

Investigating Small Business Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria

Stella Chinelo Nwagbala^{1*}, Aliuba Ukamaka Harrieta¹, Obijiaku, Chimamkpa Promise¹, Samuel Anodi Ejiogu¹

¹Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36347/sjebm.2024.v1i11i10.004> | Received: 06.09.2024 | Accepted: 09.10.2024 | Published: 18.10.2024

*Corresponding author: Stella Chinelo Nwagbala

Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

Abstract

Original Research Article

The study examined the relationship between small business entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study was anchored on Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, by Jay Barney in 1991. A random sampling probability technique was used. The population of the study consisted of 260 registered small businesses in Onitsha. Krejcie and Morgan's table was used to obtain a sample size of 155. Hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 27). Hypothesis one indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State, with $r = 0.912$, $n = 155$, and p -value of 0.037 ($p < 0.05$). Hypothesis two revealed that there is a positive significant correlation between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State, with $r = 0.758$, $n = 155$, and p -value of 0.022 ($p < 0.05$). The study concluded that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between small business entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria. The study recommended that the Anambra State Government needs to promote creative initiatives in Onitsha to advance social equity and community development. The Nigerian government needs to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation among small businesses to enhance environmental protection and sustainable development in the country.

Keywords: Small Business Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development, Creativity, and Social Equity.

Copyright © 2024 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of economic growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development has become a pressing imperative in today's global landscape, where the interconnectedness of nations and the complexity of challenges demand innovative solutions and collective action. As the world grapples with the triple threats of economic inequality, environmental degradation, and social injustice, the quest for sustainable development has become a rallying cry for governments, international organizations, and civil society alike (Mwasalwiba, 2022). In this quest, small business entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital catalyst for achieving these goals, particularly in developing regions like Onitsha, in Anambra State, where the potential for economic transformation is vast and the need for sustainable development is urgent. Small businesses, with their agility, adaptability, and grassroots connection, are uniquely positioned to drive economic growth, create jobs, and promote innovation, while also addressing

social and environmental challenges (Adeneye and Anuolam, 2024). While sustaining profitability, Consumer expectations are shifting towards a preference for eco-friendly and socially responsible products and services, posing a challenge for businesses to meet these evolving demands (Jones & Smith, 2023; Ezeanokwasa, Nwagbala, Nwachukwu, Oranusi and Ani, 2023).

In Onitsha, Anambra State, the potential for economic transformation is vast, with a large and growing population, a strategic location, and a rich cultural heritage. Onitsha, a thriving commercial hub in the south-eastern part of Nigeria, boasts a rich history of entrepreneurial spirit, with a diverse array of small businesses operating across various sectors, including manufacturing, trade, and services. These small businesses are the backbone of the local economy, driving innovation, creating employment opportunities, and contributing to the region's economic growth (Onodi, Nwosu & Oti, 2024). Sustainable development is a multifaceted concept that encompasses economic,

Citation: Stella Chinelo Nwagbala, Aliuba Ukamaka Harrieta, Obijiaku, Chimamkpa Promise, Samuel Anodi Ejiogu. Investigating Small Business Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria. Sch J Econ Bus Manag, 2024 Oct 11(10): 329-336.

social, and environmental dimensions, is critical for ensuring a prosperous future for generations to come (Ahmed, 2021). In Onitsha, sustainable development is crucial for addressing pressing issues such as environmental degradation, poverty, and unemployment, which threaten the well-being of the community and undermine economic growth.

Statement of the Problem

Small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State, face numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to finance, poor business management skills, and intense competition. These challenges hinder their ability to contribute to sustainable development, leading to stunted growth, reduced competitiveness, and negative impacts on the local economy and community. Creativity, response to opportunities, social equity, and environmental protection can serve as remedial factors to revive small businesses in Onitsha. By embracing creativity, small businesses can innovate and differentiate themselves, improving their competitiveness. Responding to opportunities enables them to adapt to shifting market trends and consumer needs. Prioritizing social equity ensures that businesses operate inclusively and ethically, while environmental protection mitigates their ecological footprint. By adopting these factors, small businesses can enhance their resilience, scalability, and sustainability, contributing to sustainable development in Onitsha.

By integrating these remedial factors, small businesses in Onitsha can overcome their challenges and thrive. Creativity can help them develop innovative solutions to operational challenges, while response to opportunities enables them to pivot in response to shifting market conditions. Social equity can guide their engagement with the community, ensuring that their operations are inclusive and beneficial. Environmental protection can inform their practices, reducing waste and promoting sustainability. By embracing these factors, small businesses in Onitsha can drive sustainable development, promoting economic growth, social progress, and environmental stewardship. There is a paucity of empirical research on this study. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to ascertain the relationship that exists between small business entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Onitsha, Anambra State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective is to examine the relationship between small business entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Onitsha, Anambra State. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the relationship between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State.

2. To ascertain the relationship between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State?

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Small Business Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship refers to the process of discovering and pursuing business opportunities by creating and developing new products, services, and procedures, to generate profits and economic growth. In recent years, Nigeria has experienced a significant increase in the number of entrepreneurs and start-up businesses which has contributed to the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem (Nwagbala, Nwachukwu, & Ezeanokwasa, 2023; Ezeanokwasa, Nwagbala, Nwachukwu, Oranusi & Ani, 2023). Small business entrepreneurship refers to the process of designing, launching, and running a small business venture, typically characterized by innovation, risk-taking, and adaptability, to create a profitable and sustainable enterprise that generates economic value, creates employment opportunities, and contributes to the development of the local community, while also providing personal fulfilment and financial independence for the entrepreneur, who is often driven by a passion for innovation, a willingness to take calculated risks, and a commitment to excellence, and who must navigate a complex and dynamic environment, marked by uncertainty, competition, and constant change (Awomailo, Adekunle, Sarah and Alagbe, 2024). Small business entrepreneurship is a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of starting and managing a small business, which involves identifying opportunities, mobilizing resources, and creating value through innovation, marketing, and sales, while also managing finances, operations, and human resources, all of which requires a unique blend of skills, knowledge, and personal qualities, such as creativity, resilience, and leadership, and which has a significant impact on the economy, society, and the individual entrepreneur, who must navigate a complex web of relationships, institutions, and policies that shape the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Hall, 2023).

Small business entrepreneurship encompasses the full range of activities, processes, and behaviours involved in starting, running, and growing a small business, which includes everything from idea generation and business planning to financing, marketing, and operations management, as well as the personal and emotional aspects of entrepreneurship, such

as motivation, self-efficacy, and stress management, all of which requires a unique blend of skills, knowledge, and personal qualities, such as adaptability, creativity, and resilience, and which has a profound impact on the economy, society, and the individual entrepreneur, who must navigate a complex and dynamic environment, marked by uncertainty, competition, and constant change (Mahr, 2020). Small and medium enterprises contribute significantly to economic development and job creation in Nigeria (Ajibola, 2020; Ezeanokwasa, Nwagbala, Nwachukwu, Oranusi & Ani, 2023). Despite their importance, SME owners face challenges in sustaining their understanding the factor's influencing sustainability is crucial.

Creativity

Creativity is the ability to generate novel and valuable ideas, solutions, and products through a cognitive process that involves imagination, inspiration, and innovation, and is characterized by originality, flexibility, and adaptability, and requires a willingness to take risks, challenge assumptions, and embrace uncertainty, and is influenced by a complex interplay of genetic, environmental, and cultural factors, and can be developed and enhanced through education, training, and practice (Schaltegger, 2023). Creativity is the capacity to envision and shape the future, to bring forth new possibilities and realities, and to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary, through a process that is both intuitive and rational, logical and imaginative, and requires a deep understanding of human needs, desires, and aspirations, and the ability to navigate the complex and dynamic interplay of technological, social, and economic forces that shape our world (Goyal, 2022).

Creativity is the spark that ignites the flame of innovation, and is the catalyst for change, growth, and progress, and involves the ability to think outside the box, challenge conventional wisdom, and embrace unconventional ideas, and requires a willingness to experiment, take risks, and learn from failure, and is influenced by a complex array of factors, including culture, upbringing, education, and life experiences (Leutner, 2020). Creativity is the ability to make connections between seemingly unrelated ideas, concepts, and disciplines, and to generate new insights, perspectives, and knowledge, through a process that is both analytical and imaginative, and requires a deep understanding of the human experience, and the ability to navigate the complex and dynamic interplay of cognitive, emotional, and social forces that shape our thoughts, behaviours, and actions (Singh, 2020).

Response to Opportunities

Response to opportunities refers to the ability to recognize, capitalize, and leverage potential chances, openings, and possibilities, through a cognitive process that involves perception, attention, memory, reasoning, and decision-making, and is characterized by alertness, adaptability, and action-oriented behaviour, and requires

a willingness to take calculated risks, challenge assumptions, and embrace uncertainty, and is influenced by a complex interplay of personal, environmental, and contextual factors, including prior experiences, knowledge, skills, and cultural background, and is a critical component of entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour, as entrepreneurs need to be able to respond to opportunities to identify untapped markets, develop innovative products, and create new businesses (Zhang, 2021).

Response to opportunities is the capacity to envision, create, and seize new possibilities, and to transform them into viable business ventures, through a process that involves creativity, imagination, and innovation, and requires a deep understanding of customer needs, market trends, and technological advancements, and the ability to navigate the complex and dynamic interplay of economic, social, and political forces that shape the business environment, and is a key characteristic of successful entrepreneurs, who can respond to opportunities by developing new products, services, and business models that meet the changing needs of the market (Ismail, 2022). Response to opportunities involves the ability to recognize and pursue opportunities that align with one's values, passions, and goals, and to transform them into meaningful and impactful ventures, through a process that is both personal and professional, and requires a willingness to take risks, challenge assumptions, and embrace uncertainty, and is influenced by a complex array of factors, including personal experiences, skills, knowledge, and cultural background, and is a critical component of entrepreneurial leadership, as entrepreneurs need to be able to respond to opportunities to create value, drive innovation, and make a positive impact on society (Hockerts, 2020). Business organizations exist only to survive environmental factors that tend to invade business performance (Nwagbala, Ifureze, & Okafor, 2022). Any business organization that does not consider survival as the main goal should re-think (Ukpai, 2014; Nwagbala, Ifureze, & Okafor, 2022)

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the process of attaining social and economic advancement without depleting a nation's natural resources (Ashford and Hall, 2013; Nwagbala and Ani, 2022). Sustainable development is a dynamic and multifaceted process that aims to reconcile the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, by integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations into a holistic framework that prioritizes equity, justice, and human well-being, and requires a long-term perspective, a system thinking approach, and a commitment to social and environmental responsibility (Ahmed, 2021). Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and is based on a vision of a

better future, where economic prosperity, social justice, and environmental sustainability are mutually reinforcing and require a radical transformation of our values, beliefs, and practices, and a commitment to human rights, social justice, and environmental stewardship (Khan, 2022).

Sustainable development means striking a careful balance between protecting ecosystems and natural resources, which are essential to both present and future generations, and the human need to improve quality of life, maintain and ensure the continuation of a business, and feel well (Ozoh and Stephen, 2018; Nwagbala and Ani, 2022).

Sustainable development is a process of change that seeks to promote the well-being of all individuals and communities, by creating a more just and equitable society, a more prosperous and sustainable economy, and a more healthy and resilient environment, and requires a collaborative and participatory approach, that involves governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals, and is based on a shared vision of a better future, and a commitment to human rights, social justice, and environmental sustainability (Spengler, 2022). Sustainable development is a way of thinking and acting that prioritizes the long-term health and well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants, by integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations into a holistic framework that seeks to balance human needs and environmental limits and requires a commitment to social and environmental responsibility, and a willingness to challenge the status quo and embrace change (Saeed, 2020).

Social Equity

Social equity refers to the fair and just distribution of resources, opportunities, and services within a society, recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of all individuals, and seeking to promote equal access, opportunities, and outcomes for all, regardless of race, gender, class, or other social categories. It is about creating a society that is just and fair for all, where everyone has access to the same opportunities, resources, and services, and where no one is denied their basic human rights and dignity because of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic (Hall, 2023). Social equity means ensuring that all individuals have equal access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive, including education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political power, and that no one is left behind because of systemic barriers or biases. It is a principle of justice that requires that all individuals and groups receive a fair share of the benefits and resources of society and that no one is denied their fair share because of their social identity or circumstances (Schaltegger, 2023). Social equity is about recognizing the historical and systemic inequalities that have been perpetuated against marginalized communities, and working to address and dismantle

them, through policies, practices, and programs that promote equity and inclusion (Mahr, 2020).

Environmental Protection

Environmental protection is a moral and ethical imperative that requires us to safeguard the natural world and all its inhabitants from harm, degradation, and destruction, and to preserve the integrity and beauty of the earth's ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources for future generations, through a commitment to sustainability, conservation, and responsible stewardship (Adeneye, and Anuolam, 2024). Environmental protection is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for human well-being, security, and development, that requires us to address the environmental causes of poverty, inequality, and injustice, and to promote sustainable development, social justice, and human rights, through a framework of environmental governance, law, and policy. It is a critical component of our global commons, that requires us to manage the earth's natural resources in a way that is equitable, sustainable, and responsible, and to protect the planet's ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural beauty from degradation, pollution, and destruction, through a commitment to environmental ethics, values, and principles (Ismail, 2022).

Environmental protection is a vital aspect of human health and well-being, that requires us to address the environmental causes of disease, illness, and injury, and to promote healthy environments, sustainable development, and environmental justice, through a framework of public health, environmental health, and ecosystem services. It is a long-term investment in the future of our planet and all its inhabitants, that requires us to think and act with a sense of urgency, responsibility, and hope, and to prioritize the health, resilience, and sustainability of the earth's ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources, for the benefit of all life on earth (Ahmed, 2021).

Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, by Jay Barney in 1991. It states that a firm's resources and capabilities are the primary sources of competitive advantage and sustainable business performance. Key aspects of the RBV theory include Resources and capabilities, competence and capabilities of the firm, internal resources for strategy formulation and implementation, innovations and entrepreneurship, competitive advantage and sustainable business performance, and leadership positions within industries. The RBV theory is relevant to the present study because it provides a valuable framework for understanding how small businesses can leverage their unique resources and capabilities to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, create value, and contribute to sustainable development, by identifying and utilizing their strengths, exploiting opportunities, and mitigating weaknesses and threats, thereby enabling them to

innovate, adapt, and thrive in dynamic environments, while also contributing to the well-being of society and the environment, which is essential for achieving sustainable development goals.

Empirical Review

Onodi, Nwosu, and Oti (2024) examined entrepreneurship studies and the development of small and medium-scale enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. The instrument of the study was a questionnaire and the population of the study consists of 300 senior staff of Small and Medium Enterprises in Anambra State with a sample size of 160 senior staff. The statistical tools used to analyze the data and test the hypotheses were percentages and Chi-square respectively. The result of the test of hypotheses revealed that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship studies and employment generation. The study further revealed that entrepreneurship studies have a significant relationship with the production of goods and services and that entrepreneurship skills enhance the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Awomailo, Adekunle, Sarah, and Alagbe (2024) determined the effect of entrepreneurial creativity and innovation on business growth in Nigeria. The sample size was 200. Data was collected through the use of a Purposive sampling technique and questionnaire. The collected data was entered into a computer application package (SPSS) to quantitatively analyze the data both in terms of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include frequencies, measures of central tendencies (mean), and measures of dispersion (standard deviation). Inferential statistics include correlation. The data was then presented using tables for clarity and ease of understanding. The study revealed there is a positive and significant relationship between incremental creativity and business growth ($r=.723$, $p<0.05$). In the same vein, there is a positive and significant relationship between process creativity and business growth ($r=.892$, $p<0.05$). More importantly, there is a direct and significant relationship between architectural creativity and business growth ($r=.761$, $p<0.05$). Thus, there is a positive and significant relationship between modular creativity and business growth ($r=.737$, $p<0.05$).

Adeneye, and Anuolam (2024) ascertained the effect of environmental protection expenditures on the financial performance of industrial goods firms in Nigeria. Firms' financial performance was measured with return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE), and earnings per share (EPS). Data were sourced from the annual reports and sustainability reports of the selected industrial goods firms. Data for environmental protection expenses (EPE) were obtained through a content analysis approach while data for ROA and ROE were computed with the accounting figures derived from the firms' annual reports. Panel Regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data collected. Results from the analysis

revealed that EPE exerted a negative but insignificant effect on ROA and EPS while on the other hand, EPE exerted a positive but insignificant effect on ROE.

Anoke, Osita, and Okafor (2023) explored business tutoring and entrepreneurship growth in Anambra State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was used in the study. The study's population was 911 registered entrepreneurs in Awka and Onitsha, Anambra State. The study employed Yamane's (1967) sample size determination to select 278 entrepreneurs as the sample size for the study. Data for the study were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire. Regression was used to analyze the stated hypotheses in the study. The study revealed that knowledge sharing has a negative and insignificant effect on entrepreneurship growth, while psychological support and knowledge transfer have strong positive effects on entrepreneurship growth in Anambra state, Nigeria.

Chukwujama, Nwangwu, and Ihim (20203) investigated the role of micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) in solving unemployment problems in selected MSMEs firms in Onitsha metropolis. This study was anchored on the theory of entrepreneurial drive. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and a simple random sampling technique was used to select the MSME firms in Onitsha Metropolis, Anambra State. The population of the study is 89 and Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 73. Findings revealed that there is a significant role of MSMEs in solving the problem of Unemployment in Nigeria by indicating that there is a positive relationship between the medium scale business and job creation; secondly, between small scale business and self-employment, and lastly, between micro-enterprise and sustainable employment.

Gap in Literature

There exists a methodological gap, variable gap, organizational gap, geographical gap, and periodic gap. There is limited research on the present study. From the reviewed studies, the methodologies, variables, organizations, locations, and time are different from those of the present study. Therefore, this study sought to bridge these gaps.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study adopted a survey research design. Primary source of data were used. The study employed a random sampling probability technique. The target population is 155 respondents were drawn from 260 registered small business enterprises in Onitsha under the National Association of Small-Scale Industrialists, Anambra State Chapter. Krejcie and Morgan's table was used to get a sample size of 155 respondent from the owner Manager. Hypotheses were tested with the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS version 27) at a 5% level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypotheses Testing

Decision Rule: Reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate if P-value < 0.05; if otherwise, accept the null Hypothesis.

Hypothesis One

Table 1: Ho: There is no significant relationship that exists between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State

		Creativity	Social Equity
	Pearson correlation	1	.912**
Creativity	Sig. (2-tailed)		.037
	N	155	155
	Pearson correlation	.912**	1
Social Equity	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	
	N	155	155

Source: SPSS ver. 27 Outputs

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Table 1 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State, with $r = 0.912$, $n = 155$, and p-value of 0.037 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the study accepted the alternate hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between creativity and social equity of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State. This implies that as creativity

increases in Onitsha, Anambra State, social equity also increases, suggesting that creative initiatives and endeavors have a positive impact on promoting social justice and equal opportunities in the region. This finding is in congruence with the result of Awomailo, Adekunle, Sarah, and Alagbe (2024) in the study on the effect of entrepreneurial creativity and innovation on business growth in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

Table 2: Ho: There is no significant correlation between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State

		Response to Opportunities	Environmental Protection
	Pearson correlation	1	.758**
Response to Opportunities	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022
	N	155	155
	Pearson correlation	.758**	1
Environmental Protection	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	
	N	155	155

Source: SPSS ver.27 Outputs.

Appendix I

Table 3.1									
Table for Determining Sample Size of a Known Population									
N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	346
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	354
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	191	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	170	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	180	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	190	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	200	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	370
65	56	210	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	220	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	230	144	550	226	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	240	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	250	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	260	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	254	2600	335	100000	384

Note: N is Population Size; S is Sample Size Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Table 2 shows that there is a positive significant correlation between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State, with $r = 0.758$, $n = 155$, and p -value of 0.022 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the study accepted the alternate hypothesis and concluded that there is a positive significant correlation between response to opportunities and environmental protection of small businesses in Onitsha, Anambra State. This implies that promoting entrepreneurship and innovation can also lead to improved environmental protection and sustainable development in the region. This result is in harmony with the result of Adeneye, and Anuolam (2024) in the study on the effect of environmental protection expenditures on the financial performance of industrial goods firms in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between small business entrepreneurship and sustainable development in Onitsha, Anambra State.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. The Anambra government needs to promote creative initiatives in Onitsha to advance social equity and community development.

2. The Nigerian government needs to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation among small businesses to enhance environmental protection and sustainable development in the country.

REFERENCES

- Adeneye, O. A., & Anuolam, M. O. (2024). Environmental protection expenditures on the financial performance of industrial goods firms in Nigeria. *Advance Journal of Management, Accounting and Finance*, 9(2), 1-19.
- Ahmed, S. (2021). Small businesses can drive sustainable development in Africa. *African Business*.
- Anoke, A. F., Osita, F. C., & Ndidiamaka, O. J. (2023). Business tutoring and entrepreneurship growth in Anambra State Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Management Research*, 3(2).
- Awomailo, L. B., Adekunle, O. O., Sarah, O. I. I., & Alagbe, O. T. (2024). Examining the effect of entrepreneurial creativity and innovation on business growth.
- Chukwujama, N. C., Nwangwu, C. J., & Ihim, M. C. (2023). Role of micro, small, and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs) in solving unemployment problems in selected MSMEs firms in Onitsha metropolis. *Journal of the Management Sciences*, 60(5), 291-302.

- Ezeanokwasa, F. N., Nwagbala, S. C., Nwachukwu, R., Oranusi, I. N., & Ani, A. E. (2023). Challenges and Opportunities: Unravelling the Dynamics of Entrepreneurship Disruptions in Nigeria, *Development Policy and Management Review (DPMR)*, 3(2), 165-176.
- Goyal, S. (2022). *The role of small businesses in achieving sustainable development goals*. Forbes.
- Hall, J. K. (2023). The impact of small businesses on sustainable development: A systematic review. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 58(3), 539-563.
- Hockerts, K. (2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Management*, 46(6), 1031-1056.
- Ismail, A. (2022). The role of small businesses in achieving sustainable development in Malaysia. The Star.
- Khan, A. (2022). How small businesses can drive sustainable development? World Economic Forum.
- Leutner, F. (2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship and stakeholder management: A systematic review. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 213(2), 287-303.
- Mahr, D. (2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship: A systematic review and future directions. *Journal of Sustainable Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 1-23.
- Mwasalwiba, E. S. (2022). Small businesses and sustainable development in Tanzania. The Citizen.
- Nwagbala, S. C., & Ani, E. A. (2022). Security challenges and the implications on business Sustainability in Nigeria", *Electronic Journal [online] Available: <http://KcKcc.edu/KcKcc-e-journal>*, (13),1-16
- Nwagbala, S. C., Ifureze, P. C., & Okafor, I. P. (2022) Insecurity in Nigeria and Business Sustainability in Selected Hotels in Awka, *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, 6(3), 1571-1580.
- Onodi, B. E., Nwosu, U. S., & Oti, I. (2024). Entrepreneurship Studies and Development of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Jalingo Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 5(3), 156-169.
- Oparah, P. C., Iloanya, K. O., & Ndubuisi, U. M. (2023). Small and Medium Enterprises Development and Poverty Reduction among Youths in Anambra State, Nigeria. *Central Asian Journal of Innovations on Tourism Management and Finance*, 4(3), 109-120.
- Saeed, A. (2020). Sustainable entrepreneurship in developing countries: A systematic review and future directions. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, 18(2), 147-164.
- Schaltegger, S. (2023). Entrepreneurship and sustainable development: A framework for research and practice. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 211(2), 257-271.
- Singh, A. (2020). How small businesses can contribute to sustainable development goals. Entrepreneur.
- Spengler, A. (2022). Sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation: A systematic review and research agenda. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 287, 120694.
- Zhang, Y. (2021). Small businesses and sustainable development in China. China Daily.