“Repurposing support tendered youth owned Small, Medium, and Micro-Enterprises in urban agri-business sector in Durban”

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REPURPOSING SUPPORT TENDERED YOUTH OWNED SMALL, MEDIUM, AND MICRO-ENTERPRISES IN URBAN AGRI-BUSINESS SECTOR IN DURBAN

Abstract

Food security is one of the most fundamental challenges facing many countries, especially in the developing economies, which still has a vast section of its population still trapped in the socio-economic cocoon of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. This paper aims to investigate the institutional support in the facilitation of empowerment and development of youth Small, Medium, and Micro-Enterprises (SMMEs) to be active participants in the agribusiness economic mainstream. The paradigm shift from primary agriculture into urban farming business models in agri-business could accelerate the ascendancy of youth SMMEs in the competitiveness stakes. The theoretical analysis focused on the resource-based view model, institutional theory, and the role of the CSR impact as a conceptual framework for the study. The research design was predicated on the quantitative methodology, which enabled the researchers to statistically test the reliability and validity of the theory. The findings indicated that the CSR interventions had not yielded a fundamental impact on assisting youth SMMEs within the agribusiness sector. The results also identified a lack of tangible and result-driven institutional support from policy-makers and authorities. Overall targeted technological transfer as a strategic and critical resource to youth SMMEs is another constraining factor from empirical findings. The results also revealed the lack of monetary and non-monetary access by youth SMMEs as hampering their competitiveness and profits ability. The findings advocated that the policy-makers could synthesize the theories encapsulated in the study and the empirical evidence as the bedrock for bespoke, customized, and tailor-made youth SMMEs' bespoke support, empowerment, and development of their entities.

Keywords policy-makers, institutional theory, resource-based view model, CSR, agri-business, value-chain

JEL Classification M10, M13, M15

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INTRODUCTION

Globally, continentally and in the Sub-Saharan region, food and nutrition could be described as the significant priority on the policy-makers and authorities' agendas to mitigate the dire and bleak consequences if left unattended. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has accentuated the need to galvanize the strategic and comprehensive efforts, especially amongst the youth, to be equipped with the skills and the expertise to make constructive participation and contribution in this sector. Many cities in emerging economies in the Sub-Saharan region, including South Africa, should identify various innovative ways of addressing the food security challenges within the broader agricultural sector. It is incumbent upon policy-makers, authorities, practitioners, academics, and entrepreneurs to prioritize the significance of devising and strategizing optimal action plans as a matter of urgency. In the study conducted by Battersby-Lennard et al. (2009), an accentuation of the benefits advan-

tage in urban agriculture is facilitated by its proximity to the end-user who is the consumer while also mitigating food insecurity challenges. According to Crush and Frayne (2011), urban agriculture should form a pivotal linkage, especially for SMMEs that still espouse a transition from the informal oriented economy to more formal economic participation. The institutional certainty should assume a profound role and lead from the front in leveling the playing field for the inclusive participation of entrepreneurs, especially those operating as youth entities who could be classified as those aged between 18 and 35, according to the National Youth Development Agency Act. This paper has also recognized the pivotal role that Corporate Social Investment (CSI) could play in supporting youth entities getting their feet off the ground within the entrepreneurial business landscape. According to Giones and Brem (2017), the evolution of technology and digitization within the entrepreneurship and innovation space has catapulted the role of innovative mind-set in the provision of solution that could invariably mitigate urban agriculture challenges and backlogs, which could then be converted into an economic value enhancement (Specht et al., 2014). The entrepreneurial growth policies and strategies suggest that urban agriculture should explore and exploit the recent thriving of modern-oriented farming methods specifically within the urban environment such as hydroponics, aeroponics, aquaponics, and verticrops stronger than ever. In this paper, the researchers are positing that it should take a holistic and integrated effort for the strides in urban farming to be inclusive of youth-owned enterprises to make any profound impact in our society. According to the United Nations Inter-Agency Network, youth SMMEs remained in oblivion in terms of the participation in the labor market absorption that could ameliorate the socio-economic exclusion amongst this sector population. The prospects of fortifying efforts within the urban farming projects will go a long way in mitigating the social ills ravaging the country, namely unemployment, poverty, and income inequality. If not expediently addressed, it will culminate into catastrophic food security and national instability. To put matters into perspective in South Africa, within the context of Small, Medium, and Micro-Enterprises (SMMEs), various piece of legislation have been promulgated within a regulatory framework domain of corporate social responsibility wherein Multi-National Enterprises (MNEs) are compelled to contribute 1% of their post-tax profits in support of SMMEs. While the global trends are shaping towards the gains brought about by the dawn of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Fifth Generation (5G), blockchains and algorithms, and the concomitant solutions towards the food value chains there is still a huge room for growth for the emerging economies if they could bolster policy and institutional certainty.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The institutions have been established to facilitate the leverage between the decision-makers' objectives, the beneficiaries, and the broader populace. Challenges emanating from a correlation between policy-makers and intended beneficiaries have been pointed out by Lele and Goswami (2017), specifically within the agricultural landscape is the lucidity of policies at the decision-making echelons and disintegration at the actionable level. According to Szirmai (2012), while the emerging economies have to catch up in the industrialization efforts, the agricultural sector could act as a primer specifically on the agro-processing side of the value chain. Szirmai's (2012) observation corroborates Naudé's (2017) affirmations that business models should be designed in both developed and emerging economies while taking into cognizance the positive impact of the 4IR and the urban agriculture is not immune on this trajectory. Urban agriculture also had no exception in pioneering the support and the acceleration of youth agro-oriented SMMEs to their rightful place within the urban farming value chain. The urban agriculture ecosystem, stakeholders, and the associated value chain should incorporate various role-players, thus facilitated a meaningfully comprehensive and robust accomplishment of the desired objectives. Figure 1 casts peculiar lenses on the urban agriculture value chain sustainable framework that could form the bases within which the authorities and the decision-makers could embrace to propel this complex and yet achievable phenomenon for the ultimate benefit of youth

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SMMEs within this critical economic sector. The actions, interactions, and reactions in most value chains irrespective of the sector type should be contextualized within the prism of Value Chain Development (VCD) as postulated by Donovan et al. (2015). The term Value Chain Collaboration (VCC) coined by Ros-Tonen et al. (2015) has been riddled with perpetual self-defeating tendencies of exclusion and marginalization, which manifest themselves as a hindrance for developmental and support initiative for the intended beneficiaries. Due to such practices, an assertion by Crane et al. (2014) warrants a paradigm shift on the part of the corporations to have an affinity of social value creation and sharing, especially with the less finally endowed entities like youth SMMEs irrespective of the industry.

1.1. Resource-based view theory

The triple S of "size, scope, and scale" could be adopted as a befitting exemplary where the nexus between the economic profit intentions and the benevolent pursuit of social value could be predicated harmoniously in a win-win scenario which exhibits both symbiosis and mutualism (Porter et al., 2012). Therefore, the hybridization of institutional theory and the resource-based view (RBV) model has been dealt with extensively, albeit in the developed economies could be escalated within the urban agriculture and inference could be deduced on the success stories and guidelines. According to the RBV, social capital, entrepreneurial orientation, intellectual capital, entrepreneurial mind-set, stakeholder participation activism, robust CSR ties, and genuine philanthropic practices are the critical components of accelerating SMMEs' support and development (Campbell & Park, 2017). While the perception that the RBV model acts as the bedrock for the corporation to attain their competitive advantage, this could also be extended to the small enterprise, which could help catapult their fortunes to greater heights (Jensen et al., 2016). Figure 1 illustrates some of the permutations that could be resonant with both the inducements and the deterrents for the youth SMMEs within the urban agriculture when especially when they transcend from the gestalt phases right up until they could experience growth in their entities life cycle phases (Joosten et al., 2008).

The multi-criteria and the integrated upstream participation of youth SMMEs could be amongst an avalanche of key drivers that could boost their status even within the second-tier supplier selection hierarchy by the private sector enterprises (Ho et al., 2010). The scarcity of access to land by the previously marginalized communities who find themselves residing in the cities has been a documented knowledge specifically in South Africa (Crush & Frayne, 2011). The mushrooming of malls within

Source: Developed by the researchers for the study.

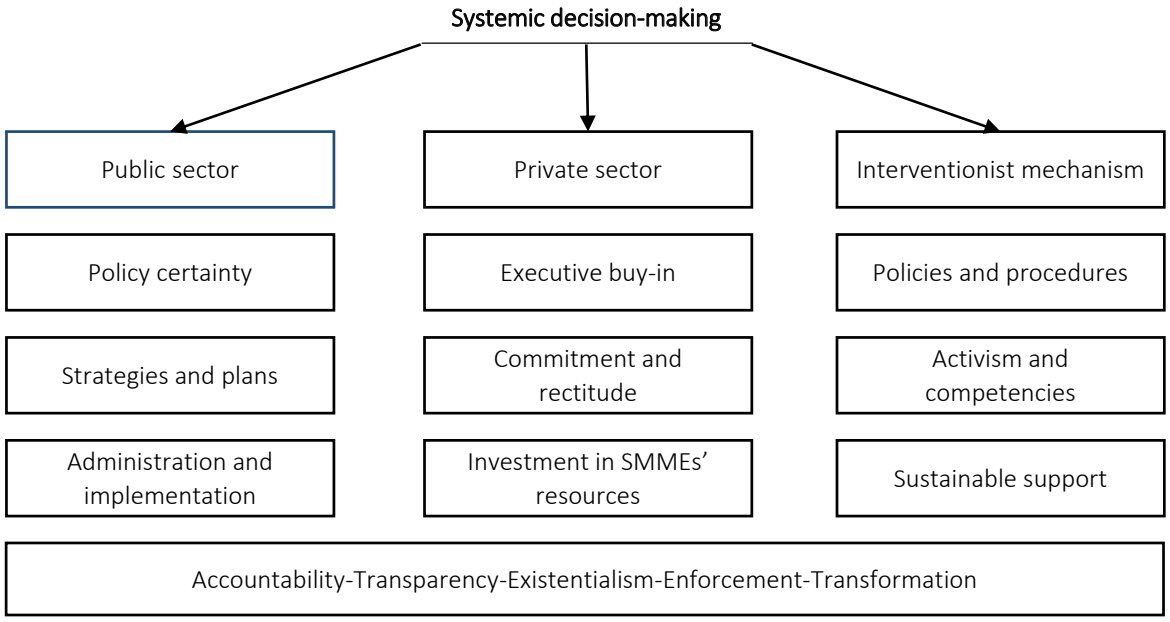

Figure 1. Architect of sustainable youth SMMEs in the urban agriculture support mechanism

the urban precincts could act as a catalyst in fostering the opportunities for the local-based youth SMMEs, which is also motivated by the proximity into these super and hypermarket food retail warehouses, which could immensely make an impactful change on the plight of the seemingly marginalized suppliers (Crush & Frayne, 2011).

1.2. Institutional theory

According to North (1993), institutions could be construed as those structures incorporating formal rules and procedures with legitimacy as their cornerstone. Scott (2008) further postulated that the cognitive and the regulatory dimension that the institutions possess. While the scholastic contributions predicated on the organization, management, and execution of expected legitimation due to the institutional processes, intricacies, permutations, interaction, and expectations from both the primary (direct) and tertiary (indirect) stakeholders play a critical role (DiMaggio, 1988). In this article, pragmatic legitimacy, which drew its origins from the cognitive institutional dimension, Greenwood et al. (2002) accentuated the pivotal role that the professional bodies could facilitate, especially while the urban agricultural landscape could immensely benefit specifically within the context of an emerging economy like South Africa. The main impediments that stagnate the scalable role of youth participation within the urban agriculture could also be approached from the triple helix model integrating academia, private sector, and public domain (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). The external environment with its social capital and network ties could also act as an inducement for the youth SMMEs within the urban agriculture to consider the resource theory dependency perspective (Nienhüser, 2008). The unpredictable and volatile nature of the external environment could pose as a constraining factor for both the authorities and the SMMEs alike while both are espousing to navigate between the notion of Resource-Based View Model (RBVM) and Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) (Hillman et al., 2009).

1.3. Corporate social responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been accorded an avalanche of definitions and characterizations over the years. In this article, the authors embrace Kotler and Lee's (2008) renditions describing CSR as "an assurance to improve community well-being through voluntary business philanthropic and benevolent goodwill by availing organizational resources to value-added social practices to the intended beneficiaries". Kotler and Lee's (2008) explication of the CSR narration has been aptly configured by Jamali and Neville (2011) within the institutional context by adding multi-layered positioning and approach the CSR proponents. Kotler and Lee (2008) and Jamali and Neville (2011) corroborate with Scott's assertions that construe CSR from the complementarity of endogenous and exogenous spectrum lens. The dissemination and the distribution of resources and cognate tools of the trade by the practitioners within the urban agricultural ecosystem will depend on the institutional framework catalyzed by the CSR endeavor from the ethical perspective (Fassin et al., 2011). According to Matten and Moon (2008), corporations adopting CSR prioritization explicit utilization incorporate organizational values, policies, culture, and programs within their organizational DNA while juxtaposing altruism, which is anchored within institutional obligation intended for the social value contribution to the beneficiaries. The article harmonizes the theoretical underpinnings of the RBV by augmenting the CSR discourse that it should be at the epicenter of institutional framework concentrating its rationale on the fundamentals of the regulatory, normative, and cognitive dimensions (Kostova & Roth, 2002). The impediments and the hindrances that continue to impede the youth SMMEs from resource accessibility and extending to constructive participation in the urban agriculture value chain necessitate the nexus of CSR intervention and the invigoration of access to empowerment benefits such as grants, loans, discounts, investments, and human capital contribution which could be packaged as CSR interventions. Borrowing from the stakeholder theory and the social capital theory, CSR could integrate, synthesize and consolidate, as posited by Specht et al. (2014), the intended beneficiary expectations by undertaking an organizational self-reflection, benchmarking the organizational impact on philanthropic expedience. The participation, perception, and interpretation of SMMEs' CSR influence have been succinctly punctuated by Sen and Cowley (2013) within the

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domain of stakeholder theory and social capital theory who postulated the critical comprehension and creative evaluation of these scholastic framework's influence on the expansive and scalable execution of the desired outcome. According to the Johannesburg Securities Exchange and the Germany-based Corporate Allianz SE, a strategic alliance initiative by both institutions in terms of collaboration, they have the pledge to advocate the proactive transparent push for the corporates in their respective country to ignite the private sector CSR activism. This would be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically Goals 8 and 12 that focus on "decent living wage-oriented work opportunity" and "accountable consumption and production," which primarily accentuate the economic inclusivity and for this article food security through urban agriculture. Due to the ever-increasing urban/rural food-price gap, a concerted effort has been identified in the National Development Pan Vision 2030 that a concerted effort by both the policy-makers and the practitioners in their respective capacity should be galvanized in ensuring the relationships between agriculture and nutrition. This resonates with Statistics South Africa, which has shown that unemployment levels are approaching 30% of the economically active population and, worse still, the youth sector between 18 and 35.

1.4. Hypotheses scenario

The correlation coefficient is used in the study to determine the factors such as leveraging resources, institutionally aligned support to their entities, and CSR intervention to propel the competitiveness and sustainability of youth SMMEs within the agri-business sector. The dependent variable in this study is, therefore, those interventions that would ordinarily be exogenous to the youth SMMEs' competitiveness strength like financial and non-financial resources, as well as the institutions amenable for the youth SMMEs' success and the pivotal role of corporate social investment intervention impact threshold. On the other hand, the independent variables were categorized as follows:

1) demographics: gender in terms of ownership, educational achievements, and length of enterprise existence;
2) entrepreneurship business environment landscape and its concomitant ecosystem;
3) other indirect (external) sources of capital or finances for their business;
4) agri-business value chain, trends, and opportunities;
5) broader sector spatial development and competitiveness intensity;
6) legitimate monitoring of legislated CSR interventions by the corporate sector.

The study aims could be synthesized within the following hypotheses:

H_0: *The nature of the strength and opportunities the entity possesses do not have relative to the threats and opportunities the external business environment pose.*

H_0: *The disequilibrium of enterprises is not predicated by the duration and durability of existence, economies of scale and learning curve effects.*

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method and research designs adopted in this article assume the quantitative methodology premise of theory testing within the positivist paradigm. The questionnaire had the following themes:

1) entrepreneurship landscape; assign its success to host SMMEs;
2) availability of resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability;
3) institutions support of the urban agricultural ecosystem;
4) youth SMMEs' support in terms of technology, operations, human capital, and other business-related resources;
5) role of Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) in supporting SMMEs;

6) CSR implementation;

7) consequential accountability by policy-makers in CSR adherence.

The study is located in the City of Durban and is the third biggest in South Africa. The study population is drawn from a diverse range of youth SMMEs who have their entities formally registered with the CIPC (Companies and Intellectual Property Commission) and under the custody of BSU (Business Support Unit) in Durban. The positivist paradigm has guided the researchers with its theory testing realm of a quantitative approach (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), and approximately 202 youth SMMEs from a targeted 217 out of a population of 500 youth SMMEs were selected using random sample testing. The following formula was utilized for the sample size determination in the study (Taherdoost, 2017):

$$n = \frac{p(100-p)Z^2}{E^2}, \quad (1)$$

where N denotes the required sample size, P denotes the percentage occurrence of a state or condition, E denotes the maximum percentage error required, Z denotes the value corresponding to the level of confidence required.

The research instrument in the form of the questionnaire has been used to collate, coalesce and solicit data that has been utilized to extrapolate the responses (Creswell & Clark, 2017) from the participating youth SMMEs in the study.

3. RESULTS

The site boasts one of the busiest harbors in the Sub-Saharan region and state-of-the-art King Shaka International Airport (KSIA) that also hosts an agri-zone. The private sector has pledged more than R 3.2 billion investment within the Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which also incorporates the agri-zone. Therefore, access to international markets is mitigated due to the infrastructure already on the ground, which youth SMMEs in the agriculture value chain could find advantageous. The city has a fully-fledged agri-zone with modern facilities. The sample size of the study is 202. The sample contains gender demographics reflecting 51.5 of male and 48.5% of female respondents. Fifty-eight respondents have an educational level of at least Matric, which is 28.7% of the sample. The sample also consists of 35 National Diplomas, 51 Undergraduate Degree, 49 Honors/ Post Graduate Degree, and 7 Doctoral Degrees.

Table 1. Percentage's sources of income

Permanent employment	60.4
Casual employment	14.9
Business	17.8
Grants	5.9
Error	1.0
Total	100.0

Most of the participants are permanently employed; the table above depicts that 60.4% are employed full time. There are 14.9% who are funding their businesses from their casual employment. Some of the businesses are funding themselves, and 5.9% are grant recipients. Transportation cost is one of many business expenses that cannot be avoided. Businesses involved in urban agriculture will incur the cost of transporting their produce to the storage facilities and en route to their customers. Almost half of the participants use public transport, and the results show that 41% of youth SMMEs involved in the study do not have private transport. It is important to have a reliable transportation mode; 40.6 % of the respondents have private transport. Over 75% of the participants have another source of income apart from the businesses that they are running. 14% of participants are assisted by their family and are using family transport. The responses signify the importance of transportation to business, as only 4% use other forms of transportation.

Table 2. Life-cycle stage

Phase	Frequency	Percent
Pre-start-up phase	57	28.2
Start-up phase	93	46.0
Growth phase	48	23.8
Maturity phase	4	2.0
Total	202	100.0

It is crucial to understand the life cycle of businesses as growth can be associated with the income level and sustainability of a company. Table

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Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Items	N	Mean
Entrepreneurship landscape is flourishing and receiving official's attention for youth Small, Medium, and Micro-Enterprises (SMMEs)	202	2.37
Sufficient resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability	202	2.84
Institutions are honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban agricultural ecosystem	202	2.52
Youth SMMEs' support received in technological, operational, human capital, and other business-related resources in the form of CSR or other interventions	202	2.46
Satisfied by the role of Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) in supporting SMMEs' access to finances	202	2.25
Officials are implementing CSR in an efficient and impactful manner	202	2.13
Consequential accountability by policy-makers in CSR adherence	202	2.40

2 reflects that most SMMEs are in the pre-start-up and start-up phase, and 2% fall under the mature life cycle category.

The sampled participants were presented with seven statements that require them to provide responses ranging from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree. The mean of all responses ranges between Disagree to Neutral response to the statements. Table 3 indicates the mean responses that suggest that:

- SMMEs do not find that entrepreneurship landscape flourishing, and they do not receive the attention they require to consider the space in which they operative supportive. The mean responses of 2.35 show that entrepreneurs, on average, disagree with the first statement.
- The average response of 2.84 suggests that SMMEs are not provided with sufficient resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability. Participants, on average, agree that they are given sufficient resources.
- In South Africa, several institutions are set up to support youth enterprises. Participants were asked to respond to whether these institutions honored their youth SMMEs' support and development mandate within the urban agricultural ecosystem. The average response of 2.52 indicates that participants on average did not agree to receive the support set up to support youth entrepreneurs.
- In modern days, technology is an important part of the business process. On average, the participants do not agree that the youth SMMEs are receiving adequate support in terms of technological, operational, human capital, and other business-related resources either in the form of CSR or in any other interventions.
- It is worth noting that participants do not agree to have Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) honoring their role of supporting SMMEs' access to finances. An average of 2.25 mean score suggests that participants are not satisfied with the role of Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) in supporting SMMEs' access to finances.
- Profitable and large South African companies must spend a portion of their post-tax profit on social responsibility. Amongst other activities, companies do spend their portion on the CSR budget in supporting youth SMMEs. However, the participants in this study do not agree that officials are implementing CSR efficiently and impactfully. The average score of 2.13 suggests that participants disagree with CSR being implemented effectively and efficiently.
- A mean of 2.40 indicates an average disagreement by the participants to consequential accountability by policy-makers in CSR adherence.

Some variables have a significant mutual relationship, as indicated in Table 4, which shows significant complementary relationships between the responses to the following statement at a *p*-value of 0.001.

Table 4. Correlation coefficient

		Sufficient resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability.	Institutions honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban agricultural ecosystem.	Youth SMMEs' support received in technological, operational, human capital, and other business-related resources in the form of CSR or other interventions.	Satisfied by the role of Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) in supporting SMMEs' access to finances.	Level of education
Sufficient resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability.	Pearson correlation	1	0.147*	0.361**	0.373**	0.099
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.037	0.000	0.000	0.164
	N	202	202	202	202	200
Institutions honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban agricultural ecosystem.	Pearson correlation	0.147*	1	0.356**	0.560**	–0.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.037		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	202	202	202	202	200
Youth SMMEs' support received in technological, operational, human capital, and other business-related resources in the form of CSR or other interventions.	Pearson correlation	0.361**	0.356**	1	0.324**	0.085
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.233
	N	202	202	202	202	200
Satisfied by the role of Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) in supporting SMMEs' access to finances.	Pearson correlation	0.373**	0.560**	0.324**	1	–0.244**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	202	202	202	202	200
Source of income	Pearson correlation	–0.012	0.233**	0.076	0.239**	–0.370**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.870	0.001	0.284	0.001	0.000
	N	202	202	202	202	200

- There is a significant relationship between the availability of resources to assist with resources for competitiveness, performance, long-term sustainability, and youth SMMEs' support. This relationship signifies that entrepreneurship support may consider SMMEs' support important for competitiveness, performance, and sustainability. The R-value of 0.361 signifies a weak relationship between the two variables.

- Table 4 also suggests a correlation between the availability of sufficient resources for competitiveness, performance, and long-term sustainability, and Financial Development Institutions (FDIs) role in supporting SMMEs' access to finances. The R-value of 0.373 suggests that SMMEs can access financial resources to be sustainable, competitive, and perform.

- Urban agriculture is becoming more prominent in developing economy-oriented countries and growing cities like Durban in this study, while in South Africa, the government has set up various institutions with the mandate to support SMMEs in this space. There is a significant relationship between institutions honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban agricultural ecosystem and entrepreneurial success.

- Respondents have at least Matric/Grade 12 as the lowest level of education; thus, education can be associated with the perception of Institutions honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban agricultural ecosystem. Participants have some level of expectations from the instructions set out to support entrepreneurs in the space of urban agriculture.

- Source of income has a mutual relationship with Institutions honoring youth SMMEs' support and development within the urban

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agricultural ecosystem, and youth SMMEs' support received in technological, operational, human capital, and other business-related resources in the form of CSR or other interventions. Most participants are self-funding their businesses through earnings from their permanent jobs.

All the above needs to be considered to have a functional shift to urban agriculture. Youth SMMEs in this sector should be equipped with resources that add to their value chain gravitas and strength. The global trends shift towards practical and pragmatic solutions towards the food value chains, and there is still a huge room for growth for the emerging economies by fostering resource mobilization and access and institutional certainty. Thus, there is a constant appeal for the government from SMMEs. Challenges emanating from a correlation between policy-makers and intended beneficiaries have been pointed out within the agricultural landscape with actionable outcomes. The emerging economies have to catch up in the industrialization efforts; the agricultural sector could act as a primer specifically on the agro-processing side of the value chain. The results above corroborate with Naudé's (2017) affirmations that business models should be designed in both developed and emerging economies while taking into cognizance the positive impact of the 4IR and the urban agriculture is not immune to this trajectory.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study points to the need for the policy-makers, institutions, authorities, captains of industry, civic organizations, and practitioners within the agri-business industry to create a conducive environment for the SMMEs to prosper and contribute positively to the country's economic fortunes. Urban agriculture stimulates the local economy through job creation, income generation, technology resource transfer, and the overall growth competitiveness and profitability of the youth SMMEs. Urban farming provides fresh produce speedily and in a cost-effective manner while also empowering the youth SMMEs in making a constructive contribution to economic prosperity. The results suggest that many respondents have a negative perception of the current support structures in South Africa and which they value to be important for businesses involved in urban agriculture. Big companies like MNEs are expected to assist in addressing social ills through corporate social responsibility. The study demonstrates the systemic obstacles and the hindrances that continue to impede the youth SMMEs from institutional support and resource accessibility. The above calls for policy adjustment to facilitate constructive participation in the urban agriculture value chain by incorporating CSR intervention and the invigoration of access to empowerment benefits such as grants, loans, discounts, investments and human capital contribution. There is striking evidence that the study revealed the lack of monitoring and evaluation and the associated consequential management by those entrusted with the legislated mandate to support the youth SMMEs as vastly lagging behind. There is an overwhelming need for the paradigm shift, evidenced by both the public authorities and MNEs, which is displayed by the institutional abdication of responsibility and the dereliction of duty.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Tony Ngwenya.
Data curation: Pfano Mashau.
Formal analysis: Pfano Mashau.
Investigation: Tony Ngwenya.
Methodology: Pfano Mashau.
Project administration: Tony Ngwenya.
Visualization: Tony Ngwenya.
Writing – original draft: Tony Ngwenya, Pfano Mashau.
Writing – review & editing: Pfano Mashau.

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