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Impact Evaluation of Youth-Driven Innovation Projects: A course study for Bokamoso Innovation hub in the Khomas Region, Namibia

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ABSTRACT: Youth unemployment remains a critical challenge in Namibia, particularly in low-income urban areas like Katutura. The City of Windhoek established the Bokamoso Incubation Hub as a response to support entrepreneurship development as means of fostering youth-led enterprises. The study evaluated the specific impact of youth-led innovative entreprises by assessing their ability of job creation and examined the experiences of the youth entrepreneurs at Bokamoso as well as capturing their challenges in their entrepreneurial journey. A mixed-methods sequential explanatory design was employed. First, quantitative data were collected through a structured survey from 15 incubated entreprenuers to measure the relationship between types of business support (funding,mentorship, training, marketing skills) and the number of jobs created. A comporative analysis revealed that training & mentorship through government interventions like equipmnet scheme, the NTA and youth grants (Youth Development Fund) were the strongest significant predictors of employment creating. Subsequently, qualitative data from 15 in-depth interviews and 2 focus group discussions were analyzed using thematic anaklysis to explain these findings not well addressed by the qiantitative phase. The qualitative data revealed that process innovation training and skills to operate business (Customer care, financial management,digital software development) enhanced operational efficiency, for two joinery shops that have managed to increase the staff compliment from 2 to 8 allowing these business to create jobs. Printing and design due to machinery invovled required more staff compared to agro-processing The findings srevealed that incubation programs should be rxtended to other incubation hubs run and managed by City of Windhoek as well as extending such to youth entrepreneurship facilities in order to maximize their impact on job creation.The study concludes that the Bokamoso Hub's greatest impact on youth unemployment is achieved not merely by supporting novel ideas, but by strategically fostering a culture of entrepenurial mindset among the youth and supprot mechanism (funding, mentorship & start-up development).

KEYWORDS: Youth Unemployment, Innovation, Mixed-Methods Research, Job Creation, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Incubation

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INTRODUCTION

The development of any nation relies on the skill set possesed of its youth, who form the majority of populations worldwide. Namibia is no exception; according to the latest census which reports that 73% of its population is aged 16-35 yaers (Central Statistics Agency, 2012). The NDP6 suggests empowering Namibian youth with innovation skills through mentorships and access to credit schemes to help them thrive in the SME economic space (Government of Namibia, 2014).

The World Bank report on Namibia highlights that the lack of meaningful employment in the country arises from various factors, starting with the education system's inability to meet the labor market's demands. Additionally, the job market in both formal and informal sectors offers limited opportunities accessible to the youth. The study further indicates that approximately 50% of Namibians are aged between 15 to 24 and are mostly unemployed, making the youth the most affected group in terms of employment opportunities (World Bank, 2021).

The Bokamoso Incubation Hub, named after the Setswana word for "the future," was founded in Katutura, in the City of Windhoek to serve as an examplifier providning opportunity to young people use their creativity and entrepreneurial skills that could lead businesses and creation of jobs. The Centre offers young people opportunities of persuing entrepreneurial intentetion that led them enter new markets or start their own businesses and have emerged as key instruments to nurture this entrepreneurial potential

(Venter, et al., 2015). The study assessed its impact on youth employment, drawing on theory, regional case studies, and local socio-economic factors (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor(GEM), 2020).

This study investigated how youth-led innovation projects at Bokamoso Entrepreneurial Centre can address youth unemployment in Namibia. Focusing on sustainable job creation through entrepreneurship, it explores techniques for success and support for young entrepreneurs in small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The findings offered insights into current youth entrepreneurship and provide recommendations for improving its effectiveness in combating youth unemployment (Glaister & Buckley, 2017).

Problem Statement

Youth-led innovation projects in Namibia's Khomas Region drive economic growth, job creation, and technology (World Bank, 2020). These programs provide financial support, training, and mentorship but face sustainability challenges due to insufficient evaluations after incubation (UNDP, 2021). Research gaps include limited funding access and lack of impact data. The study aimed to assess these initiatives, highlight obstacles, and recommend ways to enhance effectiveness (Glaister & Buckley, 2017).

Research Questions

The study aims to inquire into the following questions to address the knowledge gap identified in the problem statement.

1.1.1 What are the socio-economic impacts of youth-driven innovation projects?

1.1.2 How effective are the support mechanisms (e.g., funding, mentorship, training) provided to young innovators?

1.1.3 What challenges do youth entrepreneurs face in sustaining their innovation projects?

1.1.4 How do youth-led innovation initiatives contribute to job creation and skills development?

1.1.5 What strategies can be implemented to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of youth innovation projects?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focused on evaluating existing research and theoretical frameworks regarding the role of entrepreneurship in addressing youth unemployment, with particular emphasis on young individuals engaged in innovation-related projects and their contributions to reducing unemployment and supporting economic development in nations such as Namibia. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), youth unemployment refers to individuals aged 15-35 who are not employed. This issue remains significant worldwide, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where economic instability, limited employment opportunities, and skill mismatches frequently prevent young people from entering the formal labor market (ILO, 2021).

Youth unemployment is a challenge face by many countries in sub saharan Africa, including Namibia whose unemployemnt rate is above 40%, calling strategic interventions to solve the problem by suggestion critical pathways for job creation, entrepreneurship development, economic empowerment and poverty alleviation through introduction of business incubation hubs (Msomi & Olarewaju, 2021). The business incubation though well established in many developed countries, in Namibia the concept still lack dynamisim as only few of these are operational and sustainable (Fumbo & Tjahjono, 2018).

The study analyzed various theoritical frameworks to get the best fit for youth unemployment which remains a challenge in many developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. For the Namibian context the fitting context is that which is posited by the World Bank where young people dominates the higher unemployment rates than the general population, due to limited access to formal jobs, as these youth lacks the skills required by the job market (World Bank, 2021). Therefore, the framework puts Entrepreneurship at the centre as a proposed solution which allows young individuals to create their own businesses and resulting in reduced dependence on the formal job market. It also fosters innovation, enhances productivity, and drives local economic growth (Klapper, 2021).

Although entrepreneurship can reduce unemployment, its success for young people hinges on overcoming complex challenges like limited entrepreneurial education, insufficient capital, and inadequate support policies and infrastructure (ILO, 2021).

The potential of youth entrepreneurship in Africa is immense, yet it is fraught with challenges. Studies across the continent indicate that while young people are increasingly turning to entrepreneurship out of necessity, their ventures often remain in the informal sector, characterised by low growth and high failure rates (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor(GEM), 2020). The literature identified barriers inhibiting many youth in Africa to excel in entrepreneurship not limted to access to finance as traditional financial institutions are often hesistant to led these youth seed money to startup their business without asking for collateral of risk profiling (World Bank, 2020).

Many young people in africa are trapped in Skills Mismatch net where they might have technical skills but lack core entrepreneurial acumen in areas like financial management, marketing, and business plan development (GEM, 2022). The long and cumbersome business registration processes and lack of regulatory environments can possess a challenge for penetration of new market frontire by many youth in Africa (World Bank, 2020).

The link between youth entrepreneurship and empowerment is well-documented. Empowerment involves enabling individuals to take control of their lives, a key element in youth entrepreneurship, particularly for those with limited economic opportunities (Miller, 2019). SMEs plays a major role in entrepreneurship mitigation that promote self-reliance and personal development by

encouraging initiative, problem-solving, and community economic growth (Acs, Desai, & Klapper, 2020). Additionally, it provides purpose, identity, and enhances social capital and employment prospects (Glaister & Buckley, 2017). To truly empower, youth entrepreneurship needs robust support in terms education, mentorship, and start-up capital in order to achieve sustainability and survive the competition from rivals (Venter, et al., 2015) & (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor(GEM), 2020).

Recent studies have highlighted the potential of youth entrepreneurship to contribute to local economic development. The findings indicate that start-ups, including those in informal markets, play a significant role in job creation and income generation in both urban and rural communities (Hernandez & Thavapalan, 2020). By providing goods and services tailored to local needs, youth-led start-ups at facilities such as Bokamoso Entrepreneurial Centre contribute to inclusive economic growth and community development (Glaister & Buckley, 2017).

Youth entrepreneurs face challenges in driving innovation due to a lack of skills in business idea generation, pitching ideas, impact evaluation, monitoring, and business plan development (Miller, 2019). The impact of these start-ups is both economic and social as such successful youth entrepreneurs from this Centre should serve as role models and catalysts, promoting peer-to-peer mentorship and coaching in entrepreneurial ventures (Glaister & Buckley, 2017).

Developed and developing country governments have initiated targeted programs to promote youth enterprises (Audretsch, Falck, & Lederer, 2011). Like in ISouth Africa, youth entrepreneurs are offered grant schemes and non-monetary support such as business development services and young entrepreneurs' entrepreneurship training by the National Youth Development Agency (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor(GEM), 2020). This has helped many young South Africans access seed financing and market-ready products (Venter, et al., 2015). Whereas the Rwandan government established what they call the YouthConnekt program to link young people with mentors for opportunity, resources, and skills under a program that incorporates bootcamps, business pitching competitions, and networking sessions to drive youth innovation (UNDP, 2020).

In Namibia, the UNDP is running a global accelerator programmme that provides opportunity to young emptreprenuers rediscover their talents through disruptive innovation methods and help to nurture them and transfrom into goods and services (UNDP, 2020). Namibia has established institutions to address issues pertaing to entreprenurship development targeting the young and women like the Namibia Investment Promotion & Developemnt Board (NIPDB); The National Commission on Research Science and Technology (NCRST); Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport, Arts and Culture; National Youth Council. Financial opportunities for youth enterpreneurship and innovation development done financing mechanisms provided through the banks like Namibia Development Bank's annual innovation and SME competition award as well as the general loan scheme. Business Financial Services (BFS) for funding start-ups; Namibia Youth Credit Grant Scheme; Equipment Scheme for SMEs by the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy; private commercial bank SME loan scheme; The Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) portifolio on youth involved in climate change and green energy projects.

Innovation hubs act as accelerators that foster the relationship between innovation and entrepreneurship development among the youth (Audretsch, Falck, & Lederer, 2011). They help complement mainstream education, particularly for entrepreneurship courses offered accros all disciplines at the University of Namibia through targeted interventions like ideation, conceptaulisation of ideas into proof of concept followed by testing the idea for feasibility and development of prototypes which are fabricated into these incubation hubs(Hernadez & Thavapalan, 2020). The Other hubs of similar nature are found at NUST and IUM. The VTCs also plays a major role in developing skills to young Namibians in various skill set as contained in the UNESCO scopping mission report produced in conjunction with then Ministry of Higher Technology and Innovation now called the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sport Arts and Culture (MHETI, 2016).

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study used of a mixed-methods approach, which included a sequential explanation and worldview methods for qualitative research, as well as sequential exploration methods for quantitative research (Creswell, 2014). This combined approach aimed at providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by utilizing the strengths of both methods and addressing their individual weaknesses (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). This leads to more robust findings, enhanced validity, and a broader perspective on the research topic.

Furthermore, mixed research methods was used to obtain multiple perspectives for validation, helping researchers to develop a comprehensive understanding of the study. This approach allows researchers to explain statistical results in greater detail and achieve better contextualization (Kathori, 2004).

Finally, the study applied triangulation to evaluate the differences in outcomes between supported and non-supported youth innovative initiatives (Creswell, 2014).

Population

The population of the study consisted of 41 youth entrepreneurs operating at the Bokamoso Entreprenuerial Center that offers a "One-Stop" marketing opportunity for a wide range of products and services allowing for entrepreneurs to improve their business

operations through the provison of access to an affordable working space with internet services, adequate incubation and mentorship support using appropraite tools/equipment as well as information material that benefit entrepreneurs (Kathori, 2004). The Centre offers a SMEs specializing in arts, crafts, catering, clothing/textile manufacturing, innovation/ICT services and manufacturing and many more innovative related programmes (Lee & Lings, 2012). Furthermore, the incubation spaces offers the opportunity to support Namibian entrepreneurs and their development by buying their products and services.project beneficiaries, and key stakeholders from government agencies, NGOs, and private sector partners operating at the City of Windoek's Bokamoso Entreprenuerial incubation hub (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007).

Sample

Sampling methods in research involve selecting a subset (sample) from a larger group (population) to study and infer conclusions (Creswell,2014). These techniques ensure research findings are generalizable and cost-effective, divided into probability a sampling method the invovle randomly slecting the research intends to reaearch on and ensuring that each member of the population have an equal chance of being selected, whilst and non-probability sampling (Creswell, 2014).

The sample was drawn from a popoulation of 41 occupants using stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation across different businesses operated by young entrepreneurs at Bokomoso Incubation Centre . The formula to calculate the sample size shall be Yamane (1967)'s formula as follows: n = (($Z^{2}xPx$ (1−P))/(d^2)

Where n = number of respondents in the sample (sample size)

Z = z score which show confindence level (95% confidence = 1,96)

P = Expected proportion of the population that has the characteristic the proposal is interested in. (0.5) d= margin of error (0.15)

n = $(1{,}96^2$ x 0.5(1-0.5)/ $(0.15)^2$ = 15.3664 ~ **15** respondents for each phase making the total respondents to 30

Therefore, a sample size of n=15 entrepreneurs for each phases (quantitative and qualitative) while a total of n=30 was targeted, that allowed for a rich and diverse collection of insights while maintaining manageability for data analysis (William, 2011).

From this number of respondents (n=15), a puposive skey informants were sampled (n=5) which included 2 FGDs selected for the in-depth qualitative phase to accommodate all unclear responses from the qantitative phase of the study..

Research Intruments

The study employed a sequential explanation design mixed method apporach that involved collecting and analysing quantit utilize an interview guides for data collection for qualitative as well as applying some degree of observations & allow focus group disscusion in some instances and questionnaires/survey will be used for quantitative research and search engines for secodary data to ensure a smooth triangulation(Creswell, 2014).

The interview guide was also used to collect qualitative data from the key informants who will be purposefully sampled from the respondents to provide an indepth explanation to the questions not adquately answered during the quantitative phase (Creswell & Planco, 2017). Quantitative data was collected using a survey questionnaire send to respondents (selected youth entrepreneurs, project beneficiaries, and key stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and private sector partners by means sending emails (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007).

The qualitative data collection procedures were used to guided the study to collect data needed for deepened explanation of quantitative results through the administration of interviews guides for gathering qualitative data on the n=12 participants as well as from the the (n=5) key informants puposefullyy sampled to give further explanation to some questions not well understood by the first phase quantitative research by the particpants in their enpreneurial journey. These key informants included members of Bokamoso management, mentors and local investors to establish linkages between innovation support these entreprenurs enjoyed and employement outcomes (Creswell & Planco, 2017).

Furthermore, data collection procedures for Focus Group Discussion (FGD) undertaken ensured that results were polorised by dominace of outspoken members of the group espaceiallyy the combination of these FGDs comprised of a mixture of gradutes form hub and those still being incubated.. This structured approach ensured a comprehensive and reliable data collection for the study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).phase also included pretesting the interview guide to determine whether duration of interview or questons are in line

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The study found that while such hubs are important, their effectiveness depended on tackling both business skills and deeper ing structural challenges (Fumbo & Tjahjono, 2018).

The study employed a two phase approach to data analysis,starting with quantitative analysis data analysed using statistical software (SPSS) that presented descriptive statistics results in form graphs , charts showing the means, frequences and standard deviation that provided a summarised findings in form of demograph, eduactional levels and experinces of both those that have graduated from Bokamoso and the current incubatees.

Additionally, the study used mult regression as inference statistics to determine the relationship between the dependent variables (graduates creating employment) and independent variables (types of innovations) was determined using multi regression as inferential statistics (Creswell & Planco, 2017).

The second phase of data analysis was for qualitative data, all interviews, focus group discussions, analysed using thematic analysis from the puposeful sampled key informants where te researcher had to start by familiarisation with the data followed by generation codes to be assigned to the themes. (Creswell J. W., 2014).

Response Rate

The study had targeted 30 participants from 41 SMEs equivalent to the stalls at the hub. A total of 15 questionnaies were distrubuted (quantitative phase) and 15 interiews guides printed were suppoosed to adminstered by the researcher on the qualitative phase. Out of the these 15 questionnaires distributed, 1 questionnare was completely discarded from data anaylsis procedures due to a lot of missing information and 2 questionnaires were not returned by respondents making a response rate of 80% which guranteed the validity of the research findings due to the williness of participates in the study.

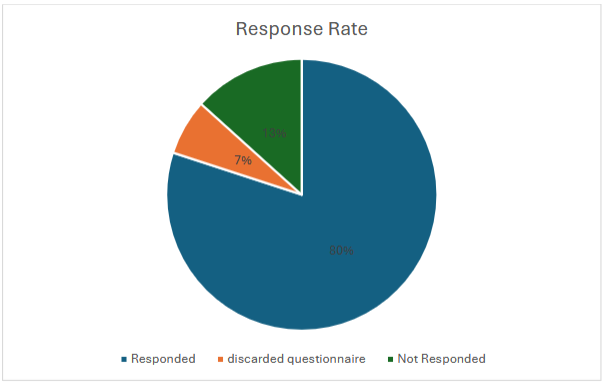

Figure 1: Response rate

Figure above shows that 12 (80%) of participants participated in the quantitative phase and 2(13%) of the participants did not paricipate in the study and 7 % (1) was the discared questinonnaire.

As for the qualitative phase, inteview guide was administered on 10 respondents and 2 FGD (key informates puposefully sampled) that included the Bokamoso management and some matured entrepeneurs with campacity of employing more 6 employees.This phase again the saw good cooperation from the respondents.

Gender of Participants

The combined sum of participants from both quantitative and qualitative for the study was 25.

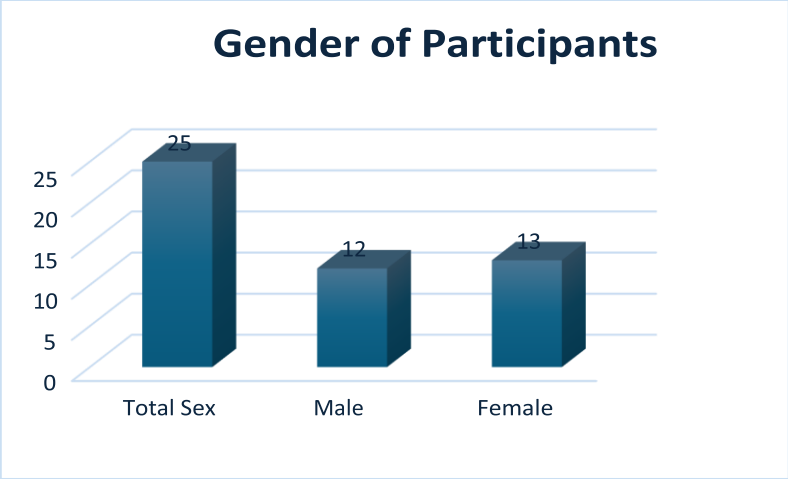

Figure 2: Gender

The figure 2 above shows that 48 % ot the participants were male while 52% were female which implys that there are more female entrepreneurs aas copared to the male conterparts.

Age Categories of Participants

Table 1: Age Category

Age Range (years)	Actual number	Frequencies (%)
20-25 years	2	8%
26-30 years	16	48%
31-35 years	1	4%
41-45 years	1	4%
Above 45 years	5	20%
Total	25	100%

The results from the above table 1 shows that the age range of 26-30 years are majority at Bokamoso which is agood indication that active group of youth dominates resonating well with the topic of study followed by these that are above 45 years who are mainly matured SMEs who save as role models to the young ones in terms of emulation. From this category there one SMEs who have aleady acquired land for expenasion and will be existing the centre next year.

whlist these in age group 20-25 years only constitute 8% from sampled population and were found to be less than a year in the centre and mainly are being mentored, also expressed their lack of information of government interventions for developing youth entreprenurs in the country.

Years of Operations at the Centre

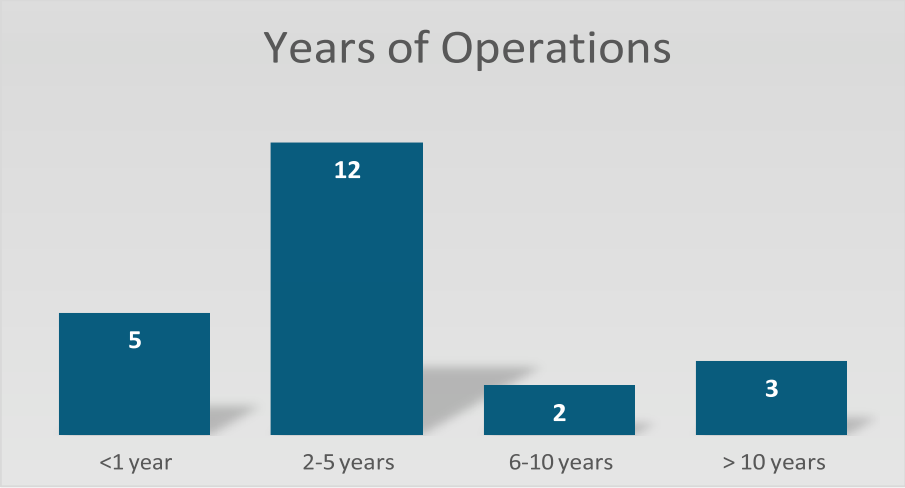

Figure 3: Years of Operation at Bokamoso

The Figure 3 above shows the years of operation of entreprenurs who participated in the study. The entrepreneurs that have been operatinf for less a year were found to be 5 representing 22.7%, while those that fall between the 2-5 years were found to be 12 representing 54.5%; the 6-10 years category were 2 representing 9.1% and lastly those above 10 years were 3 representing 13.6%. This shows that the majority of entrepreneurs incubated at Bokamoso (those falling in categories from 2- 10 year and above) have past the infancy stage and confirmed to have benefited from the support mechamisms offered by the hub in form funding, mentorship and training to support their business operations and strongly agree that youth driven innovation project have an impact on emplyement creation. This was demonstrated with evidence of three seasoned entrepreneured who are mentoring and employing some youth on permanent basis thus, answering reseaerch questions 1.3.1, 1.3. 2 & 1.3.4 respectively.

Quantitative findings

Figure 4 beow Impact of youth-driven innovation project of employment creation the study indicates that 83.3 % (10) respondents stronly agree with only 6.7 % (2) undecided, meaning empowerment of namibian youth could led to the reduction of the high unemployment rate the country is facing.

Impact of Youth driven Innovation on Employment Creation

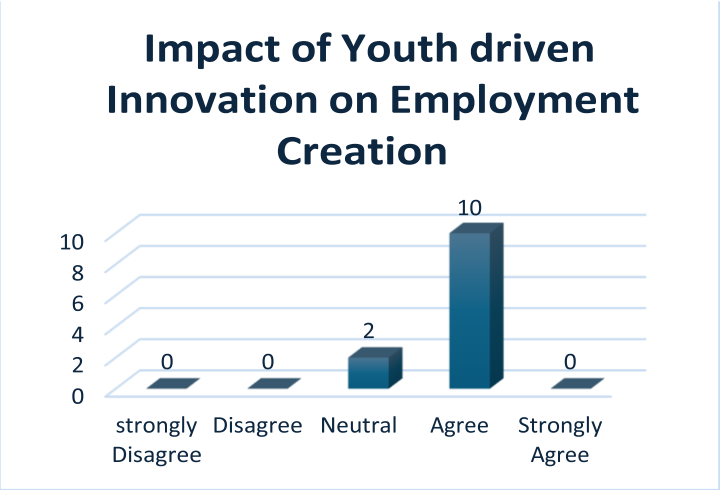

Figure 4: Impact of Youth-Driven Innovation on Job Creation

Effectiveness of Support Mechanisms offered by Bokamoso

Figure 5 below indicates that Bokamoso offers support mechanism to its incubated entrepreurs as shown that 50 % (6) respondents acknowledge receipt of such support services with additional 25% (3) respondents strongly agreeing to the statement, thus answering Q 1.3.2 of the study.

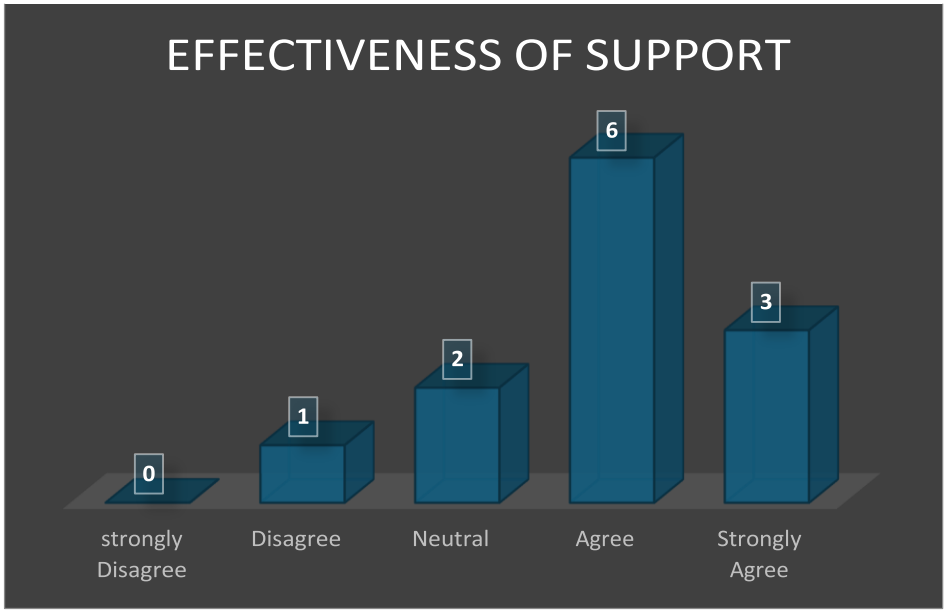

Figure 5:Effectiveness of Support Mechanisms

Challenges faced by Innovators

The figure below indicates that about 50% (7) of the respondents agrees and 25% (3) strongly agree that youth incubated Bokamoso face challenges in sustaining their innovation projects due to tough competition they face as new entrant to the market as well as rivarly from already existing chains who can survive through product differentiation with competitive advantage on price skimming.

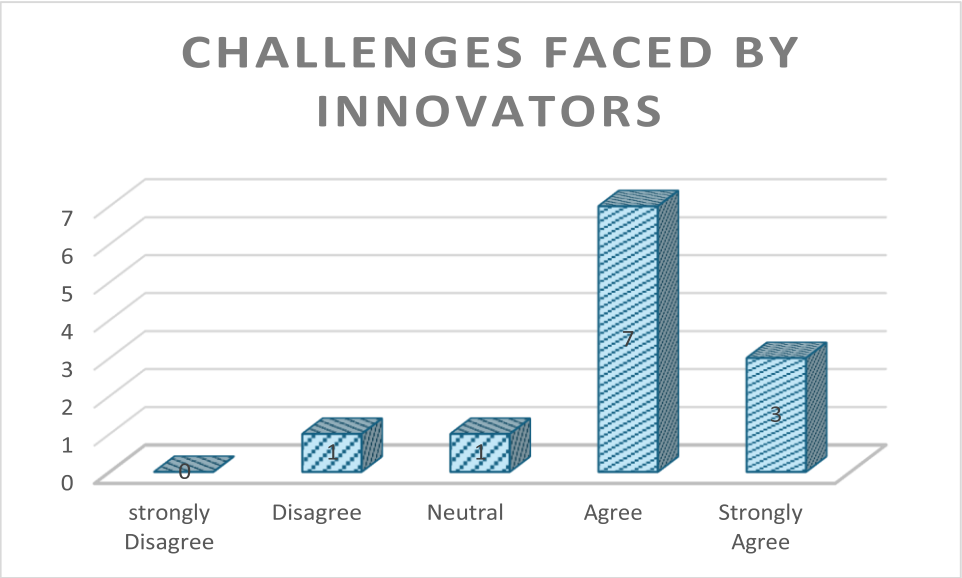

Figure 6: Challenges faced by Innovators

Strategies to improve effectiveness & Sustainability of Youth Innovation Projects

The responses from the Figure 7 below shows over 50% (6) and about 42% (5) a strong agreement for calling good implementation strategies geared towards empowering the youth through provision of incentives, mentorship & coaching and, equipment schemes and business plan development. whilst only 8% (1) was undecided.

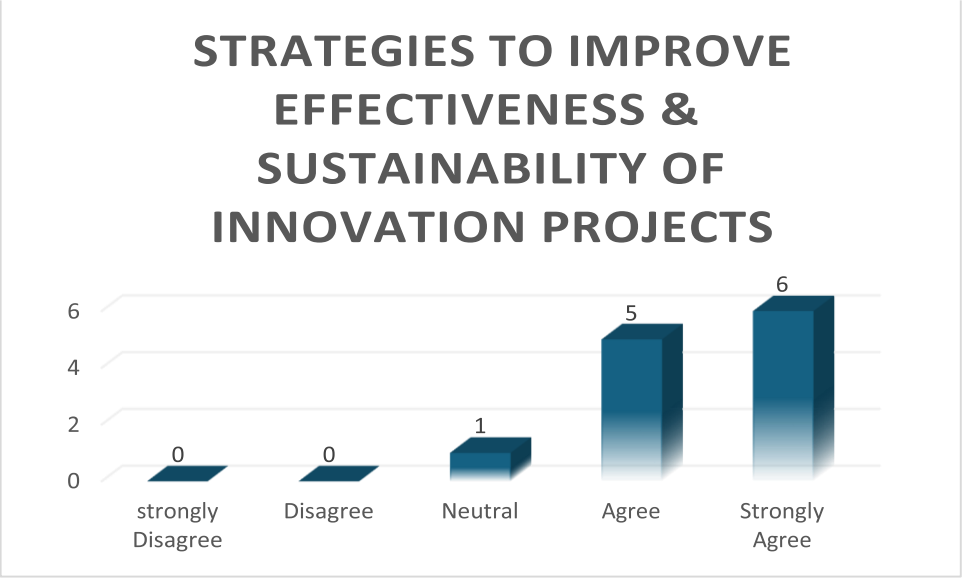

Figure 7: Strategies for Improving Growth and Sustainability

Types of Businesses Operating at Bokamoso

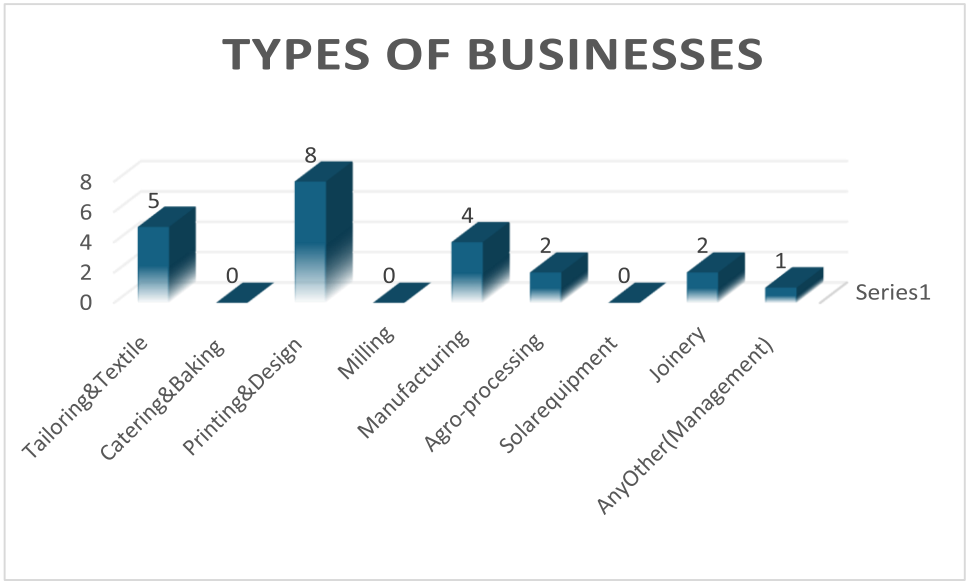

Figure 8: Types of Businesses

Figure 8 above indicates that more entrepreneurs at Bokamoso are involved in printing and design looking at the number of 8 stalls which are mainly operated by males except one which operated by a group of two females agreeded have benefited from the business training (customer care, financial management, leadership and entrepreneurship) & mentorship programmes offered by Bokamoso. However, registered some challenges like competition from already established companies in the space, unware of legislations that protect infancy industries, funding opportunity to allow youth to participate in upscaling their business prevents them to grow and sustain their business thus, answering qestion 3.3 of the study. The participants in this area indicated the support mechanisms (funding, mentorship & training) the government offers to young innovators were proven to be effective as it has motivated many youth to have faith in their business as well as determination to upgrade the businesses thus anwering quest 3.5 of the stuy, like what participant 11 had to say:

"Youth are always invnovative as they come up with new ideas that can shape up the industrial business" which must be accompained by the introduction a price skimming strategies to support the youth with pricing of their new products and services".

The other participant female former graduate of College of the Arts in film & prodcution serached for formal jobs for four years but was not successful, and later joined Bokamoso through the influence of a friend, now runs a printing & design stall which employees three graduates and indicated of having a annual turnover of N$ 100 000.00.

The second ranking was Tailoring and Textile with 5 stalls who appreciate the training they received from the COSDECs, Kayec and NTA. One seasoned tailor and fashion designer Namibian aged 53 years has now been recognised by GIZ as the trainer of trainers for upcoming entreprenuers as well as serves as an assesser for government equipment scheme (sewing) and tailoring projects under the Youth Development Fund.

CONCLUSIONS

The study examined how venture innovation affects job creation at the Bokamoso Incubation Hub, using a mixed-methods approach for thorough analysis. The quantitative results show a statistically significant association, indicating that process and organizational innovation are the main factors contributing to employment growth in youth-led ventures. This finding suggests that product innovation may not be the sole pathway to job creation.

The literature suggests Bokamoso Incubation Hub can help address youth unemployment in Katutura. Evidence shows structured support for impact entrepreneurship is essential in Namibia's tough economy. By offering mentorship, resources, and training, Bokamoso can foster youth ventures that generate sustainable jobs.

Feedback from youth at the Bokamoso Incubation Hub shows strong agreement that youth-led innovation projects drive job creation. Ten out of twelve respondents said their projects helped them hire, often within their own community. Innovation enabled these entrepreneurs to stand out, grow their customer base, and expand operations, making employment necessary.

The quantitaive findings indicates a strong positive skew, with 92% of respondents agreeing that the support is effective. This study suggests Bokamoso is providing valuable resources for young innovators, with many finding the support essential in building the needed skills and networks to build and sustain their businesses .

Three respondents (8%) had reservations about the support experience whilst two were neutral, possibly due to concerns about specificity or relevance, and one disagreed, citing gaps in areas like seed funding or targeted mentorship.

The qualitative findings clarified the data by highlighting key support mechanisms: funding, mentoring, and training. The analysis showed that innovation-driven projects boost employment and that adopting new business processes helps entrepreneurs sustain and grow their businesses.

The Bokamoso Incubation Hub reduces youth unemployment most effectively when ventures prioritize product development and building resilient, scalable organizations. The study finds that the Hub promotes job creation through innovation, operational excellence, and effective management. Youth-led innovation at Bokamoso offers significant potential for job growth, but needs targeted support to benefit all entrepreneurs. While the Hub has demonstrated success, further effort is needed to address challenges faced by those who still feel unsupported.

The study ended by summarizing the fields using the theory of change to showcase how they addressed the altimate goals of the study which is job creation by the youth that graduate from the incubation leadin to economic growth.

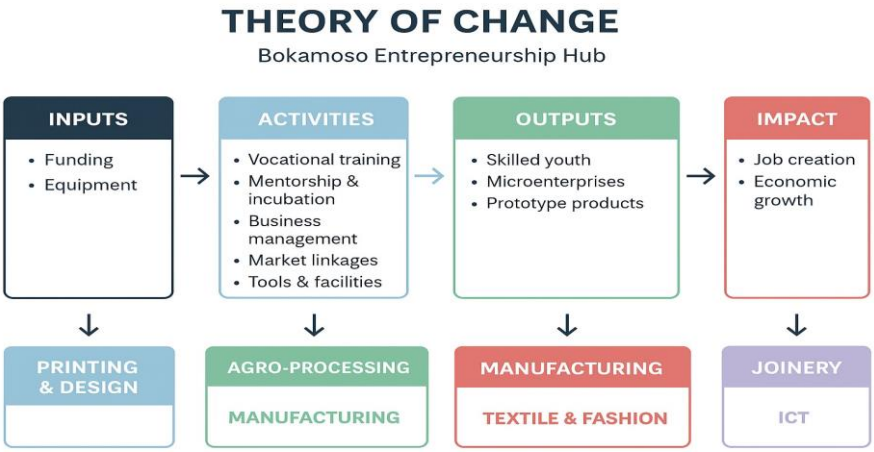

Figure 9: Theory of change

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed for the
Bokamoso Incubation Hub management, policymakers, and other ecosystem stakeholders:

1. Management should create mandatory modules on Process Innovation for the core incubation program. These should go beyond business model canvases, focusing on practical skills like workflow optimization, price skimming and financial controls.
2. The government needs to create that contiouns enabling envoironment for entrepreneurs to prosper through provision of funding, mentorship and training as well as transfroming the identified challenges in the study into opportunities.
3. An entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem that allows peer to peer learning where alumni from the sectors to mentor new entrants through sharing of practical insights on growing and sustaining businesses.
4. Evaluation should go beyond counting active stalls to include the quality and sustainability of jobs created, the hub's effectiveness, overcoming financial and market barriers, and its impact on building an inclusive entrepreneurial environment in Katutura. Future research should track Bokamoso alumni over time and expand to other SME centres and innovation hubs, like Soweto, Khomsdal SMEs and the entire to inorder to providie a deeper insight into the initiative's long-term effects on youth unemployment and economic development.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author hereby declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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