



Entrepreneurial Orientation as a Correlate of Effective School Management in Private Schools

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the relationship between EO and effective school management in private schools in Oyo Metropolis. Specifically, it examines the correlation between the risk-taking propensity, innovation application, and proactiveness of private school administrators and the effectiveness of school management.

The study employs a correlational research design, using a stratified random sampling technique to select 40 school administrators from four local governments within Oyo Metropolis. Data were collected through structured questionnaires based on established EO scales and measures of school management effectiveness. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyze the data, and hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level. The findings indicate a weak positive correlation between the risk-taking propensity of private school administrators and school management effectiveness. A strong positive relationship was found between the application of innovative practices and the effectiveness of school management. Additionally, a significant positive correlation was observed between the proactiveness of private school administrators and the effectiveness of school management. The study highlights the importance of entrepreneurial practices in enhancing the management and performance of private schools. Innovation and proactiveness among school administrators are particularly crucial for improving school management effectiveness. These findings have implications for educational policy and practice, suggesting that fostering an entrepreneurial culture in private schools can lead to more dynamic and effective educational institutions. With the findings of the study it was recommended that school administrators should actively seek and implement innovative practices in their management and teaching methods. This includes integrating new technologies, modern educational techniques, and creative problem-solving approaches to enhance the learning environment and improve school performance.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Effective School Management, Private Schools

Introduction

Private schools are a big part of the education system in Nigeria, with a focus on urban areas like Oyo metropolis. These schools fill the gaps left by the public sector, providing quality education and contributing to the development of human capital. But they face a few obstacles, such as inadequate funding, regulatory challenges, and fierce competition (Joshi 2022). Effective management requires innovative and entrepreneurial thinking to address these challenges and ensure sustainability. Education subsector in Nigeria can boast of various schools, which include primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. In terms of governance, some of these schools operate as government-owned, while some simply belong to individuals (private schools). It is the individuals' interest and involvement in the ownership and/or management of schools in exchange for economic (profit) returns that is of concern in this study. Currently, among the non-government schools are for-profit institutions known as private schools. The concern is on problems that have made it difficult for the management of such schools to operate at an optimal level whereby meeting their primary goal will not be hindered. To achieve that, effective school management is an important aspect to be focused on. Because making productive decisions and finding solutions to the problems facing the school is an important aspect of school management.

Effective school management is crucial for the achievement of educational goals and the overall success of the school. It involves strategic planning, resource management, staff development, and fostering a conducive learning environment. Effective school management is characterized by a clear vision and mission, efficient administrative processes, strong leadership, stakeholder involvement, and continuous improvement practices

(Odhiambo & Hii, 2012) In private schools, effective management is particularly vital due to the competitive nature of the sector and the need to attract and retain students.

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) refers to the strategic orientation of an organization that captures its practices, policies, and decision-making styles that are entrepreneurial in nature. It involves taking calculated risks, being innovative, and being proactive in the pursuit of new opportunities (Kivuitu & Karugu, 2020). EO has been extensively studied in the context of business organizations, where it has been linked to increased performance, competitive advantage, and growth (Mahmood & Hanafi, 2013; Utami & Wilopo 2018; Correia et al., 2023). However, its application in the educational sector, particularly in the management of private schools, is relatively underexplored.

Entrepreneurial orientation encompasses several dimensions, including innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy (Ibrahim & Martins, 2020). Innovativeness involves the willingness to support new ideas and experimentation. Furthermore, Innovativeness generates a strong willingness to depart from existing practices and stimulates engagement in explorative activities and experimentation (Kyrgidou & Spyropoulou, 2013). Risk-taking refers to the propensity to engage in ventures with uncertain outcomes, while pro-activeness is about anticipating and acting on future needs and changes in the environment (Jiang, 2020). Competitive aggressiveness involves a firm's intensity in outperforming its rivals, and autonomy refers to independent action by an individual or team in bringing forth an idea or a vision and carrying it through to completion. The Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm provides a theoretical underpinning for this study. According to RBV, organizations can achieve sustained competitive advantage by acquiring and managing valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources (Madhani, 2010). In the context of private schools, entrepreneurial orientation can be viewed as a strategic resource that enhances the school's ability to manage its operations effectively and achieve superior performance

Several studies have highlighted the impact of entrepreneurial orientation on other variables such as organizational performance and the like. For instance, Adeniyi et al. (2024) investigate the impact of Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation (IEO) components on the entrepreneurial readiness of students from science and technology colleges in Nigeria. The analysis, conducted through Pearson's correlation and regression, reveals that while IEO risk-taking is insignificantly associated with entrepreneurial readiness, both IEO innovation and IEO proactivity are significantly linked to students' readiness for business start-ups. The findings of the study suggest the importance of fostering innovation and proactivity among students to enhance their entrepreneurial readiness. The managerial implications highlight the need for promoting and developing an entrepreneurial mindset with practical applications, providing valuable insights for entrepreneurship educators and practitioners aiming to improve entrepreneurial competence among youth in Nigeria.

Furthermore, Irawan et al. (2023) conduct a systematic review to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and firm performance (FP), focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from 2016 to 2021. By systematically examining selected literature, the authors found a consistent positive and significant correlation between EO and FP across various countries. The review highlights that the innovation dimension of EO has a particularly strong positive influence on firm performance. SMEs that are proactive in responding to external stimuli tend to be more innovative and exhibit stronger EO capabilities, which support their performance in international markets. Additionally, the review reveals that EO and FP maintain a positive and significant relationship in economically depressed areas, regions with high environmental dynamics, and hostile environments. Furthermore, the findings emphasize that EO serves as a critical strategic resource, which, when combined with a learning orientation, allows organizations to leverage this resource more effectively. This study provides comprehensive insights into the vital role of EO in enhancing firm performance, particularly in challenging and dynamic environments.

Again, Aggarwal et al. (2023) investigate the interplay between individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO) and entrepreneurial intention (EI), with a focus on the moderating effect of educational support (ES). Recognizing the significance of entrepreneurship in driving economic growth and offering lucrative career paths, the study addresses a gap in understanding how various factors influence entrepreneurial intentions. Using data from 388 undergraduate students in the Delhi–National Capital Region (NCR), the researchers employed exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to ensure reliability and validity, followed by structural equation modelling to test their hypotheses. The findings reveal a statistically significant impact of IEO on students' EI. Furthermore, the results from multiple regression analysis indicate that the presence of educational support enhances this impact, as reflected in the adjusted R-square value. The study underscores the importance of fostering IEO among students

and providing robust educational support to cultivate an environment that encourages entrepreneurial endeavours. These insights suggest that educational institutions should focus on strengthening entrepreneurial orientation and support systems to effectively nurture future entrepreneurs.

Zina et al. (2022) explore the mediating role of organizational culture on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and business performance in Algerian manufacturing SMEs. Using a sample of 180 SME owners/managers collected through structured questionnaires, the study employs partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate these relationships. The results indicate that EO significantly impacts organizational culture, which in turn influences business performance. EO alone has a medium effect on business performance, while organizational culture mediates this relationship, explaining 50.2% of the variance in business performance. Additionally, EO accounts for 38.9% of the variance in organizational culture. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence from the Algerian context, highlighting the importance of organizational culture in enhancing the effects of EO on business performance. The findings underscore the need for SME authorities and researchers to consider both EO and organizational culture in strategies to improve organizational performance, particularly in emerging economies like North Africa. This research bridges a gap in the literature and offers valuable insights for academics and practitioners aiming to understand and leverage the dynamics between EO, organizational culture, and business performance.

Kojo et al. (2021) investigate the factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of university students in Ghana, focusing on the interplay between individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO) dimensions and network ties. The study examines how innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, and network ties affect students' entrepreneurial intentions. Utilizing a sample of 720 students from both private and public universities, data were collected via an online survey and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The results demonstrate that the IEO dimensions of innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions. Additionally, network ties are found to have a statistically significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions. The study also reveals that the type of university moderates the relationship between network ties, risk-taking behaviour, and entrepreneurial intentions. These findings underscore the importance of fostering risk-taking, innovativeness, proactiveness, and strong network ties in enhancing students' entrepreneurial intentions. The research provides valuable insights for policymakers and educators, suggesting that entrepreneurial education should focus on these key areas to effectively nurture entrepreneurial aspirations among university students.

Despite the acknowledged importance of entrepreneurial practices in organizational success, there is limited research on how EO influences the management of private schools, particularly in Nigeria. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the correlation between EO and effective school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis. It aims to provide insights into how entrepreneurial strategies can be leveraged to enhance the management and performance of private educational institutions. Understanding the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management can provide valuable implications for educational policy and practice. For school administrators, it can offer strategic insights into how to foster an entrepreneurial culture within their institutions. For policymakers, it can inform the development of frameworks that encourage entrepreneurial practices in schools. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on educational management and the role of entrepreneurship in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of education in Nigeria. This study aims to explore the correlation between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis. By examining this relationship, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how entrepreneurial practices can enhance the management and performance of private schools. This research has the potential to inform educational policy and practice, contributing to the development of more dynamic and effective educational institutions.

Statement of the Problem

Effective school management is essential for the success and sustainability of private schools, especially in competitive and dynamic environments like Oyo Metropolis, Nigeria. Private schools face numerous challenges, including limited funding, high competition, regulatory pressures, and the need to continuously innovate to meet the demands of parents and students (Gokturk & Dinckal, 2018). These challenges necessitate the adoption of strategic management practices that can enhance school performance and ensure long-term sustainability. Entrepreneurial orientation (EO), characterized by innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy, has been recognized as a critical factor influencing organizational success in various sectors (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Covin & Slevin, 1991). In the context of private schools, EO can

potentially drive innovation in teaching and learning, improve administrative processes, enhance market competitiveness, and foster a proactive approach to addressing emerging educational challenges.

Despite the theoretical and practical significance of EO, there is limited empirical research examining its impact on the management and performance of private schools in Nigeria. Most studies on EO have focused on business organizations, with little attention given to educational institutions (Kuratko et al., 2005). Furthermore, the unique challenges faced by private schools in Oyo Metropolis, such as socio-economic disparities and varying levels of educational infrastructure, underscore the need for context-specific research. This study aims to fill this research gap by investigating the correlation between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis. Specifically, it seeks to understand how the dimensions of EO influence key aspects of school management, including strategic planning, resource allocation, staff development, and stakeholder engagement. By doing so, the study intends to provide insights into how private schools can leverage entrepreneurial practices to enhance their management effectiveness and overall performance. The problem, therefore, is the lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management in the context of private schools in Oyo Metropolis. Addressing this problem is crucial for developing strategies that can improve the management and performance of these schools, thereby contributing to the broader goal of enhancing educational quality and outcomes in Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the correlation between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. assess the relationship between risk-taking propensity of private school administrators and school management effectiveness.
- ii. examine the relationship between innovation application and effectiveness of school management in private schools.
- iii. determine the relationship between proactiveness of the private school administrators and school management effectiveness.

Hypotheses

To achieve the above objectives, the following research hypotheses were tested:

H01: There is no significant relationship between risk-taking propensity and the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

H02: Innovativeness does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

H03: Proactiveness has no significant effect on the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

Methodology

This study employed a correlational research design to determine the extent to which variables are related. In this case, the study seeks to explore the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and effective school management. The population for this study includes all private schools (Primary and Secondary) administrators in Oyo Metropolis. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select forty (40) school administrators from the four (4) local governments within the study area. Schools' heads and proprietors were considered most appropriate for the study because they are the ones at the helm of affairs in the school setting. Eighty (80) respondents made up of twenty (20) head teachers, twenty (20) principals, and forty (40) proprietors were selected through a simple random sampling technique as a sample for the study making up of two (2) respondents from each selected private school. A four (4) points Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Agreed (SD) structured questionnaires were developed to collect data on EO and school management effectiveness. The EO section was based on established scales such as Lumpkin and Dess's (1996) EO scale, which measures innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness. The school management effectiveness section included items related to strategic planning, resource allocation, staff development, and stakeholder engagement. The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in educational management and entrepreneurship to ensure that they adequately covered the constructs of EO and school management effectiveness. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation) was used to summarize the data collected and provide an overview of the levels of EO and school management effectiveness in the sample, while Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between EO and school management effectiveness. Furthermore, t-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses formulated in this study at 0.05 level of significance. A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the instruments. Twenty (20) copies of the

questionnaire were administered to 5 head teachers, 5 principals and 10 proprietors who were not part of the main study. Necessary revisions were made based on the pilot study findings. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the survey items, which revealed value of 0.82. Ethical approval was sought from the relevant authorities, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study to protect participants' privacy.

The results were arranged according to the stated hypotheses as follows:

Results

H01: There is no significant relationship between risk-taking propensity and the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

Table 1: Correlation between the risk-taking propensity of private school administrators and the overall effectiveness of school management

	Risk-taking propensity of private school administrators	Effectiveness of school management
Risk-taking propensity of private school administrators	1	.017*
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	40
Effectiveness of school Management	.017*	1
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	40

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

From Table 1, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.017$) indicates a very weak positive correlation between the risk-taking propensity of private school administrators and the overall effectiveness of school management. Since the p-value is significantly greater than 0.05, then we accept the null hypothesis.

H02: Innovativeness does not significantly influence the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

Table 2: Relationship between the application of innovative practices and the effectiveness of school management in private schools

	Applications of innovative practices	Effectiveness of school management
Applications of innovative practices	1	.876
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076
	N	40
Effectiveness of school Management	.876	1
	Pearson Correlation	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076
	N	40

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the application of innovative practices and the effectiveness of school management in private schools, in that ($r= 0.876$, $p\text{-value}>0.05$). Thus, we reject the null hypothesis.

H03: Proactiveness has no significant effect on the effectiveness of school management in private schools within Oyo Metropolis.

Table 3: Relationship between the proactiveness of private school administrators and the effectiveness of school management in private schools

		Applications of innovative practices	proactiveness of private school administrators
Proactiveness of Private school administrator	Pearson Correlation	1	0.76
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.030
	N	40	40
Effectiveness of school Management	Pearson Correlation	0.76	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	
	N	40	40

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 showed a statistically significant strong positive correlation between the proactiveness of private school administrators and the effectiveness of school management ($r = 0.76, p < 0.05$). This suggests that as the proactiveness of private school administrators increases, the effectiveness of school management also tends to increase. We therefore reject the null hypothesis.

Discussion

Table 1 reveals a very weak positive correlation between the risk-taking propensity of private school administrators and the overall effectiveness of school management. This implies that the correlation observed is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. While the data shows a weak positive correlation, it is not statistically significant, implying that the relationship between risk-taking propensity and school management effectiveness might be due to random chance rather than a real underlying effect. This finding aligns with Gilley et al. (2002) and Rank and Strenge (2018) who found that there exists a weak positive correlation between top management team risk-taking propensities and firm performance.

Again, Table 2 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the application of innovative practices and the effectiveness of school management. The analysis provides strong evidence to negate the null hypothesis that there is no significant positive relationship between the application of innovative practices and the effectiveness of school management in private schools. The very strong positive correlation and significant p-values indicate that the more innovative practices are applied, the more effective the school management tends to be. This result is in line with Fios et al. (2024) who assert that Principals emerge as dynamic change agents (innovativeness), navigating multifaceted roles to foster holistic student growth.

Furthermore, Table 3 showed a statistically significant strong positive correlation between the proactiveness of private school administrators and the effectiveness of school management. Thus, negates the stated null hypothesis. In other words, this implies that as the proactiveness of private school administrators increases, the effectiveness of school management also tends to increase. The analysis revealed a statistically significant correlation coefficient ($r = 0.76, p < 0.05$), suggesting that higher levels of proactiveness among administrators are associated with increased effectiveness in managing private schools. This finding underscores the importance of entrepreneurial orientation, particularly proactiveness, in enhancing school management practices. Administrators who actively anticipate and respond to changes and opportunities tend to foster more efficient and effective school environments, leading to better overall performance and management outcomes.

Conclusion

This study underscores the pivotal role of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) in the effective management of private schools within Oyo Metropolis, in Oyo State, Nigeria. The findings highlight that while risk-taking propensity shows a weak correlation with school management effectiveness, innovativeness and proactiveness significantly enhance school management. Effective school administration in private schools requires a strategic adoption of innovative practices and proactive management styles. This research contributes to the existing literature by exploring the application of EO in the educational sector, emphasizing the importance of entrepreneurial strategies in fostering dynamic and effective educational institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research work, the following are recommended:

1. School administrators should actively seek and implement innovative practices in their management and teaching methods. This includes integrating new technologies, modern educational techniques, and creative problem-solving approaches to enhance the learning environment and improve school performance.
2. School leaders should adopt a proactive management style. This involves anticipating future challenges and opportunities, planning strategically, and implementing forward-thinking policies to stay ahead in the competitive educational sector.
3. Stakeholders should organise continuous professional development programs focused on enhancing entrepreneurial skills among school administrators. Training sessions should cover areas such as innovation management, strategic planning, risk assessment, and proactive leadership to equip administrators with the necessary skills to manage schools effectively.
4. Policymakers and educational authorities should create incentives for private schools that demonstrate strong entrepreneurial orientation. This could include grants, awards, or recognition programs that reward schools for their innovative and proactive management practices.

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