

# DOES ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGIES CAUSES GROWTH AND SURVIVAL OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE ENTERPRISES (MSMES) IN NIGERIA? A MULTI-CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim was to examine the variables for measuring entrepreneurial strategies (ES) on growth and for the survival of top executive entrepreneurs and managers of MSMEs. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** Questionnaire approach of data collection was utilized. 160 respondents was collected from top executive of MSMEs in Nigeria. Descriptive and Pearson correlation statistical method such as multi-collinearity analysis was employed to provide testing of hypotheses. Findings: Therefore, the findings indicated a significant positive relationship between ES variables: adaptability to change strategy (ACS), exploitative strategy(ES), (New Entry strategy), competitive strategy (ComS), collaborative strategy (ColS), conservative strategy (ConS), proactive strategy (PS), customer relationship strategy (CRS), cost minimization strategy (CMS) and risk taking strategy (RTS) on growth and survival of MSMEs. **Practical Implications:** Entrepreneurial strategies is a strategic and survival tool employed by corporate entrepreneurs in order to achieve growth, competitiveness and sustainable performance. Due to the dynamic and complex changes in the business environment corporate entrepreneurs develop better survival strategies for better strategic actions and decisions. Within the practical applications of this paper, emphasis is placed on developing strategic planning tools for growth and survival in a complex, volatile and competitive business environment. This strategies should be put in practice by MSMEs. Based on the proxies for measuring entrepreneurial strategies entrepreneurial firms can chose any of those strategies that best fit for organizational growth and survival. Also, entrepreneurial firms can develop their own strategy that can be best fit for survival and competitiveness. **Originality and value:** This study highlights the practical knowledge of entrepreneurial strategies (ES) and how it can influence growth and survival of MSMEs and also contributes to literatures by filling the gaps and providing clarity to top executive entrepreneurs on entrepreneurial strategies and survival.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial strategies (ES), Growth, MSMEs, Nigeria, Survival of MSMEs

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept “entrepreneurial strategies” (ES) is one of the most contemporary, significant, repeated and widely discussed topic in entrepreneurship and strategic planning literatures. Hence, it has received remarkable attention among scholars of entrepreneurship, management experts and business strategist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Apparently, small and medium enterprise development agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) organization reported that most MSMEs in Nigeria do not survive at the first 5years of business operation Ajibola, (2018). This is due to

the changes in the global market, fluctuation in the micro and macro-economic indexes, forces of demand and supply, product and technological dynamics and innovation, epileptic power supply. Furthermore, Agwu & Emite (2014) opined that the unfriendly and inconsistent government policies, problem of insecurity, banditry, competition and changes in the internal and external environment and other innumerable factors tend to affect MSMEs and entrepreneurs in the ease of doing business in Nigeria. Therefore, in other to confront and mitigate these challenges, entrepreneurs and enterprises tend to design and develop entrepreneurial strategies implemented for the survival, development and sustainability of MSMEs growth in Nigeria. Thus, vast majority of entrepreneurs seems to rely on the dynamics, resourcefulness, entrepreneurial skills and capability to remain in business and enhance wide spectrum of entrepreneurial growth. Consequently, government all over the world, especially the government in Nigeria has put in place favourably policies to encourage and promote MSMEs and ensuring the continuous formulation of sustainable policies in the growth of MSMEs in other to change the narrative of doing business in Nigeria. There are different survival strategies determined from the angle of proactiveness, searching and recognising opportunities, exploitation and innovation that is profitably and a medium for growth for survival to the MSMEs. Decision variables such as investing in opportunities, diagnosing the internal and external business environment, analyzing the economic policies of government is related to MSMEs growth and development. Therefore, adopting backward integration strategy involves price cutting strategies, adopting cost reduction strategy (Lean Strategy), competitive strategies, collaborating with similar firms in technology (Nnabugwu, 2021; Junaidu, Bature & Zuru, 2019) and supply chain distribution (Maranesi & De-Giovanmi, 2020). It is on these bases that entrepreneurial firms are involved in strategic making process with a view of taking strategic decisions and actions. However, only a few entrepreneurs and managers of MSMEs embark on entrepreneurial strategies which result to either dwindling of the business or complete closure of the firm. Therefore, the prominence of this study is based on entrepreneurial strategies and the survival of MSMEs in Nigeria has been discussed by numerous scholars (Nnabugwu, 2021; Maranesi et al., 2020; Xhhavit, Naim & Marija, 2020; Ayodele, 2018; Janaidu, Bature & Zuru, 2019; Etim, Adabu & Ogar, 2017; Lorun, 2014 & Yu, 2012). Subsequently, previous research measurements and proxies on entrepreneurial strategies (ES) considered innovative strategy, Niching strategy, adaptability to change strategy, exploitative strategy (New Entry Strategy), competitive strategy, conservative strategy, collaborative strategy, proactive strategy (Respond to changes), customer relationship strategy (Customer centric), cost minimization strategy and risk-taking strategy. However, much of these empirical literatures did not consider a holistic study on the measurement of MSME in Nigeria, hence, a gap. To this end, the study considers the following outline. The present session constitute introduction. The next two sessions is the theoretical and empirical review of literatures, Session three entails the methodology of conducting the research, next, session four, entails the analyses of results and discussion of findings. Finally, summary of conclusion and recommendations was also derived. Therefore, this study considered and explored the various entrepreneurial strategies on continuous existence, survival and growth of MSMEs. The main purpose of this study was to examine the impact of entrepreneurial strategies employed by MSMEs for survival and growth in Nigeria.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 Entrepreneurial Strategies

The concept entrepreneurial strategies (ES) has a variation of terminology among past researchers including strategic entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial actions, entrepreneurial behaviour, entrepreneurial intensity, entrepreneurial posture, entrepreneurial activity, entrepreneurial proclivity, entrepreneurial propensity, and in some cases, learning strategies, competitive strategies and adaptation strategy, corporate entrepreneurship (Covin & Wales, 2012; Aloulou & Fayolle, 2015; Belenzon, Aaron & Brendan, 2017 & Branco, Ferreira & Jayantila, 2021). Certainly, none of the label is linked to specific scholar of entrepreneurial strategist depending on the phenomenon of measures. Entrepreneurial strategies (ES) has been described as a multidimensional component that involves innovative strategy, risk taking strategy and proactive strategy (Yi, Amenuvor & Boateng 2021). According to Akhmiokhor & Adenikin, (2017) business strategies and entrepreneurs are confronted with numerous challenges daily and tasked with the responsibility of identifying sustainable strategies that will create sustainable values and profits in a long term. Thus, the authors posited that an entrepreneurial strategy (ES) is a strategic approach employed by entrepreneurial firms with a view to understanding and analyzing the environment characterized by certain influence that provide for proactive effective decision making. Entrepreneurial strategies are the integration that interlinks the creation of strategic proactive intentions and practical real life business situation. Entrepreneurial strategy (ES) is a strategic entrepreneurial process that involves opportunity creation and invention through the development of ideas to a start-up of a business venture (Harm, 2013). Consequently, ES is a strategic process of developing new products and processes in a constrained and competitive market. Entrepreneurs are people or individuals that are willing and have the propensity to take risk in creating and developing new products. As such, entrepreneurial strategies encompass strategies for innovation and running a business venture that entails all aspect of marketing and operations. Murray, (1984) put it this way as “the means through which organisations establishes and re-establishes its fundamentals set of relationships with its environment”. Entrepreneurial strategy is described as an action, reactions and a process of decision making an entrepreneur takes to exploit new innovative opportunities by entry into a new market. Ireland, Covin & Kuratko, (2009) conceptualised entrepreneurial strategy as a corporate strategy which includes individual and organisation members, entrepreneurial perception, the external environmental conditions that invite entrepreneurial activity and top management entrepreneurial strategic vision for the firm and the organisational result, consequences, benefits as a result of entrepreneurial actions and competitive capabilities. Herath Mahmood, (2013) stressed that the intention of entrepreneurial strategist is to deploy and utilise organisational capabilities in order to recongnise new market potentials and respond to changes in the business environment. Most importantly, entrepreneurial strategy (ES) is closely related to top management capabilities to proffering solutions to problems and making effective decisions with respect to enterprise survival. Entrepreneurial strategy is a series of steps and decision making processes of exploring, exploiting and generating Poudyal & Prandhan (2020) new market entry and new opportunities with a view to achieving cost reduction, maximising

opportunities and utilising resources. It also refer to entrepreneurial decisions and actions that involve entrepreneurs conducting environmental analysis, understanding the unfavourable environment that create barriers, take advantage of the favourable environment, enter the industry that create substantial barriers and exploit a particular new entry. Entrepreneurial strategy involves the combination, utilization of resources and knowledge with the aim of achieving competitive advantage. Hence, entrepreneurial resources are the ability of entrepreneurs to utilise the integration of organisational knowledge (creative ideas) into valuable, rare, imitable asset which cannot be substituted (Arokodare et al., 2020).

This strategy is the persistence determination to inhibit the ability to adapt the changes in the business environment. It also involves minimizing the risk of entering into new market that creates barriers to entry, developing skills and competencies that are necessary to be successful in competitive and turbulent economy, reduce the cost associated with research and development (R&D). According to Sahler & Carr, (2009), Stroe, Parida & Wincent, (2018) opined that survival strategies often introduced by entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial firms can be similar in their approach either to reduce, tolerate or minimize situations. Similarly, some survival strategies can be applied using modeling techniques in solving situations and the application of behavioural and personality approach (Marina, Antonio & Jose, 2018). The numerous and exciting explanations of entrepreneurial strategies (ES) lead to justifiable critics from various scholars and designing strategic approach for survival in identifying the various survival strategies for MSMEs. Numerous theories have supported the development of entrepreneurial strategies. Among this theories are Resource based dependency theory (RBD) (Barney, Ketchen & Wright, 2011), the organizational Life-cycle theory (OLC), knowledge based view (KBV) (Grant, 2002), and opportunity based theory (OBT), the survival-base theory (SBT) and dynamic capability theory (DCT).

This study is anchored on two basic theories; the dynamic capability and survival base theory. These theories focused on the ability of micro, small, medium scale enterprise (MSMEs) to quickly learn, adapt to changes in innovations, and build strategic asset that would enable firms to compete in a dynamic and turbulence business environment. The dynamic capabilities theory posit that firms focuses on the ability to quickly coordinate, harmonizes, and reconfigure externally sourced competencies and leveraging or taking advantage of the internal resources. The survival base theory argued that small and medium strategic firms deliberately design strategies to avoid being exterminated by competitors. Basically, the focus of organisation to renew the quest for survival strategy is that organization needs to continuously creates value and develops adaptation to changing environment. Hence, organisation with practical and intellectual capacity is able to survive in ever changing, competitive business environment with a view to achieving growth and performance. The theory was formally initiated by Herbert Spencer (Miesing & Preble, 1985) and was coined from the word “survival of the fittest”. The proposition was based on the fact that in a highly intense, competitive, challenging and rivalry business environment, small and medium sized firms need to deploy effective and efficient strategies to responds to the changing and unprecedented environment (Khairuddin, 2005). Thus, this study examined entrepreneurial strategies and the survival of MSMEs and the implications for growth in Nigeria. Hence, this theory is consistent and support previous

empirical research in entrepreneurial strategies and the survival among MSMEs. For instance, a prior empirical research investigated by Etim, (2017) examined the significant impact of survival strategies for SMEs in Africa continent. Thus, the study revealed that innovativeness, risk taking and pro-activeness was the capability for survival, profitability, growth and sustainability of SMEs in Nigeria. These contemporary researches tend to make contributions to the body of knowledge in an existing literature on the various variables for measuring entrepreneurial strategy on MSMEs growth. For instance, numerous prior empirical studies have been done by different scholars on the subject of entrepreneurial strategies in developed and developing countries with mixed results. However, few empirical studies have examined the various entrepreneurial strategies but emphasis more on the factors and the survival on MSMEs growth in developed and developing countries. In addition, very few strategies have been examined by various researchers. Therefore, there is a great significant need to explore the various entrepreneurial strategies for growth and survival on MSMEs in order to foster possible failure. For instance, Xhhavit, Naim & Marija, (2020) examined the various Porter's generic strategic measuring variables which are low cost minimization strategy, product differentiation and focus/niche market strategy and its relationship with performance among enterprises in the republic of Kosovo. The authors employed the use of correlation statistics and multiple matrix analysis to test the proposed hypothesis.

They found out that enterprise firms that make used of differentiation strategy achieve a better superior performance than low-cost strategy and focus strategy, however, they still achieve a better impact. Similarly, Branco et al., (2021) conducted a systematic review of 427 articles of the concept of entrepreneurial strategy (ES) from the archives of Scopus and web of science. The results revealed to the authors five basic phenomena of ES conceptualization which are economic theory/mode and entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial conceptual theory, Framework/models of entrepreneurial strategies, the context, application of entrepreneurial strategies and applications/matrix of entrepreneurial strategies. Subsequently, the authors further investigated the various global economic problems facing SMEs sector with critical understanding and consideration of the survival strategies adopted. 110 articles were reviewed and they found out that sustainable policies were considered for global survival strategies. Lonbardi, Tiscim, Trequattrim & Martimello (2020) explore the use of case study approach to evaluate the impact of strategic entrepreneurs on personal values, features, qualities and the success, growth of entrepreneurs and SMEs operators of Balloon industries in Italy. The study indicated that entrepreneurial mind set, dynamics of the environment and combination of adequate resources, leadership values are essential strategy for achieving SMEs success and decision outcomes. Gamage, Ekanayake, Abeyrathne, Prasanna, Gamage, Jayasundar & Rajapakshe, (2020) investigated the factors that affect the survival of newly established ventures in Pakistan. The results revealed that there was a relationship between strategic entrepreneurship and network collaboration with superior outcomes of incubated established businesses and while human and financial capital was insignificant effect on performance of newly incubated businesses in Pakistan emerging market. Yu (2012) determined the survival of newly founded small and medium scale businesses in china. The determinant factors for survival are the enterprises age, age, start-up size, size of an industry and growth of a firm,

forms of ownership, full control of a firm, advancement in high-technological intensiveness and regional agglomeration. Other determinant factors included state owned and foreign state firms. Therefore, the research revealed that SMEs with such determinant factors have better survival prospects. Furthermore, an explicit analysis implies that the SMEs of different technology intensity and monopoly level are characterized with different survival features. In conclusion, the empirical works of Nybakk, (2012); Herath, (2013); Chai & Sa, (2016) assessed the effect of strategic entrepreneurship (SE) on superior performance. The results indicated that there was no substantial effect between SE and organizational outcomes. Also, it was found that the follower has more cooperative relationship with the leader in new product commercialization.

In Nigeria, Similar research was conducted by Arokodare, (2020) with intensive literature review on strategic entrepreneurship and the mindset of entrepreneurs in achieving superior performance. A research developed model was constructed to measure the variables for strategic entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial mindset and superior performance in an environmental uncertainty. Therefore, the study anchored on dynamic capabilities which are linked to the conceptual model study. The model was developed to interact with study variables as a moderating variable. Therefore, the result revealed that entrepreneurial mindset can be a catalyst for achieving entrepreneurship strategy and superior performance. Egwakhe, Tijani, Akinlabi & Egwuonwu, (2020) examined the effect SE on outcomes and a moderating role on competitive advantage. The findings showed that SE can be used to predict competitive advantage and superior outcomes. Subsequently, Ayodele, (2018) studied the characteristics of entrepreneurs in relations with the survival of small and medium sized business in a dynamic environment in Nigeria. The study employed the use of structured questionnaire to elucidate information from the respondents and use of Mean Maximum Correlation Vector (MMCV) model, r- factor and t-distribution was used to analyse the data. Therefore, it was found that innovative ability, finance value possession and entrepreneurial spirit was the survival and growth of entrepreneurial Businesses in Nigeria.

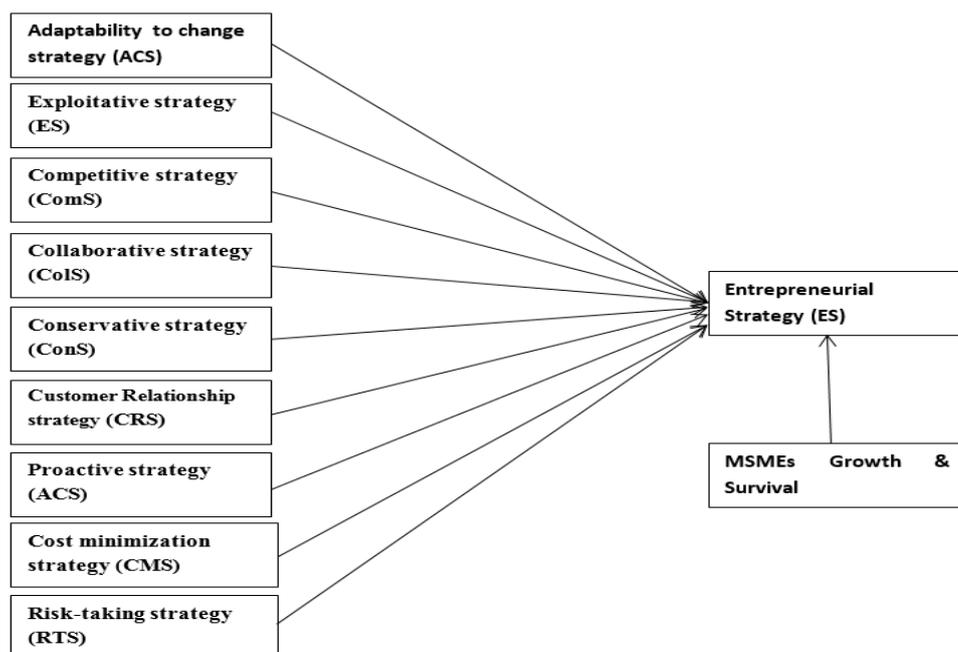
Similarly, Akinso, (2018) examined successful strategies for the survival of Small businesses in Nigeria. The study further explored the high causes of failure rate of Small business during the five years of activities in Nigeria. The various components used include education & training, effective strategies for business profitability, flexible financial strategy, market positioning and efficient infrastructure. The study found that positive social change was one of the factors that increase the survival rates of micro and small businesses during the initial years of business operation. The study also indicated that small enterprises reduce unemployment, increase tax revenue for the government, enhance economic activities and minimize the level of poverty of the nation. More so, Etim et al., (2017) examined the survival strategies for small and medium enterprises in Africa with special reference to SMEs in Lagos state, Nigeria. Secondary data was employed in this study and the use of Multivariate regression model was adopted. Thus, the study revealed that innovation, risk taking and Pro-activeness had positive influence on the survival, profitability, growth and sustainability of SMEs in Nigeria. In the same vein, Ifekwem & Adedamola, (2016) investigated the survival growth strategies and sustainability of selected Small and Medium Scale enterprises in Oshodi Isolo Local

Government Area of Lagos state. The use of questionnaire and interview was adopted and descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient were used to analyse the data. Hence, the study found that there was a significant relationship between survival strategies and SMEs sustainability.

Similarly, Lorun, (2014) examined survival strategies for the sustained growth of Small and Medium Scale entrepreneurs in Nigeria. The use of questionnaire was adopted and Chi Square statistical method was used to analyse the data. Therefore, the result showed that Creativity strategy, high risk taking strategy and opportunities seeking strategy was found to be a survival strategy for SMEs in Nigeria. Based on the argument elucidated from empirical literatures, the following hypothesis was proposed:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Entrepreneurial strategies have significant impact on growth and survival of micro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs) in Nigeria.

**Figure 1: Research Model**



### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Sample and Data collection

Data utilized was collected from top and executive entrepreneurs who owns and managed micro, small and medium scale businesses (MSMEs) in Lagos state, Nigeria using a structured questionnaire. The selected MSMEs were registered with corporate affairs commission in Lagos state, Nigeria. The total number of population of MSMEs in Lagos state comprised of 97,091 duly reported by National MSMEs survey reports, (2020). This study only focused on registered number of MSMEs in Lagos metropolis. The choice of Lagos was predicated on the

fact that Lagos was a commercial nerve centre and it support entrepreneurship and innovative activities. In order to facilitate the collection of data from organisations of respondents, both Purposive Stratified random sampling method and was employed to categorise the MSMEs into three groups such as micro, small and medium enterprises and to ensure proportional representation of selected firm. A simple random sampling technique without replacement was also used in each functional unit to make sure that the employees within the units have equal chances of being selected. A total of 160 copies of questionnaire were distributed and only 150 were retrieved. A sample size of 160 was determined using the [38] formula for sampling determination.

### **3.2 Instruments and Measurement of variables**

160 questionnaires was distributed via email and physical distribution to top executives of MSMEs and requested for their cooperation in filling the questionnaire due to adequate knowledge and strategies they have adopted and applied strategies in managing MSM businesses effectively though been faced with controllable and uncontrollable factors. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it facilitates the desired responses from the participants bearing in mind the objectives of the study. The questionnaire entails ten parts which was drawn from key variables of Entrepreneurial strategies and MSMEs growth which comprises of forty seven (47) 5-point likert scale close ended items that addressed each research question. Data required for this study measured two types of variables. Independent and dependent variables, hence, the independent variables which was entrepreneurial strategies (ES) have Nine measurable indicators adapted from (Xhhavit, Naim & Marija, 2020; Ayodele, 2018; Etim et al., 2017; Lorun, 2014 & Yu, 2012) Adaptability to change strategy. Exploitative strategy (New Entry Strategy), competitive strategy, conservative strategy, collaborative strategy, proactive strategy (Respond to changes), customer relationship strategy (Customer centric), cost minimization strategy and risk-taking strategy. While the MSMEs growth was developed by the researcher and from the subjective approach and perspective of growth. The method of descriptive statistical approach was utilized as analytical tool. The utilisation of descriptive statistics was employed and comprise of arithmetic average (mean of statistical distribution) root-mean square distribution or mean absolute deviation was used to analysed the responses from the respondents while inferential statistical tools such as Pearson correlation statistics was used to test the corresponding hypotheses according to the objectives of the research. This was done with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.

### **3.3 Reliability testing**

In this research, Cronbach's coefficient alpha reliability test was performed to measure the internal consistency of the variables. Prior studies advocated that the reliability test value above 0.60 is accepted (Khan, NU, Li, Safdar, Zia Khan, 2019; Anwar, Sher, & Najib, 2018). Cronbach's coefficient alphas value for measuring entrepreneurial strategies is 0.80, 0.63, 0.70, 0.72, 0.65, 0.70, 0.71, 0.65, 0.71 and for MSME growth is 0.90, 0.72, 0.81, 0.82 0.91. All the values are valid, reliable and recognized within the range of validity standard.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurial strategies are applicable as a survival tool in a complex, dynamic and competitive environment. Information from the respondents were collected, analysed and presented in Table 1 reports the means and standard deviations. Table 2 reports the multicollinearity of the variables that is high correlation between the independent variables [30].

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics of entrepreneurial strategies and MSMEs variables (n=150)**

<b>Entrepreneurial Strategies Variables (ESV)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation (SD)</b>
Adaptability to change strategy(ACS)	150	9.6466	5.5565
Exploitative strategy (New Entry Strategy)(ES)	150	10.1600	4.3016
Competitive strategy (ComS)	150	8.5667	4.9108
Collaborative strategy(CoS)	150	6.1401	3.6955
Conservative strategy(ConS)	150	10.6333	6.6492
Customer relationship strategy (Customer centric).(CRS)	150	7.1600	4.8877
Proactive strategy (PS)	150	6.9267	4.6188
Cost minimization strategy.(CMS)	150	6.2210	3.6967
Risk taking strategy (RTS)	150	8.7334	4.4477
Average Mean		<b>7.5</b>	<b>4.75</b>
<b>MSMEs Growth Variables</b>			
Increase in the numbers/size rate of MSMEs as a result of survival strategies	150	2.1667	1.5212
Increase in the number of innovative brands of product line as a result of survival strategies	150	2.2800	1.5635
Increase in employment rate/job creation.	150	2.9480	1.6145
increase in foreign direct investment (FDI)	150	2.1467	1.4348
Increase in exportation and local industry.	150	2.2667	1.5615
Average mean		<b>1.90</b>	<b>1.53</b>

Source: Field Survey processed 2021. Strongly Agree, A-Agree, NS-Not Sure, SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree.

Table 1, indicates the independent variables for entrepreneurial strategies and dependent variables for MSMEs growth. The indicators for independent variables comprised of adaptability to change strategy (ACS), exploitative strategy (New Entry strategy (ES), competitive strategy (ComS), collaborative strategy (CoS), conservative strategy (ConS), proactive strategy (PS) customer relationship strategy (CRS), cost minimization strategy (CMS) and risk taking strategy (RTS) are categorized to be good.. However, based on the indicators/dimensions, the mean average value is between 7.5 and standard deviation of 4.75. This value implies that the responses were good. Furthermore, the collaborative strategy indicators has the lowest value of 6.1401 which implies that collaborative strategy employed by MSMEs are not optimal or have not been achieved optimally. The inability of the MSMEs

to adopt or employ collaborative strategy in conjunction with other enterprises affects entrepreneurial growth. In the same vein, the growth of MSMEs as a dependent variable comprised of the following indicators namely increase/size of MSMEs, increase in the number of innovative brand, increase in employment rate /job creation, increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) and increase in the number of exportation and local industries, increase sales growth/turnover and profits and expansion of new market, addition of new product lines and increase in market shares are all categorised to be a good indicators. However, based on the indicators, the mean average value is between 1.90 and standard deviation of 1.53. This valid value shows that the responses were good. The lowest value of 2.1467 implies that the indicators foreign direct investment (FDI) has a low significant rate on MSMEs growth. This means that the percentage of investment or enterprises in foreign countries is low. Therefore, there is need to increase more presence in foreign countries and have greater percentage in ownership and control.

**Table 2: Pearson correlation matrix (N=150)**

Variables	Correlations	ACS	ES	ComS	CoIS	ConS	CRS	PS	CMS	RT	MSME growth
ACS	Pearson's correlation	1									
	Sig. (two-tailed)										
ES	Pearson's correlation	0.385	1								
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.007									
ComS	Pearson's correlation	0.527	0.119	1							
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.14	0.002								
CoIS	Pearson's correlation	0.499	0.337	0.528	1						
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0	0.007	0.004							
ConS	Pearson's correlation	0.511	0.421	0.414	0.552	1					
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0	0.308	0.12	0.14						
CRS	Pearson's correlation	0.518	0.461	0.437	0.353	0.371	1				
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.12	0.003	0.201	0	0					
PS	Pearson's correlation	0.651	0.433	0.429	0.412	0.44	0.322	1			
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.017	0.013	0.017	0.016	0.017	0				
CMS	Pearson's correlation	0.328	0.581	0.401	0.432	0.371	0.501	0.513	1		
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0	0.014	0.007	0.006	0	0.014	0.013			
RT	Pearson's correlation	0.341	0.455	0.432	0.338	0.443	0.499	0.391	0.424	1	
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0	0.006	0.008	0.006	0.006	0.015	0	0.003		
MSME Growth	Pearson's correlation(R)	0.616**	0.591**	0.621**	0.582**	0.544**	0.681**	0.661**	0.587**	0.781**	1
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.012	0.013	0.355	0	0.022	0.006	0.017	0.004	0.07	

\*\*=R>0.5 \*=p<0.05 level

Table 2 shows the Pearson correlation analysis for independent variables Entrepreneurial strategies which can predict the findings in dependent variables “MSME Growth”. The results showed multicollinearity among variables. The hypotheses provided in the study support the correlation results. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between adaptability of change (ACS) and MSME growth (R=0.616, p<0.01), Exploitative strategy (ComS) (New entry strategy) are significantly and positively related to MSME growth (R=0.591, p>0.01), Competitive strategy are significantly and positively related to MSME growth (R=0.582,

$p > 0.01$ ). The value ( $R=0.621$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ) revealed that there is a significant strong positive relationship between collaborative strategy (ColS) and MSME growth. The value ( $R=0.544$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ) shows a significant positive relationship between conservative strategy (ConS) and MSME growth, customer relationship strategy (CRS) are significantly and positively related to MSME growth ( $R=0.681$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ), proactive strategy (PS) is significantly and positively related to MSME growth with a value of ( $R=0.661$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ). Furthermore, the value ( $R=0.587$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ), revealed a significant positive relationship between cost minimization strategy (CMS) and MSME growth. Finally, risk taking strategy (RT) is significantly and positively related to MSME growth. With a value ( $R=0.781$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ). Thus, there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurial strategies and MSME growth.

Consequently, a summary of this present study tends to extend the existing literature by measuring the impact strategic entrepreneurship on micro, small, medium enterprises (MSMEs) growth. To achieve dependable and consistent results, we used more variables and indicators in measuring ES and MSME growth in Nigeria. The multicollinearity analysis revealed a significant and positive relationship between adaptability to change strategy (ACS), exploitative strategy (New Entry strategy (ES), competitive strategy (ComS), collaborative strategy (ColS), conservative strategy (ConS), proactive strategy (PS) customer relationship strategy (CRS), cost minimization strategy (CMS) and risk taking strategy (RTS) on growth and survival of MSMEs. The results generated supported our formulated hypotheses which states that entrepreneurial strategies have significant impact on growth and survival of MSMEs in Nigeria. This result is in line with the research objectives and the submission of previous studies. For instance, Xhhavit et al., (2020) examined cost minimization strategy, product/service differentiation strategy and niche market/product strategy and its relationship with performance. It was found that porter's generic strategies helps to achieve better superior performance. Similarly, Ayodele, (2018) examines the various characteristics of entrepreneurs for the survival of SMEs in a dynamic environment. It was revealed that innovative ability, which can as be referred to innovative strategies, financial value (financial capability/resources) and others can be used as a survival tools and for achieving growth. Najib et al., (2019) evaluated the various entrepreneurship strategies on newly established SMEs. The results revealed that financial capital and network ties were the pivotal role in the achievement of SMEs. From the overall results from prior studies, it revealed that entrepreneurial strategies were used based on the environment and the scope of the study. Hence, the dimension of entrepreneurship strategies used in this study tends to be extensively researched that any other scholarly research. In conclusion, entrepreneurial strategies (ES) had a significant positive relationship on growth and survival of MSMEs in Nigeria. In addition, top executive entrepreneurs and owners of entrepreneurial firms must be able to manage entrepreneurial strategies in order to achieve sustainable growth and survival of MSMEs.

## **5. CONTRIBUTIONS/IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

In view of our findings, we can theoretically, practically and reliably say that all the variables used in measuring entrepreneurial strategies are germane, significant and core indicators employed by MSMEs in achieving growth and survival in a turbulent, complex and dynamic business environment. Our findings established that customer relationship strategy is the most significant strategy for growth and survival of MSMEs, followed by competitive strategy and adaptability to change strategy to enter into a new market and ability to adapt to changes in the environment. Entrepreneurial firms with broader and implied strategy achieve sustainable performance and growth, also be able to understand those determinant factors/challenges that may influence organisational survival. In the case of newly established small and medium enterprises cost minimization, proactive and risk taking strategy is the most significant component in a competitive market and turbulent environment in Nigeria and globally. Practicably, top strategic entrepreneurs should consider those ES discussed in the study in order to mitigate possible challenges and uncertainty that may affect superior sales, profit and growth of the organisation.

## **6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

This research contributes to the current literatures by examining numerous key variables for measuring entrepreneurial strategies for growth and survival among MSMEs in Nigeria. The study also covers MSMEs in Nigeria. Furthermore, questionnaire approach of data collection was employed and descriptive correlation statistical analysis was used to determining the significant relationship between ES and growth and survival of MSMEs. However, this research has some limitations such as the sample size determination which focus only on MSMEs in Lagos. More so, only questionnaire instrument was employed in collection of data. Besides, the study covers only MSMEs in Nigeria and could not extend to other MSMEs in other developing or developed countries. In addition, only descriptive and correlation statistics was employed as a statistical analysis. Future researches can expand the variables used in the study and draw a comparison between MSMEs in Nigeria and other developed and developing nations of the world.

## **7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Practicably research has shown that MSMEs in Nigeria are confronted with the challenges of epileptic power supply, inaccessibility to financing of projects, high interest rate from commercial banks, insecurity, competition, inconsistent government policies, search for new customers, poor road network and many others. This all exhaustive constraint facing entrepreneurs has called for entrepreneurs to designed and developed strategies for survival and achievable sustainable growth. In respond to this environmental factors hindering smooth operation of the enterprise, top executive entrepreneurs, owners of businesses adapt to changes in the environment, exploit, recognise and search for new market, collaborate with similar organisations in terms of supply, production and distribution, create more robust customer problem solving platform and embark in cost reduction in terms of production and expenditure.

The results therefore revealed that strategies deployed by entrepreneurs have help to achieve growth and survival of MSMEs in Nigeria. First and foremost, we recommended that government in all strata should provide the conducive and enabling environment for business to thrive. They should support MSMEs in order to mitigate these challenges, determining factors militating against entrepreneurs. In addition, we also recommended that entrepreneurs should respond to their unique environment by expanding their strategic plans, developed more survival strategic actions, increase their resources, core competencies and capabilities. This will boost the gross domestic product (GDP) of MSMEs in Nigeria and increase our competitive strength globally.

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