EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN: A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

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Approval of the Thesis

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A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

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Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA)

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Abstract

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN: A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

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The inquiry attempted to investigate what influences the prosperity of young and female-led businesses in Botswana with a focus on management capabilities/competencies, policies, and entrepreneurial programs for entrepreneurial empowerment in general so that practical solutions can be offered to fill identified research gaps. The mixed method technique used in the inquiry allowed for data collection, optimal sample utilization, and data analysis. The inquiry improved the rigor of the respondents' participation by employing a mixed-method paradigm to survey 384 people and interview key informants. Moreover, the research employed a standardized survey containing questions that were closed-ended, and the research information gathered was numerical in nature. However, to enable a thorough investigation of the success factors for women- and youth-owned firms, a qualitative method was used to interview 16 key informants and acted as a secondary data source to gather more insights on the subject matter.

Following data editing, coding, and tabulation, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to assess the quantitative data. Additionally, the qualitative data was subjected to content or thematic analysis. The results showed that managerial competencies had a favourable impact on

the success of businesses run by women and young people. On the contrary, the findings revealed that entrepreneurial education programs did not significantly predict managerial capabilities, which reflects a genuine absence of a linear relationship in this sample rather than an issue with insufficient data. Conversely, the ANOVA test confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant when managerial capabilities was used as a mediator of the relationship between entrepreneurial training programs and enterprise success. This demonstrates that entrepreneurial training programs and managerial capabilities jointly explain a statistically significant amount of variance in enterprise success. Moreover, government policies and support programs (as moderator) demonstrated a statistically significant positive direct relationship with managerial capabilities in model 1. Conversely, the moderation effect (model 2) of government policies and systems on entrepreneurial training programs showed a non-significant direct relationship. This explains why government policies are viewed as not effective.

Governmental entities responsible for SMME development will find value in the study's conclusions which will act as a manual for them to set up workshops, seminars, and training programs for SMMEs. However, this is so because strong managerial capabilities have a direct and favourable impact on the performance of women- and youth-led businesses. Nonetheless, because of the research gaps that have been identified, future studies will provide an opportunity to comprehend the management gaps that impact women and young entrepreneurs in Botswana more thoroughly and create solutions that would encourage the expansion of these enterprises.

Keywords: Managerial Capabilities, Policies, Entrepreneurial Programs, Human Capital

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation work to my husband Boipuso Kedikanetswe, my son Setso and my daughters Goata and Melodi who prayerfully stood with me throughout my doctoral journey.

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I give thanks to Almighty God for his enabling grace and strength that preserved me to remain focused during my entire journey until I finished my race. My thanks go to my husband Boipuso Kedikanetswe who helped me financially and inspired me to work hard and do my best. My son Setso, and my two daughters Goata and Melodi, your emotional support and love assisted me in keeping my focus.

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I am grateful to LEA, MYSC, CEDA and Young Minds Africa management for allowing their officers and the SMMEs under their portfolios to participate in the study. They made this study a success by committing their time to complete the questionnaires and participate in the interview sessions.

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List of Abbreviations

ITC	International Trade Centre
SMMEs	Small, Micro, and Medium Enterprises
SMEs	Small, Medium Enterprises
UN	United Nations
US	United States
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
TVSD	Technical and Vocational Skills Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
LEA	Local Enterprise Authority
CEDA	Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency
BITC	Botswana International Trade Centre
BOU	Botswana Open University
GP	Global Performance
DMC	Dynamic Management Capabilities
OP	Operational Capabilities
AMOS	Analysis moment of Structure
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
YDF	Youth Development Fund
MYSC	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture
AFGD	Africa Goes Digital
ILO	International Labour Organization

MLR	Multinominal Logistics Regression
YED	Youth Entrepreneurship Development
NEP	National Entrepreneurship Policy
FNB	First National Bank
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
BDS	Business Development Services
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
TVSD	Development of Technical and Vocational Skills
EO	Entrepreneurial Orientation
HRM	Human Resource Management
NMC	Numerical Machining Complex
LPO	Large Private Organizations
BoP	Base of the economic Pyramid
PSL-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
SIYA	Start and Improve Your Business
RO	Research Objectives
RQ	Research Questions
CRM	Customer Relationship Management

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to Ng'ora et al. (2022) efficient managerial abilities can be crucial to the internal management of Africa's micro and small businesses, enabling them to survive, compete, and prosper in a fast-paced commercial climate. The author further noted that many SMME owners lack the necessary managerial skills because they are unable to recognize the value of new information and put it to commercial use. However, to effectively boost the performance and productivity of women entrepreneurs, management abilities and family support are necessary for future improvement (Chipfunde et al., 2021).

Similarly, Srećković (2017) argued that research on organizational capacities and their value generation has received a lot of attention in the research on entrepreneurship and strategic management because of the emergence of new organizational forms and environmental dynamics. The organizational capabilities and resource-based perspectives, firms' unique resources and abilities give them a leading role in the market. Therefore, skills related to management are the technical and conceptual skills that enable entrepreneurs and owners to manage their enterprises effectively. According to Fatoki and Odeyemi (2010, as cited in Adewole, 2021) managerial capabilities are a collection of abilities, mindsets, dispositions, and knowledge that enhance a person's efficacy. The authors contended that since managerial competencies impact small businesses' expansion, they are critical to their success.

Women entrepreneurs are more prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. This tendency improves the quality of life for communities and families by promoting innovation and employment opportunities (Mamabolo & Lekoko, 2021). Therefore, women business operating under small and medium scales may represent mostly unexplored sources of job generation in both industrialized and emerging economies. However, some obstacles discourage women from launching and

growing their businesses. Chigudu (2018) and Ślusarczyk et al. (2023) highlighted that these issues are mostly made visible by a lack of policies that support women, inadequate training and credit opportunities, and national legal restrictions. It must be noted that many women encounter obstacles while attempting to obtain credit financing from banks or even through unofficial networks (Chigudu, 2018). Similarly, Etim and Iwu (2019) contended that in sub-Saharan Africa, most of these restrictions are administrative, legal, and institutional, and they are only prevalent in growing economies. Randhawa et al. (2015) contended in support of this claim that women are the main drivers of sustainable development and are responsible for a variety of home and family duties. However, often women perform below their potential and exhibit a reluctance to try new things because of a deficiency of scientific expertise and technical skills.

Similarly, Africa's young people suffer several difficulties, with civil wars, ethnic conflict, natural calamities, and unemployment among the most pressing. Most nations have documented papers and policy documents to address their specific individual youth issues. Svotwa et al. (2022) proposed that governments in Africa's developing nations pay more attention to the elements that encourage young people to start businesses. This strategy is necessary to reduce unemployment rates through self-employment and encourage graduates' entrepreneurial aspirations. Baloyi (2018) concurred that in labour markets with few formal employment possibilities, youth involvement in entrepreneurial activity is considered a long-term approach to lowering youth unemployment.

Mtonga (2019) noted that it is significant to highlight that governments all over the world now consider combating youth unemployment to be a top concern. However, the ability of young people to influence their job prospects is being emphasized, and youth entrepreneurship is a crucial strategy for combating unemployment. The accomplishment of entrepreneurship has been facilitated by the execution of targeted policies, plans, and strategies related to youth employment

that are meant to encourage job creation and support young people's skill development and training.

Sambo (2016) reported that Kenya was one of the first nations in Africa to include entrepreneurship education into its curricula and training programs. The author also noted that starting a business and being an entrepreneur are increasingly becoming options for young people in various economies who often see double-digit unemployment rates in the job market. However, empowering youth in this sense refers to the process of creating and preserving the circumstances necessary for youth to behave on their terms and independently of others. These enabling variables include a sound value system, access to knowledge, information, and skills, and a stable atmosphere of equality, peace, and democracy. They also include a strong economic and social foundation, political will, proper resource allocation, and supportive legal and administrative frameworks (Lucas et al., 2014).

Okurut (2013) asserted that a large portion of entrepreneurial growth involves capacity building. The five primary types of training that women and young people need are technical skill training, on-the-job training, bookkeeping, management, and marketing training. Research must explore alternative avenues that can improve women's and young people's capacity to successfully run their enterprises. Kuratko and Hodgetts (2001, as cited in Maireva & Magomana, 2021) recognized three categories of vital entrepreneurial abilities: technical, personal, and management skills. They believed these to be crucial for the success of entrepreneurs. They contended that an entrepreneur needs to possess specific skills to succeed. Technical skills encompass a variety of topics, including oral and written communication, environmental change, technological advancement, job organization, situational leadership, interpersonal interactions, and teamwork. As a result, for an entrepreneur to flourish in their business, they must possess

technological skills. They also contended that business management abilities include the capacity of business owners to organize their work, create organizational goals, and come to wise decisions.

Muller (2004, as cited in Zeffane, 2013) argued that the problem of gender has drawn significant investigation due to the growing interest in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial potential, leading to many assumptions about the variations between male and female entrepreneurial ability. Other scholars argue that even though the inequality between men and women in this area has been documented, there has been minimal progress in reducing the gender income disparity. Regretfully, there are still underlying cultural preconceptions linking entrepreneurship to traits associated with men. Zeffane (2013) indicated that despite the conventional perception of entrepreneurship as a field dominated by men, this is no longer the case, even in the Middle East. This implies that prevalent gender preconceptions are no longer valid. Zeffane (2013) asserted that men and women are equally capable of launching their own businesses.

However, Chigudu (2018) is optimistic that it is possible to boost female entrepreneurship through creative initiatives that have the backing of both the public and commercial sectors. Other elements impacting women-owned SMEs' success showed that, relative to their male counterparts, women had challenges in accessing and competing in marketplaces, as well as in raising the required capital (Chigudu, 2018). In his study, he also noted that other challenges that SMEs had to deal with were clients not paying past due debts, fierce rivalry, and a lack of market for their products or services.

According to Majama and Magang (2017) businesses run by women and young people are more likely to perform poorly and eventually collapse. Likewise, Charles et al. (2015) claimed that the informality of small enterprises' management has been the main justification put up by

supporters of traditional strategic management for their underperformance. According to Bullough (2008) the business environment which includes taxes, laws, corruption, labour, market competitiveness, and funding, influences women in every society. Further, Bullough suggested that the global variations in the dynamic surroundings that women and youth live in impact the various aspects that influence their involvement in leadership roles (Bullough, 2008). In the long run, nevertheless, improving their business savvy might help them remain competitive and sustainable.

Mamabolo and Lekoko (2021) argued that governments, academics, policymakers, and other stakeholders suggested the concept of an entrepreneurial ecosystem to foster the business-venturing process of entrepreneurs to reduce the negative effects of institutional factors on entrepreneurship. However, the idea of interactions amongst a variety of interdependent actors and elements served as the foundation for the concept of an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Government, financial institutions, higher education, support services, talent, and an environment that fosters the development of new businesses were among them.

According to Okurut and Ama (2016) considerable progress has been achieved in encouraging women to participate in business because of the collaboration of many institutions. Despite the efforts made, it would be interesting to know what results they have produced. However, Small, Micro, and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) development has received more attention in the literature than other subjects, especially economic empowerment, and factors impacting SMME growth.

Entrepreneurship is viewed in Botswana as crucial to both economic growth and the elimination of poverty. As a result, a variety of legislative frameworks offer Botswana's female entrepreneurs sufficient assistance. Mamabolo and Lekoko (2021) highlighted government-

approved frameworks like the Botswana Development Corporation (BDC), the Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Agency (CEDA), as funding institutions; the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH); as established to assist entrepreneurs from the start of their business with market access interventions, training, mentorship, and incubation. Regarding the youth, the government has introduced policy documents such as the Youth Policy of 1996, the Revised Youth Policy of 2010, and the Youth Development Fund. These policies' main goal was to guarantee that young people have the chance to realize their full potential through funding and other capacity building initiatives. In 2019, the government introduced the National Entrepreneurship Policy. The policy envisaged placing Botswana among front ranking entrepreneurial and innovative nations in 2036. The policy vision of making entrepreneurship a culture for Botswana will be realized when this goal is completely executed (NEP, 2019).

Govender et al. (2025) revealed how high rentals and land costs in the South East District specifically force managers to adopt Internal Resource Utilization strategies to survive Gaborone's competition. They further concluded that the Botswana government must give precedence to projects requiring land in the manufacturing sector since it has been identified as a priority sector. Both short-term and long-term rental subsidies may be used to achieve this, they noted. Additionally, manufacturing companies should be encouraged to establish consortiums to pool their financial resources and buy equipment and machinery that they can share to achieve sustainability and growth.

Despite the challenges women face, statistics from multiple studies conducted in Botswana have demonstrated the substantial impact that female entrepreneurs have, in influencing the growth of the economy (Rudhumbu et al., 2020). However, it is crucial to remember that Botswana's past and present youth empowerment initiatives have not been able to make a substantial influence on

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) accomplishment. However, the reality is that most programs for youth empowerment are not built on young people's diligent engagement renders them inherently flawed (Diraditsile, 2020).

One of Botswana's largest economic issues is the shortage of business owners who can manage larger companies. As per the International Trade Centre (2019) the SMME sector is the main provider of managerial and entrepreneurial skills that will enhance over time. According to Jefferis (2014) women and young business owners who invest in managerial skills may find it easier to fulfil domestic and foreign markets' quantity, cost, and timeline demands.

Temtime and Pansiri (2004, as cited in Okurut & Ama, 2013) conducted a study on the factors influencing the SMEs perceived success or failure rate in Botswana. The authors found that the performance of SMEs was significantly impacted by organizational development, management experience, and human resource development. Furthermore, the study also discovered associations between various firm-specific demographic factors, including ownership status, experience, and operating time, and the perceived critical success and/or failure factors.

Statement of the Problem

Most women and youth-led enterprises in the South East District operate as formalized, self-sustaining entities that contribute directly to Botswana’s economic diversification (Vision 2036). These managers possess the strategic capability to separate personal finances from business capital, maintaining audit-ready records that make them bankable for expansion loans (e.g., via CEDA or commercial banks) rather than reliant on grants. Ideally, these managers do not rely solely on government procurement, the manager establishes systems (inventory, POS) so the business runs efficiently even without them present, they have diversified markets and use digital tools to scale beyond their immediate locality. They possess the human resource skills to delegate

effectively, moving the business from a one-person survivalist shop' to an employer of labour that can survive market shocks.

However, the reality is that owner managers treat business revenue as personal cash, rendering the business un-creditworthy and unable to track true profit/loss. The businesses operate on a survivalist day-to-day basis. There is no strategy to scale, leading to stagnation once initial start-up capital runs out. On another note, the business relies entirely on the owner's physical presence. If the owner falls ill or attends to family matters, the business halts. Passive reliance on foot traffic or a single government tender. When the tender ends, the enterprise collapses because no private market base was built. However, these observations have been noted as the researcher deals with the SMMEs daily as a Consultant/ Trainer for the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA).

Ideally, government empowerment initiatives in Botswana should yield self-sustaining enterprises capable of graduating from grant dependency to commercial viability. However, evidence suggests that despite financial access, women and youth-led SMEs in the South East District suffer from high mortality rates (Diraditsile et al., 2019). The core problem appears to be a deficit in managerial capabilities: specifically, the inability to separate entity finances, plan strategically for the growth, and operationalize systems. Consequently, these businesses fail to transition from informal survivalist units to formal contributors to the district's economy.

Other noteworthy contributions have been made by The International Trade Centre (2019) who conducted a study that revealed that women-led businesses were less effective in the daily operations of their companies. They were also less punctual with their delivery compared to businesses run by men. Additionally, companies run by women were 14 percentage points lower than men-led businesses to assess the effectiveness of their inventory management system. Women- and youth-led businesses scored worse than the industry average across all measures of

business management (International Trade Centre, 2019). Furthermore, ITC explained that, compared to older-led enterprises, young driven organizations had a nine-percentage point lower rate in maximising their capacity.

Comparative benchmarks from global and regional literature that validate and expand upon the claims in the current research regarding productivity, management practices, and capacity utilization were highlighted. In terms of the gender productivity gap, Islam and Amin (2022) reported that 14 developing economies found that labour productivity is approximately 15.2% lower in women-owned informal firms compared to men-owned ones. Similarly, another report by The World Bank (2020), revealed a study finding of 8,000 firms in Ethiopia and found a 12% gap in Total Factor Productivity (TFP). Yet another report by International Finance Corporation (2021) highlighted that during the pandemic in Uganda, 61% of women-led SMEs reported zero income compared to 22% of male-led SMEs, a nearly 3 times difference, highlighting higher vulnerability to shocks.

The findings by Diraditsile (2021) revealed that young people in Ramotswa are involved in a variety of commercial endeavours. However, he noted a duplication among many firms because most of them make investments in fashion design, internet cafés, and event management, all of which appear to be in competition. The author further argued that one intriguing, although unsettling, discovery is that young companies fail before they can even commemorate their first year of operation. This could be the cause of the tendency of most financial institutions to avoid and restrict loans to young business owners because they view them as too risky and fear that their ventures are likely to fail in the coming years.

Similar studies by Bosire et al. (2020) found that in Kenya, the mortality rate of youth-led micro and small firms is substantial; three of every five of these businesses fail within the first

three years of operation and fail to make it to their third anniversary, representing a sixty percent failure rate. Khayesi (2016) also supported the argument that the failure rate of youth-led businesses is significant, given that up to 80% of new companies fail during the first three years of operation. Consequently, 48% of young people have a less chance of becoming successful entrepreneurs. The research showed that many young people who started businesses were driven by socioeconomic issues like unemployment and had restrictions in obtaining financing, market access, training in entrepreneurship, and company development services during the establishment and expansion phases (Sangwa, 2021).

According to Brush et al. (2003) the average revenues for women-owned companies in 1997 were $1.8 million. Although the United States'(U.S.) average had increased to $2.4 million by 2000, women-owned businesses remained behind the $12.3 million national average for all businesses. In 2000, women made up an average of six employees per company, whereas all enterprises had over nine employees. According to the International Trade Centre (2019) when comparing the number of employees in Botswana, 39% of enterprises led by women were significantly smaller than those led by men. Less than five people worked for four of every five women-owned enterprises.

UN WOMEN (2018, as cited in Bobek et al., 2022) reported that research showed that compared to men, women struggle to establish their enterprises and have greater obstacles to overcome. However, compared to other locations, Sub-Saharan Africa tends to provide women with fewer options for entrepreneurship, which explains why self-employment is common in many nations there. The authors further noted that more women are economically active in the Sub-Saharan Africa compared to other parts of the world including Latin America, East Asia, the

Pacific area, North America, and the European Union. Nevertheless, Botswana recorded 56.4% lower rates in the Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

One of the biggest hindrances to human development progress and a significant source of inequality are the disadvantages faced by women and girls (UNDP, 2018). The gender debate continues to boil over differences in income between men and women. In comparison to men, women in Africa experience greater unemployment rates (Matsoso & Iwu, 2016). Men still have a higher chance than women of receiving funding and other types of assistance for their business ventures (Kelley et al., 2011). More restrictions influence the businesses of women entrepreneurs than those of males. Women frequently experience harassment and discrimination from financial institutions, government departments and the business world. In Uganda, 28% of women and 53% of men are landowners, yet just 10% of female landowners, as opposed to 95% of male landowners, can utilize their land as collateral (UNDP, 2017).

However, Joseph (2012) in his perspective regarding inequalities between women and men, noted that the empowerment approach to gender aims to change the current gender relations by redistributing power both inside and between cultures, giving women more control over their own lives. In this perspective, power is more about enabling the expansion of choices, voices, control, .and autonomy rather than about dominating others or the replacement of male dominance with female dominance.

According to Nagujja et al. (2021) a lack of knowledge in areas like effective management of corporate operations, as well as a shift in mindset and attitude, were noted. Therefore, the shortcomings are evident in the lack of ability to keep both financial and non-financial records, insufficient cash on hand and ineffective cash flow management, weak supervisory abilities, absence of systematic planning and monitoring, etc. Francis et al. (2020) argued that most

developing countries' educational and training systems have consistently failed to give young people access to necessary skills. However, understanding the necessary skill set and its implications for improving the sustainability of youth-led firms has up to this point received little attention.

Nonetheless, the government of Botswana has implemented entrepreneurial programs, particularly those that are focused on SMMEs, to encourage economic growth. Notably, the country is described as a factor-driven economy with a high rate of entrepreneurship, particularly among women (Paya, 2021). Moreover, training institutions or the general environment in Botswana present opportunities for business owners who can notice them and seize them to improve their companies and, consequently, their welfare. According to Lyngsie and Foss (2017) entrepreneurs differ in their capacity to identify and embrace these opportunities. Their ability to get information and attitude toward taking risks in reaction to that information are other important factors. Entrepreneurs must create a culture of lifelong learning to deal with the rapidly shifting market trends and remain competitive.

Empowerment policies and initiatives for the youth cannot succeed unless they provide the necessary resources and require active participation in the program creation process rather than just watching from the sidelines, claimed Diraditsile (2020). In addition, he pointed out that to do this, it is critical to emphasize that initiatives meant to accelerate youth empowerment should adopt a long-term outlook rather than the short-term, band-aid solutions that have been proven to be ineffective thus far.

According to Diraditsile (2017) the success of government-sponsored youth initiatives and programs is harmed by the absence of financial literacy and business management coaching for program participants. Additionally, he asserted that various government projects in Botswana are

impacted by the absence of integrated monitoring and assessment. As a result, program implementers are unable to track advancement concerning established objectives, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and targets.

Despite efforts to promote entrepreneurship among women and youth in Botswana, a significant number of their led enterprises in the South-East District continue to face challenges related to sustainability and growth. While various factors contribute to business success, the managerial capabilities of entrepreneurs are often highlighted as a critical determinant. However, there is insufficient empirical data specifically evaluating the direct effect of these managerial capabilities and other aspects of management on the performance and longevity of women and youth-led enterprises within this region. Designing and implementing focused interventions and support programs is challenging due to this lack of knowledge that effectively address the unique needs of these entrepreneurial groups, potentially hindering their full economic participation and contribution to national development.

In addition, determining whether juvenile policies and training education interventions are effective or not is difficult. Given this, the purpose of the study was to examine the elements that influence the growth of firms led by women and youth in Botswana with an emphasis on managerial abilities, policies, and programs for entrepreneurial empowerment in general so that practical solutions can be offered to fill identified gaps.

Purpose of the Study, Research Aims, and Objectives

The intent of this mixed-method study methodology was to investigate how managerial capabilities affect the performance of enterprises in Botswana run by women and young people. Ahmed (2017) argued that to boost the success and secure the sustainability of organizations, firms are placing increasing emphasis on investing in their physical assets. Developing the managerial

skills that directly affect performance is given comparatively little emphasis. Organizations are not paying enough attention to their internal environments or cultivating a learning culture, both of which have a direct bearing on the development of exceptional managerial qualities.

According to UNDP (2017) Africa requires more programs and organizations capable of actively closing the knowledge gap between industry and academia, particularly by emphasizing problem-solving and managerial abilities. Colleges and business schools mandated for the enhancement of vocational and professional skills should focus on lifelong learning, managerial support, and apprenticeships for small business owners, while also forging closer ties with the commercial sector.

Literature has shown that effective managerial capabilities are essential to small businesses' development since they have an impact on their expansion. These studies examined managerial qualities about other variables, but none examined the role of managerial capabilities on the success of women's and young people's owned enterprises in Botswana, which is the knowledge gap that this research attempts to close. For a business leader to properly carry out the responsibilities of their jobs, they must be proficient in fundamental management competencies (Hani, 2021). This requires their ability to understand, motivate, and mentor people, either alone or in groups. The ability to delegate as well as the ability to grow employees and subordinates are essential human management competencies. Moreover, it is the capacity to direct and control the actions of subordinates to produce higher-quality products. These interpersonal skills require taking into consideration the attitudes, emotions, and cultural traits of peers, superiors, and subordinates (Adewole, 2021).

Maireva and Magomana (2021) discovered that there is a 0.781 positive link between the degree of education, experience, managerial abilities, and entrepreneurial success.

The strong correlation shows that there was a significant positive link between the two variables. Based on this, it suggests that women and young people require the necessary skills and experience to run successful businesses.

Through a mixed-method approach, the inquiry managed to improve respondents' engagement rigor, which made it easier to comprehend the multifaceted characteristics of youth and female-owned enterprises and the viable tactics for boosting their success. To enable a thorough investigation of the success factors for women- and youth-owned firms, a qualitative method will be used to interview key informants and secondary data sources to gather more insights on the subject matter. Simultaneously, the investigation will employ a substantial survey to collect quantitative data to apply findings to a study population. The study will employ a standardized questionnaire with closed-ended questions, and the information gathered is numerical (Gelling, 2015).

A sample of female and young SMME owners in the Southeast District was employed to collect pertinent data as the study purposed to close these important research gaps. In addition, to gather more information, executives from the Ministry of Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Youth, Sports, Gender & Culture, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and government parastatals that are assigned for SMME development (LEA, CEDA etc.) were interviewed.

However, the research aimed at identifying possible existing knowledge gaps and close them by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between managerial capabilities and the success of women and youth-led enterprises in the South-East District of Botswana. The investigation aimed to move beyond a general understanding of entrepreneurship challenges and offer a specific analysis of how management skills directly influence business outcomes. This

provided a more exact understanding of the challenges that either enable or prohibit the growth of these businesses.

Moreover, research aimed at suggesting management frameworks that would assist business owners, women business managers, and young business managers in making wise decisions throughout the early stages of their venture. However, the study will uncover other variable factors such as entrepreneurship training programs and the external environment, including the government initiatives and policy frameworks affecting women and youth entrepreneurs that are closely associated with business success. The government of Botswana has attempted to create a favourable economic climate that allows SMMEs to prosper in this nation. As a result, there have been few studies to ascertain how effectively these government initiatives have helped SMEs in Botswana, particularly those managed by women and young people, in building their capacity. Below is the outline of research aims that would help the current study to achieve its intended goals. The investigation sought to accomplish the following aims:

- Establish the link between the identified managerial capabilities and the observed performance metrics. The goal is to determine if a correlation exists and, if so, to what extent managerial skills contribute to business success.
- Examine the effectiveness of policies and support systems and recommend strong support networks and favourable regulations that can greatly accelerate growth and barriers to entry by businesses owned by women and youth in Botswana.
- Identify specific managerial strengths and weaknesses among women and youth entrepreneurs. This will help pinpoint areas where skills development is most needed.

- Assess the influence of entrepreneurship education and training programs have on the success of businesses and recommend relevant and targeted programs to women and youth entrepreneurs.
- Formulate evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, training institutions, and support organizations. The aim is to inform the development of targeted and successful initiatives that can improve the managerial competence of women and youth entrepreneurs and ultimately improving their business success rates.

The current study used the operating businesses in the Southeast as a case study. As a result, the following research objectives were formulated.

1. To evaluate the influence of managerial capabilities on the success of women and youth businesses.
2. To evaluate the moderating effect of government policies and systems on the relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities.
3. To assess how women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training programs on the success of women and young-led businesses.

Nature and Significance of the Study

This research is both analytical and descriptive. It seeks to describe the current state of managerial capabilities among women and youth entrepreneurs in the South-East District and analyse the relationship between these capabilities and enterprise success. The inquiry will adopt a mixed-method approach which will enable data collection, appropriate sample use, and data

analysis. According to Cresswell (2014) the mixed method approach is used to describe studies that combine quantitative (close-ended) and qualitative (open-ended) data in a single investigation to address specific research questions or hypotheses. Olsen (2004) asserted that these approaches make it possible to examine different facets of the same social phenomenon.

A sequential explanatory mixed-method approach divided the data-collecting process into two stages, with intentional qualitative sampling occurring in the second phase and rigorous quantitative sampling occurring in the first (Creswell, 2014). The main idea is that gathering qualitative data enhances quantitative research. However, the investigation started with a substantial survey to collect quantitative information so that conclusions apply to a population. While the research employed structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions, the data acquired was numerical (Gelling, 2015). Open-ended, unstructured questions were used as the foundation for data collection in the qualitative paradigm. To gather the participants' thoughts and opinions for the activity, interviews were conducted (Creswell, 2014).

In addition, the explanatory sequential mixed method design also adopted the triangulation technique to help the researcher to fully comprehend the research problem. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2017) emphasized that the explanatory sequential design might be helpful when a researcher needs qualitative information to explain quantitative data, including abnormal observations, unexpected outcomes, or extremely significant results. This is crucial for understanding the intricacies of managerial capabilities and their impact in a specific national context like Botswana.

For quantitative data, the sampling strategy used was stratified random sampling, which ensured that each stratum, including subgroups of women and youth, was fairly represented in the sample and reduced bias (Sharma, 2017). To gather qualitative information, the researcher utilized a purposeful sample strategy to identify executives in the ministries and Southeast women and

young entrepreneurs who were interested in the study. According to Saunders et al., (2009) purposeful sampling can help the researcher establish a high degree of credibility and dependability.

According to Sandelowski (2000) data analysis procedures for mixed method research are achieved by comparing the findings of the two analysis methods, which is achieved by applying the methods that are typically applied to each data collection, that is, one uses qualitative procedures for analysing data that is qualitative, and one uses quantitative approaches for analysing data that is quantitative. However, the author additionally stated that when assessing data from instruments, such as interviews, one or more statistical approaches are employed, and among the techniques used are narrative analysis, qualitative content analysis, and constant comparison. The findings of the two methods of analyses are then combined at the interpretive level of the study, but each data set is still examined separately.

The findings of this research hold significant importance for several stakeholders. When the study's findings are made public, SMEs are anticipated to greatly benefit from them. The study's findings will inform SMEs about the elements that influence their success or failure. They will also help identify their own skill gaps and seek out relevant training to boost their chances of survival and growth. Likewise, SMEs will have more knowledge about the best approaches to enhancing their company performance through the successful integration of entrepreneurship training, managerial abilities, and business environment. The results would help new start-up business owners in their preparation before beginning business operations by outlining the elements necessary for business success.

Due to the research gaps that have been identified, future studies will provide an opportunity to comprehend the management gaps that impact women and young entrepreneurs in

Botswana more thoroughly and create solutions that would encourage the expansion of these enterprises. Research on entrepreneurship training is growing, and one area where not much research has been done is the development of skills for SMEs' survival and expansion (Kunene, 2008). Women and youth entrepreneurs will learn from the research findings how to capacitate themselves and grow their managerial skills. Hani (2021) concurred that managerial ability is an important aspect of corporate performance and success. However, to create an innovative marketing model that will guide managers toward effective, profitable resource allocation and investment, the study will explore this connection.

Botswana's policies and support systems for women and youth-owned businesses have had a mixed impact. On one hand, the country is recognized for having a relatively conducive and supportive legal environment for women entrepreneurs. There are specific government agencies like the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency which provides funding and the Local Enterprise Authority that provides training, and advisory services. The Youth Development Fund (YDF) is another notable program that offers a combination of grants and loans. However, these programs often face challenges, such as:

- *Inaccessibility to credit facilities:* The eligibility criteria for institutional credit often align with traditional banking models, which can be difficult for small, microenterprises to meet.
- *Ineffective Gender Targeting Programs:* Some programs, like those from YDF, may not prioritize sectors such as services where women and youth-led businesses are concentrated, limiting their reach.

- *Policy Implementation Gaps:* Despite supportive policies, there can be a disconnect between policy and effective implementation, hindering the full potential of these programs.

Nonetheless, governmental entities responsible for SMME development may also find value in the recommendations and conclusions. The results of the study will show how well SMMEs are performing in Botswana. As a result, SMMEs' issues will be better understood, and these organizations will be in a better position to help SMMEs overcome their difficulties. Consequently, they will serve as a manual for setting up workshops, seminars, and training programs for SMMEs. Moreover, the researcher believes that the study will help shape support systems and cultures both in Botswana and around the world. The outcomes of the study were also echoed by Bobek et al. (2022) that they will make it possible for Botswana's constitutional, legal, and institutional reforms to involve more women and young people in the formulation of policies that affect SMMEs. The research will yield data that is supported by evidence that can guide the development of more effective and targeted policies and programs to policy makers. This will help shift from a "one-size-fits-all" approach and create interventions that specifically address the managerial skill deficits of women and youth entrepreneurs.

Youth and women business owners in Botswana face both challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education. Lack of knowledge is one of the obstacles that they experience in accessing the available funding and technical support. Similarly, entrepreneurs who lack access to technology and digital literacy may find it difficult to use contemporary tools for market reach and business operations. Women who face socio-cultural barriers and gender stereotypes may limit their access to resources and leadership opportunities. Again, high costs and delays in the processes for business registration and acquiring licenses can be costly and time-

consuming, creating an additional hurdle for those with limited resources. Moreover, opportunities are available for entrepreneurs to identify and seize. Botswana's legal framework is generally supportive of entrepreneurship, providing a solid foundation for business ventures. There is an opportunity for training institutions to develop and offer customized entrepreneurial training programs that address the specific skills gap of women and youth. Additionally, collaborative efforts between government and private institutions could create more effective support systems and training programs. Additionally, women and youth are increasingly leveraging social networks to create their own ecosystems and gain access to financial resources and support systems.

Moreover, results of study can be used to tailor entrepreneurial curricula and training modules to focus on the most impactful managerial skills by Training and Educational Institutions, such as financial management marketing, and strategic planning, which are often overlooked. On another note, Kanayo (2021) suggested that training programs must focus on the more profound psychological and sociological limits faced by women to bring about a transformational change. It is also essential to do a detailed review of government programs that are aimed at enhancing the skills of female entrepreneurs and by increasing their accessibility to markets and customers. The findings will have significant benefits to the public since they will help SMMEs function at their best, which will lead to more jobs being created and lower the rates of high youth unemployment. Women will take care of their families; thus, this will result in a higher standard of living for them and their households. There will be even greater improvements to safety and harmony. People who work will be much less likely to engage in social vices and violent behaviour. The economy will flourish, and jobs will be stable because of the creation of jobs and employment prospects.

Nonetheless, the study's conclusions will help academia as well as emerging nations like Botswana. The inquiry will offer a framework for assessing the success of entrepreneurial support

programs and act as a basis for further research on related subjects. The study will benefit the financial institutions and investors to better assess the risk and potential of women and youth-led businesses. By understanding the link between managerial capabilities and success, they will make more informed lending and investment decisions.

Research Questions and Research Hypotheses

Researchers use quantitative research questions, hypotheses, and sometimes objectives to frame and tightly define the study's purpose in quantitative investigations. The interactions between the variables that the researcher is attempting to understand are the main emphasis of quantitative research questions (Creswell, 2014). However, in this research, the four primary research questions are:

RQ1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

RQ2: How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

RQ3: How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

RQ4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

The hypothesis is usually the main tool in research. Its main goal is to suggest fresh views and new research observations. According to Kothari (2004) a research hypothesis is a predictive statement that links an independent variable to a dependent variable and may be investigated using scientific procedures. Research hypotheses play a critical role in guiding quantitative research

where data collection is numerical, and establishing a link between two variables is done using regression analysis. However, the following hypotheses were tested in this investigation.

H_1: Entrepreneurial Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities

Statistical support for H_1 aligns with Human Capital Theory (HCT), confirming that structured entrepreneurial education directly enhances a manager's operational and strategic capabilities. However, investing in structured education builds practical knowledge, strategic foresight, and problem-solving skills, directly boosting a manager's operational competence. This demonstrates that managerial skills are acquired competencies rather than static personal traits. On the other hand, supportive government systems (e.g., access to grants, easy business registration, supportive frameworks) strengthen the impact of education on building managerial skills. Conversely, rigid or corrupt regulatory environments can hinder an entrepreneur's ability to translate what they learn into effective managerial capability.

H_2: Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success

Testing this hypothesis will establish if the hypothesis aligns with management and entrepreneurship theories. Effective management skills are a cornerstone of business success, for example, financial management skills like budgeting, cash flow management are crucial for the sustainability of any business. These capabilities are necessary to avoid insolvency, regardless of a business's market potential. For women and youth-led enterprises, which often have limited access to capital, sound financial management is even more critical. Similarly, strategic planning skills are crucial because they empower an entrepreneur with the capabilities to develop a clear business plan, identify market opportunities, and set realistic goals directly impacts a firm's long-term viability and growth. Entrepreneurs who plan effectively are better equipped to handle market changes and competition. Additionally, having the proficiency in marketing, including market

analysis, brand promotion, and sales strategies, is essential for acquiring customers and generating revenue. Businesses with strong marketing capabilities are more likely to achieve higher revenue growth and market share. Additionally, capable managers allocate resources efficiently, navigate market uncertainties, and execute strategies that drive firm growth and financial performance.

H_3: Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial education programs and enterprise success.

This hypothesis builds on H_2 by introducing a mediating variable: managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial education programs and enterprise success. Education alone does not automatically guarantee business success, it works indirectly by first building better managerial capabilities, which then drive enterprise performance. This enhancement of these skills can lead to better decision-making and business performance. Similarly, training programs can provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to network with peers and gain access to experienced mentors. These connections can provide valuable support, insights, and opportunities that are not available to those who have not participated in such programs. However. participation in formal training can help entrepreneurs professionalize their operations, leading to more robust business practices and a greater likelihood of attracting investment and partners.

H_4: Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurial education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation).

Government policies and systems significantly moderate the relationship between entrepreneurial education programs and managerial capabilities., suggesting that the effectiveness of government policies is enhanced when paired with entrepreneurship training. When government policies provide financial or regulatory support, training programs can teach entrepreneurs how to effectively utilize these resources. For example, a training program could teach an entrepreneur

how to apply for and manage a CEDA loan or how to navigate the tax system. Training can also act as a bridge between policy and practice. Policies may be well-intentioned, but if entrepreneurs lack the knowledge to take advantage of them, their impact is limited. Training programs can educate entrepreneurs on available resources and how to access them, thus making the policies more effective. Ultimately, effective training programs can also increase the uptake of government support systems. Entrepreneurs who feel more confident in their capabilities after training may be more likely to seek out and apply for government assistance, leading to a higher success rate for both the businesses and the government initiatives. Moreover, the entrepreneurial ecosystem is significantly shaped by governments. Favourable policies and robust support systems can significantly reduce barriers to entry and growth. Policies that provide accessible funding, such as grants, low-interest loans, and loan guarantees, can help women and youth overcome the significant challenge of securing capital. Likewise, streamlined business registration processes, simplified tax structures, and favourable legal frameworks can lower administrative expenses, facilitating the operation and success of new firms. Moreover, government-led or sponsored programs that offer business incubation, mentorship, and advisory services provide entrepreneurs with the necessary guidance to navigate complex business challenges. However, this has not been extensively studied in relation to women and youth-led enterprises.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter covers the actual method of evaluating the literature. However, the chapter is logically organized to cover the following headings: the Entrepreneurial Domain, the Theoretical Framework, and the Empirical literature evidence. The evidence is discussed under the following themes:

Theme 1: Managerial influence on the success of women and youth-led enterprises

Theme 2: Effective government policies and support systems on women and youth SMMEs

Theme 3: Challenges faced by women and youth business owners

Theme:4 Impact of entrepreneurship training and education on innovation and SMME competitiveness.

Library Databases and Search Engines

A systematic approach to gathering, assessing, and summarizing literature was adopted. There are several methods for swiftly accessing the literature using computer databases that can help streamline the process of gathering pertinent content. They make thousands of journals, conference papers, and other information on various subjects that are easily accessible. Most of the content included in this study came from scientific journal publications that have undergone peer review. The topic under study was explored through investigation using scholarly databases. The publications were retrieved from the Botswana Open University (BOU) e-library- EBSCO host. This paid online research resource offers full-text databases, topic indexes, e-books, historical digital archives, and point-of-care medical references. ProQuest EBook Central is a global online information repository of immense size, and it allows researchers to browse various databases and Google Scholar. However, searching for this work online yields a wealth of information about the papers found through Google Scholar, including connections to similar

publications, abstracts, electronic versions of works associated with a certain library, and full-text purchase options (Creswell, 2014). Articles from online libraries and UNICAF University ProQuest e-Journals were also used in the study. To cover a broad spectrum of literature, keywords or synonyms were employed.

Article Search Period and Types of Literature Searched

The main period of the literature search was December 2023 to February 2024, with additional time added as needed. It was essential to take out the relevant information from the literature and decide which sources were most pertinent to my research query. The year of publication has been the initial criterion for inclusion in the literature. Because of this, the publications that were most recently published in 2019 were the ones that were chosen to be included in the literature review. This was done in compliance with UNICAF University's requirement that most of the literature be no older than five years. Notably, the content that lacked a critical evaluation was excluded from the review. The material that has been examined by editorial boards, published in impact factor journals, and had several citations were preferred. In summary, a coherent examination of the literature fills up the discrepancy between theory and practice and sparks the interest of researchers for future work.

Literature Search Criteria

The researcher was compelled to peruse the abstracts and titles or extract the most pertinent information from the voluminous body of literature. An additional phase involved reading passages from the literature and offering a critical evaluation of the selected sources. However, the author also drew attention to the results by using markers and highlighting noteworthy revelations from the chosen literature. To detect trends and gaps in the body of the study, the most pertinent material was arranged in labelled folders. The sources were organized in categories based on

recurring themes, results, and approaches that were most relevant to the subject of my research. It is noteworthy that it was crucial to examine any gaps in the literature and any other unsolved issues. In a similar vein, the author also highlighted the material that had been synthesized from the results of the body of existing literature; in this case, it would be helpful to summarize the notes and their coherence to arrange the paragraph methodically.

The literature was also thoroughly analysed to determine its merits and shortcomings, and the most trustworthy sources were picked to guide the research and help explain the study's findings. In addition, the results were arranged in a logical and well-structured manner, beginning with an introduction that outlined the research topic and ending with a summary of the primary themes or findings. According to Creswell (2014) once the literature has been summarized, the literature review is put together by arranging the sections thematically or according to key ideas. Likewise, the main themes of the literature are summarized and explain how the writer's particular research closes such gaps after the review. At this stage, it may be necessary to offer an overview of earlier studies, pointing out flaws in the material and problems with the methodologies.

List of Key Search Terms

The present study conducted a literature search utilizing terms, phrases, and sentences that are mostly related to how the performance of companies run by women and young people is affected by their managerial abilities. The search was conducted using the following terms and phrases:

- Managerial capabilities/competencies
- Performance and business success
- Female/women entrepreneurship
- Youth entrepreneurship

- Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship training and education
- Government initiatives/programs
- Policy frameworks
- Women and youth empowerment

The Entrepreneurial Domain

This section covers important advancements when studying entrepreneurship. The research findings provide a comprehensive and current empirical analysis of entrepreneurship research, and they render themselves relevant to this proposed study. Since the 1930s, it has been believed that entrepreneurship is essential to the growth and stability of world economies. According to Rudhumbu et al. (2020, as cited in Ramadani et al., 2015) globally, entrepreneurship is quickly emerging as a key force behind economic expansion and advancement. Consequently, it demonstrates that entrepreneurship is universally recognized as being essential to the expansion and long-term viability of global economies (Rao et al., 2012, as cited in Rudhumbu et al., 2020).

Cooper (2003, as cited in Alvarez et al., 2010) revealed that since the 1970s, the topic of entrepreneurship has battled to establish its identity as a distinct field and acquire acceptance as a respectable area of study within academia. A substantial portion of the research on entrepreneurship was theoretical or employed the phenomenon as a framework for examining other theories (Alvarez & Barney, 2020). Moreover, the domain of entrepreneurship has been quite active and dynamic during the past ten years. Still, it has not been thoroughly investigated if there is a strong network of (in)formal connections that links the most prominent researchers in the field (Teixeira, 2011).

To chart the development of entrepreneurship as a distinct topic within the social science literature, Meyer et al. (2014) undertook a study that spans the early 1990s through 2009. According to their data, entrepreneurship grew significantly in the 1990s but only became a respectable academic field throughout the second part of the 2000s. For twenty years, academics from Anglo-Saxon nations have dominated the field under investigation; for example, the US, UK, and Canada have particularly significant representatives.

Even though entrepreneurship is acknowledged as being fundamentally important to our economy and many scholars worldwide have focused on it, there is currently no consensus over the research object in this scientific discipline. To describe the phenomenon, empirical investigations have used a variety of methodologies (Bruyat & Julien, 2001). Additionally, it has demonstrated that the phenomenon is far more varied and complex than previously believed in the 1980s. Nonetheless, the structure and intellectual foundation of entrepreneurship research continue to point to a significant dependence on established disciplines of study, such as business and management and, to a lesser degree, economics, it is indisputable that there is a heavy reliance on recently published papers on entrepreneurship-related sources. This appears to indicate an increasing trend in this field of study toward being more than just an economics or management specialty (Teixeira, 2011). However, it is now essential to develop theories that will lead to more fruitful empirical studies to progress knowledge and create practical instruments.

According to Brush et al. (2003) a key feature of the study of entrepreneurship and related fields is the emphasis on the formation of novel businesses and organizations, as well as creative mixes of goods and services. A variety of circumstances can lead to this kind of production, including new projects and groups, current companies, family-run enterprises, franchising, etc., as well as individuals and teams. Through the development of jobs, innovation, and increased

productivity, entrepreneurship is one of the key elements fostering economic progress (Rankhumise, & Letsoalo, 2019). According to Raza et al. (2018, as cited in Rankhumise & Letsoalo, 2019) SMMEs are crucial because of their role in eradicating poverty and promoting social uplift, job creation, and economic progress. Their significance cannot be overstated. Business development is considered a viable approach to creating jobs and revenue in developing nations like Botswana, particularly when it comes to SMMEs.

Moreover, Africa's developing markets should pay more attention to the elements that encourage women and young people across the continent to pursue entrepreneurship. This strategy is necessary to reduce unemployment rates by encouraging graduates to pursue self-employment and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship has been identified as a crucial area for addressing some of the societal problems that economies face, such as reducing unemployment (Svotwa et al., 2022). The writer further noted that Botswana has been plagued by high rates of poverty, inequality, and unemployment (17.7%), with concerning rates of 35.67% among the young. Approximately 9% of the GDP is allocated to education by the government of Botswana, making it one of the highest in the world, however, it has not produced the necessary credibility features (The World Bank, 2018, as cited in Svotwa et al., 2022). By offering entrepreneurship courses, Botswana's institutions of higher learning have contributed significantly to the development of an entrepreneurial attitude in their pupils by infusing entrepreneurship in their school curricula.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This section focuses on a thorough examination and discussion of a theoretical framework for an inquiry aimed at evaluating the effect of managerial capabilities on the success of women and youth-led enterprises. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014) a theoretical framework serves as the basis and rationale for conducting the research, and it is essential to forming arguments that

are employed in any investigation. However, the importance of using a theoretical framework in a dissertation study cannot be emphasized. Grant and Osanloo (2014) further argued that the theoretical framework of a research study is the basis upon which all knowledge is built, both literally and symbolically. Therefore, it gives the study's justification, problem statement, purpose, significance, and research questions structure and support. Consequently, grounded or anchored by the theoretical framework are the methodology, analysis, and most importantly, the literature review.

Similarly, Mortensen (2023) contended that a study's conceptual framework serves as a link between all of the components of the investigation procedure, such as the objectives and interests of the researcher, their identity and positionality, the context and setting, formal and informal theories, and methodologies. A conceptual framework aids in directing and supporting researchers as they choose the course of their study. According to Wacker (2004) a strong theory identifies concepts, that is, what and who qualifies as a conceptual definition, defines the domain, or the conditions in which the conceptual definitions are applicable, establish causal relationships, that is, how the conceptual definitions relate to measurements, and, lastly, makes predictions, that is, what should, might, and would happen when formal conceptual definitions are applied for testing. Ultimately, the cornerstone of any sound hypothesis is logic.

The diagrammatic illustration of the Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The development of the research's theoretical/conceptual framework was created from feminist theories, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial orientation theories, human capital theory, empowerment theory, and social learning theory. The framework serves as a lens through which to develop the theories that offer a strategy for investigating the relationship between management skills and the success of firms managed by women and young people.

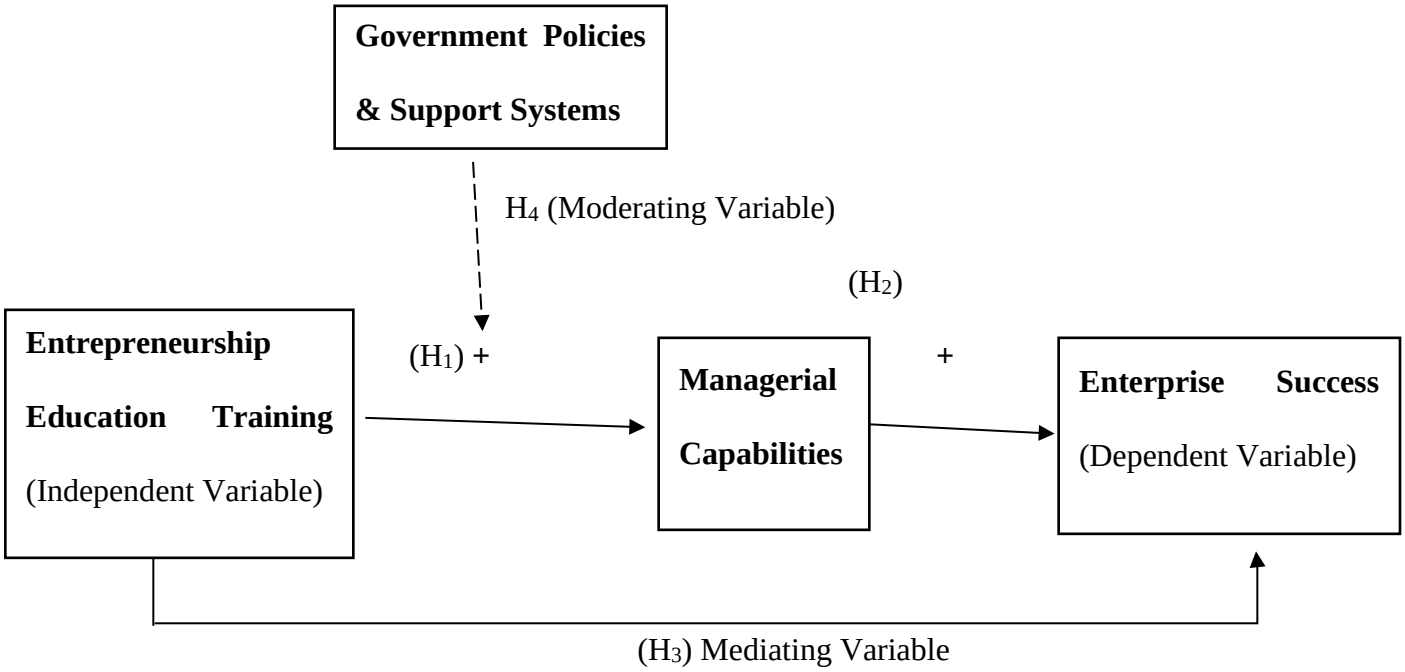
The researcher decided to investigate the following factors.

- *Independent variable*- Entrepreneurial education programs
- *Mediating variable*- Managerial capabilities
- *Dependent variable*- Enterprise Success
- *Moderating variable*- Government policies and systems

The researcher intended to test if there is a positive relationship between managerial capabilities and the success of women and youth businesses. The moderating effect of government policies entrepreneurship education programs and managerial capabilities. Entrepreneurial education programs as an independent factor, that is, whether a positive relationship exist between them and managerial abilities, as well as the success of women and youth-owned businesses. The dependent variable is Enterprise success of women and youth-led businesses (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1

Diagrammatic illustration of conceptual framework



Source: Author's own diagram

The statistical evidence supporting H1 is consistent with the Human Capital Theory, demonstrating that a manager's operational and strategic skills are directly improved by structured entrepreneurial education. This indicates that managerial talents are not fixed by human qualities but rather learned competencies. However, Path H_1 (Education → Capabilities): Is based on Human Capital Theory, this path demonstrates how engaging in organized entrepreneurial education enhances an individual's managerial capabilities by developing essential skills, knowledge, and operational competence. Path H_2 (Capabilities → Success): Is grounded on the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, which suggests that strong managerial capabilities serve as essential internal intangible resources that directly propel enterprise success (such as growth, profitability, and competitive advantage). The Mediation Path **(H_3):** This hypothesis, which is symbolized by the sweeping bottom curve, asserts that managerial capabilities serve as the crucial link (mediator) between success and education. In summary, education works indirectly by first improving the manager's competencies, which in turn provide performance outcomes. It does not, however, automatically result in business success on its own. The Moderation Path (H_4): which is based on Institutional Theory, explains that government systems and policies function as an external conditional factor. The dashed arrow pointing down to the H_1 link indicates that business-friendly policies, procedures, and supportive regulatory frameworks enhance (or moderate) the degree to which training translates into real managerial skills. On the other hand, this conversion process may be weakened by restrictive policies.

Overview of Theories

Creswell (2014) suggested that in mixed methods research, theory can be applied inductively, as in the case of an emergent qualitative theory or pattern, or deductively

about quantitative theory testing and validity. Furthermore, there are several special ways that theory is applied in mixed methods studies, where researchers use various mixed methods designs to gather, examine, and integrate both quantitative and qualitative data. There are two approaches to using this framework: (a) applying a social science framework and (b) applying a transformative framework.

Social Science Theory

Creswell (2014) stated that the social science hypothesis could be drawn from any number of social science ideas, including those from the theories of political science, economics, marketing, behavioral change, adoption, and dissemination. It could be presented as a conceptual model, a literature review, or a theory that explains the findings the researcher hopes to find in a study. According to Reiter (2017) feminist perspective theorists' understanding of science as a social activity of knowledge production and their calls for strong objectivity in research have totally invalidated any possibility of naively claiming neutrality and traditional objectivity simply because one employs scientific methodology. Recognizing the inevitable consequences of bias and partiality and seeking methods to mitigate or counteract them is the only realistic way to go forward. Karl Popper (2002, as cited in Reiter, 2017) asserted that deductive, confirmatory research cannot yield absolute facts. It seems sense to give inductive and exploratory research another attempts if we agree with this concept. In the social sciences, exploration can yield reliable and informative results if it is carried out in an open and self-reflexive manner. Additionally, it can benefit from using dialectical reasoning.

Transformative Paradigm Theory

Another theory by Creswell (2014) demonstrated how information regarding the transformational framework and the application of mixed methods research is expanding. It

appears to be particularly useful for researching community health concerns and marginalized groups wherever they may be found around the globe. Regarding applying a transformative framework in mixed methods, two topics have dominated the conversation: (a) What is a framework for transformation? (b) How might a researcher using mixed methods apply it to a meticulous, complex mixed methods study? In addition, a transformative mixed methods framework consists of themes which are not limited to the following:

1. The underlying presumptions that depend on moral positions of inclusivity and opposition to repressive social systems.
2. A procedure for joining the community that aims to foster trust and increase transparency regarding objectives and tactics.
3. Sharing research findings in a way that promotes applying them to advance human rights and social justice.

Mertens (2010, as cited in Creswell et al., (2010) also confirmed that people who face discrimination and oppression due to their color or ethnicity, disability, immigration status, political disagreements, sexual orientation, poverty, gender, or age can all benefit from the transformative approach. The next section describes the theories that the researcher uses as a lens to apply solutions to how the theory relates to the problem being studied, as well as the purpose, significance, and design of the study.

Description of the Theories Relating to the Study

An initial examination of institutional theories, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial orientation theories, human capital, empowerment, and resource-based theory informed the development of research; however, the study is ultimately guided by human capital, resource based and institutional theories, which provide the most relevant theoretical framework for addressing

the research objectives. These ideas serve as a prism through which we develop the epistemology and the conceptual framework that proposes a technique for examining the relationship between management skills and the success of firms managed by women and young people. The problem is that businesses led by women and young people are still performing poorly when compared with other industries when it comes to implementing best practices for management. Research has shown that women-driven businesses have lower daily performance than other business types. Compared to companies run by men, they delivered their products later than expected. However, to provide workable answers to identified research gaps, the investigation aims to examine the variables influencing the success of young and female-owned enterprises in Botswana, with a focus on managerial skills, policies, and entrepreneurial programs for entrepreneurial empowerment generally. The researcher believes that the inquiry will add greater value to the field of enterprise development and that the theoretical framework will help organize the study, serve as its foundation, and provide guidance in the selection of the data analysis and study design. Additionally, the following research questions will be answered.

Q1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

Q2: How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

Q3: How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

Q4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

Through an exploration of the above questions, the paper advances knowledge of the theoretical framework of the inquiries, and how they complement each other. Grant & Osanloo (2014) asserted that the reader is introduced to current information through the theoretical framework, and the study's research questions serve as a liaison between that knowledge and the problem that one is attempting to answer.

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Orientation Theory

In their book Baker & Welter (2020) stated that in the last ten years, there has been significant growth in the scope and there is now a trend away from the pursuit of a universal theory of entrepreneurship due to the empirical variability of entrepreneurship research and towards an enhanced comprehension of the crucial function that settings fulfil in this domain. This should enhance the research's theoretical rigor and practical usefulness in this field. Everybody defines entrepreneurship differently, based on the situation, and context, and circumstances. Its causes and effects also change. They gave an example that business may be a wonderful means of liberation for certain individuals, but it may also be a burdensome road that leads to drudgery and excessive effort for others. It can spur revival and liveliness in certain areas but merely allow for basic existence in others. Theoretically, entrepreneurship explains a person's capacity to recognize and take advantage of opportunities presented by the external business environment to launch or grow a company. However, this would be based on their access to information and readiness to take calculated risks (Ajuna et al., 2018). While typical interpretations of the term define the decision to enter a business as either a binary one in which one is viewed as an entrepreneur or not, this definition of entrepreneurship does not clearly say that it must only be a full-time endeavor (Ferreira, 2020). Conversely, though the authors describe Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) as the tendency of businesses to be risk-takers, creative, and aggressive in responding to opportunities in

the market. They further distinguish the two terms by defining entrepreneurship as content and entrepreneurship orientation as a process. A company's entrepreneurial traits include taking calculated risks, being creative, and being proactive.

According to Miller (1983, as cited in Sulasih et al., 2023) every leader has possessed an entrepreneurial mindset, outlook, and disposition ever since the organization was established. These attitudes and characteristics mold their mindset, influencing company strategy and decision-making. Their decision-making and corporate strategy are influenced by these deeply rooted attitudes and characteristics. The entrepreneurship of a company's leaders might vary in strength or weakness based on their orientation. Furthermore, it is widely acknowledged that one of the most significant methods of accumulating wealth in a capitalist system is through entrepreneurship.

Building on this, Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) theory goes deeper by focusing on the specific behaviours and mindsets that a firm exhibits to be entrepreneurial. These key dimensions are, *innovativeness*- the company's propensity for innovative and unique concepts, *proactiveness*- the firm's ability to act ahead of competitors, and *risk-taking*- the readiness to devote substantial resources to projects with uncertain outcomes. However, these elements are crucial for analysing the competitiveness and performance of women and youth-led SMMEs. By using this theory, one can investigate how these specific orientations, cultivated through training and education, lead to better business outcomes and a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, entrepreneurship is essential to social and economic change (Cho & Lee, 2018). However, Mahoney and Michael (2005) argued that a subjectivist theory of entrepreneurship is necessary to effectively address the process of knowledge formation. They further believe that subjectivism, at its most general level, is the belief that environmental factors

have little to no influence on how people think or make decisions. Subjectivism promotes freedom of choice and creative problem-solving.

Resource- Based Theory (RBT)

According to the resource-based view framework, a company's survival and competitive advantage are influenced by its distinct resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991, as cited in Chaurura & Dar, 2025). By efficiently controlling and utilizing their special resources, such as networks, human capital, and knowledge, SMMEs can improve their chances of surviving. Therefore, it is crucial to consider how SMMEs use their resources to overcome obstacles and increase their chances of survival when assessing SMME survival. Viewed through the RBV framework, the fundamental cause of this issue is a significant, understudied gap in internal strategic resources, particularly dynamic managerial competencies like social networking, formal financial literacy, and strategic planning (Chaurura & Dar, 2025). These competences are more than just operational skills in the South East District's resource-constrained environment; they are the essential human capital capabilities needed to absorb, use, and convert outside government funds into long-term competitive advantage.

Institutional Theory

Institutional Theory states that formal regulatory frameworks and governmental systems greatly limit organizational behavior and performance (Bruton et al., 2010). Further, Government policies act as institutional mechanisms that either facilitate or constrain how effectively inputs translate into capabilities and business success. The theory explains how firms use survival mechanisms to adjust to external environmental expectations, that is, when driven by professionalization, by uncertainty and when driven by laws and regulations of the government. From an Institutional Theory perspective, this behavioral pattern reveals a significant contextual

gap: it illustrates how formal business structures in Botswana's urban and peri-urban South East District are subordinated to deeply ingrained sociocultural norms and informal institutional pressures (Mamabolo and Lekoko, 2021). Nevertheless, these make businesses structurally unreliable and prevent them from building a stable private market foundation. As a result, even though the government has provided significant capital through official financial assistance systems, empirical data shows that financial capital is not enough to ensure the survival of a business.

Human Capital Theory

According to Hulsink and Koek (2014) human capital theory is about learning new things that enhance one's cognitive and entrepreneurial skills, resulting in more successful and beneficial future endeavors. Likewise, human capital theory, as stated by Ajuna et al. (2018) is the prevailing theory surrounding the induction training of people at work. The strategy views education as an outlay that must be paid for to reap the benefits of future productivity. They both agreed that an understanding of human capital is crucial for aspiring business owners when it comes to recognizing and pursuing business opportunities. People will become more confident as a result of the process of acquiring human capital in their position to start a successful business of their own (Hulsink & Koek, 2014). Theorists of human capital assert that formal education and productivity are positively correlated (Aladejebi, 2018). The writer further suggested that theorists claim that those who possess an education are more likely to be productive. On the other hand, Eze and Nwali (2012) described entrepreneurship education as a process of transforming people's perceptions so they may use innovative ideas and creative problem-solving to enhance current systems or address particular issues. The strategy seeks to alter individuals' attitudes and beliefs while also supplying them with the resources they require to successfully design, develop, and manage their enterprises.

According to Brinda and Dileep (2011) it is critical to inspire women to think about pursuing jobs in business ventures to fulfill various needs, such as independence, the desire to be accepted and successful at work, professional growth, and a means to improve the well-being of their families. This can also help them pay for their children's education.

Empowerment Theory

According to Omang et al. (2022b) the theory's central assumption is that for people to fulfill their morally mandated societal obligations, individuals must have access to personal, interpersonal, and environmental resources that can help them develop new abilities, knowledge, and motivation. According to the authors, When it becomes impossible to gather resources to achieve predetermined objectives, it can lead to a feeling of despair and powerlessness. Lord and Hutchison (1993) also suggested that understanding empowerment starts with looking at the ideas of power and powerlessness. Power is the capacity of certain people or groups to have predicted, unanticipated, and intentional consequences on others. Cornell Empowerment Group (1989, as cited in Lord & Hutchison, 1993). The writers claim that power comes from a variety of sources. Galbraith (1983, as cited in Lord & Hutchison, 1993) highlighted personality, property, wealth, and prominent organizations as major sources of power in the latter half of this century. Furthermore, some have noted that because our society is class-dominated, a tiny number of individuals hold a disproportionate amount of either economic or political power, while the majority holds little to none of either. On a personal level, being powerless can be seen as believing that one cannot change the course of events in life with their actions Keiffer (1984, as cited in Lord & Hutchison, 1993). Additionally, systemic oppression and the control of others, along with economic disparities, lead to true impotence. Conversely, excess powerlessness is the outcome of an internalized idea that change is impossible, which makes one apathetic and hesitant to fight for

more influence and control. Those with little to no political or economic authority are seen to be powerless since they are unable to get more resources and control over their life. This notion of powerlessness has evolved, they noted. However, the majority of the literature also links personal control to empowerment (Page & Czuba, 1999).

Capacity Building Theory

According to Ikharehon (2007, as cited in Debie & Debie, 2014) capacity building is crucial for sustainable development and cannot be overstated. This is because developing countries need to be able to create more skilled human capital to attain sustainable development, and the government can only do this by making significant investments in entrepreneurship and the acquisition of technical skills. Capacity building in developing nations should be of such a calibre and relevance that it aids the linked countries in setting up systems for sustainable development. Without a doubt, the ability of the individual, including their knowledge, experience, and skill sets, plays a crucial part in any entrepreneurial process. According to the World Bank (2012, as cited in Debie & Debie, 2014) building capacity is a rigorous approach to change management. As per the UNDP (2003, as cited in Debie & Debie, 2014) definition, capacity building includes the development of human resources, the establishment of managerial systems, institutional development including community engagement, and fostering an enabling environment. In the framework of development, capacity building denotes a dynamic process that empowers people and organizations to grow the essential social and technical abilities needed to recognize issues, assess them, and offer solutions. Aladejebi (2018) argued that SMEs may boost their degree of capacity building if there is a correlation between performance and capacity building that is positive. Getting information is essential for modern SMEs to operate successfully. However, a

key factor in a company's development, expansion, and improvement in both capacity and profitability is training.

In conclusion, the choice of the three theories, that is, *human capital theory*, *resource-based* and *institutional theory* is justified because they provide a comprehensive framework for analysing the factors influencing the success of women and youth-led businesses. Human capital theory suggests that individuals invest in skills, knowledge, and education to increase their cognitive abilities and productive efficiency. Education generates human capital (managerial capabilities), which subsequently enhances organizational performance. Whilst resource-based theory argues that a firm achieves sustainable competitive advantage through resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. Managerial capability is an intangible, dynamic capability that is difficult for competitors to copy, serving as a direct engine for long-term enterprise success. The institutional theory posits that organizations are influenced by their surrounding institutional environment (formal rules, regulations, laws, and informal social norms). Government policies form the rules of the game that either enable or constrain how effectively formal education translates into actual capability and business execution. It provides a justification for advocating for the government interventions that address the unique needs of women and youth, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Empirical Literature Review

This section provides empirical evidence and a review of the studies that have examined the issue. However, the significance of reading the literature is in drawing comparisons between earlier research and the one that is being suggested. It helps uncover the findings of previous research that are closely related to the one being conducted and are shared with the reader. It connects a study to the more comprehensive, continuing discussion in the literature, completing

gaps and expanding on earlier research. As we explore the entrepreneurship discipline, it must be noted that literature has revealed that in today's global economies, the field of entrepreneurship is rapidly becoming a primary force for advancement and economic prosperity. Because of this, entrepreneurship is widely recognized as being essential to the expansion and sustainability of global economies. Rao et al. (2012, as cited in Rudhumbu et al., 2020).

Notably, from the literature review, managerial capabilities, skills, abilities, and competencies are critical for the performance and success of firms. However, observations have shown that the words skill, ability, capability, and competence and mostly interchangeable by most authors. In general, the phrases relate to the intricate combination of abilities, attitudes, and knowledge that allow an individual to carry out activities efficiently. However, in the current study, the words were adopted. Therefore, this section will explore evidence from the four themes and or subthemes discussed below.

Managerial Influence on the Success of Women and Youth-led Enterprises

Various studies have been conducted regarding the influence that managerial skills can have on the performance and success of firms. Their report, Smallwood and Ulrich (2004) believed that people value the companies' capabilities, that is, their ability to innovate and their response to the customer's changing needs, more than their organizational design or management philosophies. They are invisible to the naked eye, but they can influence market value and instill confidence in investors over future profits. In their attempt to explain organizational capabilities, they note that, although the terms' ability, competence, and capability are frequently used interchangeably, certain differences need to be noted while discussing technical matters, we speak of a person's functional competence or an organization's core competencies; while discussing social issues, we speak of a person's leadership ability or an organization's capabilities. In their in-depth analysis,

they made a distinct difference by comparing technical and social skill sets, in addition to analytical levels at the individual and organizational levels as demonstrated by the figure below:

Table 1.1

Individual and Organizational Levels Analysis

	Individual	Organizational
Technical	**1** An individual's functional competence	**3** An organization's core competence
Social	**2** An individual's leadership ability	**4** An organization's capability

Source: Harvard Business School Publishing Cooperation, 2004.

Based on the above explanation, the current study will use the words capability/competency/ability/skill interchangeably to explore more insight into management theories relating to the topic under study. Additionally, strategically relevant human resource management (HRM) practices are built on top of organizational capacities. For a considerable amount of time, the strategy literature has highlighted specific core capabilities as being crucial to business performance (Buller & McEvoy, 2012). According to Rankhumise and Letsoalo (2019) one of the key components in the growth of the company and one that significantly influences business success is human capability. Using a cross-sectional qualitative study design, they investigated the variables impacting the success of SMMEs in China and South Africa. Ten business owners were chosen for the study using a purposeful sample technique. Open coding, Tesch's data reduction method was applied to the collected data for analysis. The study's conclusions showed that financial management training affects the firm's success. Moreover, managerial abilities, government backing and market access, technology use, and startup funding,

all of which are essential to a business's survival and success. However, they argued that within the business community, it is a well-known fact that companies with a workforce that is more educated and trained tend to be more successful and efficient. Interestingly, trained and educated personnel have greater learning and creative ability to impact the firm favorably.

Hani (2021) carried out qualitative research to determine how managerial capabilities affect the success of businesses. The investigation was founded on in-depth interviews with fifteen prominent Israeli foreign executives. The research indicates that a company's performance greatly depends on its manager's ability to drive employees, lead negotiations, and manage risks, crises, tasks, projects, and technology is critical to its success. Research has indicated that managerial capabilities are one of the primary elements impacting the performance and success of firms. Therefore, it is unknown to what extent the crucial component has an influence and what resources need to be used to achieve success and optimal performance. The literature has not offered the answer to the query, and the author claims that no research has been conducted on the connection between effective management and successful business performance.

What are Managerial Capabilities?

Brewer and Brewer (2010, as cited in Koech et al., 2018) defined capability as a manager's skill set, knowledge, and aptitudes pertinent to their management function. Buller and McEvoy (2012) asserted that management strategies, organizational activity, organizational results, and individual results are likely to be impacted by capability. Jiménez et al. (2016) stated that competency has no universally accepted definition. They explained that the Latin word competent is where the word competency originates and this implies “authorized to judge” or “has the right to speak” (p.10). However, the following features of the concept of competency are revealed by the various definitions: The goal of competency is to effectively perform essential tasks in a

particular work environment through the complex synthesis of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The outcomes of competency must be anticipated and assessed qualitatively and/or quantitatively. According to Gamara et al. (2019) the definition of managerial competencies is a subset of a broader category of individual competencies that include the drive, character attributes, skills, knowledge, and values required to enhance management performance. Consequently, finding these management talents is a useful tool for these companies to get a competitive edge. Also, Rambe and Makhalemele (2015) and Mohd-Shamsudin and Chuttipattana (2012), described that the ability of a person, such as a manager or small business owner, to carry out a duty or an activity to fulfill a specific function or position is known as managerial competency. It is believed that one of the most important factors supporting small firms' operations and survival is their managerial abilities.

From their perspective on the firm’s capacity, Koeller and Lechler (2006) noted that one way to define managerial capacity is a company's knowledge capital for both operating and strategic management. They suggest that this capability will be built by the company's founders, by increasing the resources available to management, by structuring managerial tasks, and by management's efficient handling of changing data. They further noted that Richardson in 1964 restricted his discussions to the managerial staff of a company. However, they further noted that the ability of a company to manage will also be demonstrated by its efficient and successful managerial operating procedures and by how well those procedures are aligned with the business’ strategic objectives.

Ng’ora et al. (2022) gathered information from Tanzanian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) owners and managers to use regression analysis as well as thematic content analysis to investigate managerial capabilities needed and how they affect company success. The

results showed that MSMEs' success is greatly influenced by the ability of their managers and owners to manage, especially the ability to effectively manage finances, market, interact with people, and exercise entrepreneurial spirit were critical for small business success. However, a lot of MSMEs' managers and owners stated that their largest areas of weakness were in marketing, finance, and entrepreneurship. This suggests that MSME owners and managers require further assistance in these areas in the form of instruction, coaching, and training. Since young people make up most stakeholders in small businesses, this study suggests that policies and strategies that specifically encourage youth entrepreneurship through experience and learning can help foster an entrepreneurial mindset. This is important because entrepreneurial mindsets are among the most important competencies in small business management.

Osei-Bonsu (2014) conducted a similar study to ascertain the importance of management qualities as one of the primary motivators or influences behind a company's global operations. Their research employed a longitudinal methodology to investigate management competency, management process, and capacity or size quantitatively. At each stage of internationalization, the findings showed a substantial disparity between the managerial skills of SMEs and non-SMEs. In comparison to their non-SME counterparts, SMEs had significantly weaker managerial capability in terms of size at both moderate and high levels of internationalization. SMEs were far less likely to apply professional training and qualified management skills at low, moderate, and high levels of internationalization as compared to non-SMEs. Also, in comparison of SMEs to non-SMEs, it was discovered that SMEs had a considerably lower likelihood of developing management processes, such as international expansion, export and strategy plans, Total Quality Management, Just in Time, and Quality Assurance.

In another study conducted by Ahmed (2017) the study's findings demonstrated a two-link value chain linkage between managing capabilities and performance, with development generating managerial capabilities. This made it possible for researchers to comprehend how development affects the growth of superior managing abilities that have an impact on the effectiveness of organizations. The following fascinating empirical data was found while examining this value chain interaction about the ownership and size of the organization; although there was no correlation between an organization's size and ownership and its managerial capabilities and performance, multinational and large-scale Pakistani organizations foster a culture of learning and invest in development to improve their managerial capabilities. The absence of a development framework and learning culture in small-scale Pakistani firms hurt the development of managerial competencies, resulting in subpar managerial performance in addition to overall business success and longevity. On the other hand, companies that put development first, creating a learning culture, providing funding for capacity building, and granting managers decision-making power, are more likely to have managers with superior managing capabilities. The businesses stand to acquire a competitive advantage over their competitors and can use their better managerial abilities.

In South Africa's largest metropolis, the study carried out by Antonites and Govindasamy (2013) aimed at investigating the crucial success variables that impact the success of Indian small company owners. To do this, the study sought to ascertain if a set of company owners were prosperous, and those who were not in terms of general management abilities, personal traits, entrepreneurial orientation, and business financing. Based on the results of the study, there are no appreciable variations in management abilities or financial characteristics between the comparable groups. However, there are notable variations in terms of individual characteristics including experience, family support, and educational attainment.

Alves and de Carvalho (2023) noted that there is limited research and understanding of the internal capability landscape of microenterprises and how it affects the firm's global performance (GP). They further noted that there may be some empirical support for discrete correlations between a capability and GP, but it is still unclear how the capabilities of microenterprises quantitatively relate to one another and GP. A model was developed by them to investigate the connection between dynamic management capabilities (DMCs), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), and how those relationships affected GP, with competitive intensity acting as a moderator. 402 Portuguese microenterprises participated in a questionnaire survey that yielded the data, which was subsequently subjected to structural equation modeling based on covariance. They verify that DMCs and EO significantly, positively, and statistically influence operational capabilities (OCs), accounting for more than half of their variance, when OCs entirely moderate any relationship to GP. Furthermore, their findings demonstrate that managers of microenterprises, particularly their DMCs, EOs, and, eventually, OCs, require a significant deal of care and support to maintain a robust microenterprise business environment.

According to research by Ariasih et al. (2018) coffee processing SMEs in Pupuan's management competencies and market orientation mediate the association between entrepreneurial orientation and company success. The study aimed to examine the significance of managerial skills and a market-oriented approach to this process. 52 owners completed the study's questionnaire, which was used to collect data, and managers of 26 coffee-processing SMEs in Pupuan were used as samples. This study examined the mediation effect using a partial least squares statistical analysis technique. The outcomes of the study support the notion that managerial capabilities and a market-oriented mindset both positively and significantly impact entrepreneurial orientation and function as a partial mediator between it and corporate success. The findings also

offer recommendations on how SMEs should maintain a strong entrepreneurial mindset while enhancing their managerial skills and market orientation to boost company success.

To assess Nairobi's Numerical Machining Complex Business Limited's competitive advantage, which is a manufacturing business and its management capability, Nyangidisi (2018) carried out an extra investigation. The research employed a descriptive methodology to evaluate how management skills affect competitive advantage in the manufacturing industry. The target demographic for this study was Numerical Machining Complex (NMC) Limited's 167 management and lower-level employees. Using stratified random sampling, 50 respondents, that is, 30% of the target population, were chosen from among the 167 management and subordinate staff members. Primary data were gathered using self-administered, open-ended, and closed-ended surveys. Quantitative data was examined using descriptive statistics, such as standard deviation, mean scores, frequencies, and percentages. The study used multiple regression analysis to evaluate how managerial abilities affected NMC's competitive advantage. The Numerical Machining Complex Company Ltd.'s competitive advantage is significantly impacted by knowledge management, according to the inquiry. The company's competitive edge is significantly impacted by organizational change as well. The competitive advantage of the organization is greatly impacted by the coordination of management procedures. The impact of discontinuous innovation on the company's competitive advantage is minimal. To succeed in business, entrepreneurs create business initiatives. To achieve this, they will need to think creatively and innovatively to stay up to date with the rapid changes happening in the corporate world.

According to Hasani and O’Reilly (2021) the performance of a company can be impacted by the attitudes and interests of managers, as well as their overall management quality, according to empirical evidence derived from a limited number of studies on managerial characteristics.

Hasani & O'Reilly further suggested that managerial characteristics are characterized by innovativeness and attitude. They believe that the ability of a manager to adapt to new technology, bring in fresh perspectives, and create inventive methods that advance the organization and boost performance is reflected in their innovativeness. On the contrary, Hyytinen et al. (2015, as cited in Hasani & O'Reilly, 2021) it is unclear how managers' creativity affects a start-up business's ability to survive and thrive.

Is innovativeness a component of management? In answering the question, Asghar et al. (2023) and Šajeva and Jucevičius (2008) suggested that effective knowledge management is typically cited in scientific literature as essential for enhancing organizational innovativeness. It is emphasized that quicker, less hazardous, and more active processes of invention-creation may result from the efficient use and administration of knowledge. While there is a connection between innovations and knowledge management, it can be assumed that good knowledge management will increase an organization's capacity for innovation, or its capacity to generate and support novel ideas and concepts as well as experiment with and implement cutting-edge procedures that may lead to the development of new goods, services, or technological advancements. Hence the author suggests the hypotheses stated below.

H_2: Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success.

Enhancing performance and productivity is the primary goal of any firm, but this can only be accomplished with effective management strategies and result-driven technology. Prior studies have demonstrated the significant influence that technological advancements and managerial proficiency have on an organization's effectiveness, output, and profitability. Prior research has examined how managerial capabilities and roles affect innovation in products and processes (Asghar et al., 2023). Using the PLS-SEM technique, they examined how managerial capabilities

and technological adaptation affect company performance and productivity through the mediation channel of process and product innovation. Data was gathered from 150 managers working in manufacturing companies in Lahore, Pakistan's second-biggest metropolis. To accomplish the goals of the research, the researcher employed the purposive sampling technique. The empirical results of the study showed a significant and favorable relationship between process and product innovation, technological adaptation, and managerial capabilities. Additionally, both overall and indirect effects demonstrate the positive and significant relationship between the abilities of managers, their ability to adapt to new technologies, innovate processes and products, and the output and effectiveness of their companies.

It has been found recently by researchers that altering several managerial facets can foster innovation and sustainability (Khurana et al., 2022). The study advances this subject by examining the causal relationships between the organizational level sustainability capacities using structural equation modeling. Examined were the responses from 301 micro, small, and medium-sized business owners and managers in the context of a rising economy. Financial resources greatly impact the ability to collaborate. Furthermore, it has become clear that developing capacity has a big impact on innovation that is focused on sustainability.

Walter et al. (2021) used structural equation modeling to ascertain the impact that business management has on Brazilian micro and small businesses' degree of creativity. However, the inquiry has made practical contributions in emphasizing the importance of business management for micro and small businesses and the necessity for them to implement methodical business management techniques that increase their potential for innovation development and the upkeep of a sustainable competitive position.

Song Ng and Hung Kee (2018) measured the effects of technical proficiency, entrepreneurial skill, and transformational leadership on how innovation contributes to the success of owner-managed small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Data was collected from 178 owner-managers of SMEs operating in Malaysia through the administration of a self-report questionnaire. Utilizing structural equation modelling with partial least squares, the data was examined. Analysis of the data was done using partial least squares structural equation modelling. The findings demonstrated the significance of every interaction between process innovation and transformational leadership, technical proficiency and entrepreneurship, and innovativeness and business success. The connection between innovativeness and process innovation were noted as an exception.

An article published by Laguna et al. (2012) clarified the relationship between general and specific managerial competencies and small- and medium-sized businesses (SMEs') financial success. In this survey, 264 managers of SMEs participated. SMEs' performance was evaluated based on a subjective analysis of economic growth metrics relative to competitors in the market. Both general and managerial qualities strongly influence success in running a corporation.

On the other hand, Atiase et al. (2023) investigated how managerial training affects Ghanaian SME managers' effectiveness. They used a variance-based estimation method called partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to estimate the impact of training on SME managers' managerial efficacy. This is because it makes use of the human capital hypothesis. This study used primary data from 506 SMEs in Ghana to evaluate four possible paths using a stratified random sample technique. Conversely, the model result showed that, at the 1% level, accessibility and training content have a statistically significant impact on explaining managerial performance. However, statistical research shows that Ghana's management performance cannot

be fully explained by training efficiency or frequency. Furthermore, it has been observed that the industry category has an impact on the correlation between managerial effectiveness and training; however, the impacts of gender, age, and education on this association are not statistically significant.

Fernandez-Malpartida and Dextre-Beteta (2023) concluded that a manager's educational background and negotiation skills have an impact on the performance of small and medium-sized firms in Peru, which influences the success of the businesses. The post-positivist perspective and quantitative methodology were used in this investigation. The population was made up of SMEs in various Lima, Peru sectors. A random sample group including managers from 215 SMEs was selected. The study used PLS-SEM structural equation modeling and descriptive reporting to analyze data to assess the relevance and causal relationships of the variables being tested. The results demonstrated that a manager's capacity for negotiation is the only element that significantly influences the success of SMEs in Peru.

Research was conducted to examine the impact of these management capabilities on the performance of small, recently founded internet businesses in South Africa. This was found to be essential in determining the tactical levers that may maximize these companies' expansion and long-term viability in developing nations, given that most new companies fail in the first three years of their existence (Rambe & Makhalemele, 2015). They pointed out that a conceptual model was created utilizing the experiences of prior research as well as the researchers' introspective experiences to examine the connection between the management competencies of managers and owners of small internet cafés and the success of their companies. According to the concept, the improved success of small online businesses depends on several factors affecting managerial competencies (requirements, resources, and individual talents) in human capital.

Youth Entrepreneurs

Many developing nations, including Botswana, place a high priority on youth development. Most governments and local communities worldwide have determined that entrepreneurship is essential to fostering wealth and promoting regional growth, particularly among young people. Young people are an extremely promising resource that might make a major contribution to the nation's economic growth. The power and endurance of Botswana in pursuing social, economic, and political growth will be determined by their capacity to realize their potential.

The research by Maireva and Magomana (2021) sought to ascertain how internal factors affect young people's ability to succeed in entrepreneurship. Quantitative correlational research methodology was used in the investigation. 420 young entrepreneurs in Masvingo Urban made up the study's population. Using a random selection technique, 201 respondents were selected as a sample from the population. Data was collected via a structured questionnaire, and its analysis included both multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistics. They discovered that the youthful entrepreneurs' personal traits, attributes, abilities, and attitudes, as well as their educational background, management expertise, and prior entrepreneurial experience, all impacted their performance. The educational background, entrepreneurial coaching, and necessary technological abilities also assisted the young business owners in growing their enterprises.

Diraditsile (2020) believed that youth empowerment is a phenomenon that has not been fully explored. The researcher investigated that function as one of the initial experiments to demonstrate the connection between sustainable development and youth empowerment in Botswana. Diraditsile pointed out that the study offers a foundation for upcoming studies on advancing youth empowerment, which might assist the government and other donor organizations in understanding the necessity of reassessing current and prior approaches to create more pertinent

and successful interventions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, 111 young people participated in the study, together with 25 representatives from the Ministry of Youth Sports, and Culture. They were obtained by purposive and systematic sampling. Descriptive statistics were used to assess the quantitative data, while significant themes were used to synthesize the underlying meanings of the qualitative data. The findings suggested that several underlying issues that impede attempts to attain the SDGs have a major impact on young empowerment.

Researchers from Malaysia, Ridzwan et al. (2017) reported that the number of young entrepreneurs has increased from 2.6 million in 2014 to 30% of the total entrepreneurs. This is because of the Malaysian government's policy, ongoing support, growing incentive, and intervention tactics to foster the growth of this cohort of entrepreneurs. According to studies, just 20% of business owners are successful and survive each year. They must be capable of succeeding on their own, and it all depends on how they handle the resources of their company, the authors echoed. They further noted that, young business people must also recognize that, to improve their access to markets and resource management, they must establish connections with the environment. As a result, it is critical to have a thorough understanding of how young business owners use their abilities and make associations because doing so will help develop new tools that will help businesses innovate and grow, as well as help governments create new policies that will support and guide economic growth.

Cull (2006) claimed that with its global network of business programs, Youth Business International (YBI) has aided a sizable number of young entrepreneurs. It gives young people a start-up loan and the assistance of a volunteer mentor when they just have a dazzling concept and they succeed. The true nature of the mentor-client connection and how it influences a young person's success in both their personal and professional lives, however, is less widely

known. Using a case study approach, the research examined what makes two distinct cohorts of program administrators, young entrepreneurs, and mentors from two different nations successful. The frequent themes demonstrated how the relationship's character is impacted at three crucial junctures: the beginning, middle, and end. The findings additionally showed that mentors must approach entrepreneurs in a way that lessens reliance and boosts confidence. The results point to a mentoring approach that becomes more empowering rather than prescriptive as the client's firm expands.

Women Entrepreneurs

Kamberidou (2020) aimed to comprehend several aspects of female entrepreneurs by asking several questions. Despite the chaos of multitasking, how are female entrepreneurs in the 21st century changing and questioning conventional notions of professional success? What kind of expertise is needed to advance professionally and be a successful entrepreneur in the modern digital world? What are the main obstacles to women achieving their full potential in entrepreneurship or even launching a business that stops them from starting one? Further, the glass ceiling has not been broken despite the large number of women entering previously male-dominated fields. According to the author, studies from the late 20th and 21st centuries, continue to draw attention to gender disparities in entrepreneurship and the highly regarded work-family balance, but they still maintain that further research is necessary. They also concur that having an innovative spirit and digital abilities are essential for successful entrepreneurship.

Chipfunde et al. (2021) have observed that there is no doubt that there are more women becoming entrepreneurs around the world. In Malaysia, the effectiveness of female owned enterprises is drastically declining, leading to the closure of commercial endeavors. This study looked at the variables influencing Malaysian women entrepreneurs' performance in

entrepreneurship. The anticipated outcomes contributed to the validation of the correlation between personal traits, familial support, loan and financial accessibility, gender disparity, absence of mentorship, and the efficiency of female entrepreneurs. This research will help women entrepreneurs create platforms that will increase output, improve management skills, devise easy strategies to secure loans and funding, build solid relationships with their families, provide job opportunities, and progress Malaysia's economy.

Abdul Rahim et al. (2017) also emphasized that women have seized the opportunity to jointly establish a reputation in the field, and those who aspire to be successful must be able to show that they are serious and that they are prepared to take on obstacles and problems. They further noted that women entrepreneurs need to work hard, have a positive attitude, and be able to overcome obstacles to succeed. As a result, their conceptual paper will go over the factors that encourage women to start their new ventures, the difficulties and issues that these women confront, and recommendations for enhancing their potential and raising the rate at which women succeed in entrepreneurship.

Another study by Yahaya (2021) looked at how Kwara State's company management practices affected the success of female entrepreneurs. A quantitative research technique based on surveys was used to achieve the study's objectives. A standardized questionnaire consisting of 240 copies was provided to female entrepreneurs to gather data through self-administration. Utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistics, regression analysis was employed to examine the data. The quantitative conclusion demonstrates that innovation and creativity have little bearing on women entrepreneurs' desire to expand their businesses at $p=0.000 <0.005$ and $F=30.448$, DF =2,6 237. Nonetheless, the study discovered that the company management process had a major impact on the success of female entrepreneurs in Kwara State.

Yet another study on women entrepreneurs Sangeetha and Krishna (2013) aimed to investigate the views of Andhra Pradesh's female entrepreneurs on business success. The research specifically asked for their opinions on what success meant to women business owners, the significance of success factors for business success, the prerequisites for success in the fields of human resources, and finance, and the possible influence of women on the leadership styles of female entrepreneurs, as well as the areas in which training is essential for these entrepreneurs. For every response category on the questionnaire, the female entrepreneurs were asked to rate a series of statements using a five-point rating system. To analyze the results, the women entrepreneurs were divided into three groups according to their investment family structure and geographic origin. According to the analysis, the opinions expressed by women entrepreneurs across all categories are largely consistent, with the few differences in opinions being explained by the economic, social, and cultural backgrounds of the female business owners in question.

Effective Government Policies and Support Systems for Women and Youth SMMEs

The government policy framework offers a roadmap for implementing the legislation that will improve the performance of SMEs. Since the development of a robust government policy supporting the expansion of SMEs is essential to their growth, performance, and expansion, most nations' policies must take this into account. Legislation, regulations, and practices that support long-term women and youth entrepreneurial activity and promote socio-economic growth have been recommended by several studies, particularly in the last 20 years. For example, Rupali Jitendra Khaire (2011, as cited in Rudhumbu et al., 2020) advocated for the adoption of legislative measures that support women's empowerment as successful, creative business owners. Further, she noted that to encourage female entrepreneurs, she suggested creating policies, procedures, and arrangements that would lighten women's domestic workload as well as offering training

opportunities and financial support only to women. However, this section offers comprehensive information on how the researcher intends to test the suggested hypotheses as stated below.

H_4: Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurship education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation).

Khurana et al. (2022) advanced the subject by using structural equation modeling to analyze the causal linkages between sustainability capabilities at the organizational level. An analysis was conducted on the answers provided by 301 managers and owners of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses operating in a developing nation. However, they noted that the multifaceted combination of socio-economic and environmental performance indicators is attained through a more all-encompassing strategy, as advocated by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The conclusions reached show that government initiatives have a greater influence on technological resources and business growth. Collaboration capacity is significantly impacted by financial resources. Furthermore, it has become clear that one important factor influencing innovation that is focused on sustainability is capacity building.

Songling et al. (2018) argued that achieving a sustained competitive position and outstanding performance is crucial for organizations. However, they highlighted that small businesses frequently fail to fulfill their objective because of well-known factors like a lack of financing, management expertise, and resources. As a result, for them to compete in the market, they frequently search for less hazardous and convenient supplies. They pointed out that while many factors have been looked at regarding a company's performance and competitive position, from this angle, the significance of government assistance has not gotten much attention. In their study, they evaluated the impact of both financial and non-financial government support on a company's success, with the sustainable competitive position acting as a moderator. Analysis

Moment of Structure (AMOS) was used to test hypotheses using structural equation modeling on a dataset of 326 Pakistani small and medium-sized enterprises. The findings revealed that company performance and a sustainable competitive position are significantly impacted by financial and non-financial support from the government. Additionally, the relationship between government support and corporate performance is somewhat mediated by a persistent competitive position of the firm. However, they noted that it is crucial to review the literature to identify effective policies that work for women and youth groups.

Untari and Suharto (2020) also carried out research to examine the potential for tourism in Wonorejo, including opportunities for entrepreneurship for youth and women's organizations in Karang Taruna, as well as collaborations to promote rural tourism involving the public, business sectors, and the university. The study used a qualitative method and was a case study. Village authorities and heads, young people, women leaders, and business owners were among the informants. Focus groups interviews documentation, and observation, were among the data collection techniques. The information was examined using a domain analysis model that included pattern-matching. The hamlet has some potential for religious, historical, natural, and cultural tourism, the universities and village governments created agreements through Memorandums of Understanding, and private sector operations were carried out without formal contracts, according to the results. Universities served as initiators, facilitators, investors, and mediators through the collaboration, while the village administration assumed the responsibilities of regulators, facilitators, and investors; the private sector took on the role of facilitators and marketers; and youth and women developed entrepreneurial opportunities, including the creation of souvenirs, culinary experiences, out-of-town activities, and educational tours. Moreover, incorporating village tourism into the village development plan program was the responsibility of the local

authority. Consequently, it is recommended that governments, academic institutions, and the private sector work together to foster entrepreneurship in rural areas of developing countries.

Programs/Policies Supporting SMMEs

An interesting article by Rahman et al. (2015) reported that researchers find it interesting that large private organizations (LPOs) are giving those at the base of the economic pyramid (BoP) possibilities to start their businesses. They noted that their article aimed to investigate, using entrepreneurial competencies, the influence of the LPO initiative on the entrepreneurship business success of the BoP segment. This study employed a quantitative research methodology. Using a standardized survey instrument, information was gathered from 134 BoP entrepreneurs in Bangladesh as a sample. To analyze the data statistically, a partial least square has been used. They found out that the BoP entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial capabilities expanded because of the technical and training help from LPOs. Furthermore, if training and technical assistance are provided, a company's ability to succeed is mediated by its entrepreneurial spirit, which also fuels the expansion of BoP entrepreneurship.

Small and medium-sized businesses in Vietnam have been particularly affected by the Covid-19 epidemic since 2020. Tam (2023) argued that to combat the global epidemic, some firms have exhausted their cash reserves and even crippled them. The government swiftly enacted several fiscal and monetary policies to combat the outbreak. Therefore, examining the many factors impacting the expansion of SMEs in Vietnam was the article's main objective. Survey data from 550 managers for the SMEs were analyzed by research using structural equation modeling using Amos SPSS 20.0 software. The study found five factors impacting the growth of small and medium-sized firms at a significant level of 0.01; five of the hypotheses were verified. In this

article, what was innovative was identifying the financial aid policy component that most affects small and medium-sized firm growth.

Another study by Musabayana et al. (2022) noted that the Zimbabwean government developed good policies that were thoughtfully designed to boost SMEs' performance, but their communication, implementation, and support faced major obstacles, which significantly limited their impact. The study determined the degree to which government measures in Zimbabwe were effective in limiting the performance of SMEs. The sequential exploratory approach was used in the study's mixed research technique. The government was able to educate the top group, based on the study's conclusions. Every expert in the SME sector was informed of its plans by its officials, who are well-versed in SME policies; nonetheless, the information did not reach the SME implementers. The results of the study led the researcher to the conclusion that the government's failure to inform implementers of its aims contributed to the underwhelming performance of Zimbabwean SMEs, which had a detrimental effect on the nation's economy.

Programs/Policies Supporting Women Entrepreneurs

Although the United States of America is the world leader in promoting women's business ownership and operation, little is known about how U.S. federal laws contribute to these objectives. To address the research question, "How do U.S. federal policies support women's business ownership and women's entrepreneurship?" this study looked at six decades (1951–2011) of federal statutes in the country. Federal legislation and resolutions are analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively as part of the study approach. According to the quantitative study, the USA started to show more interest in this area of policy in 1988 when the Women's Business Ownership Act was passed. What started in 1988 as a policy trial eventually became institutionalized (Pandey & Amezcua, 2020). According to their qualitative study, not much has

changed since 1988 in terms of the overall goals and intended consequences of policy. Considering this depressing discovery, they address significant ramifications and prospective study topics to spur a more thorough investigation into how the government may assist women entrepreneurs and business owners. However, the current study also seeks to get better and informed answers to the question.

According to OECD/SWAC (2019) the contribution of women to West Africa's food economy is substantial. They actively engage in the production, processing, and selling of agricultural goods from Dakar to N'Djamena. In addition, West African women carry on a long-standing trade history that aids in the integration of the area. However, several barriers prevent women from participating in commerce in these essential activities for the expansion of the West African economy. This contemplation situates the problem within the framework of a significant shift in urbanization. The population of West Africa is anticipated to quadruple in the next 25 years, with metropolitan regions expected to see majority of this expansion. Significant social and economic transformations brought about by this development will open new avenues for women's empowerment. Due to changes in food consumption patterns brought about by urbanization, there is an increasing demand for processed agricultural goods that rely on the work and efforts from women.

Bender (2000) argued that the current decade has come to represent the age of female entrepreneurs. According to her, these women now demand attention not because they are unique but rather because they are significant. They are no longer seen as followers but as leaders, and they are seen as innovators across the board in business and commerce rather than just in a particular sector. This pattern is most noticeable in the United States, where women are launching enterprises at a quicker rate than in other nations. By 2002, it is anticipated that the percentage of

these enterprises would reach 50%. Currently, one in four American workers is employed by about 8 million women-owned enterprises, which also generate over S2 trillion in economic output yearly. However, this demonstrates that the number of female entrepreneurs is growing quickly, which has made it crucial to research this group to pinpoint their shared traits.

According to her studies on female business owners, without males in the room, we cannot make changes, Kamberidou (2020) inquired about steps being taken to support female entrepreneurship, with a focus on the ways that information and communication technologies (ICTs) can encourage and facilitate change. In addition to providing advice from successful women entrepreneurs on how to use new technologies, social media in particular, to succeed in their businesses and manage their personal and professional lives, the paper looked at conversations and research on female entrepreneurship. Consequently, the first part of this article looks at the latest research on the new work patterns, engagement levels, and transformative leadership styles of social women. Women offer material in a variety of ways, and many, including stay-at-home parents and homemakers, have found financial success by working online. An increasing number of women are acting naturally and utilizing their supposed inherent talents, which include listening, sharing, forming connections, and fostering a collaborative atmosphere.

Although the study was conducted within a particular framework of COVID-19 in Bangladesh by Jaim (2020) the feminist study offered fresh perspectives and examined how women's experiences managing small businesses in a patriarchal developing nation reflect gender-specific challenges. based on discussions with female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. However, this study demonstrated the varied gendered experiences of female employees in the private and public sectors in carrying on with their commercial activities throughout the epidemic. Additionally, it exposes patriarchal attitudes about women's decisions to halt or cease business endeavors because

of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the research significantly increases knowledge of how gender affects women's decisions to start, stop, or even close their enterprises during a pandemic in a highly patriarchal developing country. Additionally, it provides significant recommendations for policy practitioners to assist female entrepreneurs in patriarchal developing countries amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another research by Iakovleva et al. (2013) examined women-owned businesses in Russia and Ukraine, two post-Soviet nations. With institutional theory, the study was intended to examine the financial resources available and the entrepreneurial climate, with a specific emphasis on women entrepreneurs and government assistance initiatives. In this qualitative study, bank employees, and 60 entrepreneurs from Russia and Ukraine, including representatives of government agencies that support entrepreneurship were interviewed. However, the study presented a large variety of management and empirical data on the evolution of female entrepreneurship in modern Russia and Ukraine. Despite a few reasons for the alleged barriers to getting help and the underfunding of existing resources by the business owners of the two nations, findings indicated that these nations have effectively transitioned from planned to market economies, and the local populace is progressively acclimating to the new circumstances. The data provided information about the infrastructure and financial assistance that rising economies in particular give to growing companies, as well as the distinctions between the two nations.

Lee et al. (2011) carried out a study of a similar nature to ascertain the efficacy of government assistance for Korean women entrepreneurs operating small and medium-sized businesses. The research looked at several additional aspects, such as personal aptitude, family life, social networks, and business settings, as well as the link between women entrepreneurs' happiness and government aid programs and processes. The empirical results show that increasing

the degree of satisfaction among female entrepreneurs is mostly a function of the government assistance process. Nonetheless, they noted that the existing state of government assistance was comparatively inadequate and required enhancement. Remarkably, the government support program had the least impact on Korean women entrepreneurs' satisfaction. For example, women business owners were insensitive to the present support system, program, and gender-sensitive policies in place in Korea.

When researching about similar factors that led women to launch their own companies and the satisfaction levels of female entrepreneurs, McAtavey (2002) analyzed 94 respondents' replies to the survey from Florida-based female business owners. The sample means between the independent variables and the demographics were compared using ANOVA. Women start their businesses for a variety of reasons, including aligning with their principles, finding their passion again, taking charge, growing personally, achieving a lifelong ambition, and striking a balance between family and friends. Additionally, regression analyses were performed, revealing that 41% of changes in the dependent variable, recovering enthusiasm, is attributable to taking responsibility, achieving a lifelong goal, and juggling work and family obligations. Third, the variation of the dependent variable flexibility is accounted for by being in charge, maintaining a healthy balance between work and home, client satisfaction, effective and knowledgeable personnel management, and the satisfaction level of the owner. The findings indicate that women would rather be free to choose their hours and could launch their enterprises to manage work and family obligations.

Nziku and Henry (2020) argued that though women's entrepreneurship as a topic continues to gain scholarly interest, less scholarly attention has been paid to the policy element of the topic, particularly in developing nations. Their study sought to fill this scholarly vacuum by critically

examining Tanzanian policies on women entrepreneurs. What gender bias exists in Tanzanian legislation meant to support and encourage entrepreneurship, and how may they be changed to better support female entrepreneurs operating in Tanzanian contexts? They stated that the study they conducted builds upon the Global Women's Enterprise Policy project. Using a modified reading guide technique, the writers examine and assess relevant policy papers on entrepreneurship in Tanzania. The reading guide looks at the document type and category, important topics, language, images, and substance. Additionally, it examined the main policy recommendations and how they apply to Tanzanian women entrepreneurs as well as those operating throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Once the reading guide templates are created, they are completed and assembled into an Excel file. The outcomes are scrutinized and assessed in the context of the normative, cultural-cognitive, and regulative frameworks. They pointed out that their research expands upon the Global Women's Enterprise Policy initiative. The writers analyze and evaluate pertinent Tanzanian entrepreneurship policy papers using a modified reading guide approach. The reading guide looks at the document type and category, important topics, language, images, and substance. Alongside this, it examined the main policy recommendations and how they apply to women entrepreneurs in Tanzania and throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Once the reading guide templates were coded, they were assembled into an Excel spreadsheet. The normative, cultural-cognitive, and regulative frameworks were used to assess the results, and each framework was used to examine and critique the data. The authors made the case that laws intended to encourage women to start their enterprises should be formalized and placed within the unique geographic and cultural context of each country. They can identify certain areas where the contextualization of policies regarding women's entrepreneurship needs to be enhanced by using the idea of institutional pillars.

In Tunisia, Drine and Grach (2012) a pertinent topic was whether governmental assistance for female entrepreneurs should be tailored differently. The article examined how men and women perceive conventional government financing, information, and training programs for entrepreneurship to offer an answer to this question and to help shape policymakers' efforts to encourage women entrepreneurs. The subject of discussion was Tunisia, a growing nation with a high rate of unemployment, especially among women. Based on a study of fifty male and fifty women business owners in the Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax areas, their findings implied that the support services currently in place were insufficient to encourage female entrepreneurship.

Notably, Beriso (2021) evaluated the factors that influence and the obstacles that face Ethiopian women entrepreneurs who want to succeed financially. Of the 2450 responders, 698 sample women entrepreneurs were chosen at random for the research. Several linear regression models and descriptive statistics were used by the author to examine the data. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that the income of female entrepreneurs was positively predicted by the following variables: the level of education of the parents, business experiences, access to raw materials, and family size, in the following regions: SNNP, Gambella, Harari, Dire Dawa, and Addis Ababa. Additionally, the number of individuals who depend on their parents financially. Furthermore, research revealed a negative correlation between the income of female entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial location (Afar, Amhara, and Oromiya), marital status, entrepreneurship training, business license, and lack of supportive institutions. Therefore, the author noted that the key to reducing the variables impacting the level of income of female business owners was to improve the education of entrepreneurs and their parents, provide entrepreneurship training, share business experiences, and encourage entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it is recommended that the state of women's business involvement be evaluated regularly to keep an eye on the situation and take

the necessary action to prevent and battle the obstacles that face female entrepreneurs in the pursuit of economic progress.

In the article by Ojo (2021) the author looked at how governance and institutional responsibilities affected financial inclusion in South Africa, which also reports on research on the country's view and alignment with financial inclusion for women. Consequently, the government's efforts to establish financial inclusion in the nation are amply demonstrated. However, scholars have overlooked the significance of how institutions and governance support women's access to financing. Using coded data from recent research on thirty female entrepreneurs, five prominent lawmakers on women's training and development, and five financial institution regulators on women's financial inclusion were all part of the study's approach. More effort must be made to guarantee that all South Africans have fair access to financial services since the findings hint at a lack of institutional quality and governance surrounding women's financial inclusion. Moreover, the author recommended policymakers support financial literacy, monitoring and assessment, gender-mainstreaming methods and working policies, and a transparent legislative framework on financial policies about women. This line of reasoning is also supported by Pardo-del-Val (2010), who adds that programs designed to support female entrepreneurs should put an emphasis on long-term plans as opposed to immediate actions, and should prioritize strengthening pull motivators.

In Botswana, the Youth Development Fund was established by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture to give young people long-term job options by developing sustainable enterprises. The study by Paya (2021) aimed to ascertain the experiences and sustainability of the companies of female fashion entrepreneurs in Botswana through an investigation of the obstacles they face as part of the Youth Development Fund initiative. In the study, qualitative research methodology and a phenomenological approach were used. The intended audience consisted of

Kgatleng, Kweneng, and South East district women fashion businesses who satisfied certain selection requirements. Eleven (11) people made up the sample: one YDF representative and 10 carefully chosen fashion businesses who profited from the YDF project. To gather information, comprehensive semi-structured interviews and observations were employed. The principal data source came from the in-depth interviews, which followed a semi-structured schedule with questions and probes. Additional observations were made to augment the information from the interviews. The data in the research were analyzed utilizing the interpretive method after being subjected to thematic analysis. The findings demonstrate that the YDF project's female fashion entrepreneurs deal with a variety of difficulties in operating their companies. These difficulties include an excessive number of strict requirements when submitting a funding application, an inadequate amount of funding, cash flow issues, a lack of raw materials, a lack of retail space, inadequate fashion marketing events, a lack of venture capital investment or collateral, fierce competition from imports, and a lack of mentorship and incubator programs. For example, to attempt and tackle these issues, the government, stakeholders, researchers, and the female entrepreneurs themselves should collaborate. Among the initiatives to address these issues should be the establishment of a fashion council, a mentorship program, an incubator program, and an academic alumni network.

Programs/Initiatives Supporting Youth Entrepreneurs

Ayamga et al. (2023) conducted a qualitative case study to shed light on how a community of practice is formed and how it is made up of young businesses using digitalization to engage in agriculture. Thus, they investigated Africa Goes Digital (AFGD), a group of up-and-coming African businesses that offer services to farmers across the continent by utilizing digital tools and technology. The findings demonstrated that: AFGD was formed as a result of the Technical Centre

for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) taking the lead as a development agency in helping drone-based businesses and providing training for farmers; two recurring themes were observed in the services provided by AFGD members; and AFGD unites its members on a single platform where they use Twitter to share success stories and collaborate on particular development initiatives in collaboration with governments and organizations, as well as WhatsApp for communication and knowledge exchange. Finally, the high costs of sensors and accompanying drones provided hurdles for the members, as do the absence of rules or tight controls on the use of drones, which continue to be issues for some of the members. Building on the findings, they addressed how digitalization may help African countries achieve sustainability objectives.

According to the International Trade Centre (2019) Guinea's population is among the youngest in the world with almost 75% of its citizens under 35 and a median age of 19. The nation's top goals are increasing young possibilities domestically, expanding resources, and lowering irregular migration. The Support program for the socio-economic integration of the Guinean youth (INTEGRA) was introduced by the governments of the Republic of Guinea and the European Union in response to such problems. INTEGRA, funded for four years under the European Union's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, aimed to address the economic reasons of irregular migration by fostering localized entrepreneurship and job creation and offering development prospects. Guinea, like many other African nations, is dealing with a high percentage of young unemployment, a situation made worse by the country's youthful population. Because of the formal private sector's declining influence and the public sector's job scarcity, self-employment and entrepreneurship would be a suitable way to address youth unemployment.

Hinnant (2001) argued that community psychology and public health practitioners and scholars have shown a special interest in the idea of empowerment in recent years. Despite the

growing interest in empowerment, not much research has been done to define and comprehend empowerment, particularly about young people. To further the field's efforts to create and assess youth empowerment programs, this research aimed to better understand how youth feel empowered and the contextual factors that support this process. The study also sought to ascertain how community involvement in local tobacco control programs affects the process of empowerment. After identifying differences between these groups, the researcher concluded that engagement level did affect the process of youth empowerment. Research revealed that kids with high levels of involvement had more information about tobacco when they get engaged, join for personal reasons, for example, they felt that they were making a difference for others, and utilized their knowledge to improve their public speaking skills. In addition, these young people seem more confident and eloquent when talking about tobacco concerns and their place in these organizations, in contrast to low-involved adolescents who often find it harder to talk about this topic and prefer to regurgitate information that has already been shared with them, such as facts and statistics.

Izzrech et al. (2013) researched to determine if the business endeavors of young Algerians are information-driven using both theoretical framework and empirical investigation. However, they noted that several programs exist to assist them in starting their businesses. One such initiative is the Agence Nationale de Soutien à l'Emploi de Jeune (Agency for Supporting Youth Employment), which offers young people both technical and financial support in starting their businesses. Noticeably, it is well acknowledged that, in the twenty-first century, an entrepreneur must possess both knowledge and talent to use their business to further economic progress, particularly in information-based economies. Around the world, a lot of young people these days prefer to start their businesses.

Ogamba (2019) utilized the corpus of research on crucial youth empowerment utilizing participatory development theories as well as the UNDP Youth Strategy entry points for boosting youth economic empowerment. The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (You Win) program was critically analyzed in this article to determine its suitability as a program for youth economic development and empowerment. Although You Win is a noteworthy intervention aimed at fostering entrepreneurship, there are several shortcomings and restrictions in its design and execution that might potentially jeopardize the progress of sustainable economic growth. Consequently, it is critical to examine the millennial empowering paradigm in the context of three essential, useful, complementary methods meant to encourage youthful entrepreneurship. The development, execution, and evaluation of youth entrepreneurship policies and initiatives for multilateral agencies, the commercial sector, and other organizations are also crucial. However, the nonprofit sector is proposed to be approached from three main complimentary action-oriented angles in this study.

Another study in Nigeria by Chidiebere et al. (2014) focused on examining how much entrepreneurship has contributed to the decline in young unemployment in Nigeria. It also discusses the government's commitment to end unemployment as well as the obstacles and opportunities facing industry. The study discovered that the transformation question has been impacted by government activities and policies. This is brought on by a rise in corruption, poor and ineffective infrastructure, and poor management. The paper concluded that entrepreneurship is a driving force behind job creation, innovation, and diversity. Additionally, it states that before Nigerian entrepreneurs can make a major economic influence on their country, they still have a way to go. Considering this, the government or politicians ought to sincerely recognize the value

of entrepreneurship to economic growth by establishing safe, supportive spaces where youth may work toward this goal and by allocating enough infrastructure.

In Nepal, Dangol et al. (2022) analyzed the challenges facing social enterprises (SEs). The research was qualitative and made use of case studies, expert and social entrepreneur interviews, and open-ended surveys. Instead of focusing on making money, Nepalese social companies provide value for society and are motivated by social reasons. Their main goal is to have a beneficial societal influence. Lack of laws and other regulations leads to misunderstandings, which makes it difficult to maintain social enterprises. The lack of finance policies, business support services, and specific legislation promoting social businesses are among the obstacles to the long-term viability and expansion of social companies in Nepal. Encouraging social entrepreneurs in Nepal will require comprehensive government policies and accompanying legislation.

On another note, Malete et al. (2022) reported that sport-based life skills programs provide effective means of gaining insight into how exercise and sports affect young people's psychosocial and other developmental outcomes. This is due to data demonstrating the advantages of sports programs for young people's health and well-being, as well as, more recently, for other domains including academic success and a range of life skills, including leadership, teamwork, and goal-setting. Unfortunately, a significant number of studies in this field of childhood development are descriptive, making the process of determining causality challenging or applying the findings to different circumstances. In this study, students from three African nations (n = 146; average age = 15.9 years; 48.6% female) will have their entrepreneurial mindset and life skills evaluated about the effects of a sport-based intervention program. An intervention program for life skills lasting three weeks was allocated to half of the recruited participants, while the other half were placed in a control group that focused solely on sports. A demographic information questionnaire, the

General Enterprising Tendency v2 test, and the Life Skills for Sport Scale were completed by both groups. Significant changes in life skills following the intervention were shown by two-way mixed ANOVAs for both groups, but only for the intervention group's entrepreneurial attitudes. This emphasizes how youth sports can change lives, as evidenced by past studies, and how sport-based therapies may benefit juvenile development results in a variety of settings. The results have significant implications for the deliberate and focused implementation of programs designed to improve certain outcomes related to youth development.

Mkandawire et al. (2023) examined the key elements affecting young employment in Malawi's peri-urban and urban agriculture. They adopted mixed-methods paradigm where they combined quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The Fourth Integrated Household Survey, which was conducted in 2016–2017, provided nationally representative survey data, which was analyzed using a quantitative approach using a Bivariate Logit Model and a Multinomial Logit Model. Key informant interviews and focus groups with significant agricultural stakeholders in the Lilongwe district yielded information that was analyzed using a thematic analysis qualitative approach. The qualitative study, which focused on a case study of young people involved in agriculture in cities and peri-urban areas, provided context and validation for the quantitative analysis. The results of the survey revealed that most young individuals in Malawi's urban and peri urban areas who work in agriculture do it alone on what is known as family farms, or any other. In addition, within the field of agribusiness, women outnumber males, a trend that has its roots in history. The study's policy recommendation was that a variety of issues should be considered when young people participate in agribusiness programs. If funding is scarce, these programs should make sure that they provide youth with capacity-building opportunities, such as extension services and hands-on agribusiness training.

In South Africa, Odongo and Kyei (2018) suggested government-implementable strategies to encourage young entrepreneurship. When writing the article, they noted that South African youth still have low levels of engagement in economic activities, even despite the implementation of complex institutional and legal frameworks designed to encourage young entrepreneurship. The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution emphasizes everyone's right, including youth, to take part in the development of their nation. The National Youth Policy (2015–2020) seeks to establish a favorable atmosphere that empowers youth to realize their greatest potential. To address youth unemployment, the National Development Plan and Vision 2030 offer several recommendations for skill development, entrepreneurial training, and opportunity providing. This will enable the youth to successfully aid in the advancement of their communities. The percentage of youth-owned and -managed businesses that contributed to the GDP in 2013 was still a pitiful 5%, even after these and other well-intended efforts. With a total early-stage entrepreneurial activity rate of just 5.9%, it is among the lowest in both the globe and sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa was placed 35th out of 54 nations under global entrepreneurship monitoring in 2009. Only 37.9% of South Africans believed they had the skills necessary to launch their own company, and only 35% could identify business possibilities in and around their areas. The interventions suggested in this paper were divided into the following categories: creating and fostering entrepreneurial behaviors; supporting systems, structures, and cooperative partnerships; and appropriate and responsive entrepreneurship education.

Jongman (2020) examined how social workers might help Botswana's youngsters engage in business. Among the goals of the research were to contextualize social work in Botswana, analyze theories of positive youth development within a paradigm of social development while considering local and global perspectives, and synthesize entrepreneurship theories based on

positive youth development theories within the framework of social work in Botswana. Additionally, they investigated how social work can support youth development in related programs in Botswana. 21 social workers were interviewed for this exploratory and descriptive study, which was ontologically grounded in the interpretivism paradigm and concentrated on understanding the narratives, dialogues, and meaning, using a purposive sample section of the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture. The subsequent empirical investigation looked at social workers' accounts of their experiences encouraging young people to start their businesses in Botswana. Social workers believed that the ministry was focusing more on enrolling people in programs rather than considering the level of service, skill, enthusiasm, or the setting in which the youngsters are located.

Undoubtedly, developing nations have witnessed a notable increase in unemployment rates, which mostly explains the decline in living standards and the widespread impacts of poverty. Literature from throughout the world demonstrates that entrepreneurship is becoming more widely recognized as a useful extra tactic and a substantial means of improving the livelihoods of young people and financial independence (Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018). Given that Botswana's youth unemployment rate is 20%, there is a strong argument for entrepreneurship to catalyze self-employment. Their study attempted to ascertain if entrepreneurial development in the setting of Botswana can alleviate young unemployment or if it is only idealistic in this respect. Several conclusions and suggestions were drawn from the study given here, one of them being that all educational levels' curricula must incorporate entrepreneurship classes, raising youth awareness of the significance, necessity, and need for entrepreneurship development, particularly in practical terms, and fostering an environment that supports entrepreneurship.

Okurut and Ama (2013) were motivated to employ both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the environmental factors influencing the performance of 590 women's and youth microenterprises in Botswana, which is a nationally representative sample. Additionally, the investigation evaluated the extent to which the microenterprises had expanded their activities by utilizing institutional loans from the government and programs aimed at increasing capacity. It appears from the data that women and young people who run successful microenterprises primarily operate in the commerce and services sectors. Small businesses owned by women and young people found it challenging to grow due to the government's inaccessibility of institutional credit and capacity-building initiatives such as the YDF, CEDA, and LEA. According to the study, a specific institution that is more realistically modeled after the establishment of a government microfinance organization that provides microentrepreneurs with loans and substitute collateral should be done to satisfy their credit demands. Due to easier access to institutional finance, this will enhance the environment for micro-enterprises to make investments.

Challenges faced by women and youth business owners

Challenges

Tiasakul et al. (2024) argued that entrepreneurship training is a common starting point for entrepreneurial endeavours. However, people with disabilities (PWDs) are still frequently unable to attend these trainings, which means that their economic potential is still unrealized. This thorough assessment of the literature looks at the obstacles to PWDs' access to entrepreneurship courses and suggests solutions. Scopus, JSTOR, ProQuest, DOAJ, and Google Scholar were the five databases used in the review and adhered to the PRISMA 2020 Statement's systematic approach. After identifying, screening, and evaluating 2140 publications spanning a decade, 17

were chosen and summarized to provide context for the findings. The primary findings highlight several challenges, including restricted access to high-quality education, challenges in personalizing entrepreneurial programs, financial barriers, issues with digital and physical access, and the influence of social standards and self-perception. Additionally, they suggested strategies for increasing inclusivity in entrepreneurship education, such as applying universal design principles, adjusting instruction to meet the requirements of each student, moving toward active learner-centred approaches, utilizing technology, and creating encouraging communities. Organizations, people, and institutions striving to broaden the variety of entrepreneurship training programs might utilize this assessment which they view as a helpful tool. Along with offering a theoretical foundation for the previously recognized needs of PWDs in terms of entrepreneurship training, it also highlighted further prospects by pointing out existing constraints and recommendations for further study.

Dyantyi-Gwanya (2024) investigated how entrepreneurship education affects SMME sustainability. The study employed a qualitative thematic review methodology. The thematic analysis produced the following themes: SMME sustainability, financial stability, company reputation, and entrepreneurship education competencies. The author noted that most Small, Medium, and Macro Enterprises (SMMEs) have trouble staying in business for longer than five years because of poor management, ill-conceived business plans, and restricted access to funding. Often disregarded, proper records administration is essential to creating a profile that regulatory laws and financial institutions will recognize. Another factor is that people lacking entrepreneurial skills are more likely to run smaller businesses. However, entrepreneurial education imparts skills in originality, flexibility, and long-term business recovery. Enhancing commercial relationships, cutting operational expenses, raising competitiveness, and expanding access to financial services

are all made possible by entrepreneurial education competencies and technological adoption. The study suggested investing in human capital to guarantee a return on investment for sponsors, income for the company owner, innovative answers to social problems, and a diverse, multi-talented entrepreneurial community.

Nhleko et al. (2023) pinpointed obstacles hindering the expansion of women-owned businesses in rural South Africa. The study used a quantitative research methodology to collect data. The study concentrated on 250 female business owners in the villages of Hluhluwe, Ulundi, and Eshowe in northern KZN. According to the survey, the biggest barriers to the expansion of women-owned businesses in rural areas were a lack of infrastructure, low levels of education, and financial constraints. Overcoming these barriers, however, might empower women entrepreneurs and promote the growth of rural economies, alleviate poverty and raising rural communities' standards of living. Based on these results, the study suggested several actions to aid in accelerating growth of women-owned businesses in rural areas, including targeted education and training initiatives, alternative financing models, and infrastructure development. Future studies ought to investigate other problems like social and cultural barriers, information and market accessibility challenges, and laws and regulatory constraints that hinder women-owned enterprises from establishing themselves in rural areas.

Agrawal et al. (2023) asserted that sustainable development in South Asian nations depends on advancing women's economic empowerment and participation. Studies have revealed that major challenges faced by South Asian women entrepreneurs include lack of formal education, knowledge about entrepreneurship, capital, skilled and trained labour, expertise in leadership, collaboration, infrastructure support, fear of failure, discrimination based on gender, and a heavy workload. The research intended to create a hierarchical framework of crucial issues for removing

obstacles to increase women's entrepreneurship in South Asian nations and evaluate the contextual relationships between a few significant concerns. Thirty-one female entrepreneurs from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and India participated in the primary study, which used interpretive structural modelling. According to the report, multiple actions are needed to ensure that women have equal access to economic opportunities and may actively participate in and contribute to the region's economic progress.

Makena et al. (2014) examined the obstacles Kenyan women entrepreneurs face while trying to obtain business financing. The findings revealed that most educated women are free to pursue official employment; only the unfortunate minority who are not given an opportunity right away choose to launch a business while they wait for it to present itself. The second presumption is that most women, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds, struggle to obtain formal education, and even those who do only manage to earn a certificate above the O-level. The study also revealed that a lack of collateral is a significant obstacle to women entrepreneurs' ability to obtain financing, particularly from formal banks. This results from a lack of ownership of material assets, such as land, which are used as collateral for loans. Additionally, the study suggested that government line ministries and prospective financiers conduct civic education and publicity on the importance of empowering women to dispel the myth that small businesses cannot obtain substantial amounts of credit like larger companies. However, policymakers ought to prioritize entrepreneurship instruction in educational institutions. The establishment of business incubation facilities within the colleges, where students can hone their entrepreneurial talents prior to graduating, can make this more feasible.

Celestin and Vanitha (2018) examined the driving forces, obstacles, and tactics used by young entrepreneurs in 2018 to create significant companies, with a focus on the role of technology

and mission-driven objectives. Qualitative evidence from case studies, journals, and publications show that young entrepreneurs are motivated by three factors: social impact (30%), innovation (47%), and financial independence (55%). Research indicated that social media in particular increases business awareness, and entrepreneurs that use these technologies get an average 15% boost in sales. According to 62% of respondents, access to funding is still the biggest obstacle. Improving access to money, digital training, regulatory assistance, and ecosystem development were all suggested by the study, which concluded that technology use and entrepreneurial education are critical for success.

Ankita et al. (2025) reported that the rise of female entrepreneurs has changed India's socioeconomic progress. More women are entering entrepreneurship in a variety of fields, including biotechnology, IT, healthcare, tourism, and more, due to increased understanding, instruction, and government assistance. Notwithstanding their increasing numbers, women entrepreneurs still have several obstacles, such as restricted financial resources, inadequate training, market limitations, sociocultural hurdles, and trouble juggling work and family obligations. Famous success stories like Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Indra Nooyi inspire young female entrepreneurs nationwide. The Indian government has launched several training efforts, financial aid programs, and empowerment projects to aid in their development. Moreover, to promote a more inclusive business ecosystem, recommendations such as focused training, loosened prerequisites, and enhanced marketing assistance are crucial. Given the circumstances, supporting female entrepreneurs is essential for attaining gender equality as well as for guaranteeing inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Their accomplishments stand for tenacity, creativity, and the untapped potential of half of the nation's talent pool.

Inkumsah (2024) stated that over the past few decades, women have become much more involved in business. Figures from 2023 show that 43% of all entrepreneurs are female, marking a significant shift in economic participation. The author emphasized that these women, who frequently link their businesses to social impact and community development, an important role in advancing global economic stability. Despite these advancements, most women in impoverished communities find it difficult to access essential services, which leads to discrimination and hostility against them. This issue draws attention to the persistent gender discrimination that still exists. Giving women economic autonomy promotes social justice and is a crucial element in the advancement of society. However, the study highlighted several issues and significant advancements in the fields of female entrepreneurship and gender equality. The results revealed that major obstacles preventing women-led enterprises from scaling include a lack of capital, small networks, and poor access to resources and expertise. Given that emerging nations struggle with male-dominated establishments and the need to establish an investment platform that supports them, the geographic disparity emphasizes the need for special solutions. On the other hand, industrialized countries frequently face difficulties with networking, managing domestic duties, and luring in the right investors. Notably, the female perspective on gender equality promotes equal opportunities for all people, regardless of gender, and is more concerned with variety and inclusivity than numerical parity. This study highlighted the need of empowering female entrepreneurs because of their abilities rather than outdated gender stereotypes.

One of the main barriers to Kenya's economic development remains businesses' inability to obtain adequate and affordable finance, despite attempts by several entities, including the government, businesses, and non-governmental organizations (Kabukuru & Afande, 2016). The study's specific goals were to ascertain how much women entrepreneurs' literacy levels in Nairobi

Central Business District, Kenya, impact their ability to obtain financing and how much the quantity of lending institutions influence women entrepreneurs' ability to obtain financing in Kenya, Nairobi Central Business District, to ascertain the degree to which interest rates levied by financial institutions impact women entrepreneurs' access to financing in the District; and to ascertain the degree to which collateral requirements by financial institutions impact women entrepreneurs' access to financing. The investigation was carried out using a descriptive survey. The study employed a sample size of 400 female entrepreneurs. Primary data was collected from managers and owners of women-owned beauty firms using a semi-structured questionnaire. Among the descriptive statistics utilized to analyse data pertaining to the objectives of the study were measures of central tendency, variability, and frequency. According to the authors, majority of the female entrepreneurs, had at least a postsecondary college degree as their highest academic achievement. The study discovered that the lack of collateral security has become a barrier to the capacity of young women entrepreneurs to get loans since they may not have deeds to capital assets to provide as security against the loans. Additionally, most young women entrepreneurs have had their loan applications denied because they were unable to provide collateral security. The study suggested that alternate methods to collateral security requirements be employed by emphasizing social capital instruments for securities, such as network connections and trust to enable underprivileged women to obtain credit. Additionally, it proposed that the government provide women entrepreneurs with focused and intentional training to promote an entrepreneurial culture and, consequently, job prospects. The government should also make sure that policies encourage the establishment of additional lending institutions.

In a study conducted in India, the paper investigated the following topics: why women start their own businesses; why women entrepreneurs in India are not growing as quickly as they should;

strategies for advancing and developing Indian women entrepreneurs; and a case study of woman entrepreneurs in Ludhiana. Koneru (2018) noted that due to deeply ingrained Indian culture, where men have historically dominated the sociological framework, educated Indian women must put forth a lot of effort to achieve equal position and rights. However, Indian women are praised for their achievements in their fields and stand out from the crowd despite all the social barriers. Indian women's lifestyles had to alter because of the social fabric of Indian society changing due to women's higher educational status and a variety of ambitions for better living. She has successfully defended herself against men in every aspect of life, but business remains the same. These female leaders are risk-takers, outspoken, and persuasive. Through endurance, hard effort, and diligence, they were able to survive and thrive in these competitive environments.

Ssekiziyivu et al. (2022) also examined the barriers to women's and youth entrepreneurship from the perspective of emerging nations. A sample of 571 carefully chosen women- and youth-owned enterprises that were registered with the Mbarara district served as the basis for the study's cross-sectional, quantitative research design. The analyses carried out were mostly descriptive due to the nature of the study. Convergent validity was examined using exploratory factor analysis. Government, education, finance, the market, and infrastructure constituted the main barriers to women's and youths' sustainable entrepreneurship. However, this implies that policymakers must enhance the educational system to promote individual initiative, innovation, and self-sufficiency. They must also establish ongoing mentorship programs, tax breaks, and subsidies to support women's and youth entrepreneurship. To achieve sustainability, entrepreneurs must also prioritize their stakeholders, be proactive and tenacious in resolving problems, and aggressively confront obstacles as they arise for the company. Notably, the conclusions of this study may only apply to

Mbarara, Uganda, as it was restricted to women- and youth-owned entrepreneurial businesses that are registered and functioning there.

In Zimbabwe, Nani (2011) conducted an inquiry to investigate the difficulties faced by urban Zimbabwean women business owners. This study combined a descriptive and quantitative research approach, and the sample was selected using a straightforward random sampling method. The sample included 580 registered female entrepreneurs from Zimbabwe's four largest cities, Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, and Masvingo, who worked in the Small and Medium Enterprises sector. Theoretical conclusions suggested that women have historically faced discrimination in the political, economic, social-cultural, legal, educational, and occupational spheres served as the impetus for the study. Gender studies experts claim that although women have achieved educational levels on par with males in recent decades, they have continued to work in low-paying occupations. Nonetheless, the difficulties experienced by women were comparable, with the exception that industrialized nations had made greater progress in enhancing the lives of women than did developing nations. According to theoretical research on Zimbabwe, women have traditionally been barred from active political and decision-making participation. Women were economically dependent on men, who were seen as the breadwinners, because they were not allowed to hold resources like land. events were organized based on gender in society and culture, with some events exclusively for males and others designated for women. The report also identified a few obstacles that female entrepreneurs still face in the marketplace. Lack of collateral is still a problem for women. Joining official business organizations is another obstacle faced by female entrepreneurs. Accessing government networks is also a challenge for women. Women now have an equal opportunity as males to receive company bids, per empirical data on the macroenvironment.

Opportunities

Bhamjee and Chishimba (2024) asserted that young people and women entrepreneurs are becoming more widely recognized as the drivers of innovation, productivity, economic expansion, and job creation. However, this is crucial in preserving global competitiveness and economic vibrancy. This has also expanded knowledge on female entrepreneurship by examining the factors influencing the performance of young female entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized firms in Lusaka, Zambia. The study's explanatory mixed methods design employed structured interviews and purposeful sampling to collect data. According to the research findings, 72% of female entrepreneurs have regularly complied with their tax. and levy duties to the local authority, demonstrating a respectable pattern of adherence to standards. According to the report, social media sites like Facebook are the primary marketing channel used by most female entrepreneurs. The study demonstrated the complex difficulties faced by young female entrepreneurs as they attempt to reconcile their personal and family responsibilities with the demands of their businesses. Kah et al. (2022) analysed the market prospects, obstacles to company growth, and reasons for starting a business using data from semi structured interviews with twenty entrepreneurs in The Gambia. The authors contributed to the present literature by providing critical insights into the contextual and individual drivers of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, they revealed dynamic market factors that impact business growth in developing nations. They found features of personal and contextual entrepreneurship incentives. Nonetheless, people are motivated by need, poverty, job development, first-hand knowledge, and experience. Likewise, they believe that entrepreneurship is influenced by religious, ethnic, and opportunity recognition standards. Remarkably, three types of opportunities were found: competitive markets, entrepreneurial networks, and discovery. However, in addition to contextual constraints like political shifts, a lack of government reforms,

high taxes, high business expenses, and market volatility, entrepreneurs often confront personal obstacles including a lack of funding and inexperienced employees.

In a similar study, Brinda and Dileep (2011) examined the specific factors that inspire women entrepreneurs to start their business entities. They noted interesting fact that in rural and semi-urban areas, entrepreneurial endeavours are expanding economic opportunities for women as well as men. In relation to entrepreneurship and educational institutions, this study posits that identifying women's driving characteristics could help educational institutions customize their entrepreneurial programs to suitable method and pedagogy. Since the Madurai Region is home to numerous small and medium-sized businesses, SIDCO Industrial Estates was chosen as the study's location. The entrepreneurs who manage SIDCO Industrial Estate's small-scale industrial units were the respondents. A sample size of 144 small business owners has been selected from the 432 total population. Descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and the Kruskal Wallis test were used to examine the gathered data. The results of this study established the key elements that affect women entrepreneurs' motivation in small and medium-sized businesses and how these elements are closely related to entrepreneurial factors. The study also made recommendations for actions that educational institutions might do to encourage their faculty to support the nation's efforts at entrepreneurial development.

The article by Moore (2015) discussed the changing strategy of programs in sub-Saharan Africa funded by The MasterCard Foundation considering more extensive research and data. It implies that providing youth with access to business and employment possibilities, training in a variety of market-relevant skills, and suitable financial services can promote economic opportunities. It highlighted how crucial it is to acknowledge the value of mixed livelihoods in areas with a shortage of formal employment and to encourage young people to pursue careers in

agriculture and agribusiness as viable sources of income. It also emphasized that the commercial sector, government, civil society, and, most importantly, young people themselves must all meaningfully engage to effectively address the unemployment issue.

Chaker and Zouaoui (2022) used semi-structured interviews to examine how social media functions in the businesses of eight digital women entrepreneurs from Tunisia. From the study findings, they noted that even though there are a lot of digital women entrepreneurs worldwide, and that it is still unclear how social media may help them overcome the challenges during their entrepreneurship journey. They observed that Tunisia was an interesting study location since it is in the Middle East and North Africa and has a notable female presence in many spheres of life, particularly in business. However, despite social media platforms' high adoption rates, there are still few research conducted in this context on this effect, they noted. Based on the theoretical approach and data analysis, the results demonstrate that social media positively impacted women entrepreneurs' professional lives and assisted them in overcoming the challenges of entrepreneurship.

Makena et al. (2014) argued that to maintain the economy and raise living standards, youth entrepreneurship is vital, as evidenced by the rising unemployment rates in South Africa and other regions of the continent. However, the writer also noted that youth involvement in entrepreneurship is still low despite the unemployment scourge. The purpose of the study was to investigate how young people in South Africa perceive opportunities and problems related to entrepreneurship. The study implored exploratory design coupled with qualitative research methodology, with an emphasis on a cross-sectional data gathering method employing structured online interviews. The inquiry used a sample of twelve young South Africans. The results demonstrated that major cognitive obstacles resulting from historical injustices that have excluded many people from

economic involvement and from current systems that are less conducive to youth participation, also make it difficult for people to engage in entrepreneurial activity. To encourage start-up development and lower unemployment, the study suggested encouraging an entrepreneurial attitude that is centred on grasping opportunities and overcoming historical obstacles.

Hynes (1996) observed that entrepreneurs and the shift to self-employment are and will be a crucial component of economic development and expansion. The reality that Ireland's small companies are net creators of jobs while the large firms' sector is a net shedder of jobs is now acknowledged. However, the author noted that having the right infrastructure in place to support this growth is essential to ensuring that self-employment continues to rise steadily. Establishing an enterprise culture that will inspire and lure people to take calculated risk of launching a firm is a crucial component of this infrastructure. Moreover, exploring how education, one of the fundamental elements of an enterprise culture, might be incorporated into different educational programs to promote an interest in entrepreneurship. The author further emphasized the need to teach entrepreneurship and infuse entrepreneurship module in non-business courses to empower and instil the entrepreneurial spirit in learners. However, these students often come up with ideas but lack the business knowledge to take them further. The program that focuses on how an enterprise education process model can be used to target different student groups in an interdisciplinary manner.

Access to entrepreneurship education training

According to Raposo and do Paço (2011) the crucial role of entrepreneurship for a nation's economic development is now widely acknowledged. Relevant literature is suggesting that there are significant connections between entrepreneurial education and activity as well as between education, venture creation, and entrepreneurial performance. According to existing literature, the

rate of new business creation is the best metric to assess the outcomes of entrepreneurship education. Nevertheless, some research suggested that these programs do not always produce outcomes right away. Therefore, the authors contended that governments would face two challenges because of the benefits of entrepreneurship education, the growing demand for financial resources to support entrepreneurship education and the selection of the most appropriate educational program.

However, the idea of teaching entrepreneurship is frequently advocated to combat teenage unemployment. This essay contrasts macroeconomic and human capabilities frameworks, highlighting how much of the debate around entrepreneurship confuses initiatives meant to promote economic development through company and job creation with those meant to reduce poverty (De Jaeghere, 2014). The author gives a comprehensive explanation of how capabilities approach highlights the significance of addressing youth values and the social, material, and institutional conditions that mediate how youths' skills and resources are converted into livelihood opportunities and choices. Further, the approach uses the examples from the case of one NGO implementing a youth livelihood program in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mishra (2024) also noted that entrepreneurship education is essential for fostering economic growth and competitiveness by imparting the expertise and knowledge needed to come up with new and unique ideas for the success of businesses. Meeting educational needs can have a huge positive impact on entrepreneurial outcomes and promote overall economic development, especially in underprivileged groups of people. The author further noted that government rules and laws have a significant effect on how businesses operate, compete, and expand. Governments must constantly modify their laws to foster an atmosphere that is favourable to business and encourage the growth of entrepreneurship. The relationship between business performance and government

policies emphasizes how crucial it is to have a coordinated strategy to entrepreneurship support and economic policy. Strong legislative frameworks are necessary to encourage entrepreneurship and create a welcoming business climate. Notably, the dynamic interplay between company success and government actions emphasizes the necessity of constant policy coordination and adaptation to foster economic growth and entrepreneurial development.

Kirby (2002) discussed the traits and responsibilities of entrepreneurs in their research, along with the difficulties faced by business schools in producing more enterprising people. It makes the case that traditional educational system stifles rather than to fosters the qualities and abilities needed to create successful entrepreneurs. Moreover, the inquiry suggested that significant adjustments be made to the curriculum and teaching methodology to boost the competencies and expertise of entrepreneurs. It specifically implied that the focus of education needs to change from teaching about entrepreneurship to teaching for it. Additionally, it emphasized that entrepreneurship is more about creativity and change than it is about starting a new business or running a small company. It also emphasized the necessity for educational institutions to alter their teaching methods to help their students develop their innate entrepreneurial skills.

Bullough et al. (2015) wrote an article that offers guidelines to program directors conducting entrepreneurship education and training programs and academics studying women in business, leadership, entrepreneurship, and emerging countries can employ. Drawing from a comprehensive examination of the research on women's leadership and entrepreneurship regarding training and education for entrepreneurs, as well as their vast first-hand experience with such programs, the authors offer a framework for creating and executing successful programs for women. The framework offered the essential elements that must be considered to successfully accomplish a program's objectives: funding, contextual variables, human factors, and program

elements. The authors illustrated the framework's unique value by providing first-hand accounts of their work with female entrepreneurs from over 20 developing nations over the previous ten years, even though it may be used in entrepreneurship education and training programs generally.

Ladzani and van Vuuren (2002) contended that training is necessary and that there are certain shortcomings in current entrepreneurial education. These included the course material, training approaches, and characteristics of trainers and trainees of SME service providers in South Africa's Northern Province. Ther conclusion underlined how crucial a thorough entrepreneurship training program is for small business success. SME stakeholders are supplied with recommendations that may help sustain new small business operations. However, SMEs and stakeholders received suggestions that could support new small company ventures in the current study.

A study in India conducted by Zahari (2022) examined how easily available official and informal entrepreneurial education is for young adults and youth in India. Important trends and indicators are found in the study, highlighting the necessity of comprehensive and easily available entrepreneurial education. The study emphasized how urgently comprehensive entrepreneurship education that connects official and informal channels is needed. It tackles the over-reliance on formal education, which has prevented many graduates and students from having the skills needed to solve the high rate of youth unemployment. Although informal channels are important, young adults lack access to resources and high-quality education, which causes a skills gap. The results advocated for blended learning strategies that use technology improvements to combine formal and informal entrepreneurship education.

In Nigeria Akhuemonkhan et al. (2013) studied Nigerian entrepreneurship education and job creation as the subjects of their study. Despite the numerous poverty reductions polices (PRPs),

official statistics released by reputable organizations show that unemployment and poverty have remained widespread. Due to the failures of earlier PRPs, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the need that entrepreneurship education be taught in all three levels of Nigerian higher education curricula became the subject of intense interest. The authors used a methodical approach to gather quantitative data, which they then analysed using econometrics to draw well-informed findings. Based on the data that was gathered, examined, and interpreted, it was found that promoting entrepreneurship could be a helpful strategy for lowering poverty, increasing employment, accelerating the adoption of universal primary education, and promoting gender equality. The study suggested that educational institutions implement a training program for creativity. This inventiveness might assist the person in seeing issues from various angles. Institutions need to do more to incorporate entrepreneurship into their curricula.

Mayombe (2018) investigated the relationship between South African adult education and training (AET) programs for self-employment and the institutions and policies that promote the expansion of small and microenterprises. The issue that motivated this article is that even after finishing AET programs, adults who experience long-term unemployment continue to be unemployed. The findings demonstrated that relationships between AET programs and SME promotion policies and institutions are ineffective in providing post-training support for graduates' microbusinesses due to the centre managers' and trainers' inadequate knowledge of the policies and the corresponding custodian institutions, as well as their ignorance of the application processes. The author concluded that graduates would continue to struggle to integrate into the labour market if AET programs are not connected to SME promotion policies and self-employment institutions, which will prolong unemployment resulting in chronic poverty in South Africa.

Research by Ndedi (2013) investigated some of the interventions implemented by the South African government through its various agencies such as the Sector Education Training Authorities (SETA) to encourage youth entrepreneurship. The study employed two methods to gather data: first, a desk study was conducted on a few selected works in the field of entrepreneurial education and training. The second source of data came from empirical studies on how the several Sector Education Training Authorities supported the skill development of SMEs levy payers. Data from impact assessment studies was collected from the South African Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Trade and Industry which was collectively integrated with the information from SETAs. The research findings reported that there were no interdisciplinary approaches to entrepreneurial education that enable all students to access it and, when necessary, form teams for the creation and exploitation of commercial concepts. The fact that engineering and business students from diverse backgrounds are unrelated is another finding. Through carefully thought-out entrepreneurial development initiatives, the study had investigated the nature of youth entrepreneurial education development. Interestingly, a suitable plan was proposed for fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in training and focusing efforts on assisting the expansion of new businesses.

Chikari (2021) evaluated the efficiency of Entrepreneurship Education (EE) in Botswana's private institute of higher education and learning. The evaluation of EE's efficacy provided a framework for identifying solutions to problems and putting forward specific models for EE implementation in private institutions of higher education in Botswana. The investigation adopted the paradigm of positivism for its data collection. The research also utilised a quantitative methodology. The empirical study employed a survey design and collected data using a self-created questionnaire. 52 teachers from commercial colleges and universities and 249 students

who had been exposed to EE took part in the study. This study found that the objectives, content, implementation, and assessment of EE's curriculum had an impact on its efficacy. Additionally, the study found that private higher education institutions in Botswana lacked the material resources necessary to successfully implement EE. The recent study also found that Gaborone's entrepreneurial culture was inadequate, despite stakeholders' favourable opinions of EE. The study's conclusions also showed that tertiary institutions lacked a comprehensive EE policy for its successful deployment. The current study suggested that curriculum redesign, resource provision, and the creation of laws and rules requiring its implementation would all improve the way EE is implemented.

Impact of Entrepreneurship Training and Education on Innovation and SMME Competitiveness

Building capacity is a critical component of entrepreneurial growth since entrepreneurial skills are essential for business success. Most developing countries' educational and training institutions have consistently failed to give women and young people the necessary entrepreneurial capabilities they require to build their strong entrepreneurial qualities and attitudes. The research must look at alternative strategies that can improve women's and young people's capacity to run their enterprises successfully. However, the researcher has formulated these inquiries in the following research hypotheses:

H_1: Entrepreneurial Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities

H_3: Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial education programs and enterprise success.

Koape (2021) aimed to emphasize the significance of competency development and entrepreneurship education in cultivating entrepreneurial ability. The study also aimed to

determine if traditional classroom education or experience learning is superior to teaching entrepreneurship. Business performance and experiential learning have been related, but the entrepreneurial qualities that moderate that relationship have not been examined. Koape identified that there are four theories put out, all based on earlier research. These theories are evaluated using hierarchical regression analysis based on information gathered from 123 participants in a program for the growth of entrepreneurs. The results demonstrate that experiential learning does encourage the growth of entrepreneurial skills that boost company performance. The connection between experiential learning and company success was shown to be significantly influenced by entrepreneurial attributes including market knowledge, opportunity, network, and return on investment.

In another study by Mandengenda (2016) the aim was to determine how much entrepreneurship education influences the start-up and expansion of new businesses in Zimbabwe. Key components and ideas for the study were identified through a survey of the works written about training, education, entrepreneurship, and the transfer of abilities. It became clear that theories and concepts from various fields had been incorporated into entrepreneurial studies. Everyone agrees that numerous aspects of entrepreneurship are teachable. The realm of learning comprises knowledge, skill, competence, and attitude which are all included in a well-designed program by didactics, skill-building, and suggestive learning methodologies. It is crucial to keep in mind that among the many skills needed by entrepreneurs are technical, individual entrepreneurial aptitudes, and company management skills. Nonetheless, when launching a new company, competencies are required at every stage of entrepreneurial development process.

Studies that examined the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education for SMEs were conducted to examine the situation in Zimbabwe. The program examined entrepreneurs taught in

the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Empretec entrepreneurship programs are used extensively both abroad and in African countries like Zimbabwe. An analysis of four entrepreneurship models created in South Africa provided the basis for a framework to look at the ILO and Empretec activities implemented in Zimbabwe. The usefulness and effectiveness of the two long-running, internationally executed initiatives aimed at launching and expanding businesses, along with the suitability of entrepreneurship education programs for developing countries, especially in Africa, are the areas of recognized knowledge gaps. The study method was deductive, with a survey methodology and quantitative data to evaluate hypotheses. The theoretical viewpoint is positivism. Five components were found through factor analysis to be the key research results and study contributions: program methodology, entrepreneurial aptitude, business performance capabilities, and business planning and presentation abilities. These qualities or abilities are recognized as some of the core components of the four training approaches that have been examined and are deemed to be required features of successful entrepreneurship training programs. Furthermore, it was also determined that the firm's location and legal structure were significant demographic characteristics associated with entrepreneurship and business performance ability. Key business and entrepreneurial skills were to be covered in the core beginning training of the ILO and Empretec training programs in terms of design, content, and organization. However, both programs produced significant skills transfer and high rates of company start-up despite little business development. Policymakers, sponsors, and donors ought to encourage more comprehensive and integrated programs that at the very least reflect the skills and abilities that have been recognized as well as the relevant methodology.

The investigation conducted by Terstena et al. (2023) sought to identify the factors that influence the performance of SMEs. Research employed a qualitative methodology used a total of

52 survey questions. 336 managers and owners of SMEs were polled for the study between March and April of 2022. The empirical method known as Multinomial Logistic Regression (MLR) examined the impact of personnel inadequacies, prior experience, training attendance, business strategy, and education level on the performance of SMEs. Research has shown that the effectiveness of small and medium-sized businesses is positively impacted by the quality of training and consulting services. On the other hand, employees' lack of competency and training neglect negatively impact SMEs' performance. To improve management performance, the research advises managers and owners of SMEs to invest in their staff's professional development and to make use of professional training possibilities. From the standpoint of the contribution, it uses logistic regression analysis to provide the latest information on Kosovo's economic situation.

Napwanya and Chinyamurindi (2021) employed a sample of companies headquartered in Durban, South Africa to investigate the connection between the performance of the firm and informal sector entrepreneurship. The authors determined that investigating the entrepreneurial endeavours that benefited or hindered the informal sector was essential to its effective and efficient functioning. Enhancing the informal sector through evidence-based interventions that drive the firm performance agenda is possible through identifying the importance of components such as government incubation programs, entrepreneurial education and skill sets, funding availability, and entrepreneurial culture. The study gathered data from 152 informal sector enterprises in Durban, South Africa, using a quantitative survey research methodology. The respondents were accessed using a convenience sample approach. The data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23 for correlation and regression analysis. Based on the findings, a company's performance, both financially and non-financially, could be significantly predicted by implementing an entrepreneurial culture that included making

entrepreneurship skills and courses available. Moreover, the financial performance of a corporation was found to be predicted by government and incubator assistance. It was also determined, nevertheless, that incubation and government backing did not specifically improve non-financial performance.

Youth Entrepreneurship Education Programs

In recent years, community psychology and public health practitioners and scholars have shown a special interest in the idea of empowerment. Nevertheless, despite this growing interest, not much research has been done to define and comprehend empowerment, particularly concerning young people. To further the field's efforts to create and assess adolescent empowerment programs, this research aims to better understand how kids feel empowered and the contextual factors that support this process.

Hinnant (2001) observed that the conceptual framework for programs targeting youth empowerment initiatives, created by the Youth Empowerment Work Group of the American Legacy Foundation, served as the theoretical foundation for two studies that were carried out. Using a focus group technique, the first research investigated youths' experiences and attitudes of empowerment in tobacco prevention and control from a qualitative standpoint. Individual traits of young people before and after being involved were found using theme analysis, along with organizational traits that young people believe have aided in the empowering process. Finding out how community participation in local tobacco control initiatives affects the empowerment process is the second goal of this study. The study concluded that one's level of engagement does affect the process of youth empowerment after identifying differences between these categories. High-engaged kids were found to know more about tobacco when they got active, joined for personal reasons, felt they were making a difference for others, and used their knowledge to improve their

public speaking skills, among other areas. Additionally, these young people seem more fluent and self-assured when talking about tobacco concerns and their roles in these groups, whereas less active kids typically find it harder to talk about. Data from the field test of the first Legacy Youth Empowerment Survey were analysed in the second research that was undertaken. These analyses looked at the connection between an individual's degree of participation in community-based tobacco control initiatives and their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and abilities related to tobacco use. The findings of tests used to estimate an individual's level of engagement are not definitive due to sample size issues, which also restrict statistical power and group variability.

Ngwenya and Mashau (2019) reflected on the ongoing structural obstacles that Youth SMMEs face in gaining access to the entrepreneurial literacy, knowledge, and competencies that drive their businesses toward long-term profit maximization. Although it is the Department of Small Business Growth's responsibility to support the overall growth of SMMEs, there does not seem to have been much success in helping youth SMMEs participate in the mainstream economy. The authors firmly believe that competent youth SMMEs with the right knowledge, experience, and abilities can unquestionably maintain their organization's operations and favourably impact the nation's economic progress. SMMEs function in the economy focused on knowledge building, which is the main engine of sustainability, productivity, and innovation, as the Fourth Industrial Revolution gets underway. However, youth entities' knowledge of entrepreneurship is important since it may have a significant impact on their ability to absorb skills and expand competitively. Youth entities, on the other hand, need to get off to a head start in the entrepreneurial world, even though policymakers still lack result-driven institutional mechanisms for entrepreneurial literacy incentives. Knowledge of entrepreneurship among young entities is important since it may have a significant impact on how well such entities absorb skills and expand competitively. Policymakers

still lack result-driven institutional mechanisms for entrepreneurial literacy incentives, but youth entities need to get off to a head start in the entrepreneurial world.

In a study by Motha (2015) the main inquiry driving the study was how much assistance the government now provides for youth entrepreneurship initiatives that help young people launch their firms. This research addresses the requirements of a nurturing atmosphere for the younger generation to launch their enterprises. In this quantitative study, self-administered questionnaires served as the measuring instrument. 197 young people from Johannesburg's surrounding areas who visited the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) roadshow display make up the study sample. Reliability analyses, frequency distributions, cross-tabulation, factor analysis, and the Chi-square ($\mathcal{X}^2$) test were among the statistical studies performed. The study's primary conclusions showed that people believe entrepreneurial education and training, which equips them with the knowledge and abilities to launch and manage a business, to be more crucial for creating a supportive environment. Most of young people lack understanding about how to save, invest, and spend money, which further demonstrates the need for financial literacy in a supportive atmosphere. This study suggested that it's critical for students at all educational levels, from elementary to postsecondary, to learn about entrepreneurship and consider it as a career option. Furthermore, the study hypothesized that enforcing criteria that are essential in an entrepreneurial environment might raise the rate of early-stage entrepreneurship activity among teenagers in Johannesburg.

According to Sebeho (2020) within the business world, the act of starting a firm and assuming financial risks to make a profit is referred to as entrepreneurship. A small firm can become more lucrative and competitive by participating in one of the many youth’s entrepreneurship developments (YED) programs available. The entrepreneurship development

programs were designed to help people get ready and trained to start their own firms or become entrepreneurs. The knowledge and comprehension of YED development programs and efficient company management are enhanced by this study. Examining the difficulties posed by the YED programs, this research focuses on the township of Soweto. SME owners were interviewed, and 150 locally owned, for-profit SMEs in the Soweto region that had been operating for at least three years were included in the sample. The questionnaire was created to assist in the accomplishment of the study goals and offer precise data. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient and an analytical plan were used to confirm the measuring instruments' precision and consistency. Regression and correlation analysis were used to examine the relationship between the constructs (variables). To find out if there was statistical support for a meaningful difference in the related population means, an Anova regression was also performed to contrast two or more independent variables' means. The results of the YED programs demonstrated that a significant portion of Soweto's business owners were ignorant of opportunities for business expansion and entrepreneurship development. To hire additional people, many entrepreneurs are keen to engage and establish connections with development programs as well as with other SMEs. YED programs aim to educate and equip people with the skills necessary to think more independently, like employers or entrepreneurs. YED programs are intended to address the difficulties that come with being an entrepreneur. Youth development initiatives might encourage young people to pursue success in business as their lifelong goal.

Omeje et al. (2020) reported that the Nigerian government, in collaboration with the World Bank, nonprofit groups, and private benefactors, has been investing significant resources in entrepreneurial training and empowerment for young people. To diversify the economy and reduce dependency on government and oil revenue, more jobs must be created, poverty must be decreased,

and income must be generated for both the government and the people. This promotes development and economic prosperity. This study employed the multinomial logistic regression model and data from the 2014 Nigeria Enterprise Survey to empirically assess whether youth empowerment has significantly increased entrepreneurship and contributed to economic diversification in Nigeria, even though these programs constitute a positive start. Apart from the tax rates, transportation costs, and land accessibility, almost all the factors tested to measure the growth and improvement of entrepreneurship in Nigeria were statistically significant when comparing small-scale businesses with micro and mega businesses, as well as medium-sized enterprises with small-scale enterprises. Numerous recommendations were made, such as the necessity of increasing support for youth entrepreneurship education efforts from all levels of government and its agencies, the World Bank, charitable organizations, and even individual contributors. Following their empowerment, these entrepreneurs should get ongoing financial and non-financial support, as well as oversight of their business operations as part of the training.

According to Vageesha (2023) India's youth comprise one-fifth of the global population, and their empowerment is essential to the nation's future prosperity. The government must create specifically designed plans, and programs, as well as programs that optimize the potential of the younger generation if it is to grow into a $5 trillion US economy. One such program that seeks to empower young people by giving them the training and skills they need for the workforce is the Skill India Mission. However, there have been several issues with the scheme's execution, including poor industry engagement, low awareness, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified trainers. This study set out to determine if the Skill India Mission initiative was necessary, identify the challenges facing its implementation, and offer solutions. Regarding the research outcomes, the progress of India's economy and society depends on the Skill India Mission.

Moreover, the government may increase business engagement, raise awareness, and improve infrastructure to meet the obstacles associated with executing the system.

Boye et al. (2024) aimed to offer a thorough analysis of previous research on the beliefs and elements influencing young people's interest in agriculture. The project also intends to look at how the skill training intervention affects the engagement of youth in agriculture. Additionally, the study finds and examines the barriers to their participation. Following the PRISMA guidelines, 57 studies from throughout Sub-Saharan Africa were analysed. Extracted from several online resources, such as Science Direct, Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis Online, and Wiley Online Library, are studies published between 2012 and 2022. The review's conclusions show that many of African youths saw agriculture as a lucrative sector and a source of livelihood. Nonetheless, it was also noted that young people had differing perspectives about agribusiness. Access to capital, education, training in skills, social support perception, and previous agricultural experience were shown to be important factors affecting their decision to enter the agribusiness sector. Additionally, the study shows that youth involvement in agriculture is significantly impacted by skill training programs. Through skill enhancement, these interventions raise their income, productivity, and employment prospects. However, it was shown that the main barriers to youth involvement in agriculture were the lack of access to funding and other necessary resources, such land and extension assistance. Youth policies must place high priority on granting young people access to a range of resources, such as funding, education, skill development, land, extension assistance, social support, mentorship, and business sector engagement to promote youth involvement in the improvement of agri-food systems in Africa.

Adeyanju et al. (2023) evaluated the traits that motivate agribusiness owners to participate in programs that empower them and computed the causal effect of program involvement on

agribusiness competencies utilizing data from 1435 young agribusiness owners in Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda who were selected at random for a cross-sectional study. In particular, the study analysed data from the African Development Bank's Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) initiative, specifically from the youth component Empowering Novel Agribusiness-Led Employment (ENABLE). The program's influence on young people's agribusiness skills was evaluated, and variables that strongly influenced participation decisions were found using an endogenous switching model. Participation was significantly impacted by age, education, business level, prior experience as an agribusiness owner, place of residence, and evaluation of the training. Participants in the program scored higher than non-participants in all three nations, even though both groups had high agripreneurship skills ratings. According to the causal impact estimation of the switching regression model, engagement significantly and favourably affects one's capacity for agribusiness. This suggests that the higher scores attained by the participants may have been a result of their engagement with the ENABLE-TAAT program. These findings imply that youth agribusiness empowerment programs should be made more widely known and that kids should be encouraged to engage more actively. Furthermore, the outcome points to the necessity of putting policies into place that can alter youths' unfavourable opinions of agricultural interventions to boost involvement.

Yet another study in Kenya by Sambo (2016) aimed to research and document the variables influencing the growth of youth entrepreneurship with an emphasis on entrepreneurship training in the Kenyan area of Kibera. Two of the stated objectives are for the government to make entrepreneurial education and training available to young people in Kenya. The second goal was to determine whether the rise in young entrepreneurship and the quantity of education and training offered by the government are correlated. The project would involve the recruitment of three

hundred entrepreneurs, aged between 18 and 35, from the Kibera district of Kenya. The Kibera area business owners were surveyed using structured questionnaires to get primary data. Research showed that the growth of youth entrepreneurship is strongly positively correlated with the availability of entrepreneurship education, however, there is a strong negative correlation between educational attainment and the growth of young entrepreneurship.

King'ori (2012) examined the elements affecting the long-term viability of youth-led group entrepreneurship in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises founded by young people in the municipality of Nyeri. The author examined how independent and dependent variables are related to one another. A descriptive survey approach was employed, and 24 young entrepreneurs were chosen using a stratified selection technique to provide a sample size representative of 30% of the youth firms. Personnel from the projects that were sampled were also interviewed. The purpose of this study was to ascertain the impacts of marketing, technological proficiency, educational attainment, and individual characteristics on the long-term viability of youth group companies in Nyeri Town Municipality. Data collection methods included observation and interview schedules in addition to questionnaires with both closed- and open-ended questions. The results of this study have demonstrated how technical proficiency affects the youth group entrepreneurship sustainability. Over 50% of respondents said that using social media as a marketing and referral tool affects the viability of young group entrepreneurship. The study discovered that personal characteristics and educational attainment are important determinants of youth project entrepreneurship sustainability. The two independent factors that affected the sustainability of youth group entrepreneurship were the usage of technology skills and educational attainment. Both variables were statistically significant. The Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Youth Affairs

will gain from the study's conclusions as they will both recognize and enhance the elements that affect young entrepreneurs' sustainability.

Ojo et al. (2014) investigated entrepreneurial education as a useful instrument for empowering young people in Nigeria. Given the current issues facing the country, including high rates of poverty, instability, and unemployment, the study reported that entrepreneurship education is among the most effective strategies to enhance the youth with the requisite skills. The goals of entrepreneurship education include but are not limited to, giving people the tools and attitude they need to take the risk of trying something new using the information and abilities they have learned in the classroom. The study examined the functions of entrepreneurship education critically, including giving people the necessary skills to support their innovative and creative thinking concerning skill development, which promotes self-employment and independence. It examined many methods for learning entrepreneurial skills, such as industrial training exercises, workshops and seminars, and field trips. These methods help to empower young people, which in turn leads to the eradication of acute hunger and poverty. The study listed several obstacles to entrepreneurship education, including a lack of equipment, insufficient money, and a shortage of qualified instructors. The report suggested that all educational curricula should have an entrepreneurial focus and that the government and other relevant parties should create an environment that supports the growth of entrepreneurship education, which is essential for boosting Nigeria's economy and empowering its youth.

Women Entrepreneurship Education Programs

On the other hand, for most women, entrepreneurship is a far better career choice than traditional employment. Since women are viewed as a vital human resource in the country, every state needs to try to employ them as agents of economic growth and advancement. According to

Prabhu (2020) argued that women's empowerment has emerged as a critical issue in the modern era. This article discusses the advantages of entrepreneurship for small businesses as well as the empowerment of rural women via it. The neighbourhood and the home grew as because of women's economic empowerment. The primary goal of the research project is to determine how women entrepreneurs can empower themselves financially. There were 100 responders in the study's sample. The equipment utilized for the ANOVA test and percentage analysis as well as the online structured questionnaire were used to gather the data. The Czech Republic's cumulative small business entrepreneurship attests to this assertion.

In research published by Ibuathu et al. (2020) investigated the Nyambene region's female entrepreneurs' business acumen as the primary drivers of rural development. The specific objectives were to gauge women's understanding of entrepreneurship, help them hone their entrepreneurial abilities, and provide advice on how to improve their company ventures. The study used a combination of questionnaires, observation schedules, and interview schedules as part of its descriptive research methodology. There were 142 female company owners in the sample. Participants acknowledged that critical thoughts are a skill utilized in managing business endeavours (mean = 5.0; standard deviation = 0.604). The majority, or 92.9%, believed that receiving training in entrepreneurial skills and competencies would improve their business endeavours by acting as a multiplier. A substantial correlation was found ($F = 13.24$; $p < 0.05$) between women's entrepreneurial ability and the enhancement of commercial endeavours. The link between boosting entrepreneurial activities and women entrepreneurs' ability to enhance commercial initiatives was very positive, with a 95% confidence level ($t = 2.378$; $p < 0.05$). Less than 25% of the participants lacked experience in record keeping, management abilities, business

planning and research, value addition, and technology, according to the study's findings, indicating areas that still needed improvement in training.

In their research, Abdullah Alshammari et al. (2023) focused on a group of female small- and microbusiness owners within the Saudi Arabian Kingdom's eastern provinces and Hail, Riyadh. The study's objectives were to pinpoint the specific leadership style shown by these female business owners and determine whether each of their abilities influences their people or task-oriented leadership approaches. Initially, the responders were discovered through several institutions, such as Wa'ed, Aramco's Entrepreneurship Centre, MISK Foundation, and Monsha'at. After that, they selected as their target respondent's female-owned small enterprises that have been in operation for at least two years in their industry. Following their clearance, 310 female entrepreneurs received the survey form. We received 211 complete questionnaires in total. After removing replies with duplicate or missing data, 174 surveys were left, which were then examined with SPSS. The results suggested that those who participated had a higher task-oriented leadership style score, something that was unexpected. It has been observed that female entrepreneurs with strong business and management, relational, entrepreneurial, and interpersonal abilities tend to favour task-oriented leadership styles. Individual attention is positively impacted by relationships and entrepreneurial abilities.

Simuka and Masunda (2023) looked at the function of entrepreneurship education and examined the chances that exist for female entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe. They pointed out that the importance of entrepreneurship education resides in its capacity to change participants' viewpoints and provide them with the knowledge and abilities they need to launch and grow their businesses, thereby promoting the empowerment of women. Using a standardized questionnaire, a quantitative research technique was used in this inquiry. Five-point Likert scales were employed in the

development of the structured questionnaire to facilitate the simple gathering of quantitative data. The research included 100 female entrepreneurs from Harare, the nation's largest city, who were chosen by stratified simple random selection. The women entrepreneurs represented a range of age groups, educational backgrounds, and trades. Version 3.2.1 of Smart PLS was employed to analyse quantitative data. The results of the survey demonstrated the variety of businesses and organizations that support the development of female entrepreneurs. The primary findings of the study demonstrated that women entrepreneurs may enhance their technical and knowledge abilities by enrolling in specialized entrepreneurship courses and training. The study's practical effects include the need for specialized entrepreneurship training to assist women entrepreneurs in changing their perspectives and gaining the knowledge and abilities necessary to launch and expand their businesses. The development of more pro-women entrepreneurs' policies may help and promote the entrepreneurial endeavours of women.

The Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, was the site of research by Omang et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between women's empowerment and the welfare of women without jobs across all age groups. They glanced in specifically at the sorts of women's empowerment programs that are available, how simple it is for women to access them, the kinds of programs that have helped women, and the areas where these programs have improved socioeconomic well-being. The research used an exploratory approach, recruiting 660 unemployed women using a multi-stage sample technique, and gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. To assess the two hypotheses, the data was analysed using chi-square and descriptive statistics. Results revealed that the most well-liked women's empowerment program is the provision of agricultural facilities, as reported by 31.9% of respondents; conversely, 58.3% of respondents think they have benefited from other women's empowerment programs. Twenty-eight % of

participants reported that their well-being has been enhanced by women's empowerment initiatives, whilst 19.9% reported that microcredit facilities have been beneficial to them. Further investigation revealed a statistically significant relationship between residence and the impact of women's empowerment programs, as well as a statistically significant relationship between education level and these impacts. The findings showed that the well-being of jobless women in Yakurr, Nigeria, was positively impacted by women's empowerment activities. For this reason, the Cross Rivers State Government needs to develop community-based initiatives aimed at empowering women. These initiatives will enable these women to take advantage of the resources available to them and to realize that, apart from NGOs and the government, they can actively support themselves and take charge of their own lives.

Demedeme and Opoku (2021) examined the program's ex-anti and ex-post income variables to determine how successfully a Rural Enterprise Programme (REP) enhanced the standard of living for Ghanaian rural women. The survey involved the use of the snowball sample technique to choose 217 beneficiary women from the farm-based, agro-processing, traditional craft, agro-industrial, and small commerce economic sub-sectors. Data was gathered using both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires in a cross-sectional approach. The results of the data analysis were qualitatively displayed using tables and charts, which were carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics (SPSS version 20). The research revealed that the Rural Enterprise Programme employed several tactics and resources to enable women, such as literacy-enhancing education and training, to improve the participants' capacity for entrepreneurship and job marketability. The results showed that the program's use of women empowerment strategies raised participants' nominal income throughout the intermediate and long term, pointing to an improvement in rural women's well-being. However, the study found that there was a barrier to obtaining loans at a

reasonable price and that the high cost of input made it difficult for the REP to respond to the beneficiary rural women's economic well-being. The study contributes to the literature on women's empowerment in rural West Africa, which highlights the significant challenges that these women encounter when trying to access financial resources to invest in their business, however, majority of these resources and assets are owned by men. The paper recommends that future ethnographically informed case studies incorporate culturally sensitive tactics that could best support women's economic empowerment in traditional, male-dominated rural African settings.

Mumba (2014) conducted a study that looked at how Zambian women entrepreneurs sought out information. Information demands, information sources, information acquisition hurdles, and information and communication technology utilization were the main topics of the research (ICTs). The conceptual framework employed in this study consisted of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Chatman's information poverty theory, and the social network approach. Information demands, information sources, information acquisition hurdles, and information and communication technology utilization were the main topics of the research (ICTs). The conceptual framework employed in this study consisted of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Chatman's information poverty theory, and the social network approach. The research employed two different approaches to collect data: 1) a questionnaire that was distributed to 300 female entrepreneurs; and 2) a qualitative study that included conducting in-depth interviews with 25 individuals who had filled out the survey as well. However, the questionnaire allowed data to be gathered for the study's several theme areas. The study's findings revealed that most Zambian women entrepreneurs need to know about government programs, sources of raw materials and funding, as well as market opportunities. The study's findings also demonstrate that some of women's primary information

sources are their friends, family, and acquaintances. The Internet, workshops, seminars, and trade exhibits are some more. Additional study findings show that Zambian women entrepreneurs have relatively little awareness of and usage of information and communication technology. Most of them are not proficient with computers and know very little about computer programs. The study's findings also show that women business owners encounter several obstacles when trying to obtain information. Several obstacles have been mentioned, including inadequate funding, exorbitant ICT costs, subpar networks, unavailability of up-to-date information, unfavourable government regulations, and a deficiency of information literacy among female entrepreneurs. According to the study, the private sector, the government of Zambia, and other interested parties should take action to support Zambian women entrepreneurs. This will enhance their business environment and support the expansion of the country's economy.

Botswana Context

Rudhumbu et al. (2020) looked at the possibilities and problems encountered by female company owners in Botswana as well as how entrepreneurship education may provide women more power by improving their understanding of and capacity for managing successful enterprises. Using stratified random selection, 400 female company owners from 10 distinct towns and cities around the nation were chosen to participate in the poll. The women entrepreneurs varied in age, education level, trade, and geography. A standardized questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was used to collect the data. Regression analysis, descriptive statistics, and one-way ANOVA were among the methods used to analyse the data. The findings showed the intricate web of problems that women entrepreneurs faced, such as their inability to secure funding, their lack of technical expertise due to inadequate training, their ignorance of available financial and technical resources, their intense competition in the industry, their marginalization, and their limited understanding of

marketing tactics. While women entrepreneurs encountered numerous obstacles, the primary findings indicated that women could augment their technical and knowledge foundation using specialized training in entrepreneurship, since Botswana's legal and regulatory structure was exceedingly favourable to and supportive to women business owners and encourages them to completely engage in the economy.

Ganamotse et al. (2017) asserted that increased productivity and declining rising unemployment rates are linked to the importance of entrepreneurship in developing countries, especially for young people. Consequently, several frameworks and initiatives for assistance have been developed to help young people engage in profitable entrepreneurship. The Global Business Labs (GBL) business acceleration concept is discussed in the article. Based on a Swedish model, it was reproduced in Botswana, Namibia, and Uganda between 2012 and 2015, however, it was unsuccessful in Mozambique and Zambia. The results of a cross-country case study of the GBL program are presented in their paper using a multiple-case study approach to comprehend the creation of a business accelerator. The program's principles, materials, and operational procedures have all been replicated, but the instances show that the five nations' acceleration performance and operational experiences differ. These discrepancies are highlighted in the paper using the emergence theory. The primary theoretical contribution of the work is to comprehend the emergence of business accelerators in the dual nature of key players' objectives and interactions, as well as the role of resource bursts as triggering mechanisms in developing nations. The research also contributes to the creation of a model that will help developing economies establish their businesses more quickly and function well afterward.

Baliyan and Baliyan (2013) noted that, in emerging nations like Botswana, entrepreneurial education has surged dramatically due to institutional and organizational development, which

paves the way for a nation's overall sustainable growth. This research aimed to raise awareness among the public on the establishment of institutions and organizations that facilitate entrepreneurial education and training in Botswana, putting special focus on the expansion of post-secondary institutions and programs as well as other collaborators who operate outside of the educational system to further the cause of entrepreneurial education and training. The data was gathered from primary and secondary sources, including reviewing pertinent documentation, conducting in-person and telephone interviews with respondents who had well-defined questions, visiting institutions, ministries in charge of labour and employment, education and training, and parastatals and non-governmental organizations. Prominent organizations such as Brigades Centres, the Botswana Training Authority, the Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Agency, the Local Enterprise Authority, and the University of Botswana have held discussions regarding the development of entrepreneurial education and skills in Botswana. According to the study's findings, most of Botswana's post-primary education and training institutions contribute significantly to the long-term growth of entrepreneurship education and skills by providing a range of programs. However, revisions to the objectives and curriculum of these institutions are still necessary to improve their employability and their capacity to provide further entrepreneurship education and training.

Moremong-Nganunu (2009) conducted a study to determine Botswana's impact on the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training program. An international entrepreneurship training program called Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) was developed, funded, and distributed by the International Labor Organization. Perhaps the biggest entrepreneurship skills development program in the world is SIYB. Having started operations in the early 1970s, SIYB is now present in over 80 countries. Over 100,000 business owners, thousands of instructors, and

hundreds of small-business development groups from all over the world took part in the program between 2000 and 2002. Remarkably, not much program assessment has been done for an educational initiative of this scope and potential worldwide significance. The evaluation that has been done is inadequate, non-quantitative, and lacks systematization. Simultaneously, since the mid-1970s, programs in Botswana have grown significantly to teach small and medium-sized business owners. An important part of this entrepreneurial training initiative in Botswana is the SIYB program (SIYB 1996). The SIYB program has only been examined once since it was first introduced in 1983. An adequate assessment of the program was not produced using the employed methodologies. Thus, the largest entrepreneurship training program in the world is still in operation in Botswana despite little information on its effectiveness. Additionally, the program's curriculum omits important elements of entrepreneurship, such as competition, self-efficacy, creativity, and opportunity appraisal.

Innovation and its Effect on SMME Competitiveness

Valdez-Juárez et al. (2016) argued that Knowledge management (KM) has been studied in the literature and regarded as a fundamental component of company management for more than 20 years. Their article aimed to investigate how knowledge management might improve company performance and innovation for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Using PLS-SEM data analysis processes, the data derived from self-directed survey responses from 903 business owners in the industries of commerce, construction, services, and industry in the Region of Murcia, Spain, was analysed. The findings indicated that while KM has a small impact on SMEs' performance levels, it has a large impact on innovation. Employee training as part of KM, however, did not appear to have a substantial impact on innovation in SMEs. However, managers and leaders

must be more receptive to adjustments in the effective application and operation of knowledge management.

Previous research on African industrial clusters has shown that a major barrier to innovation and cluster growth is the lack of management experience among entrepreneurs running micro and small enterprises (World Bank, 2010). A certain educational background is required to develop the business acumen needed to upgrade product lines and enhance production, quality control, marketing strategies, and financial techniques, all of which help industrial clusters maintain profitability and expand amid escalating internal competition. There exist several instances in Africa when businesses run by entrepreneurs possessing superior marketing and administrative expertise have been able to transition from low-income survival clusters to higher-class formal industrial zones. Moreover, the team ran pilot programs for managerial skills training in two industrial clusters: one located in Nairobi, Kenya's Kariobangi Light Industries, and the other in Ghana's Suame Magazine. A set of randomly chosen company owners in each area received a three-week crash course on fundamental management techniques and skills, including bookkeeping, business planning, sales and marketing as well as production management. The impact review of the pilots' findings showed that the training initiatives significantly increased the value-added and gross revenues of businesses. Participants in the training program saw noticeable gains in everyday company operations including record keeping, advertising, and keeping the workplace tidy following the training. For instance, over a year, the training's net effect increased gross revenues at Kariobangi and Suame Magazine by almost 160%.

Yahaya and Nadarajah (2023) conceded that due to their restricted size and resources, SMEs in today's competitive business climate struggle to allocate resources strategically and respond to changes in the market. This makes it difficult for them to obtain critical data and

insights, which impacts their ability to make decisions and seize growth opportunities. Achieving a lasting competitive edge requires them to have an innovative, learning, and entrepreneurial mentality. Tailored strategies that prioritize innovation and continuous learning, together with targeted government assistance, are crucial for enabling small and medium-sized enterprises to prosper in the face of fierce competition. Together, these initiatives may help SMEs reach their full potential and thrive in the ever-changing business environment. This gap was filled by a thorough literature analysis that created an all-encompassing framework based on institutional theory and the resource-based perspective. 469 publications from reliable databases were found for the study, and the findings were analysed using a one-sample T-test. In the end, it was decided that 16 publications were most important for developing the conceptual framework. According to the research, 13 variables have a major influence on a company's performance and strategic orientation in the knowledge-based, unpredictable global business world of today. Research has indicated that several elements, including market orientation, learning orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation, can have a major impact on a firm's performance. The literature still lacks information on how company inventive engagement affects performance, especially in SMEs, despite numerous empirical investigations. Furthermore, although studies on strategic orientations are generally available, more empirical research is required to determine the precise aspects influencing the success of SMEs in the modern knowledge economy, where intangible assets are now essential for gaining a competitive edge.

Summary

Most research results from literature sources have shown that SMME owners' and managers' management capabilities improved their performance, consequently, small business success depended heavily on the ability to successfully manage finances, markets, engage with people, and display an entrepreneurial spirit.

Managerial capabilities, especially in financial management, are a key component of business growth and success. Studies show that financial management training positively affects a firm's success. Similarly, a manager's ability to drive employees, negotiate, and manage risk and technology is critical. A person's technical **(**functional competence) and leadership ability (social) contribute to an organization's core competence and overall capability, respectively. From the literature, it was observed that companies with an educated and trained workforce tend to be more successful. Investing in development and creating a culture of learning can improve managerial capabilities and give businesses a competitive edge. This is often lacking in smaller firms.

While managerial capabilities are crucial, other factors also play a significant role, for example, managerial innovativeness, the capacity to develop creative solutions and adjust to changing technologies which is seen as a key characteristic influencing firm performance. Knowledge management is essential for fostering organizational innovativeness. External support, for example, government backing, market access, and startup funding are vital for a business's survival. For young entrepreneurs, mentorship and coaching are particularly helpful for developing an entrepreneurial mindset and boosting confidence. On the other hand, individual characteristics like personal traits, attitudes, educational background, and prior experience also influence success. For women entrepreneurs, factors like family support and mentorship can significantly impact

their performance. Studies also indicate that a manager's negotiation skills and educational background are important for business success

Contribution by other scholars in general to SMME's capabilities to impact their success, few are specific to women and youth. On the other hand, most studies focus on managerial skills that are required for businesses to be successful and not really on the influence or impact of managerial skills. However, the lack of direct studies focusing on women and youth business owners has led to the need to fill this gap. The findings of other researchers have noted that SMMEs cannot develop management processes and that innovation seems to be very critical in any business endeavor for it to succeed. A review of methodologies was also investigated. Most authors employed quantitative methods of regression analysis and descriptive statistics were adopted in data analysis, also partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was utilized. However, a triangulated approach with a qualitative component that might offer a deeper understanding of some of the study's findings would be highly beneficial to the investigation.

Although their efficacy varies, government regulations and support networks have a major impact on the expansion and development of women-led businesses. While many nations have frameworks to support small and medium-sized enterprises, challenges in implementation, accessibility, and communication often limit their impact. Academics contended that both financial and nonfinancial government support have a major influence on performance and the long-term competitive position of SMMEs. However, for these policies to be effective, they must be implemented properly. For instance, a Zimbabwean study found that while the government had strong policies, a lack of communication and poor implementation prevented information from reaching the businesses that needed it most.

Nonetheless, financing for initiatives that support young and female entrepreneurs is provided by several government initiatives globally. Whether these laws and initiatives are successful is the question. Conversely, scholarly works have demonstrated the existence of government initiatives, although with little or non-existent policy execution. As a result, some have observed that the influence of government assistance and support is minimal. According to some academics, the policies are not doing enough to help young and female entrepreneurs. In a similar vein, others have discovered that the government's backing of female and young entrepreneurs is not very significant. They contended that most of government policies and initiatives prioritize short-term gains above long-term advantages, which explains why government initiatives are failing to produce results. Interestingly, no initiatives have been mentioned in the literature. Moreover, policies aimed at women entrepreneurs face specific hurdles. While countries like the United States have focused on this area for decades, a study suggests that the core goals of the policies have not changed much since 1988. In many developing nations, Policies are frequently not adapted to the particular social and cultural situations., such as patriarchal attitudes and the necessity of striking a balance between job and family.

However, they emphasized that strong legislative frameworks and government policies are essential to creating a business-friendly environment that encourages entrepreneurship. The Indian government has launched several training efforts of which Botswana can benchmark from, for example, financial aid programs, and empowerment projects to support women entrepreneurs, which have contributed to their increasing numbers in various sectors. Other scholars highlighted the need for infrastructure development, along with targeted education and alternative financing models, to support women-owned businesses in rural South Africa and Africa at large. Literature has suggested that programs for women should focus on long-term plans and factors that motivate

them, such as gaining independence and finding a work-life balance. According to a South African study, improved institutional and governance support is necessary to guarantee that women have equitable access to financial services. Female entrepreneurs in Botswana, for example, have struggled with a lack of mentorship and incubator programs, despite government funding initiatives.

Youth empowerment and entrepreneurship are central to the agendas of many developing nations. Support systems, such as Guinea's INTEGRA program and Nigeria's YouWiN initiative, aim to address youth unemployment by fostering self-employment. However, these programs also have limitations, for example, a study on African youth-led agricultural businesses found that while they benefit from digital platforms for collaboration, they still face challenges like high costs for technology and a lack of clear regulations. Research has noted that true youth empowerment goes beyond just providing resources. It involves helping young people develop the confidence and skills to take control of their projects and advocate for themselves.

To investigate possible initiatives to assist female entrepreneurs, qualitative methods were used in the current study. There is not enough empirical data in the literature to support the specific measures that are implemented to help women and young entrepreneurs perform better. As a result, it is necessary to determine which policies are pertinent to youth-owned firms. Furthermore, based on the gaps found in those nations, each countries have distinct programs tailored to their areas. The policy aspect of the subject is still receiving less attention in developing countries, according to some writers. To further understand why, however, and identify areas where the conceptualization of policies aimed at women and youth needs to be enhanced, additional study is needed.

The scholars highlighted specific challenges and opportunities for women and youth-led businesses. They noted that many governments view youth entrepreneurship as a key driver of economic growth. Personal traits, educational background, and technological skills are all critical for success. Also, mentorship can help reduce dependency and increase a young entrepreneur's confidence. They observed that the number of female entrepreneurs is increasing, but they still face significant challenges, including gender disparities, a lack of mentorship, and difficulty securing loans. Success for women entrepreneurs often depends on personal traits, family support, and a resilient attitude. They noted that while innovation and creativity are important, a strong company management process is a major factor influencing the success of female-led businesses.

From the literature, it is reported that a significant and recurring challenge for women and youth entrepreneurs are issues pertaining to financial and resources constraints. Several studies in the literature highlighted collateral and loans as the major challenge. They noted that in Kenya, researchers found that a lack of collateral, particularly ownership of assets like land, is a major barrier for women when trying to secure loans from formal banks. This issue is also prominent among young women, who may not have capital assets to use as security. The denial of loan applications due to a lack of collateral is a common experience for young women entrepreneurs in Nairobi. They emphasized that the identified restricted access to funding and financial limitations as primary factors hindering the sustainability and growth of small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs). Furthermore, they noted that geographic location plays a role, with emerging nations struggling to establish investment frameworks that support women, while industrialized countries face different challenges related to networking and attracting investors.

Socio-cultural and gender barriers also play a significant role in hindering the growth and the success of enterprises owned by women and youth. Women in disadvantaged communities frequently experience prejudice and discrimination, which restricts their access to essential services. This is rooted in historical gender discrimination in political, economic, and social spheres. Other aspects mentioned in other studies are the traditional norms. They highlighted that deeply ingrained customs in Indian society, where the sociological framework has historically been male dominated, require women to work harder to achieve equal rights and status. Similarly, South Asian women entrepreneurs face significant obstacles related to gender discrimination and a heavy workload.

Scholars noted educational and skills gaps as another barrier. They revealed that most entrepreneurs face limitations when it comes to access to quality education. They highlighted that entrepreneurial education is largely inaccessible to Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), which prevents them from reaching their full potential. Additionally, they discovered that many SMMEs fail within five years due to bad management and poorly thought-out business ideas, which are frequently caused by a lack of entrepreneurial abilities. They pointed out that the conventional school system frequently suppresses rather than develops the traits necessary to produce entrepreneurs. Teaching about entrepreneurship needs to give way to teaching for it. Nonetheless, research has indicated that to foster an entrepreneurial culture and meet the unique requirements of women and young people, particular and deliberate training programs are required.

Several opportunities and enablers for women and youth entrepreneurs were identified. The role of technology and social media were seen as the tools used by current generation of SMMEs in identifying and seizing opportunities. Social media is a key marketing channel for

young female entrepreneurs in Zambia. They found that social media positively impacts women entrepreneurs' professional lives, helping them overcome entrepreneurial challenges. Additionally, they noted that entrepreneurs who use social media technologies see an average 15% boost in sales. Consequently, the increasing adoption of digital technologies is an important enabler for entrepreneurs, enhancing business relationships and increasing competitiveness.

Entrepreneurship education and training are essential for small, micro, and medium-sized enterprises, particularly those that are run by women and young people to become more competitive, develop innovation, and further develop their business skills. While traditional classroom learning is one approach, studies indicate that experiential learning is particularly effective in cultivating entrepreneurial abilities. Entrepreneurship education programs provide a foundation in technical, managerial, and personal skills. Studies in Zimbabwe, for example, show that well-designed programs, such as those from the International Labour Organization (ILO), significantly transfer skills, though business development success may vary. The most effective programs cover essential areas for example, training helps entrepreneurs develop business plans, manage finances, and understand market dynamics. They also help in networking and opportunity recognition. That is, experiential learning, specifically, helps individuals identify market opportunities and build networks that improve business performance. Additionally, training helps entrepreneurs develop the critical thinking skills needed to effectively manage their ventures.

Most researchers think that entrepreneurship education teaches important skills. They found several ways to increase inclusivity in entrepreneurship education, including leveraging on technology, active learner-centred methods, and universal design principles. Tailored Education offer a framework for creating successful entrepreneurship programs for women by

considering factors such as funding, human factors, and the local context. Moreover, integrated learning advocated for integrating enterprise education into various academic programs, not just business schools, to foster an entrepreneurial culture.

Moreover, more researchers agreed that entrepreneurial skills are critical for the success of every business. They also believe that entrepreneurship can be taught, and entrepreneurs can gain the necessary skills and competencies to run competitive businesses. Even though the current study does not focus on identifying the most relevant entrepreneurial competencies required by business owners, it was noted that technical business management and personal entrepreneurial skills are among the most important abilities needed by entrepreneurs. Similarly, most researchers have made extensive inquiries on empowerment programs targeting youth entrepreneurs. It is thought that entrepreneurial education and training are crucial for two reasons: first, they give aspiring business owners the abilities and information they need to launch and manage successful ventures; second, they are more crucial for creating a positive environment. These initiatives for empowerment programs for education and training in entrepreneurship are designed to hasten the expansion of young businesses.

Numerous researchers have looked at entrepreneurship education as a useful tool for empowering young people, and their conclusions support the idea that this is one of the most effective methods. According to female entrepreneurs, acquiring training in entrepreneurial skills and competencies will enhance their company pursuits. Findings from another study indicated that among female entrepreneurs, a preference for task-oriented leadership styles relates to strong interpersonal, business, and management, relationships, and entrepreneurial abilities. However, the main conclusions of other research showed that women entrepreneurs may improve their

knowledge and technical skills with specific entrepreneurship education and training. However, there are known information gaps regarding the implementation of entrepreneurial training programs in poor nations, especially in Africa, and the successful outcome of such implemented programs for start-ups and growth is worth investigating and current study aims to gather more insights into that. Notably, there have been limited studies conducted on the same topic in Botswana and this allows the author to explore more findings into the problem. Moreover, the relationship exists between entrepreneurship education and innovation. This is supported by some scholars who believe that knowledge management (KM) significantly influences innovation but with little effect on the performance levels of SMEs. Understanding entrepreneurship is crucial for women and young-led businesses since it may have a big influence on how well they absorb skills and grow competitively.

The literature suggests that a multi-faceted approach is needed to address the challenges faced by women and youth entrepreneurs. While significant progress has been made, particularly with the rise of technology and government support, persistent barriers remain in Botswana. However, the most cited solutions include making entrepreneurship education more accessible and relevant, leveraging technology and social media, and implementing supportive government policies that provide targeted training, infrastructure development, and alternative financing models. Programs should be more comprehensive, integrating a variety of methods and covering a wide range of skills. Financial and non-financial support, along with oversight, should be provided to entrepreneurs even after their training is complete. Governments and other stakeholders need to create supportive environments, address gaps in program implementation, and tailor policies to the specific needs of women and youth. This includes enhancing financial literacy and increasing access to qualified trainers and resources

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Botswana's economy is classified as factor-driven, with a high rate of entrepreneurship, especially among women, youth and differently abled citizens. According to Paya (2021) and other scholars, the government of Botswana has initiated entrepreneurial initiatives, especially those focused on small, micro and medium enterprises to accelerate economic growth. The problem is that businesses led by women and young people remain behind other industries when it comes to implementing best management practices. Even today, SMMEs especially those headed by women and young people, face challenges in their daily operations of their companies, which ultimately causes them to fail. Women-led enterprises performed less when managing their daily business operations (International Trade Centre, 2019). They delivered their goods later than companies owned by men. In addition, in comparison with enterprises run by men, women-driven businesses were 14 percentage points lower in assessing if their inventory management system was successful. In every area of company management, companies run by women and young people performed poorly than the industry average. ITC also found that youth-led enterprises in comparison with adult-led firms, their capacity utilization rate was nine percentage points lower. Jefferis (2014) asserted that young entrepreneurs and women who invest in management skills may find it easier to meet the needs of both domestic and international markets in terms of quantity, cost, and schedule.

According to related research by Bosire et al. (2020) Kenya's micro and small enterprises run by young people have a high mortality rate. The overall failure rate for these enterprises is 60%, indicating that three of every five of them fail during the initial three years of business and fail to survive to reach their third anniversary. Khayesi (2016) offered more data supporting the assertion that youth-led enterprises fail frequently, remarking that up to 80% of new businesses

fail during the first three years of their launch. As a result, 48% of young individuals have less than a 50% chance of becoming successful in business. According to the study, many young people who founded businesses did so in response to socioeconomic problems such as unemployment and constraints on their ability to access markets, finance, firm development services and entrepreneurial training throughout the beginning and expansion phases of their enterprises (Sangwa, 2021).

According to studies, women face more challenges and are less likely than men to launch their businesses (UN WOMEN, 2018, as cited in Bobek et al., 2022). However, Sub-Saharan Africa tends to provide women fewer opportunities for entrepreneurship than other regions, which explains why self-employment is prevalent in many of those countries. The authors also point out that the proportion of women employed in Sub-Saharan Africa's economy is higher than in other parts of the world, such as Latin America, East Asia, the Pacific, North America, and the European Union. However, Botswana's ranks fell 56.4% short of Sub-Saharan Africa's.

The disadvantages that women and girls suffer are one of the major barriers to the advancement of human development and a major cause of inequality (UNDP, 2018). The topic of wage disparities between men and women remains central to the gender debate. Women in Africa have higher unemployment rates than men do (Matsoso & Iwu, 2016). It is still more common for men than women to be able to obtain funding and other types of assistance for their business ventures (Kelley et al., 2011). In comparison to male business owners, female entrepreneurs are subject to more constraints in their firms. The government, financial institutions, and the business community often harass and discriminate against women. Only 10% of female landowners can utilize their property as collateral, whereas 95% of male landowners can do so in Uganda, while 28% of women and 53% of men own land (UNDP, 2017).

According to Joseph (2012) the empowerment approach to gender strives to alter the way that power is currently distributed within and between cultures, providing women more autonomy over their own lives. According to this viewpoint, power is less about enslaving others or substituting female dominance for male dominance and more about facilitating the growth of choices, voices, control, and autonomy. A shift in perspective and attitude, as well as a lack of expertise in areas such as effective administration of company operations, were observed by Nagujja et al. (2021). Consequently, the weaknesses are apparent in the failure to keep up with accounting and other documents, the absence of organized planning and oversight, the insufficient amount of cash on hand, and the control of cash flows, deficiencies in managerial skills, etc. According to Francis et al. (2020) the educational and training systems in most of developing nations have continuously fallen short of providing young people with the skills they need. Nevertheless, there has not been much focus on comprehending the required skill set and how it affects the viability of youth-led businesses up until now. Additionally, business owners in Botswana have opportunities to improve their businesses and, therefore, their welfare, so long as they can identify them in the nation's training facilities or the general business environment.

Interventions and programs aimed at empowering young people must have the necessary funding and demand active participation in the creation of the program rather than passive observation (Diraditsile, 2020). Furthermore, he stated that to achieve that, it is essential to emphasize that programs designed to promote youth empowerment should have a long-term plan rather than rely on temporary fixes that have not succeeded thus far. Moreover, Diraditsile (2017) contended that the absence of financial literacy and business mentorship and coaching for program participants impairs the success of government-sponsored youth initiatives and programs. Furthermore, he believes that the lack of integrated monitoring and assessment impacts various

government projects in Botswana. Consequently, program implementers are unable to track advancement in relation to preset objectives, targets, and KPIs.

Similarly, Ahmed (2017) noted that there is not enough attention paid to building management abilities that have a direct impact on performance. Developing a learning culture and attending to internal surroundings are two areas that organizations need to focus on more since they directly impact the growth of outstanding management traits. UNDP (2017) asserted that Africa needs more initiatives and institutions that can actively close the knowledge gap between academia and business, especially by stressing management and problem-solving skills.

Studies have indicated that proficient managing skills are essential for sustainability of small businesses as they impact their expansion. This inquiry sought to find possible ways to close the gap that exist between managerial capabilities and the success of women's and young people's owned enterprises in Botswana. Prior research has concentrated on managerial characteristics concerning other variables. Business leaders need to be knowledgeable in essential management abilities to adequately fulfil the obligations of their positions (Hani, 2021). This calls for their capacity to comprehend, inspire, and guide individuals as well as groups. The ability to delegate as well as the ability to grow employees and subordinates are essential aptitudes for managing people. Moreover, it describes the ability to direct and control the conduct of subordinates to achieve higher-quality output. These interpersonal skills need considering the attitudes, sentiments, and cultural traits of leaders, subordinates, and colleagues (Adewole, 2021). Considering this, this research attempts to assess the characteristics that impact the development of enterprises in Botswana that are managed by women and young people, with a focus on managerial skills, laws, and initiatives for general entrepreneurial empowerment so that workable solutions can be provided to close gaps that have been identified.

The chapter outlines the mixed method research strategy, and the explanatory sequential mixed methods design that were applied in the current study, along with the justification for using mixed methods of research. Population and sample size are also covered. Subsequently, the operational definition of variables that are pertinent to mixed studies were explained, followed by the materials and instrumentation of research tools. The author further delved into greater depth on the study procedures and ethical assurances. The latter part of the techniques the chapter addressed are the data gathering and analysis, coupled with a synopsis of the chapter.

Research Approach and Design

To improve data collection, the study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, maximize sample effectiveness, and support data analysis. According to De Lisle (2011) investigations using mixed methods and the different ways that quantitative and qualitative techniques may be systematically combined are becoming increasingly common. Further, the author noted that since mixed methods research is often considered a recent innovation, it has a long historical lineage and is not a new or illegitimate concept. Several additional names for this technique include mixed methodology, integrating, multimethod, synthesis, and quantitative and qualitative techniques. However, the phrase mixed methods have become more popular in recent literature (Bryman, 2006, as cited in Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell et al. (2003, as cited in Bryman, 2006) identifying the various types of mixed-methods research has advantages. It conveys the sense of rigor of the research and notifies journal editors and funding organizations of what researchers want to achieve or have finished. Accordingly, researchers and authors may find it helpful to employ mixed-methods or multi-strategy study typologies to explain the nature of their research objectives or accomplishments. Similarly, Poth and Shannon-Baker (2022) claimed that the methodological approach has become widely accepted both internationally and within the

discipline for producing insights that cannot be obtained by qualitative or quantitative research alone.

While scholars argue that the mixed techniques paradigm is still in its infancy, many researchers still find it mostly unknown and confusing. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009) pointed out that the challenge of choosing the best mixed methods designs, however, falls on doctoral students, inexperienced researchers, and even seasoned scholars who are unfamiliar with the subject of mixed methods research due to the abundance of designs that are now in use. Greene (2007, as cited in De Lisle, 2011) offered another viewpoint on the historical evolution of this third community of practice. The writer maintained that several approaches had always coexisted peacefully in some practical disciplines, such as evaluation. Therefore, another explanation for this open acceptance of mixed techniques might be that researchers and evaluators in the practical social sciences frequently deal with complicated and multiplex social phenomena that are difficult to understand by single-frame inquiry. Furthermore, the definition and typology are becoming crucial elements of best practices because of the complexity and diversity of mixed methodologies approaches. In a broader context, mixed methods methodology is an approach to study that incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods to enhance the depth and comprehension of an issue or subject (Alhassan, 2024). A helpful description of this approach is given by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, as cited in Stentz et al., 2012) which helps to distinguish between the many viewpoints that individuals have when defining mixed methods. In a mixed methods research design, philosophical assumptions are combined with investigative techniques. As a method, it combines qualitative and quantitative approaches at different phases of the study process, together with philosophical assumptions that dictate how data collection and analysis should proceed. Gathering, analysing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative data into a single

study or group of linked studies are the primary goals of the approach. Its basic premise is that integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches enables a deeper comprehension of research issues than either strategy can offer on its own.

Sandelowski (2000) added that there is still a lack of guidance and misunderstanding regarding the best way to integrate qualitative and quantitative methods. There is no methodological or paradigmatic connection to these techniques; however, the researchers' methodological commitments and inquiry orientations will determine how they apply them. Moreover, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, as cited in Alhassan, 2024) outlined how the mixed methods approach involves more than just combining the two methodologies. Mixed methods refer to the application of both qualitative and quantitative techniques in a single study with the aim of providing a comprehensive solution to a specific research problem. Younas et al. (2023), highlighted that for mixed methods research to stand out from monomethod research, it is crucial to combine quantitative and qualitative data, methodologies, and conclusions.

Piccioli (2019) reiterated that mixed approaches have been presented in the context of the quantity-quality dichotomy in the social sciences to provide a third option. This is accomplished by considering the integration of various approaches and, with them, various analytical techniques, not as their sum but rather as an integrated, integral approach to the situation under study, also considering the necessity of their systemic integration as a functional modality for analysing complex phenomena. However, the author emphasizes that avoiding the drawbacks of individual techniques and enhancing the investigative force is the pragmatic concept driving the mixed methods theory. On another note, Perez (2023) noted that several academics have contended that, depending on the number of grant application submissions and peer-reviewed publications, mixed methods research is either in its mature adolescent or emerging adult stage right now. The study

delves into several issues, including research approaches that incorporate qualitative methodologies, integration tactics, and inherently mixed methods analyses.

There has also been a claim that mixed methods methodology is unique and different from other research techniques like quantitative and qualitative techniques. According to Haines (2011) combining the numerous benefits and non-overlapping drawbacks of qualitative approaches involving small sample size and in-depth analysis with quantitative approaches involving large sample size and generalization, is the basic idea underlying mixed methods research. Nonetheless, researchers employ mixed methods research for many purposes. The need to ask more complex questions than can be answered by a study that is only quantitative or qualitative, the awareness of various worldviews and paradigms, the necessity of explaining and comprehending, deducting and inducting, generalizing and contextualizing, and the integration of data collection and analysis to overcome the limitations of using one method exclusively are a few examples. The ability of a methodology to explain the world, help readers understand the research and its conclusions, increase reader trust in the results, improve correctness and completeness, and provide information and support for the study's overall validity are all broad ways to describe the significance of combining various study approaches (Haines, 2011).

The Rationale for Mixed Method Research

The primary objective of combining qualitative and quantitative research components is to strengthen and validate the study's conclusions and add to the existing collection of published literature. Nonetheless, the current study's decision to employ a combination of methodologies should aid in addressing the research questions. For example, the relationship between managerial capabilities and enterprise success, particularly within the delicate context of women and youth-led businesses in Botswana, is multifaceted. A single methodological approach (either purely

quantitative or purely qualitative) would likely provide an incomplete picture (Creswell et al., 2006). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) if quantitative data indicates a strong correlation between a particular managerial capability and success, qualitative data can provide rich, in-depth explanations for *why* that correlation exists, offering empirical examples and personal narratives. Conversely, if qualitative data reveals an unexpected trend or an important contextual factor, quantitative data can be used to assess its prevalence and statistical significance across a wider sample. This convergence of evidence increases the reliability of the study's conclusions. Discrepancies between quantitative and qualitative findings can also be illuminating, prompting further investigation and resulting in a more thorough and complex comprehension of the phenomenon. Additionally, mixed methods allow for triangulation, which compares results from several approaches and cross-reference them. This strengthens the validity and credibility of your conclusions (Creswell et al., 2010).

Greene et al. (1989), state that there are five (5) distinct mixed-method goals that exist. Their purposes include triangulation, complementarity, initiation, development, and expansion. This purpose is still relevant and is described below as follows.

1. Triangulation looks for outcomes from several approaches that are similar, corroborative, and corresponding.

2. The purpose of complementarity is to clarify, refine, exemplify, and expound on the findings from one technique utilizing the findings from the other.

3. Development, broadly understood to include decisions about sampling, implementation, and measurement, seeks to improve or guide the other approach by utilizing the results of the former.

4. Finding contradictions and paradoxes, creating new framework perspectives, and rephrasing problems and conclusions from one method with those from another are the objectives of initiation.

5. Finally, expansion seeks to broaden and deepen the study by using a variety of methods for different aspects of the research.

However, triangulation is a technique that is used in mixed-method research strategy that may enhance both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches. In various disciplines such as social, behavioural, and health sciences, triangulation describes the process of supporting results with data from several sources, approaches, or viewpoints (Guest & Fleming, 2015). According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, (2004) quantitative researchers contend that social science research should be objective, while qualitative researchers feel that social observations should be regarded as entities, like how physical scientists treat physical phenomena.

The reasoning behind the concept of mixed methods for a dissertation or thesis assignment were further emphasized by Creswell (2014). He noted that blended techniques are preferred since they minimize the drawbacks of both methodologies while utilizing the combined efforts of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Practically, mixed methods offer an elegant, intricate manner of doing research, appealing to those at the advanced level of novel research techniques. Furthermore, this can be the ideal course of action if the investigator possesses both quantitative and qualitative information. Procedurally, it is beneficial to comprehend research problems and topics in greater detail, including the following: comparing varying views from both quantitative and qualitative data, using interviews to make follow-up on data gathering and analysis to explain quantitative results, and enhancing measuring tools by administering, analysing, and collecting qualitative data to a sample prior to the development of instruments.

Interpreting experiment outcomes by considering individual viewpoints, creating a more thorough knowledge of the adjustments required for a minority group by combining quantitative and qualitative data, and gaining a deeper comprehension of the necessity and effects of an intervention program over time by gathering quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014). Many types have been developed to categorize and identify different kinds of mixed methods tactics that proposal writers may employ in their suggested mixed methods studies. Researchers must comprehend each component of mixed methods design, carefully consider each one, and always keep validity in mind while designing a mixed study (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017).

According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, (2004) there are several differences between qualitative and quantitative researchers. In particular, the former upheld their objectivity and claimed that quantitative research involves both verification and confirmation, whilst the latter disapproved of positivism and hated passive, detached writing styles. However, researchers must take note of the difficulties this research methodology presents to them. Creswell (2014) mentioned the demand for significant data collecting, the time-consuming nature of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis, and the need for the researcher to have experience with qualitative as well as quantitative study methods. Due to their complexity, it is also necessary to have access to clear, visual representations to completely understand the intricacies and the development of the research activities inside this design.

The Integration Process

The Integration process is a key component when conducting research using mixed methodologies, which produces conclusions by methodically synthesizing qualitative and quantitative data to enable comprehensive, robust understandings of complicated phenomena. To rely on knowledge of the above discussed methodologies, one may choose how and when to

combine the quantitative and qualitative research studies and logically integrate various data sources to produce new conclusions, however, it can be a difficult integration process (Svoboda, 2023). The components are mixed at the integration point, which is why the term mixed methods designs is used. However, the phrase mixing is deceptive because the components need to be thoroughly integrated rather than just simply mixed.

Mixed Method Research Designs

Three main categories of mixed methods research are described by Gurenlian (2023) which include explanatory, convergent, and exploratory sequential designs. However, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously, nearly simultaneously, or in phases in sequence. Stentz et al. (2012.) described the three designs to create a better distinction and understanding: One distinguishing characteristic of this approach is the concurrent and simultaneous deployment of the quantitative and qualitative components during the same stage of the study process. Both the approaches are frequently given equal weight, and the various elements are kept separate until at the outcomes' stage, when the final interpretation is formed and when they are combined. This approach helps create a comprehensive, complementary picture of phenomena or validate findings from one sort of data with those from another. Explanatory sequential designs gather and evaluate quantitative data, then utilize the findings to determine which qualitative data should be collected for additional study (Ivankova et al., 2006). Three stages make up the data analysis process for explanatory sequential designs: first, data is analysed quantitatively, followed by the qualitative data analysis, and finally, the interpretation of how the quantitative findings are generalized or extended to the qualitative findings is done. The researcher uses the integration process in this embedded design, combining it with the conventional quantitative or qualitative design analysis to

improve the overall design. One illustration would be incorporating a qualitative element, such as an experiment into a quantitative design.

Gurenlian (2023) also emphasized that designs may be helpful when thinking about novel, in-depth, or challenging research projects. When preparing to employ mixed methods research technique, it is essential to consider the following important issues to gather evidence that many approaches are required to achieve the study's goal. The questions that follow might be helpful as a tool.

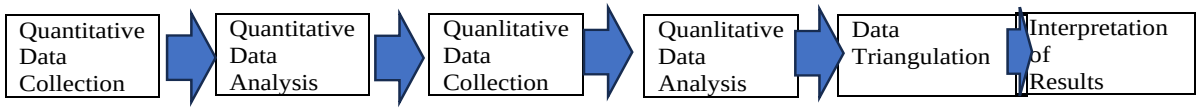
- Given the objectives and/or research questions, is using a mixed methods design appropriate?
- Is the procedure sequence well-described and aligned with the study's objectives?
- Does the explanation of data collection and analysis make sense and align with the objectives of the study? Is the data collection convergent, parallel, or sequential?
- Are both approaches equally vital or does one predominate over the other? The techniques are equally weighted in certain research. They are embedded or nested in other designs. However, a clear explanation of the process is required.
- Did using one approach interfere with or limit the usage of the other?
- How, when, and by whom is the data mixing or integration accomplished? Make it obvious how much integration there is.

The current study will employ an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. Creswell (2014) described that research design is divided into two phases. The first step involves the researcher gathering quantitative data, analysing it, and using the findings to further explain the qualitative phase, which is conducted in the second phase. Usually, the researcher can select the

type of individuals to choose about the qualitative stage and the inquiries to ask them to use the quantitative data as a guide. Additionally, this strategy's main objective is to use the qualitative data to give a more complete explanation for the initial quantitative findings. A standard procedure would start with the collection and analysis of survey data, followed by qualitative interviews and data triangulation to help interpret the results. This mixed methods approach is particularly well-suited for the current research question. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2017) emphasized that when a researcher needs qualitative information to explain quantitative data, such as abnormal points of information, unexpected outcomes, or extremely significant results, explanatory sequential design might be helpful. This is crucial for understanding the intricacies of managerial capabilities and their impact in a specific national context like Botswana. However, Botswana's socio-economic landscape and business environment present unique challenges and opportunities for women and youth-led enterprises. A purely quantitative study might miss the contextual factors that influence how managerial capabilities translate into success. This argument is supported by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) who argued that Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design are key proponents of pragmatism in mixed methods research. They argue that pragmatism provides a suitable philosophical underpinning for combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, because it places more emphasis on the research issue and the findings' practical applications than rigorous adherence to a single paradigm. This is highly relevant for a study aiming to inform interventions for women and youth-led enterprises. However, a diagrammatic illustration of the design is shown by figure 3.1.

Figure:3.1

Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design



Source: 2024 own compilation from related literature reviewed

Population and Sample of the Research Study

According to Kothari (2014, as cited in Bosire, 2024) sampling is a procedure that specifies the approach taken to determine the sample size and how members of the target demographic are chosen. Sampling is the procedure used to choose a subset of the population for research. It entails selecting a sample of units from a population to single out the characteristics, beliefs, and dispositions of individuals generally (Rahi, 2017). A well-assembled sample can improve the chance that the study results will be applicable to the population from which the sample was drawn (Thompson, 1999). Getting a representative sample, that is, a small number of units or examples selected from a much larger group or population, is the main goal of sampling.

Therefore, by examining the smaller group, the researcher may use its findings to make trustworthy inferences about the larger group (Rahman et al., 2022). According to Datey and Kuthe (2015) management scholars employ several sampling techniques. Due to the mixed technique approach used in this study, the inquiry will go into more depth about the sampling design process below, it comprises selecting the sampling frame, choosing the sampling techniques, figuring out the sample size, and identifying the target population.

The Target Population

All registered women, young business owners, and/or managers, between the ages of 18 and 75, who run their companies in the Southeast of the nation and have been in operation for a

year or more, were the target demographic. Women and youth business owners completed the questionnaire to collect quantitative data. Executives working for the Ministries and organizations responsible for SMME development also constituted a target population by participating in the interviews for qualitative data collection. The Southeast district comprises Gaborone, the major city of Botswana, Ramotswa, and Tlokweng villages, both surrounding the city.

The predetermined target population was used as participants (data source) for the survey and interviews following the goals of the researcher's study. Women encounter more challenges and are less likely than males to start their businesses. However, limited options for business still exist for young people, who also must deal with unemployment issues. To increase the rigor of respondents' participation, the inquiry employed a mixed-method approach and provided a deeper understanding of the intricate characteristics of firms owned by women and young people, as well as practical ideas for boosting their performance. The study sets to determine if good government policies and the expansion of women's and young people's enterprises are related, as well as whether management skills and the success of these firms are related. Additionally, the moderating effect of entrepreneurial training programs ascertained whether additional training would strengthen the relationship between managerial abilities, support networks, and the prosperity of young and female-owned businesses.

Sampling frame

A comprehensive collection of sample units selected from a population is sometimes referred to as a sampling frame. One thing to keep in mind is that a sample frame is more specialized than a population; a population is more generic (Rahman et al., 2022). Although the target population is not known, data for all registered women and youth enterprises is available at the ministries and institutions supporting enterprises. After receiving approval from Unicaf

University to contact the ministries, the investigator asked for accurate data on all the district's registered companies. However, SMME development organizations in the country have been mandated to provide support systems and ensure that they are sustainable. Therefore, they would have available information on the active and operational SMMEs. The researcher would request such valid data from their existing databases.

Sampling size

Carefully determining the sample size is necessary so that the sample will be sufficient to make trustworthy, widely applicable results. Knowing the specifics of the problems being examined within the community under study is essential for determining the right sample size. Additionally, a sample's sub-categories necessitate to take into consideration analysis, variation, accuracy, availability, and research costs (Singh & Masuku, 2014). For this reason, a crucial component of any scientific study is the sample size. Additionally, Singh & Masuku contended that sample size determination is the process of deciding how many observations to include in a sample. Sample size must be considered in any study or inquiry that seeks to make inferences about the population from a representative group of people. The cost of gathering data and the requirement for sufficient statistical power are typically considered when calculating a sample size for a particular study. The research made use of Cochran's sampling formula (1963). Cochran developed the formula $n_0 = Z^2\ p\ q\ /\ e^2$ in 1963 and 1975 as a representative sample for the proportions of a large sample. This is true when the sample size is n_0 and the standard normal deviation (Z^2) is set at 1.96, for 95% confidence level. The required accuracy level is **e**, the estimated percentage of an attribute in the population is p, and the desired confidence level which is 95% when (1 - α). The value of q is equal to 1-p. Therefore, the desired sample size that will be used that has been adopted from Cochran (1963) is as follows; n = 1.962(0.5) * (0.5)/0.052.

n = 384

Therefore, a sample size of **384** for quantitative research is regarded adequate for creating reliable criteria for the Likert scale items that assess management skills' influence on the success rate of women- and youth-owned businesses, and **16** for qualitative research, which then gives a total sample of **400** participants. The instruments utilized guaranteed that the data acquired allows for the depletion of all key concerns or that a saturation threshold was attained. According to Bosire (2024), it is advised to alter Cochran's formula when the target population is smaller than 1000 (or known) to ascertain the actual sample size necessary to fairly represent the target population. Similarly, Singh and Masuku (2014), agreed with the assertion that the sample size may be somewhat lowered in cases when the population is small. This is because, for a given sample size, a small population receives proportionately more information than a large one. The formula $n = n_0 / [1 + \{(n_0 - 1)/N\}]$ can be used to modify the sample size (n_0), where n is the sample size and N is the population size.

Table 3.1

Sample size determination

Target population	**Sample size**	**Sampling technique**
Women and youth entrepreneurs	384	Stratified
SMME advisors (Executives)	16	Purposive
Total	400	

How much of a sample is enough?

Francis et al. (2010) highlighted that interviewing research participants until data saturation is achieved, using semi-structured interviews, and analysing the data using content analysis are common ways to justify a study's sample size. The authors further noted that it is unclear what this implies that there is disagreement around the methodology for determining when data saturation

has occurred. The same is true for research using interviews, where the conceptual categories, or constructs, are predetermined according to contemporary theory. The content domain of the construct has most likely been adequately populated if the interviews are successful in generating participants' experiences or opinions within these conceptual categories. The issue of data saturation has significance as it pertains to the likelihood of obtaining a sufficient sample size for content validity in interview research based on theory, they noted.

Nonetheless, sampling strategies based on probability theory are typically employed in quantitative investigations. When researchers want to say anything about the likelihood (or chance) of something occurring in a population, they most frequently employ quantitative technique. In theory, a researcher may potentially reach every individual in the population. There is an equal and non-zero chance for every member of the population to be selected for the study sample. Stated differently, they are unable to have a no chance of being sampled. They are convinced that they have attained the right sample by doing this (Thompson, 1999).

Sampling techniques

When designing mixed method research both sampling methods for quantitative and qualitative methods are considered. However, probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the two main categories of sampling techniques (Rahi, 2017). Therefore, the primary sampling methods and methodologies typically employed in this research are described here.

Probability sampling

When probability sampling is used, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. Put another way, probability sampling enables the researcher to extrapolate the sample study's results to the full population (Higginbottom, 2004). Similarly, Rahman et al. (2022) argued that it is not implied that each random sample is an exact

representative sample of the population. Instead, it demonstrates that most random samples will be near the population most of the time and that it is possible to determine the probability that a sample will be correct. It is thought to be the best way to ensure that every sample unit serves as an accurate representation of every population. Therefore, the most important characteristic that separates qualitative from quantitative research is the question of generalizability (Higginbottom, 2004).

According to Datey and Kuthe (2015) the most popular techniques for probability sampling include the following; cluster random sampling, stratified random sampling, simple random sampling, and systematic random sampling. The present research employed stratified sampling. According to Sharma (2017) this sampling technique ensures that every stratum, including youth and women's subgroups, properly represents the sample and reduces bias. Chen (2016) contended that for more than a century, survey research has been dominated by probability-based sampling. Because randomization theory creates accurate representations of the target population, it minimizes selection bias, given comprehensive measures of sampling units and knowledge of selection probabilities.

Non-probability sampling

Non-probability population sampling can help in hypothesis formulation, case studies, pilot studies, and qualitative research. Typically, this sampling strategy is used in research projects when the features of the full population are not significant. Some researchers like this sample strategy due to its ease of use, speed, and affordability (Datey & Kuthe, 2015). Additionally, Schreuder et al. (2001) recommend using purposive sampling when making a quick decision. Purposive sampling is the process of identifying and choosing people or groups of people with specific expertise or experience in a topic of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). The strategy is used

to identify and choose the most information-rich examples and make the most use of the limited resources available. The approach is often more robust to small sample numbers and less expensive. Furthermore, non-probability sampling is frequently employed in qualitative research, which suggests that the findings of a study are frequently specific to the community being examined and not intended for generalization to other communities. Consequently, the desire to thoroughly explore the chosen issue and produce data that is rich in detail determines the sample size rather than the need to ensure generalizability (Higginbottom, 2004). There is no random selection since the individuals are selected by the researcher via non-probability sampling (Gelling, 2015). The research design and technique have an impact on participant selection in an inquiry. Typically, a qualitative researcher may utilize themes that emerge from continuous data analysis to influence the choice of participants in the future. Chen (2016) contended that such non-probability samples are susceptible to selection bias because they can readily diverge from the target population on significant statistics when selection probabilities are not present.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

Reliability

Utilizing the instrument's internal consistency, reliability was examined. Cronbach's Alpha (α) was utilized to evaluate for internal consistency in this investigation. Alpha values vary from 0 to 1, and as the value rises, so does dependability. As a rule, a value of 0.6–0.7 denotes adequate dependability, whereas 0.8 or above denotes good reliability (Bosire, 2024).

Validity

The extent to which the test's collection of items reflects the subject matter it is intended to evaluate (Saebi, 2017, as cited in Bosire, 2024). For example, whether the content of the questionnaire looked acceptable to its purposes.

Recruitment of participants

All female and young company owners and/ or their managers in the Southeast District composed the quantitative sample. Executives from groups that assist SMMEs in the nation made up the qualitative group. Through the Gatekeeper letter and the staff contact list, the researcher secured consent from management representatives of the pertinent ministries and organizations.

Materials/Instrumentation of Research Tools

The inquiry applied both instruments for quantitative and qualitative methods because the inquiry adopted a mixed methodological research design and strategy. Considering that qualitative and quantitative research methodologies vary in their fundamental epistemological assumptions, the data-gathering techniques utilized in these two types of studies are not the same. Stewart et al. (2008) claimed that epistemologies underpin all conceptions of methodology and address philosophical issues such as what is known, who knows it, and how concepts are tested to be accepted as true. Conversely, the methodology explains the strategies and techniques employed to collect data. In quantitative investigation, analysing correlation between variables is one way to assess objective hypotheses. Consequently, these variables may be evaluated or measured by many quantitative research tools, including surveys, enabling numerical information to be analysed statistically, for instance, through regression analysis. In qualitative research, there are several ways to collect data, such as through observations, one-on-one or group interviews, and textual material from books or movies. Gill et al. (2008) stated that focus groups and interviews are the methods that are most frequently used, especially in medical research. However, in the current study, face-to-face interviews were conducted with participants.

Questionnaires (surveys)

According to Creswell (2014) a survey design examines a demographic sample to produce a quantitative or numerical account of the attitudes, trends, or perspectives of the people. The researcher extrapolates conclusions or makes assumptions about the population using sample data. A quantitative survey will employ a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions. Creswell (2014) suggested that with a questionnaire instrument, a subset of the population is analysed to produce a numerical or quantitative portrayal of attitudes, practices, or views of the people. The assumptions about the population using sample data are developed by the researcher.

Golafshani (2003) observed that this paradigm emphasizes the importance of the reasons and facts of behaviour. Information is presented as quantifiable and summarized statistics, and mathematical analysis are the standard method for interpreting the numerical data, and statistical terminologies are used to communicate the conclusion. Nonetheless, the investigator utilized the existing questionnaire instruments from Bosire (2024) and Moise (2019) in the present investigation to derive significant and practical conclusions from the instrument's results.

Interviews

One method for doing qualitative research is comprehensive one-on-one interviews with a small group of people or individuals to learn about their perspectives on a given idea, project, or scenario. Boyce and Neale (2006) argued that in-depth interviews could be beneficial when researching new subjects in detail, and when looking for detailed information on a person's opinions and behaviour. Contextualizing fresh information by conducting interviews can occasionally give a more thorough comprehension of the events in the study and the reasons behind them. Yeong et al. (2018) underlined that to obtain the most valuable qualitative data possible, an interviewing approach that can be trusted is needed. It makes conducting interviews with various groups of individuals easier by outlining the subjects to be investigated in advance and making the

procedure systematic, uniform, and thorough. Furthermore, using an interview methodology ensures that comprehensive information is obtained in the allotted time, which increases the interview's effectiveness. Researchers are better equipped to understand respondents' experiences when they can identify crucial information relevant to the subject at hand and have access to extensive qualitative data.

Doody and Noonan (2013) mentioned that every participant receives identical questions in an identical sequence and language during a well-planned interview. This is accomplished using an interview schedule that outlines the predetermined questions and probes and is followed during the interview process. However, an analysis of the literature on the development of interview procedures demonstrated that several researchers concentrated on common elements, like interview settings, question composition, interview ethics, and interviewing techniques (Yeong et al., 2018). However, other writers proposed that interview inquiries should be developed following the investigator’s level of expertise in the field. However, certain authors argued that only a complete understanding of research subject is essential to guarantee that reliable interview questions are created. Further, the writers noted that the degree of expertise of the researchers had a greater impact on the calibre of the information gathered and the dependability of the instrument.

Pilot Testing of Instruments

When Majid et al. (2017) discussed the importance of pilot studies and the methodologies they employed in their paper, they found that conducting pilot interviews is a vital and helpful stage in the qualitative research paradigm since it highlights the improvisation in the main study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) observed that pilot studies and the quantitative method of testing a specific research instrument are frequently linked. However, they mentioned that in qualitative inquiry, where pilot work is conducted prior to the main research, the significance of the work

appears to have grown. Whatever the paradigm, pilot studies are helpful methods for setting up a larger investigation. According to Dikko (2016) numerous writers have emphasized how critical it is to conduct a pilot research since it helps identify potential problems with the measuring tool, which is essential to any research project.

Testing the Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

For interview instruments to be deemed reliable, they must satisfy both the validity and reliability standards to be considered trustworthy tools. Brink (1993) suggested that validity and reliability are essential features of every research project. Keeping a careful eye on these two variables will help differentiate high-quality research from low-quality research and guarantee that findings are accepted as legitimate and dependable by other scientists. Further, the author noted that the credibility and accuracy of discoveries in science are what define research validity. Similarly, the dependability and consistency of the informant's stories combined with the investigators' aptitude for obtaining and documenting correct information, consistently providing the same results throughout several testing periods, are all factors that contribute to reliability.

Creswell (2014) also highlighted that some methods should be used in the research design phase, while other strategies should be used in the data collecting and interpretation phases to guarantee high-quality outcomes. Refinement processes during the interview protocol formulation stage and evidence-based methods like member verification and triangulation may both be applied to increase the reliability of the interview findings. Brink (1993) cautioned the scholars that they must become aware of the factors that negatively impact on the credibility and dependability of their results and design and put into effect plans or procedures to minimize or avoid them. Error is one of the primary variables determining validity and reliability. Every inquiry contains mistakes, which are negatively connected with reliability and validity. The results are less accurate

and truthful the higher the degree of inaccuracy. Because of this, when developing and carrying out their study, researchers need to pay particular attention to probable sources of mistakes. Brink restated that the researcher might attempt to enhance the validity of replies in this type of environment in many ways: (1) by ensuring that informants are aware of the objectives, purpose, and type of investigation, the techniques for gathering information, and the planned use of the information gathered, (2) by initially establishing a trusting connection by engaging the participants and investing a significant amount of time in that setting, (3) by conducting repeated interviews with the same informant and documenting observations throughout time, and (4) by contrasting the results with further data. Hypotheses are tested in quantitative research using experiments and quantitative measures and the results of these tests lead to generalizations. Also, they underline how crucial it is to measure and examine the causal connections between the variables (Bashir et al., 2008).

Testing Reliability

According to Charles (1995) it is feasible to determine if a person's results mostly remain the same or if the consistency with which questionnaire questions are answered is achieved by using the test-retest procedure twice. Stability is the real term used to describe this feature of the instrument. The outcomes should be comparable if we work with a stable measure. An elevated level of stability indicates an elevated level of dependability, indicating repeatability of the outcomes. The Cronbach formula serves as one gauge for how strong that consistency is. Cronbach's alpha, also known as coefficient alpha, was developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951 and is a measure of internal coherence or dependability. Occasionally, consistency is referred to as dependability. It makes sense to utilize. Using Cronbach's alpha tests, surveys with many Likert scale questions may be evaluated for reliability. These questions are intended to examine latent

variables, notably hidden or unobservable traits like motivation, attitude, or conscientiousness. It is challenging to measure things in the real world. You may determine how closely connected a group of test items are to one another by using the coefficient (Taber, 2018). Alpha values vary from 0 to 1, and the higher the alpha value, the higher the dependability. However, a value of 0.6 to 0.7 indicates sufficient dependability, whereas 0.8 or above indicates exceptional reliability (Mugenda, 2008, as cited in Bosire, 2024).

Testing Validity

According to Roberts and Priest (2006) validity is the degree to which our intended outcome and what we believe we are measuring agree. Furthermore, in qualitative research, validity refers to how credible, compelling the facts are, as well as the degree to which it may be credibly refuted in the event of a disagreement (Bashir et al., 2008). The three classic forms of validity to check for are the three types of validity: concept, content, and criteria. Concept validity, according to Greenbaum et al. (1987) is the degree to which an instrument captures the idea or trait that it was designed to evaluate. The concept of content validity pertains to evaluating whether a measuring process includes a fair sampling of all the events in space and time that it is intended to reflect, or if the construct under investigation has been adequately sampled (Greenbaum et al., 1987). Content validity, as acknowledged by Salmond (2008) deals with how well the measuring instrument captures the main components or various aspects that are pertinent to the construct being assessed. A more direct measurement of what is frequently quantified indirectly in self-report or other reported instruments is what criterion validity aims to do (Greenbaum et al., 1987). Examples include predictive validity, which gauges future behaviour, and concurrent validity, which gauges present behaviour.

Quantitative Phase (1)

First, the quantitative phase of the study was carried out to evaluate the impact of managerial abilities on the success of businesses owned and operated by women and young people. The quantitative phase's goal was to verify the following hypotheses.

H_1: Entrepreneurship Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities

The aim of the hypothesis is to determine if there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurship education programs and managerial capabilities, which ultimately influence the success of women and youth-led businesses.

H_2: Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success

The purpose of the hypothesis is to ascertain if management skills will have a beneficial impact on the success of young and female-owned firms.

H_3: Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education programs and enterprise success

According to the hypothesis, there would be a better correlation between managerial skills and the performance of women- and youth-led firms as the number of entrepreneurship training programs increases due to their mediating influence. The theory states that when more entrepreneurship training programs are offered, the mediating effect of managerial capabilities will result in a stronger association between entrepreneurship programs and the success of women- and youth-led businesses.

H_4: Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurial education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation)

The theory examines if establishing and/or enforcing laws will have a beneficial impact on the expansion of enterprises managed by women and young people.

The link between the previously specified elements was examined using this hypothesis. The moderator effect will strengthen the relationship between entrepreneurial training, managerial capabilities, and the prosperity of women- and youth-led businesses becomes more intensive.

The Quantitative Data Collection Procedures (Survey process)

The data from the survey responses was collected for processing during the quantitative phase to ascertain how government regulations, entrepreneurial training initiatives, and management abilities that affect the performance of women- and youth-owned enterprises. The data collection method was modeled after Bosire (2024) who created a model to examine the performance and entrepreneurial orientation of youth-led micro and small businesses in Kenya. Another study by Moise (2019) examined how management competences were affected by interventions from supporting institutions: a case study of small, medium, and micro-sized businesses in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. More studies were reviewed to see if they would give more insights in assisting in selecting appropriate data collection tools to support the current inquiry. The researcher sought permission before starting the quantitative phase and got approval from local institutions. The permission letters for the present study are included in the appendix.

The Survey Participant Selection

Women, youth business owners or managers, were enlisted to complete the survey. Following approval, the researcher distributed the survey to study participants to complete the questions voluntarily. The Gatekeeper letters were included in the Quantitative Phase Request letter to the Ministries and Organizations for research participants to participate.

The Questionnaire Instrument Development

The survey instrument that has been validated was adapted from Bosire (2024) and Moise (2019) for use. A questionnaire with closed-ended questions based on a Likert scale was

developed to analyse the responses from the sample. The Likert-scale items have a 5-point rating system that goes from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The survey was reviewed, and feedback was given by my research supervisor. After that, the survey was updated to reflect the comments. The modified Survey Questionnaire can be found in the appendix. Demographic inquiries like age and gender etc. are questions in the inquiry form. Respondents will be asked to indicate at the end of the survey if they would be open to participating in an interview to advance the study.

Qualitative Phase (2)

A qualitative phase exploring individual perspectives on how to express integration was the second stage. The goal of the qualitative phase was to gain insight into how government regulations, entrepreneurial training programs, and managerial abilities affect the prosperity of women-owned and youth-owned enterprises.

Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

The interviewing process was guided by the findings of the quantitative research phase. Before starting the qualitative phase, clearance from the local institutions was sought.

The Planned Integrated Data Collection

To enable data integration at the methods level, data was integrated using the sample frame. Selecting interviewees who completed the questionnaire served as the foundation for the qualitative sample, which was derived from the quantitative sample. An integrated data-gathering system was used to plan and organize the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The approaches from the two phases were linked and combined. The two stages were combined for analysis and comparison to determine where the findings deviate and converge.

The Selection of Participants for the Interviews

Those who completed the quantitative survey, filled in their email addresses and expressed interest in taking part in an interview, that is, executives from ministries and other organizations that assist SMMEs, as well as women and young entrepreneurs, were called to participate. Before contacting interview subjects, permission was sought from local authorities. Survey respondents were contacted to arrange an interview after they consented to participate. The email or letter requesting the qualitative phase interview was included in the Appendix. Before conducting interviews, informed consent was acquired from the participants.

The Interview Protocol Development

Participants were interviewed by the researcher to get their unique opinions; this allowed us to integrate data from mixed methods research and form conclusions. My supervisor, who has familiarity with mixed methods research, evaluated the interview process that I would have produced and supplied, and it was made available in the Appendix.

Operational Definition of Variables (Applicable for Quantitative/Mixed Studies Only)

The research investigated the following independent variables; managerial capabilities, government policies and systems, and entrepreneurial training programs while the dependent variable focused on success for women and youth owned enterprises. Additionally, entrepreneurial training programs acted as moderating factors, that is, whether an increase in training would strengthen the link between management skills, support systems, and the performance of women and youth-owned businesses. The operationalization of the study's variables is displayed in Table below.

Table 3.2

Operationalization of the research variables

Research Hypothesis	**Objective**	**Variable Type**	**Indicators**
H_1: Entrepreneurial Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities	To evaluate the influence of management skills on the success of women and youth businesses.	Independent	• The initial input/treatment (e.g., training, workshops, or academic courses provided to founders/managers).
H_2: Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success	To evaluate the influence of management skills on the success of women and youth businesses.	Mediator	The internal mechanism or bridge (e.g., leadership, strategic planning, decision-making, and operational skills).
H_3: Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial education programs and enterprise success.	To evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training programs on the success of women and young-led businesses.	Mediator	• The more the training offered, the stronger the association between management abilities and the performance of women- and youth-led businesses
H_4: Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurial education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation).	To evaluate the moderating effect of government policies and systems on the relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities.	Moderator	• The contextual environmental factor (e.g., business regulations, subsidies, infrastructure, or bureaucratic red tape).
H1, H2, H3 & H4	Success of women and youth-led enterprises	Dependent	• The ultimate target outcome (e.g., firm innovativeness,

			growth, profitability, competitive advantage, or survival).

Levels of Measurement of Variables

Questionnaires were used to gather the necessary data from respondents to measure the constructs included in this study. The measurement levels, origin, components, and design of the equipment utilized in this investigation are all covered by the above table in detail in this section. To assess five of the components in this investigation, existing measures that have been deemed valid and reliable in prior research Bosire (2024) and Moise (2019) were employed. Nonetheless, the dependent variable of enterprise success was measured objectively.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014) there are four distinct scale types that are frequently employed in relation to levels of measurement. They are interval, ratio, ordinal, and nominal scales. For variables whose categories cannot be ranked in order, nominal scales are employed. Ordinal scales are ranking scales because they enable the arrangement of things according to their relative amounts of the idea under consideration. Despite having both nominal and ordinal characteristics, interval scales are useful for capturing variations in a concept's quantities across observations. Since ratio scales feature all the qualities of interval scales plus the added capacity to portray absolute numbers with absolute zero, they are the greatest type of measurement. The statistical techniques available for use in data processing depend on the size of measurement. All these scales were included since the questions in the questionnaire used for this study asked for differences in the amounts of a concept between observations. The respondents' demographics in this study included both nominal and interval values for things like gender, age, employment status, qualifications, and type of enterprise. A five-point Likert scale ranging from

1-5, that is from strongly disagree to strongly agree was also used as a measure interval metric for constructs such as enterprise success, the efficacy of government initiatives, entrepreneurial training programs, and management abilities.

Managerial competencies

Rambe and Makhalemele (2015) described managerial competencies as the capacity to complete a job or activity within a specific function or job by the owner and manager of an enterprise, and it is believed that these abilities are a crucial component in the success and longevity of small businesses. Small business owners and managers are in desperate need of personnel with both competence and expertise. To maintain the day-to-day operations of businesses, owner managers must also develop a variety of competences, including opportunity, personal, and strategic (Agbenyegah & Mahohoma, 2020).

According to Mashavira and Chipunza (2021) the qualities or aptitudes known as interpersonal or soft skills enable an individual to carry out their work more successfully. They handle the emotional aspect of things, assess the calibre of interactions with a company's stakeholders, and assist in enhancing the manager's capacity to establish solid connections with significant stakeholders such as suppliers, workers, and so on, which is a factor in higher company success. Organizational literature still considers the link between management competence and corporate performance to be crucial. However, it is crucial to determine in the current study how much managerial competencies affect the performance of businesses owned by women and young people. A 5-point Likert scale was utilized to judge management qualities for this study. To indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement as it best reflected their companies, respondents were asked to select between strongly disagree and strongly agree.

Effectiveness of government policies and support systems

According to Moise et al. (2019) interventions have been created to promote SMMEs because of their importance to the worldwide economic growth of countries. Within this research, any aid provided by government or private establishments to foster the growth of small, micro and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) is referred to as supporting institutions intervention. Further, there are several resources available to business owners in the country where they conduct business. The institutional sources of support are the main subject of this study. Support from government agencies and allied organizations, academic institutions, professional societies, and corporate associations are all considered institutional sources of support. These assisting organizations offer invaluable assistance in obtaining both non-financial and financial help.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (2019) policy on entrepreneurship has made a commitment to consistently lowering administrative and regulatory costs to promote business-friendly norms, laws, and regulations that make it easier for businesses to enter and exit the market. This is part of their endeavour to build a regulatory environment that is supportive to entrepreneurship. With this policy and other regulatory instruments in place that attempt to support SMMEs in Botswana, this inquiry focuses on assessing their effectiveness in helping women and youth business owners to perform better. In this study, a 5-point Likert scale was utilized to test the effectiveness of government policies and support systems. The respondents had to rate their agreement or disagreement with each assertion as it best reflected their company, with the options ranging from strongly disagree and strongly agree.

The Effect of Entrepreneurial training programs

According to Ministry of Trade and Industry (2019) NEP stated that education aimed at enhancing an individual's capacity and readiness to start and run a commercial firm is referred to as entrepreneurship education and skills development. The Botswana government declares the

strategic significance of the connection between industry and entrepreneurial education networks in enabling the development of skills and will work in conjunction with the Private Sector and other important stakeholders to foster and reinforce these relationships. Recognizing the critical role the private sector can play in advancing entrepreneurship education and skill development across the nation, the government will make sure the private sector's contribution to these programs remains paramount. Moise et al. (2019) confirm that the most common kind of company development services offered by supporting organizations is business training. To improve the managerial abilities of business owners, training is crucial. In a similar vein, training is a methodical and structured procedure that helps entrepreneurs and company owners obtain the abilities, know-how, data, and mindsets needed to meet their goals. The purpose of training is to improve a business owner's performance levels and working habits to increase productivity. This research employed a 5-point Likert scale to test entrepreneurial training programs as moderating factors, that is, whether an increase in training will strengthen the connection between the support networks, management skills, and the success of women- and youth-owned enterprises. Respondents were given the choice to declare whether they strongly disagree or strongly agree with each item that best characterizes their organization.

Enterprise success (Outcome variable)

Mohamad Radzi et al. (2017) argued that success in business is judged by an organization's competence to meet its goals and objectives. It may also be defined as a company's capacity to provide results and activities that are deemed acceptable. At least two important aspects of corporate success are financial versus non-financial, and short-term versus long-term success. According to this argument, there are several metrics that may be used to assess a business's performance, such as its ability to survive, make money, increase sales, increase the number of

employees, boost employee satisfaction, and maintain a positive reputation. Moreover, social enterprises must adapt to the present climate and become more inventive, with a new focus on helping organizations achieve efficiency and effectiveness gains (Wronka, 2013). Therefore, this research investigates how performance and innovation might be used as metrics to gauge an organization's success.

Innovativeness

Meulenberg (2004, as cited in Song Ng & Hung Kee, 2018) claimed that as innovation is a source of long-term competitive benefit, there is a strong link between innovativeness and the financial performance of a firm. Innovativeness, a complex concept that represents an organization's capacity to adopt novel practices, products, or behaviours, is likewise highly valued in SME performance literature research. Moreover, technical proficiency is a prerequisite for creating new behaviours, processes, and products. Chandler and Jansen (1992) argued that technical competence is the capacity to use the proper instruments, techniques, and processes to analytically address functional and technical problems in certain industries. It also includes knowledge and competency in a particular job area or activity. SMMEs may increase their level of innovativeness in step with market trends by improving technical competence by drawing on a semi-structured repertoire of core technical abilities and previous work experience. This is because technology is evolving and changing quickly. It is crucial for managers and entrepreneurs to be flexible in response to changes and to aggressively look for creative talent inside their company. For technical know-how and training in to create novel behaviours, procedures, and products, they need also make use of outside resources like technology transfer centres, research-based institutions, and well-established businesses.

Performance

According to Abdul Karim and Ahmad Suhaimi (2013) success and business performance are inextricably linked, there are occasions when they overlap. Put another way, success typically denotes that a company is operating profitably. However, SMMEs use a variety of factors to measure their performance, which can be categorized into aspects that are financial and those that are not. The writers also explained that cash flow and sales or revenue are company success's financial drivers, whereas customer happiness, experience, open-ended outlets, competitiveness, service quality, and problem-solving are its non-financial drivers. However, these indicators are some of the measures of performance that are used in this study. On the other hand, training in entrepreneurship is a crucial component that encourages entrepreneurship and has a favourable impact on performance (Hameed et al., 2020). A 5-point Likert scale was used in this study to assess the enterprise success (performance) as the outcome variable. Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent do they agreed or disagreed with each statement that best defined their organization by picking measures ranging between strongly disagree and strongly agree.

Study Procedures and Ethical Assurances

Before beginning the study process, whether it be quantitative or qualitative, the researcher obtained permission from the Unicaf Research Ethics Committees (UREC). This complies with the rules and research guidelines of the Unicaf university. De Wet (2010) asserted that Research Ethics Committees are fast emerging as essential procedures in an institution's overall operations. The REC’s approval ensured that the researcher may move on with requesting additional permission from Botswana's ministries and SMME development organizations. A Gatekeeper letter (Appendix C) was used by the research to contact the relevant authorities. Following acceptance, the researcher asked for all the women and young entrepreneurs' contact information if possible so that all the required preparations would be made to meet with them. Since the

researcher employed the explanatory sequential mixed method design, data was collected in two phases, that is, Phase 1 and 2.

According to Creswell (2014) in this approach, a quantitative strand is created and put into practice first, and the specific quantitative findings that will be addressed are selected after that. Second, a qualitative component is created to provide an explanation of the quantitative results.

In **Phase 1**, the initial step of the dominant stage of the investigation was conducted to test the hypotheses already mentioned. This took a while since it involved contacting participants and scheduling meeting times. However, thirty-three (33) SMMEs in the district participated in a pilot study of the questionnaire prior to data collection on a larger scale. Pilot testing was done to allow for any necessary tool modifications to increase its reliability (De Vos et al., 2011).

Surveys (Appendix F) were delivered by hand. Following their consent (Appendix D), women, young entrepreneurs, and government representatives for SMME service providers were requested to complete the survey. Before the researcher picked up the filled surveys the next day, respondents were given time to finish them. The human interaction and convenience that the procedure provided participants led to a rise in the response rate. Notably, respondents who asked to have surveys sent to their email addresses received a reasonable time to fill out whenever it was convenient for them. With this approach, the researcher uses the qualitative information to support a certain quantitative finding. An interview, for example, is meant to delve deeper and offer a more thorough explanation when statistical measurements have identified a significant predictor. Additionally, several quantitative results, including unexpected findings, are explained in greater detail by the qualitative framework of this technique (Dawadi et al., 2021). Finally, a synopsis and analysis of the numerical data were presented.

In **Phase 2**, individual viewpoints on how to convey their emotions about the topic were investigated through an empirical process. The qualitative stage aimed to acquire a deep understanding of people's thoughts and opinions on the research topic. Data was analysed and integrated from both phases and conclusions reached. In this integration, according to (Creswell et al., 2010) a single dataset such as a quantitative survey was analysed, and the data was then used to guide further data gathering such as interview questions and participant identification. In this manner, the integration took place by linking the data gathering from the second research phase with the analysis of the first phase's findings. However, as the discussions above demonstrate, the quantitative phase impacted the qualitative phase, and the qualitative phase contributed to the explanation of the quantitative results. Therefore, the writer was able to examine the research issues in a suitably thorough and in-depth way by utilizing the two data sets. Moreover, the study could be replicated because the topic has not received sufficient research attention. Several investigations have been extensively conducted on entrepreneurship development, women and youth economic empowerment in Botswana, Africa, and globally, etc, and inquiries on assessing how managerial skills affect the success of businesses run by women and young people are still to be explored.

Ethical Assurances

The Unicaf Research Ethics Committee (UREC) approval was on the 9th of September 2024 (Appendix A) allowing the researcher to start collecting data. The investigator gathered information from both primary and secondary sources to develop findings and suggestions. Participants from Ramotswa and Tlokweng in the district and the surrounding of Gaborone were given a structured face to face questionnaire in person to gather primary data. Nonetheless, a structured interview guide that followed the questionnaire was also given in-person. In the study

area, a few individuals were acquainted with the process and had internet connection, therefore the researcher, where suitable, emailed the surveys directly to the respondents via email. Additionally, at a time and location that worked for the respondents, the researcher personally performed the interviews.

The researcher obtained approval from management officials from the relevant ministries, and organizations through the Gatekeeper letter and the list of contact details of staff. The participants were also reached through the phone and email by the researcher. There were NO dangers, psychological damage, and/or moral dilemmas related to the suggested research project. The study's objective was not to intrude on people's personal lives, expose their secrets, or diminish their value. The study's objective was to aid the participant and the researcher to mutually collect enough information while maintaining the subject's safety. However, a code of conduct is necessary to carry out research that balances the interests of the study participants and the researcher, which leads to research ethics. Each participant got an informed consent form outlining the data collection process and its purpose. A thorough explanation of the participant informed consent form included information about all risks, risk-reduction techniques, and advantages for the participant. Each participant's consent was sought to prevent human rights violations; in fact, they should not be coerced into taking part in any way (Endacott, 2005).

All participants signed a written consent form, and after being made aware of the study's goals and methods, and respondents participated voluntarily. Every effort was made to find and eliminate any real or imagined problems where the researcher and participant might misuse their position. However, informed consent is the foundation of research that is morally sound. According to Dooly et al. (2017) all participants will always give the researcher their free, prior informed permission before the study project begins. Everything from methodology to data

processing was incorporated, including full disclosure of any possible risks to participants and whether respondents would get compensation. Data coding was used to preserve anonymity throughout the data analysis process. Surmiak (2018) also highlighted how crucial it is to constantly remain anonymous. Apparently still in use in social research, this strategy is premised on the notion that anonymity safeguards study participants from damage. The identities of the research participants must be kept secret to protect members of vulnerable groups from further stigmatization or marginalization. All collected data will be retained securely and kept confidential for a minimum of five years following publication, in compliance with institutional and ethical requirements. Maintaining participant confidentiality means keeping their names a secret and not sharing anything they say or do throughout the study unless they consented to it (Surmiak, 2018). The researcher will utilize secure passwords to access the digital gadgets, and the data will be safely kept in a closed cabinet.

Moreover, the researcher made sure that no group is subjected to bias in the study, concerning their sexual orientation, age, gender, colour, or ethnicity. When data is gathered, processed, interpreted, and disseminated, bias is any tendency or divergence from reality that might result in inaccurate findings. Bias may be deliberate or unintentional (Šimundić, 2013). The researcher would be interested in the ideas and viewpoints of the study participants; therefore, the qualitative technique may be more appealing to them in the proposed study. Nonetheless, triangulation presents an opportunity to optimize the advantages of every distinct approach while reducing the disadvantages (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The writer further noted that when the two approaches are used to investigate a single event, the personal aspect of the qualitative method is diminished by the quantitative technique's accuracy.

Additionally, the researcher adopted meaningful strategies to prevent biases and experiences from influencing the analysis or findings. They used suitable sample techniques, such as the stratified sampling method for quantitative research and the purposive sampling approach for qualitative research. Further, they ensured accurate theoretical/conceptual frameworks are used. The selection of a mixed methods design needs to be guided by a conceptual and theoretical framework that upholds the study's requirements and the broader science. There may occasionally be one or more frameworks guiding the research.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection procedure

The researcher requested permission from the Ministry of Youth, Sports & Culture, CEDA and the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) after the university approved the research authorization Gatekeeper letter. Copies of the research permits were sent to the offices of the youth district coordinators offices and the Gaborone and Ramotswa LEA branches, who then authorized the investigator to conduct research in certain areas. To obtain the records of the registered youth groups, the researcher went to the youth offices; consequently, the LEA branch offices were asked to provide the database of the clients (including women and youth). After the lists of enterprises were requested, they were selected at random and comprised the sample.

Consequently, 384 women and young entrepreneurs were included in the sample of respondents. The method of gathering data involved administering questionnaires to the respondents for completion. The survey questionnaires were distributed to the participants by the researcher and either waited for them to complete them or scheduled a time to collect them later. However, the survey instrument is one of the most popular data gathering methods in the quantitative approach. An effective method of gathering responses from the sample before

quantitative analysis was provided by requiring each responder to answer a comparable set of questions from the questionnaire which were closed-ended. In this quantitative paradigm, a five-point Likert scale with a range of 1–5 was used to measure the dependent and independent variables. Closed-ended questionnaires were used in the present study to guarantee that the empirical data they collected enabled the authors to conduct reliable statistical analysis and determine perceptive data interpretations (Creswell, 2014). This approach was favoured by the researcher since it featured the usual answers that a person may provide and included a small number of response possibilities that were either unique from or mutually exclusive from one another. To make it easy for the researcher and reader to comprehend how the data gathering connects to the variables, questions, and hypotheses, the table 3.3 below summarizes the variables, questions, and particular survey items.

Table 3.3

Research Variables, Research Questions, and Items on a Survey

Variable	Research Question	Survey Items
Managerial Capabilities	RQ1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?	Questions 9.1–9.10
Effectiveness of Government Initiatives	RQ2: How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?	Questions 10.1–15.10
Entrepreneurial Training Programs	RQ4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?	Questions 16.1–16.9
Enterprise Success	Q3: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?	Questions 17.1–18.6

In qualitative interviews, the second phase of data collection, the investigator interviewed individuals face-to-face. These interviews employed a small set of open-ended, unstructured questions intended to elicit the participants' ideas and opinions (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, to ask questions and record responses during qualitative discussions, an interview protocol was developed and adhered to by the researcher. Additionally, the researcher documented the material from interviews using handwritten notes, and audio recordings. However, permission was sort from the interviewees to use audio recordings. Creswell went on to say that even if an interview is recorded, he advises researchers to take notes in case the recording device fails. Additionally, researchers must prepare ahead of time for the transcription of audio recordings if they are used.

Pilot study

Before the main inquiry began, a pilot study was undertaken to test the research methodologies. Prior to the substantial quantitative research, this mini version of the original study was carried out to see whether a future, extensive endeavour was feasible. A pilot study, according to Dikko, (2016) is a trial run or scaled-down version of bigger research conducted prior to a full-scale examination. It can be carried out especially to pre-test a research instrument. This was done to prevent inquiries that were inappropriate, repetitious, or misleading. Additionally, pilot testing guarantees that a research tool can be utilized appropriately, assesses its viability, and produces consistent results. Several writers have emphasized the value of pilot testing, which helps uncover potential issues and regions that may necessitate instrument adjustments to identify any such flaws early (Gani et al., 2020). Approximately 33 respondents were used for this preliminary testing. Prior to being given to the chosen sample, the questionnaire was pilot tested to improve its design considering the study questions.

Data Analysis

Version 29 of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to assess the information gathered following editing, coding, tabulation, and the application of descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistical models, which produced the mathematical model linking the independent and dependent variables using correlation and multiple regression analysis, were used to examine quantitative data. A correlation shows the degree and direction of a link between two variables. According to Landau & Everitt (2004) the behavioural and social sciences make extensive use of the SPSS, a collection of software tools for data manipulation, analysis, and presentation. Arkkelin (2014) noted that SPSS is widely used because of its widespread use as the most popular software of its kind in both academic and corporate circles. Furthermore, SPSS is a versatile program that can be used for a variety of analyses, data transformations, and output formats; in the same way, it will satisfy our demands. The descriptive analysis of the qualitative data was conducted using the mean and standard deviation. Additionally, to analyse qualitative data, Tagutte software and content analysis were employed to find themes and patterns pertaining to management skills and business performance.

Summary

The chapter provided the methods utilized to address the study topics and summarized the main themes discussed. Nonetheless, the chapter made clear that the growth of Botswana's youth- and women-led businesses depends on the development of management abilities. Sustaining these businesses requires strategic strategy, sound financial management, and effective leadership. The study highlights the importance of focusing on empowerment initiatives that improve managerial skills, like the capacity to solve problems and make decisions, in addition to entrepreneurship. According to the ITC report, government programs that assist women and young entrepreneurs should adopt long-term strategies that prioritize ongoing training and assistance over temporary fixes. Improving the performance and sustainability of these companies might be greatly enhanced by closing the knowledge gap that exists between business practice and academia, particularly in management. Moreover, the study advances knowledge on how enhancing management skills may result in increased business success, particularly for businesses run by women and young people in Botswana. The chapter summarises the key themes or points as follows.

1. Botswana's economy has a high rate of entrepreneurship, especially among women and young people, but many of these companies struggle with good management techniques, which results in a high failure rate. For instance, compared to companies run by males, women-driven enterprises typically perform worse in areas like inventory control, meeting deadlines, and general business operations.

2. Obstacles Women and Young Entrepreneurs confront: Like in other Sub-Saharan nations, women in Botswana confront several obstacles, including restricted access to capital, education, and business mentorship. Their capacity to use efficient management techniques, which are essential for company success, is hampered by these difficulties. Furthermore, many of youth-

led firms in Botswana and other African nations fail within the first three years with significant failure rates.

3. Importance of Managerial abilities: According to the research, one of the primary causes of failure of youth-led and women-led businesses is a lack of managerial abilities, such as inventory control, financial literacy, and strategic planning. Better business success and sustainability are closely correlated with effective managerial abilities. According to the ITC (2019) research, these entrepreneurs may have a higher probability of success if they invest in these talents.

4. Government and Institutional Support: Botswana has government programs designed to assist small and medium-sized businesses. However, these initiatives frequently fall short in meeting the unique requirements of young and female entrepreneurs, such as mentorship and financial literacy. Furthermore, these initiatives have had limited long-term impact and inadequate execution due to the absence of integrated monitoring and evaluation procedures.

The mixed-method approach used in this study is essential because it enables a thorough examination of the ways in which management skills impact the viability of young and female-led firms in Botswana. This method makes it simpler to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, giving a thorough understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by these entrepreneurs, statistically significant patterns, and qualitative, in-depth individual observations. It is anticipated that combining the two approaches would yield insightful information that will help Botswana's entrepreneurial environment improve firm operations and results. Additionally, the combination of methods used in this study aims to leverage the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to improve the research findings. This method enables a more thorough comprehension of intricate phenomena, such as the managerial abilities that impact the success of Botswana's

youth- and women-led enterprises. This approach overcomes the drawbacks of employing a single method while improving the study's validity, breadth, and depth by approaching the research topics from several perspectives. Mixed approaches offer a thorough approach to comprehending complex topics and add significant insights to the literature, despite integration obstacles.

To obtain correct data for the study, both qualitative and quantitative tools must be used. Structured, quantifiable data will be provided via the questionnaire, and deeper, more contextual insights will be possible through interviews. The research tools will be improved and honed through pilot testing prior to the start of primary data collecting, guaranteeing their efficacy and dependability in answering the research questions. A mix of test-retest protocols, Cronbach's alpha, and several types of validity testing will be used to guarantee the reliability and validity of the research instruments. These techniques guarantee that the tools measure the targeted constructs precisely and constantly yield dependable findings. The legitimacy of the qualitative data is further enhanced by the application of techniques like member verification and triangulation. The study seeks to provide legitimate and dependable results by minimizing probable errors, which will enhance the overall calibre of the investigation.

The quantitative phase sort to evaluate theories about the importance of management abilities, governmental regulations, and entrepreneurial training in the performance of enterprises run by women and young people. This will be supplemented by the qualitative phase, which uses interviews to collect detailed viewpoints. The research attempts to offer a thorough grasp of the elements that lead to these companies' success by combining the two forms of data. The study adhered to ethical standards, guaranteeing informed consent and local authorities’ approval at each stage. Consequently, to ensure that the findings can be applied to a broader population of women and young entrepreneurs in Botswana, the study will utilize a strong and representative sample

technique. Both comprehensive quantitative analysis and in-depth qualitative insights were possible by utilizing both non-probability and probability sampling techniques. This study took a thorough approach, employing a range of scales and techniques to evaluate the effects of management skills, governmental regulations, entrepreneurial education, and the general prosperity of enterprises run by women and young people. When assessing the factors linked to company performance, the use of established scales such 5- point Likert- scale guarantees consistency and dependability.

Finally, the quantitative information was examined making use of SPSS version 29. The social and behavioural sciences make widespread use of SPSS because of its broad range of capabilities in data analysis, presentation, and modification (Landau & Everitt, 2004; Arkkelin, 2014). To evaluate the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed after it was edited, coded, and tabulated. Additionally, the qualitative data was subjected to content or topic analysis. This strategy entailed looking for recurrent themes or patterns in the interviewees' replies about managerial abilities, company performance, and other elements influencing the prosperity of businesses run by women and young people.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter offers an interpretation and thorough examination of the collected data from the participants in an investigation that used the South-east Region as a field to figure out how managerial skills may affect the performance and, eventually, the success of youth and women-led businesses in Botswana. Effective management skills, successful government initiatives, and entrepreneurial programs are essential to small business success because they impact the expansion and prosperity of these businesses.

Like other African countries, Botswana needs additional programs and establishments that can actively bridge the knowledge gap between business and academics, especially by focusing on managerial and critical thinking skills. However, the use of mixed-method approach in the current study improved the rigor of respondents' engagement, which facilitated the comprehension of the complex features of women and youth-owned businesses as well as practical strategies for enhancing their performance. Since women and young people are the most vulnerable segments of society, they require greater attention. There is evidence of the difference in earnings between men and women in this area. According to Chigudu (2018) there has been little progress in closing the income gap between men and women, but there is still a sense of optimism. The survey was conducted in the large city of Gaborone, as well as the surrounding countryside, which includes major villages like Tlokweng and Ramotswa.

The inquiry utilised both closed-ended and open-ended survey questions that yielded quantitative data, which was recorded, analysed, and interpreted in distinct ways. The data gathered from research participants encompassed a range of topics and is grouped into distinct research objectives (RO), hypotheses, or theme areas. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences “version 29” was employed to capture and examine the data obtained from closed-ended questions.

Further, frequency analysis and other descriptive statistics were employed in this investigation. To analyse the data, inferential statistics like linear regression analysis were employed.

The research questionnaire (Appendix F) comprised of six (6) sections, which are A, B, C, D, E & F. The initial segment (A) of information represented attributes of the research participants' demographics. These include age, gender, position, and highest level of education. The other variables that were examined were the business sectors that the business belongs to, whether the business is formally registered or not and the entire workforce that works for the company. These factors influence the inquiry and aid in characterizing the sample under study.

The second section (B) consisted of a set of information which was collected to determine the level of respondent’s agreement or disagreement whether managerial abilities are correlated with the success of the firms. A related set of information was collected from them to determine whether they possessed the technical skills necessary to successfully manage their businesses, effectively communicate their goods and services to their stakeholders, encourage their staff to work hard as a team, and inspire them to develop innovative ideas and plans so they can make wise decisions and find solutions to their business issues. An open-ended inquiry was used to ask the respondents to further specify the managerial abilities necessary to operate profitable companies.

The third set of information (C) was collected to establish government and supporting institutions’ assistance received by SMMEs. They were required to state the sources of support that helped them acquire managerial competencies. Formal education and training, on-the-job training, government agencies, and commercial aid organizations are just a few of the ways SMMEs can acquire skills. Respondents were provided with a list of government-sponsored organizations, including Business Botswana, and Sector Education & Training Institutions,

CEDA, YDF, LEA, BITC to ascertain whether they agreed or disagreed that these organizations had assisted them in developing managerial skills. A similar question was posed which targeted private supporting institutions such as business associations, commercial banks, educational institutions and expert services, including accounting firms and consulting services, or lawyers' firms. Through an open-ended inquiry, respondents were asked to list additional forms of support they get from government agencies which could have been omitted to enhance their managerial competencies. Finally, information on business development services from both public and private funding sources was sought. They ought to agree or disagree if they have received training, mentoring counselling, incubation and advisory services from supporting institutions.

The fourth section (D) aimed to establish the challenges that are hindering women and youth business owners and managers from obtaining support from entities that provide funding. interviewees were to specify how much they agree or disagree with the assertions such as whether they are not aware, do not appreciate the institutions providing assistance, whether the available assistance is not appropriate, whether they do not have enough resources, lack adequate knowledge about company development services and whether the organizations providing support prevent them from taking part in the policy-making process etc. They were further probed to specify the challenges they were facing to access assistance to develop their management skills in case they were left out.

The fifth set of information (E) focused on entrepreneurial education and training programs offered by institutions to find out if the programs were effective in equipping entrepreneurs with the necessary managerial skills to run sustainable enterprises. Information gathered included whether they have improved their leadership and decision-making abilities, whether the quantity of business training they have attended was adequate, whether the training was pertinent to

their needs, how long and frequently they have attended, and whether the information was clearly structured and easy to understand. Conversely, the questions sought to determine whether managerial abilities, support networks, and the viability of businesses run by women and young people were more strongly correlated with the amount of training provided.

The sixth data set (F) intended to establish how innovativeness applies to enterprise success. The following statements were used to prompt positive or negative responses from the participants such as, innovativeness has helped my business break into the market; their companies encourage creativity in launching new products; they constantly incorporate fresh concepts into their operations to guarantee customer satisfaction; occasionally, issues in my business are resolved with fresh, creative ideas from staff members; their companies are proactive in innovation before their rivals react; and they have adopted technology-based marketing to attract potential clients.

Information that would disclose the business performance measures associated with the company's success was also examined. These were the performance measures that the respondents concurred or did not agree with. Since the start of the business, my company's sales volume has increased; I have hired more employees to meet the growing demand for my goods and services; the company's profits have exceeded my initial investment; they have implemented better cost-cutting and profit-maximizing strategies; they have opened more branches to meet demand and reinvest profits; and their clientele has grown significantly since they first opened.

However, after the survey process was completed, a qualitative investigation was carried out and the data gathered was triangulated with the quantitative information to enhance the study findings. Using open-ended questions, themes were employed to further analyse data that was collected from key informant interviews.

The research questions served as the framework for the whole chapter's presentation and interpretation of the results after the methodical data gathering procedure. The questions were **RQ1**: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully? **RQ2:** How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses? **RQ3:** How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana? **RQ4:** To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

Trustworthiness of Data

Producing meaningful and dependable research conclusions requires ensuring the data's trustworthiness. Given the volume of data being shared and the growing reliance on it for important decision-making, it is now crucial to guarantee the reliability of information at the receiving end to produce accurate outcomes (Gurjar & Moon, 2016). Therefore, data trustworthiness means the degree to which data may be trusted to be accurate, consistent, and dependable for its intended use. It is a crucial idea in data management because it influences the level of confidence that people and organizations can have when using that data to make choices.

Another idea seen in the literature is the substitution of the word validity in qualitative studies that are rigorous or trustworthy (Hayashi et al., 2017). The authors further argued that a wide range of words can be used to describe validity, including appropriateness, and even quality. Morse et al. (2002, as cited in Kyngäs et al., 2020) argued that standards are helpful for assessing relevance and usefulness, but they do not by themselves ensure that the study will be pertinent and helpful. They contend that to guarantee rigor, the researcher needs to incorporate specific tactics

into factors that are important to the qualitative research process, including data saturation, theoretical sampling, sample adequacy, investigator responsiveness, and methodological coherence. Kyngäs et al. (2020) concluded that the sample is a crucial component of trustworthiness. Participants and/or materials that are pertinent to the study issue must be included, and it must be suitable. Since data saturation produces the optimal sample size, it is the most crucial indicator of adequate sampling, while purposive sampling may be helpful in creating a suitable sample. Additionally, they pointed out that data saturation guarantees that the collected information may be arranged into concepts, themes, and categories, confirming the completion of the study. After conducting a few interviews or after gathering some information from the study papers, researchers who wish to present reliable analyses should think about conducting a preliminary analysis. Additionally, researchers should remember that reliability will be influenced by the unit of analysis they choose.

Gunawan (2015) proposed that there are four categories of trustworthiness: transferability, which is a type of external validity, confirmability which primarily relates to presentation, dependability which is more closely related to reliability, and credibility, which is the positivist concept of internal validity. However, these qualities of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are commonly used terms in qualitative research to describe the reliability of data. Lincoln and Guba (1982) further maintained that these four attributes ought to take the place of the idea of internal validity. This means that qualitative researchers must provide proof of these four above main standards to ensure that the study's conclusions are trustworthy.

Credibility

According to Schmidt (2017) numerous published critiques of the credibility of study findings in psychology as well as other disciplines have surfaced in recent years. The main

emphasis of these criticisms has been questionable statistical research procedures and methodology. The author further reiterated that many research study conclusions, however, are doubtful not because of the evidence analysis procedures employed but rather because pertinent earlier research findings were overlooked. In other words, known study findings that are very relevant to the content and conclusions of the paper were not considered, discussed, or even brought up.

Credibility, therefore, describes whether the study results show a conceptual, trustworthy interpretation of the initial facts (Kyngäs et al., 2020). The writers also emphasized two elements that contribute to credibility. Firstly, doing the investigation in a method that guarantees readers will accept the results and acting to lend credibility to the research report. According to Patton (1999) the credibility issue for qualitative research consists of three distinct but related components. Notably, rigorous protocols and techniques for collecting high-quality data that are thoughtfully evaluated, taking into consideration concerns of triangulation, validity, and reliability. However, triangulation issues examine the credibility of the researcher, based on their education, background, performance history, standing, and self-presentation; and a philosophy that recognizes the importance of qualitative research, which encompasses inductive analysis, intentional sampling, qualitative methods, a fundamental comprehension of naturalistic inquiry, and holistic thinking.

However, the researcher's efforts to guarantee that the sample size was suitable, that data saturation was achieved during data collecting, and that the study participants were suitable for the research topic, all contributed to the study's increased credibility. Before the data collecting phase started, the researcher found it helpful to interact with the research participants for a while. This helped the researcher understood some of the realities that the participants face and help them feel

at ease while speaking with the researcher or researchers. Prior to data collection process, we performed pre-testing interviews to find out the types of responses the questions would generate and if these replies were pertinent to the research goal, this was mainly done by the researcher to reduce the chance of undermining the credibility of the study.

However, during the interview process, to address a range of experience descriptions and avoid interviewer bias, open-ended questions were employed. This was carefully done by asking broad questions and being careful not to influence or persuade the subject to provide a particular response. The interviewer found it beneficial to record the conversations and later transcribed them. When analysing pre-test data, the researcher also considered if she allowed participants adequate time to respond, whether they had any influence on them, and whether they were able to ask more in-depth questions. Over and above the mentioned credibility measures outlined, the researcher also adopted an appropriate method of data analysis where information was coded before analysed to enhance the credibility of the research and to minimise errors.

Transferability

Kyngäs et al. (2020) define transferability as to how well research findings may be applied to different domains and situations. When it comes to transferability, researchers should consider if their findings would be applicable to a different population of participants, they noted. According to Ghafouri and Ofoghi (2016) transferability suggests that study findings will be applicable in the future and that they will be the same as findings in similar circumstances. Korstjens and Moser (2021) emphasized that by providing detailed explanations, the investigator conducts a transferability assessment with a potential user, through thick description of the research findings to their own setting. This means that thick, in-depth explanations are provided by the study strategy and methodology, data collecting, data analysis, and a thorough explanation

of the topics. However, for an outsider to understand the behaviour and experiences, a thick description must include both the context and the behaviour and experiences (Korstjens & Moser, 2021).

Dependability

According to Guba (1981, as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1982) dependability is a term that takes into consideration both traditional unreliability as well as additional shifts or changes that the investigator purposefully introduces as the inquiry's design develops or unfolds and objectivity because of confirmability. Korstjens and Moser (2021) have described dependability as the consistency and longevity of research findings across time. They further highlight that subjects' evaluations of the results, analysis, and solutions of the study are given. These are supported by the information gathered from study participants. According to Ibraigheeth (2023) a few qualities, including resilience, security, confidentiality, availability, and dependability, combine to form dependability in general. These characteristics allow a user to rely on and trust a system. Two strategies for reliability include conducting peer debriefings with a colleague and keeping an audit trail of process logs. The researcher keeps process logs, which document all the actions conducted during the study and the decisions made about its components, such as who to observe and what to interview.

Korstjens and Moser (2021) conceded that the investigator must provide a comprehensive collection of notes detailing the decisions taken throughout the study process, team meetings, reflective thoughts, sample, resources utilized, findings, and information on data management. This allows the auditor to determine whether the necessary approach is being used and how clear the research route is to ensure dependability and confirmability. Moreover, Kyngäs et al. (2020) think that an investigator might reexamine their findings, either the complete set of data or a

portion of it to verify the accuracy of the analysis process's findings. A researcher may, for instance, conduct two analyses of their data and evaluate how well the results speak to the subject of the study. However, this approach might not work because it is quite possible that the investigator will recall how they initially carried out the assessment. The authors further argued that the main driving force behind sending the study to peers for assessment is due to a lack of confidence, and that some academics contend that a researcher should not require outside assistance to analyse their data. Similarly, thorough the explanation of the analytical procedure is a good place to start when a researcher wants to establish the reliability of their work.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which other people agree with the study's conclusions, including participant and supervisor and colleague reviews, researcher validity, a summary of situations that conflict, and precise explanations of facts utilized to enhance study results (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016). According Nyirenda et al. (2020) the term confirmability describes the researcher's impartiality in analysing the results, the findings are devoid of bias, especially social-desirability bias, which can be inherent considering the way the researchers design and employ the instruments. The secret to controlling such prejudice is to remain reflective. Recognizing and considering how one's ideas and experiences might influence participant answers, and the collection, processing, analysis, and presentation of data is referred to as reflexivity.

Confirmability involves the feature of neutrality. It is necessary to protect the data's inter-subjectivity. This means being grounded in the facts rather than one’s own inclinations and viewpoints. However, the interpretation process, which is a component of the analysis process is emphasized (Korstjens & Moser, 2021). Similarly, Kyngäs et al. (2020) supported that this facet of credibility pertains to the relationship between the facts and the outcomes. Therefore, while

thinking about confirmability, a researcher should assess if their conclusions are influenced by the information collected from respondents alone, or whether bias, motivation, or other interests of the researcher are also considered.

Reliability and validity of data

Pilot study

The pilot study was carried out to determine if the study instruments that are used to collect data, accurately addressed the research questions. The reason being that these instruments would help the investigator to identify potential problems and implement corrective measures related to the study questionnaire to ensure the instrument's applicability and responsiveness before the main study. Thirty-three (33) questionnaires were distributed amongst the study participants and the data collected was processed in SPSS to determine its reliability and validity in measuring the research questions. Reliability testing was used to establish the consistency of statements used to measure targeted variables in the questionnaire while validity testing measured the accuracy of the statements in measuring targeted variables.

Reliability analysis from the pilot study

The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach Alpha analysis, and the instrument was also used to gather information from the target group. The technique is used to analyse the internal consistency of various statements used to analyse a variable. The various statements of a variable are expected to yield the same result when used multiple times indicating that they are reliable. Table 1 below outlines the Cronbach Alpha values and their interpretation.

Table 4. 1

Interpretation of Cronbach Alpha Values

Cronbach's Alpha @	**Internal Consistency**
Above 0.9	Excellent
0.8-0.9	Good
0.7-0.8	Acceptable
0.6-0.7	Questionable
0.5-0.6	Poor
Less than 0.5	Unacceptable

***Source**: Adopted from Reliability Analysis, Cronbach Alpha in SPSS (Lesson 6) from YouTube.*

Reliability of the data collection instrument

The results of Cronbach's Alpha were utilized to determine the internal consistency of the Likert scaled responses; the findings were presented in Table 2. They yielded Cronbach's Alpha above 0.7 except for sources of acquiring managerial skills with an Alpha value of 0.685.

Table 4 2

Reliability Analysis Results

Variable	Question number	No of Items	Cronbach 's Alpha	Internal consistency
Managerial competencies	9	9	0.863	Good
Sources of acquiring managerial competencies	10	5	0.685	Questionable
Government supporting institutions' help in acquiring managerial competencies	11	6	0.846	Good
Private supporting institutions' help in acquiring managerial competencies	12	4	0.827	Good
Received business development services from government supporting institutions to gain managerial competencies	13	6	0.918	Excellent
Received business development services from private supporting institutions to gain managerial competencies	14	6	0.941	Excellent
Challenges to accessing assistance from supporting Institutions	15	9	0.761	Acceptable
Entrepreneurial Training Programs	16	9	0.836	Good
Innovativeness aspects contribution to enterprise success	17	6	0.896	Good
Business performance measurements contribution to business success	18	6	0.860	Good

Validity of Analysis of Data

Research validity is one of the most important principles in academic research because it forms the cornerstone of the reliability and significance of research findings. It serves as a crucial indicator of whether a study measures the ideas it plans to investigate, demonstrating the precision and importance of the information gathered. In this study, 33 completed questionnaires from the pilot investigations were analysed to determine if the questionnaire was valid.

Face validity and content validity were used in this study to ascertain if the questions asked were relevant and clear based on the judgement of the experts. The method was adopted because

it is a fast and preliminary check that is frequently carried out by people who are representative of the target audience or who are knowledgeable about the construct being measured. Two pertinent Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) experts who possess in-depth expertise of the construct we are measuring were identified for this study to evaluate the tasks, items, and questions that comprise the instrument. They were specifically designed to evaluate if the items seem to be relevant to the topic being tested, whether the language used is clear, and whether the time required to answer the questions is sufficient. The experts attested to the validity of the study questionnaire based on these validity measures.

Construct validity assessment necessitates looking at how the measure being assessed relates to variables that are either known to be related to or conceptually related to the construct that the instrument is measuring (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). The validity of the constructs examined within the dependent variables was assessed using Factor analysis. Table 4.3 presents the results of the validity test across ten specific variables. However, we can infer from the factor loadings how strongly the variables are related to one another. Strong convergent validity is demonstrated by high loadings. They are often ≥0.5 or higher, and ideally ≥0.7. It shows that the items designed to assess a particular construct, and that underlying factor have a strong association. This suggests that these items are accurate indicators of that idea. Consequently, low Factor Loadings (ideally less than 0.3) are good discriminant validity. It indicates that there is little or no correlation between the items measuring one construct and other different constructs. Since the values of every variable were greater than 0.50, the instrument was considered valid.

Table 4.3

Factor Loadings for Construct Validity

Variable	Number of Items	Factor loadings
Managerial Competencies	9	.670
Sources of Acquiring Managerial Competencies	5	.715
Government Supporting Institutions	6	.767
Private Supporting Institutions Group	4	.502
Received BDS from GOVT supporting Institutions	6	.679
Received BDS from PVT supporting Institutions	6	.725
Challenges in accessing assistance from SI	9	.646
Entrepreneurial Training Programs	9	.532
Innovativeness	6	.690
Performance	6	.716

RESULTS

REPORTING RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

For this investigation, two statistical analyses were adopted. Data was analyzed statistically using the two-tailed test (T-test) and the alpha level (p-value). Limentani et al. (2005) asserted that by computing the test statistic, it enables the comparison of the mean values of two data sets. Despite which way you think the relationship could go, a two-tail test checks for the likelihood of the relationship in both directions. Likewise, using the Alpha level (p value), the researcher looks for any indication of significance in the findings. Usually, this is set at the 5% (0.05) alpha level, with the 1% (0.01) alpha level coming in second in popularity. Typically, these are denoted as p, such as $p = 0.05$ or $p = 0.01$. A hypothesis's acceptance or rejection is determined by its significance and level of confidence with the alpha (a) level. However, we set the significance thresholds as low as feasible, often at 5% ($p = 0.05$) or, better yet, at 1% ($p = 0.01$), because it is obvious that we want our results to be as precise as possible. Anything over these numbers is seen as

insufficiently accurate. Stated differently, the findings are not significant. Therefore, an absolute t-value which is greater than 1.96 indicates a significance level of 0.05 ($p<0.05$) for the parameters. Moreover, to analyze quantitative data, a few statistical tests were also employed to test the assumptions. The following tests are described below.

Correlation Analysis –Pallant (2010) noted that this statistical analysis examines the relationship between a group of variables. A bivariate analysis that assesses how closely two variables are related Saunders et al. (2015). A positive linear relationship between two variables is shown by a correlation coefficient of +1, whereas a negative linear relationship is indicated by a correlation coefficient of -1, and when it is 0, it indicates the absence of linear relationship at all. According to Farndale et al. (2011) a correlation coefficient falls into one of the following categories: very weak falls between 0.0 and 0.19, weak falls between 0.20 and 0.39, moderate falls between 0.40 and 0.59, strong falls between 0.60 and 0.79, and very strong falls between 0.80 and 1.0. Pearson's correlation was used to determine if two or more continuous variables are correlated, which has a value between 0.00 (indicating no connection) and 1.00 (indicating perfect correlation).

Linear Regression Analysis- is employed to assess the study's hypotheses and determine the independent and dependent variables' linear statistical relationship. Asha and Sindhuja (2022) assert that regression analysis improves the study's capacity to draw meaningful findings and offer suggestions by illuminating the statistical link between variables. The statistical goal of regression analysis is to reject the null hypothesis of no impact by demonstrating high R^2 and significant t-values. Kumari and Yadav (2018) suggested that the relationship between x and y is perfect when R^2 is + 1, meaning that changes in x account for 100% of the variance in y. A weaker linear relationship between x and y exists when it is $0< R^2<1$ indicating that changes in x can only account

for a fraction of the changes in y. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)- This is used to assess the association between many groups. However, a variety of tests can also be used including MANOVA which is for multivariate analysis of variance, whereas ANCOVA stands for analysis of covariance.

Demographic Characteristics in Quantitative Enquiry

The respondent's demographic information was gathered during the first part of the study, which was the quantitative investigation, and the second stage, which entailed the gathering of qualitative data. The major demographic data of the respondents examined among the section under the study included the following: gender, age range, the position of the owner and/or manager. The respondents were required to specify other positions they were holding as the overall managers (overseers) of the business and their highest level of education. Further, to classify participants, questions were asked regarding their sector, the subsector the business they belong, the status of their business registration and the total number of people employ Prior to the survey's primary questions, the study sought to have a better knowledge of the respondents' demographics to form preconceived notions and appreciate the variety of answers.

However, the overall number of people that took part in the study was four hundred (400). A total of 384 respondents were engaged in the quantitative survey whereas sixteen (16) answered to the interview questions. The distribution of the 384 study participants that participated in the quantitative inquiry by gender is shown in Table 4.4.

Gender-The statistics indicate that 69.5%were female and 30.5% were male.

Age-The study's objective was to ascertain the respondents' age distribution. According to the Botswana constitution, youth are between the ages of 18 and 35. However, the ministry in

charge of the Youth Development Fund (YDF) removes young people at the age of forty (40) and graduates them from the youth category as beneficiaries of the fund.

An analysis of information demonstrates that there are more young people than adults who participated in the survey, as evidenced by the fact that most respondents at 54,4% were between the ages of 26 and 35. However, the least were in the age category of 45> at 16, 4%. Further, an analysis revealed that there were more female respondents, at 35,5% against 30,5% of the male respondents in the youth category. 33.8 % in the research were adults' participants, all of whom are female.

The research population's age distribution mirrored the overall population trend; most of the respondents are in the age range 26-35, at 54.4 % followed by 36-45, at 17.4%. Those participants who were in the age range of 46> made up 16.4 %, while the remaining age range 18-25, accounted for 11.7 %.

Positions in the Business-Analysis in Table 4.4 portrays that owner managers made up a sizable portion of the study participants at 82.6%, followed by employee managers at 8.6% and sales assistants at 2.3% respectively. The percentages for shop assistant, director, and supervisor positions ranged from 1% to 1.6%, while the percentages for other positions were below 1%. The "other category was used as the second option to ask the respondents to specify their positions. Since most business owners have full-time jobs elsewhere, it is quite clear that they do not operate their companies full-time. Instead, they have hired individuals to supervise and manage their companies.

Highest level of Education-Furthermore, Table 4.4 revealed that the study population was highly literate, which is shown by 84,7% of the respondents having attained tertiary education

trailed by those with basic education at 15%. Only 2% of the population reported that they did not have formal education.

Business Sectors -A high proportion of the respondent's business were from the services sector at 65,9% followed by those from the agriculture and manufacturing sectors at 18% and 13% respectively. Tourism sector had the least representation at 3%.

Business Subsectors-They were asked to state the subsectors of the businesses they operate following the business sectors. The analysed information indicated that 17,5% of the respondents are in the farming industry, which is the highest and the least being the landscaping and events decoration with 1,5% respondents.

Business Registration Status-Most of the respondents, 78,4% operated formally registered businesses while 21,6% were not. Those businesses that operate without registration usually fall within the informal sector category. Services had more (63.9%) of businesses operating without formal registration followed by agriculture and manufacturing at 34.9% and 1.2% respectively. All respondents' businesses under the tourism sector were formally registered.

Number of People Employed by Business -Employment distribution of respondent's businesses shows that 75,8% of businesses had 1-5 employees while 17,2% employed 6-20. Employment rate was low amongst the 21-49 and 50-100 categories with 4,4% and 2,6% respectively.

Table 4.4

Demographics of the participants

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	117	30,5
Female	267	69,5
Age		
18-25	45	11,7
26-35	209	54,4
36-45	67	17,5
46>	63	16,4
Business Positions		
Owner Manager	317	82,6
Employee Manager	33	8,6
Sales Assistant	9	2,3
Shop Assistant	6	1,6
Director	5	1,3
Supervisor	4	1,0
Others	10	2,6
Highest level of Education		
No formal education	2	0,5
Primary	5	1,3
Secondary	52	13,5
Certificate	44	11,5
Diploma	85	22,1
Bachelor's Degree	150	39,1
Master's Degree	38	9,9
PhD	6	1,6
Post PhD	2	0,5
Business Sectors		
Tourism	12	3,1
Agriculture	69	18,0
Manufacturing	50	13,0
Services	253	65,9
Business Subsectors		
Education Services	13	3
Health Care Services	14	3
Farming	68	17,5
Agro processing	14	3
Transport & Communication Services	31	8

Financial Services	10	2,5
Construction Industry	26	6
Business Consultancy Services	18	4,5
Beauty Care Services	31	8
Retail, Distribution & Supplies	54	14
Food Supplies & Catering	23	6
Landscaping & Events Decoration	7	1,5
Light Industrial	34	9
Creative Arts Industry	5	4,8
Hospitality & Travel Tours	15	4
Other Services	21	5,5
Registration Status		
Registered	301	78,4
Not registered	83	21,6
Number Employed		
1-5	291	75,8
6-20	66	17,2
21-49	17	4,4
50-200	10	2,6

N=384

RQ1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

Table 4.5 represents the responses to question 9 on managerial competencies. The data shows that most of the respondents, 81 percent (311 respondents), possess the technical skills necessary to run their businesses successfully. They effectively communicate the products and services to their stakeholders at 84.1 % (323 respondents). Moreover, they agree that they inspire their employees, 88.6% (340 respondents) to put in a lot of effort to complete significant jobs. They also assist them in collaborating as a team, at 90.8% (349 respondents) to position their businesses to compete better in the market. Majority of the respondents, at 91.4 % (351 respondents) were of the perception that they frequently inspire their staff to meet company objectives, and they often come up with creative ideas to manage their businesses, at 89.9 % (345 respondents). Furthermore, most of the study participants, 86.2% (331 respondents), suggest that

they often come up with effective plans in line with their organization's objectives. They also mentioned, at 85.9% (330 respondents) they often make effective choices to enhance their businesses. Additionally, they often find effective solutions to solve their business problems, at 84.6% (325).

Table 4.5

Respondents Perceptions on Managerial Competencies

Managerial Competencies	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
I have the required technical skills to manage my business successfully	3 0.8	12 3.1	58 15.1	189 49.2	122 31.8	4,08
I communicate my products and services effectively with my stakeholders	2 0.5	10 2.6	49 12.8	186 48.4	137 35.7	4,16
I often inspire my employees to work hard to accomplish important tasks	6 1.6	4 1.0	34 8.9	160 41.7	180 46.9	4,31
I often help my employees to work together as a team to position our business to compete better in the market	5 1.3	3 0.8	27 7.0	148 38.5	201 52.3	4,40
I often motivate my employees to achieve business goals	5 1.3	2 0.5	26 6.8	167 43.5	184 47.9	4,36
I often come up with creative ideas to manage my business	2 0.5	5 1.3	32 8.3	190 49.5	155 40.4	4,28
I often come up with effective plans in line with the organization's objectives	3 0.8	5 1.3	45 11.7	204 53.1	127 33.1	4,16
I often make effective choices to enhance my business	4 1.0	7 1.8	43 11.2	194 50.5	136 35.4	4,17

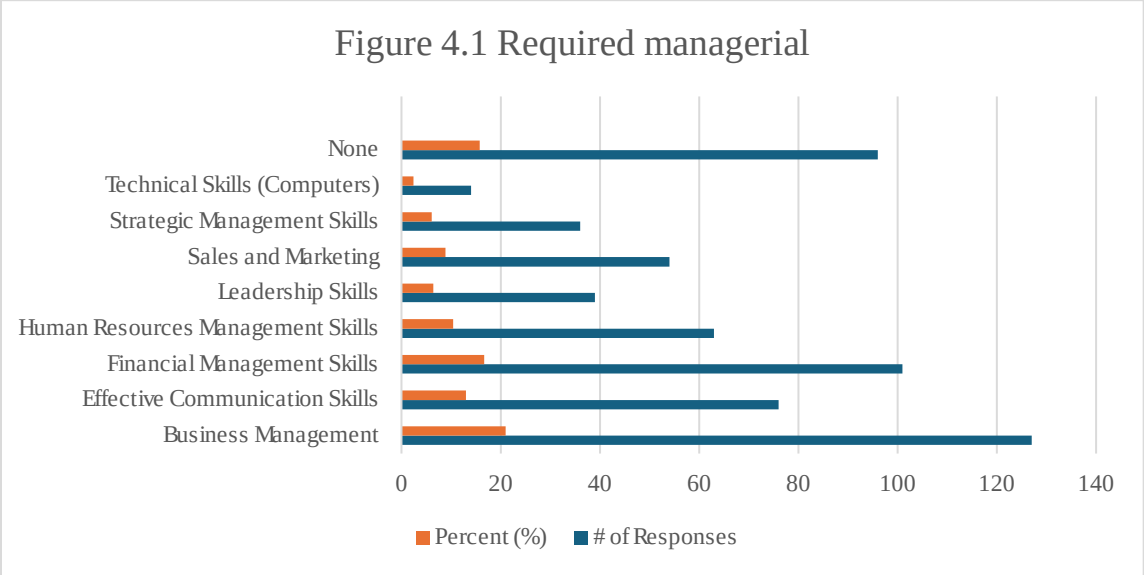
I often find effective solutions to solve my business problems	5 1.3	7 1.8	47 12.2	197 51.3	128 33.3	4,14

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=38.07/9=4.23**

Respondents were asked in Question 9.10 (open ended) to specify the required managerial skills that would help women and youth run successful businesses. Figure 4.1 depicts the themes that were analyzed from the multiple responses from the respondents, ranging from business management (21%) being the highest to technical skills (2.4%), being the least. Interestingly, 96 respondents (15.8%) did not mention any skills that they would require.

Figure 4.1

Required Managerial capabilities for business success.



RQ 2: How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

Evidence on Table 4.6 reveals how the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with claims that they have benefited from government assistance and other institutions to develop their

managerial skills. Respondents highly perceived that job experience at 79.7% (306 respondents), formal training at 75.3% (289 respondents), and 57.8 % (222 respondents) were able to develop managerial skills through in-house training, while their perception was low on acquiring managerial competencies through government agencies and private supporting institutions interventions. Those who agreed were 38.8% (151 respondents) for government agencies and 46.8% (180 respondents) for private supporting institutions respectively.

Table 4.6

Sources of Acquiring Managerial Competencies through Government and other Supporting Institutions Interventions

Sources of Acquiring Managerial Competencies	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
Job experience	14 3.6	24 6.3	40 10.4	130 33.9	176 45.8	4,12
Formal training/education	12 3.1	24 6.3	59 15.4	154 40.1	135 35.2	3,98
In-house training	18 4.7	42 10.9	102 26.6	128 33.3	94 24.5	3,62
Government agencies	41 10.7	76 19.8	118 30.7	102 26.6	47 12.2	3,10
Private supporting institutions	43 11.2	68 17.7	93 24.2	133 34.6	47 12.2	3,19

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=18/5=3.6**

Government Supporting Institutions as the driving force to provide managerial capabilities to entrepreneurs

Table 4.7 shows data collected to determine if the respondents do receive help from government institutions to gain managerial capabilities to run successful businesses. However,

many of the respondents disagreed with most of the statements as indicated. 62.5 % (240 respondents) disagreed that BITC helped them gain managerial competencies, 56% (215 respondents) were against the statement that CEDA has helped them acquire managerial capabilities, followed by Business Botswana with 59.1% (229 respondents). Similarly, 57% (219 respondents) disagreed that they have received help from Sector Education & Training Institutions, while 58.6% (225 respondents) also disagreed that they acquired managerial capabilities through YDF initiatives. Moreover, most of the respondents, at 54.9% (211 in number) felt that the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) helped them to gain managerial competencies as opposed to BITC, CEDA, Business Botswana and YDF.

Table 4.7

Government Supporting Institutions that help Entrepreneurs to Gain Managerial Competencies

Government supporting institutions	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**N (%)**	**A (%)**	**SA (%)**	**Mean**
Local Enterprise Authority (LEA)	61 15.9	68 17.7	44 11.5	96 25.0	115 29.9	3,35
Botswana International Trade Centre (BITC)	111 28.9	129 33.6	73 19.0	53 13.8	18 4.7	2,32
Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA)	106 27.6	109 28.4	69 18.0	75 19.5	25 6.5	2,49
Business Botswana	110 28.6	119 31.0	90 23.4	48 12.5	17 4.4	2,33
Sector Education & Training Institutions	106 27.6	113 29.4	69 18.0	68 17.7	28 7.3	2,48
Youth Development Fund (YDF)	116 30.2	109 28.4	60 15.6	60 15.6	39 10.2	2,47

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=15.44/6=2.573**

Question 12.5 was an open-ended question and a follow-up where the respondents were asked to cite additional forms of support they got from government agencies that helped them

develop their managerial skills. As depicted by Fig 4. 2 majority of the respondents at 67.8% gave multiple responses indicating that the government agencies have not offered them any support to improve their managerial skills. However, 20.1% of them mentioned that they have received training although they did not specify where they received their training followed by the remaining 12. 1 % of the responses specified that they have received business development workshops, coaching and mentorship at 2,5% and 2.0% respectively. The rest of the responses were less than 2%.

Figure 4.2

Other Assistance Received by SMMEs



Private Supporting Institutions interventions

A further analysis from Table 4.8 sought to establish if Private Supporting Institutions do also provide interventions that assist entrepreneurs to acquire managerial competencies. The results show that 52.9% (203 respondents) believed that Private Educational Institutions and business associations at, 46.1% (177 respondents), were rated highly in having helped the respondents to gain managerial competencies. On the contrary, they disagreed that commercial

banks at 48.5% (183 respondents) and professional services at 46.4% (178 respondents) such as law businesses, accounting firms, and consulting services were considered to have been of no help to them in gaining managerial competencies.

Table 4.8

Private Supporting Institutions Help to Gain Managerial Competencies

Private supporting institutions	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
Commercial Banks such as ABSA, FNB, Standard Chartered, Bank Gaborone, Capital Bank or Bank of Baroda	94 24.5	92 24.0	76 19.8	82 21.4	40 10.4	2,69
Professional services such as consultancy services, accountant firms, or lawyers' firms.	87 22.7	91 23.7	70 18.2	101 26.3	35 9.1	2,76
Educational institutions	56 14.6	57 14.8	68 17.7	139 36.2	64 16.7	3,26
Business associations	73 19.0	65 16.9	69 18.0	125 32.6	52 13.5	3,05

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average =**11.75/4=2.938**

Interventions Received by Entrepreneurs from Government Supporting Institutions

Table 4.9 presents information solicited by their views regarding the interventions they have received from government supporting institutions to enhance their managerial abilities in their day-to-day running of their enterprises. A significant number of respondents attributed their receiving of business development services such as business training, provision of information and advisory services assistance to Government supporting institutions at 40.9% (194 respondents) and at 47.9% (184 respondents) respectively. In contrast, more respondents did not consider

government supporting institutions to be the source of business consulting, mentorship and counselling assistance. 49.5% (190 respondents) mentioned that they had not received any assistance on business consulting, 54.1% (246 respondents) on business incubation, 50.9 % (195 respondents) on business mentoring services, while 51.7% (198 respondents) on counselling services from the government.

Table 4.9

Received Assistance from Government Supporting Institutions

Business development services	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**N (%)**	**A (%)**	**SA (%)**	**Mean**
Business training	74 19.3	80 20.8	36 9.4	119 31.0	75 19.5	3,11
Business Consulting	84 21.9	106 27.6	47 12.2	94 24.5	53 13.8	2,81
Business Incubation	102 26.6	144 37.5	55 14.3	45 11.7	38 9.9	2,41
Business mentoring	85 22.1	110 28.6	56 14.6	89 23.2	44 11.5	2,73
Business counselling	94 24.5	104 27.2	69 18.0	79 20.6	37 9.7	2,64
Provision of information and advisory services	73 19.0	66 17.2	61 15.9	124 32.3	60 15.6	3,08

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=16.78/6=2.796**

Interventions Received by Entrepreneurs from Private Supporting Institutions

A similar question was asked in Table 4.10 to find out from the entrepreneurs if they have received the interventions from private supporting institutions. The majority felt that they had not received assistance from private supporting institutions. The findings indicate that 50 % (188 respondents) did not receive business development services from business training, 51 % (196

respondents) from business consulting, 66.6 % (256 respondents) from business incubation, 53.4 % (205 respondents) from business mentoring, 54,9 % (211 respondents) from business counselling services. Finally, 45 % (172 respondents) felt they did not receive assistance, which relates to the provision of information and advisory services.

Table 4.10

Received Assistance from Private Supporting Institutions

Business development services	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**N (%)**	**A (%)**	**SA (%)**	**Mean**
Business training	82 22.4	106 27.6	48 12.5	92 24.0	52 13.5	2,79
Business Consulting	90 23.4	106 27.6	51 13.3	94 24.5	43 11.2	2,72
Business Incubation	108 28.1	148 38.5	58 15.1	45 11.7	25 6.5	2,30
Business Mentoring	96 25.0	109 28.4	62 16.1	79 20.6	38 9.9	2,62
Business counselling	96 25.0	115 29.9	66 17.2	74 19.3	33 8.6	2,57
Provision of information and advisory services	78 20.4	94 24.6	60 15.7	98 25.7	52 13.6	2,87

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=15.87/6=2.645**

RQ 3 How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

The findings on Table 4.11 reveals the views of the SMMEs on the challenges they are faced with when attempting to access assistance from supporting institutions. As depicted in the table, most respondents disagreed with the statements. 68.8 % (249 in numbers) were not aware of supporting institutions' assistance, 70.8 % (272 in numbers) did not appreciate the assistance

offered by supporting institutions, 62 % (238 in numbers) indicated that the available support is not appropriate to the needs of my business, 43.8 % (168 in numbers) revealed that they did not have enough resources to access business development services, 51.4 % (197) did not have sufficient information about the availability of business development services to make a rational choice, 55.8 % (214 in numbers) mentioned that supporting institutions do not allow them to participate in the design of the policies, 49.1 % (182in numbers) did not have sufficient information about the cost of business development services to make a rational choice, 67.4 % (259 in numbers) assumed that supporting institutions will not be able to handle my request, while 61.4 % (235 in numbers) disagreed that supporting institutions do not deal with requests professionally.

Table 4.11

Challenges to Accessing Assistance from Supporting Institutions

Challenges	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
I am not aware of supporting institutions' assistance	103 26.8	146 38.0	65 16.9	50 13.0	20 5.2	2,32
I don't appreciate the assistance offered by supporting institutions	131 34.1	141 36.7	77 20.1	21 5.5	14 3.6	2,08
The available support is not appropriate to the needs of my business	104 27.1	134 34.9	84 21.9	47 12.2	15 3.9	2,31
I do not have enough resources to access business development services	69 18.0	99 25.8	89 23.2	96 25.0	31 8.1	2,79
I do not have sufficient information about the availability of business development services to make a rational choice	79 20.6	118 30.8	82 21.4	69 18.0	35 9.1	2,64
The supporting institutions do not allow me to	89 23.2	125 32.6	94 24.5	49 12.8	27 7.0	2,48

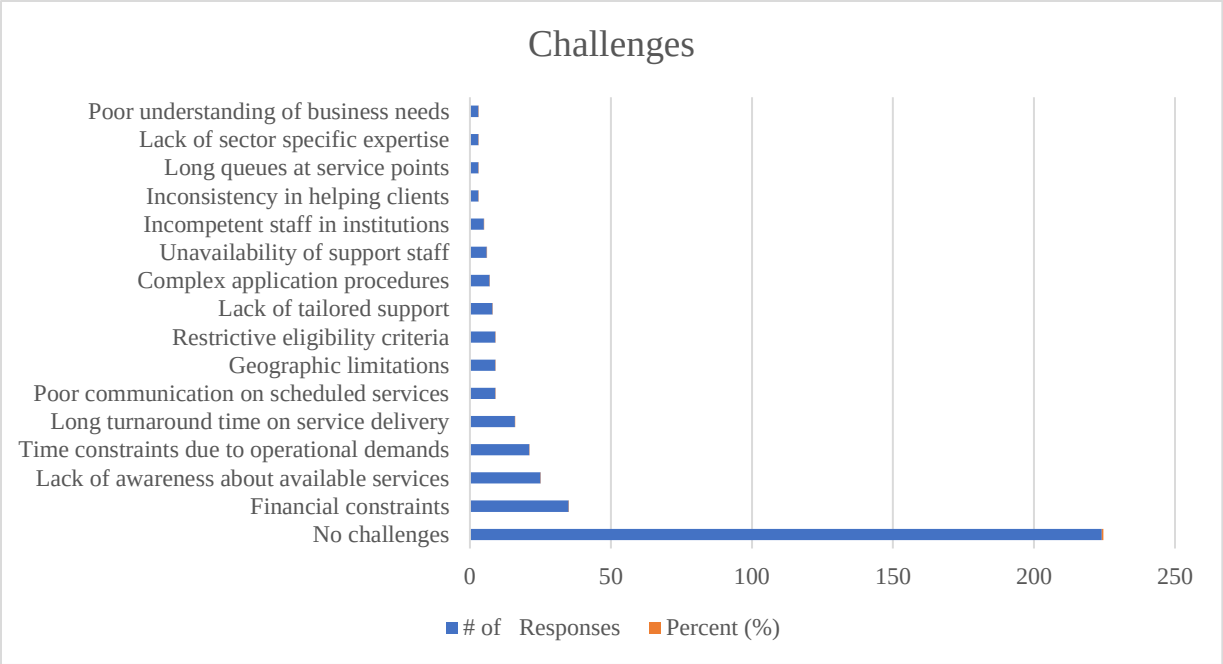
participate in the design of the policies						
I do not have sufficient information about the cost of Business development services to make a rational choice	82 21.4	106 27.7	97 25.3	70 18.3	28 7.3	2,62
I assume that supporting institutions will not be able to handle my request	98 25.5	161 41.9	88 22.9	30 7.8	7 1.8	2,18
The supporting institutions do not deal with requests professionally	101 26.4	134 35.0	113 29.5	30 7.8	5 1.3	2,23

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=21.66/9=2.406**

Over and above the challenges mentioned, owners/managers of the enterprises were asked in question 15.10 to specify other challenges they were facing in accessing assistance from supporting institutions to develop their managerial competencies. Figure 4.3 outlines several challenges that the respondents often face when trying to access assistance from supporting institutions. Although many (56.9%) reported no challenges, 8.9% of them mentioned financial constraints related to participation and transport fees as a leading barrier to accessing services. Lack of awareness about available services and time constraints due to operational demands were also reported amongst key challenges at 6.3% and 5.3% respectively. Long turnaround time on service delivery, poor communication on scheduled services, geographic limitations, restrictive eligibility criteria, lack of tailored support and complex application procedures were also regarded as significant challenges in accessing assistance from support institutions as indicated in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3

Other Challenges in Accessing Assistance from Support Institutions



RQ 4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

Table 4.12 presents the results of the SMMEs views on the entrepreneurial training programs they have attended. The respondents were required to state if they agreed or disagreed with the statements. Based on the respondent's feedback, a significant number of (136 respondents) at 35.4 % were neutral and 37.8 % (145 in number) did not agree to the fact that the number of business training attended is sufficient, 64.5 % (244 in numbers) believed that the business trainings they received were relevant to their needs and that 44.7 % were of the view that the length of the training was sufficient. 38.3 % (147 in numbers) agreed that the frequency of the training was sufficient. The majority, 63 % (242 in numbers) were of the view that the content was well organized and easy to comprehend. 66.7 % (256 in numbers) also felt that the training enhanced their leadership skills and made them confident in their decision making at, 63.5 % (244

in numbers). In addition, 71.1 % (273 participants) felt that being offered more trainings improves their managerial abilities which in turn leads to enhanced businesses performance and 71.4 % (274 in numbers) felt that the more the training offered, the relationship between entrepreneurial training, support systems, and the prosperity of women- and youth-led businesses becomes more intense.

Table 4.12

SMMEs' Views on Entrepreneurial Training Programs Attended

Entrepreneurial training programs	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**N (%)**	**A (%)**	**SA (%)**	Mean
The number of business training attended is sufficient	46 12.0	99 25.8	136 35.4	85 22.1	18 4.7	2,82
The business training was relevant to my needs	19 4.9	34 8.9	87 22.7	171 44.5	73 19.0	3,64
The length of the training was sufficient	27 7.0	80 20.9	105 27.4	134 35.0	37 9.7	3,19
The frequence of the training was sufficient	28 7.3	87 22.7	122 31.8	122 31.8	25 6.5	3,08
The content was well-organized and easy to comprehend	17 4.4	34 8.9	91 23.7	164 42.7	78 20.3	3,66
Trainings have enhanced my leadership skills	19 4.9	27 7.0	82 21.4	157 40.9	99 25.8	3,76
Trainings have enhanced my decision-making confidence	22 5.7	32 8.3	86 22.4	151 39.3	93 24.2	3,68
The more the training offered, the stronger the association between management abilities and the performance of women- and youth-led businesses	13 3.4	20 5.2	78 20.3	148 38.5	125 32.6	3,92
The more the training offered, the relationship between entrepreneurial training, support systems, and the prosperity of women- and youth-led businesses becomes more intensive	14 3.6	21 5.5	75 19.5	139 36.2	135 35.2	3,94

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree.

Weighted average **=31.67/9=3.5189**

Innovativeness in Enterprise Success

Table 4.13 presents the findings of the question that sought to establish the facts on how innovative aspects influence enterprise success. A significant portion of the respondents believe that innovation is critical in the growth of enterprises. However, 74.5 % (286 in numbers) believe that innovativeness has enabled their businesses to penetrate the market. Additionally, the study participants, and 75.8 % (291 in numbers) felt that their businesses support creativity in introducing new products in the markets and that. Further, most of the respondents, at 87 % (334 in numbers), always introduce new ideas in their business operations to ensure customer satisfaction. Nonetheless, 77.4 % (297 in numbers) asserted that at times problems in their businesses are solved using employees new and original ideas, and that 60.6% (232 in numbers) agree that their businesses are also proactive in innovation to stay ahead of their competitors. Moreover,76.3 % of the respondents (293 in numbers) have also embraced technology-based marketing to capture prospective customers.

Table 4.13

Innovation Aspects Applying to Enterprise Success

Innovativeness	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
Innovativeness has enabled my business to penetrate the market	10 2.6	15 3.9	73 19.0	194 50.5	92 24.0	3,89
My business supports creativity in introducing new products in the market	9 2.3	14 3.6	70 18.2	197 51.3	94 24.5	3,92
I always introduce new ideas in my business operations to ensure customer satisfaction	7 1.8	3 0.8	40 10.4	217 56.5	117 30.5	4,13
At times problems in my enterprise are solved using new and original ideas from employees	7 1.8	10 2.6	70 18.2	205 53.4	92 24.0	3,95
Our business is proactive in innovation before the competitors respond	7 1.8	24 6.3	120 31.3	168 43.9	64 16.7	3,67

I have embraced technology-based marketing to capture prospective customers	7 1.8	19 4.9	65 16.9	174 45.3	119 31.0	3,99

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=23.55/6=3.925**

Business Performance Measurements

Table 4.14 reports on the findings relating to the respondents' views on how business performance measurements affect the success of the firms. A reasonable proportion of the respondents at 46.1 % (177 in numbers) reported that their business sales volumes were on the increase. Less respondents, 38.4 % (147 in numbers) have employed additional employees to meet the growing demand for their products and services. 56.5 % (217 in numbers) have recorded higher profits from the business than what they started. Majority of the respondents, at 69.3 % (266 in numbers) have embraced better strategies for minimizing costs and maximizing the profits in their enterprise. Despite the increase in profits, however, the majority at 63 % (242) disagree that they have opened other branches to meet the demand and as a way of reinvesting profits. Interestingly, 61.4 % (235 in numbers) agree that the number of customers in my enterprise has increased significantly since they started the enterprise.

Table 4.14

Business Performance Measurements

Performance	**SD (%)**	**D (%)**	**N (%)**	**A (%)**	**SA (%)**	**Mean**
The level of sales volume in my enterprise has been on the increase since the inception of the business	9 2.3	52 13.5	146 38.0	144 37.5	33 8.6	3,36
I have employed additional employees to meet the growing demand for my products and services	29 7.6	105 27.4	102 26.6	123 32.1	24 6.3	3,02

The profits recorded from the business are higher than what I started with	14 3.6	52 13.5	101 26.3	162 42.2	55 14.3	3,50
I have embraced better strategies for minimizing costs and maximizing the profits in my enterprise	6 1.6	20 5.2	92 24.0	202 52.6	64 16.7	3,78
I have opened other branches to meet the demand and as a way of reinvesting profits	95 24.7	147 38.3	68 17.7	47 12.2	27 7.0	2,39
The number of customers in my enterprise has increased significantly since I started the enterprise	18 4.7	36 9.4	94 24.5	157 41.0	78 20.4	3,63

N= **384**, SD=Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; N=Neutral; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree. Weighted average **=19.68/6=3.28**

Correlation between managerial competencies, government policies and support systems and entrepreneurial education and training programs.

As the findings indicate in Table 4.15, government policies and support systems and the entrepreneurial success of women and youth-led enterprises had the lowest correlation in our analysis ($r=0.225$, $p<0.001$), followed by managerial competencies at ($r=0.267$, $p<0.001$). The highest correlation was between entrepreneurial education and training programs and enterprise success of women and youth-led businesses ($r=0.284$, $p<0.001$). The Pearson Correlation between managerial competencies, government policies and support systems, entrepreneurial training programs and enterprise success of women and youth-led businesses was 22.5%, 26.7% and 28.4% respectively. The findings merely showed that the enterprise success of women- and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast district was weakly correlated with aspects of entrepreneurial orientation, such as managerial competencies, government policies and support systems, and entrepreneurial education and training programs.

Table 4.15

Correlations Matrix

Variable		**Managerial Competencies**	**Government Policies and support system**	**Entrepreneurial Education and Training**	**Enterprise Success**
Managerial Competencies	Pearson Correlation	--			
Government Policies and support system	Pearson Correlation	.101*	--		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,048			
Entrepreneurial Education and Training	Pearson Correlation	.146**	.380**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,004	0,000		
Enterprise Success	Pearson Correlation	**.267****	**.225****	**.284****	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**					
****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**					

N=384

Linear Regression on Entrepreneurship Training Programs and Managerial Competencies

The findings in Table 4.16 reflect a linear regression analysis examining the relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities of women and youth-led enterprises in the Southeast district in Botswana. Path coefficients were used to determine the direction and strength of the correlations, and T statistics were used to determine the relationships' significance. Table 4.16 presents the findings.

The R coefficient measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities. The outcome showed an

extremely weak value (close to 0.00) which indicates that changes in training participation or quality do not systematically correspond to changes in managerial capability levels in the sample. However, the model $R^{2,}$ which is 0.00%, represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable, which means that entrepreneurial training programs account for none of the variation in managerial capabilities in this model. Hence the Adjusted R^2 (0.012), which is effectively zero, confirms that the zero explanatory power of the model offers no predictive power.

Table 4.16

Model Summary on Entrepreneurship Training Programs

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.012[a]	.000	-.002	129.42491
a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Training Programs				

The analysis of ANOVA shows that the overall regression model is not statistically significant because the *p*-value of 0.05 (F=1.382, p>0.001) which is well above the standard alpha threshold as indicated by the results in Table 4.17. This implies that entrepreneurship training programs cannot statistically predict the managerial competencies of women and youth-led enterprises in the Southeast district in Botswana.

Table 4.17

ANOVA Results on Entrepreneurship Training Programs

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	914.789	1	914.789	.055	.815[b]
	Residual	6398808.587	382	16750.808		
	Total	6399723.376	383			
a. Dependent Variable: Managerial Capabilities						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Training Programs						

The unstandardized regression coefficient for entrepreneurship training programs was -1.900. This indicates that a unit increase in the entrepreneurship training programs would result in a 1.900 decrease in the managerial skills of women and youth-led enterprises in the Southeast district in Botswana. The t-statistic for the regression coefficient for managerial competencies was significant at 5% level of significance (T=-0.234, p>0.001) as shown in Table 4.18, implying acceptance of null hypothesis. Based on these statistics, the study concludes that the relationship is negative and that there is no statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and the managerial capabilities of women and youth-led business in Southeast district in Botswana.

Table 4.18

Regression Coefficients on Entrepreneurship Training Programs

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	71.522	29.362		2.436	.015

	Entrepreneurial Training Programs	-1.900	8.130	-.012	-.234	.815
a. Dependent Variable: Managerial Capabilities						

Suggested model: = Managerial Capabilities 71.522 - 1.900 Entrepreneurship Training Programs +29.362 (error)*

$H_0$1: *Entrepreneurial Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities*

Linear Regression on Managerial Competencies and the Success of Women and Youth-Led Businesses

The study's primary goal was to investigate the impact of managerial competencies on the success of women and youth-led businesses in Southeast district in Botswana. To test the hypothesis, linear regression was used to test the relationship between managerial competencies and the success of women and youth-led businesses. The direction and intensity of the associations were ascertained using path coefficients, and the significance of the relationships was ascertained using T statistics. The results are presented in Table 4.19.

The regression model's R^2 for the relationship between managerial abilities and the success of women and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast district was 0.071, indicating that managerial competencies account for 7.1% of the variation in the success of women and youth-led businesses in this region, with other external factors accounting for the remaining variation. R squared = 0.071 and adjusted R = 0.069 vary by 0.002, indicating that the proposed model has good generalization since the adjusted R is too close to R squared.

Table 4. 19

Model Summary on Managerial Competencies

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate

1	.267[a]	0,071	0,069	0,55959
a. Predictors: (Constant), Managerial Competencies				

Further testing on ANOVA shows that the regression model was a good fit as indicated by a significant F-statistic of 0.001 which is below a p-value of 0.05 (F=29.265, p<0.001). Results from the ANOVA Table 4.20 shows that the model that predicts the success of women and youth-led businesses is significant. This implies that managerial competencies can statistically predict the success of women and youth-led enterprises in the Southeast district in Botswana.

Table 4.20

ANOVA Results on Managerial Competencies

Model		**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	9,164	1	9,164	29,265	<.001[b]
	Residual	119,618	382	0,313		
	Total	128,782	383			
a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise Success						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Managerial Competencies						

The unstandardized regression coefficient for managerial competencies was 0.275. This indicates that a unit increase in the managerial competencies would result in a 27.5% increase in the success of women and youth-led enterprises in the Southeast district in Botswana. The t-statistic for the regression coefficient for managerial competencies was significant at 5% level of significance (T=5.410, p<0.001) as shown in Table 4.21, implying rejection of null hypothesis. Based on these statistics, the study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship between managerial competencies and the success of women and youth-led business in Southeast district in Botswana.

Table 4.21

Regression Coefficients on Managerial Competencies

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2,437	0,217		11,218	0,000
	Managerial Competencies	0,275	0,051	0,267	5,410	0,000
a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise Success						

*Suggested model: = Women and youth-led business success 2.437 +0.275*Managerial competencies +.051 (error)*

$H_0$2: *Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success*

Linear Regression on the Mediating effect of Managerial Capabilities on the Relationship between Entrepreneurship Training Programs and the Success of Women and Youth-led Business

Having established the direct relationships in H_1 and H_2, the simultaneous regression model (Step 3) was executed to test for mediation. The Model Summary in Table 4.22 evaluates the overall explanatory power of the model containing both the independent variable (Entrepreneurial Training Programs) and the mediator (Managerial Capabilities) predicting the dependent variable (Enterprise Success).

The combined predictors (Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Managerial Capabilities) yield a multiple correlation coefficient R of 0.290 and an R^2 of .084. This indicates that Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Managerial Capabilities together account for 8.4% of the variance in Enterprise Success.

Table 4.22

Model Summary of *Multiple Regression Predicting Enterprise Success from Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Managerial Capabilities (Mediator)*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.290[a]	.084	.079	.55640

a. Predictors: (Constant), Managerial Capabilities, Entrepreneurial Training Programs

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in Table 4.23 evaluates whether the overall regression model containing entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities as predictors is statistically significant in predicting Enterprise Success. The ANOVA test confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant (F=2,381=17,491, p<0.001). Because the *p*-value is well below the standard threshold of 5%, the null hypothesis which posits that the regression coefficients of the predictors are collectively equal to zero is rejected. This demonstrates that entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities jointly explain a statistically significant amount of variance in Enterprise Success.

Table 4.23

ANOVA Results for Regression Model Predicting Enterprise Success

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.830	2	5.415	17.491	<.001[b]
	Residual	117.952	381	.310		
	Total	128.782	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise Success

b. Predictors: (Constant), Managerial Capabilities, Entrepreneurial Training Programs

Prior to this simultaneous step, each relationship was evaluated in isolation: Step 1 tested whether entrepreneurship training programs directly predicted managerial capabilities on their own, while Step 2 evaluated whether entrepreneurship training programs directly predicted Enterprise Success to establish its total overall effect. What changes in the Coefficients Table 4.24 for Step 3 is that both variables are entered into the exact same regression equation at the same time, allowing one to test how much unique predictive power each variable retains when controlling for the other to explain Enterprise Success.

Training programs have a significant, positive direct effect on Enterprise Success ($T=5{,}773$, $p<0.001$). This shows that taking part in training directly improves business success. When accounting for training programs, managerial capabilities do not significantly affect Enterprise Success ($T=-1.219$, $p>0.001$) Because managerial capabilities did not have a statistically significant effect ($p=0.224$), hypothesis 3 (H_3) is not supported. Entrepreneurship training programs directly drive Enterprise Success rather than working through managerial capabilities as a middle step.

Table 4.24

Regression Coefficients for Model Predicting Enterprise Success from Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Managerial Capabilities

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.910	.127		22.877	<.001
Entrepreneurial Training Programs	.202	.035	.283	5.773	<.001
Managerial Capabilities	.000	.000	-.060	-1.219	.224

a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise Success

*Suggested model: = Women and youth-led business success 2.910 +0.202** Entrepreneurship Training Programs *+.035 (error)*

$H_0$3: *Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and enterprise success.*

Linear Regression on the Moderating Effect of Government Policies and Support Systems on the relationship between entrepreneurship education programs and managerial capabilities

Model Summary Table 4.25 presents the overall explanatory power of the hierarchical regression models across two sequential stages. The primary predictor (Entrepreneurial Training Programs) and the proposed moderator (Government Policies and Support Programs) were entered. Model 1 yielded a correlation coefficient R of 0.112 and an R^2 value of 0.012. This indicates that the direct main effects of training programs and government policies together account for 1.2% of the total variance in managerial capabilities, leaving 98.8% of the variance unexplained by these two predictors alone.

In Model 2, the interaction term (*Moderation effect of government policies and systems*) was added to the equation to test for moderation. The inclusion of the interaction term resulted in a slight increase in R from 0.112 to 0.117 and an R2 of 0.014. This shows that adding the moderating effect only explained an additional 0.2% of variance in managerial capabilities.

Furthermore, the Adjusted R^2 slightly decreased from 0.007 in Model 1 to 0.006 in Model 2, suggesting that adding the interaction term did not improve the predictive quality of the model. Crucially, the interaction effect was statistically non-significant (T= -0.704, p>0.001). Because the *p*-value (0.482) is greater than the standard significance threshold of 5%, the hypothesis is not supported.

Table 4.25

Model Summary for Multiple Regression Predicting the Moderation effect of Government policies on Entrepreneurship Training programs and Managerial Capabilities

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.112[a]	.012	.007	128.79286
2	.117[b]	.014	.006	128.87821

a. Predictors: (Constant), Government Policies and Support Programs, Entrepreneurial Training Programs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Government Policies and Support Programs, Entrepreneurial Training Programs, Moderation effect of government policies and systems

The ANOVA table 4.26 tests the overall statistical significance of both regression models to determine whether either model predicts managerial capabilities at a rate significantly better than chance. For Model 1 (main effects), the regression model yielded an *F*-statistic of F=2,381 with a significance level of p=0.091. Because p>0.001. However, model 1as a baseline combination of the main effects is not statistically significant at the 5% level. For Model 2 (moderation model), after adding the interaction variable, the regression model produced an *F*-statistic of 3,380 with a significance level of p=0.153. Since p>0.001, Model 2 overall has also statistically non-significant. This confirms that the combination of entrepreneurial training

programs, government policies, and their interaction term does not significantly account for changes in managerial capabilities. Hence the null hypothesis should be accepted.

Table 4.26

ANOVA Results for Hierarchical Moderated Regression

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	79847.422	2	39923.711	2.407	.091[b]
	Residual	6319875.954	381	16587.601		
	Total	6399723.376	383			
2	Regression	88078.065	3	29359.355	1.768	.153[c]
	Residual	6311645.311	380	16609.593		
	Total	6399723.376	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Managerial Capabilities

b. Predictors: (Constant), Government Policies and Support Programs, Entrepreneurial Training Programs

c. Predictors: (Constant), Government Policies and Support Programs, Entrepreneurial Training Programs, Moderation effect of government policies and systems

The Coefficients in Table 4.27 evaluates the specific individual contributions and statistical significance of each variable within the models. In Model 1, Government Policies and Support Programs demonstrated a statistically significant positive direct relationship with Managerial Capabilities (T=2.181, p<0.001). Conversely, Entrepreneurial Training Programs showed a non-significant direct relationship (T= -0.9992, p>0.001). In Model 2, the central focus of hypothesis 4 was evaluated using the interaction term (*Moderation effect of government policies and systems*).

The interaction coefficient yielded a t-statistic of T= -0.704, and a significance value of p=0.482. Because the significance value of the interaction term (p=0.482) is well above the standard threshold of 5%, the interaction effect is statistically non-significant. Therefore, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that Government Policies and Support Programs act as a moderating factor in the relationship between Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Managerial Capabilities.

Table 4.27

Regression Coefficients for Main Effects and Moderation Interaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
	(Constant)	55.835	30.091		1.856	.064
	Entrepreneurial Training Programs	-8.651	8.662	-.054	-.999	.319
	Government Policies and Support Programs	15.328	7.027	.119	2.181	.030
	(Constant)	13.562	67.179		.202	.840
	Entrepreneurial Training Programs	3.305	19.068	.021	.173	.862
	Government Policies and Support Programs	34.516	28.151	.268	1.226	.221
	Moderation effect of government policies and systems	-5.262	7.475	-.193	-.704	.482

a. Dependent Variable: Managerial Capabilities

Suggested model: = Managerial capabilities 13.562 +34.516 government policies and support systems +28.151 (error)*

$H_0$4: *Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurial education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation).*

Table 4.28

Summary of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis		**p-value**	**comment**
H_1: Entrepreneurship Education programs positively affect Managerial capabilities	*71.522 - 1.900* Entrepreneurship Training Programs +29.362 (error)*	P=0000>0.001	Accept Null Hypothesis
H_2: Managerial capabilities positively affect Enterprise success	2.437 +0.275*Managerial competencies +.051 (error)	P=0000<0.001	Reject null hypothesis
H_3: Managerial capabilities mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education programs and enterprise success.	*2.910 +0.202** Entrepreneurship Training Programs *+.035 (error)*	P=0000<0.001	Reject null hypothesis
H_4: Government policy and systems significantly moderate the relationship between Entrepreneurship education programs and managerial capabilities (First-stage moderation).	*13.562+5.262** Moderation effect of government policies and systems+7.475 (error) *13.562 +34.516* government policies and support systems +28.151 (error)*	P=0000>0.001	Accept null hypothesis

REPORTING RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

This section presents the results of qualitative data which was collected from interviewing the participants of the study. The first part involved the collection of data on the participants' demographics. The information was analyzed manually by hand, and the data was presented in a table format. The second part consisted of semi-structured questions that included sixteen (16)

open-ended interview questions (Appendix G). The study used textual information gathered from semi-structured interviews to address the research objectives.

The process involved using interview scripts of all the interviewees which were captured in Tagutte software. Descriptive codes (tags) and direct codes were created from the texts by highlighting them line-by-line to ensure that all the relevant information is captured in step 1. All the tags and direct codes were exported to a codebook. Thirty-four (34) codes were developed, and the frequency of the responses were noted by the number of highlights which were developed in the first step. To compress the data codes produced by step 1 of data coding, was combined and grouped according to their similarities in step 2.

To create significant themes that addressed the study objectives, the categories and subcategories were further refined. Finally, the twelve main categories that emerged from the data coding procedure served as the themes that were used to create the statements that addressed the study questions as depicted by table 4.29.

Table 4. 29

Generated Themes

Objectives	**Themes**	**Tags**	**Number of Highlights**
To examine the influence of management skills on the success of women and youth businesses.	Hard and soft skills	Human Resources Management Skill	9
		Financial Management Skill	18
		Leadership skills	10
		Business Management	17
		Soft skills	42
	The Differentiator of business	Creativity and innovativeness	26
		The Business environment is	23

		highly competitive	
	Business performance	Revenue turnover	13
		Employee turnover	13
		Market access opportunities	14
		Opening more branches	13
	Quality aspect	Quality as the first aspect when conceiving the idea	18
		Robust operating systems and processes	6
	Overall planning of enterprises	Overall planning of enterprises	15
	Enhancing managerial skills	Enhancing managerial competencies	22
		Benchmarking	5
		Mentoring and Coaching	1
To assess if government strategies and policies are effective to support the growth and development of women's and youth enterprises.	Entrepreneurship Ecosystem	Entrepreneurship Ecosystem	38
	Gender responsive policies	The Citizens Economic Empowerment Policy	4
		Policy on public procurement	6
		Policy on funding of women and youth enterprises	13
		Policies on business centers that are gender responsive	3
		Policy on land allocation targeting women	2

		and youth enterprises	
		Participating in policy making	29
		Policies not fully effective	14
		Policies are effective and good	3
	Effective implementation of policies	Policies to be effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated	19
To assess how women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana.	Challenges	women and youth are marginalized and oppressed, undermined by men and elderly people especially when they must lead them.	7
		Funded youth projects, 90% of youth industries have collapsed due to lack of collaborative and partnership skills	4
		Lack of receptiveness to the interventions offered by business development service providers	2
To evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training programs on the success of women and young-led businesses.	Effective entrepreneurial training programs	Entrepreneurial Training Programs	26
		Programs address specific needs for women and youth entrepreneurs	21

		Effective Entrepreneurial programs	29
	Sector specific programs	Women and youth entrepreneurs require Sector specific training	4

Demographic Characteristics in Qualitative Enquiry

Table 4.30 depicts a total number of 16 interviewees who participated in the qualitative inquiry. The participants were chosen from four (4) Business Development Service Providers from government (i.e. LEA, CEDA and MYGA) and a private institution (i.e. Young Minds Africa). The officers/executives are client facing staff and they work directly with SMMEs offering services ranging from mentoring, coaching, training and incubation. However, statistical information is summarized below.

Gender- Table 4.5 shows that 31% of males and 69% female participated in the interview session to share their views and opinions. Most females responded to the inquiry and dominated the study.

Age- Most of the respondents are in the age range 36-45, at 69 % followed by 46>, at 18% and 26-35 at 13%.

Position- Table 4.5 portrays that the participants positions range from Programs to the Director position and their contribution is at 6% and 25% respectively.

Highest level of Education- Interestingly, the majority hold bachelor's degree at 63% followed by master's degree at 37%.

Number of years worked- Analysis shows 38% who worked for 6-10 years, followed by 1-5 years and 16-20 years at 25 % respectively. The least is 12% for those who have worked for 11-15 years.

Business Development Services Provided-This refers to the interventions offered to the SMMEs to accelerate growth of their businesses. Mentoring of Clients is 37%, coaching 27%, training and incubation at 18 % respectively.

Table 4.30

Demographics for Qualitative Enquiry

Variables	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Gender		
Male	5	31
Female	11	69
Age		
18-25		
26-35	2	13
36-45	11	69
46>	3	18
Position		
Gender Officer	1	6
Program Officer	3	19
Business Analyst	1	6
Programs Manager	1	6
Business Consultant	4	25
Chief Programs Officer	1	6
Business Executive	2	13
Portfolio Executive	2	13
Director	1	6
Highest level of Education		
No formal education		
Primary		
Secondary		
Certificate		
Diploma		
Bachelor's Degree	10	63
Master's Degree	6	37
PhD		
Post PhD		
Number of years working		
1-5	4	25
6-10	6	38
11-15	2	12
16-20	4	25
BDS provided		
Mentoring	15	37

Coaching	11	27
Training	7	18
Incubation	7	18

N=16

RQ 1 To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

Theme 1 Hard and soft skills

According to the views of the respondents on the required managerial capabilities by women and youth owners were that hard skills, like technical aptitudes acquired from education and training, are critical to the efficient operation of the company. Conversely, soft skills are the behavioural and interpersonal traits that affect how managers collaborate with people and perform well in groups. Majority of the executives believe that soft skills are the most required competencies in today's highly competitive business world. They noted that combining these abilities gives company owners the ability to deal with uncertainty, make wise decisions, and create long-lasting, resilient companies. However, some highlighted that because women are naturally sensitive or they have a soft spot and workers often take advantage of this, they must be given the authority to efficiently manage their workforce. More examples were given and one of the executives (5) gave an interesting illustration that,

"Women do not network. Yes, it could be a societal issue. Women still have domestic burdens, after work when men go and have drinks, women go straight home. Men meet in less formalized golf courses to seize opportunities. Decisions are taken in board rooms when opportunities are discussed in informal settings, it could be at the golf places where less women are seen. So, the confidence to get into the board room and state your decision as a woman is tough".

Theme 2 The Differentiator of business

The question sought to solicit views on how managerial competencies influence innovation and competitiveness. The respondents stated that the skills are essential for assessing the viability

and possible influence of many innovative concepts and deciding which are worthy of investing in that would give them the competitive advantage. The executives suggest that creativity and innovativeness require an agile and forward-looking business owner. Similarly, for managers and owners to thrive in the market, they should be able to differentiate themselves. They recommend streamlining operations for cost-efficiency and creating strategic positioning and branding to influence competitiveness. However, increased empowerment would enable them to manage long-lasting organizations that can successfully compete in a fiercely competitive market. Some of the respondents reported that due to their greater technical proficiency and openness to change, young people in society have an advantage over competitors in tackling new problems and seizing possibilities.

Theme 3 Enterprise growth

The aim of starting a business is to bring tailor made solutions to the customers and ultimately maximise on their profits. The perspectives on the effect of managerial competences on the growth of firms were amazing. They have observed that possessing the appropriate skill set enables entrepreneurs to make choices that improve the company's performance (efficiency, cost-cutting initiatives). They noted that an increase in turnover indicates a rise in employment, which indicates that goods and services are in high demand. Moreover, a growing market gives them more chances to sell more of their goods. Agile and creative businesses can react swiftly to new market possibilities and problems, maintaining an advantage over rivals that are reluctant to change. However, one respondent (10) reiterated that,

"Managerial competence supports better market research and entry strategies and stronger value chains, supplier relationships, participation in tenders and export markets".

Their views are that entrepreneurs are expected to create new branches if their firm is sustainable. Additionally, diversification makes it possible to expand into other markets.

Nonetheless, due to their limited or suppressed leading abilities by the society, “most women by nature have been excluded by society from certain issues that would have horned their skills in management. For example, in our society, when there is a funeral or marriage ceremony men lead, as they lead, they build their leadership skill from a young age. Therefore, if a woman starts a business vis viz a man, because women have always been at a disadvantage to lead, they struggle to lead the business effectively as compared to men,” a statement by executive (9).

Theme 4 Quality aspect

According to the respondents, quality should be the primary consideration when coming up with a company concept. They refer to it as design thinking, which implies that business owners need to always strive to improve their goods to stay competitive. They pointed out that management and quality are inextricably linked, thus entrepreneurs cannot operate a firm with inferior goods. This will allow them to provide their products and services on time. Additionally, they will become more competitive if they make good plans, find new clients, and regularly provide for their market. Interviewee (7) reported with concern that,

“From youth funded projects, my observation is that they lack competitive edge, therefore their products/services are below the standards because they run their businesses casually. They further stated that their products/services cannot be exhibited to attract customers.”

Theme 5 Overall planning of enterprises

Effective managers create clear business plans and roadmaps, use data and forecasting tools to make better decisions, define reasonable KPIs and performance metrics, plan for scalability and risk management, and link everyday operations with long-term objectives. However, several respondents are adamant that young people act hastily and make quick judgments without following through on their ideas, which has an impact on how they manage successful enterprises.

In contrast, women are planners by nature and can manage profitable enterprises if given the right managerial skills.

Theme 6 Enhancing managerial capabilities

Respondents believe that a balance between hard and soft skill is crucial. They also suggest benchmarking with similar and established entities by the owner manager as a way of strengthening their abilities. Respondent (9) felt managers must invest in self-development particularly in soft skills, especially emotional intelligence (EM), and noted that,

"If I were to hire managers, I would hire attitude rather than qualifications, people who are mature enough to handle issues."

More capacity building initiatives should be given such as formal education and business training; mentorship and coaching programs, participation in accelerators/incubators, workshops and peer learning platforms, online courses and certifications, exposure to real-life business environments and supportive policies and funding for capacity-building.

RQ 2 How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

Theme 7 Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

The interviews sought to identify if the entrepreneurial ecosystem is supportive, inclusive, and accessible for women and youth entrepreneurs in Botswana. Several responses were given by the respondents that suggest the following initiatives.

1. Access to finance: Women and young entrepreneurs sometimes have difficulties obtaining capital. The government can design low-interest loans, microfinance programs, and subsidies specifically for women and young business owners. Others suggest there should be alternative forms of collateral, for example, life insurance guarantees, group lending schemes etc.

2. Government-funded business incubators and accelerators may assist women and young people launch and grow their enterprises by offering networking opportunities, tools, and mentorship.

3. Legal and regulatory support: It is critical to streamline the legal and regulatory requirements for launching and running a business, particularly those pertaining to intellectual property rights, tax compliance, and business registration.

4. Networking platforms: It would be essential to set up venues for young and female business owners to get in connect with mentors, investors, and industry professionals.

Theme 8 Gender responsive policies

The interview question sought to identify specific government policies and systems that the government of Botswana should put in place to allow women and youth to participate fully in their business activities. Nonetheless, the respondents think that current programs, such the Youth Development Fund (YDF) and Citizen Economic Inclusion, should be evaluated and redesigned to better serve the needs of these categories. The executives suggested that the policies be gender responsive such as Grants and soft loans that are gender responsive, one stop business centers that are gender responsive and gender responsive procurement policies that addresses market access issues and policy on land allocation targeting women and youth enterprises.

It was noted that since most regulations are created by males, they would not consider many factors that affect women and youth. They firmly believe that if women and young people participate in the formulation of policies, they will create policies that cater to their unique needs, advocate for changes to policies, and quickly identify the underlying causes so that the best

solutions can be implemented. Majority concurred that it was wrong to decide for women and youth entrepreneurs as evidenced by their lived experiences.

Theme 9 Effective implementation of policies

Differing views were uttered as to whether the existing policies that support women and young business owners are effective. 13 respondents felt that the policies are not fully effective, whilst 3 respondents felt that they are effective and good. They reported that,

"The policies are there; the only problem is that they are not fully implemented. Policy implementers say they monitor but they fail to review."

However, the question of how they should be effectively implemented attracted the responses that policy implementers should ensure that effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of these policies are necessary to ascertain their impact. Similarly, monitoring and evaluation: making sure that policies, with frequent reviews and assessments, have observable, and measurable impacts on women and young entrepreneurs.

RQ 3 How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

Theme 10 Challenges

Further challenges identified during the interview sessions were that women and youth are marginalized groups, oppressed and undermined by men and elderly people especially when they must lead them. They also mentioned they lack collaborative and partnership efforts, for example, "90% of the funded youth projects have collapsed," one officer has observed. Additionally, there is a lack of receptiveness to the interventions offered by business development service providers as observed by some respondents.

RQ 4 To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

Theme 11 Effective Entrepreneurial Training Programs

Several respondents have identified LEA training programs, especially EDT, as the most relevant program for start-ups. Others from the private sector are those offered by Tokafala and Young Minds Africa (their Xala ka Botlhale). They have provided testimonies indicating that these customized programs have influenced the customers to perform better. One respondent attested that,

"Private sector institutions offer unique and more specific and practical like Tokafala programs, their programs tend to look at the industry they are in." On the other hand, some reported that government programs are too generic, and they noted that "program designers should move away from generic ones to targeted programs."

They further noted that entrepreneurial training programs tailored to women and young people do not just empower individuals, they inject new energy, ideas and competitiveness into the broader economy. Some of the success stories highlight that numerous participants have successfully started or expanded their firms after completing the courses, proving how well these programs encourage entrepreneurship spaces in Botswana. Furthermore, they noted that these programs help build the confidence of women and youth to start and manage businesses, providing them with the tools to overcome doubts and societal expectations. Moreover, they increase their participation by catering to their unique needs and concerns, training programs can encourage more women and youth to enter entrepreneurship and thrive in the sector.

Theme 12 Sector specific programs

Respondents suggest sector specific programs to women and youth entrepreneurs as they impart technical skills to the commercial farmers. However, they noted that offering tailored instruction according to the target industry (such as manufacturing, technology, or agriculture) can

improve competitiveness and relevance. However, these training increase confidence and self-efficacy of the SMMEs as they address specific barriers and build on existing strengths, they can significantly boost the confidence and self-belief of participants, making them more likely to succeed.

REPORTING RESULTS OF THE DATA TRIANGULATION

The investigator triangulated the quantitative survey results with qualitative interview data to increase the findings' reliability and trustworthiness. The study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between managerial competencies and the success of women and youth-led business in Southeast district in Botswana. Regarding the required managerial capabilities by women and youth owners, their views were that women and young people need both hard and soft abilities for managing their businesses. However, majority of executives, emphasized that soft skills (such as emotional intelligence (EM), critical thinking etc) are the most important competences in the fiercely competitive corporate environment of today. They pointed out that integrating these skills enables business owners to handle ambiguity, make informed choices, and build robust, long-lasting enterprises. One participant noted that, “if I were to hire people, I would hire attitude.”

Another illustration of how managerial capabilities affect creativity and innovation was looked at. According to their opinions, creative and innovative business owners who are fast and forward-thinking are necessary for their companies to compete and succeed. They have noted that entrepreneurs who have the right skill set are able to make decisions that enhance the operation of the business in terms of its efficiency and cost-cutting measures. In the end, this results in increased income, employment creation, prospects for market access, and growth into new regions. Regarding the aspect of quality of products and services, participants underlined that management

and quality are intertwined, entrepreneurs should endeavour to provide goods that would satisfy their customer's needs. "Youth funded projects sell products/services that are below the standards," one executive said, expressing dissatisfaction.

In terms of the overall planning of their businesses, the respondents were against young entrepreneurs who make quick decisions and act hurriedly without following through on their ideas. However, they suggested various capacity building initiatives to be put in place to impart them with the necessary skills to run successful business. Therefore, there is a stronger proof that management skills have influence in fostering business success, and this is provided by the correlation between the statistical findings and the real-world experiences of entrepreneurs.

Another hypothesis of the study concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between effective government policies and support systems and the success of women and youth-led business in the Southeast district in Botswana. This was reinforced by the perspectives from the respondents who felt that Botswana needs to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem which is supportive, inclusive, and accessible for women and youth entrepreneurs. They strongly felt that the government should ensure that policies are gender responsive. They were adamant that if women and youth are included in the policy-making process, they would develop policies that address their needs, push for policy changes, and promptly pinpoint the root reasons so that the best solutions may be put into place. Majority (13) of respondents noted that,

> "The policies are there, the only problem is that they are not fully implemented, hence effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies is crucial to ensure that they are impactful."

According to the third hypothesis, managerial competencies moderated by entrepreneurial training programs were found to be significant. This revealed that entrepreneurial training programs have a positive significant effect on the relationship between managerial competencies

and success of women and youth-led business in Southeast district in Botswana. The fourth hypothesis revealed that entrepreneurial training programs (as a moderator) has a high significant effect on the relationship between government policies and support systems and success of women and youth-led business in Southeast district in Botswana.

However, the success stories have demonstrated how well these programs support entrepreneurship in Botswana, as many participants have successfully launched or grown their businesses after finishing the courses. They view the LEA (government institution) programs as most relevant, even though most government entrepreneurship education programs are too generic. They applauded the private sector for their unique and tailored industry specific (agriculture, tourism and technology) ones like Tokafala and Young Minds Africa. These results show that more of these customized initiatives, through a single support system of assistance between public and private institutions, would help to accelerate the growth of youth and women-owned businesses.

Evaluation of Findings

This section offers a comprehensive examination and discussion of the results presented in this chapter. The explanation and the interpretation of the findings in this section will be done in a way that supports the researcher's specified theories supported by empirical evidence stated in the literature review. Analysis of the findings will be rationally arranged in accordance with the objectives and/or the hypothesis of the study. The writer will also give an explanation if the outcomes of the results which were expected are contradictory to the findings when considering the literature and offer possible justifications for any.

RQ1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

The first section of the study question was on managerial competences, and it sought to determine whether the respondents had the technical know-how needed to successfully operate their businesses. According to Table 4.6, most respondents agreed with every statement. They were confident that they could effectively communicate the products and services to their stakeholders and inspire their employees to put in a lot of effort to complete significant jobs. They mentioned that they assist them in collaborating as a team to position their businesses to compete better in the market. They frequently inspire their staff to meet company objectives and come up with creative ideas to manage their businesses. Furthermore, they often come up with effective plans in line with their organization’s objectives. They also mentioned they often make effective choices to enhance their businesses. Additionally, they often find effective solutions to solve their business problems. The results suggest that the possession or the lack of managerial skills can have a favourable or negative impact on a company's performance and several research studies attest to that. Rankhumise & Letsoalo (2019) have observed in their study that human capability is a crucial

element in the company's expansion and a major determinant of business success. Similarly, the research conducted by Hani (2021) reported that a manager's capacity to motivate staff, conduct discussions, and effectively handle threats, situations of crisis, assignments, endeavours, and technology is crucial to a company's success.

A simple linear regression was conducted to determine whether entrepreneurship training programs significantly predicted managerial capabilities. The overall regression model (Table 4.18) was not statistically significant at ($T=-0.234$, $p>0.001$). Entrepreneurship training programs did not significantly predict managerial capabilities. These results indicate that entrepreneurial training programs do not account for variations in managerial capabilities within this sample. This implies acceptance of the null hypothesis.

The lack of a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurship training programs and managerial capabilities aligns with empirical literature highlighting the 'knowing-doing gap' in entrepreneurial education (Glaub et al., 2014). Prior studies indicate that formal training alone yields low skill transfer rates unless moderated by individual baseline factors such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy or practical experience (Davies et al., 2023). Consequently, training participation in isolation may be insufficient to account for variance in managerial capabilities without considering contextual implementation and trainee readiness.

Linear regression was also used to test the combined effect of managerial competencies on the success of women and youth-led enterprises. Consequently, the model that forecasted the performance of women-led and youth-led firms was found to be significant, according to the ANOVA results in Table 4.20. This has demonstrated that the performance of women- and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast area may be statistically predicted by management

abilities. It was also found that the management competencies unstandardized regression coefficient was 0.275. This suggested that women's and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast area would thrive 27.5% more if management competences increased by one unit. As seen in Table 4.21, the t-statistic for the regression coefficient for management competences was significant at the 5% level of significance ($T=5.410$, $p<0.001$), suggesting the rejection of the null hypothesis. However, these figures support the study's conclusion that the performance of women- and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast area is significantly positively correlated with management competence. The results are consistent with Ncube and Chimucheka (2019) who argued that management skills and SMME success are statistically correlated.

The present investigation aimed to determine the required managerial competencies women and youth entrepreneurs require to run successful enterprises. According to the survey's open-ended question, most participants (21%) thought that they urgently required business management abilities (see Table 4.7). Further, the study investigated the interviewees' perspectives on the required managerial skills. According to the majority, entrepreneurs need both hard and soft talents to operate profitable enterprises. They pointed out that integrating these skills enables business owners to handle ambiguity, make informed choices, and build robust, long-lasting enterprises. Lamri and Lubart (2023) discovered that good performance requires both hard and soft skills. The authors further explained that hard skills are objective, quantifiable, and readily assessed talents, whereas soft skills are non-technical, interpersonal, and visual characteristics that are often learned via experience. However, Aglaonema et al. (2023) argued that nowadays, businesses must offer training in both soft skills and hard skills to improve employee effectiveness. Sopa et al. (2020) reiterated that management of the organization must encourage the full participation of all workers to consistently enhance both hard and soft abilities.

Majority of executives claimed that the most important competencies in today's fiercely competitive business environment are soft skills. Furthermore, several emphasized that women need to be empowered to effectively manage their workforce since they are inherently sensitive or have a soft spot, which is frequently exploited by employees. These findings concur with the research results obtained by Aglaonema et al. (2023) who found that simultaneously, employee performance characteristics are significantly impacted by both hard and soft skill variables. This indicates that employee performance development may be influenced by both hard and soft abilities at the same time. They further provided an illustration of how managerial abilities affect creativity and innovation. According to them, managers who are adaptable and forward-thinking are essential for creativity and innovation since they can impact many innovative ideas and choose which ones are worthwhile investing in, which eventually helps a firm stand out from its rivals.

The results from the International Trade Centre (2019) indicated that the ability to continually convert ideas and information into new systems, procedures, and products is crucial to a business's capacity for adaptation. A similar study by Bosire, et al. (2020) discovered that the performance of youth-led businesses in Kenya's Nyanza area will increase for every unit increase in creativity and innovativeness.

The viewpoints of how management competencies impact business performance was astounding. To affect revenue, staff turnover, market access prospects, and expansion, they advised on developing strategic positioning and branding in addition to simplifying processes for cost effectiveness. Nevertheless, once these things are accomplished, competitiveness will naturally be impacted. Mashavira and Chipunza (2021) also confirmed that the relationship between management conceptual skills and SME success measured by innovation are statistically significantly correlated.

Regarding the quality component of products and services, respondents emphasized that since management and quality are closely related, business owners should strive to produce products of the quality that are required by consumers. An observation made by one of the respondents regarding products offered by funded youth projects, is that they sell products that are below the standards, which are less competitive in the market. Moreover, International Trade Centre (2019), revealed that businesses in Botswana perform comparatively badly when it comes to satisfying customers' quality criteria. The report also revealed that of those that responded to the study, 77% said they were not certified to any sustainability, quality, or other standards. This explains why maintaining quality standards over time and swiftly correcting deviations will be made possible by ongoing customer monitoring and feedback via Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, which will result in consistent and improved quality.

Another inquiry was to determine how management capabilities impact the overall planning of businesses run by women and young people. Many respondents insisted that young people's impulsive behaviour and snap decisions without implementing their ideas affect how they run profitable businesses. Parallel to this, women are naturally good planners and, with the correct managerial training, can run successful businesses.

Many examples that might improve the managerial abilities of women and young entrepreneurs were cited by the respondents. These included, but were not limited to, formal education and business training, mentorship and coaching programs, workshops and peer learning platforms, accelerators and incubators, online courses and certifications, exposure to real-world business settings, supportive policies and funding for capacity-building, and more.

RQ2: How effective are Botswana's government policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

The first question under the research objective sought to determine the sources that young people and women entrepreneurs utilize to develop their managerial skills. According to the research currently in publication, fewer participants believed that private and public assistance organizations were effective sources for developing managerial skills (Bosire et al., 2020). The question of whether formal training/education, government agencies, in-house training, private supporting institutions, and job experience helped women and young owners/managers develop managerial skills was posed to them. The respondents strongly believed that the development of their managerial abilities was made possible by their job experience, formal training, and in-house training as depicted in Table 4.8. This implied that these are the most effective ways of acquiring managerial abilities for women and youth owners/managers to run successful enterprises. However, they had low perception of the involvement of private institutions assistance and government agencies in gaining managerial skills which is confirmed by the findings from Bosire et al. (2020).

A follow-up inquiry asked if the government organizations that were identified, such as LEA, BITC, CEDA, Sector Education & Training Institutions, and YDF, had assisted them in the acquisition of management skills. Furthermore, compared to BITC, CEDA, Business Botswana, and YDF respectively, most respondents (Table 4.7), thought that the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) assisted them in developing managerial skills. This demonstrated that LEA as a driving force in promoting SMME development in Botswana provides targeted interventions to help SMMEs to be sustainable and vibrant as their vision statement states. Moreover, most respondents (Fig 4.2) reiterated that they had not received any assistance from government institutions to enhance their managing abilities when asked with an open-ended inquiry to specify the type of assistance. However, the findings are linked to research by Simodisa (2015, as cited in Majadibodu

et al., 2023) who revealed that tight government rules limit access to resources that are essential for the growth of SMEs.

Another question aimed to determine whether professional services like consulting, accounting, or law firms, educational institutions, business associations, and private supporting organizations like commercial banks (ABSA, FNB, Standard Chartered, Bank Gaborone, Capital Bank, or Bank of Baroda) had assisted them in acquiring managerial competencies (Table 4.8). Business associations and private educational institutions received good confirmations for assisting the respondents in developing their managerial skills. However, they believe that they have not benefited from commercial banks or professional services like law companies, accounting firms, or consulting firms in developing managerial skills. This implies that these institutions' contributions in terms of corporate social responsibility are limited and that they need to do more.

The next study question was to identify the interventions offered by government and private institutions that improve the managerial skills of women and youth business owners as depicted in Tables 4.9 and 4.10. The interventions examined in this study included business information and guidance, business mentorship, business counselling, company incubation, business training, and business consultancy. A considerable proportion of participants applauded government-supporting organizations for providing them with business training, information, and advisory services. They stated that the government had not offered them any support in the areas of business consulting, business incubation, business mentorship, and counselling. This explains why government institutions offering business development services should intensify their outreaches to increase awareness on the various interventions they offer. According to Majadibodu et al. (2023) SMMEs require government interventions to launch successful businesses as they lack knowledge and assistance while working on their own. Additionally, most of the respondents

believed that private supporting organizations had not helped them with business development services interventions. This shows little or no commitment of private institutions towards entrepreneurship development in the country.

To delve deeply into the opinions and viewpoints of the participants in accordance with governmental policies and mechanisms that assist women and young entrepreneurs, a qualitative analysis was carried out. The questions sought to identify the type of entrepreneurship ecosystem the government of Botswana should create to support women and youth-led businesses, the specific government policies and systems the government of Botswana should put in place to allow women and youth to participate fully in their business activities, the reasons behind women and youth business' owners participation in developing policies and regulations in Botswana and how to effectively address the requirements of women and youth-led businesses within the current policies that assist SMMEs. However, the performance of businesses and their industrialization success may be impacted by a variety of governmental challenges (African Economic Outlook, 2017). These include strengthening the business climate, upholding solid regulatory frameworks, guaranteeing fair trade relations, along with improving overall economic circumstances through wise fiscal and monetary policies and suitable currency rates.

Literature has cited that Botswana's ecosystem is not well developed. A review by Mamabolo and Lekoko (2021) revealed that the government, as the main actor, is unable to adequately address the demands of businesses. The current findings are aligned with Botswana Youth Magazine (2024) who found that the government of Botswana should provide microfinance programs, low-interest loans, and subsidies tailored to women and young entrepreneurs. Other collateral options include life insurance guarantees and group lending programs. The government should provide funding for business incubators and accelerators that can help women and young

people start and expand their businesses by providing mentorship, tools, and networking opportunities. They should also simplify the legal and regulatory requirements for starting and operating a business, especially those related to tax compliance, intellectual property rights, and business registration. This supports the idea that the government of Botswana should ensure that inclusive and gender responsive policies are enforced to encourage full participation of women and youth entrepreneurs.

The researcher also found out from the respondents' opinions that it is critical that organizations, decision-makers, and communities pay close attention to the issues and viewpoints of women and youth entrepreneurs when formulating policies. Diraditsile et al. (2019) reiterated that young people should be included at the table not to satisfy a quota or be politically acceptable, but because their input is desperately required.

Most respondents confirmed that the existing policies are not effective to meet the needs of women and youth. However, to properly address the shortcomings of the policies, the respondents suggest a holistic approach that is focusing on all sectors when creating policies, offering training and support, reaching out to all regions or being accessible to them, introducing gender-based services, and giving targeted assistance. However, to determine the effects of these policies, they must be implemented, monitored, and assessed effectively to determine their impact. This is supported by Etoori (2017) that the Commonwealth nations must implement legislative and policy changes by passing legislation and policies that expressly aim to support social innovations and businesses.

After conducting linear regression analysis, managerial capabilities showed a statistically significant positive direct association with government policies and support systems ($T=2.181$, $p<0.001$) in model 1 (see Table 4.27). On the other hand, there was no significant direct correlation

between Entrepreneurial Training Programs (T= -0.9992, p>0.001). The interaction term (Moderation effect of government policies and systems) was used in Model 2 to assess the focus of hypothesis 4. The interaction coefficient produced a significant value of p=0.482 and a t-statistic of T= -0.704, which is well above the standard threshold of 5%, the interaction effect is statistically non-significant.

Evaluating Hypothesis 4, the interaction term between Government Policies and Entrepreneurial Training Programs was statistically non-significant leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis This indicates that while government policies directly support managerial capabilities, they do not act as a conditional catalyst or moderator that enhances the effectiveness of training programs. These results support the theoretical perspective that macro-level institutional support and micro-level human capital interventions operate as independent additive drivers rather than interactive mechanisms (Cho & Honorati, 2014;McKenzie & Woodruff, 2014).

RQ3: How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

Even with government initiatives to promote SMMEs, several of them continue to lack access to business development services. According to Diraditsile (2020) the execution of Botswana's youth development initiatives is hindered by several basic obstacles. He noted that nearly all the key informants stated that the first issue was a lack of efficient monitoring, and political interference was the second issue that affected both the key informants and the young participants.

However, the current study found that most participants face a lot of challenges in accessing support from the providers. Table 4.11 revealed that most of them are not aware of supporting institutions' assistance, and that they did not appreciate the assistance offered by supporting institutions. They also indicated that the available support is not appropriate to the needs of their business, and they further revealed that they did not have enough resources to access business development services. They mentioned that they did not have sufficient information about the availability of business development services to make a rational choice and mentioned that supporting institutions do not allow them to participate in the design of the policies. They argued that they did not have sufficient information about the cost of business development services to make a rational choice, whilst they assumed that supporting institutions will not be able to handle my request, and that supporting institutions do not deal with requests professionally.

Additional problems revealed by open-ended inquiries revealed financial constraint related to participation and transport fees as a leading barrier to accessing services. Lack of awareness about available services and time constraints due to operational demands were also reported amongst key challenges. Long turnaround time on service delivery, poor communication on scheduled services, geographic limitations, restrictive eligibility criteria, lack of tailored support and complex application procedures. The findings are aligned with Rudhumbu and du Plessis (2020) who discovered that access to funding is the biggest obstacle for female entrepreneurs, while the legal and regulatory landscape is the least concerning.

Interview outcomes revealed that young people and women are marginalized groups that are oppressed and undermined by males and the adults, particularly when they are required to lead them. A similar review by Rudhumbu and du Plessis (2020) argued that men's dominance syndrome and societal prejudices still affect female entrepreneurs. Some respondents also

reported a lack of cooperation and collaboration efforts as well as a lack of receptivity to the interventions provided by business development service providers. Women and youth entrepreneurs should work hard to identify available opportunities and seize them. Mamabolo and Lekoko (2021) suggested that they ought to take advantage of possibilities available in the market and keep up with developments to place their companies in the market and mitigate threats. Further in their findings they noted that women business owners should aggressively and consistently look for ways to collaborate strategically with the government and Public and Private Partnerships (PPPs). They may also help to accelerate a cycle of growth by coaching new female business owners.

RQ4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

According to the African Economic Outlook (2017) Africa needs more initiatives and institutions that can actively bridge the knowledge gap between academics and industry, especially by focusing on management and problem-solving skills. However, Table 4.12 revealed that most respondents believed that receiving more training enhanced their managerial and leadership skills, which in turn improved the performance of their businesses. They also believed that the more training provided, the stronger the link between support networks, entrepreneurial training, and the success of businesses run by women and young people. On the contrary, few of the participants (37.8 %) were of the view that the number of business training attended is not sufficient, and that the length of the training was sufficient (38.3 %).

According to a related investigation by Sangwa (2021) only 27.6% of people had access to entrepreneurship training before launching their own company, indicating that the availability of such training was still quite low. The author further noted that it might be because, while

entrepreneurship education is available in secondary schools as an elective and is more academic than practical, it is not given at the elementary level. This explains the need for government and private business development service providers to intensify their entrepreneurship training awareness targeting women and youth entrepreneurs. Moreover, training may become more relevant by enhancing communication between government as well as the private sector. Similarly, Diraditsile (2020) argued that youth empowerment initiatives must be sustained and ongoing to achieve their goals and have an impact.

The researcher conducted some qualitative inquiries to find out from the interviewee's perspectives, if entrepreneurial training programs influence the success of women and youth-led enterprises. According to the respondents, LEA training programs, particularly EDT, are the most relevant for start-up businesses and have proven to be effective in assisting SMMEs to accelerate their growth and remain sustainable in the market. Tokafala and Young Minds Africa (their Xala ka Botlhale) provide further private sector options. African Economic Outlook (2017), confirmed that "training by the private sector correlates positively with program success (p. 217)." However, on the contrary, Tanko & Faruk (2023) argued that the success of these companies does not seem to be statistically impacted by financial competencies. It draws attention to how many different factors affect young enterprises' financial results, which needs further investigation. They did point out, though, that providing training that is specific to the target industry, such as manufacturing, technology, or agriculture, can increase relevance and competitiveness.

The results of the inquiry that aimed to determine the facts regarding how creative elements impact business performance were presented in Table 4.13. However, they showed that a sizable percentage of respondents thought that innovation is essential to businesses' expansion. The findings are consistent with Bosire (2024)) and Nyachoti (2018), who found that innovativeness

can statistically predict how well youth-led businesses will do, and that it has much more impact on the performance of their businesses.

Regarding the aspect of enterprise performance, the question aimed to examine the effect of managerial skills on the revenue turnover, employee turnover, market access opportunities and opening more branches. However, a few respondents reported that their business sales volumes have been on the increase. Less respondents reported that they have employed additional employees to meet the growing demand for their products and services and have not opened more branches. Nonetheless, most testified that they have used more effective tactics to reduce expenses, and the profits recorded have been higher since inception. Further, Table 4.21 explained that the relationship between management competences and the performance of women and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast area is positively and significantly impacted by entrepreneurship training programs. Nyachoti (2018) and Balcha (2022), concurred with the findings that the performance of the MSEs in the research region was therefore shown to be strongly positively correlated with entrepreneurship training.

Linear regression was conducted and managerial capabilities were used as the mediator between entrepreneurship training programs and enterprise success. However, the hypothesis Outcome (H_3) is not supported. Managerial Capabilities do not mediate the relationship between Entrepreneurial Training Programs and Enterprise Success. Entrepreneurial training programs directly drive enterprise success ($T=0.202$, $p<0.001$), which is revealed in Table 4.24. Participating in training improves business performance without needing managerial skills as an intermediary bridge. Once training programs are accounted for, managerial capabilities have no statistically significant effect on Enterprise Success ($p=0.224$). Even though mediation failed, the combined

simultaneous regression model remains overall statistically significant (T=17.491, p<0.001), explaining 8.4% of the variance (R^2=0.084) in enterprise success.

The rejection of the mediation hypothesis (H_3), alongside the significant direct effect of entrepreneurial training programs on enterprise success ($T = 0.202, p < 0.001$), indicates a direct mechanism of benefit. This finding aligns with McKenzie and Woodruff, 2014 and Cho and Honorati, 2014, who observed that entrepreneurship training in developing contexts often drives firm performance directly through immediate market exposure, resource access, and behavioral activation, rather than indirectly through structured managerial capabilities. Once training benefits are accounted for, managerial capabilities offer no unique predictive variance ($p = 0.224$), supporting arguments that administrative management skills may be secondary to direct operational and network advantages in determining small enterprise success (Glaub et al., 2014). Educational and training interventions yield direct, practical performance gains for enterprises, rather than relying on building broad managerial capabilities first.

Summary

The first objective of the study assessed whether women and youth owners and managers possessed the technical know-how to operate their businesses successfully. The comments that showed confidence in their managerial skills, such as effective communication, motivating staff, encouraging team spirit, strategic planning, decision-making, and problem-solving, were endorsed by most respondents. According to this review of the data, having management abilities improves the success of a business

Linear regression analysis was conducted to test the combined effect of managerial capabilities on the success of women and youth-led enterprises. The model predicting the performance of these firms was found to be significant (ANOVA results in Table 4.20). The unstandardized regression coefficient for managerial competencies was 0.275, indicating that a one-unit increase in management competencies could lead to a 27.5% improvement in business performance. The t-statistic for the regression coefficient was significant at the 5% level ($T=5.410$, $p<0.001$), supporting the conclusion that managerial competencies are significantly positively correlated with business performance.

The study also sought to determine the managerial capabilities required for women and young business owners to operate profitable companies. According to an open-ended survey question, 21% of participants indicated a need for business management capabilities. Interviewees emphasized the importance of hard skills and soft skills, noting that integrating these skills enables entrepreneurs to handle ambiguity, make informed decisions, and build robust businesses. Soft skills, such as interpersonal abilities, are often acquired through experience, while hard skills are measurable capabilities.

The next question assessed the impact of managerial capabilities on innovation, creativity and competitiveness. Interestingly, executives highlighted that managerial skills greatly influence innovation and creativity. Notably, managers who are flexible and forward-thinking can inspire creative ideas and determine which ones are worth investing in, differentiating their businesses from competitors. The International Trade Centre (2019) emphasized the importance of converting ideas into new systems, procedures, and products for a company's adaptability.

The quality aspect and strategic planning were other factors that were interrogated. Respondents stressed the close relationship between management and product/service quality. They emphasized that business owners should aim to produce quality products that meet consumer requirements. In confirmation of this the International Trade Centre (2019) reported that 77% of surveyed businesses in Botswana were not accredited to any sustainability, quality, or other standards, highlighting the need for ongoing customer monitoring and feedback to maintain quality standards.

However, participants were asked to suggest ways of enhancing managerial capabilities that would enable women and youth nosiness owners to run profitable entities. Respondents suggested various methods to improve the managerial capabilities of women and young entrepreneurs, including but not limited to: formal education and business training to up their skills; mentorship and coaching programs and learn from mentors; workshops and peer learning platforms to empower and share experiences; accelerators and incubators to utilize available resources; online courses and certifications to add value; exposure to real-world business settings; supportive policies and funding for capacity-building; personal development and benchmarking.

The second objective aimed to assess the effectiveness of government policies and systems supporting women and youth entrepreneurs in Botswana. First question aimed to identify primary

sources for empowering women and youth with managerial competencies. Respondents identified formal education, work experience, and in-house training as the most effective means of developing managerial competencies. Further, we examined the role of private institutions in providing managerial abilities to SMMEs. Surprisingly, private support organizations and government agencies were perceived as less effective in providing managerial skill development.

Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) was recognized for assisting entrepreneurs through targeted interventions aimed at SMME development. Other Agencies and entities like the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC), Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), and Youth Development Fund (YDF) were less frequently acknowledged for their support in managerial skill acquisition.

Therefore, there are perceived gaps to be carefully identified and closed. Many respondents indicated a lack of assistance from government institutions in enhancing their managerial abilities, despite some benefiting from training, coaching, mentoring, and seminars. However, the identified positive contributions by business associations and private educational institutions who were noted for aiding in managerial skill development. Consequently, they identified areas that needed improvement. For instance, they found that professional service organizations, such as law and accounting firms, and commercial banks were thought to be making very little contribution to the development of management skills, indicating the need for more corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Furthermore, the investigation examined the interventions and initiatives that are relevant in enhancing managerial competencies. Nonetheless, participants valued the government's efforts to offer business consulting, information dissemination, and training services. Support in areas such as business consulting, incubation, mentorship, and counselling, however, was considered

inadequate. A wake-up call to involve the private sector was made by the participants. A lack of entrepreneurial assistance was highlighted by the widespread belief that private supporting groups were not actively involved in providing company development services.

Undoubtedly, Botswana needs to enhance its entrepreneurship ecosystem and policy climate. Research indicates that Botswana's ecosystem is undeveloped, and that the government finds it difficult to adequately address women and youth entrepreneurs demands adequately the need for inclusive policies. The significance of developing an environment for entrepreneurship that promotes women and youth-led enterprises through inclusive and gender-responsive policies was underlined by the respondents. Additional recommendations include offering business incubators, low-interest loans, microfinance programs, and streamlining legal and regulatory processes to create an atmosphere that is more favourable for entrepreneurs.

Linear regression analysis revealed that government policies and support systems account for 5.1% of the variation in the success of women and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast district. The model was statistically significant, indicating a positive correlation between effective government policies/support systems and the performance of these enterprises.

The third objective focused on determining the challenges that women and young entrepreneurs in Botswana encounter when trying to access business development services, despite the current existing government programs that support SMMEs. The main challenges included a lack of awareness about the available support, a lack of resources, and the belief that the help provided by supporting organizations is insufficient or irrelevant. Financial limitations, limited information, and exclusion of women and youth business owners from policy design processes. The involvement of women and young people in entrepreneurial endeavours is further impeded by societal issues, including marginalization and gender discrimination. To successfully empower

these groups in the business sector, the findings point to the need for more accessible, inclusive, and customized support systems. Inadequate education and training are other obstacles. Many entrepreneurs lack access to entrepreneurship training since current programs are frequently overly theoretical and unsuited to real-world company requirements.

The fourth objective aimed at determining the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education and training programs in empowering women and youth entrepreneurs. Training programs are crucial for the success of women and youth-led businesses in Africa, especially in bridging the gap between industry and academia. Most entrepreneurs believed that training enhances their managerial and leadership skills, leading to improved business performance. This training also strengthens the link between support networks, entrepreneurial training, and business success for these groups.

However, there's a recognized shortage of adequate and sufficiently long business training, with many potential entrepreneurs lacking access to it before starting their ventures. This highlights the need for increased awareness campaigns and more practical entrepreneurship education, particularly at the elementary level. Enhanced communication between government and the private sector could also make training more relevant.

Sustained and ongoing women and youth empowerment initiatives are essential. Programs like LEA's EDT and private sector options such as Tokafala and Young Minds Africa's (Xala ka Botlhale) have proven to be effective for start-up businesses, aiding growth and sustainability. While private sector training positively correlates with program success, financial competencies alone may not statistically impact business success, suggesting other factors are at play. Training tailored to specific industries (e.g., manufacturing, technology, agriculture) can increase relevance and competitiveness.

Innovation is also vital for business expansion and performance. Studies show a strong link between innovativeness and the success of youth-led businesses. Regarding enterprise performance, while some businesses reported increased sales and employee numbers, many have focused on cost reduction and higher profits. Overall, entrepreneurship training programs significantly and positively impact the relationship between management competencies and the performance of women and youth-led businesses.

In conclusion, the overall findings compare to the literature by confirming that managerial competencies have positive influence on the success of women and youth-led enterprises. The study underscores the pivotal role of practical experiences and internal training in developing managerial skills among women and youth entrepreneurs in Botswana. While certain government agencies like LEA are recognized for their support, there exists a notable gap in comprehensive assistance from both public and private institutions. Addressing these gaps through inclusive policies, enhanced support mechanisms, and active involvement of private entities is crucial for the sustained success of women and youth-led enterprises in the region.

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The current study sought to evaluate the effect of managerial capabilities on the success of women and youth-led enterprises in Botswana. However, there is an observation that businesses run by women and youth continue to face challenges and ultimately collapse. Literature has highlighted that when it comes to implementing management best practices, firms led by women and young people continue to remain behind other companies. Although previous research examined management traits in connection to other factors, none examined the impact of managerial skills on the success of women-owned and youth-owned enterprises in Botswana. Therefore, this study aims to bridge that gap.

The data collection process was split into two phases using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach, with rigorous quantitative sampling taking place in the first phase and purposive qualitative sampling in the second (Creswell, 2014). This method makes it simpler to collect both quantitative, statistically significant patterns and qualitative, in-depth individual observations. On the other hand, this technique offered a thorough understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by these company owners.

Prior to the commencement of primary data collection, the research instruments (survey questionnaire and interview guides) underwent pilot testing to ensure their effectiveness and reliability in addressing the study topics. These methods ensured that the instrument measured the desired constructs accurately and would consistently produce reliable results. The use of methods such as member verification and triangulation further strengthened the validity of the qualitative data.

Before conducting surveys and interviews, ethical procedures were followed by requesting permissions from the relevant authorities and approval was granted. All participants voluntarily

signed consent forms after understanding the design and rationale of the study. To minimize possible errors, the study aimed to produce valid and trustworthy results, raising the standard of the inquiry by adhering to ethical research standards during data collection and analysis.

Limitations of the study

Geographical scope limitation: The study specifically focuses on Botswana's Southeast area. This immediately limits the generalizability of its findings to other regions of Botswana, or to other countries in Africa, which may have different economic, social, cultural, and policy contexts. Entrepreneurial ecosystems can vary significantly even within a single country.

Self-reported data and social desirability bias: A significant portion of the data seems to come from respondents' perceptions and beliefs (e.g., most respondents believed, they were confident, they often come up with effective plans). This relies on self-reported information, which can be subject to social desirability bias (respondents may want to present themselves or their businesses in a positive light) or recall bias. It might not always reflect actual behaviours or objective outcomes.

Lack of control group: To definitively state the impact of training or specific interventions, a comparative analysis with a control group (entrepreneurs who did *not* receive the training/intervention) would be ideal. The text does not indicate the presence of such a group, making it harder to isolate the unique effect of the interventions discussed.

Qualitative data limitations (Small Sample Size for Interviews): While qualitative inquiries provide rich insights (from the interviewee's perspectives, that is, open-ended inquiries), the number of interviewees for specific qualitative sections might be small (e.g., few of the participants, specific percentages like 21% for a perception). This limits the representativeness and

generalizability of those qualitative insights to the broader population of women and youth entrepreneurs.

Potential for selection bias: The study's sample might disproportionately include entrepreneurs who are already more engaged, proactive, or successful, as they might be more likely to participate in surveys or interviews about training and support. This could lead to an overestimation of the positive impacts of training or support. Berk (1983) contended that working with a non-random subset of a population (Purposive sampling) will have the potential of carrying the risk of sampling bias. However, Saunders et al. (2016) argued that the researcher can still get a high degree of credibility and trustworthiness by using purposive sampling.

Subjectivity of Success: While the study mentions that improved performance, accelerate their growth, and remain sustainable, the specific metrics for success might vary. If success was largely based on self-reported perceptions of improved performance, it introduces subjectivity. While revenue turnover, employee turnover, and profit increases are mentioned, the extent of data collected on these objective measures across all respondents is not explicitly detailed, and some respondents reported limited growth in these areas.

Measurement of managerial capabilities: While the study states that most respondents agreed with every statement regarding their managerial capabilities (e.g., communication, motivation, planning), the method of assessing these competencies beyond self-assessment is not fully detailed. Objective measures or 360-degree feedback could provide a more robust assessment.

Dynamic nature of entrepreneurship: The entrepreneurial landscape, including market conditions, technologies, and available support, is constantly evolving. A study conducted at a

specific time may not fully capture these dynamics or how they influence the relevance and effectiveness of training and support over longer periods.

The implications of the investigation are discussed in this chapter, and the author will ensure that the implications of the findings related to how women and youth entrepreneurs develop their managerial skills and the role of various support systems in Botswana are organised into sections. The chapter will also discuss the challenges faced by women and youth entrepreneurs in accessing business development services (BDS) in Botswana and finally, the discussion of the implications will focus on the importance of training and related factors in the success of women and youth-led businesses.

Implications

RQ1: To what extent do managerial capabilities help women and young people in Botswana to run their businesses successfully?

The success and sustainability of women- and youth-led businesses in the Southeast region of Botswana are conclusively dependent on managerial competences, which have a big impact on their expansion, competitiveness, and long-term viability.

Implications of Managerial Capabilities on Business Performance

Direct Impact on Business Success

Strong managerial abilities have a direct and favourable impact on the performance of women- and youth-led businesses, according to the study's overwhelming consensus. This association is well supported by the conclusion that for these businesses, a one-unit improvement in managerial competences results in a 27.5% increase in business flourishing. This implies that making an investment to cultivate these skills will pay off in the form of measurable gains in company expansion and success.

Human Capital as a Crucial Element

The value of human capital is demonstrated by the respondents' consensus regarding their capacity to inspire creativity, encourage teamwork, motivate employees, plan strategically, make wise decisions, and solve difficult situations. This supports the notion that an entrepreneur's inherent skills are essential for company growth and success, which is consistent with findings by (Hani, 2021) and (Rankhumise & Letsoalo, 2019).

Predictive Power of Management Skills

The statistical importance of managerial abilities in forecasting the performance of these companies suggests that evaluating and improving these skills can be a good way to anticipate

future economic success. This has consequences for policymakers, business development agencies, and financing organizations, as they can utilize managerial competency as a crucial criterion for assistance and intervention.

Support of Current Research

The conclusion that managerial skills and SMME success are statistically connected is more broadly applicable due to the findings' similarity with those of previous studies by Ncube and Chimucheka (2019). This offers a strong basis for creating focused support initiatives.

Implications of Required Managerial Competencies (Hard vs. Soft Skills)

Holistic Skill Development Is Crucial

One important conclusion is the idea that successful businesses require both hard and soft talents. Although business management skills (hard skills) are thought to be the most urgently needed, it is important to recognize that soft skills, like leadership, motivation, communication, adaptability, problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity, are also essential for navigating ambiguity and creating resilient businesses. This is backed up Lamri and Lubart (2023) who highlighted the need for comprehensive training programs that incorporate both.

Addressing the "Soft Spot" for Women Entrepreneurs

The specific mention of women needing empowerment to effectively manage their workforce due to perceived inherent sensitivity is a critical implication. It is suggested that training programs for female entrepreneurs should incorporate modules on negotiating, leadership assertiveness, and techniques to prevent employees from taking advantage of their perceived "soft spots" in addition to standard management. This supports Aglaonema et al. (2023) findings about the influence of both hard and soft skills on worker performance.

Continuous Learning and Development

The statement that management should support all employees' full involvement to continuously improve hard and soft skills, suggests that skill development is a continuous activity rather than a one-time occurrence (Sopa et al., 2020). Companies and supporting institutions must cultivate a culture of ongoing learning and development.

Implications of Managerial Competencies on Innovation and Creativity

Fostering Innovation through Flexible Leadership

The managerial role in promoting innovation is highlighted by the clear connection between adaptable and progressive managers and their capacity to influence innovative concepts and choose wise investments. This has consequences for the training and development of managers, highlighting the value of flexibility and receptivity to new concepts to set companies apart in cutthroat marketplaces. This supports the findings of Bosire, et al. (2020) and (International Trade Centre, 2019) about the influence of creativity on young entrepreneurs.

Implications of Managerial Competencies on Business Performance Indicators (Revenue, Staff Turnover, Market Access, Expansion)

Strategic Positioning for Competitiveness

The recommendation to create branding and strategic positioning as well as to streamline procedures for cost-effectiveness shows that managerial skills are essential for gaining a competitive edge. This extends beyond daily operations and highlights the necessity for entrepreneurs to think strategically. The relationship between conceptual management abilities and innovation-led SME success is further supported by Mashavira and Chipunza (2021).

Quality as a Management Imperative

The emphasis on creating high-quality goods and services to satisfy customer demands draws attention to a big gap, especially for youth projects that receive funding in Botswana but sell inferior goods. The International Trade Centre (2019) found that management training must prioritize quality control, standardization, and continuous customer feedback methods (such as CRM systems) to ensure competitiveness and customer satisfaction.

Implications of Managerial Competencies on Overall Business Planning and Gender Differences

Addressing Impulsivity in Youth Entrepreneurs

The finding that young people's impulsive actions and hasty decisions that are not properly implemented have an impact on business profitability is an important implication. This suggests that young entrepreneurs require managerial training that focuses on systematic planning, decision-making procedures, and follow-through to transform ideas into sustainable firms.

Leveraging Women's Natural Planning Abilities

One significant implication is the realization that women are good planners by nature and can manage profitable companies with the correct managerial training. This implies that programs aimed at female entrepreneurs can enhance their current capabilities, possibly emphasizing the development of their planning ability and the provision of the business acumen required to leverage these natural talents.

Implications for Developing Managerial Capabilities

Diverse Paths for Skill Development

The extensive list of recommended approaches to enhancing managerial skills (business training, mentorship, coaching, workshops, peer learning, online courses, accelerators, incubators,

real-world exposure, supportive policies, funding, personal development, benchmarking, mentorship, and formal education) suggested that a multifaceted strategy is needed. To develop strong management competences, a mix of formal and informal education, real-world experience, and a supportive environment is required, however, no single intervention will be enough.

Policy and Funding Support

The inclusion of supportive policies and funding for capacity-building highlighted how important it is for the government and financial institutions to provide an atmosphere that makes it possible for business owners to learn and improve their managerial abilities. This emphasizes how major development projects require specific funding and legislative frameworks.

RQ2: How effective are Botswana's policies and support systems for expanding women- and youth-owned businesses?

According to the survey, the best ways for women and young entrepreneurs to get managerial abilities are through work experience, formal training, and internal training. This is an important conclusion because it implies that structured educational programs paired with real-world, hands-on learning have a greater impact than outside help from supporting institutions.

Implications for Managerial Skill Development

Prioritizing Experiential Learning

Program designers and policymakers should place a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for real-world experience. This could include mentorships that provide practical business experience, apprenticeship programs, or even formal training that includes simulated business situations.

Strengthening Formal and In-House Training

This emphasizes how crucial accessible, high-quality formal business education (e.g., colleges, vocational schools) and robust in-house training programs within existing businesses or startups, this could entail utilizing peer-to-peer learning networks or promoting collaborative training programs.

Rethinking External Support Engagement

Given the poor reputation of government and private organizations (apart from LEA) in managing skill development, these organizations should reconsider their present approaches. They might need to better communicate their offerings, modify their programs to fit perceived needs, or better combine their assistance with opportunities for hands-on learning.

Implications for Government and Private Sector Involvement

The research revealed a mixed perception of government and private sector support, with LEA standing out as a significant contributor to managerial skill development, while other institutions and most professional services are seen as less effective. LEA's positive impact suggests that its targeted interventions, training, coaching, mentoring, and seminars are effective. Other government agencies and private organizations could study LEA's approach to understand what resonates with entrepreneurs and replicate successful strategies.

Addressing the Assistance Gap from Other Government Institutions

There is a notable awareness and access gap, as evidenced by the fact that many respondents said they received no help from government agencies (apart from specialized programs like LEA's). In areas where entrepreneurs feel unsupported, such as business consulting, incubation, mentorship, and counselling, government bodies need to intensify outreach efforts and clearly communicate the range of business development services they offer.

Encouraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Professional Services and Banks

Commercial banks and professional services (legal, accountancy, consulting firms) are being urged to step up their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in entrepreneurship development due to the perceived lack of benefit they provide in developing managerial skills. To give women and young entrepreneurs useful experience, they may partner with already-existing business support organizations, provide business development services, or hold specialized courses. In addition to helping the business owners, this could help these companies build lasting clientele.

Simplifying Regulatory Frameworks.

Goldberg et al. (2015) cited tight government rules that restrict access to resources, which suggests that regulatory reform is necessary. New entrepreneurs would find it easier to handle legal and regulatory obligations (such as tax compliance and business registration) if they were made simpler. This would allow them to focus more on core business operations and skill development.

Implications for Policy Development and Implementation

The study strongly suggested that effective government policies and support systems are positively correlated with the success of women and youth-led businesses, yet there are significant shortcomings in current policy effectiveness and implementation. However, for government policies to be effective, the following strategies were suggested.

Holistic and Targeted Policy Approaches

It is imperative to advocate for a comprehensive approach to policymaking that addresses all areas, focuses on all sectors, introduces gender-based services, and offer targeted assistance. This recognizes that entrepreneurs have different demands and goes beyond a one-size-fits-all approach.

Inclusivity in Policy Formulation

Including women and young entrepreneurs in policy discussions (instead of satisfying a quota...but because their input is desperately required) is a major implication of the emphasis on inclusivity in policy formulation. Higher acceptance and success rates will result from co-creating policies with the intended beneficiaries to guarantee that interventions are applicable, realistic, and tackle real-world issues.

Prioritizing Implementation, Monitoring, and Assessment

The study emphasized the necessity of strong implementation, ongoing monitoring, and efficient impact assessment because the current policies are thought to be ineffective. Even well-meaning policies will fail to achieve their objectives in the absence of these mechanisms. This entails setting up precise measurements, frequent evaluations, and feedback loops to guarantee that policies are adaptable and sensitive to the changing requirements of SMMEs.

Strengthening the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

The fact that Botswana's entrepreneurship ecosystem is not well developed as argued by Mamabolo and Lekoko (2021) and the numerous suggestions (microfinance, low-interest loans, subsidies, incubators, accelerators, and simplified regulations) all point to the necessity of a thorough, well-coordinated plan to create a more encouraging environment. Government, private sector, academia, and entrepreneurs themselves would all need to work together on this.

RQ3: How do women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs offered by the government and supporting institutions in Botswana?

The findings paint a clear picture of significant hurdles preventing women and youth-led SMMEs from effectively utilizing available support, despite government initiatives. These challenges have profound implications for entrepreneurship development in Botswana.

Implications of Challenges in Accessing Business Development Services (BDS)

Awareness and Information Deficit

Lack of knowledge about certain BDS providers and available supporting institutions, as well as inadequate information about their costs and advantages, is a significant obstacle. This indicates a failure in communication and outreach strategies by both public and private BDS providers. BDS providers need to invest heavily in targeted and accessible information dissemination campaigns. To target underprivileged women and young entrepreneurs, this may entail leveraging digital platforms, community engagements, local forums, and collaborations with local leaders or community organizations. Information should be clear, concise, and address cost implications directly.

Inappropriateness and Lack of Tailored Support

The current support is frequently seen as inadequate for the unique requirements of young and female-owned firms. This implies that BDS offers are not meeting demand. Therefore, BDS providers need to do in-depth needs analyses with young and women entrepreneurs. To guarantee relevance and effectiveness, programs should be co-designed with their involvement. This entails switching from generic models to customized treatments that target gender-specific requirements, sector-specific issues, and the distinct stages of growth of these companies.

Resource Constraints (Financial and Time)

Financial barriers (participation, transport fees) and time constraints due to operational demands are significant impediments. This demonstrates how many young and female

entrepreneurs are working with little flexibility and narrow profit margins. BDS providers should explore subsidized or free services, flexible delivery models (e.g., online, evening, weekend sessions), and decentralized service points to reduce travel and time burdens. Integration of microfinance organizations might help with BDS access costs.

Operational and Systemic Inefficiencies of BDS Providers

Concerns about long turnaround times, poor communication, complex application procedures, and unprofessional handling of requests indicate systemic inefficiencies within supporting institutions. The assumption that institutions will not be able to handle clients' request speaks volumes about past negative experiences or a lack of trust. However, to guarantee professionalism and efficiency, BDS providers need to increase staff training, streamline their procedures, and strengthen communication protocols. Establishing transparent service level agreements (SLAs) and methods for client feedback may enhance service delivery and foster confidence.

Exclusion from Policy Design and Political Interference

According to Diraditsile (2020), entrepreneurs' lack of interest in policymaking and their worries about political interference seriously limit the effectiveness and relevance of government programs. The marginalization of young people and women makes this situation worse. Therefore, inclusive policy-making frameworks that explicitly include the opinions and views of women and young entrepreneurs are desperately needed. This calls for a shift from token-based consultations to true co-creation, where their opinions are taken into consideration when developing policies and initiative. Enhancing development efforts' governance and accountability frameworks are necessary to combat political interference.

Societal and Gender Biases

The persistent men's dominance syndrome and cultural biases, especially the devaluation of women and young people in leadership positions, foster a hostile atmosphere that deters their involvement and leadership (Rudhumbu & du Plessis, 2020). However, beyond BDS, there are wider social implications that call for public awareness campaigns and lobbying to dispel gender stereotypes and advance inclusion. BDS programs must include elements that enable women and young people to confront and transcend these prejudices, cultivating self-assurance and leadership abilities. Here, mentoring from accomplished young and female business owners may be quite helpful.

Lack of Cooperation and Proactiveness from Entrepreneurs

The findings noted a lack of cooperation and collaboration efforts and lack of receptivity to the interventions provided. While many challenges stem from the providers, this suggests a mutual issue. Although BDS providers need to make improvements, entrepreneurs should also aggressively look for and seize opportunities. BDS providers may need to raise awareness of the advantages of their services, not just their accessibility. An attitude of continuous learning and resourcefulness may also be cultivated via entrepreneurship education.

Implications for a Call to Action by Women and Youth Entrepreneurs

Seizing Opportunities and Strategic Collaboration

According to Mamabolo & Lekoko (2021) women and young entrepreneurs should actively look for and take advantage of market possibilities, keep abreast of trends, and work strategically with PPPs and the government. Consequently, entrepreneurs have the responsibility of being fully involved and proactive. Modules for BDS programs could cover networking techniques, market intelligence, and how to interact with both public and private sector

organizations. Promoting success stories and peer-to-peer learning can help inspire entrepreneurs to take greater initiative.

RQ4: To what extent do entrepreneurial training programs influence the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana?

Implications of Entrepreneurship Training and Skill Development

The findings of the study strongly emphasized how important entrepreneurship education and skill development, especially in the areas of management and problem-solving, are to the success of women- and youth-led enterprises.

Bridging the Knowledge-Industry Gap

The African Economic Outlook (2017), demanded for more efforts to close the knowledge gap between academia and industry, particularly in the areas of management and problem-solving skills, highlights the urgent need for more hands-on, applied entrepreneurship education. It is possible that traditional academic methods are not adequately preparing entrepreneurs for the real-world business challenges. Institutions of higher learning and career training facilities ought to work more closely with industry participants to create curriculum that emphasize real problem-solving skills, decision-making, and daily business management above theory. Apprenticeships, internships, and case studies centred on issues facing the local sector might all be combined.

Positive Perception of Training Effectiveness

The perceived worth and effectiveness of entrepreneurship training are highlighted by the respondents' strong view that training improves management and leadership abilities, which in turn improves firm performance. This favourable opinion serves as a solid basis for promoting more extensive training programs. This positive sentiment can be leveraged in marketing and awareness

campaigns for training programs. Highlighting testimonials and success stories of entrepreneurs who have benefited from training can encourage others to participate.

Insufficient Access and Duration of Training

The findings that few participants felt the *number* of training sessions attended was sufficient, and a significant portion had no prior entrepreneurship training, point to a major unmet demand and access barrier. The limited availability, especially at the elementary level, and the academic nature of existing secondary school education further exacerbate this. Government and private BDS providers must intensify their outreach efforts to increase awareness and accessibility of entrepreneurship training, specifically targeting women and youth. This includes exploring diversified delivery channels (e.g., mobile training units, online platforms) and potentially introducing practical entrepreneurship education at earlier stages of the education system, beyond just an elective in secondary school. The emphasis should be on practical application, not just theory.

Sustained and Relevant Training is Key

Given the strong association between training and company performance and the need for consistent and continuous youth empowerment programs, Diraditsile (2020) argued that short-term or one-time training interventions are unlikely to have a lasting effect. Therefore, training programs must be created as avenues for continuous development pathways, maybe including peer learning, refresher courses, and follow-up mentoring. However, to guarantee that training stays relevant to changing market demands and industrial needs, it is also essential to improve communication between the public and private sectors.

Implications of Specific Training Modalities and Focus Areas

The findings identified specific training and skill-building approaches that have the most impact.

Effectiveness of Targeted Programs (LEA, Private Sector)

The effectiveness of LEA's EDT programs and private sector initiatives like Xala ka Botlhale (for Young Minds Africa) in supporting SMMEs, especially start-ups, demonstrates that training programs that are well-thought-out, pertinent, and practical may hasten development and sustainability. This is further supported by African Economic Outlook (2017) who discovered that private sector training and program success are positively correlated. Other government agencies and private sector entities should study and potentially replicate the models used by successful programs like LEA's EDT. This entails concentrating on the unique requirements of startup companies and offering useful resources for long-term market viability. Additionally, collaboration between public and private providers could also lead to more impactful programs.

Industry-Specific Training for Competitiveness

A significant complexity is the discovery of Tanko and Faruk (2023) that industry-specific training has a statistically significant influence on the business performance, but financial abilities alone do not. It suggests that general business training may not be enough to stay competitive. However, training programs need to move beyond broad business principles to offer specialized modules tailored to specific industries (e.g., manufacturing, technology, agriculture, services). This would equip entrepreneurs with unique skills and knowledge that are required to help them thrive in their chosen sector, directly enhancing their relevance and competitiveness.

Implications of Innovation and Managerial Capabilities on Performance

The results correlate general management abilities and creativity to corporate effectiveness in addition to formal training.

Innovation as a Growth Driver

Given the overwhelming consensus that innovation is necessary for company growth, which is in line with previous studies by Bosire (2024) and Nyachoti (2018) it is imperative that young people and women-led enterprises cultivate an inventive attitude and provide the necessary innovation tools. Moreover, training programs should integrate modules on creativity, innovation, and design thinking. Policies could incentivize innovation through grants, intellectual property protection, or access to research and development resources for SMMEs.

Recommendations for application

The recommendations for each target were derived from the study's findings, taking into consideration the literature. They were categorized into three subsections, those addressing managerial competencies, effective policies and finally entrepreneurship training programs.

Recommendations for Managerial Capabilities Enhancement

The suggestions for improving the managerial abilities of women and young business owners in Botswana are covered in this section. Business development service providers from government and private institutions should provide structured learning opportunities to develop fundamental business knowledge and skills. While government agencies and private supporting institutions have a role, the study clearly indicates that job experience, formal training/education, and in-house training are perceived as the most effective avenues for women and youth to develop managerial skills. To effectively implement such initiatives to boost the growth and success of women- and youth-owned businesses in Botswana, institutions offering training should focus on the following areas.

Focus on experiential learning and strengthen in-house training initiatives: Institutions should design support programs that incorporate hands-on experience, apprenticeships, and simulated business environments. Government should encourage and incentivize larger businesses to offer or partner on in-house training programs that smaller women- and youth-led businesses can access.

Integrate practical components into formal education: This will ensure that business and management courses offered through educational institutions are highly practical and relevant to the daily challenges of running a small business.

Mentorship and coaching programs: This involves pairing experienced business professionals with women and young entrepreneurs to provide guidance and support. Mentors impart their knowledge and advice based on prior achievements, whereas coaches concentrate on helping individuals reach their full potential and facilitate their own solutions. While mentors provide more general guidance and support based on their own experiences, coaches are more action-oriented, assisting clients in making plans and achieving certain objectives.

Workshops and peer learning platforms: These platforms create collaborative environments where entrepreneurs may create networks, exchange experiences, and learn from one another. While peer learning platforms provide ongoing engagement and information exchange among people with different backgrounds and experience, workshops offer organized chances for concentrated learning and skill-building.

Accelerators and incubators: They offer intensive programs that provide resources, mentorship, and access to funding to help businesses scale. Although there are not many startup accelerators and incubators in Botswana, they are vital for promoting creativity and helping start-up companies. These organizations provide a variety of services to assist startups in their growth and success, such as networking opportunities, funding, and mentorship. They also offer "entrepreneur shadowing" where aspiring or less experienced entrepreneurs are paired with more established business founders for a defined period for them to observe and learn from successful businesses. It enables entrepreneurs to build critical skills, better comprehend business possibilities, and apply theoretical knowledge to practical circumstances thereby exposing them to real-world settings.

Online courses and certifications: They provide flexible and accessible learning options for entrepreneurs to enhance their skills.

Recommendations for Effective Policies

While the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) is recognized for some assistance, the overall perception of government agencies and private institutions (like commercial banks and professional services) in managerial skill development and business support is low. Therefore, we recommend the following interventions to increase the effectiveness and awareness of government and private institutional support. First and foremost, government institutions offering business development services (BDS) must significantly increase their outreach efforts to make women and youth entrepreneurs aware of the full range of interventions available (e.g., business consulting, incubation, mentorship, and counselling). Many entrepreneurs simply do not know what is on offer. Secondly, the government should strive to strengthen LEA's role and take inspiration from their achievements and examine its effective interventions and duplicate them in other pertinent public and private sectors. Other initiatives include encouraging and incentivizing the private sector Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in entrepreneurship development. For example, commercial banks, law firms, accounting firms, and consulting firms should be encouraged, perhaps through incentives or partnerships, to actively contribute to entrepreneurship development, particularly in managerial skills. Their current contributions are seen as limited. In addition, the government should promote collaboration between business associations and educational institutions. This will *c*ontinue to leverage the perceived effectiveness of business associations and private educational institutions in managerial skill development. Facilitate partnerships between them and entrepreneurs.

Based on the findings relating to the effectiveness of government policies and systems supporting women and youth entrepreneurs, we recommend that the government of Botswana streamline and tailor financial and regulatory support by implementing targeted microfinance and

low-interest loan programs by providing financial products specifically designed for women and young entrepreneurs, including flexible collateral options like life insurance guarantees and group lending programs. Secondly, fund and support business incubators and accelerators. This requires investing in programs that provide not just funding but also mentorship, tools, and crucial networking opportunities to help entrepreneurs launch and expand. Also, simplifying legal and regulatory processes by drastically reducing the bureaucratic hurdles involved in starting and operating a business, especially concerning tax compliance, intellectual property rights, and business registration. This will ease the burden on new entrepreneurs.

Existing policies are largely seen as ineffective in meeting the specific needs of women and youth. Therefore, we recommend the government to be proactive in ensuring inclusive policy formulation and effective implementation by adopting the following approaches.

Inclusion of women and youth in policymaking: It is critical that organizations, decision-makers, and communities actively involve women and youth entrepreneurs in the formulation of policies. Their direct input is essential for creating relevant and effective frameworks. Actively inviting and integrating the perspectives of women and youth business owners in the design of policies and support programs will ensure relevance and ownership.

Introduce gender-based and targeted services: Recognize and respond to the unique opportunities and problems faced by women and young people by offering services specifically tailored to their needs.

Prioritize effective policy implementation, monitoring, and assessment: Policies, once drafted, must be rigorously implemented, consistently monitored for their impact, and regularly assessed to ensure they are achieving their intended outcomes. This feedback loop is vital for continuous improvement.

Enforce inclusive and gender-responsive policies: Actively enforce existing or new legislation and policies that explicitly aim to support social innovations and businesses led by women and youth.

Supportive policies and funding for capacity-building: Advocate for government and organizational support to provide resources and funding for training and development programs.

Recommendations for Capacity Building

These specific recommendations for implementation are based on the study's findings to improve access to and effectiveness of entrepreneurial education programs for women and youth in Botswana.

Enhance Awareness and Information Dissemination

Implement targeted and widespread awareness campaigns using diverse channels (community meetings, social media, radio, mobile services) to inform entrepreneurs about the availability, nature, cost (or lack thereof), and application procedures of all entrepreneurship and education programs. Similarly, create easily accessible and comprehensive information hubs (online and physical) detailing support options on training programs.

Tailored Support for Entrepreneur Training Needs

However, in terms of offering tailored support to entrepreneur’s training needs, there is need to conduct needs assessments by BDS. This requires regular consultation with women and youth entrepreneurs to understand their specific business challenges and educational needs, ensuring that offered support is relevant and appropriate. On the other hand, BDS should diversify program offerings, that is, moving beyond generic training to offer specialized programs that cater to different business sectors, stages of development, and gender/youth-specific challenges.

Intensify and Broaden Entrepreneurship Training Awareness

BDS's should launch sustained and aggressive awareness campaigns targeting women and youth entrepreneurs to inform them about the availability, benefits, and content of entrepreneurial training programs. Also, utilize diverse channels (digital platforms, community radio, local outreach events) to ensure wide reach.

Increase Access and Availability of Practical Training

They should expand the reach of effective programs. To scale up successful programs like LEA's EDT and private sector initiatives (e.g., Tokafala, Young Minds Africa's Xala ka Botlhale), which have proven effective for start-ups and accelerating growth. Another strategy would be to prioritize practical, industry-specific training. This involves moving away from purely academic approaches. This entails designing and delivering training courses that are highly practical, hands-on, and tailored to specific industries (e.g., manufacturing, technology, agriculture) to enhance relevance and competitiveness. Moreover, they should increase training frequency and coverage. This will ensure that there are enough training opportunities available to meet demand, addressing the concern that the number of training sessions attended is often insufficient.

Foster Collaboration for Relevant Training Content

Institutions responsible for SMME development should bridge academia-industry knowledge gap. They should actively promote and facilitate communication and collaboration between government, the private sector, and academic institutions to ensure that training content directly addresses current industry needs, management challenges, and problem-solving skills gaps.

Enhance Program Sustainability and Continuity

BDS should recognize that youth empowerment initiatives and training must be sustained and ongoing rather than one-off events to achieve lasting impact and goals. They should develop long-term training pathways with continuous support to empower them to run successful enterprises.

Emphasize Innovation in Training Curricula

BDS's should explicitly incorporate innovative modules on creativity, innovation, and adaptability into all entrepreneurial training programs. Educate entrepreneurs on how to continuously convert ideas into new systems, procedures, and products, as innovation is crucial for business expansion and performance.

Proactive Information Seeking by Entrepreneurs

Women and youth entrepreneurs should ensure that they benefit from the existing entrepreneurship and training programs available in the country. We recommend that they actively seek out information regarding available support programs from various sources (government, private, business associations, educational institutions) and maintain updated knowledge. They should overcome assumptions about service providers by directly inquiring about their capabilities and services. They should **s**eek out opportunities to coach new female business owners and engage in peer learning platforms to share experiences and knowledge, fostering a supportive community. Moreover, it is their responsibility to stay informed about market developments, identify emerging opportunities, and understand potential threats to strategically position their businesses for growth and resilience.

Addressing Cultural Biases

Government should promote inclusivity within institutions to implement training for staff of supporting institutions to address unconscious biases and foster a respectful, professional, and

non-discriminatory environment when dealing with women and youth entrepreneurs. Similarly, institutions should advocate for gender and youth mainstreaming initiatives by working with policymakers to ensure that youth development initiatives are designed with effective monitoring mechanisms and shielded from political interference.

Recommendations for future research

The current study's target demographic was limited to women and youth-led businesses in Botswana's southeast. This instantly restricts the findings' applicability to other Botswana areas or other African nations, as they may have distinct economic, social, cultural, and policy situations. Future research could broaden the scope to other regions of Botswana to see if the findings regarding managerial competencies and business success are consistent or if regional differences exist. Similarly, the study did not include the control group. To definitively state the impact of training or specific interventions, a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) with an intervention group of entrepreneurs that would receive the proper training, resources etc and a control group (entrepreneurs who did *not* receive the training/intervention) would be ideal.

While the study acknowledges both hard and soft skills, future research could aim to quantify the relative contribution and interplay of specific hard skills (e.g., financial management, marketing analytics, supply chain management) alongside soft skills on business performance. Similarly, it emphasizes the importance of soft skills but could delve deeper into which specific soft skills (e.g., emotional intelligence, negotiation, conflict resolution, leadership styles) have the most significant impact on business performance for women and youth entrepreneurs.

The current findings suggest various ways to improve managerial abilities (e.g., formal education, mentorship). Future research could track participants of such programs over an extended period to assess the long-term impact on business growth, sustainability, and profitability. Since the study examined the role of digital literacy and technological adoption in enhancing managerial competencies and business success, though not explicitly detailed, the evolving business landscape suggests that digital skills are increasingly vital. Future research could explore how digital literacy, and the adoption of business technology impact the managerial

effectiveness and success of women and youth-led enterprises. In addition, the study investigated the specific challenges and support needs related to women's soft spot being exploited by employees. The study pinpointed this as an area of concern for women entrepreneurs and indicates this as a sign of lack of managerial abilities. Future research could delve into the nature of this exploitation, its impact on business operations, and effective strategies or training to empower women in managing their workforce more effectively.

The observation about below standard products from funded youth projects warrants further investigation. Research could explore the causes (e.g., lack of quality control training, insufficient resources, market pressure, misaligned incentives) and propose specific interventions. The study also mentions that CRM systems can help maintain quality standards. Future research could specifically investigate the adoption rate and impact of CRM systems on quality consistency and customer feedback mechanisms in women and youth-led businesses in Botswana.

Furthermore, regarding effective policies and systems supporting women and youth entrepreneurs, the study investigated the specific barriers to effective engagement between entrepreneurs and support institutions (government and private). The study highlights a low perception of government agencies and private institutions' involvement, despite some interventions being offered. Future research could delve deeper into why entrepreneurs perceive this low effectiveness, exploring issues such as accessibility, relevance of programs, awareness gaps, bureaucratic hurdles, or perceived quality of support. The study also assessed the perceived professionalism and quality of service delivery of the supporting institutions. The results mentioned that supporting institutions do not deal with requests professionally. Future research could conduct a deeper qualitative study into specific instances of unprofessionalism, the

underlying causes, and propose best practices for service delivery in entrepreneurial support organizations in Botswana.

Regarding the impact of specific financial interventions offered by government and private supporting institutions, the study recommends microfinance programs, low-interest loans, and alternative collateral options. Future research could assess the effectiveness and the ease of access of existing or newly implemented financial programs, analysing their specific impact on business growth, sustainability, and job creation among women and youth-led enterprises. Further, conclusions of the study also highlight financial constraints (participation/transport fees) and time constraints (operational demands). Future research could quantify these burdens more precisely across different business types and regions and assess their specific impact on program participation and completion rates. On another note**,** the study notes the limited perceived contribution of commercial banks and professional service providers. Future research could explore successful CSR models in other contexts, identify potential incentives for increased private sector involvement, and assess the impact of targeted CSR initiatives on entrepreneurial development in Botswana.

Another inquiry was to evaluate the effectiveness of business incubators and accelerators in Botswana. While recommended, the study did not provide detailed information on the current state or effectiveness of these policies and programs. Future research could conduct case studies or comparative analyses of existing incubators/accelerators to identify best practices, success rates, and areas for improvement. The study also analysed the specific impact of simplified legal and regulatory requirements. The research findings recommend simplifying legal and regulatory processes for establishing and running businesses, such as tax compliance, business registration, and intellectual property rights. Future research could study the effects of specific reforms in

business registration, tax compliance, or intellectual property rights on the ease of doing business and the growth trajectory of women and youth-led enterprises. Given the conclusion that existing policies are not effective and the call for better implementation, monitoring, and assessment, future research could focus on designing robust frameworks and methodologies for tracking policy impact, identifying bottlenecks, and ensuring accountability in government support systems.

The research also explored the dynamics of gender-based services and their specific impact. However, the recommendation to introduce gender-based services warrants further research to define what these services entail, how they should be tailored, and to empirically measure their distinct impact on women's entrepreneurial success compared to gender-neutral approaches. Further, inquiry on how to develop and test tailored BDS models for specific sub-groups of youth and women entrepreneurs were suggested. Given the reported lack of tailored support and restrictive eligibility criteria, future research could focus on segmenting the target population (e.g., by sector, education level, rural vs. urban, pre-start-up vs. established) and developing custom BDS models, followed by rigorous evaluation of their effectiveness.

The qualitative studies were conducted to get insights on the lived experiences of entrepreneurs on how they navigate support systems in Botswana**.** While a qualitative analysis was done for policy opinions, further in-depth qualitative research could focus on the journey of entrepreneurs seeking and utilizing support, identifying pain points, success stories, and unarticulated needs that quantitative data might have missed. On another note, some entrepreneurs had indicated that they were not aware of the available supporting systems in the country. However, given the significant lack of awareness about supporting institutions and services, future research could conduct a comparative study on the efficacy of different communication channels (e.g., social media campaigns, community radio, mobile outreach, local government offices, direct

mail) in reaching and informing women and youth entrepreneurs about available Business Development Services (BDS).

Since most entrepreneurs felt they were denied the opportunities by the government to participate in policy design, future research could implement pilot programs where women and youth actively co-design entrepreneurial education programs. A subsequent study could then evaluate whether such co-created programs lead to higher engagement, better perceived appropriateness, and improved business outcomes compared to traditionally designed programs. Other challenges observed from the study were those that examined the socio-cultural barriers and gender-based discrimination in accessing support. The findings highlight that women and youth are marginalized groups that are oppressed and undermined by males and the adults. Future research should delve deeper into the specific manifestations of men's dominance syndrome and societal prejudices in the context of accessing entrepreneurial support and explore effective interventions to mitigate these biases within the support ecosystem.

However, several initiatives were solicited that offer suggestions to the government on how to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem and ensures that the existing policies that support SMMEs can effectively meet the needs of women and youth-led enterprises. The other inquiry analysed the long-term impact of strategic collaborations (Govt & PPPs) on business growth. The recommendation for women to aggressively and consistently look for ways to collaborate strategically with the government and Public and Private Partnerships (PPPs) presents an opportunity for future longitudinal studies. Research could track businesses that successfully form such partnerships and compare their growth trajectories, access to resources, and overall success against those that do not. While the other investigated the effectiveness of mentorship and coaching networks among women entrepreneurs. The study suggests that coaching new female business

owners can accelerate growth. Future research could assess the formal and informal mentorship networks among women entrepreneurs in Botswana, measure their impact on business resilience and growth, and identify factors that contribute to successful mentorship relationships.

Several recommendations for future research on entrepreneurship education training programs were made. Given the mixed perceptions on the sufficiency of the *number* of trainings attended versus the *length* of training, future research could delve deeper. This could involve a comparative study to determine the ideal duration, frequency, and intensity of entrepreneurial training programs that yield the most significant and sustainable impact on business performance and innovation. The study also investigated the long-term impact of entrepreneurial training programs and their sustainability. The findings highlight the need for sustained and ongoing initiatives. Future research could conduct longitudinal studies to track the performance and innovativeness of businesses whose owners have undergone specific training programs over several years, assessing the long-term sustainability of the benefits.

Similarly, the study examined the specific mechanisms through which training influences innovation. While the study notes that innovation is essential and statistically predicts performance, future research could explore the specific content, methodologies, or pedagogical approaches within entrepreneurial training programs that most effectively foster creativity and innovative behaviour among women and youth entrepreneurs. Moreover, the study explored the connection between training, support networks, and business success. The finding that the more training provided, the stronger the link between support networks, entrepreneurial training, and the success of businesses warrants further investigation. Future research could explore the nature of this enhanced link, how training facilitates better utilization of support networks, and if certain types of training are more effective in building these critical connections.

The study also assessed the effectiveness of industry-specific vs. general entrepreneurial training. The text suggests that providing training specific to the target industry can increase relevance and competitiveness. Future research could conduct a comparative study to empirically evaluate the differential impact of general entrepreneurship training versus highly specialized, industry-specific training programs on innovation and performance within various sectors (e.g., manufacturing, technology, agriculture) for women and youth businesses.

In conclusion, the current study recognises the need for research on bridging the knowledge gap between academics and industry. Future research could investigate effective models or initiatives for collaboration between academic institutions and industry players in Botswana to ensure that entrepreneurial education is practical, current, and directly addresses industry needs and challenges.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of managerial capabilities on the success of women and youth-led enterprises in Botswana using a case study of the Southeast District. This study adopted the mixed-method approach. The rationale for conducting the study was rooted in the need to strengthen the research findings and expand the existing literature by combining both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. Mixed methods offer a more comprehensive understanding of complex research problems by integrating diverse types of data. This methodology facilitated the collection of both detailed individual insights (qualitative) and generalized, statistically significant trends (quantitative), thereby offering a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by these entrepreneurs. The integration of both methods was expected to provide valuable, well-rounded insights for improving business practices and outcomes in Botswana's entrepreneurial landscape.

Therefore, based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding managerial competencies.

Managerial capabilities are crucial for business success

The study definitively concludes that managerial competencies are significantly and positively correlate with the performance and success of women and youth-led businesses in Botswana's Southeast area. A one-unit increase in managerial competencies is associated with a 27.5% increase in the thriving of these businesses. On the contrary, the findings revealed that entrepreneurial education programs did not significantly predict managerial capabilities, which reflects a genuine absence of a linear relationship in this sample rather than an issue with insufficient data. Conversely, the ANOVA test confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant when managerial capabilities was used as a mediator of the relationship

between entrepreneurial training programs and enterprise success. This demonstrates that entrepreneurial training programs and managerial capabilities jointly explain a statistically significant amount of variance in enterprise success.

The study found that entrepreneurs possess and recognize the value of managerial skills. Most surveyed women and youth entrepreneurs are confident in their managerial abilities, including communication, inspiration, teamwork, strategic planning, effective decision-making, and problem-solving. They also perceive a strong need for improved business management abilities. Nonetheless, the study revealed that both hard and soft skills are essential in the day to day running of businesses. Successful entrepreneurship requires a blend of both hard (technical, quantifiable) and soft (interpersonal, non-technical) skills. Soft skills are particularly highlighted as paramount in today's competitive business landscape, with an emphasis on empowering women in workforce management.

Managerial capabilities have broad impacts

Effective managerial skills influence various aspects of business performance, including revenue, staff turnover, market access, expansion, strategic positioning, branding, cost-effectiveness, and competitiveness. They also play a vital role in fostering creativity and innovation. More importantly, quality management is a significant challenge and opportunity for businesses to stand out from their competitors. There is a noted issue with some youth-led businesses producing sub-standard products and a general challenge for Botswanan businesses in meeting customer quality criteria. Continuous customer monitoring and feedback (e.g., via CRM systems) are identified as crucial for maintaining quality standards. Similarly, planning is a key area for development, particularly for youth. While women are noted for being natural planners,

however, impulsive behaviour and a lack of effective planning can hinder the success of businesses run by young people.

Capacity building is vital and multi-faceted

The study identified a wide range of avenues for improving managerial abilities among women and youth entrepreneurs, including formal education, business training, mentorship, coaching, workshops, peer learning, accelerators, incubators, online courses, real-world exposure, and supportive policies/funding. While job experience, formal training/education, and in-house training are perceived by entrepreneurs as highly effective for developing managerial skills, the involvement of private institutions and government agencies in this regard is generally perceived as low or ineffective. Among government entities, the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA**),** business associations and private educational institutions are perceived as more effective in assisting with managerial skill development compared to other institutions. However, a significant number of respondents still report receiving no assistance from government institutions for enhancing their managing abilities. Despite the government's effort in empowering SMMEs to manage successful businesses, commercial banks and professional services (e.g., law, accounting, consulting firms) are generally not perceived as beneficial in helping entrepreneurs acquire managerial competencies, suggesting limited contribution to entrepreneurship development through their corporate social responsibility initiatives.

The study also examined the effectiveness of government policies and systems supporting women and youth entrepreneurs. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were made.

Gaps in Government Interventions and Awareness

While government organizations are applauded for providing some business training, information, and advisory services, there's a significant perceived lack of support in crucial areas

such as business consulting, business incubation, business mentorship, and counselling. This points to a need for increased awareness campaigns and intensified outreach by government institutions. Conversely, most respondents indicated little to no assistance from private supporting organizations regarding business development service interventions, suggesting a lack of commitment towards fostering entrepreneurship in Botswana.

Existing Policies are Perceived as Ineffective

Government policies and support programs was used as a moderator between entrepreneurship programs and managerial capabilities demonstrated a statistically significant positive direct relationship with managerial capabilities in model 1. Conversely, the moderation effect (model 2) of government policies and systems on entrepreneurial training programs showed a non-significant direct relationship. This explains why government policies are viewed as not effective.

The overarching conclusion from qualitative analysis is that current government policies and systems are **not effective** in meeting the specific needs of women and youth entrepreneurs, often due to tight government rules and an underdeveloped entrepreneurship ecosystem. However, there is a strong consensus that the government should create an entrepreneurship ecosystem with simplified legal and regulatory requirements, provide microfinance, low-interest loans, and subsidies, and fund incubators/accelerators. Policies must be inclusive, gender-responsive, involve entrepreneurs in their formulation, and adopt a holistic approach across sectors.

Policy Implementation, Monitoring, and Assessment are Crucial

Beyond policy formulation, effective implementation, continuous monitoring, and rigorous assessment are highlighted as essential steps to determine the actual impact of policies and ensure they properly address the shortcomings. Despite perceived shortcomings, the study's linear

regression analysis concluded that government policies and support systems significantly and positively correlate with the success of women- and youth-led businesses, statistically predicting their performance. However, these factors explain a relatively small proportion (5.1%) of the variation in business success, implying other factors also play a substantial role.

The following conclusions were also drawn regarding how women and youth business owners navigate challenges and opportunities in accessing entrepreneurial education programs in Botswana.

Significant Barriers to Accessing Support

Despite government initiatives, women and youth entrepreneurs face numerous substantial challenges in accessing business development services (BDS). These include a pervasive lack of awareness about available assistance, a perception that existing support is not appropriate to their business needs, and insufficient information about both service availability and cost.

Systemic and Operational Deficiencies in Support Provision

A major impediment is the lack of sufficient information about available BDS, hindering rational choice. Also, Financial barriers (participation and transport fees) are leading obstacles, coupled with time constraints due to business operations. Long turnaround times, poor communication regarding scheduled services, and geographic limitations further hinder access. Restrictive eligibility criteria and complex application procedures act as deterrents. Perceived Lack of Professionalism, entrepreneurs perceive that supporting institutions do not handle requests professionally and may not be able to address their needs. Moreover, women and youth entrepreneurs feel they are not given the opportunity to participate in the design of policies and support programs, leading to a disconnect between the offered services and their actual needs.

Other challenges include societal marginalization and prejudice. Women and youth entrepreneurs continue to face oppression, undermining, and prejudice, particularly male dominance and societal biases, which impacts their leadership and participation. Despite the challenges, there is an emphasis on the need for women and youth entrepreneurs to proactively identify and seize market opportunities, stay updated with developments, and actively seek strategic collaborations with government and larger companies to benchmark from them and enhance their growth. Additionally, the study conclusions suggest that coaching new female business owners can accelerate a cycle of growth, highlighting the value of peer-to-peer learning and mentorship within the entrepreneurial community.

Finally, the study looked at entrepreneurship education programs offered in the country, and the following conclusions were drawn regarding the influence of these programs on the innovation and performance of women and youth businesses in Botswana.

Training Positively Impacts Managerial Capabilities and Business Performance.

The study strongly concluded that entrepreneurial training programs enhance managerial and leadership skills, which, in turn, directly improves the performance of businesses run by women and young people. There is a perceived strong link between increased training and business success. Despite its perceived benefits, access to entrepreneurship training before starting a business is low. A significant concern is that existing entrepreneurship education, particularly at secondary school levels, is often more academic than practical, failing to adequately close the knowledge gap between industry and academia.

Length of Training is Generally Perceived as Sufficient, but Number is Not

While many participants felt the *length* of individual training sessions was adequate, a substantial portion believed that the *number* of business training programs they had attended was insufficient, indicating a need for more frequent or continuous access to training.

Specific Training Programs Show Effectiveness

Training programs offered by entities like LEA (particularly EDT) and private sector options such as Tokafala and Young Minds Africa (Xala ka Botlhale) are highlighted as relevant and effective in assisting start-up businesses to accelerate growth and achieve sustainability. Providing training tailored to specific industries (e.g., manufacturing, technology, agriculture) is crucial for increasing its relevance and improving the competitiveness of businesses.

Innovation is Crucial and Influenced by Training

Innovation is acknowledged as essential for business expansion and can statistically predict the performance of youth-led businesses. Entrepreneurial training programs can equip entrepreneurs to foster creativity and innovation within their businesses. While the impact on employing additional staff or opening new branches was less pronounced, most businesses reported increased sales volumes, more effective cost reduction tactics, and higher recorded profits since inception, suggesting that training contributes significantly to these financial aspects of performance.

Training Strengthens the Competence and Performance

The association between management competences and the overall success of women-led and youth-led enterprises was found to be positively and significantly impacted by entrepreneurship training programs. To achieve their goals and have a lasting impact,

entrepreneurial training and youth empowerment initiatives need to be sustained and ongoing, rather than being one-off events.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: UREC Approval Letter

UNICAF UNIVERSITY

UREC Decision, Version 2.0

Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee Decision

Student's Name:	Annastacia Gomotsang Kedikanetswe
Student's ID #:	R2109D12708074
Supervisor's Name:	Dr Yasmine Bezzaz
Program of Study:	UU-DBA-900-3-ZM
OfferID / GroupID:	O72514G81622
Dissertation stage:	DS3
Research Project Title:	EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT
Ethical conditions for approval:	No comments
Methodological recommendations:	
Decision*:	A. Approved without revision or comments
Date:	09/09/2024

All Doctoral students are advised to check the regulations pertaining to research and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the country in which the research will take place as each country may have different restrictions on conducting research.

i. Approval from a local Research Ethics Committee (REC) or professional regulatory body such as Institutional Review Board (IRB)

ii. Approval from Ministry or public agency

*Provisional approval provided at the Dissertation Stage 1, whereas the **final** approval is provided at the Dissertation stage 3. The student is allowed to proceed to data collection following the final approval.

Appendix B: REAF-DS

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REAF_DS - Version 3.4 AP

UNICAF UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM
DOCTORAL STUDIES

UREC USE ONLY:
Application No:
Date Received:

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE

Student's E-mail Address: akedikan@yahoo.com

Student's ID #: R2109D12708074

Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BEZZAZ

University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Zambia: DBA Doctorate of Business Administration

Research Project Title: EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT.

1. **Please state the Timeline involved in the proposed research project**

The Doctoral Studies Provisional Ethics approval is valid for a maximum period of 2 years following the date of approval. Doctoral students must submit the full research ethics application form within 2 years. If they fail to do so, they should resubmit the provisional approval prior to the one in dissertation stage 3.

☑ I have read the statement above and I declare that this application is submitted prior to the completion of 2 years since the Doctoral Studies Provisional Ethics approval

2. **External Research Funding (if applicable)**

2a. Do you have any external funding for your research?

YES ☐ NO ☑

If YES, please answer questions **2b** and **2c**.

2b. List any external (third party) sources of funding you plan to utilise for your project. You need to include full details on the source of funds (e.g. state, private or individual sponsor), any prior / existing or future relationships between the funding body / sponsor and any of the principal investigator(s) or co-investigator(s) or student researcher(s), status and timeline of the application and any conditions attached.

n/a

2c. If there are any perceived ethical issues or potential conflicts of interest arising from applying for and/or receiving external funding for the proposed research then these need to be fully disclosed below and also further elaborated on, in the relevant sections on ethical considerations later on in this form.

n/a

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3. The research project

3a. Project Summary

In this section please fully describe the purpose and underlying rationale for the proposed research project (maximum 100 words).

The purpose of the study is to look at what influences the sucess of of women and youth-led enterprises in Botswana with an emphasis on managerial abilities, policies, and entrepreneurial programs for entrepreneurial empowerment in general so that practical solutions can be offered to fill identified research gaps. Literature has shown that effective managerial abilities are critical to the success of small enterprises since they affect their growth. Several studies examined managerial qualities about other variables, but none examined the role of managerial capabilities on the success of women's and young people's owned enterprises in Botswana, which is the gap that this study aims to fill

3b. Research Questions and /or Hypotheses

List the research questions and/or hypotheses of the proposed research project (maximum 100 words).

The following hypothesis will test the study;
H1: There is a significant positive relationship between Management skills and the success of women and youth-led businesses.
H2: There is a significant relationship between effective Government policies and support systems and accelerated Growth and development of women's and youth enterprises.
H3: There is a significant positive relationship between the Managerial skills of women and youth-led projects (and Enterprise success as a dependent variable here) moderated by the entrepreneurship training programs.
H4: There is a significant relationship between effective government policies and support systems, and the success of women and youth-led enterprises moderated by entrepreneurship training programs.

3c. Expected Results

Discuss the expected results of the proposed research project (maximum 100 words).

Due to the research gaps that have been identified, future studies will provide an opportunity to comprehend the management gaps that impact women and young entrepreneurs in Botswana more thoroughly and create solutions that would encourage the expansion of these enterprises. On the other hand, women and youth entrepreneurs will learn from the research findings how to capacitate themselves and grow their managerial skills. Training programswill focus on the more profound psychological and sociological limits faced by women to bring about a transformational change.

3d. Significance of the Proposed Research Study and Potential Benefits
Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research (maximum 200 words).

The study's findings will inform SMEs about the elements that influence their success or failure. As a result, SMMEs will have more knowledge about the best approaches to enhancing their company performance through the successful integration of entrepreneurship training, managerial abilities, and business environment. Governmental entities responsible for SMME development may also find value in the study's conclusions. SMMEs' issues will be better understood, and these organizations will be in a better position to help SMMEs overcome their difficulties. The findings of this study will serve as a manual for setting up workshops, seminars, and training programs for small and medium-sized businesses. Moreover, the researcher believes that the study will help to shape support systems and cultures both in Botswana and around the world. The study's conclusions will make it possible for Botswana's constitutional, legal, and institutional reforms to involve more women and young people in the formulation of policies that affect SMMEs. In addition, policies that capitalize on the immense potential of women and youth as human capital willbe put in place if Botswana is to diversify its economy and maintain a long-term competitive advantage.

4. Project Execution

4a. The following study is a:

- [x] Primary research involving human/animal participants
- [ ] Desktop study (secondary research)
- [ ] Desktop study using existing databases involving information of human/animal subjects
- [ ] Other

If you have chosen 'Other' please Explain:

n/a

4b. Methods
The following study will involve a:

- ☐ Quantitative methodology
- ☐ Qualitative methodology
- ☑ Mixed methods approach
- ☐ Other

If you have chosen other please explain (maximum 100 words).

n/a

If you have chosen mixed methods, please state below whether you are going to proceed with triangulation or not.

YES ☐ NO ☑

4c. Please state below which tools you are going to use

A **Select the tools to be used in your study**	B **Select how the tools selected in column A will be administered (select one or more)**	C **Select what types of questions will be included in the tools previously selected in column A (select one or more)**
Interviews ☑	☑ Face-to-face ☐ Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) ☐ Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone)	☑ Open-ended questions ☐ Close-ended questions ☑ Ensure that a section related to demographics is included
Focus Groups ☐	☐ Face-to-face ☐ Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) ☐ Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone)	☐ Open-ended questions ☐ Close-ended questions ☐ Ensure that a section related to demographics is included

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REAF_DS - Version 3.4

A Select the tools to be used in your study	B Select how the tools selected in column A will be administered (select one or more)	C Select what types of questions will be included in the tools previously selected in column A (select one or more)
Questionnaire ☑	☑ Face-to-face self – administered questionnaire ☑ Online, i.e., via phone or any other platform. The researcher reads the questions to the participants ☐ Online asynchronous self-administered questionnaire (i.e., via email)	☑ Open-ended questions ☑ Close-ended questions ☑ Ensure that a section related to demographics is included
Experiments ☐	☐ Face-to-face ☐ Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) ☐ Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone) ☐ Asynchronously via any online platform	☐ Open-ended questions ☐ Close-ended questions ☐ Ensure that a section related to demographics is included
Tests ☐	☐ Face-to-face ☐ Online with camera (synchronous live discussion with camera) ☐ Audio only (synchronous live discussion without camera, i.e., via phone) ☐ Asynchronously via any online platform	Provide a brief description of the test in the box 'Other' below.
Other ☐		

5. Participants

5a. Does the Project involve the recruitment and participation of additional persons other than the doctoral student ?

☑ YES **If YES, complete all following sections below.**

☐ NO **If NO, proceed directly to Section 7.**

Note: The definition of "participation" includes active participation, such as when participants knowingly take part in an interview or complete a questionnaire.

5b. Relevant Participant Details of the Proposed Research

Please state the number of participants you plan to recruit, and describe important characteristics such as: demographics (e.g. age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc.). It is also important that you specify any inclusion and exclusion criteria that will be applied (e.g., eligibility criteria for participants).

Number of participants: 400

Women, and young business owners and/or managers, will be given questionnaires to complete, while members of the executive cadre from the identified Ministries and organizations will be interviewed face-to-face individually.We will calculate the sample size using the Yamane formula.

Describe important characteristics such as: demographics (e.g., age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc.). It is also important that you specify any inclusion and exclusion criteria that will be applied (e.g., eligibility criteria for participants).

Age range From 18 To 75

Gender ☑ Female ☑ Male ☐ Other

Eligibility Criteria: List and justify the rational of selecting the specific inclusion and exclusion criteria

- Inclusion criteria: Participants who are operating their businesses in the Southeast region of the country, which have been in operation for a year or more. Executives working for the Ministries and organizations responsible for SMME development will participate in the inquiry.
- Exclusion criteria: The Political appointees, for example, the Minister, Assistant Minister, their private Secretaries, and Chief Executives Officers for the state-owned enterprises), interns, cleaners, security guards, and newly recruited workers will be excluded from the study

Disabilities/Disorders: Please provide information for any disabilities/disorders the participants may have and explain why they should participate in the study and what is the benefit to them.

Participants who are mentally challenged at the time the data will be collected will not be included in the study

Other relevant information (maximum 100 words):

Other participants who are differently abled and are able to read and write will be included in the study. Those participants who may require resources like brail will not be included since the resaerch has limited knowledge in utilizing such tools.

5c. Participation & Research Setting

Clearly describe which group of participants (described in 5b) is completing/participating in the material(s)/tool(s) described in 4c above (use the space provided in the box)

Women and youth business owners and/or their managers in the Southeast District and officials from the ministries and organizations will participate in the material completion. Women and youth business owners will complete the questionaire.The researcher will also complete the questionaiires via telephone with those who would have requested it done through the telephone. However, to ensure proper representation of the participants, all the cadres from the Ministries and organizations will be interviewed to ensure that the data gathered allows for the exhaustion of all significant issues or that a saturation threshold is achieved. Inclusion in the interview sessions will also depend on voluntarily, written consent to take part in the investigation.

5d. Recruitment Process for Human/Animal Research Participants

Clearly describe how the potential participants will be identified, approached and recruited (use the space provided in the box).

The target population of the study is all women and youth business owners in the Southeast District. The other group entails executives from organizations that provide support to SMMEs in the country. These include the likes of The Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), and Botswana International Trade Centre (BITC). Non-governmental organizations like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Business Botswana form part of the target group. There are also officials from the Ministry of Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Youth, Gender Sports and Culture, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, who influence policy decisions and can be of importance to the success of the study. The researcher will obtain approval from management officials from the relevant ministries, and organizations through the Gatekeeper letter and the list of contact details of staff. The participants will also be reached through the phone and email by the researcher.

5e. Research Participants Informed Consent

Select below which categories of participants will participate in the study. Complete the relevant Informed Consent form and submit it along with the REAF form.

Yes	No	Categories of participants	Form to be completed
☑	☐	Typically Developing population(s) above the maturity age *	Informed Consent Form
☐	☑	Typically Developing population(s) under the maturity age *	Guardian Informed Consent Form

* Maturity age is defined by national regulations in laws of the country in which the research is being conducted.

5f. Relationship Between the Principal Investigator and Participants

Is there any relationship between the principal investigator (student), co-investigators(s), (supervisor) and participant(s)? For example, if you are conducting research in a school environment on students in your classroom (e.g. instructor-student).

YES ☑ NO ☐

If YES, specify (use the space provided in the box).

Participants from the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) and the principal investigator are employees of the same organization. None of the participants will be a direct subordinate of the researcher to avoid any conflicts of power. Ethical problems will be reduced by ensuring that: all respondents freely and fully understand the implications of their participation in the study; No one is forced to participate in the study either directly or indirectly; A written introduction to the project outlining objectives, rights of the researched, as well as assurances of secrecy, anonymity, and confidentiality will be shared with the respondents.

6. Potential Risks of the Proposed Research Study

6a.i. Are there any potential risks, psychological harm, and/or ethical issues associated with the proposed research study, apart from risks pertaining to everyday life events?

YES ☐ NO ☑

If YES, specify below and answer the question 6a.ii.

n/a

6a.ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimise risks described in 6.a.i.

n/a

6b. Choose the appropriate option

		Yes	No
i.	Will you obtain a written informed consent form from all participants?	✔	
ii.	Does the research involve, as participants, people whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question?		✔
iii.	Does this research involve participants who are children under maturity age? **If you answered YES to question iii, complete all following questions.** **If you answered NO to question iii, do not answer Questions iv, v, vi and proceed to Questions vii, viii, ix and x.**		✔
iv.	Will the research tools be implemented in a professional educational setting in the presence of other adults (i.e., classroom in the presence of a teacher)?		✔
v.	Will informed consent be obtained from the legal guardians (i.e., parents) of children?		✔
vi.	Will verbal assent be obtained from children?		✔
vii.	Will all data be treated as confidential? If NO, explain why confidentiality of the collected data is not appropriate for this proposed research project, providing details of how all participants will be informed of the fact that any data which they will provide will not be confidential. n/a	✔	

		Yes	No
viii.	Will all participants/data collected be anonymous? If NO, explain why and describe the procedures to be used to ensure the anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of the collected data both during the conduct of the research and in the subsequent release of its findings. n/a	✔	
ix.	Have you ensured that personal data and research data collected from participants will be securely stored for five years?	✔	
x.	Does this research involve the deception of participants? If YES, describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Explain how and when the deception will be revealed, and who will administer this debrief to the participants: n/a		✔

6c.i. Are there any other ethical issues associated with the proposed research study that are not already adequately covered in the preceding sections?

YES ☐ NO ✔

If YES, specify (maximum 150 words).

n/a

6.c.ii Provide information on what measures will be taken in order to exclude or minimise ethical issues described in 6.c.i

n/a

6d. Indicate the Risk Rating

High ☐ Low ☑

7. Further Approvals

All doctoral students are advised to check the regulations pertaining to research and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the country in which the research will take place as each country may have different restrictions on conducting research.

7a. Please list below the countries in which this specific research will be conducted:

Botswana

7b. Are there any other approvals required in addition to ethics clearance from UREC in order to carry out the proposed research study such as:

Yes	No	Approvals required
☐	☑	Approval from a local Research Ethics Committee (REC) or professional regulatory body such as an Institutional Review Board (IRB)
☑	☐	Approval from a Ministry or public agency

If any of the above approvals are required please provide the name and the link to the webpage of the Research Ethics Committee and/or Institutional Review Board and/or professional body.

Local Enterprise Authority
www.lea.co.bw
Telephone: +2673644000

7c. As a doctoral student researcher, you are required to submit a Clear Criminal Record Certificate (CRC) along with the UREC application during dissertation stage 3.

The Certificate should be obtained no more than 6 months prior to the UREC application during dissertation stage 3.

☑ I confirm that I have read the information in point 7c and will submit a valid Clear Criminal Record Certificate along with this UREC application.

8. Application Checklist

8a. Mark √ if the study involves any of the following:

☐ Children and young people under the maturity age, vulnerable populations such as children with special educational needs (SEN), racial or ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged persons, pregnant women, elderly, malnourished people, and ill people.

☐ Research that foresees risks and disadvantages that would affect any participant of the study such as anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, harm risk (which is more than what is expected from everyday life) or any other act that participants might believe is detrimental to their wellbeing and/or has the potential to/will infringe on their human rights/fundamental rights.

☐ Risk to the well-being and personal safety of the researcher.

☐ Administration of any substance (food / drink / chemicals / pharmaceuticals / supplements / chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants.

☐ Results that may have an adverse impact on the natural or built environment.

8b. If you have ticked any of the above, please provide more information below (maximum 100 words).

n/a

9. Further Documents

Check that the following documents are attached to your application:

		ATTACHED	NOT APPLICABLE
1	Recruitment advertisement (if any)	☐	☑
2	Informed Consent Form / Guardian Informed Consent Form Sample	☑	☐
3	Research Tool(s) / Protocols	☑	☐
4	Gatekeeper Letter Sample	☑	☐
5	Clear Criminal Record Certificate (CRC) The certificate should have been obtained within six months prior to the submission of the application	☑	☐
6	Any other approvals required in order to carry out the proposed research study, e.g., institutional permission (e.g., school principal or company director) or approval from a local ethics or professional regulatory body	☑	☐

10. Final Declaration by Applicants

(a) I declare that this application is submitted on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will only be used by Unicaf University and Unicaf University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) for the explicit purpose of ethical review and monitoring of the conduct of the research proposed project as described in the preceding pages.

(b) I understand that this information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent, excluding use intended to satisfy reporting requirements to relevant regulatory bodies.

(c) The information in this form, together with any accompanying information, is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.

(d) I undertake to abide by the highest possible international ethical standards governing the Code of Practice for Research Involving Human Participants, as published by the UN WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (ERC) on http://www.who.int/ethics/research/en/ and to which Unicaf University aspires to adhere.

(e) In addition to respect any and all relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines, where applicable, while in pursuit of this research project.

(f) I understand it is my responsibility to submit a full REAF application during Dissertation Stage 3 to UREC.

(g) Submission of the application does not guarantee approval. Approval can only be provided by UREC and not a supervisor or other faculty members.

(h) If my application is not approved by UREC I cannot proceed to data collection or apply to other non-Unicaf University Ethics Committee for approval.

(i) I fully acknowledge that this form does not constitute approval of the proposed project but it is only a provisional approval.

☑ **I agree with all points listed under Section 10**

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE

Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BAZZAZ

Date of Application: 23-Aug-2024

Important Note:
Save the completed form (we suggest you also print a copy for your records) and then submit it to your UU Dissertation/project supervisor (tutor). **In the case of student projects, the responsibility lies with the Faculty Dissertation/Project Supervisor.** If this is a student application, then it should be submitted via the relevant link in the VLE. Please submit only electronically filled in copies; **do not** hand fill and submit scanned paper copies of this application.

☑ **Before submitting your application, please tick this box to confirm that all relevant sections have been filled in and the information contained is accurate to the best of your knowledge.**

Appendix C: Gatekeeper letter

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UU_GL - Version 3.0

Gatekeeper Letter
Part 1: Approval Request

Institution/Organization: LOCAL ENTERPRISE AUTHORITY
Address: P/BAG 191. GABORONE. BOTSWANA
Date: 23-Aug-2024
Subject Permission to collect research data

Dear CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER-LOCAL ENTERPRISE AUTHORITY,

My name is Annastacia Gomotsang Kedikanetswe, a doctoral student at Unicaf University in the campus of the University, Zambia.

In the context of my studies, I am conducting research on EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT. This topic is relevant and important as the study will look at what influences the sucess of women and youth-led enterprises in Botswana with an emphasis on managerial abilities, policies, and entrepreneurial programs for entrepreneurial empowerment in general so that practical solutions can be offered to fill identified research gaps.

The study will apply a mixed methods methodology, and data collection will be conducted with the use of Questionnaire and Interview questions to investigate the THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT.

Subject to approval by Unicaf Research Ethics Committee (UREC), this study will require from participants to engage in completing the questionnaires and answering interview questions, in/at Ramotswa and Gaborone branch offices for an estimated time of a month. Please note that participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

As such, I am writing to inquire whether you would be interested in/willing to permit access to premises to collect data from the consenting participants for this research.

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UU_GL - Version 3.0

Gatekeeper Letter
Part 1: Approval Request

To this end, I would be grateful if you would grant your approval for conducting this research. I wish to assure you that all data and personal information will be processed according to the code of Ethics of Unicaf University, which ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. During the entire research process, no personal information of participants will be revealed, thus maintaining scientific confidentiality and anonymity.

I wish to clarify that the organization's participation will be voluntary. For any further clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your time and for your consideration of this project.

Yours Sincerely, Annastacia Gomotsang Kedikanetswe

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE

Student's E-mail: akedikan@yahoo.com

Student's Address and Telephone: P.O.BOX 47185. GABORONE. BOTSWANA. +26772682490

Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BAZZAZ

Supervisor's E-mail: y.bezzaz@unicaf.org

University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Zambia: DBA Doctorate of Business Administration

Research Project Title: EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

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Gatekeeper Letter
Part 2: Approval

This section is mandatory and should to be signed by the Gatekeeper

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE

Student's E-mail: akedikan@yahoo.com

Student's Address and Telephone: P.O.BOX 47185. GABORONE. BOTSWANA. +26772682490

Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BAZZAZ

Supervisor's E-mail: y.bezzaz@unicaf.org

University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Zambia: DBA Doctorate of Business Administration

Research Project Title: EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions and I have received enough information about this study. I consent to the provision of access as per the letter above for the period from _____ to _____

Gatekeeper's Name:

Gatekeeper's Position:

Gatekeeper's Signature:

Date:

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

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UU_IC - Version 3.0

Informed Consent Form
Part 1: Briefing of Participants

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE
Student's E-mail Address: akedikan@yahoo.com
Student ID #: 12109D12708074
Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BEZZAZ
Supervisor's Email Address: y.bezzaz@unicaf.org
University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Zambia: DBA Doctorate of Business Administration
Research Project Title:

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

Provide a short description of the research project. To be precise, explain:
(1) what the main aim of the research project is

The aim of the research is to investigate factors that affect the growth of firms led by women and youth in Botswana with an emphasis on managerial abilities, policies, and programs for entrepreneurial empowerment in general so that practical solutions can be offered to fill identified gaps.

(2) what the participant will need to do during the data collection

You are requested to take a moment to fill out the following survey. The questionnaire should take about 30 minutes and 45 minutes for the interview. Your responses are anonymous and will not be identified with you.

(3) where the data collection will take place

Ramotswa and Gaborone Branch Offices. Botswana.

(4) the duration of participant's involvement in the data collection

Approximately 30 minutes for the questionnaire and 45 minutes for the interview.

(5) whether the participant will be paid

The participants will not be paid.

The above named student is committed to ensuring participant's voluntarily participation in the research project and guaranteeing there are no potential risks and/or harms to the participants. Participants have the right to withdraw at any stage (prior or post the completion) of the research without any consequences and without providing any explanation. In these cases, data collected will be deleted.

All data and information collected will be coded (kept anonymous) and will not be accessible to anyone outside this research. Data described and included in any dissemination activities will only refer to coded and nonidentifiable information ensuring beyond the bounds of possibility participant identification.

If you have any issues or concerns about the study, please contact:

DR YASMINE BEZZAZ y.bezzaz@unicaf.org

I, ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE **, ensure that all information stated above is true and that all conditions have been met.**

Date: 23-Aug-2024

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UU_IC - Version 3.0

Informed Consent Form
Part 2: Certificate of Informed Consent

This section is mandatory and should to be signed by the participant

Student's Name: ANNASTACIA GOMOTSANG KEDIKANETSWE
Student's E-mail Address: akedikan@yahoo.com
Student ID #: 12109D12708074
Supervisor's Name: DR YASMINE BEZZAZ
Supervisor's Email Address: y.bezzaz@unicaf.org
University Campus/Program: Unicaf University in Zambia: DBA Doctorate of Business Administration
Research Project Title:

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

I have read the foregoing information about this study, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss about it. I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions and I have received enough information about this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without giving a reason for withdrawing and without any negative consequences. I consent to the use of multimedia (e.g., audio recordings, video recordings) for the purposes of my participation in this study. I understand that my data will remain anonymous and confidential, unless stated otherwise. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Participant's Print name:

Participant's Signature:

Date:

If the Participant is illiterate:

I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form to the potential participant, and the individual has had an opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the aforementioned individual has given consent freely.

Witness's Print name:

Witness's Signature:

Date:

Appendix E: Police Clearance



BP 180
(Revised 2011)

Botswana Police Service

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Fingerprint No: NF/CR/20240906 1158 430 00043093A

Surname: KEOKANETSWE

Forename: ANNASTACIA G

Gender: FEMALE

Omang/ID: 725 628 004

Passport/ETD: BN 2003657

Date of birth/place: 09/12/1972, MOTOKWE

Nationality: MOTSWANA

confidential

No Records Found

Botswana Police Service
Mogoditshane Police Station
Station Officer Administration
2024 -09- 06
P.O. Box 1403
Mogoditshane
Tel: 3915246 Fax: 3915255

For Officer Commanding
Criminal Records Bureau

To be completed by AFIS Operator and signed by Inspectorate or above

NB: any erasure or amendment to this certificate renders it invalid

Address | Private Bag 0400, Gaborone, Botswana, Plot: 22117 G/West Industrial site
Tel: (+267) 391 8601 Fax: (+267) 391 8615 CRB Forensic Science Serices ©

Scanned with MOBILE SCANNER

Appendix F: Research Questionnaire: Women and Youth Business Owners

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT**.**

My name is Annastacia Gomotsang Kedikanetswe, and I attend Unicaf University's Zambia Campus as a doctoral student. You are requested to take a moment to fill out the following survey, which attempts to evaluate the Effect of Managerial Capabilities on the Success of Women and Youth-led Enterprises in Botswana. A case of the South East District. The study will be conducted in two locations: an office complex in Gaborone, and a countryside in Ramotswa Village.

The questionnaire should take about 30 minutes, and the tool comprises 18 questions. Your responses are anonymous and will not be identified with you in any way. However, by answering this survey, you confirm that you know that the information you provide will remain anonymous and cannot be linked back to you. It would be helpful if you could answer as many questions as possible. You have the option of having a face-to-face interview with me, having me interview you over the phone later, or having you fill out the questionnaire on your own and have me pick it up later.

Please be aware that you may withdraw at any time, without repercussions and without giving a reason, before or after the research is finished. In such instances, the information we have on you will be deleted.

Kindly answer all the questions, being careful to follow the instructions for each question.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH SHOULD TICK THE BOX BELOW THE TEXT INDICATING THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY

I have either read or had the study's material read to me. Additionally, I have also had the opportunity to discuss the study and ask questions. All my queries have been answered well, and I have also received sufficient responses to the study. I know that I can withdraw from the study at any moment, without giving a reason or suffering any consequences. I am aware that, unless otherwise specified, the information I submit will be kept private and anonymous. I willingly consent to participate in this research.



SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

(Please place a tick in the appropriate box; only one answer is possible unless stated otherwise).

1. Gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age

18-25 years ☐ 26-35 years ☐ 36-45 years ☐ 46 years and above ☐

3. What is your position in the business?

Owner Manager ☐ Other (please specify) ……...

4. What is your highest level of education?

No formal Education		Bachelor's degree	
Primary education		Master's degree	
Secondary		PhD	
Certificate		Post PhD	
Diploma		Other (please specify)	

5. Which of the following business sectors does your business belong to?

Tourism	
Agriculture	
Manufacturing	
Services	

Other (specify)	

6. In which subsector does your business belong? Specify…….

7. Is the business formally registered? Yes ☐ No ☐

8. What is the total number of people employed in your business

☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-20 ☐ 21-49 ☐ 50-200

SECTION B: MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES

9. To what extent do you Agree or Disagree with the following statements:

Nº	Managerial Competencies	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
9.1	I have the required technical skills to manage my business successfully					
9.2	I communicate my products and services effectively with my stakeholders					
9.3	I often inspire my employees to work hard to accomplish important tasks					

9.4	I often help my employees to work together as a team to position our business to compete better in the market					
9.5	I often motivate my employees to achieve business goals					
9.6	I often come up with creative ideas to manage my business					
9.7	I often come up with effective plans in line with the organization's objectives					
9.8	I often make effective choices to enhance my business					
9.9	I often find effective solutions to solve my business problems					

9.10. Specify the required managerial skills that would help you run successful businesses

……

……

SECTION C: GOVERNMENT AND OTHER SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INTERVENTIONS

10. To what extent do you agree that the following sources helped you acquire managerial competencies?

N^{o}	Sources of Acquiring Managerial Competencies	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10.1	Job experience					
10.2	Formal training/education					
10.3	In-house training					
10.4	Government agencies					
10.5	Private supporting institutions					

11. To what extent do you agree that the following Government-supporting institutions have helped you to gain managerial competencies?

Nº	Government supporting institutions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11.1	Local Enterprise Authority (LEA)					
11.2	Botswana International Trade Centre (BITC)					
11.3	Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA)					
11.4	Business Botswana					
11.5	Sector Education & Training Institutions					
11.6	Youth Development Fund (YDF)					

12. To what extent do you agree that the following private supporting institutions have helped you to gain managerial competencies:

Nº	Private supporting institutions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
12.1	Commercial Banks such as ABSA, FNB, Standard Chartered, Bank Gaborone, Capital Bank or Bank of Baroda					
12.2	Professional services such as consultancy services, accountant firms, or lawyers' firms.					
12.3	Educational institutions					
12.4	Business associations					

12.5 Specify other types of assistance you received from government supporting institutions to enhance your managerial competencies: ……
……

13. Specify to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements: “I have received the following assistance from Government supporting institutions”

Nº	Business development services	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
13.1	Business training					
13.2	Business Consulting					
13.3	Business Incubation					
13.4	Business mentoring					
13.5	Business counseling					
13.6	Provision of information and advisory services					

14. Specify to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements: “I have received the following assistance from private supporting institutions

Nº	Business development services	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14.1	Business training					
14.2	Business Consulting					
14.3	Business Incubation					
14.4	Business mentoring					
14.5	Business counseling					

14.6	Provision of information and advisory services					

SECTION D: CHALLENGES TO ACCESSING ASSISTANCE FROM SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

15. Please specify to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Nº	Challenges	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15.1	I am not aware of supporting institutions' assistance					
15.2	I don’t appreciate the assistance offered by supporting institutions					
15.3	The available support is not appropriate to the needs of my business					
15.4	I do not have enough resources to access business development services					

15.5	I do not have sufficient information about the availability of business development services to make a rational choice					
15.6	The supporting institutions do not allow me to participate in the design of the policies					
15.7	I do not have sufficient information about the cost of Business development services to make a rational choice					
15.8	I assume that supporting institutions will not be able to handle my request					
15.9	The supporting institutions do not deal with requests professionally					

15.10. Specify other challenges you are facing in accessing assistance from supporting institutions to develop your managerial competencies: ……...……
……

SECTION E: ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

16. Specify to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Nº	Entrepreneurial training programs	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
16.1	The number of business training attended is sufficient					
16.2	The business training was relevant to my needs					
16.3	The length of the training was sufficient					
16.4	The frequence of the training was sufficient					
16.5	The content was well-organized and easy to comprehend					

16.6	Training has enhanced my leadership skills					
16.7	Training has enhanced my decision-making confidence					
16.8	The more the training offered, the stronger the association between management abilities and the performance of women- and youth-led businesses					
16.9	The more the training offered, the relationship between entrepreneurial training, support systems, and the prosperity of women- and youth-led businesses becomes more intensive					

SECTION F: ENTERPRISE SUCCESS

17. Specify to what extent the following innovativeness aspects apply to enterprise success. Make a tick if you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Nº	Innovativeness	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
17.1	Innovativeness has enabled my business to penetrate the market					
17.2	My business supports creativity in introducing new products in the market					
17.3	I always introduce new ideas in my business operations to ensure					

	customer satisfaction					
17.4	At times problems in my enterprise are solved using new and original ideas from employees					
17.5	Our business is proactive in innovation before the competitors respond					
17.6	I have embraced technology-based marketing to capture					

	prospective customers					

18. Indicate to what extent you agree to the following business performance measurements concerning the success of your business.

Nº	Performance	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
18.1	The level of sales volume in my enterprise has been on the increase since the inception of the business					
18.2	I have employed additional employees to meet the growing					

	demand for my products and services					
18.3	The profits recorded from the business are higher than what I started with					
18.4	I have embraced better strategies for minimizing costs and maximizing the profits in my enterprise					
18.5	I have opened other branches to					

	meet the demand and as a way of reinvesting profits					
18.6	The number of customers in my enterprise has increased significantly since I started the enterprise					

Appendix G-Interview Guides: Business Development Service Providers Executive Officers

EVALUATING THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL CAPABILITIES ON THE SUCCESS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH-LED ENTERPRISES IN BOTSWANA. A CASE OF THE SOUTH EAST DISTRICT**.**

My name is Annastacia Gomotsang Kedikanetswe, and I attend Unicaf University's Zambia Campus as a doctoral student. You are requested to take a moment to answer the research questions, which attempts to evaluate the Effect of Managerial Capabilities on the Success of Women and Youth-led Enterprises in Botswana. A case of the South East District. The study will be conducted in two locations: an office complex in Gaborone, and a countryside in Ramotswa Village.

The interview guides should take about 45 minutes, and the tool comprises 22 questions. Your responses are anonymous and will not be identified with you in any way. However, by answering this interview, you confirm that you know that the information you provide will remain anonymous and cannot be linked back to you. It would be helpful if you could answer as many questions as possible. You have the option of having a face-to-face interview with me or having me interview you over the phone.

Please be aware that you may withdraw at any time, without repercussions and without giving a reason, before or after the research is finished. In such instances, the information we have on you will be deleted.

Kindly answer all the questions and carefully follow the instructions for each question.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH SHOULD TICK THE BOX BELOW THE TEXT INDICATING THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY

I have either read or had the study's material read to me. Additionally, I have also had the opportunity to discuss the study and ask questions. All my queries have been answered well, and I have also received sufficient responses to the study. I know that I can withdraw from the study at any moment, without giving a reason or suffering any consequences. I am aware that, unless otherwise specified, the information I submit will be kept private and anonymous. I willingly consent to participate in this research.



SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

(Please place a tick in the appropriate box; only one answer is possible unless stated otherwise).

1. Gender

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age

18-25 years ☐ 26-35 years ☐ 36-45 years ☐ 46 years and above ☐

3. What is your position?

……

4. What is your highest level of education?

No formal Education		Bachelor's degree	
Primary education		Master's degree	
Secondary		PhD	
Certificate		Post PhD	
Diploma		Other (please specify)	

5. How many years have you been working for your organization?

☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20

6. Which of the following business development services do you provide to SMMEs?

Mentoring	

Coaching	
Training	
Incubation	

Managerial Capabilities on the success of women and youth enterprises

7. What Managerial skills do you think are required by women and youth business owners to run successful enterprises?

8. Why do you think the competencies mentioned are crucial?

9. How do managerial capabilities affect the creativity and innovativeness of women and youth business owners?

10. How do managerial skills influence the competitiveness of women and youth-led businesses?

11. How do managerial capabilities affect the Performance of women and youth-owned enterprises? Can you elaborate on their impact in the following areas:

a) in terms of revenue turnover

b) the number of employees (employment growth?)

c) market access opportunities

d) opening more branches

12. How do managerial capabilities influence the quality of products and services offered by women and youth business owners?

13. How do managerial capabilities influence the overall planning of enterprises owned by women and youth?

14. How can managerial competencies be enhanced?

Government policies and systems supporting women and youth-led business

15. What type of entrepreneurship ecosystem should the government of Botswana create to support women and youth-led businesses?

16. Which specific government policies and systems should the government of Botswana put in place to allow women and youth to participate fully in their business activities?

17. Why do you think women and youth business owners should participate in developing policies and regulations in Botswana?

18. Do you think the existing government policies and support systems are effective?

19. How do you think the existing policies that support SMMEs can effectively meet the needs of women and youth-led enterprises?

Influence of entrepreneurial training programs for women and youth business owners

20. What entrepreneurial training programs are most relevant for women and youth business owners?

21. Why is it important to design training programs specifically for women and young entrepreneurs?

22. How effective have this entrepreneurial training been (what significant changes have they made)? Can you provide examples?

23. How do you think they will influence the innovativeness and competitiveness of women and youth-owned enterprises?