient of variation (24%) reveals that most responses had low variability and coalesced around the true mean.

The descriptive findings showed that managerial, technical and entrepreneurial topics were included in the trainings. Though entrepreneurial topics were more emphasized followed by managerial topics with little emphasis on technical topics. This showed that most trainers focus on entrepreneurial skills. This is in line with Dewhurst and Livesey (2007) assertion that entrepreneurship-training programmes mostly focus on entrepreneurial skills, which include knowledge, experience and aptitudes of entrepreneurs. Similar studies by Mayuran (2016), Radzani and Vuuren (2016) which showed that business management skills if covered on entrepreneurship training would lead to positive impact on business impact. A study by Azim and Al-Kahtani (2014) concludes that training content should include technical, business management and personal entrepreneurial skills. The findings are also supported by GEM (2010) which indicated that the common objectives of entrepreneurship training covers acquisition of knowledge relevant to entrepreneurship as well as acquisition of skills to manage the business. The findings that content of training influences performance particularly the entrepreneurial behavior (new product development and customer satisfaction) is in line with the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1982) which emphasizes use of entrepreneurship training to influence trainee behavior and performance.

4.3 Inferential findings

The study sought to establish the relationship between the content of entrepreneurship training and the firm performance. This was guided by the following null hypothesis;

H₀, Content of entrepreneurship training does not influence performance of the Small and Micro ICT enterprises in Nairobi, City County, Kenya.

To establish the overall effect of the content of entrepreneurship training on performance of the firms, management skills, technical skills and entrepreneurial skills factors were entered into a single regression. The regression model summary in Table 2 shows as a moderate influence of the independent variables (content of entrepreneurship training) on the dependent variable (firm performance). The R² of 0.183 indicates that content of training explains 18.3% variability of dependent variable (performance).

Table 4.1: Model Summary for Content of Training

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.427 ^a	.183	.165	.818

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content of Training

Source: Survey Data (2016).

The *F*-ratio in Table 3 shows that the independent variable (content of entrepreneurship training) statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(1, 46) = 10.283, p < .05$.

Table 3: ANOVA for Content of Training

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.879	1	6.879	10.283	.002 ^b
	Residual	30.772	46	.669		
	Total	37.651	47			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Content of Training

Source: Survey Data (2016).

The general form of the equation to predict Performance from the content of training curriculum:

$$\text{Predicted Performance} = 2.032 + 0.494 \text{ Content of Training.}$$

This means that a unit increase in content leads to 0.494 increase in the performance factor.

Table 4: Coefficient for Content of Entrepreneurship Training

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.032	.609		3.336	.002
	Content	.494	.154	.427	3.207	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Source: Survey Data (2016).

In summary, linear regression was run to predict performance from the content of training. The null hypothesis was that there is no significant relationship between the content of entrepreneurship training and firm performance. At 95% confidence, the regression showed a *p*-value < 0.05, thus we reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship. Hence, conclusion that content of training has a relationship with firm performance. That

is, the independent variable (content of entrepreneurship training) statistically significantly predict performance, $F(1, 46) = 10.283, p < .05, R^2 = .183$. This meant that an increase in training content index leads to an increase in firm performance.

In conclusion, the content of entrepreneurship training significantly influenced business performance of ICTSMEs in Kenya. The finding is in line with studies done by Mugai (2012); Osinde, Iravo, Munene and Omayio (2013); and Okeyo (2014) which established a positive relationship between entrepreneurial training and business performance among small and micro enterprises in Kenya.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study objective intended to determine the extent which the content of entrepreneurship training influences the performance of Small and Micro enterprises in ICT sector in Nairobi City County Kenya. The study established that content of training positively statistically significantly influence business performance of SMEs in ICT sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The content of entrepreneurship training was measured by the extent of inclusion of managerial skills, entrepreneurial skills and technical skills in the training curriculum. The study established that entrepreneurial skills training have more influence on business performance followed by managerial skills training and technical skills training.

5.2 Conclusions

The content of entrepreneurship training positively significantly influence business performance of Small and Micro Enterprises in ICT sector in Nairobi City County Kenya. That is, a multidisciplinary curriculum that covers technical, management and entrepreneurial skills have more positive impact on firm performance. Therefore, trainers should give equitable emphasis on entrepreneurial topics, managerial topics, and technical topics when designing entrepreneurial training program. Specifically, the study showed that the following areas should be considered in the entrepreneurship training; project management, life skills, business regulations and policies, company policy formulation and implementation, international trade relations, partnership and collaborations.

5.3 Recommendations

The study has shown inadequacies in the content of entrepreneurship trainings offered to SMEs in ICT sector in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Hence, the trainers and Ministry of trade/education need to regulate and broaden the curriculum of training entrepreneurship to make entrepreneurship trainings have more positive influence on business performance and economic development. For further studies, the study focused only on the ICT sector. Hence, studies in other sectors can be done to ensure generalization of the findings. Moreover, broadening the study to cover the entire country would be valuable since the study only focused in Nairobi City, County.

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