



**ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION ADOPTION AND YOUTH
ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING
FACTORS**

BY

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JOHANNESBURG, 2024

DECLARATIONS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife (Juwanela), children (Gamuchirai, Yevedzo, and Tadashe), and the entire Guruwo family for the tireless support provided during this research journey. I salute you, my parents, Mr. Alexio Pasinyore and Mrs. Enireta Guruwo, for the noble education foundation you set for me. I will always be grateful to you.

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the intricate relationships that shape the entrepreneurial journey of youth entrepreneurs, shedding light on the transformative potential of entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO). Due to volatility in business environments, the EMO dimensions have been the focus of many studies. However, this study's originality lies in being amongst the first few that delve into the mediation effects of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organisational structure (OS) to unveil critical pathways through which EMO and its integrated dimensions influence youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). While the mediation of MS was found wanting, OS exhibited multifaceted mediation effects like departmentalization, centralization of decision-making authority, and coordination of work process procedures that are vital ingredients for firm performance. It emerged that learning the business principles positively impacts superior business returns, a clear indication that KoB mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP. The findings offer excellent opportunities to refocus EMO literature on integrating its dimensions and introduce mediation factors. The study addresses a pressing concern, the underperformance of youth entrepreneurs, and sets forth a comprehensive framework to enhance their success. In light of conflicting prior research, this research clarifies the relationships between EMO dimensions and YEP, determines the influence of integrating the EMO dimensions on YEP, and examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS and OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Guided by objectivism and the correspondence theory of truth, the research employs the Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) to unravel the complex interplay between EMO and YEP. The study used a quantitative survey research strategy and statistically collected data from 417 youth entrepreneurship businesses in Botswana. Smart Partial Least Squares the Fourth Version (Smart PLS4) structural equation modelling technique and IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 28) software were used to analyse the data. Adopting a positivist philosophy, the study employs a deductive approach to formulate hypotheses built upon established EMO literature. The factor analysis of the fourteen EMO variables used in this study confirmed consistency with earlier studies. Both the descriptive and inferential analyses of the EMO dimensions generally had high levels apparent within YEP. While the mediation of MS was found wanting, OS exhibited multifaceted mediation effects like departmentalisation, centralization of decision-making authority, and coordination of work process procedures, which are vital for firm performance. The study acknowledges a plethora of challenges experienced by youth entrepreneurs, such as unfavourable government policies and low technology uptake. Furthermore, the findings enrich extant EMO theories and contribute to entrepreneurial marketing practices in both developed and emerging economies. The study exposes a lack of entrepreneurial knowledge and management skills vital for YEP. The study recommends collaborative approaches between the government and private sector to foster practical entrepreneurial activities that impart the relevant skills. Recommendations are for mutually beneficial strategic partnerships between the industry and start-up firms. The study's invaluable contributions extend beyond statistical significance, revealing a blueprint for enhancing youth entrepreneurial success. This research equips policy makers, educators, and practitioners with actionable insights to foster thriving youth entrepreneurship by identifying critical mediating factors and introducing novel perspectives on EMO integration.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial marketing orientation, Entrepreneurial performance, Knowledge of business, Managerial skills, Organizational structure, Youths Entrepreneurs*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEO	African Economic Outlook
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AM	Adaptive Marketing
AMA	American Marketing Association
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BCEC	Botswana Conference and Exhibition Centre
BDC	Botswana Development Corporation
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis
BoK	Body of Knowledge
BoP	Balance of Payment
Botsgov	Botswana Government
CA	Competitive Aggressiveness
CBD	Coordination between Departments
CC	Communication with the Customers
CEDA	Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Authority
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	Customer Intensity
CO	Customer Orientation
CR	Composite Reliability
CRefs	Customer referrals
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CRT	Calculated Risk-Taking
CSI	Customer Satisfaction Index
CTE	Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship
DSRT	Department of Science, Research and Technology
DV	Dependent Variable
EA	Entrepreneurial Autonomy
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EM	Entrepreneurial Marketing
EMO	Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation
EO	Entrepreneurial Orientation
EP	Entrepreneurial Performance
ETFA	European Trade Free Association
FA	Firm Age

FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
GGCZ	Greater Gaborone Covid Zone
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio
IN	Innovativeness
IV	Independent Variable
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
KoB	Knowledge of Business
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LCC	Locus of Control Concept
LEA	Local Enterprise Authority,
MAR	Missing at Random
MCAR	Missing Completely at Random
MI	Market Intelligence
MNAR	Missing Not at Random
MO	Market Orientation
MS	Managerial Skills
MV	Moderator Variable
MYSC	Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development
NAT	Need for Achievement Theory
NDB	National Development Bank
NFI	Normed Fit Index
NPS	Net Promoter Score
NR	Networks and Relationships
OD	Opportunity Detection
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OS	Organizational Structure
PET	Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
PR	Pro-activeness
RL	Resource Leveraging
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
ROA	Return on Assets

ROI	Return on Investment
RTC	Responsiveness towards Customers
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
Smart PLS4	Smart Partial Least Squares version 4
SMMEs	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
SRSM	Simple Random Sampling Method
SURE	Seemingly Unrelated Regression
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VC	Value Creation
VFR	Visiting friends and relatives
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
VIVA	Viva voce
WBG	World Bank Group
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
YDF	Youth Development Fund
YEP	Youth Entrepreneurial Performance

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces this thesis that examines the mediation of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The study assumes that the mediator variables KoB, MS, or OS strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. The study aims to make a scholarly contribution to the field of EMO and YEP by conducting hypothesis testing and proposing a conceptual framework. (as shown in Figure 1) and testing of hypotheses. Numerous extant literature exists on entrepreneurship strategies that aid the performance of entrepreneurial firms (Al-Alawi et al., 2022; Anosike, 2019; Berhe, 2021; Eneji et al., 2020; Omotayo et al., 2020). Most pre-existing studies independently examined the relationships between each EMO dimension and firm performance (Hashom et al., 2022; Kijkasiwat & Phuensane, 2020; Naseer et al., 2021). However, this study aimed to add to the EMO literature by, to begin with, integrating several combinations of the EMO dimensions, in which case, the study proposes strengthened relationships from the combined effect of the EMO dimensions. To date, little or no consensus has been found to take this angle of study. In addition, the research suggested mediation of KoB, MS, or OS that is proposed to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. Therefore, this chapter presents the general introduction of the study, which covers the background to the study, the research problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions, delimitations and the organization of the study, amongst others.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Global youth unemployment has become a menace with idle youth causing a variety of social ills like high crime rates, alcohol abuse and other misdemeanours due to increased poverty levels in communities (Asif et al., 2023; Olubusoye et al., 2023; Sharma, 2022; Tam et al., 2024). The youth unemployment problem was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which instigated many companies to close due to viability problems caused by reduced access to customers during the COVID-19 lockdown periods. This thesis builds on extant literature on entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Due to volatility in business environments, the EMO dimensions have been the focus

of many studies. Whereas a plethora of studies focused on the direct relationship between EMO and business performance (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Hamzah et al., 2023; Kowalik et al., 2022), this study investigates the intricate relationships that shape the entrepreneurial journey of youth entrepreneurs, shedding light on the transformative potential of entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO).

Even though *a priori* knowledge of EMO concepts often postulates that EMO propels SMMEs' performance, there is little or no evidence of the use of such mediating variables (MVs) as knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organizational structure (OS) (Chen & Sanford, 2024; Paterson et al., 2024). Therefore, unlike previous research that sparingly used the mediator variables, this study's originality lies in being amongst the first few that delve into the mediation effects of KoB, MS, and OS to unveil critical pathways through which EMO and its integrated dimensions influence YEP. The study becomes unique and presumed to be amongst the few to consider the mediating effect, and it may be the only one with the MVs KoB, MS, or OS used simultaneously. Thus, the study aimed to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) through the introduction of the three mediator variables (KoB), (MS), and (OS), which were hypothesized to have a mediation effect on the relationship between EMO and YEP. The motivation for this study emanated from the rapidly flourishing mediating effect literature, which is relatively new in academia. By explaining the crucial mediating effect mechanism, the study sought to address existing gaps in the literature and proposed a direction for future empirical studies. Therefore, the study suggested key contributions to the current body of knowledge (BoK) on the relationship between the EMO and integrating its dimensions on YEP.

The study borrowed a definition by Morris and Schindehutte (2002), who state that EM refers to innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging, and value creation used to proactively identify and exploit opportunities to acquire and retain profitable customers. Pioneering empirical research and results, such as the indicators of EM adoption by Morris and Schindehutte (2002), were also consulted in this study to integrate traditional marketing concepts and practices with modern entrepreneurship in upcoming enterprises. The study's main aim was to examine the effect of mediating variables (KoB, MS and OC) on the relationship between EMO adoption and youth YEP in Botswana. Therefore, this study sought to contribute to the extant literature on YEP (Anoke et al., 2022; Hoque, 2018; Mohamud & Ndede, 2019; Popescu et al., 2020) and the ongoing research that explores the concept of EM (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Kraus et al., 2012; Jones & Rowley, 2011; Morris & Tucker, 2023).

1.2.1 STUDY CONTEXT

The Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis [BIDPA] (2015) indicates that 70% of start-up businesses in Botswana either suffer low productivity or fail within the first 18 months of inception, while the overall failure rate is around 80%. Similarly, an African Economic Outlook [AEO] report (2016) states that approximately 80-85% of SMMEs in Botswana cease trading within five years of commencement. Questions remain about why youth entrepreneurship and start-ups fail to thrive at such high rates (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] report, 2015-2016). Furthermore, there are statistics of low-performance rates of only 1 or 2% of SMMEs in Botswana that manage to grow or make the transition to larger enterprises (Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018; Muchuchuti & Mahambo, 2020; Gaetsewe, 2018). The problem of declining rates of established youth business ownership in Botswana is worrisome. As such, poverty remains a serious problem for the country, especially compared to countries with similar economic status (Mupedziswa, 2018). Botsgov acknowledges the plight of the youth, evidenced by the constraints or difficulties the youth entrepreneurs face daily in their business operations. Botsgov fully appreciates the employment creation and poverty alleviation opportunities entrepreneurship creates (Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018).

The statistics of youth entrepreneurship and SMME failure rates contradict the much-needed employment opportunities, dampening the nation's economic growth and citizen empowerment efforts that both support economic development and provide stable long-term jobs (Hill, 2020). Extant literature suggests that the informal sector forms the backbone of most world economies. Thus, the importance of entrepreneurship becomes evident in most countries. However, Botswana's youth business performance statistics are contrary to Botsgov's efforts in employment creation, which established several entrepreneurial support structures like the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Citizen Entrepreneurship Development Authority (CEDA), Youth Development Fund (YDF), the National Development Bank (NDB) and others (Diraditsile, 2021; Gyampo & Obeng-Odoom, 2013). Moreover, Botsgov entered into bilateral and multilateral agreements with numerous trade unions like the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and European Trade Free Association (ETFA) to help businesses access international markets. However, these efforts have still failed to produce meaningful results (Guruwo, 2018).

Elsewhere, Sahid and Hamid (2019) and Rosemary et al. (2020) suggest that the performance of start-ups exposed to vulnerable conditions depends on the business' drive to adopt the entrepreneurial marketing (EM) concept (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Kraus et al., 2012; Jones & Rowley, 2011; Morris & Tucker, 2023). According to Gharibi (2020) and Morrish and Jones (2020), EM is an insightful way to perform marketing practices in business start-up ventures. Entrepreneurial marketing has been thought of as a strategy that is different from the traditional principles of marketing that are typically designed for large, well-established firms with more resources (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019; Suandi, 2022). Through EM adoption, companies may utilize a toolkit of new and unorthodox marketing practices to help emerging firms gain a foothold in crowded markets. Against this background of youth businesses' under-performance, this study cross-examined the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions as a pathway towards addressing the scourge of high youth entrepreneurship failure rate in Botswana.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Botswana experiences worrisome poverty, inequality, and unemployment, especially among youth (Sebidie, 2022; Setambule, 2022; Sivotwa et al., 2022). Moreover, the country is amongst the highest in the world to support educational investment, with 9% of the gross domestic product (GDP) compared to 4.4% of the world average (UNESCO 2021), coupled with efforts for entrepreneurial development by Botsgov. Despite positive and significant indicators of Botsgov's support towards SMME empowerment, the sector experiences a high SMME failure rate (70% collapse within the first eighteen months of inception). Furthermore, 80-85% cease trading within five years, while only 1 or 2% manage to grow and succeed or make the transition from SMMEs to large enterprises of start-up (Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018; Gaetsewe, 2018; Muchuchuti & Mahambo, 2020). Botswana's unemployment is mainly concentrated among females and youth (Siphambe et al., 2020; Diraditsile, 2022). This explains why many informal businesses are owned by women (63.7%) and the majority of informal sector employees (56.2 %) are females (Mackett, 2021). Botsgov makes clarion calls to eradicate problems of poverty and unemployment, particularly among the youth, who constitute 60% of the country's population (Sivotwa et al., 2022). The community could address this clarion call through viable youth entrepreneurial ventures. Against this background, this research sought to review and fully understand some major challenges affecting YEP in Botswana.

The World Bank (2020) suggested that the performance of start-up companies exposed to vulnerable conditions depends on the businesses' drive to adopt the entrepreneurial marketing

(EM) concept. The enduring seven (7) dimensions of EM by Morris et al. (2002) remain the foundations of the EM concept, whilst recent studies seek to broaden the scope and add other dimensions (Al Qahtani & Uslay, 2018). Although EM dimensions can impact the performance of a business, some EM dimensions are more significant than others (Morrish & Jones, 2020; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Several scholars support the notion of EM strategies and tactics for the performance and competence of firms in turbulent business situations (*e.g.* Hoque & Awang, 2016; Morris & Tucker, 2023; Navarro et al., 2022; Stocks, 2023). Numerous crucial reasons remain to link entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) with economic growth (Hills & Hultman, 2011; Morris & Tucker, 2023; Stokes, 2000). There are suggestions of a greater than 70% correlation between the level of EMO and business performance (Al Asheq et al., 2021; Amelia et al., 2022).

Against the background, this study supported suggestions that failure to understand the EMO concept shortens the long-term performance of organizations. Unlike previous research that studied the EMO dimensions individually, this study sought to combine the key EMO factors such as entrepreneurial orientation (EO), customer orientation (CO) and market orientation (MO) in different configurations to formulate a new integrated EMO conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1). Furthermore, the study examined the mediation of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. The main goal of this study was to examine the mediation of KoB, MS, and OS and then integrate the EMO dimensions into different permutations to establish the combination that best contributes to YEP. A new integrated EMO conceptual framework was formulated (as shown in Figure 1). The following section highlights the objectives of the study.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to examine the mediation of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). More specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).
2. To establish the relationships between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

3. To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).
4. To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).
5. To examine the mediation effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).
6. To examine the mediation effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

Although this research was quantitative, it was imperative to have both the objectives and research questions for the following reasons:

- The study sought clearly defined objectives followed by research questions to guide the research process. Though the objectives provided a broad framework which outlined the general aims of the study, the research questions, on the other hand, specified clear and focused inquiries that the researcher wanted to address. This study's objectives focused on measuring and examining or testing hypotheses of the relationships of the IV, MV, and DV variables. On the other hand, the research questions were framed to investigate the EMO dimensions of the research problem, explore patterns or trends, and compare groups or conditions.
- Some objectives had more than one research question that clarified the respective objective. The addition of research questions guided the research methodology by providing the variables of interest used to explore the relationships or differences between the variables.
- The study sought to test the objectives through the proposed hypotheses and thoroughly describe the nature of the relationships.

In summary, the preference to use this quantitative study's research objectives and questions was to leverage formulating a research structure with clarity guided by the research process, which answers specific inquiries to achieve the desired outcomes.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)?
2. What is the relationship between the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance?
3. What influence does integrating the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions have on youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - a. What influence does integrating market orientation with customer orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - b. What influence does integrating market orientation with entrepreneurial orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - c. What influence does integrating customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance?
4. What mediating effect does KoB, MS, or OS have on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)?
5. What mediating effect does knowledge of business, managerial skills, or organizational structure have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - a. What mediating effect does knowledge of business have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - b. What mediating effect do managerial skills have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance?
 - c. What mediating effect does organizational structure have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance?
6. What mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)?

1.6 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Guided by the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2, the study sought to test the following hypotheses:

- H₁: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
- H_{1a}, H_{1b}, H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
- H_{2a}: H_{2b}: H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions [market orientation (MO) with customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x CO x EO] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
- H_{4d-f} (3a-c): Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
- H_{5d}: H_{5e}: H_{5f}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
- H_{5da}, H_{5db} and H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Table 1 outlines the constructive alignment of the study through reiterating the research objectives, questions, and corresponding hypotheses.

Table 1: Outline of Research Objectives, Questions and Hypotheses

THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVE	THE RESEARCH QUESTION	RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS
1.To establish the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H ₁)	1.What is the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) H ₁	H ₁ : There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
2.To establish the relationships between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H _{1a-c})	2.What relationships exist between the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance? H _{1a-c}	H _{1a} , H _{1b} , H _{1c} : There is a direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).
3.To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H _{2a-c})	3.What influence does integrating the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions have on youth entrepreneurial performance? H _{2a-c} a. What influence does integrating market orientation with customer orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance? b. What influence does integrating market orientation with entrepreneurial orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance? c. What influence does integrating customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation have on youth entrepreneurial performance?	H _{2a} : H _{2b} : H _{2c} : There is a direct relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions [market orientation (MO) with customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x CO x EO] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
4.To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) H _{4d-f} (3a-c)	4.What mediating effect does KoB, MS, or OS have on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) H _{4d-f} (3a-c)	H _{4d-f} (3a-c): Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

5.To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{5d-f})	5. What mediating effect does knowledge of business, managerial skills, or organizational structure have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance? H_{5d-f} - What mediating effect does knowledge of business have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance? - What mediating effect do managerial skills have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance? - What mediating effect does organizational structure have on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance?	H_{5d}: H_{5e}: H_{5f}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
6.To examine the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) [$H_{5d-f(a-c)}$]	6. What mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) $H_{5d-f(a-c)}$	H_{5da}, H_{5db} and H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

Source: Researcher's compilation

1.7 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale of this study was twofold. Initially, this thesis identified six research gaps in extant literature (as shown in Table 2), and then the study proposed contributions to the body of knowledge to close the identified gaps (as shown in Table 3). The highlighted research gaps identified deficiencies in extant knowledge or literature with specific areas requiring further investigation. Thus, the study proposed potentially advancing knowledge through practical implications that may close the performance flaws in the industrial sector, contribute to policy formulation and add to societal benefits.

1.8 RESEARCH GAP AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The study identified research gaps within the existing body of knowledge (BoK) of entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The identified gaps were meant to pinpoint areas that need advancement of knowledge within the EMO and company performance disciplines. Secondly, the gaps directed the research by exposing current conflict areas within extant literature. Thirdly, the research gaps guided the study to avoid duplication of effort by exposing redundantly researched areas. Finally, from the highlights of previously researched areas (as shown in Tables 2 and 3), the gaps aligned this study to introduce novel ideas and methodologies that critically contribute to areas of concern. Thus, the study seeks to introduce new knowledge boundaries by examining the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. Table 2 summarizes the empirical review of the identified research gaps.

As shown in Table 3, an empirical summary of the literature review refined the direction of this study by addressing limitations identified in current studies.

Table 2: Research Gap and Contribution to the Study

Research Gap	Contribution of the Study
1. Literature reveals inconsistencies in the contribution of each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension to company performance (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019).	New literature to solve trending issues Unlike previous studies (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) that mainly examined the EMO dimensions individually, this study integrates the EMO dimensions into different permutations to establish the combination that best contributes to the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. The study hopes to contribute to the EMO body of knowledge (BoK) by identifying the integrated EMO dimensions with the highest effect on YEP.
2. There is little empirical evidence of studies integrating the EMO dimensions and formulating different permutations to form a unique conceptual framework (Figure 1).	Development of a unique conceptual framework The study formulates a new integrated EMO conceptual framework (Figure 1). The study hopes to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) and assist in solving trending issues by developing different permutations that mix the EMO dimensions into diverse combinations and establishing an arrangement that best contributes to the relationship between EMO adoptions and YEP. This study unveils critical pathways through which EMO and its integrated dimensions influence YEP. The study's invaluable contributions extend beyond statistical significance, revealing a blueprint for enhancing youth entrepreneurial success.
3. Previous studies show little or no evidence of the use of mediator variables.	The mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on YEP Introduce three mediator variables: knowledge of business, managerial skills, and organizational structure (KoB, MS and OS) that are thought to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. The study hopes to contribute to the EMO BoK by identifying the combination of the integrated EMO dimensions and the corresponding mediator variable that has the highest effect on YEP.
4. Extant research considered individual characteristics theories or firm characteristics but not both simultaneously.	Integration of theoretical lens This study relies on the individual characteristic Psychological Entrepreneurship Theory (PET) and the firm characteristic Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) to justify YEP.
5. Extant research was done in developed countries, with few or no similar studies yet found in emerging economies.	New geographical research area The study is contextualised to solve real entrepreneurial performance problems bedevilling Botswana's economy. A few studies have used this complex conceptual framework (Figure 1) to investigate the relationship between EMO and YEP in Sub-Saharan Africa.
6. Prior research studies used the ancient AMOS and ANOVA analysis methods.	New Methodological Analysis This study applied contemporary methodological analysis software like the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) technique using SMART PLS 4, which is a well-substantiated, innovative, or novel aspect of analysing complex cause-effect-relationship in multiple variant latent constructs particularly useful in social sciences (Hussain et al., (2023; Latif et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2022).

Source: Researcher's compilation

Table 3: Empirical Literature Review of Extant Studies and the Identified Research Gap

Source, Methodology and Location of Extant Research	Research Theme Used	Major Findings	Research Gap
Al-Lawati (2017) used descriptive studies with open-ended questions on a case study approach with data from qualitative content analysis through text interpretation method of documents, records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts of SMEs in Oman.	Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation (EMO) on SMEs	Knowledge, skills, and competencies are the most influential factors for entrepreneurs' success. The five dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, namely innovation, risk-taking, reactivity, autonomy and competitive aggressiveness, enable entrepreneurs to develop their skills better.	This study introduces the mediating effect of KoB, MS and OS, which the previous studies failed to cover.
Hoque (2018) used a quantitative survey technique and SEM-AMOS to analyse the role of (OS) in the relationship between (EO) and SME performance.	The mediating effect of OC in the relationship (EO) and SMEs performance.	EO and OC were significantly related to SME performance, and OC was found to mediate the relationship between EO and SME performance.	The study did not look at all the EMO dimensions but simply the EO dimensions. This study introduces the integration of the EMO dimensions.
Mohamud and Ndede (2019) used descriptive survey research design to study youth empowerment initiatives on youth in Kenya.	Managerial skills (MS) and business success in youth	Acquisition of useful (MS) and competencies, entrepreneurial training are essential to goal realization and successful businesses	The study failed to integrate MS with other EMO dimensions
Popescu et al. (2020) used anonymous questionnaires for entrepreneurs in Romania.	Managerial Skills (MS) in SME development	Increased managerial skills, such as interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, are important for the sustainable development of SMEs.	The study did not integrate MS with other EMO dimensions.
Gyanwali and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) used mixed methods with Chi-squared tests, ANOVA analysis and correlation analysis. Then, qualitative data was collected from 10 experts.	Entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) in micro, small and medium enterprises in Dhaulagiri, Nepal.	The results show a significant relationship between EMO and the performance of MSME in Nepal. Limited facilities from the government and lack of enterprise-friendly environments. The study added influence orientation on the four dimensions it studied.	The study used the same EMO dimensions but did not integrate them and lacked an introduction of the mediator variables.
Anoke et al. (2022) used in-depth interviews and a qualitative design method to examine the effect of entrepreneurial marketing (EM) on SME growth in Nigeria in the post-COVID-19 era.	Entrepreneurial marketing on SME growth	Need-oriented and technology-driven marketing are pivotal to the growth and sustainability of SMEs in the post-COVID-19 Era.	In-depth interviews and a qualitative design method were used, whereas this study uses quantitative methods, SEM and mediating effect analysis.
Phetha et al. (2022) gathered data through a self-administered five-point Likert scale questionnaire and used descriptive statistics through confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling on youth in KwaZulu-Natal South Africa.	Factors that influence entrepreneurial intention	Attitude towards entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education are key drivers of entrepreneurial intention. The study found no evidence of innovativeness as a driver of entrepreneurial intention.	This study seeks to recommend innovativeness as one of the drivers of entrepreneurial intention and performance.

Source: Researcher's compilation

The subsequent sections highlight the critical contribution to the BoK that this study attempts to add to the identified research gaps.

1.8.1 NEW LITERATURE TO SOLVE TRENDING ISSUES

The primary theoretical contribution of the study was to extend the literature by integrating the EMO dimensions into different permutations to find the best combination of the relationship between EMO and YEP. In comparison, prior research glorified the individual effect of each EMO dimension on firm performance (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Hamzah et al., 2023; Kowalik et al., 2022) with little empirical evidence of studies that integrate the EMO dimensions to formulate different permutations. Both pioneer and contemporary studies concur that if EMO is successfully employed, adopting EMO contributes to the performance of businesses (Awang, 2016; Morris & Tucker, 2023; Navarro et al., 2022). However, previous literature reveals inconsistencies in the contribution of each EMO dimension to company performance (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019).

1.8.2 DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIQUE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Although other authors (Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020; Vij & Bedi, 2012) include innovation orientation (IO) as the fourth entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension, this study ignored IO as having highly correlated scale items with those of EO. Thus, the study preferred only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), as shown in Figure 1. In addition, several permutations of the EMO dimensions are suggested with combinations through the MVs depicted in the proposed conceptual framework. Many of the extant studies agree that EMO creates greater customer value through dimensions such as proactiveness (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002), innovation (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Hamzah et al., 2023), risk tendencies (Bergner et al., 2023; Linton, 2019), opportunity detection (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002; Hills & Singh, 1998), resource leveraging, value creation, creativity, networking, flexibility (Kowalik et al., 2022). This study acknowledged those findings and borrowed especially the contextual deductions but would move further to integrate the EMO dimensions to formulate a unique conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1).

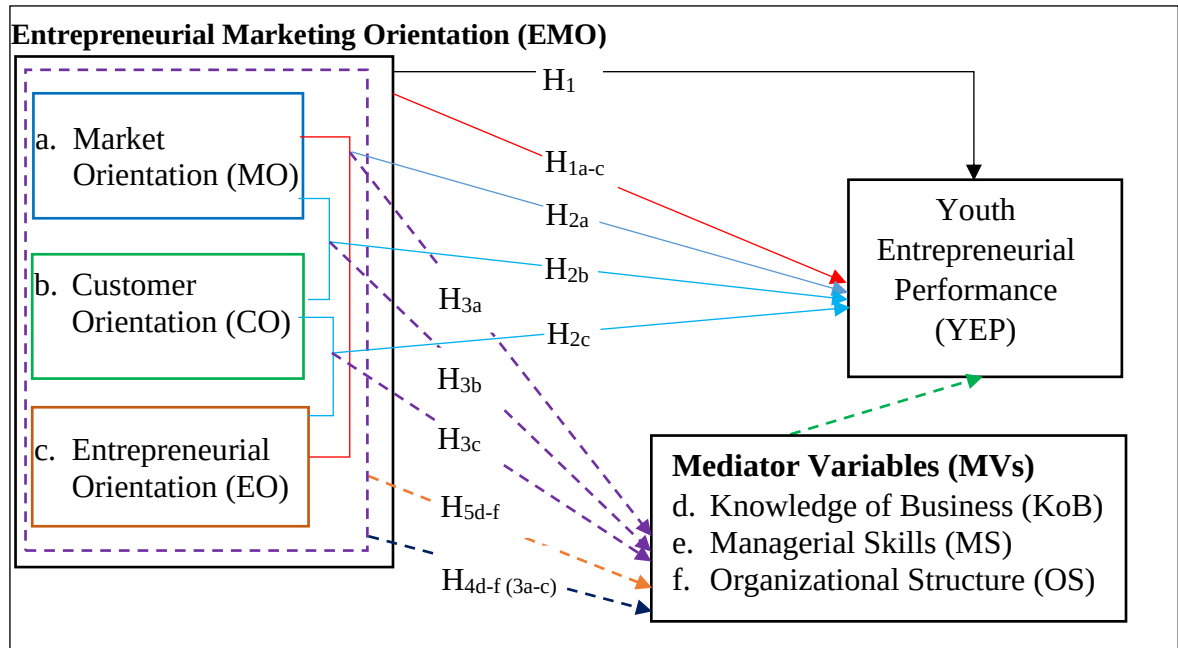


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's compilation

1.8.3 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS, OR OS ON YEP

The literature on mediating effect is relatively new and rapidly flourishing in academia. Unlike previous research that sparingly uses the mediator variables, this study hopes to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) by introducing three mediator variables (MV), KoB, MS, and OS, that are thought to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. To the best of the writer's knowledge and through peer-reviewed database searches, this study is amongst the few to consider the mediating effect and may be the only one with the MVs KoB, MS, and OS used simultaneously. Thus, the study becomes unique by explaining the mediating effect mechanism. The MVs KoB, MS, and OS create an important causal pathway of the relationship and explain how or why the independent variable (IV) EMO affects the dependent variable (DV) YEP.

1.8.4 INTEGRATION OF THEORETICAL LENS

The study relies on the Psychological Entrepreneurship Theory (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) to explain the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. Both the individual (PET) and firm level (CTE) entrepreneurship theories are considered important because the study reflects on the entrepreneur's intellect and behaviour (Ezennia & Mutambara, 2022; Mahmoud et al., 2022) as influential to how the individual governs the business, which then forms part of

the firm's characteristics (Linton & Klinton, 2019). Even though the level of analysis in PET is the individual (Landstrom, 2020) rather than firm characteristics, the study envisages that the entrepreneur's personality is hard to separate from how the individual manages the business. Thus, these individual traits are thought to be highly linked to firm performance in youth entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the CTE theory suggests that a firm gets its uniqueness and source of sustainable competitive advantage from varying its management approach to fit the interplay between management behaviours and specific situations.

Thus, the present study integrates both theoretical approaches, PET and CTE. The current study hopes to extend the theoretical lens of characteristics envisaged to contribute to entrepreneurial performance since, in both theories, either individual or management behaviour is common. Nevertheless, in entrepreneurship, the same person may be involved as the manager of the business as well as the individual worker. Therefore, this study hopes to suggest that in entrepreneurship, there is a thin line between individual and firm characteristics that influence how the business is governed.

1.8.5 A NEW GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH AREA

Most existing studies were done in developed countries, with few or no similar studies in emerging economies like Botswana. The closest study by Rasheed et al. (2016) examines the relationship between EMO and SMEs' performance in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study is deemed important to Botswana as the country experiences high levels of youth unemployment, 34.4%, yet youths constitute 60% of the population (Svotwa et al., 2022). Khan and Khattak (2014) suggest that research on business performance contributes to employment creation and alleviates poverty and the development of economies; thus, the research hopes to influence YEP and improve employment creation in Botswana. Figure 2 shows the research country map of Botswana within the Sub-Saharan region of Africa where the study was conducted.



Figure 2: Research Country Map of Botswana within the Sub-Saharan Region of Africa

Source: Google Maps 2023

1.8.6 AN IMPROVED METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The thesis considers contemporary methodological considerations. Usually, studies in social science have latent (theoretical) or multi-faceted constructs, sometimes with observed variables that cannot be directly measured compared to those from scientific fields (Dash & Paul, 2021). Rather than using the ancient AMOS and ANOVA analysis methods popularly common with prior studies, this study adopts the combined use of SMART PLS 4 and IBM Statistical Software for Social Sciences version 28. Smart PLS4 was preferred due to the software's innovative and novel aspect of analysing multiple variant latent constructs, allowing a high degree of flexibility in modelling the correlation between the various error terms (Ringle et al., 2022). The latent constructs in this study include the YEP and EMO dimensions that require using two or more related questions (measurement scales) to assess them through subjective Likert scale estimate responses, which are prone to error.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) conducted in Smart PLS4 is a powerful social science technique to test and evaluate multivariate correlations when studying complex phenomena (Becker et al., 2023; Fan et al., 2021; Tarka, 2018). In this case, SEM became appropriate since it models measurement error for both the predictor and outcome variables for this study. Unlike other statistical methods that can be challenging, Smart PLS4 is a contemporary statistical modelling technique that is flexible and suitable for handling

various data types, including continuous, categorical, and ordinal variables used to establish relationships between variables in this study. Smart PLS4 is robust to provide reliable model results in more attractive graphical representations, such as path diagrams (Figure 12) and factor loadings (Latif et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2022). Again, Smart PLS4 software typically employs bootstrap resampling techniques, which enable robust estimation of model parameters, standard errors, and significance levels. Lastly, Smart PLS4 focuses on predictive modelling, making it valuable for forecasting and prediction. The software's predictive power was preferred to develop models with strong predictive capabilities, especially when dealing with large and complex datasets (Ringle et al., 2022).

Conducting SEM, a combination of two statistical methods, confirmatory factor analysis and path or regression analysis, in Smart PLS4 software was preferred due to its simplicity and user-friendly interface, allowing even researchers with limited statistical knowledge or experience to use it comfortably. Furthermore, SEM is a set of modern diverse analysis programs that comprise both confirmatory factor analysis (measurement model) that measures the latent variables or composite variables and path analysis (structural model) that tests all the hypothetical dependencies based on path analysis (Abu-Bader, 2021; Azen & Walker, 2021) to overcome the limitations found in the first generation multivariate analysis techniques like multiple regression, logistic regression, and analysis of variance (Fan et al., 2021). SEM in Smart PLS4 could simultaneously model and solve complex relationships between multiple direct and indirect variables, which is impossible using multiple regression in IBM SPSS alone, as those in the conceptual framework of this study (as shown in Figure 1).

1.8.7 PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION TO ALLEVIATE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE MENACING SOCIAL ILLS

A practical implication of this study is that its findings could contribute to alleviating youth unemployment. The recommendations of the study may help entrepreneurial performance problems and significantly add to the socio-economic development of nations through, amongst others, employment creation, the establishment of new and dynamic businesses, and support to the GDP of countries (Sebidie, 2022; Setambule, 2022; Sivotwa et al., 2022; Kibuuka & Tustin, 2019).

Overall, the rationale of this study provided a logical and coherent argument for conducting the research, emphasizing the research gaps, significance, methodology, expected

outcomes, and contributions. The rationale helped establish the purpose and justification for the study and set the stage for the research to be undertaken.

1.9 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations of the study are the factors that the researcher deliberately chooses to maintain as a limit of the research scope to maintain clear and manageable boundaries of focus (Coker, 2022). Delimitations helped ensure that the research remained feasible and manageable within the available resources, time constraints, and research objectives (Akanle et al., 2020). The researcher considered the subsequent delimiting factors:

To begin with, the research narrowed its theoretical scope to four main concepts, namely the EMO dimensions, KoB, MS and OS. The study was conceptualized to focus on specific variables, concepts, and relationships that help narrow the research objectives and maintain a focused investigation (Coker, 2022). Rather, the research investigated the EMO dimensions, focusing on three variables, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO) and entrepreneurial orientation (EO). To be precise, the study proposed a strength in the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP, more so in the presence of mediating variables (KoB, MS and OS). The theoretical demarcation focused the research only on the highlighted objectives and purpose of the study. In addition, the study was delimited to a limited period of three years (2022-2024) to complete this thesis. Time limitation was necessary since industry trends could change within a specific time limit.

Furthermore, resource constraints, such as budgetary restrictions, necessitated the geographical delimitation of the study. As a result, this research excluded other locations outside the Greater Gaborone Covid Zone (GGCZ). The GGCZ encompassed areas such as Gaborone Central, Mogoditshane, Tlokweng, Gabane, Metsimothabe, Mmankodi, Mokolodi, Mmopane, Nkoyaphiri, Ledumadumane, Thamaga, Kumakwane, Dikhutsane, Mochudi, Lobatse, Ramotswa, and others (as depicted in Figure 3). This GGZ comprised towns and villages in and around Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. The geographic delimitation was selected for the study due to its concentration on youth enterprise headquarters, making it a suitable representation of Botswana's national youth entrepreneurship business profiles.

1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS OF THE STUDY

This section defines some key terms, specific concepts, variables, or ideas used in this study to allow for effective communication and interpretation of the research. The section acknowledges and leverages from a plethora of studies that examined similar dimensions of EMO and their contribution to business performance (Hills & Hultman, 2013; Liu et al., 2022; Presutti & Odorici, 2019; Teck, 2012; Whalen et al., 2016). The section establishes a common understanding to ensure that readers interpret the terminology the same way as the researcher. The key terms bring clarity to readers to avoid misinterpretation. The section is both precise and specific to provide consistency in the research questions, methodology, analysis, and conclusions, which are vital components for the validity and reliability of the research. The definition of key terms facilitates the comparability of the study to existing knowledge. This increases the chances of this research being replicated or cited to add to the body of knowledge. The ensuing definition of key terms (Table 4) provides a contextual framework to understand this research.

Table 4: Definition of key terms used in the study

Key Term and Theory	Definition in this study
Youth Entrepreneurship	A process of transforming creative and innovative ideas into enterprises initiated and managed by young people (18 and 35 years old) with the primary purpose being to address their socio-economic challenges, such as poverty and unemployment (Diraditsile, 2018; Tshishonga, 2019)
Integrated Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation (EMO) Dimensions	Blending the EMO constructs and their measurement scales to form unique combinations thought to significantly impact the relations affected by the mere EMO constructs alone.
Entrepreneurial Performance	A measurement construct summarises a business venture's ability to effectively use available resources to start, manage, grow, and achieve a set of desired entrepreneurial goals (Subedi, 2021).
Knowledge of Business (KoB)	The sum of skills, experiences, capabilities, and insights created and relied upon in managing a business (Chen & Sanford, 2024; Paterson et al., 2024).
Management Skill (MS)	Individuals should have the learned or practically experienced technical, conceptual, and interpersonal attributes to perform specific organizational tasks effectively (Popescu et al., 2020).
Organizational Structure (OS)	A collaborative system of rules and grouping of resources that outline how activities in a firm are determined into formal arrangements to divide work and achieve coordination amongst employees to outline the authority, and responsibilities (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Tipu, 2022), decision-making centres, (Akbari et al., 2018); employee relations; job descriptions, leadership style, set of rules, (Fitria et al., 2017); the grouping of resources at different levels (Rabhi et al., 2023) (Stamevska & Stamevski, 2016); distribution of roles without conflict (Delic & Nuhanovic, 2010); and the activities (Tipu, 2022) that direct or coordinate employee behavior, and communication towards achieving set organizational goals (Thomas, 2015).
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs)	<i>Micro-enterprise</i> : Informal sector entities that employ less than six workers, including the owner, with an annual turnover of less than P60 000. <i>Small enterprise</i> : A business entity that employs less than 25 workers with an annual turnover range of P60 000-P1 500 000. <i>Medium enterprise</i> : A business entity that employs less than 100 workers with an annual turnover of P1 500 000-P5 000 000 (Moalosi et al., 2013).
Smart Partial Least Squares Version 4 (SmartPLS4)	A preferred user-friendly structural equation modelling (SEM) software due to its innovative and novel aspect of analysing multiple variant latent constructs that produces path diagrams in modelling the correlation between the various error terms (Ringle et al., 2022).
Profitability	The measurement of productivity based on financial ratios such as return on assets, contribution margins, and others (Siepel & Dejardin, 2020).

Source: Researcher's compilation

1.11 ASSUMPTIONS

In academic research, assumptions are the underlying beliefs or statements about the characteristics or conditions taken for granted or accepted as true. The assumptions serve as the foundation for the research and guide the research design, methodology, data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Osborne & Waters, 2019). The under-listed assumptions are explicitly stated and justified to enhance transparency and allow for critical evaluation of this study's findings and, secondly, to highlight the potential limitations or risks associated with such assumptions in their study. Thus, the study assumes that the expected outcomes are realistic to help fill the research gap and advance knowledge without making unsubstantiated claims. This study assumed that:

- i. The individuals or entities studied represented a large enough sample size for the findings to be generalized to the entire industry population.
- ii. Fair randomness in the sampling procedure allowed the random collection of data for statistical inference and generalization of findings to a larger population.
- iii. Participants willingly and voluntarily took part in this research.
- iv. The respondents provided honest responses to identify the potential impact and relevance of the study.
- v. The study's instrument was valid to capture the constructs of interest accurately. Research data was gathered through a self-administered five-point Likert scale questionnaire. Data analysis used descriptive statistics through confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling (Abu-Bader, 2021; Azen & Walker, 2021) on youth entrepreneurs in Botswana.
- vi. The instrument was reliable enough to provide consistent results across different observers over time.
- vii. There is a linear relationship between the independent EMO adoption and dependent variables YEP to allow regression analysis in this study.
- viii. There is a causal relationship between the variables EMO adoption and YEP that KoB, MS and OS mediate. This causality involves temporal precedence.
- ix. The Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development (MYSC) is, amongst others, mandated to formulate, implement, coordinate, review and monitor youth development policies, programmes, and projects. Additionally, the researcher assumed MYSC to facilitate youth participation in national developmental programs, address youth unemployment and improve the overall youth standard of living in Botswana.

- x. The results could inform policy decisions, improve existing practices, or provide a foundation for further research.
- xi. Research assumes adherence to ethical principles and guidelines, such as informed consent, protecting participants' privacy and confidentiality, and minimizing potential harm.

1.12 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This research thesis is structured according to the following six major chapters.

Chapter One: The first chapter of this study is the general introduction that outlines the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, contribution of the study, definition of key terms, assumptions of the study, and the general outline of how the research is organized.

Chapter Two: The literature review examines relevant write-ups from previous researchers in entrepreneurial marketing adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance. Key themes and concepts are critically deliberated to bring out the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on youth entrepreneurial performance.

Chapter Three: The third chapter highlights the study's conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1) and the development of research hypotheses.

Chapter Four: The research methodology chapter follows and discusses the procedure of conducting the study, such as the research strategy, population, sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis, reliability, validity, and ethical considerations. The chapter clarifies and justifies the selection of each method.

Chapter Five: The results and discussion section presents the data analysis and findings of the study in formats that are easier to interpret. The research objectives, hypotheses, and questions guided discussions in this section.

Chapter Six: Lastly, the summary, implications, recommendations, and conclusions section recaps the discoveries, concludes the study, and deduces suggestions established with the results. Implications on theory, practice and the economy are shared. Limitations and areas for future research wind off the thesis.

1.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This first chapter presented the general introduction of the study, which covered the background to the study, the research problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions, delimitations and the organization of the study, amongst others. The next chapter outlines the development of research hypotheses and the study's conceptual model.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided a comprehensive introduction to this research, covering essential aspects such as the background, research problem, objectives, questions, significance, assumptions, delimitations, and the overall organization of the study. The proposed research objectives guide this second chapter to provide a comprehensive literature review of the research (Van der Walldt, 2020). According to Chigbu et al. (2023), a literature review thoroughly examines both published writings from secondary data sources on the topic at hand. A critical review of previous works (shown in the summary Table 4) helped to identify knowledge gaps, put the current study into context, point out its direction, and justify the purpose and need for the study in question. This literature review chapter discusses various scholarly works that assist in answering the study's research questions. The chapter starts by defining the key terms of the study (as shown in Table 5) to provide comprehensive clarity on the concepts of each variable. Then, it discusses the literature review that examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP.

2.2 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS USED IN THE STUDY

This section defines the key terms and theories used in the study. This section is crucial to ensure clarity and consistency so that all the readers understand exactly what the author discussed, measured, and evaluated throughout the study. The definitions and theories used in this study are from an entrepreneurial point of view, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Definition of key terms used in the study

Key Term and Theory	Definition in this study
Youth Entrepreneurship	A process of transforming creative and innovative ideas into enterprises initiated and managed by young people (18 and 35 years old) with the primary purpose being to address their socio-economic challenges, such as poverty and unemployment (Diraditsile, 2018; Tshishonga, 2019)
Integrated Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation (EMO) Dimensions	Blending the EMO constructs and even their measurement scales to form unique combinations thought to significantly impact the relations affected by the mere EMO constructs alone.
Entrepreneurial Performance	A measurement construct summarises a business venture's ability to effectively use available resources to start, manage, grow, and achieve a set of desired entrepreneurial goals (Subedi, 2021).
Knowledge of Business (KoB)	The sum of skills, experiences, capabilities, and insights created and relied upon in managing a business (Chen & Sanford, 2024; Paterson et al., 2024).
Management Skill (MS)	Individuals should have the learned or practically experienced technical, conceptual, and interpersonal attributes to perform specific organizational tasks effectively (Popescu et al., 2020).
Organizational Structure (OS)	A collaborative system of rules and grouping of resources that outline how activities in a firm are determined into formal arrangements to divide work and achieve coordination amongst employees to outline the authority and responsibilities (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Tipu, 2022), decision-making centres, (Akbari et al., 2018); employee relations; job descriptions, leadership style, set of rules, (Fitria et al., 2017); a grouping of resources at different levels (Rabhi et al., 2023) (Stamevska & Stamevski, 2016); distribution of roles without conflict (Delic & Nuhanovic, 2010); and the activities (Tipu, 2022) that direct or coordinate employee behaviour, and communication towards achieving set organizational goals (Thomas, 2015).
Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs)	Microenterprise: Informal sector entities that employ less than six workers, including the owner, with an annual turnover of less than P60 000. Small enterprises: A business entity that employs less than 25 workers with an annual turnover range of P60 000-P1 500 000. Medium enterprise: A business entity that employs less than 100 workers with an annual turnover of P1 500 000-P5 000 000 (Moalosi et al., 2013).
Smart Partial Least Squares Version 4 (SmartPLS4)	A preferred user-friendly structural equation modelling (SEM) software due to its innovative and novel aspect of analysing multiple variant latent constructs that produces path diagrams in modelling the correlation between the various error terms Ringle et al., (2022).
Profitability	The measurement of productivity based on financial ratios such as return on assets, contribution margins, and others (Siepel & Dejardin, 2020).

Source: Researcher's compilation

2.3 THE INTERFACE BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MARKETING

The interface between entrepreneurship and marketing is a crucial intersection of two key disciplines vital to running a successful business. In a business setup, having both disciplines is beneficial since entrepreneurship focuses on identifying and pursuing business opportunities, whilst marketing involves creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers. Overall, the interface between entrepreneurship and marketing is a dynamic and iterative process which involves leveraging marketing principles and strategies to identify, evaluate, and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities while continuously adapting to market feedback and customer needs. Only recently were entrepreneurship and marketing treated as separate business administration disciplines (Miles & Deacon, 2010; Rashad, 2018). Both disciplines are testified to have innovative approaches useful to business management (Collinson & Shaw 2001).

Marketing is viewed as an ancient and most studied discipline, whereas entrepreneurship is considered one of the modern and most advancing fields that recently introduced pro-activeness, risk-taking and innovative approaches to enhance the growth of businesses (Greene, 2020; Sadiku-Dushi & Ramadani, 2020; Sharma, 2021). Entrepreneurship often begins with identifying market opportunities through understanding customer needs, market gaps, and emerging trends. Once an entrepreneurial opportunity is identified, marketing helps develop unique value propositions and positioning strategies to enter the market and withstand competition (Chernev, 2020; Diva et al., 2023). Marketing becomes crucial in determining the most appropriate market entry strategies for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs must understand how their target customers perceive and interact with their products or services. Entrepreneurs also need marketing techniques such as advertising, public relations, digital marketing, and social media to attract and retain customers and build a sustainable business (Harahap et al., 2023).

Effective marketing strategies can also help build customer loyalty and encourage repeat business, which organisations need for optimum performance. Marketing provides valuable feedback to entrepreneurs about customer reactions, preferences, and changing market dynamics (Lew et al., 2023). This valuable market intelligence feedback loop allows entrepreneurs to adapt their products, services, and strategies based on customer insights and market trends. Again, marketing analytics and customer feedback mechanisms enable entrepreneurs to make informed decisions and optimize their offerings.

Thus, both entrepreneurship and marketing complement each other to manage businesses that are both innovative and creative (Gliga & Evers, 2023). Entrepreneurs must develop innovative products, services, or business models to capture profitable market opportunities. On the other hand, marketing demands creative thinking to develop compelling messages, designs, and promotional campaigns that resonate with customers.

Contemporary studies by Sadiku-Dushi et al. (2019) combine the two disciplines of marketing and entrepreneurship to form a concept called entrepreneurial marketing (EM) that integrates marketing and entrepreneurship practices by sharing ideas from the two fields previously seen as independent. Entrepreneurial marketing has significantly evolved over the past three decades (Morris & Tucker, 2023; Kilenthong, Hills & Hultman, 2015) and captures the crossing point between the two disciplines to form the fundamental dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO). Carson et al. (1995) suggest EMO be an insightful and novel way of performing marketing practices, particularly in small and medium enterprises (SME) firms since SMEs have a variety of limiting factors, fewer but major customers, inadequate resources within the business, lack of formal organizational structures or formal systems of communication and lastly are more influenced by the entrepreneur (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Rabhi et al., 2023; Tipu, 2022). The other explanations of EMO and its dimensions, which may be occasionally met in this study, are summarised in Table 5.

2.4 ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) ADOPTION

Objective 5: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP (H_{6d-f}):

H_{6d}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP.

H_{6e}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between EMO and YEP.

H_{6f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP.

Several research review the Morris et al. seven (7) dimensions of EM and discuss the contribution of each dimension to the performance of firms (Anosike, 2019; Berhe, 2021; Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018; Fierro et al., 2018; Nyamunda & Van Der Westhuizen, 2018; Omotayo, 2020; Rosemary et al., 2020). Permatasari and Praswati (2024) support and suggest that the first five EM dimensions by Morris et al. originate from entrepreneurial orientation (EO) while the last two, that is, value creation and customer intensity are the

market orientation (MO) dimensions form the EMO dimensions. The EMO dimensions under consideration include market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO) and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (as shown in Table 5). The study draws a comparative analysis from extant literature that concerns the theme of the topic. The dimensions of EMO are examined in relation to YEP in the presence of mediating factors KoB, MS and OS. The EO dimensions under consideration include pro-activeness, innovativeness, calculated risk-taking, entrepreneurial autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. Followed by the MO dimensions that include market intelligence, networks and relationships, coordination between departments, resource leveraging and opportunity detection. Then, lastly, the CO dimensions encompass responsiveness towards customers, value creation/ creativeness, customer relationship management and communication with the customers (as shown in Table 6).

Table 6: Outline of Study Variables, Study Constructs, Measurement Scales, Data Sources

Outline of Study Variables, Study Constructs, Measurement Scales, & Data Sources						
Variables	Dimension/ Construct	Determinant Factor/ Measure	Description	Measurement		Scales Adapted from
				Scales	Items	
EMO adoption (Independent Variable)	1. Market Orientation (MO)	i. Market intelligence generation (MIG)	Practice acquisition and analysis of market environmental awareness data to drive future decisions	5	15 items	Slater & Narver, (1998)
		ii. Opportunity detection (OD)	Constantly identifying unnoticed external market forces helps the firm's source of sustainable profit potential.			
		iii. Resource leveraging (RL)	Ability to use fewer inputs to produce more.			
		iv. Networks and relationships (NR)	Share ideas in multidisciplinary teams or business linkages			
		v. Coordination between departments (CBD)	Function units harmoniously work with others to contribute to greater customer value.			
	2. Customer Orientation/ Customer Intensity (CO/ CI)	i. Responsiveness towards customers (RTC)	Adaptable to accommodate changes in dynamic customer preferences	4	12 items	Sadiku-Dushi et al., (2019) and Becherer et al., (2012)
		ii. Value creation/ Creativeness (VC)	Willingness to innovate processes NPD and combine resources to meet unmet customer needs			
		iii. Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	Combination of practices, strategies, and technologies to manage customer interactions and improve lifetime value.			
		iv. Communication with Customers	Deliver and exchange information with customers.			
	3. Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)	i. Pro-activeness (PR)	Foresight to seize opportunity, hoping for future demand	5	15 items	(Jackson, 1994; Covin & Slevin, 1989; Robinson & Stubberud, 2014)
		ii. Innovativeness (IN)	The practical implementation of new ideas into new products, services, technologies, or markets.			
		iii. Competitive Aggressiveness (CA)	An intense effort to outperform industry rivals.			
		iv. Calculated Risk-taking (CRT)	Nosedive in action and decision-making rather than being too cautious			

		v. Entrepreneurial Autonomy (EA)	Independence on business concept/ vision to completion			
Mediator Variables (Internal EMO dimensions)	1. Knowledge of Business (KoB)	i. Employee Technical Skills	A sum of skills/experiences relied upon in managing a business.	1	3 items	Torri & Martinez (2014)
	2. Managerial Skills (MS)	ii. Management's Competent Strategies	Learnt/experienced attributes to effectively perform specific organizational tasks, e.g., leadership style.	1	3 items	Popescu et al., (2020)
	3. Organizational Structure (OS)	iii. Formal Systems of Communication	OS are the rules and groupings of resources that outline how activities in a firm are directed to meet the set goals.	1	3 items	Tipu (2022)
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (Dependent Variable)	1. Customer Visits	i. Number of customer visits and their purchase size	Increase in customer visits and orders made per customer	4	4 items	
	2. Efficiency	ii. Customer Retention and Referrals	A customer's long-term relationship with the business and their influence on others to buy from the firm			Bharadwaj (2000)
	3. Growth	iii. Change in Sales	The difference between the ending and starting values for the period			Richard et al., (2009)
Control Variables	4. Firm Size	i. Total Assets	Measures business in terms of the total assets, total sales, market value of equity and number of employees	1	1 item	St-Pierre & Audet (2011)
	5. Firm Age (FA)	ii. Years of Operation	FA is the years a company experiences, from incorporation to the point of investigation.	1	1 item	Delen et al. (2013)
	6. Assets Growth Rate	iii. Return on Assets (ROA)	A firm's percentage change in the growth of its assets over a given period	1	1 item	Wu et al., (2012)

Source: Lumpkin and Dess (2015)

2.5 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEFINITION AND SCOPE

According to Tshishonga (2019), youth entrepreneurship transforms creative and innovative ideas into enterprises initiated and managed by young people to address their socio-economic challenges, such as poverty and unemployment. Practical application of enterprising qualities, such as initiative, innovation, creativity, and risk-taking into the work environment (either in self-employment or employment in small start-up firms). A universal definition for business start-ups is difficult to come by since the phenomena are mentioned in different literature disciplines such as business management, organization, and entrepreneurship theories (Asif et al., 2023; Olubusoye et al., 2023; Salamzadeh & Kesim, 2015; Sharma, 2022; Tam et al., 2024).

Start-ups are businesses or ventures within the early stages of operation that are focused on a product or service that the founders believe is commercially viable to the market (Eresia-Eke et al., 2023; Ghezzi et al., 2022; Huang, 2022; Jones et al., 2022). These early years of operation may include venture creation, market-entry, and early performance and development (George, 2018). Academics define business start-ups by age to appreciate the different stages of development. In this research, youth entrepreneurship start-up ventures are considered as firms of 8 years or younger from their formation (Lewis, 2024). Following the precedence of others, youth firms with up to a maximum of 8 years were preferred since this timeline assisted in indicating the businesses at various stages of development. This timeline ranged from those at the early, developing, and adjustment phases of their progress (Atuahene-Gima & Li, 2004; Leung et al., 2013; Li, 2013; Su et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2017).

Youth businesses are usually established by one or more entrepreneurs who would probably lack adequate capital, business acumen or even the technological lag to propel the business idea further so that the start-up can be transformed into a fully-fledged company (Ghezzi et al., 2022; Huang, 2022; Jones et al., 2022). This inadequacy translates into many start-up problems that result in a high failure rate (Eresia-Eke et al., 2023) within the first few years of operation. Most start-ups that survive this “valley of death” (Hudson & Khazragui, 2013) usually transform into successful companies that significantly contribute to national economies’ “success stories” (Martinsons, 2002).

With increasing global competitiveness and saturation of markets, only the most innovative and creative start-up ventures stand a chance to survive the harsh competition (Alemu, 2018). It was noted that 70% of start-up businesses in Botswana either suffer low productivity or fail within the first eighteen months of inception, while the overall failure rate is around 80% (Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis [BIDPA], 2015). An African Economic Outlook [AEO] (2016) reports that approximately 80-85% of SMMEs in Botswana cease trading within five years of commencement. In addition, only 1 or 2% of start-ups in Botswana manage to grow and succeed or transition into larger enterprises. That is why this initial period of operation, the “valley of death,” needs to be closely monitored and managed.

According to Salamzadeh and Kesim (2015), entrepreneurs need to be more vigilant on opportunity recognition, formulate good business ideas, create viable business models or business plans, source capital, hire the required personnel, work out any other intricate details of the venture such as equity stakes for partners and investors if any, then plan for the long run performance of the business. Most successful companies, like Microsoft, Apple, and Facebook, began as youth enterprises and then became globally known, publicly traded companies. They are thought to have leveraged the ability to recognize, evaluate, and exploit opportunities.

According to Urbano et al. (2020), entrepreneurship contributes to a positive balance of payment (BOP) worldwide, and there is a correlation between the level of entrepreneurial activity and economic growth, which is greater than 70%. However, contrary to this assertion, Botswana’s SMMEs contribute only 35% to the gross domestic product (GDP) compared to an average world contribution of 45% (UNDP report, 2015-2016). Against all odds, this write-up argues that adopting an entrepreneurial mindset, innovative skills, knowledge of business, and managerial skill competencies enables young people to operate successful enterprises that help curb the existing poverty and unemployment challenges.

2.6 THE NEED FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION IN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Marketing researchers found several variations between traditional marketing practices and suggest the need to adapt the marketing field to a new paradigm to adequately respond to the dynamic environments (Constantinides, 2006; Day & Montgomery, 1999; Hultman and

Shaw, 2003; Pels, 2023; Vargo et al., 2023; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021; Webster Jr, 1992). This notion emanated from the convergence of economies into a global village, connected knowledge economy, improved customer behaviour with more demands, firms create reputation from referrals, the use of word-of-mouth for advertising, establishment of long-term relationships, more challenging business environments, especially for SMEs and start-ups, the need for businesses to be more customer-oriented and increase customer interactivity, fragmented and frictionless markets and more adaptive organizations (Huang, 2022; Jones et al., 2022). Thus, EMO emerged as the contemporary marketing paradigm to help firms rethink, survive, and adapt their marketing practices to the identified changes (Day and Montgomery, 1999; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). EMO is suggested as a beneficial and necessary solution for businesses operating in the contemporary highly competitive environments characterized by unprecedented risk, uncertainty, chaos, dynamism, and inconsistencies (Hamali, 2015; Hamali et al., 2016; Morris & Tucker, 2023; Morrish & Deacon, 2012; Mugambi & Karugu, 2017; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). This research acknowledges the basic dimensions and characteristics of EMO from past marketing and entrepreneurship literature. Studies recommended the need to incorporate the EMO dimensions into the management of firms, and a discussion of the proposed EMO dimensions follows below.

2.7 A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO ADOPTION AND YEP

Even though entrepreneurial marketing (EMO) has been widely studied, according to this researcher's knowledge, there is no consensus amongst academics regarding the number and classification of EMO dimensions (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). This study also acknowledges the lack of consensus on the measurement variables and scales within each orientation. Studies show variations in the number of dimensions used when investigating the firm's EMO behaviour and differences in classifications of the dimensions depending on their context. However, other studies concur that EMO creates greater customer value through dimensions such as pro-activeness (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002), innovation (Whalen et al., 2016; Hills & Hultman, 2013; Morrish, 2011), risk tendencies (Bergner et al., 2023; Linton, 2019), opportunity detention (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002; Hills & Singh, 1998), resource leveraging, value creation, creativity, networking, flexibility (Shaw, 2004), communication and the adoption of technological aspects which firms previously ignored. As deliberated by Kowalik et al. (2022) and Sadiku-Dushi et al. (2019), academics use different dimensions to investigate the effect of EMO on business performance. However,

researchers concur that there is a positive relationship between the EMO dimensions and company performance, as indicated in the subsequent paragraphs.

Focusing on innovation allows companies to create unique products, services, or business models that differentiate them from competitors (Sorcaru et al., 2023). Companies can adapt to changing market conditions and meet customer needs by constantly seeking new ideas and technologies. Research has found that companies with a higher emphasis on innovation as part of their EMO tend to outperform their competitors regarding revenue growth, market share, and profitability. Organizations that exhibit a proactive EMO are more likely to be early adopters of new technologies and market trends, which can give them a competitive advantage from the early anticipation of market trends and customer demands and seizure of opportunities (Mehros et al., 2023; Solano et al., 2022). Studies have shown that companies with a proactive orientation achieve higher sales growth, market performance, and overall company performance.

Companies willing to take calculated risks can explore new markets, invest in innovation, and pursue unconventional strategies. Research suggests that companies with a higher propensity for risk-taking as part of their EMO tend to experience higher levels of innovation, market performance, and overall company performance (Agustina & Fauzia, 2021; Mat et al., 2020). An EMO firm emphasising opportunity-seeking allows companies to proactively identify unmet customer needs, emerging markets, and untapped segments. Studies have found a positive relationship between opportunity-seeking orientation and various company performance measures, including sales growth, market share, and profitability (Rahaman et al., 2021; Sawaeen & Ali, 2020).

From the above discussion, this study concurs and draws a comparative analysis with the extant literature that concerns the theme of the topic. However, this study hopes to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) by integrating the previously individually analysed EMO dimensions (Nwankwo & Kanyangale, 2020) to formulate combinations of these dimensions. The study hopes to investigate the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and YEP. Antecedents of EMO are examined in relation to YEP. The study also aims to contribute to the BoK by examining the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the several permutations of the relationship between EMO and YEP. In the end, an improved EMO conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1) is suggested by this study,

which is created by collapsing some existing scales of the key dimensions (Crick, 2021). Replication of scales is minimized by being systematic and rigorous in developing the new conceptual framework and identifying the hypothesized relationships.

Firstly, the study suggests MO scales that include opportunity detection, networks and relationships, marketing intelligence and coordination between departments. Then, the CO scales, namely, responsiveness towards customers, communication with customers and understanding and delivering customer value. The IO dimensions include creativity, resource leveraging, and value creation. After that, the EO dimensions include proactiveness, calculated risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy. Lastly, the mediating variables KoB, MS, or OS are introduced to determine the strength of the relationship between EMO and YEP.

2.8 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKET ORIENTATION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Market orientation MO requires firms to systematically gather and analyse customer and competitor information to formulate a customer-linking strategy (Sheharta, 2020; Udriyah et al., 2019). There is no consensus amongst scholars on the definition of MO or its measurement scales. However, most researchers adopted one of the two perspective definitions of Kohli and Jaworski (1990) or Slater and Narver (1998). Kohli and Jaworski use marketing intelligence rather than a customer focus as the central element, whereas Slater and Narver use three behavioural components: customer orientation, competitor orientation, and inter-functional coordination. Narver et al. (2000) propose that due to the criticism and confusion surrounding the MO definition and its measurement scales, minor modifications are encouraged to the previously published theoretically valid MO scales (Coltman & Devinney, 2005; Teshome, 2021). Thus, the MO dimensions adopted for this study are market intelligence generation (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Carbonell & Rodriguez, 2010; Dabrowski et al., 2019), networks and relationships; and coordination between departments (Slater & Narver, 1998). Many scholars identified the positive relationship between MO and business performance (Ali et al., 2020; Iyer et al., 2019; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Slater & Narver, 2000). Therefore, this study did not examine the direct relationship between MO and firm performance but concurs with extant studies that the current study proposed the following hypothesis:

H_{2a}: There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and YEP.

Market intelligence (MI) is the practice of gathering, analysing and interpreting data about a particular industry sector to drive future business decisions. Market intelligence identifies customer preferences, industry trends, competitors' strategies, and other relevant factors impacting business growth, profitability, and performance (Ali et al., 2020; Chen & Hsu, 2013; Crick, 2021). Firms need information from the surrounding market they operate or want to venture into to help decide on market segmentation, market penetration strategies, market opportunity identification and other existing market metrics, such as competitor acumen, which helps entrepreneurs craft winning strategies (Ali et al., 2020). Through insights from MI, businesses discover new market opportunities and make informed decisions to develop competitive strategies. Youth entrepreneurs should appreciate that MI is an ongoing business process that monitors and analyses market trends and consumer behaviour. Unlike business intelligence, which mainly focuses on internal factors of the firm's operations (Lateef & Keikhosrokiani, 2023), MI gathers external data that provide the firm with a holistic view of the market to enable the entrepreneur's business to perform better in a particular market setup.

2.8.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Networks and relationships play a crucial role in enhancing youth entrepreneurial performance. Building and nurturing strong networks and relationships may be used to leverage resources since youth entrepreneurs are usually characterized by resource constraints (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2021; Kariuki et al., 2021; Pillai & Ahamat, 2018; Ridzwan et al., 2016;). A network of connections with experienced mentors or advisors can provide the youth entrepreneurs with valuable business guidance, industry knowledge, or access to valuable resources that can result in fruitful opportunities. Mentors can even offer their expertise and business advice and help the youth entrepreneurs navigate challenges that help them make informed decisions.

At times, building relationships with industry peers, such as other entrepreneurs or professionals in the same industry, is equally beneficial. Such relationships can foster collaboration, knowledge sharing, and potential partnerships that can widen opportunities

for learning and growth. Moreover, a good rapport with potential investors leverages youth entrepreneurs to secure funding to start or scale businesses (Ghezzi et al., 2022). Additionally, investors often have extensive networks with other key stakeholders that may benefit youth entrepreneurs as a source of other business opportunities.

Nurturing strong relationships with customers and clients may be vital for business success. Providing exceptional service and personalized interactions builds customer loyalty that can result in long-term relationships and repeat business. A company's satisfied customers can become brand advocates who provide referrals and positive recommendations to others. Youth entrepreneurs may also have strategic partnerships, such as collaborating with complementary businesses or organizations to create mutually beneficial conglomerates (Berman et al., 2024). Strategic partnerships can provide access to new markets, shared resources, and an increased network of like-minded individuals who can offer support, feedback, and potential collaborations that increase visibility in the market. Other areas that assist in business performance are carefully maintaining relationships with suppliers and vendors. Strong and mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers are vital to youth entrepreneurs because they ensure an undisturbed supply chain of products or services delivered on time, favourable terms, reliable support, market insights, and preferential treatment during times of high demand or scarcity.

It is worthwhile to note that nurturing these networks and relationships requires time, effort, unwavering trust, clear communication, and a shared vision for collaboration. Youth entrepreneurs ought to approach networks and relationship-building with authenticity, a willingness to give and receive, and a long-term perspective. Building strong networks and strategic relationships enhances entrepreneurial performance (Raharjo et al., 2023). Entrepreneurs who establish valuable connections with mentors, industry experts, investors, and other entrepreneurs can access resources, knowledge, and opportunities that boost their performance (Sebikari, 2019).

2.8.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Enhancing youth entrepreneurial performance requires effective coordination between different departments and stakeholders. Coordination between departments promotes a shared vision and an in-depth understanding of each other's roles (Berman et al., 2024).

The firm's strategic statements, like the vision, mission, and values, facilitate a common understanding of the company's goals. Information sharing of the customer's needs and preferences enables every functional unit to work harmoniously with others to contribute to greater customer value (Raharjo et al., 2023; Sebikari, 2019). Information sharing between departments establishes mechanisms to develop strategies and implement initiatives for youth entrepreneurs to track the progress of youth entrepreneurship initiatives, identify gaps, and make data-driven decisions. The identified gaps may be bridged by cross-departmental training and workshops that bring together representatives from different departments. These training sessions facilitate the exchange of ideas that help officials understand each department's roles, responsibilities, and resources relative to each other. The training workshops can involve information sharing about available sources and outline important procedures to be holistically followed by all employees.

Coordination between departments can be used as a joint mentorship program to impart the necessary skills and knowledge to youth entrepreneurs. Some professionals from other fields may capitalize on the coordination between departments to share evaluation methodologies, data, and insights to assess the impact of interventions and make informed decisions for continuous improvement, providing guidance, support, and advice to young entrepreneurs.

According to Ayupp and Kong (2010), inter-functional coordination contributes to high employee morale, task performance, outcome inter-dependence, and motivation through work satisfaction and coexistence, ultimately promoting a good social environment in the firms. By implementing these strategies, departments can enhance their collaboration and coordination, leading to a more effective ecosystem to raise awareness about the benefits and opportunities of youth that support entrepreneurial performance (Wakjira, 2022). Coordination between departments or individuals positively correlates to performance (Ayup & Kong, 2010).

2.8.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESOURCE LEVERAGING AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Resources are broadly defined to contain all kinds of monetary resources such as (investments and turnover), material resources (facilities), human resources (qualified staff), and other tangible and intangible assets of critical relevance to a new business

venture (George, 2018). Similarly, Barney (1991) classifies a company's possessions into physical, human, and organizational capital resources. Barney also notes that resources comprise all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, and others at a firm's disposal. Firms use resources to conceive and implement strategies that improve the company's efficiency, effectiveness, and performance.

Resource leveraging is referred to as the organization's ability to optimally use inputs to produce more with less (Becherer et al., 2012; Dana & Ramadani, 2019; Hacıoglu et al., 2012; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). The resource leveraging dimension of EM has been commonly shared in management research explaining the firm's ability to deliver sustainable competitive advantage using the firm's rare, valuable, and non-tradable, non-substitutable, as well as firm-specific limited resources (Barney, 1991, 2001, 2002; Javed & Akhtar, 2012; Luis et al., 2010).

The resource leveraging dimension of EM calls for the firm's ability to recognize resources invisible to others, use resources of others to complete its purpose, complement resources with one another in order to intensify value, use some resources to expose other resources, extend resources more than others did previously such as the capability to inspire extra working hours from team members, motivate abnormal activities from departments, or amass unique sets of synergistic resources that blended well (Morris & Tucker, 2023). Therefore, by applying resource-based EM, firms are asked to respond to emerging opportunities by constantly improvising and redeploying available resources (Sashittal & Jassawalla, 2001). The fact that each firm has to improvise on its available resources makes performance between firms heterogeneous. This uniqueness of the application of rare and firm-specific resources brings a sustainable competitive advantage since resources cannot be easily copied, transferred, or bought. Thus, such rare resources like entrepreneurial experience become valuable to a specific firm and may be used as an important contribution to the performance of a youth venture.

Resource leveraging requires youth entrepreneurs to take advantage of all the available and rare inputs at their disposal of the venture, such as technology assistance and a skilled workforce, to achieve the firm's goals and boost its performance. The youth entrepreneurs have to consolidate the available resources and apply them in a much more focused way.

Alternatively, firms might recruit the best in the area or multi-skill employees to take up several job positions as required (Akhtar et al., 2019; Nath et al., 2010).

2.8.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OPPORTUNITY DETECTION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Opportunity detection is a critical skill for entrepreneurs. Effective identification and capitalization of opportunities is one of the primary drivers that can enhance the success or performance of youth entrepreneurship. Detecting entrepreneurial opportunities may range from identifying gaps or room for improvement in the market, recognizing customer pain points or unmet needs that require solutions, and spotting trends in consumer behaviour. Entrepreneurs who identify viable opportunities can create innovative products, services, and business models to meet the trending market needs and generate value. Opportunities may also emerge from devising advanced technologies that can be used to improve existing businesses or even start up new ventures that adopt the contemporary way of doing things in that industrial sector. Opportunity detection means constantly searching and identifying unnoticed external market forces that might be the firm's sources of sustainable profit potential (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Youth ventures are typically created to pursue potentially profitable business opportunities.

Opportunity recognition and exploitation are essential to sustain firms, and alertness is important to achieving new venture performance (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022). Once an opportunity is detected, the focus should be put on the efficient execution and implementation of the strategy to capitalize on the chance. Implementation may require effective planning, resource allocation, and leveraging the business strengths to capitalize on the identified opportunity. Youth entrepreneurs ought to remember that opportunity detection is a continuous process that requires a combination of market intelligence and a proactive entrepreneurial mindset to enhance entrepreneurial performance. EMO calls for businesses to be more alert and proactive to detect and exploit opportunities ahead of others. Kirzner (1997) defines entrepreneurial alertness as successfully recognizing opportunities. The trait of being able to detect opportunities heavily relies upon youth entrepreneurs' ability to make correct and well-timed judgements that result in competitive advantages to the organization (George, 2018). EMO emphasizes firms' pursuit of opportunities and not being limited by available resources but believing that the needed resources can be obtained (Kilenthong, Hills, & Hultman, 2015). Although some opportunities can randomly arise,

EMO businesses should reshape their internal systems to capitalize on available opportunities (Santos & Eisenhardt, 2009).

2.9 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER ORIENTATION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Customer orientation (CO) is defined as adopting an organizational culture that emphasizes getting closer to customers to understand their needs fully and wants, build close relationships, and develop an attitude consistent with customer dedication whilst offering greater customer value (Cardwell, 1994; Jawabreh et al., 2022; Habel et al., 2020; Zontanos & Anderson, 2004). Some authors argue that there is no clear distinction between CO and MO; thus, the terms may be used interchangeably (Shapiro, 1988; Webster, 1988). This study adopts the CO scales from extant studies being first, responsive towards customers, followed by understanding and delivering customer value; then, customer relationship management; and lastly, communication with customers (Kohli et al., 1993; Slater & Narver, 1998; Saura et al., 2005; Smirnova et al., 2018). Firms that are CO need to be innovative and go beyond simple traditional market research methods and gain an in-depth understanding of customers' needs through more advanced research methods like ethnographic market research to align the business goals with those of the customers (Goffin et al., 2012; Kilenthong et al., 2015).

Many authors view customer orientation (CO) and market orientation (MO) as interchangeable concepts (Baber et al., 2020; Khan & Ghouri, 2018; Udriyah et al., 2019), while others like Jones et al. (2003) maintain that MO and CO orientation are separate concepts that need a balance to be found between the two orientations (Al Asheq & Hossain, 2019; Day & Wensley, 1988). Customer orientation firms consider the consumer needs over the needs of the business due to the understanding that the business would not thrive unless it consistently improves its customer focus. Unlike big firms, small firms generally have narrow and localized customer bases where entrepreneurs can often know their customers personally, have close interactive relationships and have the flexibility to respond to customer inquiries. All these lead to higher customer satisfaction levels, long-term relationships, and higher customer loyalty (Carson, 1985; Carson et al., 1995; Lindman, 2004). Small firms are also characterised by shorter lines of communication between the firm and its customers, thus making it easier for decision-makers to respond to changing customer demands (Weinrauch et al., 1991). This study did not examine the direct

relationship between CO and firm performance but concurs with extant studies that proposed the following hypothesis.

H_{2b}: There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and YEP.

2.9.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESPONSIVENESS TOWARDS CUSTOMERS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Youth entrepreneurs envisaging the CO dimension ought to be responsive towards customers and be adaptable to accommodate changes in dynamic customer preferences. The construct of responsiveness towards customers requires youth entrepreneurs to provide extra services that delight both the external customers and the employees, being the internal customers of the business. There is a need to share as much new information with either customers or employees about new products, services or procedures that might be required. Responsiveness assists firms pursuing EM to adapt to customer preference changes timeously and enables companies to deliver superior quality products to customers (Hultman & Shaw, 2003; Jones, Shaw, 1999; Song & Liao, 2018; Suoranta & Rowley, 2013b).

Adopting a customer-centric approach yields a mutually beneficial relationship between the customers and the firm. Firstly, the relationship helps customers obtain products that satisfy their most contemporary needs (Geursen & Conduit, 2001) whilst providing firms with relevant environmental information. Secondly, the relationship helps firms prepare for unmet needs that may arise in the future (Magretta, 1998) and acquire direct information from customers about the required desirable products (Athaide et al., 2003). This makes CO a vital EMO dimension and positions it as central to youth entrepreneurship (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990). The entrepreneurship world is dynamic and unpredictable, which requires careful adaptability and resilience. Successful youth entrepreneurs should demonstrate flexibility to adapt to fluctuating market conditions, overcome challenges, and easily bounce back from failures. Responsiveness towards changing customer preferences, resilience and flexibility are crucial in entrepreneurial performance.

2.9.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VALUE CREATION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

The basic goal of most enterprises is to fully understand the target customer's value and creation of that worth. Value creation is the marketers' ability to find worthy customer sources and combine resources to fulfil those unmet needs (Hashom, 2022; Morris & Tucker, 2023). According to the American Marketing Association [AMA] (2013), marketing is activities that create, communicate, deliver, and exchange valuable offerings for customers, clients, partners, and society. The source of value creation offered to satisfy customers may be revealed by the value propositions within the strategic statements of a business entity (Kaplan and Norton, 2004). Even though customers are the final arbiters of the value that firms create, the organization's role is to discover, interpret and deliver that value based on what management believes customers seek (O'Cass & Ngo, 2011).

Only when the customer's value is adequately met may the organization realize repeat business, thereby improving the firm's performance. Thus, the extent to which the firm's value offering meets customer-centric performance levels, the better the firm's performance levels. Identifying sources of untapped customer value can be obtained through information from several networks, such as customers, suppliers, competitors, and the general public (Achrol & Kotler, 2012; Massimo, 2020; Tolstoy, 2009). Value is said to be created only if a product or service performs following what is expected by customers. If customers get the benefits, a trade-off between the total benefits received and total sacrifice is made, making the company realize greater profitability.

Entrepreneurship is about value creation for the customers, wealth for stockholders, and benefits for other stakeholders and society (Hitt et al., 2011). Value creation entails business entrepreneurs adequately meeting customers' needs at all costs, at times using resource leveraging from networks. Firms can also create new value by unconventionally using existing technology (Hills & Hultman, 2015; Kumar et al., 2000) or improving customer satisfaction through modern technology (Hamel & Prahalad, 1991). Since resources are limited, youth firms can also create value through social media for advertising messages.

2.9.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a companywide management system that enables firms to collect, organize, and analyze customer data. Through a centralizing customer data management system, such information as contact details, purchase history, preferences, and feedback may provide valuable insights into customer behaviour that allow managers to make informed decisions, provide personalized customer experiences, and ultimately tailor-make offerings that enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty. This data-driven approach helps youth entrepreneurs create business strategies that create value for the firm and its customers. Through the systematic application of technology, data and customer knowledge, CRM increases customer satisfaction, loyalty, and revenue generation for the company (Foltean et al., 2019; Payne & Frow, 2005). By effectively managing customer relationships, youth entrepreneurs can enhance business growth, increase customer loyalty, and improve overall performance.

With CRM, entrepreneurs can segment their customer base and create targeted marketing campaigns that are effective and efficient on resources. Entrepreneurs can identify specific customer segments by analysing customer preferences and behaviour patterns. The youth entrepreneurs can then deliver personalized messages, offers, and promotions that maximize the effectiveness of marketing efforts. These targeted efforts help youth entrepreneurs attract and retain customers more efficiently. Well-executed CRM systems provide entrepreneurs with a comprehensive view of each customer, allowing them to address individual needs and provide exceptional customer services. By accessing customer history, inquiries, and interactions, youth entrepreneurs can promptly respond and effectively resolve customer issues, thereby building stronger and positive customer experiences that increase satisfaction, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth, all contributing to enhanced performance.

Customer relationship management also facilitates efficient sales process management (Tarsakoo & Charoensukmongkol, 2020). Youth entrepreneurs can track leads, manage sales pipelines, and monitor conversion rates through CRM systems. By having a clear overview of sales activities and opportunities, entrepreneurs can prioritize efforts, optimize sales strategies, and identify areas for improvement. This proactive approach helps in closing deals faster and achieves higher sales performance. Furthermore, CRM systems

enable entrepreneurs to capture customer feedback and reviews, providing valuable insights for continuous improvement. By actively seeking and responding to feedback, youth entrepreneurs can address customer concerns, identify areas of strength and weakness, and adapt their offerings accordingly. Utilizing CRM to monitor customer sentiments and satisfaction helps entrepreneurs make necessary adjustments, leading to better performance and reputation. Through tracking communication, purchase history, and preferences, CRM systems assist entrepreneurs in proactively engaging with customers, building trust, and offering personalized experiences that result in stronger long-term relationships with customers (Foltean et al., 2019; Tarsakoo & Charoensukmongkol, 2020). Maintaining ongoing customer relationships increases the likelihood of repeat business, referrals, and partnerships, contributing to sustained entrepreneurial performance.

In summary, CRM systems provide youth entrepreneurs with the tools to effectively manage customer relationships, enhance customer experiences, and improve overall performance. A well-structured CRM strategy allows entrepreneurs to make data-driven decisions, deliver exceptional customer service, and build lasting relationships that improve firm performance through better-managed customer contacts, which results from, to begin with, increased customer retention, followed by improved customer visits then, orders made per customer and lastly increased referrals. All of which leads to enhanced entrepreneurial performance in the youth segment.

2.10 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION WITH CUSTOMERS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Communication with customers as a CO dimension highlights a firm's efforts to recognize customers as valuable sources of intelligence and feedback that can be integrated into the company's operations (Ali Qalati, 2020; Bharadwaj et al., 2012; Griffin & Hauser, 1993). Both external and internal customers (buyers and employees) can regularly input valuable recommendations on the products and services of an organization. Businesses can use various communication strategies and tools to help enhance the company's performance. Some businesses still use traditional communication tools, including emails, newsletters, telephones, memorandums, and call centres. Contemporary businesses have added more innovative communication approaches that enhance customer value, such as:

Live chat support systems (chatbots) on business websites that address customer queries in real-time. Chatbot support is human-like computer simulations that can simultaneously handle multiple customer conversations, providing prompt and efficient assistance in resolving customer issues. Other businesses use customer feedback and satisfaction survey tools to regularly gather customer insights (Domi et al., 2020). Frequent customer feedback helps identify improvement areas and make informed decisions to enhance the customer experience.

While some businesses also utilize automated messaging response systems to handle common inquiries and provide instant responses, others create self-service options like a database of frequently asked questions (FAQ) that allow customers to find answers to common queries on their own, reducing the need for direct communication and freeing up human resources. Social media engagement and social listening tools proactively engage customers and address their needs even on a larger scale by monitoring and responding to comments, messages, and mentions across different channels (Ahmad et al., 2019). Social media listening tools help track conversations about a company's brand, products, or services and respond timeously.

Firms can treasure customers' needs and wants as strategic contributions in the firms' decision-making processes to enhance customer value (Hisrich & Ramadani, 2018). Customer-oriented firms can use the communications mentioned above to allow customers to have their views incorporated into new firm offerings to increase the chance of new products' success (Hoyer et al., 2010). Customer orientation requests youth entrepreneurs to constantly communicate with their customers to maintain high customer satisfaction and engagement.

2.11 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION (EO) AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) refers to a firm's inclination towards pro-activeness, innovativeness and risk-taking behaviours that are thought to enhance organizational performance (Dankiewicz et al., 2020; Isichei et al., 2020; Kramolis & Dobes., 2020 Lumpkin & Dess, 2015). Studies of EO have reported mixed results, with little or no consensus among scholars on EO measurement scales and constructs. Some of the common EO scales are innovations, risk-taking and difficulties for rivals (Covin et al., 2020), pro-

activeness, innovations and risk-taking (Cho et al., 2018; Covin & Wales, 2018; Rauch et al., 2009; Wales et al., 2016), innovativeness, autonomy, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness, and pro-activeness (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022; Jalali et al., 2022). Due to inconsistency in the measurement constructs, some literature has failed to find a significant relationship between EO and performance (e.g., Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023), while others have found significant and strong relationships (Mathafena, & Msimango-Galawe, 2023; Meekaewkunchorn et al. 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020). Gartner (2012) suggests a possible solution to the inconsistent results through a combination and investigation of multiple dimensions simultaneously. Gartner's idea suggests that only investigating the individual effect of single EO variables on performance might not be enough to capture the entrepreneurial phenomena fully. The reasoning is that the effect a variable has on an outcome might be dependent on contextual factors such as the environment or firm size. This is the underlying principle of the contingency theory of entrepreneurship (CTE) discussed in the theoretical framework section of this study. The CTE suggests that the fit between variables is important for high performance (Mostafiz et al., 2022; Yang & Jiang, 2023). Many constructs of EO enhance firm performance, but this research is premised only on pro-activeness, innovativeness, calculated risk-taking, entrepreneurial autonomy and competitive aggressiveness. This study did not examine the direct relationship between EO and firm performance but concurs with extant studies that proposed the following hypothesis.

H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and YEP.

2.11.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRO-ACTIVENESS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Pro-activeness is the competitive aggressiveness, boldness, and quick response to opportunities at the disposal of the firm (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022; Jalali et al., 2022; Kiss et al., 2022; Lumpkin & Dess, 2015). Proactive entrepreneurs go beyond simply making the company adapt to the external environment circumstances but provide the firm with the ability to be pioneers, to predict and react to changes or market needs by designing suitable products or services mix to serve the market, influence better, or shape the business environment ahead of competitors (Kiss et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2002). Pro-activeness portrays an opportunity-seeking mindset associated with launching new products or

services ahead of competitors, and this trait is often associated with SMEs rather than large organizations (Zacca & Dayan, 2018). Pro-activeness and innovativeness are critical strategic attitudes for a firm's performance, especially in highly dynamic and competitive market environments (Covin & Miller, 2014; Covin & Wales, 2012). Proactive firms anticipate future demand and create changes that shape the environment (Wanjau et al., 2015). A firm's pro-activeness confirms a strong positive relationship with firm performance (Lumpkin & Dess, 2015; Hacioglu et al., 2012; Schulze et al., 2022). In simple terms, pro-activeness wishes start-up entrepreneurs to look for ways to make things happen. Pro-activeness and innovativeness are important strategic attitudes for firms to thrive in fast-changing and competitive market environments (Bature et al., 2018; Kreiser et al., 2013).

2.11.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INNOVATIVENESS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Innovativeness is the firm's ability to proactively identify new ideas that can be developed into new products, services, technologies, or markets (Bigos & Wach, 2021; Bhatti, Rehman, & Rumman, 2020; Morris et al., 2001; Otieno et al., 2012; Vila-Lopez & White, 2018; Zufiqar et al., 2019). The risk-taking characteristic of entrepreneurs promotes a willingness to try unconventional approaches that lead to breakthrough innovations. The relationship between innovativeness and YEP is that successful entrepreneurs identify opportunities using innovative mindsets and turn the opportunities into viable businesses or ventures. Entrepreneurial activities stimulate innovation through competitive environments that encourage businesses to seek novel and improved ways of doing things. Many small and large firms adopt innovation to increase their profits and market share (Kaya et al., 2020; Makanyeza & Dzvuke, 2015). There ought to be a symbiotic relationship between innovativeness and youth entrepreneurship performance. When youth entrepreneurs become innovative, they embrace creativity in their business processes and become better at problem-solving, which results in improved application of business knowledge to enhance customer value.

The more youth entrepreneurs become innovative, the more their businesses are expected to realise improved performance, which results from increased productivity, cost efficiencies, and the creation of new industries. On the other hand, entrepreneurship turns innovations into thriving businesses that generate jobs and wealth, essential for economic

growth and societal progress. Both innovativeness and YEP play crucial roles in driving economic development, creating jobs, and fostering technological advancements. Innovative firms implement new or significantly improved products, processes, marketing approaches, or organizational methods that positively change their business practices, workplace organization or external relations (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2005). Innovative organizations seek to be pioneers in developing novelty and using innovation as a major source of firm performance.

Focusing on innovation helps the business move beyond opportunity recognition by using new or existing resources in new ways (Morris & Tucker, 2023). Thus, entrepreneurs often seek to capitalize on innovations by transforming them into commercial products or services that meet customers' needs uniquely and better than existing solutions. Innovativeness is vital to youth entrepreneurial firms with limited resources, leading to continuous initiatives and incremental improvements (Ayandibu et al., 2021). Ordinarily, innovativeness urges youth entrepreneurs to use well-thought-of methods in work systems, make changes in design where necessary, develop new services and acquire as much new information as possible that might assist in the pro-activeness of the business.

Innovative firms have strengthened market positions that allow the businesses to grow and perform better in the industry (Benazzouz, 2019; Isichei et al., 2020; Jian et al., 2018; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018; Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021). The EM concept requires some autonomy and freedom from structural constraints that stifle risk-taking, exploration, and out-of-the-box thinking to foster creativity and the discovery of new ideas (Merlo & Auh, 2009; Mason et al., 2015). Though the influence of the four types of innovation on firm performance varies from industry to industry, overall, innovation positively predicts the performance of SMEs (Bolosha, 2023). Thus, innovativeness is a critical determinant of business performance (Ayandibu, 2021; Dogbe et al., 2020; Matekenya & Moyo, 2022; Ullah et al., 2021). Successful entrepreneurs can significantly impact company performance by differentiating themselves through constant identification and capitalization on market opportunities.

Successful entrepreneurial ventures often attract investment and further fuel the development and commercialization of innovations that introduce innovative products,

services, or business models. Ultimately, innovation through entrepreneurship can address societal challenges by offering solutions to current problems pressing many economies, such as unemployment, healthcare, drug abuse, education, sustainability, and poverty alleviation. Resultantly, innovative entrepreneurial endeavours can drive positive social change and be impactful when they improve the quality of life in society.

Entrepreneurs are more likely to invest in research and development, experimenting with new ideas, technologies, and processes to gain a competitive edge or to disrupt existing markets (Rossi et al., 2020; Si et al., 2020; Zheng et al., 2021).

In summary, there is a feedback loop in the relationship between innovation and entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship performance (Rahaman et al., 2021; Riswanto et al., 2020; Šlogar, 2022). As previously alluded, innovations create new opportunities for entrepreneurs, resulting in successful entrepreneurial ventures and further innovations as profits are reinvested in research and development or the company's infrastructural development.

However, although the relationship between innovation and entrepreneurship performance benefits economic growth, job creation, and societal progress, it sometimes brings challenges because not all innovations become successful entrepreneurial ventures. Challenges emanate when innovative ideas fail to translate into viable businesses (Pisano, 2019). These uncertainties require youth entrepreneurs to exercise calculated risk-taking characteristics, which will be discussed in the next section of this thesis. In brief, innovation and entrepreneurship performance are intertwined and mutually reinforcing forces. Innovations create the foundation for successful entrepreneurial ventures, while entrepreneurship drives the adoption and commercialization of innovations.

2.11.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CALCULATED RISK-TAKING AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Decision-making in the entrepreneurship business world entails some risk-taking in one way or the other. Youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to be bold in decision-making. According to Baron and Ward (2004), entrepreneurs' internal locus of control and desires drive risky ventures (Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021). Risk-taking is the tendency of an entrepreneur to take initiative and perform activities with uncertain results (Kallmuenzer &

Peters, 2018). From the perspective of SMEs, entrepreneurs' risk-taking is associated with a greater degree of SME performance (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005). The key to successful risk-taking is considering calculated risks that minimize negatives and maximize positive outcomes (Alton, 2016). Calculated risk-taking is the entrepreneur's ability to use premeditated actions to reduce the dangers of opportunity pursuit (Becherer et al., 2012). Taking calculated risk includes the enthusiasm to pursue realistic opportunities that produce minimum losses or performance discrepancies (Morris et al., 2001). Calculated risk-taking calls for appropriate research to be done and contingency measures to be put in place, such as the importance of formulating strategies, objectives, structures, and Organizational Structure (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Rabhi et al., 2023; Tipu, 2022; Wales et al., 2020).

In other words, calculated risk-taking requests youth entrepreneurs to analyse the environmental conditions thoroughly predict and prevent possible risks that may have adverse effects on the business. As enterprise undertakings involve risk-taking, only risk-neutral entrepreneurs are more likely to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Alton encourages start-up entrepreneurs to be able to differentiate between calculated risks and foolish ones. However, some entrepreneurs can take foolish risks that might yield positive results. The major difference between calculated and foolish risk-taking is that a foolish risk is ventured into blindly without contingency plans.

On the contrary, calculated risk involves a fair amount of research and a reasonable number of chances of success rather than failure (Bergner et al., 2023; Linton, 2019). Successful entrepreneurs take calculated risks through careful evaluation and effective management of risks. Youth entrepreneurs ought to minimize potential negative impacts on businesses by making informed decisions, conducting thorough market research, and developing exigency plans in case their initial plans fail.

2.11.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL AUTONOMY AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Entrepreneurial autonomy (EA) is the ability of the entrepreneur to set the strategic direction of the firm and act independently when pursuing venture-related work to be able to have decisional freedom regarding what to do, how, and when tasks are done (Al-Mamary & Alshallaqi, 2022; Tufa et al., 2021; Van Gelderen, 2020). Through the freedom to make independent personal decisions, take risks, and pursue their ideas and visions in

managing the business, EA plays a crucial role in enhancing youth entrepreneurial performance. This autonomy empowers them to develop their entrepreneurial skills and realize greater potential. Some literature assumes that entrepreneurship comes automatically with the rights of ownership from the belief that founders innately act autonomously (Croson & Minniti, 2012; Lumpkin & Dess, 2015; Lumpkin et al., 2009), yet Van Gelderen (2016) refutes this assertion and shows that business owner/founders make active efforts to attain and maintain autonomy (Van Gelderen et al., 2020). Herewith are some of the several ways in which EA can enhance youth entrepreneurial performance:

Firstly, autonomy allows youth entrepreneurs to be more creative and innovative in exploring their ideas and solutions without external restrictions (Yu et al., 2019). This freedom to experiment, think outside the box, and develop unique business concepts differentiates youth entrepreneurs from other businesses and makes them more competitive.

Secondly, EA fosters problem-solving skills in youth entrepreneurs. Being autonomous enables youth entrepreneurs to face challenges and problems and independently devise solutions to those business obstacles. Entrepreneurial autonomy teaches the youth some essential skills vital for success in the business world, such as critical decision-making, situational analysis, and finding effective solutions.

Thirdly, autonomy provides the youth entrepreneurs opportunities to take ownership of their ventures, experience the outcomes of their decisions, and instil a sense of responsibility and accountability that leads to increased self-belief and motivation. Some EA decisions expose the youth entrepreneurs to various situations, including successes and failures. The sole responsibility for the business venture's success or failure helps enhance accountability and resilience. Autonomy instils in youth entrepreneurs a sense of adaptability vital to navigating setbacks, adjusting strategies, and persevering in the face of future challenges (Tipu, 2022; Wales et al., 2020). These autonomous factors drive the youth entrepreneurs to work harder, make better decisions, and learn from their experiences.

Fourthly, EA stimulates learning and growth in youth entrepreneurs by being active learners who constantly seek out contemporary knowledge, acquire current skills, and continuously improve themselves (Koloba, 2016). The quest to stay current provides the

freedom to explore new interests, attend relevant workshops or conferences, and engage in networking opportunities that enhance business performance. Finally, EA promotes an opportunity-driven entrepreneurial mindset characterized by proactivity, identification or seizure of opportunities, and calculated risk-taking to benefit current and future business endeavours. Youth entrepreneurship autonomy fosters a vibrant and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem that nurtures business growth performance and contributes to economic development.

Amongst the several scales used to measure entrepreneurial autonomy, the study adopts the ones by Kuratko et al., 1997. Through measuring EA, the study seeks to identify areas where support and guidance may be necessary to help an entrepreneur succeed.

2.12 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPETITIVE AGGRESSIVENESS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Competitive aggressiveness (CA) refers to a company's intention and ability to beat competitors (Hossain & Al Asheq, 2019). While competitive aggressiveness can drive youth entrepreneurs to push their boundaries and achieve success, it can also lead to negative outcomes if not managed effectively. Thus, competitive aggressiveness aims to strike a balance between healthy competition and fostering a supportive environment. By leveraging competitive aggressiveness effectively, young entrepreneurs can enhance their performance while contributing positively to the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Initially, CA encourages a growth mindset when young entrepreneurs view competition as an opportunity for growth and learning. CA encourages businesses to embrace challenges from rivalries, learn from past failures, and continuously improve skills and strategies (Uchenna et al., 2019). While competition is important, CA sometimes encourages young entrepreneurs to collaborate and build networks with their industry peers. Through collaborations, the resultant effects can be knowledge sharing, idea generation, and potential partnerships that can enhance the company's collective performance. Furthermore, CA offers mentorship programs where experienced entrepreneurs can guide and support young entrepreneurs. Mentors can help upcoming firms navigate challenges, develop effective strategies, and channel their competitive energies in a positive direction.

Through continuous environmental scanning to stay informed about customer needs and industry trends, youth entrepreneurs must conduct thorough market research to identify gaps and opportunities. As a result, the youth entrepreneurs gain a competitive advantage through developing innovative products or services. This helps the youth entrepreneurs compete effectively and gives them more confidence, resilience, and adaptability to the dynamic environment in which they operate their businesses (Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023).

Even though competitiveness can be intense, it is important to instil ethical values in youth entrepreneurs and nurture the importance of fair play, integrity, and responsible business practices. Ethical behaviour can enhance the youth entrepreneurs’ reputation and create a sustainable foundation for long-term success and performance. Of importance to note to the youth entrepreneurs is to strike a balance between healthy competition and fostering a supportive environment that enhances business performance while contributing positively to the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Alqahtani & Usay, 2020; Hidayatullah et al., 2019).

2.13 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF (KOB, MS, AND OS) THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP

A mediating effect is a way in which an independent variable (IV) impacts a dependent variable (DV) (Hoque, 2018). Mediation is part of the causal pathway of an effect and explains how or why an effect occurs (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021; Dash & Paul, 2021). The outcome that results from an MV can be illustrated in a mediational model (as shown in Figure 5).

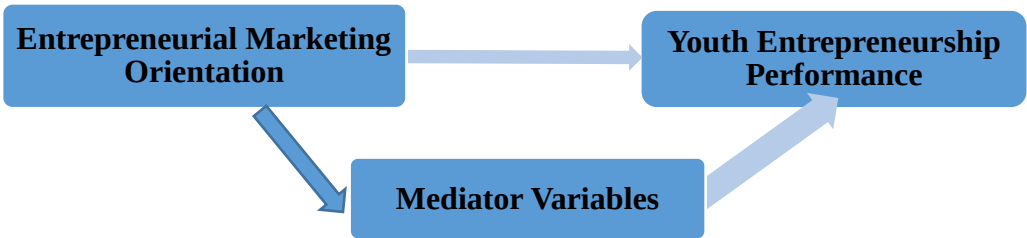


Figure 4: The Mediation Model

Source: Researcher’s compilation

Generally, the mediation models examine the relationship between the DV and the IV, the relationship between the IV and the MV and the relationship between the DV and the MV.

The study has mediator variables (MVs): knowledge of business, managerial skills, and organizational structure (KoB, MS, and OS), with the IV (EMO) and DV (YEP). Mediation is also referred to as an indirect effect or outcome that the IV (EMO) causes and resultantly influences the DV (YEP), that is, how the IV indirectly affects DV through MV. Justification for mediation in this research was a result of extant literature that revealed inconsistencies in the contribution of each EMO dimension on YEP (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Thus, this research used mediation to help clarify the underlying mechanisms and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the causal relationships between EMO or its integrated dimensions to YEP.

The effect caused by a mediator variable (MV), also known as an intervening process or intermediary variable, cannot be defined statistically. However, statistics measures an assumed causal relationship created by an MV.

2.13.1 KNOWLEDGE OF BUSINESS (KoB) MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP

Knowledge of Business (KoB) is the sum of skills, experiences, capabilities, and insights created and relied upon in managing a business (Dibie & Dibie, 2014; Torri & Martinez, 2014). Previous literature recognises the importance of relevant KoB as an important strategic asset that affects all other business activities (Kourilsky et al., 2007; Maina, 2014; Nafukho & Muyia, 2010). Numerous studies show the importance of KoB in facilitating superior business returns (Chirau, 2014; Dibie & Dibie, 2014; Muhammad et al., 2018; Torri & Martinez, 2014). This study expects to examine further the mediating effect of KoB in the relationship between EMO and YEP. The research hopes to concur with previous studies that KoB is vital in the performance of businesses. Thus, the study hypothesized that:

***H_{3d-5d}**: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP.*

2.13.2 MANAGERIAL SKILLS (MS) MEDIATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP

Management skills are learned or practically experienced technical, conceptual, and interpersonal attributes that individuals should have to perform specific organizational

tasks effectively (Katz, 1955; Popescu et al., 2020). These MS encompass essential expertise that significantly impacts business performance, such as planning, organising, coordinating, leading, evaluating, implementing, and controlling resources or activities effectively to achieve specific goals. Effective planning skills help entrepreneurs anticipate potential risks and develop contingency measures for mitigation. Organizing resources includes team building, including selecting and recruiting the appropriate individuals who complement each other in a high-performance team. A manager who deals with people also needs high emotional intelligence skills to understand and manage both their own and the emotions of others.

A managerial skill to control measures helps to reduce costs, streamline operations, and efficiently allocate resources to priority tasks that maximise performance and productivity. MS is vital for team management, budget setting, and effectively monitoring projects in any business. Evaluation skills help entrepreneurs monitor progress and identify areas for adjustments that ensure realignment to organizational goals. Furthermore, communication skills bind the team together through shared values and company culture that may lead to overall business performance.

Additional MS required by youth entrepreneurs includes leadership skills to guide and motivate team members to achieve the best performance; problem-solving skills to identify root problem causes and develop effective solutions (Popescu et al., 2020); decision-making skills to analyze information, weigh options, and make well-informed decisions promptly; time management skills to effectively prioritize tasks and meet deadlines; communication skills to convey expectations, provide feedback, resolve conflicts, and facilitate collaboration among team members; and strategic thinking skills to align the team's efforts with the organization's long-term goals that contribute to its success (Mohamud & Ndede, 2019). By developing strong MS, entrepreneurs motivate and inspire their team members, encourage creativity, and promote positive work environments to meet organizational goals such as productivity and profitability.

On the other hand, EMO refers to the ability of a business to create and deliver value to customers through clearly identifying and meeting the identified customer's needs and wants. Through EMO, companies emphasize innovation, creativity, and calculated risk-

taking to develop products or services and formulate appropriate marketing strategies that address dynamic customer tastes.

Effective managers need to possess both MS and EMO to succeed in today's business environment since they need to identify market opportunities, develop innovative solutions to meet customer needs, and lead teams to execute those solutions effectively. Evidence suggests that managerial skills like risk management, situational problem-solving practices, competent leadership skills, business management training, effective monitoring, and evaluation, as well as entrepreneurial training like having a savings culture are among the most important factors for company performance (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010; Karanja, 2014; Mohamud & Ndede, 2019). Such managerial skills, including time management, risk management and stress-handling techniques, are crucial for young entrepreneurs to avoid financial and operational failures.

Studies have shown how top management's qualities influence firms' success (Eisenhardt, 2013; Higgins and Gulati, 2006) and how top management's academic affiliation affects performance (Bonardo et al., 2011). This study expects to further examine the influence of managerial skills as a mediator variable in the relationship between EMO and YEP. The research hopes to concur with Mohamud and Ndede (2019), who conclude that acquiring useful managerial skills and competencies, entrepreneurial training, and a savings culture are essential to goal realization and successful businesses. Both MS and EMO are critical skill sets that, if effectively combined, can lead to more innovative marketing strategies for the success and performance of a business. Developing and sharpening these MS can help youth entrepreneurs become effective leaders who can enhance their employee's and organizational performance. Thus, based on the above discussions, the study hypothesized that:

***H_{3e-5e}:** Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP.*

2.13.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE (OS) MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP

Various authors concur with defining organizational structure (OS) and share fundamental views that OS is a collaborative system that categorises various employee relations through indication of job descriptions, leadership style, and set of rules (Fitria et al., 2017);

groupings of resources at different levels depending on their responsibilities (Rabhi et al., 2023; Stamevska & Stamevski, 2016); distribution of roles without conflict (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Rabhi et al., 2023); outline the activities and relationships (Tammy & Clawson, 2008; Tipu, 2022) that directs or coordinates employee behaviour towards achieving set organizational goals (Wales et al., 2020). Through OS, the various interrelationships between the different parts of a firm are defined, including the distribution of tasks, responsibilities, authority, and mechanisms of decision-making that enhance the organization's performance (Arokodare & Falana, 2021; Waribugo & Etim, 2016). The design of OS differs according to determinants such as the environment and the firm's size, culture, and organizational strategy. Hence, organizations' structures depend on environmental contexts, such as the difficulty of predicting, sustaining, and adapting to changes (Aldrich, 2008). In order to choose the appropriate organizational structure, it is best to understand the characteristics of those contexts and their requirements to find the structural arrangements to adapt together (De Massis, 2021; Haldar, 2019). Thus, the primary goal of the structural design is to facilitate the flow of information from the external environment and effectively process it within the organizational units (Astley & Fombrun, 1983).

In this study, OS is measured using such potential items as departmentalisation, hierarchy or chain of command, span of control, centralization of decision-making authority, formalization and/ or standardization of procedures, communication channels, coordination of work processes; flexibility to adapt to changes; and complexity of inter-departmental arrangement. As such, OS, in this context, determines the formal systems for dividing work and achieving coordination amongst employees to outline the authority, responsibilities, and decision-making centres (Akbari et al., 2018).

How an organization is structured can impact the efficiency and effectiveness with which the firm accomplishes its goals and objectives (Misbahudin et al., 2024; Wales et al., 2020). As a result, a well-designed OS clearly defines roles that can help minimize confusion, overlap duties clearly, and distribute appropriate responsibilities amongst workstations and team members. Furthermore, clearly defined OS may help facilitate effective communication, collaboration, and decision-making processes among team members. Clear communication and collaboration in firms harmonize information sharing and help ensure team members work towards the same goals. Through well-structured firm

arrangements, timely decisions are vital to organizational performance. In a hierarchical OS, decision-making may be centralized, resulting in limited opportunities for innovation or risk-taking, whereas, in a flat OS, decision-making may be decentralized and more flexible to experimentation with new marketing strategies (Foss et al., 2019; Ganoids & Meek, 2020; Halдар, 2019). Thus, a flat OS promotes more entrepreneurial approaches that prioritize the needs and preferences of customers. Firms with well-structured OS can easily adapt and restructure their operations in response to changing customer demands and environmental needs.

On the other hand, EMO is a contemporary marketing approach that focuses on, amongst others, innovation, calculated risk-taking, entrepreneurial autonomy, value creation, pro-activeness, and customer orientation. OS and EMO are two critical business elements that are vital ingredients for firm performance. Evidence suggests that organisational structure (OS), like appropriate institutional policies, well-designed policies, business-support frameworks, and sufficient infrastructure are vital ingredients that improve youth entrepreneurship (Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2016;). Acevedo-Duque et al. (2021) allude to the importance of structures and policies to capacitate youth to exploit competencies that enhance their financial well-being and take control of their livelihoods since youth entrepreneurs serve as catalysts for sustainable national development. Khan et al. (2016) used seemingly unrelated regression (SURE) with quantitative research to assess the involvement of Malaysian youth in business enterprises. The results show that appropriate institutional policies, well-designed government policies, business-support frameworks, and sufficient infrastructure are vital for improved youth entrepreneurship.

This study hopes to support the notion that structures and policies are vital to capacitate youth to exploit competencies that enhance youth entrepreneurs' performance. Thus, OS may help to mediate the relationship between performance and various factors that impact it. A well-defined OS promotes accountability that improves performance outcomes (Foss et al., 2019; Ganoids & Meek, 2020). Thus, based on the above arguments, the study hypothesized that:

H_{3f-5f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP.

2.14 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPANY GROWTH AND YEP

There can be complex and multifaceted relationships between company growth and company performance. Even though there is generally a positive correlation between growth and performance, it is important to note that growth alone does not guarantee good performance, and vice versa. The subsequent section further explores the relationship between company growth and its performance. Generally, when a company experiences growth in terms of revenue, market share, or profitability, it is considered a positive indicator of good performance. Growth often signifies that the company is attracting customers, expanding its operations, and generating higher profits (Vuković et al., 2022). A company's growth can result from various factors, such as successful product launches, effective marketing strategies, increased customer satisfaction, or improved operational efficiency. Also, growth can have synergistic effects on a company's performance, such that as a company grows, it may benefit from economies of scale that allow the firm to reduce costs and improve profitability. Additionally, growth can attract talented employees, investors, and business partners, providing the company with further resources and opportunities for innovation and expansion.

However, rapid company growth can present challenges and risks that negatively impact performance. If a company grows too quickly without adequate infrastructure, it may struggle to maintain quality standards, meet customer demands, or effectively manage its operations. It is crucial for a company to balance its growth aspirations with profitability and financial stability (Carp et al., 2020). Uncontrolled or unsustainable growth can strain resources, dilute core competencies, and negatively impact performance. Similarly, managing cash flow, financing growth, and scaling the organization can become more complex as the company expands. Even though sustainable growth is essential for long-term performance or while growth is generally considered positive, there is a need for growth to be managed effectively, keeping in mind the company's strategic objectives, market conditions, and long-term sustainability goals.

It is vital to note that external market conditions influence growth and performance. A company's growth may be driven by favourable market trends, such as increased demand for its products or services, a booming industry, or a favourable economic environment (Carp et al., 2020; Vuković et al., 2022). Conversely, growth may be harder to achieve

during downturns or market disruptions, and performance may suffer despite the company's efforts. Ultimately, the relationship between company growth and performance is dynamic and influenced by various factors.

2.15 ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Performance is the ability of a business to achieve its objectives and deliver desired results. Firm performance encompasses various aspects, including financial performance, operational efficiency, and overall business growth (Onalan et al., 2020). Firm performance is crucial to entrepreneurs as it determines their business's success, growth, and sustainability. Entrepreneurial performance affects the company's ability to attract investors, build a reputable brand, motivate employees, gain a competitive advantage, and pursue expansion opportunities. Monitoring, analysing, and actively working to improve firm performance are essential for entrepreneurs to achieve their goals and realize their vision. According to Subedi (2021), entrepreneurial performance (EP) is a measurement construct or yardstick for using available resources to accomplish the success/failure of a venture's goals.

According to Diraditsile (2018), young people in Botswana are typically between eighteen and thirty-five. Thus, in this research, youth entrepreneurial performance measures the accomplishments of organizational goals in businesses owned by people between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five. Entrepreneurial performance evaluates various aspects of a businessperson's activities and outcomes to assess the effectiveness and success of starting, managing, and growing a business venture. In addition, EP varies significantly depending on the industry or sector type, market conditions, and individual goals. Therefore, measuring EP can be subjective such that different stakeholders may have diverse criteria for measuring the success of businesses. The EP construct evolved from organizational theory and strategic management (Myint, 2016) and is summarised by Van Vuuren (1997) as achieving a set of entrepreneurial goals. It is vital to note that EP can be used interchangeably to sometimes mean new venture survival, growth, and success of entrepreneurial business organizations (Hanks, 1994; Subedi, 2021).

Organization theory uses three approaches to measure performance: the goal-based approach, the system approach, and the constituency approach (Hatch, 2018; Subedi, 2021). Other scholars use financial and operational performance constructs based on two

dimensions: financial versus operational measures, financial versus non-financial measures, or even primary versus secondary data sources (Venkatraman & Ramanujam, 1986). This makes firm performance a complex and comprehensive concept which can be measured using diverse determinants, starting with variables from the balance sheet, income statement or cash-flow statement, continuing with research and development expenses or IT competencies, and last but not least with intangible assets like human capital, goodwill, or brand value (Herciu & Șerban, 2018).

Hansen and Wernerfelt (1989) developed a model for organisational performance that considered three categories of factors directly impacting organisational performance: organizational, environmental, and people. Lately, the literature suggests the use of multidimensional scales to measure entrepreneurial performance, which is considered to be the ability of a business to achieve sustainable increases in revenue, expand its customer base, enter new markets, and effectively scale operations (Alqahtani et al., 2022; Myint, 2016; Onalan et al., 2020). As such, Table 7 and the preceding narratives provide overviews of important factors used in this study for EP measures.

Table 7: Entrepreneurial Performance Measurement Scales

Performance Determinants	Source
Customer visits and orders made per customer	Kumar et al. (2018)
Customer referrals (CRefs)	Bozkurt et al. (2021)
Customer retention (CR)	Al-Hersh et al. (2014); Farquhar (2005)
ROA, Sales, ROI, TSR	Bharadwaj (2000), Richard et al. (2009)
Intangible assets	St-Pierre and Audet (2011); Gu & Lev (2011)
Financial ratios	Delen et al. (2013)

Source: Researcher's compilation

2.16 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT CONSTRUCTS

This section provides an overview of some of the performance measurement constructs used in this study. As outlined in the subsequent sections, these constructs provide a structured approach to measuring and monitoring youth entrepreneurial performance against predefined goals, objectives, or standards.

2.16.1 CUSTOMER VISITS AND ORDERS MADE PER CUSTOMER

High customer satisfaction through meeting customer needs and delivering value is essential for entrepreneurial success. An increase in customer visits and the orders made

per customer is a fair measure of business performance (Kumar et al., 2018). Studies suggest that firms can increase customer visits, orders made per customer, and customer retention (CR) through a well-executed customer relationship management (CRM) strategy. Customer relationship management results from the firm's efforts to maintain long-term mutually beneficial interactions with its publics (Palmatier, 2008) that lead to CR (Berry, 1995) as well as enhance competitive advantage (Zinkhan, 2002) rather than having transactional relationships with the customers. Customer relationship management helps enhance metrics such as customer acquisition cost, lifetime value, conversion rates, customer churn rate, and average order value.

A young entrepreneur's CRM strategy may track these metrics to evaluate business performance. The CRM metrics may be used to improve satisfaction levels by keeping abreast with changing market trends, customer preferences, and emerging technologies. Successful entrepreneurs effectively address customer demands and actively solicit feedback from customers in a bid to stay ahead of the competition, address any product or service concerns, and embrace a continuous improvement culture. Regular reviews and refinements of business strategies, processes, and offerings build a strong brand reputation and high customer retention rates. Youth entrepreneurs ought to remember that customer visits, orders made per customer and firm performance are interlinked such that focusing on high customer visit strategies can increase firm performance.

2.16.2 CUSTOMER RETENTION

Customer retention (CR) is the ability of a company to maintain existing customers over a certain period. Al-Hersh et al. (2014) and Farquhar (2005) emphasize that retaining customers lowers acquisition costs and increases the firm's profitability. It is more cost-effective for businesses to focus on retaining existing customers than always acquiring new ones in each transaction. Customer retention is a measurement metric that denotes the number of customers that do not defect from the company; thus, it signifies customer loyalty and is a strong predictor of a firm's performance (Morgan & Rego 2006). The measurement of CR requires a company to integrate data from different functional departments such as accounting, finance, sales, marketing, logistics, and other customer research units. Customer retention and firm performance are two key factors contributing to a business's success and growth.

The subsequent sections discuss some important points to consider regarding customer retention: Firstly, customer retention fosters a loyal customer base that allows effective communication. Effective communication with customers engages them in relevant and valuable brand content that enhances products, services, and the overall customer experience. A clear understanding of customers through effective communication also paves the way for strong relationships, excellent customer service, and personalized experiences that enhance firm performance. Secondly, customers also include employees as internal customers. Employee conduct significantly affects overall business performance (Jalali et al., 2022). Well-trained and professionally developed contact persons may assist in customer retention. A well-motivated, competent team contributes to the overall success of the venture. Youth entrepreneurs should set clear goals and expectations and establish performance evaluation systems to motivate teams to perform well. Investing in personnel professional development to equip them with relevant skills and knowledge contributes to the long-term success of a business. Entrepreneurial performance may be influenced by the professional conduct of employees who continuously learn and self-regulate when serving customers. Lastly, CR may be assisted by the operational efficiency of the venture's internal processes. Streamlined workflows, eliminated bottlenecks, reduced costs, and leveraged technology solutions to enhance productivity and performance (Torri & Martinez, 2014). Youth entrepreneurs should remember that CR and performance are interlinked, so focusing on CR strategies can create a strong foundation for long-term business success.

2.16.3 CUSTOMER REFERRALS

Customer referrals (CRefs) are those prospective patrons who use recommendations and positive word-of-mouth from the firm's satisfied marketing affiliates (Bozkurt et al., 2021). Today's CRefs are compared to ancient times when ancestors would tell each other where dangerous animals would have been spotted or recommend which berries to eat or avoid. In today's world, CRefs are often associated with advice about a product's worth or a recommendation to avoid something based on a customer's perceived personal experiences. When satisfied customers recommend your business to others, many new customers are created through positive word-of-mouth that can further enhance your reputation and attract more customers, increasing the firm's customer acquisition efforts (Kowalik et al., 2022). Customer referrals can significantly impact a firm's performance since CRefs bring in new customers without the need for expensive marketing campaigns. Firms realise cost-savings

on advertising and promotional expenses when existing customers voluntarily act as brand advocates to promote businesses. The increase in customer referrals of your products to others indicates high customer satisfaction and trust for your brand.

Studies show that for small businesses, 85% of prospects can be attracted through word-of-mouth referrals, and 92% of those consumers admit that they trust recommendations of friends and family over other forms of advertising. Referred customers tend to have a higher lifetime value than customers acquired through other channels. Customers referred by others are likely to convert into paying customers compared to leads from other sources. Since these customers come with a recommendation, there is already a certain stronger initial level of trust in the company's brand, leading to greater loyalty, repeat purchases, and long-term relationships.

Initiatives to use CRefs act as a competitive advantage that grows a company's customer base through spreading the good brand word into the networks. Businesses that consistently receive positive referrals have a differential advantage from competitors that establish a positive reputation in the market. Youth entrepreneurs may consider implementing referral programs that incentivize or reward customers for referring others. These creative initiatives may leverage youth businesses on the benefits of CRefs for better performance. Additionally, youth businesses may provide exceptional customer service, deliver high-quality products or services, and actively seek feedback to ensure customer satisfaction and encourage referrals. Due to the advent of the internet, word-of-mouth now travels exponentially faster than before. Thus, contemporary customers rely heavily on CRef before making final purchase decisions (Garg et al., 2020).

2.16.4 FIRM SIZE

A firm's size measures the total assets, total sales, market value of equity and number of employees (Danh, 2018; Cortes, 2021; Karlsson, 2021). Firm size is the most common control variable used in financial firm performance studies (Ghafoorifard et al., 2014; Hossain & Saif, 2019; Kallmuenzer & Peters, 2018; Lopez-Valeiras et al., 2016). However, the relationship between firm size and performance varies depending on factors and contexts, such as industry dynamics, market conditions, management practices, and other variables. Expectations are that firm size positively influences firm performance since bigger market share firms have more profit-making opportunities to outcompete small firms

(Dogan, 2013; Opeyemi, 2019). Below are some common perspectives on the relationship between firm size and performance: Firstly, larger firms may enjoy economies of scale that make them achieve cost advantages by spreading their fixed costs over larger outputs. Resulting in lower production costs, higher efficiency, and improved profitability or performance. Followed by other larger firms that can enhance their competitive position and performance by having more market power. Such firms may secure favourable resource terms like discounts and exclusive agreements or negotiate better deals with suppliers and customers. Lastly, larger firms often have more diversified business operations across several markets, products, or regions. This diversification helps large firms mitigate risks associated with specific markets or industry fluctuations, thus improving the firm's performance.

On the contrary, Banchuenvijit (2012) found that firm size was negatively correlated with firm performance. The assertion is that small firms can be more agile and innovative compared to larger, more bureaucratic organizations that suffer from red tape in responses. Smaller firms have fewer decision-making layers that reduce bureaucracy, thus becoming more flexible and adaptable to market dynamics. Hence, small firms may focus on niche markets or specific customer segments that large firms ignore. This flexibility and adaptability allow small firms to capture emerging opportunities that may result in higher firm performance. However, small firms may face resource constraints, such as limited access to capital, talent, and distribution networks, that can hinder the firm's ability to grow, compete, and achieve economies of scale.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between firm size and performance can also be influenced by industry dynamics, such that some industries favour large firms due to high entry barriers, extensive regulations, or economies of scale. In contrast, other industries are more conducive to small, specialized firms that can differentiate themselves through innovation or personalized services. Therefore, it is important to note that while these perspectives provide a general understanding, the relationship between firm size and performance is not universally consistent. Various factors can influence performance, and each firm's situation is unique. In this research, firm size is measured by the youth entrepreneurs' total business assets, as done in previous research by Baysinger and Hoskisson (1989) and (Ilaboya, 2016).

2.16.5 FIRM'S AGE

A firm's age is the number of years a company existed, from incorporation right through to the point of investigation (Shumway, 2001, Gitzmann, 2008; Wang, 2011, Ilaboya, 2016; Liu, 2020)". On the other hand, performance refers to how well a firm achieves its goals and objectives. Although these factors of a firm's age and performance can be related, there is no guarantee that age alone can lead to performance. In the early stages of a firm's life, evidence suggests that the firm's performance is initially affected through learning-by-doing. The company may face various challenges, including an unstable customer base, weak brand recognition, and inefficient operational processes. During these early lifecycle phases, the firm's performance may be relatively low as the company navigates through periods of learning and adjustment.

Then, hazard rates fall through adolescence, when young firms leverage innovation and agility. As a firm matures and gains experience, it refines its strategies, builds a loyal customer base, and improves its operational efficiency. Through its life cycle stages, a well-established company may develop competitive advantages that positively impact its performance (Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020). It is imperative to understand that a firm's performance may be influenced by numerous other factors beyond age, such as its market intelligence generation, value creation, managerial skills, organizational structure (Foss et al., 2019), and innovativeness, adaptability to customer preferences, uniqueness of products or services, customer satisfaction, and many other practices.

Then, they rebound as firms get older, as long-standing firms may struggle due to complacency or failure to adapt to changing market conditions. Reasons put forward are that important lessons are learnt first and that adaptability or investment opportunities of older firms diminish as the product market ages, suggesting that age should eventually weaken performance. Therefore, while a firm's age can provide insights into its experience and potential stability, it is not the sole determinant of performance. Business success relies on a combination of factors, including adapting, innovating, and effectively executing strategies, regardless of a firm's age.

2.16.6 FINANCIAL METRICS

Company performance can also be monitored and analyzed through financial indicators such as revenue, profitability, return on investment (ROI), and cash flow (Bendle et al.,

2020). Entrepreneurs ought to regularly review financial statements to assess the financial health of their businesses and ensure profit generation, which is vital for long-term viability. Profitability is a critical indicator of a business financial performance and determines the ability to generate a return on investment. Youth entrepreneurs should develop sound financial management skills for sustainable growth and success. Youth entrepreneurs who effectively manage cash flow, control expenses, and make informed financial decisions are more likely to perform well in the long run.

Liquidity ratios indicate the firm's ability to pay off its financial obligations when due without the need for external funds (margin of safety). Three formulae are to be used to calculate liquidity: the current ratio, the quick ratio, and the cash ratio. The current ratio is the firm's ability to pay off its current liabilities (obligations due within the year) with all current assets, such as cash, inventory, and accounts receivable. The Current Ratio is calculated as total current assets divided by total current liabilities.

$$\text{Current Ratio} = \text{Current Assets} / \text{Current Liabilities}$$

The Quick/Acid Test Ratio is the firm's ability to pay off its short-term liabilities with the most liquid assets that exclude inventory. Quick ratio (Acid Ratio) is calculated as total current assets minus inventory divided by the current liabilities.

$$\text{Quick Ratio} = (\text{Current Assets} - \text{Inventories}) / \text{Current Liabilities}$$

The Cash Ratio measures the firm's cash and cash equivalents on hand to pay the firm's current liabilities. The Cash Ratio is calculated as cash and cash equivalents divided by current liabilities.

$$\text{Cash Ratio} = \text{Cash and Cash Equivalents} / \text{Current Liabilities}$$

Generally, firm performance is significant to any business for the under-listed reasons: To begin with, the performance of a business directly impacts its chances of success and survival in the market (Zaborek & Mazur, 2019). A well-performing firm is likelier to achieve its goals, generate profits, and establish a strong market position. Positive firm performance, such as consistently delivering high-quality products or services, meeting customer expectations, and maintaining ethical business practices, helps build a strong

brand reputation. Firms that build reputable brands enhance customer loyalty, attract new customers, and generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations, thereby contributing to the company's long-term success and business performance.

Also, entrepreneurial ventures often require financial resources to grow and expand. Investors, including venture capitalists, angel investors, or even banks, are likelier to invest in a business with strong performance and growth potential. Financial performance, profitability, and a track record of achieving targets make an entrepreneur's business more attractive to potential investors or lenders. On the other hand, profitable businesses can offer competitive salaries, bonuses, and benefits to their employees (Arokodare & Falana, 2021). Moreover, a successful firm creates a positive work environment, fosters a sense of achievement, and provides opportunities for career advancement. Such factors contribute to higher employee satisfaction and lower turnover rates, which are crucial for an entrepreneur to maintain a skilled and dedicated workforce that can be more creative and innovative.

Finally, excellent firm performance is a competitive advantage in any marketplace. Businesses that consistently outperform rivals gain useful differentiation factors like a reputation for excellence, customer satisfaction, and innovativeness that make such firms easily adapt to the dynamic customer needs and stay ahead of the competition. Entrepreneurs often aspire their businesses to perform well so that they scale operations and expand product lines, enter into new markets, and attract new customers. Firm performance also increases the entrepreneur's credibility and access to partnerships and collaborations that may facilitate infrastructural development.

2.17 THE NEED FOR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

According to the European Union (2015), the birth of new enterprises is often seen as one of the key determinants of job creation and economic growth (George, 2018). However, only if the informal sector is successful can it positively contribute to economic growth, prosperity, and reduction in both poverty and unemployment rates. As highlighted in previous sections, youth entrepreneurship ventures are crucial to the overall productivity of an economy. Firm performance is paramount to an entrepreneur to see the youth entrepreneurship business survive beyond the inception stage and contribute in various ways.

Although the significance of new ventures is beyond doubt, most new ventures struggle to perform effectively during the early years of establishment (George, 2018; Bartelsman, Scarpetta & Schivardi, 2005). This notion is supported by classic economics and classical institutional theories, showing that new ventures suffer from numerous liabilities that make them highly vulnerable and prone to early failure. These include the “liability of newness” (Schoonhoven, 2015), the “liability of adolescence”, their ‘adolescence” (Abatecola & Uli, 2016), and the “liability of smallness” (Lefebvre, 2022). Jointly, these liability philosophies are extremely influential during the early stages of new venture creation, resulting in limited access to scarce yet urgently desired resources.

A sizeable number of SMEs in developing countries have challenges such as access to finance, local legal institutions, insufficient knowledge of cultures prevalent in different countries, and resource constraints. Despite several challenges that SMEs face worldwide, they continue to grow rapidly in different countries. SMEs play vital roles in most economies, especially in developing countries (Berisha & Pula, 2015; Taiminen & Karjaluo, 2015; Karedza et al., 2014; Popescu, 2014). What makes youth entrepreneurs resilient and powerful economic recovery engines is their ability to adapt to changes and turn challenges into opportunities rapidly. More so, the performance and growth of youth entrepreneurship depend on the proper application of marketing and entrepreneurial strategies into their organizational culture. Some of the importance that youth entrepreneurship brings to economies are discussed below.

2.18 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION

When young people are encouraged to start their businesses, it fosters innovation and economic growth and generates jobs for themselves and others. With poverty being a menace in developing nations, youth entrepreneurship plays a significant role in economic growth through job creation, which reduces unemployment rates and offers a better standard of living in the community. A working nation results in a healthy nation since people would access medication and contribute to maintaining health facilities through tax revenue collections. Moffat and Kapunda (2015) assert that 40% of individuals in the informal sector ventured into entrepreneurship due to them being unemployed, 35% due to a high interest in being self-employed, while the remaining 25% entered as a result of seeking a better income (Gaetsewe, 2018).

When youth entrepreneurs establish their ventures, they create employment opportunities and hire employees to help run their operations. Depending on the scale and nature of the entrepreneurial endeavour, youth entrepreneurship business ventures support local economies through contribution to the overall employment growth. Youth-led businesses tend to have a local focus that mainly caters to their communities' needs. By starting businesses serving local markets, youth entrepreneurs contribute to local economic development and tackle other pressing social issues such as poverty, education, healthcare, and sustainability. Thus, youth entrepreneurship may positively impact social change in communities. Youth entrepreneurship can also lead to industries' diversification and expansion by introducing fresh perspectives and innovative ideas that introduce new products or services. Technological innovation can salvage the poverty situation in developing countries by creating jobs that provide a means of living for workers and their families (Marima, 2016). Indeed, becoming an innovative youth entrepreneur instead of a job seeker reduces unemployment levels in an economy. This diversification can create demand for new skill sets and job roles, opening up employment opportunities for other professionals in support industries such as business consulting, mentoring, financing, and legal services.

Successful young entrepreneurs serve as role models for their peers and inspire others to consider entrepreneurship a viable career option. This increased interest in entrepreneurship can lead to more young individuals starting their businesses, ultimately creating more employment opportunities. Undoubtedly, the Government of Botswana [GovBots] appreciates the important role that the informal sector contributes to employment creation and poverty eradication in the economy. To fully leverage the potential of youth entrepreneurship for employment creation, it is crucial to provide aspiring young entrepreneurs with access to education, training, mentorship, financial support, and a supportive business environment. In Botswana, all interested stakeholders, such as the BotGov, educational institutions, and the private sector, collaborate to create programs and initiatives that foster an entrepreneurial culture and enable young people to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

2.18.1 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Kushnir et al. (2010) state that youth entrepreneurship dominates in economic contribution in every continent. The same authors surveyed 132 economies that indicate 125 million formal SMEs exist, of which 89 million are operated in emerging markets. In the African region, small to medium enterprises (SMEs) constitute about 91% of all formal business entities in South Africa (Sibanda et al., 2018). Many SMEs contribute towards economic growth, reduce unemployment, and ensure equitable income distribution within the community (Gjini, 2014; Manyani, Hove, Mudzura & Chiriseri, 2014; Moorthy et al., 2012). Therefore, SMEs are one way to achieve economic self-sufficiency in many countries (Hoque, 2018a; Hoque & Awang, 2016a; Montoo, 2006).

2.18.2 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL INCOME

Schumpeter's Mark 1 regime states that "The Theory of Economic Development" emphasizes that entrepreneurs significantly contribute to economic development by introducing new inventions that obsolete current technologies and products (Acs et al., 2018; Carree & Thurik, 2010; Muranda, 2016). The world has recently witnessed a boom in the rise of youth entrepreneurship, such that youth entrepreneurship has become a standard for economic development globally (Alemu, 2018; Rafique, 2020). Several governments and policy planners worldwide shifted their focus and highly prioritised the promotion of youth entrepreneurship due to its contribution to economic development (Chen et al., 2017; Neneh & Van Zyl, 2017; Pittayasophon & Intarakumnerd, 2017; Sener et al., 2014; Westlund et al., 2011). Westlund et al. (2011) produced empirical entrepreneurial literature that shows a positive correlation between entrepreneurship (measured as the number of youth entrepreneurship ventures) and economic growth.

As cited in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report [GEMR] (2015/2017), the comparative international study concludes that entrepreneurship contributes to positive BOP worldwide and that there is a correlation between the level of entrepreneurial activity and economic growth, which is greater than 70%. Therefore, most developing nations with high technological innovation levels have above-average economic growth rates and BOP. A small youth entrepreneurship idea can be turned into a big innovative solution that can change the future of developing countries by making significant contributions to a country's Gross Domestic Product (Rafique, 2020). Similarly, the Small Business Administration [SBA] (2011) alludes that youth entrepreneurship generates more revenue with the same

number of capital inputs than older companies. Countries like the United States have already realized the dramatic potential of youth entrepreneurship companies and drafted policies to harness the benefits of a youth entrepreneurial economy (Alemu, 2018).

2.18.3 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PAVES THE WAY FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Many youth entrepreneurs introduce more advanced technologies than what might be already available in the industry, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, or the Internet of Things. These more cutting-edge technologies increase efficiency and effectiveness, resulting in increased productivity, which youth entrepreneurs might use as a competitive advantage. Other authors (Bolosha et al., 2023) view youth entrepreneurship as innovative ways of responding to the lagging business environment that ultimately creates wealth, improves capital formation, and positively contributes to economic growth. Muranda et al. (2016) view youth entrepreneurship as a contributor to economic development was also proposed in Schumpeter's view of "creative destruction". The suggestion is that traditional businesses sometimes miss the opportunities identified by new and upcoming entrepreneurial ventures, thus rocking the industry's dynamism and contributing to a nation's development through new ways of producing and distributing goods and services.

These innovative ways of producing and distributing goods might require new infrastructure, energy sources and communication infrastructure, which are viewed as direct economic development measures. Masses of successful youth entrepreneurship ventures such as Airbnb and Uber have become multibillion-dollar companies, replacing some larger corporations and government institutions and closing the existing need gaps in products and services (Alemu, 2018). According to Alemu, youth entrepreneurship signifies a new norm of economic development in the 21st century, where youth entrepreneurship defines the success of the most ambitious enterprises through providing new technologies, information, and continuous learning.

2.18.4 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE COMMUNITY'S STANDARD OF LIVING

Renowned entrepreneurs can change communities' living standards through advanced products and services that introduce efficiency and effectiveness in new ways of living and working. Youth entrepreneurship also assists in change management with innovation, where novel and enhanced products permit new market development. Youth

entrepreneurship produces a cascading effect, stimulating healthy industrial competition and inspiring workers to be more pioneering and inventive since the new novel entrepreneurial ideas stir more originality and or creativity. With time, youth entrepreneurship produces new industries that quickly expand, and many other sectors benefit from it. Developing youth entrepreneurship into prosperous companies benefits not just the owners but also all the stakeholders (Rafique, 2020).

2.18.5 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUBSIDIZES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Youth entrepreneurship directly changes the status quo of their local communities, such as the way Microsoft changed Redmond whilst Google transformed Mountain View, California (Corl, 2014). Youth entrepreneurship leads to the prosperity and proliferation of either graduates or experienced professionals as job seekers from other parts of the world. This diversity of ethnicities enriches cultural diversity and tolerance, boosting knowledge exchange. More technologically innovative entrepreneurial business ventures contribute to economic revival by contributing to improved infrastructural developments in areas such as roads, communication, electricity, water, shopping malls, hospitals, airports, administration offices and even industrial areas as a means to facilitate the ease of doing business (Lukhele & Soumonni, 2021).

2.18.6 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP ALLEVIATES COMMUNITY POVERTY

Regarding youth unemployment as that share of the labour force aged 18-35 without work but available for and seeking employment, Botswana becomes an interesting case with its high youth unemployment figures (41.65% as of 2020) depicted in Table 8. As such, the crucial role of youth entrepreneurship in creating employment and poverty alleviation cannot be overemphasized.

Table 8: Botswana's Youth Unemployment Rate

Year	Unemployment Rate	Percentage Change
2022	37.85%,	0.75% decline from 2021
2021	38.60%,	3.06% decline from 2020
2020	41.65%,	6.37% increase from 2019
2019	35.29%,	0.05% decline from 2018

Source: Macrotrends (2023)

Batswana experience an excruciating income poverty level that is pegged at \$1 (United States Dollar) a day per household. Despite the country being the largest diamond producer in the world as of the year 2023, this income poverty is considered very high in comparison to other upper-middle-income countries such as Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico, Turkey, and Venezuela (Gaetsewe, 2018; Ulriksen, 2012).

In response to the socio-political and economic challenges faced by many nations, the technological innovation brought about by youth entrepreneurship becomes a default position for many to escape the debilitating poverty, thereby significantly alleviating poverty levels of an economy (Ndiweni & Verhoeven, 2013). Poverty is a menacing challenge in developing nations, and youth entrepreneurship can salvage the situation by creating jobs that provide a means of living for workers and their families (Marima, 2016). Thus, youth entrepreneurship may be considered a worthwhile contributor to job creation and poverty alleviation and an enabler to raise the standard of living of a community.

2.19 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This second chapter discussed various literature on the relationship between EMO adoption and the performance of business, starting from the pioneers of the EM concept, Stocks (2023) and Morris et al. (2002), to contemporary studies by Guerola-Navarro et al. (2022). Studies by Lindsay and Kropp (2015) and Hoque and Awang (2016) also confirm the importance of adopting the EM concept on the performance of a business. Most of these studies have been done in developed countries, with few or no similar studies found yet in emerging economies like Botswana. The closest study by Rasheed et al. (2016) examines the relationship between EM and SMEs' performance in Lagos State of Nigeria. Previous studies on the relationship between EMO and YEP (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) show little or no evidence of the use of such mediator variables as knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organizational structure (OS). This study introduces three mediator variables, KoB, MS, and OS, that are thought to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. The motivation for this study is that the literature on mediating effect is relatively new and has been rapidly flourishing in academia (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021; Dash & Paul, 2021; Hoque, 2018). Unlike previous research that sparingly uses the mediator variables, this study aims to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) through the introduction of these three mediator variables (MV), KoB, MS, and OS, that are thought to strengthen the relationship

between EMO and YEP. This study is amongst the few to consider the mediating effect and may be the only one with the MVs KoB, MS, and OS used simultaneously.

Thus, the study is unique in explaining the mediating effect mechanism. The MVs KoB, MS, and OS create an important causal pathway of the relationship and explain how or why the independent variable (IV) EMO affects the dependent variable (DV) YEP. Research suggests that each dimension of EMO includes, amongst others, innovation (Rahaman et al., 2021; Riswanto et al., 2020; Šlogar, 2022), proactiveness (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022; Jalali et al., 2022; Kiss et al., 2022), calculated risk-taking, and opportunity-detection, is positively associated with company performance. By adopting EMO and focusing on these dimensions, companies are more likely to achieve higher levels of financial success from improved company performance. Previous studies reveal inconsistencies in the contribution of each EM dimension to the performance of youth ventures YEP (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Nevertheless, this study considers those previous studies and borrows the contextual deductions done elsewhere to examine the effects of adopting such EMO dimensions and evaluate their contribution to the YEP of Botswana. The next chapter outlines the development of the research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter provided a comprehensive literature review on the relationship between EMO adoption and the performance of business and identified the research gaps. This chapter on conceptual framework development and research hypotheses discusses various scholarly works that assist in answering the research questions of the study. A critical review of previous works helped to identify knowledge gaps, put the current study into context, point out its direction, and justify the purpose and need for the study in question. The chapter starts with clarity on the theoretical framework that motivates this research. Then follows discussions on the theoretical model, conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1), and, finally, the development of the hypotheses.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theory is an organized statement of related abstracts that seek to explain some empirical worldview (Diraditsile, 2020; Haydam & Steenkamp, 2020; Varpio et al., 2020). This research embraces individual and firm-level entrepreneurship theories as the guiding framework. The fundamentals of the Psychological Entrepreneurship theory (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) are examined to show the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. The subsequent sections discuss the research questions formulated in the conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5) and the hypotheses of this study.

3.2.1 INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP THEORIES TO YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

This research's theoretical framework acknowledges and is premised on the cognitive and economic schools of thought. The cognitive principles focus on the individual characteristics, while the economic principles focus on the firm characteristics. Both schools of thought are important because the study reflects on the entrepreneur's intellect and behaviour (Sarasvathy, 2020) as influential to how the individual governs the business, forming part of the firm's characteristics (Linton & Klinton, 2019). The individual-level characteristics are covered by the Psychological Entrepreneurship Theories (PET), which

are comprised of three entrepreneurship theories, namely, Personality Traits Theory (PTT), Locus of Control Concept (LCC) and Need for Achievement Theory (NAT) that emphasize the personal characteristics envisaged in entrepreneurs (Simpeh, 2024); whereas the firm level characteristics are covered by the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) (Yang & Jiang, 2023; Mostafiz et al., 2022). Even though the level of analysis in PET is the individual (Landstrom, 2020) rather than firm characteristics, the study envisages that the entrepreneur's personality is hard to separate from how the individual manages the business. Thus, these individual traits are thought to be highly linked to firm performance in youth entrepreneurs, as discussed in the subsequent sections.

The Personality Traits Theory (PTT) covers the enduring inborn qualities that individuals naturally show that make people entrepreneurs (Ali et al., 2020; Bleidorn et al., 2021). Even though there is little research evidence to support personality traits, successful entrepreneurs are associated with tendencies to be opportunity-driven, high levels of creativity, innovativeness, risk-taking, tolerance for ambiguity, high mental energy, and emotional resilience, high levels of management skills and or business know-how. Entrepreneurs are also known to be optimistic, hard workers, show intense commitment and perseverance and thrive on the competitive desire to win and excel because they tend to be dissatisfied with the status quo and desire to improve (Cakranegara et al., 2022; Mayr et al., 2021; Troise & Tani, 2020). Entrepreneurs are visionary individuals with a lifelong learning tendency to use failure as a springboard to transform and make a difference.

The Locus of Control Concept (LCC) refers to an individual's perception and beliefs about the underlying causes of events in their life (Hamzah & Othman, 2023; Rotte, 1954). That is, whether the outcomes of actions are on what individuals do (internal control orientation) or on events outside an individual's control (external control orientation). Empirical reports positively associate internal Locus of Control (LoC) with the desire to become an entrepreneur or a business owner (Cromie, 2000; Hsiung, 2018; Rauch & Frese, 2000; Uysal et al., 2022). Apart from LoC being highly correlated with risk-taking, need for achievement, and tolerance for ambiguity, other studies found high innovativeness, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy (Utsch et al., 1999), protestant work ethic beliefs (Bonnet & Furnham, 1991) and risk-taking (Bergner et al., 2023; Linton, 2019). Scholars assert that the entrepreneur's propensity to take risks is embedded in the individual's LoC (Sahasranamam & Raman, 2018).

The Need for Achievement Theory (NAT) explains that entrepreneurs are human beings driven by the necessity to succeed, accomplish, excel, or achieve. Evidence exists for the relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurship (Staniewski & Awruk, 2019). Xue et al. (2021) suggest that the need for achievement, risk-taking, innovativeness, and tolerance for ambiguity positively and significantly influence entrepreneurial inclination. Earlier empirical studies indicate that aversion to risk declines as one's wealth rises (Szpiro, 1986). In complementing Szpiro's observation, Eisenhauer suggests that success in entrepreneurship by increasing wealth can reduce the entrepreneur's risk aversion and encourage more venturing. In his view, entrepreneurship may, Therefore, be a self-perpetuating process. Further evidence suggests that some entrepreneurs exhibit mildly risk-loving behaviour (Ackah et al., 2019). These individuals prefer the risks and challenges of venturing to secure a stable income.

The Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) theory suggests that a firm gets its uniqueness and sustainable competitive advantage from varying its management approach to fit the interplay between the management behaviours and specific situations (Safari & Saleh, 2020). The CTE is a paradigm in entrepreneurship designed to highlight more effective ways to run the business as opposed to Weber's bureaucracy and Taylor's scientific theories that neglected that the environment or contingency factors influence management styles. The CTE supports suggestions by Fayol that the optimum management course should be flexible, thus encouraging young entrepreneurs to govern businesses circumstantially with the belief that there is no one process, system or approach to running a business. Through the CTE, entrepreneurs may have systems, structures, and philosophies in place for the business, but the right way to manage depends on the complex variety of critical environmental and internal circumstances. Tolbert and Hall (2015) suggest that organisational structure (OS) depends on the type of production technologies the firm employs. The CTE encourages young entrepreneurs to be prepared for emergencies in business operations. The theory calls for firms to have alternative plans or courses of action if things go against plans (contingency planning). The theory also encourages business continuity planning to be in place should an anticipated risk occur. The generation of solutions to performance problems can be made possible by applying situational management and resource leveraging to meet the requirements at any given moment. Entrepreneurs can gain competitive advantages through progressive innovation to maintain

or further advance a firm's performance in the market (Rahaman et al., 2021; Riswanto et al., 2020; Šlogar, 2022). The notion of flexibility, continuous improvement, and action-oriented subject to environmental changes validates CTE as a remedy for young entrepreneurs to achieve the desired results.

Young entrepreneurs are encouraged by the CTE to always be in touch with stakeholders to understand their needs, find opportunities and avoid threats that might be disastrous to the firm (Yang & Jiang, 2023). Entrepreneurial ventures that engage stakeholder suggestions to adjust their business strategies to create customer value may experience fewer performance challenges. The CTE aims to be customer-oriented and provide the user with desirable solutions, products, or services. A clear understanding of the customer brings economic viability to the business through value creation and resource leveraging. Thus, customer satisfaction and, a proactive approach and business knowledge minimize risk tendencies and drive competitive aggressiveness, ultimately boosting the YEP. The CTE principles offer situational-centred management that emphasizes flexibility, risk management and action orientation in business and administration arenas to achieve competitiveness in company performance (Mostafiz et al., 2022).

Through the CTE, youth entrepreneurs are continuously taught how to innovate and problem-solve. The CTE principles encourage creative thinking and problem-solving. The CTE pushes youth entrepreneurs to redefine the problem space and seek out the real challenges worth solving that cause poor performance. In young entrepreneurial businesses, problems might call for designing a competitive digital product or service, optimizing internal processes, or reinventing the entire business model.

3.3 HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

From the proposed conceptual framework in Figure 5, the subsequent hypothetical propositions were formulated as tentative explanations for the predicted relationships between variables in this study.

The study considers research hypotheses as scientific declarative statements based on existing literature and prior research findings in entrepreneurial marketing. Thus, the aim of this study in formulating the under-listed research hypotheses was to First empirically test the assumptions from the collected sample data of youth entrepreneurs and

scientifically prove the nature of the relationships between the adoption of the mediator variables and their effect on the relationship between EMO and YEP; Secondly, identify and contribute to abating the knowledge gaps that are observed on theories in the field, that state the expected relationships between EMO and YEP in the presence of mediator variables.

This research proposed the under-listed hypothesis:

3.3.1 THE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP (H1)

Objective 1: To establish the relationship that exists between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H1)

H₁: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.2 THE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EACH ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSION AND YEP (H1A-1C)

Objective 2: To establish the relationships that exist between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H1a-c)

H_{1a}, H_{1b}, H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

H_{1a}: There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{1b}: There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.3 THE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTEGRATING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) (H2A-C)

Objective 3: To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H2a-c)

H_{2a}: H_{2b}: H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

H_{2a}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2b}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.4 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS, OR OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) (H5D-F)

Objective 4: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H5d-f)

H_{5d}: H_{5e}: H_{5f}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

H_{5d}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{5e}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{5f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.5 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS OR OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4D-F(3A-C):

Objective 5: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) 4d-f (3a-c)

H_{4d-f (3a-c)}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is,

3.3.6 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4D(3A-C):

Objective 4d(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3a}, H_{4d3b} and H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is,

H_{4d3a}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3b}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.7 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF MS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4E(3A-C):

Objective 4e(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3a}, H_{4e3d} and H_{4e3c}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is,

H_{4e3a}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3b}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3c}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.8 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4f(3A-C):

Objective 4f(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3a}, H_{4f3b} and H_{4f3c}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

H_{4f3a}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3b}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3c}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.3.9 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF (KoB, MS, OR OS) ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EACH ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) [H5D-F (A-C)]

Objective 6: To examine the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) [H5d-f (a-c)]

H_{5da}, H_{5db} and H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is,

H_{5da}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5db}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ea}, H_{5eb} and H_{5ec}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{5ea}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5eb}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ec}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fa}, H_{5fb} and H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{5fa}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fb}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

After the hypotheses were formulated, the subsequent steps in this study were the methodology design of the study, collection of the relevant data, and analysis of the results to determine whether each framed hypothesis is supported.

The findings from the research were used to confirm, modify, or even reject the hypotheses in favour of alternative explanations (as shown in Table 31). The subsequent sections present an elaborate discussion of each hypothetical assumption.

3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

A conceptual framework is used to formulate hypotheses that answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives (Van der Waladt, 2020). The entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) conceptual model by Jones and Rowley (2011) and Whalen et al. (2015) inspired the proposed conceptual framework for this study (as shown in Figure 5). Although other authors (Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020) include innovation orientation (IO) as the fourth entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension, this study ignored IO as having highly correlated scale items with those of EO. Unlike previous research that only shows the individual effects of each EMO dimension on company performance, this study suggests a stronger impact if the EMO dimensions are integrated into several permutations. Thus, the study preferred only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), as shown in Figure 5. Thus, the conceptual framework suggests several integrated relationships between EMO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP), which previous studies (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) failed to unearth. Moreover, the study introduces some mediating effect variables such as knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organizational structure (OS), which are believed to strengthen the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. The EMO dimensions under consideration in this study include market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), as depicted in the conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5).

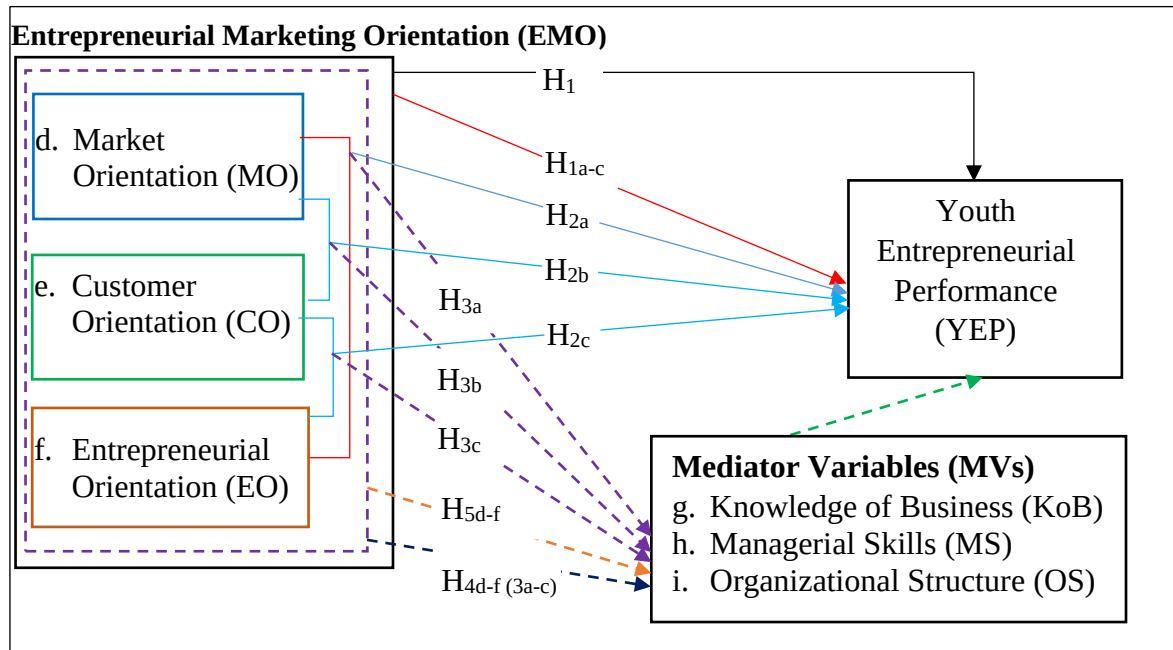


Figure 5: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher's compilation

3.4.1 THE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMO AND YEP (H_1)

Entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) is a strategic approach companies adopt that combines entrepreneurial and marketing principles. Entrepreneurial marketing orientation involves the integration of entrepreneurial mindset, innovative thinking, and proactive marketing strategies to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and superior company performance (Al-Lawati, 2017). Prior research shows that adopting EMO enhances a company's competitiveness, customer focus, and ability to capitalize on market opportunities, leading to improved performance (Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019). The subsequent sections discuss characteristics of companies that embrace EMO, including opportunity-detection, innovativeness, pro-activeness, calculated risk-taking, customer orientation, responsiveness towards customers, resource leveraging, competitive aggressiveness, customer relationship management, and financial performance.

Literature suggests that companies adopting EMO actively seek new market opportunities (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Such firms may become competitively advantaged by continuously innovating products and services to satisfy the identified untapped customer needs. Entrepreneurial marketing orientation helps companies differentiate themselves from competitors by identifying unique market opportunities and developing innovative

products or services that lead to a sustainable competitive advantage and higher market share (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Due to the company's innovativeness, such firms may take proactive measures to shape and influence the market since they will adapt their marketing strategies to the anticipated customer demands and market changes (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022; Jalali et al., 2022). The integration of entrepreneurial and marketing principles fosters a culture of innovation within the company, resulting in the development of new products, services, and business models that may propel company growth and performance (Hidayatullah et al., 2019; Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020).

Entrepreneurial marketing orientation enables companies to respond more to changing market conditions (Adel et al., 2020; Alqahtani & Uslay, 2020). Companies can adapt quickly and maintain relevance by actively monitoring trends, anticipating customer demands, and adjusting marketing strategies accordingly. As such, the companies embrace work atmospheres that encourage creativity, continuous learning, and improvement in how things are done in such organizations. This willingness to take calculated risks propels the firm to venture into new markets or launch innovative products and services that may be customer-driven. A customer-centric approach enhances customer satisfaction and builds long-term loyalty (Dabrowski et al., 2019). Companies can create strong customer relationships by effectively understanding and meeting customer needs, leading to repeat business and positive word-of-mouth.

Therefore, such firms strongly emphasise understanding and satisfying customer needs, which leads to building long-term customer relationship management and delivering superior customer value. By adopting an entrepreneurial mindset, firms optimally allocate their financial, human, and technology resources to support marketing initiatives and capitalize on market opportunities (Herlinawati et al., 2019).

When companies effectively leverage EMO, they can experience improved company performance, evidenced by higher sales, increased market share, and cost efficiencies that contribute to higher revenues, profitability, and shareholder value. Therefore, this study concurs with and backs up previous literature that developed the objective.

Objective 1: To establish the relationship that exists between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H₁)

This study proposed the hypothesis that:

H₁: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Thus, this study seeks to test this objective contextually and its related hypothesis *H₁* because that premise is covered in the extant literature, though with inconsistent results on the exact EMO dimensions to use (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). As such, this research seeks to add to existing literature by providing the contextual dimensions most applicable in emerging economies like Botswana.

3.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EACH EMO DIMENSION AND YEP (H_{1A-1C})

This section examines the direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and YEP (*H_{1a-c}*)

Literature reveals inconsistencies in the contribution of each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension to company performance (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Phetha et al. (2022) found no evidence of innovativeness as a driver of entrepreneurial intention. This study seeks to recommend innovativeness as one of the drivers of entrepreneurial intention and performance. Therefore, this study develops the subsequent objective:

Objective 2: To establish the relationships that exist between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{1a-c})

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{1a}, H_{1b}, H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{1a}: There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{1b}: There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.6 THE INTEGRATED (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND (YEP) (H2A-C)

This section examines the direct relationship between integrating the entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{2a-c})

Prior research glorifies the effect of each EMO dimension on firm performance. However, there is little empirical evidence of studies integrating the EMO dimensions to formulate different permutations and form a unique conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5). Both pioneer and contemporary studies concur that if EMO is successfully employed, adopting EMO contributes to the performance of businesses (Awang, 2016; Lindsay & Kropp, 2015; Morris & Tucker, 2023; Navarro et al., 2022; Stocks, 2023). Nevertheless, previous literature reveals inconsistencies in the contribution of each EMO dimension to company performance (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019). Unlike previous studies that mainly examined the EMO dimensions individually, this study integrates the EMO dimensions into different permutations to establish a combination that best contributes to the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP.

Objective 3: To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{2a-c})

The study hopes to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) and assist in solving trending issues by developing different permutations that mix the EMO dimensions into diverse combinations and establishing an arrangement that best contributes to the relationship between EMO adoptions and YEP. The preferred Smart PLS4 statistical software fell short of merging the integration of the EMO dimensions (MO x CO; MO x EO; CO x EO) and

performing the transformation. Thus, IMB SPSS Version 28 integrated pairs of the EMO dimensions using transformation.

In addition, several permutations of the EMO dimensions are suggested with combinations through the MVs illustrated in the proposed conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5). Many of the extant studies agree that EMO creates greater customer value through dimensions such as pro-activeness (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002), innovation (Morrish, 2011; Hills & Hultman, 2013; Whalen et al., 2016), risk tendencies (Hills & Hultman, 2011), opportunity detection (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002; Hills & Singh, 1998), and resource leveraging, value creation, creativity, networking, flexibility (Shaw, 2004). This study acknowledges those findings and borrows, especially the contextual deductions, but would move further to integrate the EMO dimensions to formulate a unique integrated EMO conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5). Gyanwali and Bunchapattanasakda (2019) are among some researchers who showed a significant relationship between EMO and performance. Their study used the same EMO dimensions but did not integrate them. It also lacked an introduction to the mediator variables.

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{2a}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2b}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.7 THE MEDIATING EFFECT ON EMO) AND (YEP) (H5D-F)

This section examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H5d-f)

The study concurs with previous research that Knowledge of Business (KoB) is the sum of skills, experiences, capabilities, and insights created and relied upon in managing a business (Chen & Sanford, 2024; Paterson et al., 2024; Raharjo et al., 2023; Uriarte et al., 2023).

Objective 4: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{5d-f})

Therefore, this study proposed the hypothesis that:

H_{5d}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

This study identified the required Managerial Skills (MS) required by youth entrepreneurs as leadership skills to guide and motivate team members to achieve the best performance; problem-solving skills to identify root problem causes and develop effective solutions; decision-making skills to analyze information, weigh options, and make well-informed decisions on time; time management skills to effectively prioritize tasks and meet deadlines; communication skills to convey expectations, provide feedback, resolve conflicts, and facilitate collaboration among team members; and strategic thinking skills to align the team's efforts with the organization's long-term goals that contribute to its success. By developing strong MS, entrepreneurs motivate and inspire their team members, encourage creativity, and promote positive work environments that meet organisational goals (Mohamud & Ndede, 2019).

Therefore, this study proposed the hypothesis that:

H_{5e}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

This study defines organizational structure as a collaborative system of rules and groupings of resources that outline how activities in a firm are determined into formal systems for dividing work and achieving coordination amongst employees to outline the authority responsibilities (Tammy & Clawson, 2008; Tipu, 2022), decision-making centres, (Akbari

et al., 2018); employee relations; job descriptions, leadership style, set of rules, (Fitria et al., 2017); groupings of resources at different levels (Rabhi et al., 2023) (Stamevska & Stamevski, 2016); distribution of roles without conflict (Delic & Nuhanovic, 2010); and the activities (Tammy & Clawson, 2008; Tipu, 2022) that directs or coordinates employee behaviour and communication towards achieving set organizational goals (Thomas, 2015).

Therefore, this study proposed the hypothesis that:

H_{5f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.8 THE MEDIATING EFFECT ON THE INTEGRATED (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND (YEP) 4D-F(3A-C)

This section examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) 4d-f(3a-c)

Objective 5: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) 4d-f (3a-c)

H_{4d-f (3a-c)}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

3.8.1 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KOB ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4D(3A-C):

Objective 4d(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Previous studies on the relationship between EMO and YEP show little or no evidence of the use of such mediator variables as knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organizational structure (OS) (Chen & Sanford, 2024; Paterson et al., 2024). This study introduces three mediator variables, KoB, MS, and OS, that are thought to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. The motivation for this study is that the literature on mediating effect is relatively new and has been rapidly flourishing in academia (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021; Dash & Paul, 2021). Unlike previous research that sparingly uses the mediator variables (Hoque, 2018), this study hopes to add to the body of knowledge (BoK) through the introduction of these three mediator variables (MV): KoB, MS, and OS that are thought to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. This study is presumed to be amongst the few to consider the mediating effect and may be the only one with the MVs KoB, MS, or OS used simultaneously. Thus, the study is unique in explaining the mediating effect mechanism. The MVs KoB, MS, and OS create an important causal pathway of the strengthened relationship and explain how or why the independent variable (IV) EMO affects the dependent variable (DV) YEP.

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{4d3a}, H_{4d3b} and H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{4d3a}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3b}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.8.2 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF MS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4E(3A-C):

Objective 4e(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

The increased levels of managerial skills, such as interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, are important for the sustainable development of SMEs (Popescu et al., 2020; Mohamud & Ndede, 2019). However, their study used in-depth interviews and a qualitative design method, whereas this study seeks to use quantitative methods and analysis tools like SEM in SmartPLS4 and then conduct a mediating effect analysis.

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{4e3a}, H_{4e3d} and H_{4e3c}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{4e3a}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3b}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3c}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.8.3 THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP) 4f(3A-C):

Objective 4f(3a-c): To examine the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{4f3a}, H_{4f3b} and H_{4f3c}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is:

H_{4f3a}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3b}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3c}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.9 THE MEDIATING EFFECT ON EACH (EMO) DIMENSION AND (YEP) [H5D-F (A-C)]

This section examines the mediating effect of (KoB, MS and OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) [H5d-f (a-c)]

Objective 6: To examine the mediating effect of (KoB, MS and OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) [H_{5d-f (a-c)}]

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{5da}, H_{5db} and H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{5da}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5db}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ea}, H_{5eb} and H_{5ec}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{5ea}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5eb}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ec}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fa}, H_{5fb} and H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{5fa}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fb}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

The study relied on the Psychological Entrepreneurship Theory (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) to explain the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. Both the individual (PET) and firm level (CTE) entrepreneurship theories were considered important because the study reflects on the entrepreneur's intellect and behaviour (Mostafiz et al., 2022; Sarasvathy, 2020; Yang & Jiang, 2023) as influential to how the individual governs the business, which then forms part of the firm's characteristics (Linton & Klinton, 2019). Even though the level of analysis in PET is the individual (Landstrom, 2020) rather than firm characteristics, the study envisages that the entrepreneur's personality is hard to separate from how the individual manages the business. Thus, these individual traits are thought to be highly linked to firm performance in youth entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the CTE theory suggests that a firm gets its uniqueness and source of sustainable competitive advantage from varying its management approach to fit the interplay between management behaviours and specific situations.

Thus, the present study integrates both theoretical approaches, PET and CTE. The current study hopes to extend the theoretical lens of characteristics envisaged to contribute to entrepreneurial performance since, in both theories, either individual behaviour or management behaviour is common. However, in entrepreneurship, the same person may be involved as the manager of the business as well as the individual worker (Yang & Jiang, 2023; Mostafiz et al., 2022). Therefore, this study hopes to suggest that in entrepreneurship, there is a thin line between individual and firm characteristics that influence how the business is governed.

Therefore, this study proposed the hypothesis that:

H_{5da}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Mohamud and Ndede (2019) used a descriptive survey research design to study the effect of Managerial Skills (MS) on youth empowerment initiatives in Kenya. Major findings were that acquiring useful (MS) and competencies such as entrepreneurial training are essential to goal realization and successful businesses. However, their study failed to integrate MS with other EMO dimensions.

Therefore, this study proposed the hypothesis that:

H_{5eb}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Al-Lawati (2017) is among the researchers who identified the five dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, namely innovation, risk-taking, reactivity, autonomy and competitive aggressiveness, that enable entrepreneurs to develop their skills better.

Hoque (2018) used the quantitative survey technique and SEM-AMOS to analyse the role of organizational structure (OS) in the relationship between (EO) and SME performance. Hoque deduced that EO and OC were significantly related to SME performance. Organizational structure was found to mediate the relationship between EO and SME performance. However, Horque's study did not look at all the EMO dimensions but simply the EO dimensions.

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{5fc}: Organizational structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided a comprehensive conceptual framework development and research hypotheses. The chapter discussed various scholarly works that assist in answering the study's research questions. A critical review of previous works helped to identify knowledge gaps, put the current study into context, point out its direction, and justify the

purpose and need for the study in question. The chapter started with clarity on the theoretical framework that motivates this research. Then follows discussions on the theoretical model, conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 1), and, finally, the development of the hypotheses. The next chapter discusses the literature review that examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on youth entrepreneurial performance.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research design, purpose, philosophy, approach, methodological choices, strategy, time horizons, data collection processes and analysis portrayed in the “research onion process approach diagram” (as shown in Figure 6). The chapter justifies the choice of the target population, sample size, the development and administration of the research instrument, data presentation methods, anticipated reliability, and validity, and concludes by discussing the ethical considerations that guide the development of this study. In order to fully address the objectives of this study, the methodology chapter depicts the “research onion process approach diagram” (as shown in Figure 6), which shows the steps that the study follows.

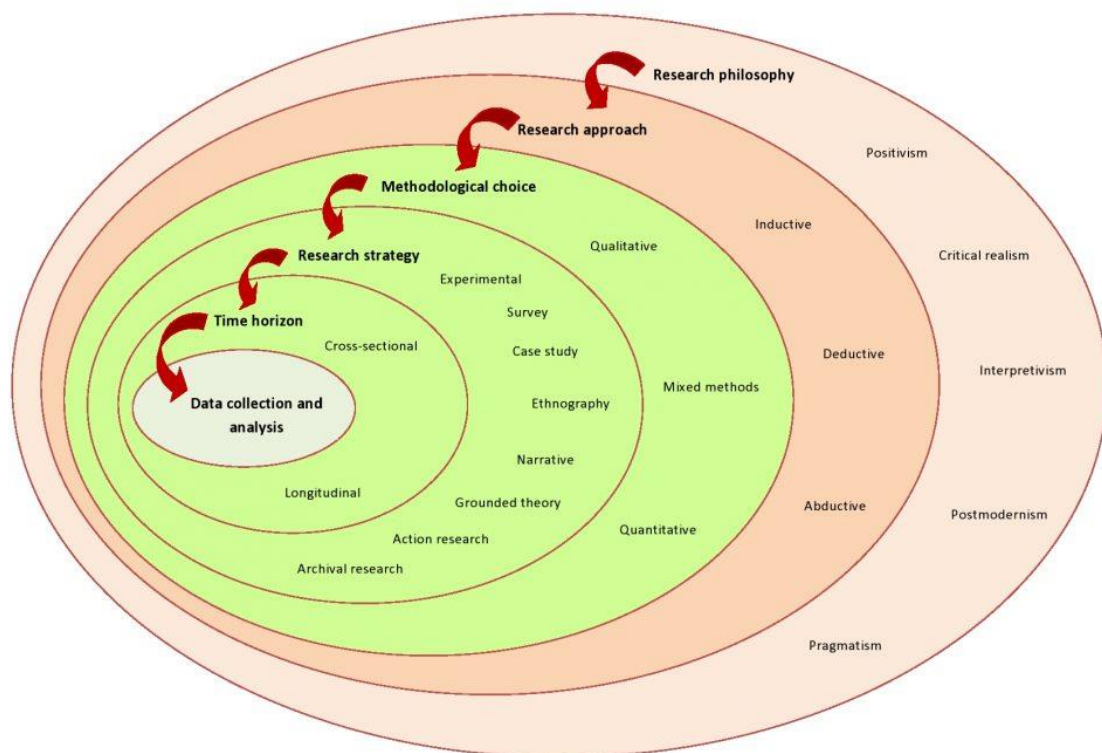


Figure 6: The Research Onion Process Approach

Source: Saunders et al. (2019)

4.2 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The research purpose is a statement, paragraph, goal or aim that explains why the study is being conducted (Harrison et al., 2020). The purpose of this research emanates from the problem of poor youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP), which hampers employment creation and stifles economic development. Amongst the several objectives of conducting a study is the need to identify a pattern, describe a concept, explain a situation, predict an occurrence or solution to a circumstance and many others (Beckingham, 1974). The principal theory in the study is entrepreneurial market orientation (EMO) adoption in Botswana youth enterprises. The main objective examines the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and YEP.

Again, the study proposed mediating factors like (KoB, MS and OS) that are assumed to strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. This study adopted an applied research classification and selected the evaluative approach. The choice for applied research was to discover more facts and information to practically solve real-life problems by suggesting contextual solutions. The evaluative approach assesses if the suggested solution is on the right track (Smith, 2012). The research adopted a realism ontological assumption, a correspondence approach to truth epistemology, and a positivism philosophy with a quantitative methodology that uses a descriptive research design conducted within a cross-sectional timeframe to gather data from an estimated sample size of 417 youth entrepreneurship businesses in Botswana. A self-administered five-point Likert scale rating questionnaire was used as the primary tool for data collection. Both the Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) were the theoretical lenses of the study. The research proposed strengthened relationships from the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and YEP.

4.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

This section introduces the nature of philosophical foundations. According to Saunders et al. (2016), research philosophy is a scientific method of interpreting, understanding, and developing new knowledge. Research philosophy forms the basis for knowledge establishment and dictates how studies choose research strategies, data collection and presentation procedures (Zukauskas et al., 2018). Various research philosophies suit

different assumptions that each researcher views the world (Bryman et al., 2017) (Figure 6). Amongst the research philosophies are positivism, interpretivism (constructivism), critical realism and pragmatism (Bryman, 2015; Creswell, 2017; McGregor & Murnane, 2010; Weber, 2017).

Each philosophy has diverse assumptions about how its knowledge views the world (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). None of these research philosophies is better than the other (Saunders et al., 2019). This research adopted a positivist philosophy where empirical methods were used to collect quantitative methods, which were then interpreted to deduce meanings or inferences about the youth entrepreneurs, understand their motivations of decision-making, and develop new knowledge from the suggested mediating effect on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

A paradigm is a holistic view of understanding knowledge through ontology and epistemology. Both ontology and epistemology are discussed in the succeeding sections of this study.

4.3.1 ONTOLOGY

Ontology are beliefs used by researchers to understand existence and reality (Katsuragi, 2023). Academics use ontological assumptions to examine the subject area's nature by addressing the truth. In general, social sciences ontological beliefs profile the research questions, methodology, and interpretations of the findings (Lawson, 2019). Thus, a researcher's acknowledgement of the study's ontological assumptions determines the research's potential limitations and biases. There are four views of ontological assumptions: objectivism (realism), constructivism (relativism), subjectivism and critical realism (as shown in Table 9). This study selects the realism worldview of ontological assumptions. The realist view considers that only one truth exists (singularity) and that truth does not change (Katsuragi, 2023; Lawson, 2019). From the realism approach, the study of youth entrepreneurial performance takes objective firm performance measurement scales to discover the truth about the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, and OS) on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP.

Table 9: Epistemological and Ontological Beliefs

Ontological Assumptions	Research Philosophy	Explanation
1. Objectivism (Realism)	Positivism	• An objective reality world exists independent of human perception and experiences. • Only one truth exists (singularity). • The truth is discovered through empirical methods like data collection, systematic observation, and measurement. • The truth is universal and does not change. • The reasoning is from objective measurement rather than merely subjective interpretations. • Sample results can be used to draw inferences generalised to other settings. • Statistical methods can be used to analyse data to uncover patterns and relationships that are used to develop theories and make predictions.
2. Constructivism (Relativism)	Interpretivism	• Knowledge is constructed through the individual's social interactions and interpretations. • Reality is subjective and is shaped by one's beliefs, perceptions, and experiences. • Multiple interpretations of reality exist • Reality varies according to one's culture and historical context • The truth is context-based, and changes • Truth cannot exist without meaning • The truth cannot be generalised but simply transferred to similar settings
3. Subjectivism	Pragmatism	• Knowledge is provisional and subject to change based on new evidence • Researchers should focus on practical problem-solving. • There is no objective reality. • Research findings simply reflect an individual's perspectives and experiences.
4. Critical Realism	Critical Theory	• There is an objective reality of the world • One's understanding of reality is always partial and subject to revision. • One's knowledge is always incomplete. • New knowledge may challenge one's current understanding of reality. • Research should uncover social power imbalances and challenge dominant ideologies to promote social change.

Source: Researcher's compilation

Since realism appraises objective reasoning, it validates generalising the results from a sample of Gaborone youth entrepreneurs to the whole Botswana population. From this

realism notion, the study believes that the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur influence the way the entrepreneurial business is run. Due to the small size nature of some youth businesses, such as sole traders, it becomes difficult to separate the individual from the firm characteristics. Therefore, in such cases, the study examined both the firm and individual characteristics with a focus on understanding the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP.

The following section discusses why the study did not consider using the other three ontological perspectives. Firstly, the constructivist (relativist) worldview believes multiple versions of reality exist. Multiple reality requires constant negotiation, debate, and interpretations according to situations. Academics who consider relativism think what is real depends on the meaning one attaches to truth. Relativists believe that since reality is context-shared, the truth changes depending on one's experiences (Lawson, 2019). Thus, if reality is context-bound, then it cannot be generalised. The study did not adopt the relativism philosophy since the research wants objective reasoning to derive conclusions.

Followed by the subjectivism perspective that assumes that there is no objective reality. Proponents of the subjectivism philosophy assume that research findings reflect an individual's perspectives and experiences (Suikkanen, 2023). This study did not adopt the subjectivism philosophy since the research wants objective reasoning to derive conclusions. Finally, advocates of the critical realism philosophy assume that there is objective truth. Followers of critical realism propose that one's understanding of reality is always incomplete and subject to revision when that person acquires new knowledge that challenges their current understanding of reality. This study did not adopt the critical realism philosophy since the research wants objective reasoning to derive conclusions.

Ontological assumptions dictate epistemological beliefs, as discussed in the subsequent sections; what the researcher believes about the nature of reality dictates what kind of relationship to have with the subject under study.

4.3.2 EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology is the philosophical study of knowledge, belief, and justification that explains the researcher's relationship with the theory of knowledge and its limits (Al-Ababneh, 2020). In research, epistemology is the underlying theories that guide the thinking process

or the methods used to figure out things and how to evaluate the acquired knowledge. Several epistemological theories of truth exist that a researcher can take, such as:

Firstly, the coherent approach to truth theory submits that a statement is considered to be true if it fits well or is logically consistent with other beliefs that a person holds rather than its correspondence with reality (Creswell, 2017; Ejnavarzala, 2019). True statements are judged from a system of beliefs with no empirical evidence that determines true beliefs. This study did not consider this coherent approach theory since belief systems vary, and the findings from this study must be empirically determined and inferred by all the youth entrepreneurs nationwide.

Followed by the consensus approach to truth theory proposes that truth is a social construct that develops from a group of people's shared beliefs and practices that they agree upon. The consensus theory of knowledge leads to majority tyranny, which suppresses the viewpoints of the minority (Ejnavarzala, 2019). In this case, since the truth is susceptible to particular communities and cultural relativism, then no one valid perspective of reality exists as the community's attitudes and beliefs evolve. This study did not consider this consensus approach theory since true statements are judged by majority opinion and preferences, yet the study wants to unearth practices that assist youth entrepreneurs, even those not within their cultural systems.

Finally, the correspondence approach to truth theory suggests that a statement or belief is considered true if it accurately describes or matches the actual state of affairs in the world. True statements are judged from intuition, common sense, and reality. This study adopts the correspondence approach to truth that pronounces that something is true when a claim matches reality in the community. Through this approach, the study conducts an empirical enquiry and collects data through fieldwork to develop factual conclusions about the contextual problem of poor youth entrepreneurial performance. The knowledge was gathered through a survey with measurable constructs using validated designs and reliable tools adopted from previous studies. The study's epistemological approach corresponded to the realism ontology that promotes empirical methods like factual data collection from the respondents and processes the data through statistical methods to uncover the factual patterns or relationships used to solve the social problems bedevilling YEP.

4.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

Research approaches can be inductive, deductive, and abductive. Through a deductive approach, the study first formulated hypotheses from known literature on EMO dimensions and then conducted research analysis to prove that the conclusions drawn could not be refuted. This deduction approach helped to explain the causal relationships between EMO adoption and YEP. As such, the deduction approach required operationalising concepts and using larger samples to measure quantitative facts. The deductive research approach is the human process of moving from the known to the unknown (Bingham & Witkowsky, 2021; Hyde, 2000; Spangler, 1986; Woiceshyn & Daellenbach, 2018). Through adopting the deductive approach, the study converted everyday youth entrepreneurial business life problems into technical, scientific, or expert descriptions of social life.

4.5 METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE

There are three primary methodological choices or research designs: quantitative research design, qualitative research design and mixed methods research design. Selecting the appropriate methodological choice (research type) guides the study and then directs it to suitable data collection procedures and analysis tools. The study adopted a quantitative research method that uses statistical data collection and analysis procedures (Cresswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2018; Tripathi, 2023). Figure 7 shows the blueprint or the methodological framework of this study.

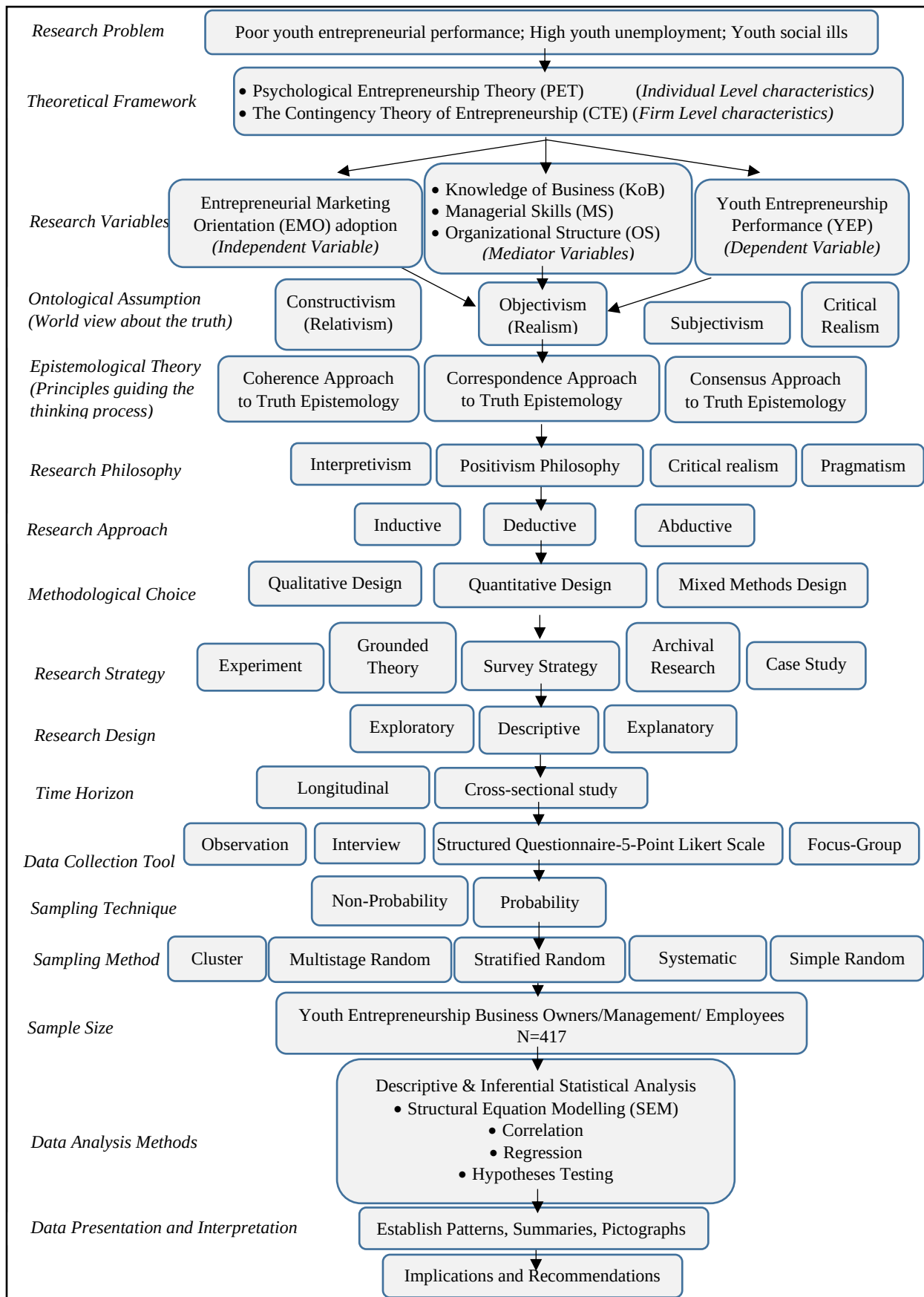


Figure 7: Methodological Framework of the Study

Source: Researcher's compilation

4.6 RESEARCH STRATEGY

A research strategy is a plan that provides a framework or philosophy which explains a blueprint that determines data type, data collection and data analysis methods (Van der Waldt, 2020; Wagner III, 2019). From the several research strategies, experiments are mainly used for quantitative methodologies; surveys, case studies and archival research can be used for either quantitative or qualitative methodologies, whilst the remaining four, that is, ethnography, action research, narrative inquiry, and grounded theory, are exclusively for qualitative methodology. Each major methodology type has various research strategies, such as case studies, experiments, surveys, ethnography, narrative inquiry, grounded theory, action research or archival research, as outlined below.

- a. Descriptive Research Design
- b. Correlational Research Design
- c. Diagnostic Research Design
- d. Explanatory Research Design
- e. Experimental Research Design

This deductive study adopted the survey research strategy to shed more light on the vaguely known problem of the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between EMO and YEP. The research used a well-structured survey questionnaire to address the study's research questions to achieve the objectives. From the five sub-categories of research categories shown below, this study adopts the descriptive research design meant to observe, explain, and depict a situation, subject, behaviour, or phenomenon under study without influencing or manipulating their decisions.

Descriptive research designs aim to systematically gather and use data to explain a phenomenon or situation (Van der Waldt, 2020). By nature, the descriptive design helps to answer the what, when, where, and how questions from a research problem rather than the why. The research problem and some facts were known, but more inquiry into the factors was needed. The problem of a high failure rate amongst youth firms in Botswana was known. Also known were the facts that EMO may assist in alleviating the problem. Based on the existing EMO-reviewed literature and the drafted theoretical framework, the study adopted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) approach to test the set of observed variables (MO, EO, and CO) and their underlying latent constructs (MIG; OD; RL; NR;

CBD; RTC; VC; RM; PR; IN; CA; CRT; EA), (as shown in Table 12). The CFA approach provided fit indices that helped the researcher determine how well the model adequately represents the relationships among the observed variables and latent constructs. Furthermore, CFA measured the theoretical constructs of interest and described the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Hypotheses were developed from the conceptual framework Figure 5.

4.7 TIME HORIZON

Concerning Figure 6, the time horizon layer has two categories: cross-sectional and longitudinal time-frame studies. Cross-sectional studies are short-term and involve data collection over a specific period, whereas longitudinal studies are long-term and involve comparing repeated data collected over a long-time frame (Creswell, 2017). Preference for a cross-sectional time-frame study was firstly, influenced by the study's objectivism ontological assumption about the truth and secondly, prejudiced by the research's correspondence approach to truth epistemology (Al-Ababneh, 2020; Creswell, 2017; Ejnavarzala, 2019). The positivism philosophy then guided this research to collect quantifiable data and analyze it using statistical methods to identify the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. The use of a cross-sectional timeframe ensured the rigour and relevance of this research's findings due to the data being collected from several respondents in a short timeframe, which minimizes participant attrition rate, biases, and inconsistencies (Cao & Lumineau, 2015; Lumpkin & Dess, 2015).

4.8 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This section describes the processes used to collect data and outlines the analysis procedures.

4.8.1 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND PROCEDURE

Primary data was collected through a self-administer hard-copy five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire was circulated to respondents who comprised either the youth entrepreneur employees, their management, or the owners of the businesses. Two research assistants helped the researcher cover the large and widely dispersed sample units as the questionnaires were manually administered.

Before the data collection exercise, a pilot study was conducted with nearby respondents closely resembling the sample. Pilot studies help to identify any unexpected problems likely to occur during fieldwork, thus guaranteeing that the identified problems can be resolved to ensure the practicality and feasibility of the study (Kothari, 2014; Krosnick, 2018; Lancaster et al., 2004). In this study, pilot testing helped clarify the instructions, the questions, and the bias to validate the questionnaire before use. The pilot study exposed some measurement items under EA, KoB, MS, and OS biased toward businesses with more than one employee or department. Such sections were also corrected to cover sole trader entrepreneurs.

The research mainly used research participants from a database list of YDF beneficiaries compiled by the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development (MYSC). Therefore, the participating youth entrepreneurs were both registered and commercially operating entities. Altinay et al. (2016) describe this concept as the inclusion and exclusion criteria. From the MYSC list, the researcher utilised the exclusive criteria to eliminate all non-operating companies. The remaining firms were then included as strata of each participating district. Using strata enabled an equal chance of being selected for each business.

The initially planned actual field work changed numerous times due to a lack of participant cooperation on the ground. Altinay et al. (2011) propose the importance of alternative plans in research in case of challenges experienced with the original plan. Amongst the adjustments to the original fieldwork plan was the inclusion of some participants who were randomly met and considered for the survey. Such participants were accepted because they met the stipulated survey criteria despite their omission from the originally planned sample units.

Initially, telephone appointments were made with each company to conduct the surveys. Followed by written permission request letters to conduct surveys with the employees of each participating company. Then, the consent strategy required respondents to formally sign a register to acknowledge informed assent to participate in the study. The consent strategy was meant to improve the response rate with the questionnaires only distributed to willing respondents. The independence of the respondents in this study was meant to come up with results and conclusions that produce pure and unbiased facts (Wilson, 2010). This

research guarded against using vulnerable groups like children by having all respondents be adults aged 18 years and above.

Upon request, participants were shown the research permits to conduct the study. The MYSC and the Ministry of Entrepreneurship sought and granted the research permits via the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge, and Technology. Wits Business School granted the ethical clearance after the researcher surpassed the minimum ethical standards stipulated by the Institution of study. Further requests and permission to avail YDF beneficiary lists were sought and granted from the various district coordinators in MYSC offices across the concerned regions (see Appendices A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H & I). Stratified sampling technique was used to sample the respondents. With the help of two research assistants, the researcher visited the respondents. A self-administered five-point Likert Scale rating questionnaire was used to capture the views of the youth entrepreneurs.

To gather accurate and reliable primary data, a self-administered five-point Likert scale structured questionnaire was preferred following its wide adoption in similar studies (Atalay, 2017; Krabulut, 2015; Makanyeza & Dzvuke; 2015; Ramadani et al., 2018). Before the respondents completed the questionnaire, the researcher perused the questions with the respondents to clarify and avoid misunderstandings. During the completion of the questionnaires, separate locations were used for respondents to reduce participant error or bias. Participant error results when individuals taking part in a survey develop tendencies to provide answers that are influenced by others, provide answers or respond in a manner they believe corresponds with what the researcher is looking for. Also, participant bias was reduced by using the simplest terminology possible in questionnaire phrases to reduce ambiguity and the occurrence of missing data.

The participants were left alone to complete the responses without the researcher. Upon completion, the questionnaires were dropped into marked boxes at the participant's premises. The strategy to drop the questionnaires into marked boxes was meant to avoid direct contact between the respondents and the researcher to mitigate the risks associated with anonymity. The researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the marked boxes and left some fresh questionnaires for those respondents who might have been absent during the visits.

4.8.2 TARGET POPULATION

The research target population consists of all the respondents, subjects, elements, groups of individuals, respondents or observable materials that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest and might be considered by the researcher (Creswell, 2012; Gregory & Schwartz, 2009; Neuman, 2014). The target population of this study was comprised of individuals (youth entrepreneurs) that the researcher was interested in studying and wanted to infer the study's findings. A well-defined target population reduces the probability of including unsuitable participants for the research objectives. This study targets all youth entrepreneurs (18-35 years) within Botswana. However, the targeted population of youth entrepreneurial businesses was approximately 3000 at the time of this study (June 2023). The targeted population was too large and dispersed for every respondent to be contacted for distribution of the research instrument due to resource and time constraints. Thus, the respondents were selected through a sampling process depicted in Figure 8 and is explained in the subsequent section.

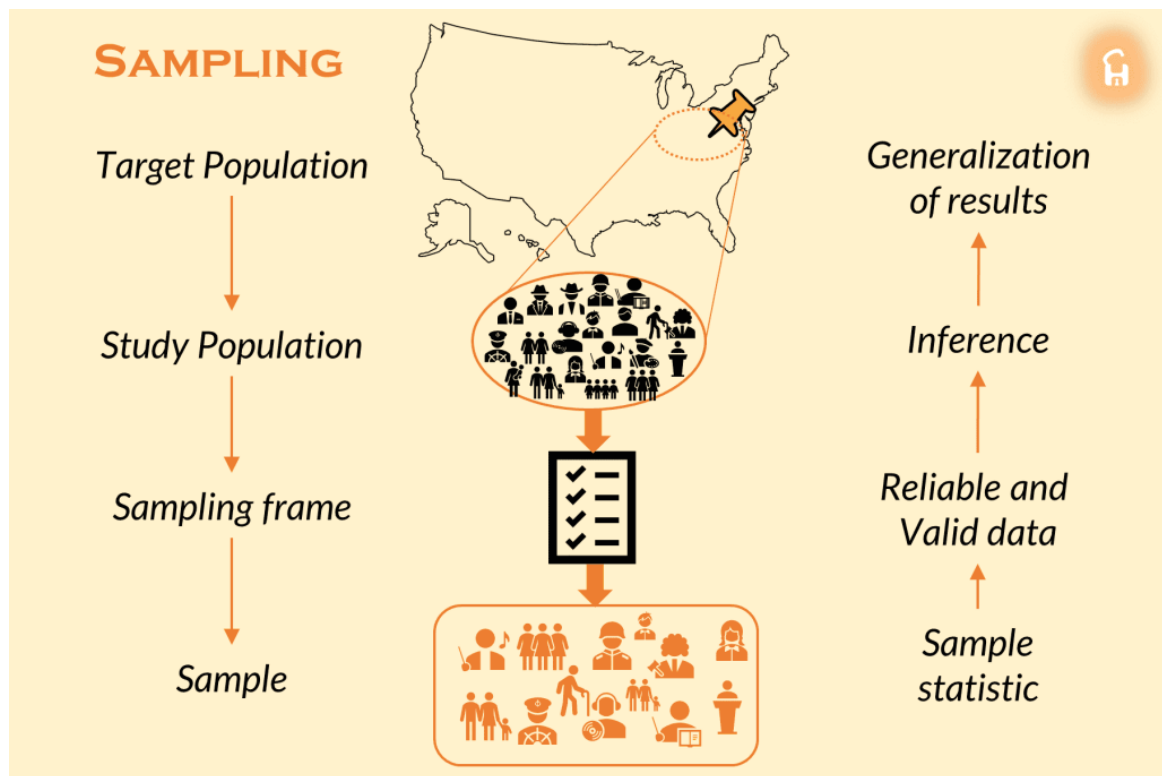


Figure 8: Sampling Process

Source: Amritaakhouri (2018)

The Rao-Soft sample size calculator determined a sample size of 417 respondents. Preference to the Rao-Soft method minimized frustrations usually encountered by

researchers with minimal statistical knowledge since the calculation follows the subsequent steps:

- i. Access the Rao-Soft website (www.raosoft.com).
- ii. Locate the "Sample Size Calculator".
- iii. Input certain parameters as required based on the specific study or survey, such as:
 - a. Desired confidence level (e.g., 95%)
 - b. Confidence interval or margin of error (e.g., 5%)
 - c. Population size (if known)
 - d. Response distribution (if known)
- iv. Click "Calculate" or "Compute" for the recommended sample size.

Table 10 provides a detailed account of this study's proposed target population, sampling frame and sample size.

Table 10: Target Population, Sampling Frame, Sample Frame and Sample Size

Unit	Number	Percentage (%)	Description
Target Population (N)	Approximately 3000		Youth entrepreneurial businesses in the Greater Gaborone Covid Zone
Sampling Frame (N)	510		Youth entrepreneurial business Owners or Managers
Sample Size (n)	417	82% of (N)	Number of youth entrepreneurs included in this study
Response Rate	385	92% of (n)	The proportion of eligible questionnaires completed
Usable Questionnaires	337	81% of (n)	Questionnaires that provided useful data

Source: Researcher's compilation (2024)

4.8.3 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Sampling is meant to reduce costs, reduce workforce requirements, and save time by considering only a subset of the representation. This study preferred a sample over a census due to resource and time constraints to complete the research (Locke & Latham, 2006; Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020; Zikmund & Babin, 2010). Through sampling, which only counts or considers a representative part of the population of interest, information from the sampled respondents was inferred from the target population

The entire population of the study were all the entrepreneurs within the sub-Saharan African region. However, due to resource constraints, only the target population of 3000 youth entrepreneurs in Botswana were used as a case group of individuals or entities that this research aims to study and serve in enhancing their entrepreneurial performance. The target population had specific characteristics, such as age (18-35 years) and geographical location (Greater Gaborone Region), that distinguished this group from the entire population.

This research used the stratified random sampling method (StrRSM) due to its simplicity and lack of bias in considering the sampling units from a heterogeneous population of elements of diverse entrepreneurs of all ages. A stratified random sampling technique divides the target population into smaller groups or strata of shared characteristics. The preferred characteristics of the study were youth entrepreneurs between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five.

Nonetheless, some of the listed beneficiaries were beyond the age limit of the study at the time, which was thirty-five years. Due to that heterogeneity, the population was first grouped into homogenous sub-groups according to their districts and business sectors in preparation for being randomly picked into the final sample. A simple random sampling method (SRS) was then used to pick the final research respondents from the district youth entrepreneurs subset. The statistics of the population under study are shown in Table 9.

4.8.4 SAMPLING FRAME GEOGRAPHIC AREA

This section presents the sampling frame, same size, geographic locations, and study period. A sampling frame lists all units in a study population from which the researcher draws the respondent's sample size (Bolarinwa, 2020). The sampling frame, which is a list of all the elements of the target population from which a sample is selected, was obtained from the various district offices of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport and Culture Developmental (MYSC). The study mainly relied on the sampling frame data lists from the regional Youth Development Fund (YDF) beneficiaries provided by the MYSC district offices. Each MYSC district was considered a stratum representing the youth entrepreneurs to visit. However, the supplied lists of YDF beneficiaries comprised some entrepreneurs above the cut-off age of thirty-five years at the time of the study. The

beneficiaries still appeared on the MYSC lists because they received sponsorship whilst still youth and remained in the database to pay back the respective loans.

The geographical areas of the entrepreneurs helped understand the physical location of the most preferred type of businesses and determined whether the socio-economic factors within that region contributed to the business's success. The lists comprised Youth Development Fund (YDF) beneficiaries sponsored from Botswana's various districts in the Greater Gaborone Covid Zone (GGCZ). The GGZ covers areas such as Gaborone Central, Mogoditshane, Tlokweng, Gabane, Metsimothabe, Mmankodi, Mokolodi, Mmopane, Nkoyaphiri, Ledumadumane, Thamaga, Kumakwane, Dikhutsane, Mochudi, Lobatse, Ramotswa, and many others. This GGZ is the geographical location comprising towns and villages in and around Gaborone, Botswana's capital city. This GGZ is where most youth enterprise headquarters are located and was convenient for this study because it represents a fair demographic representation of Botswana's national youth entrepreneurial business profiles.

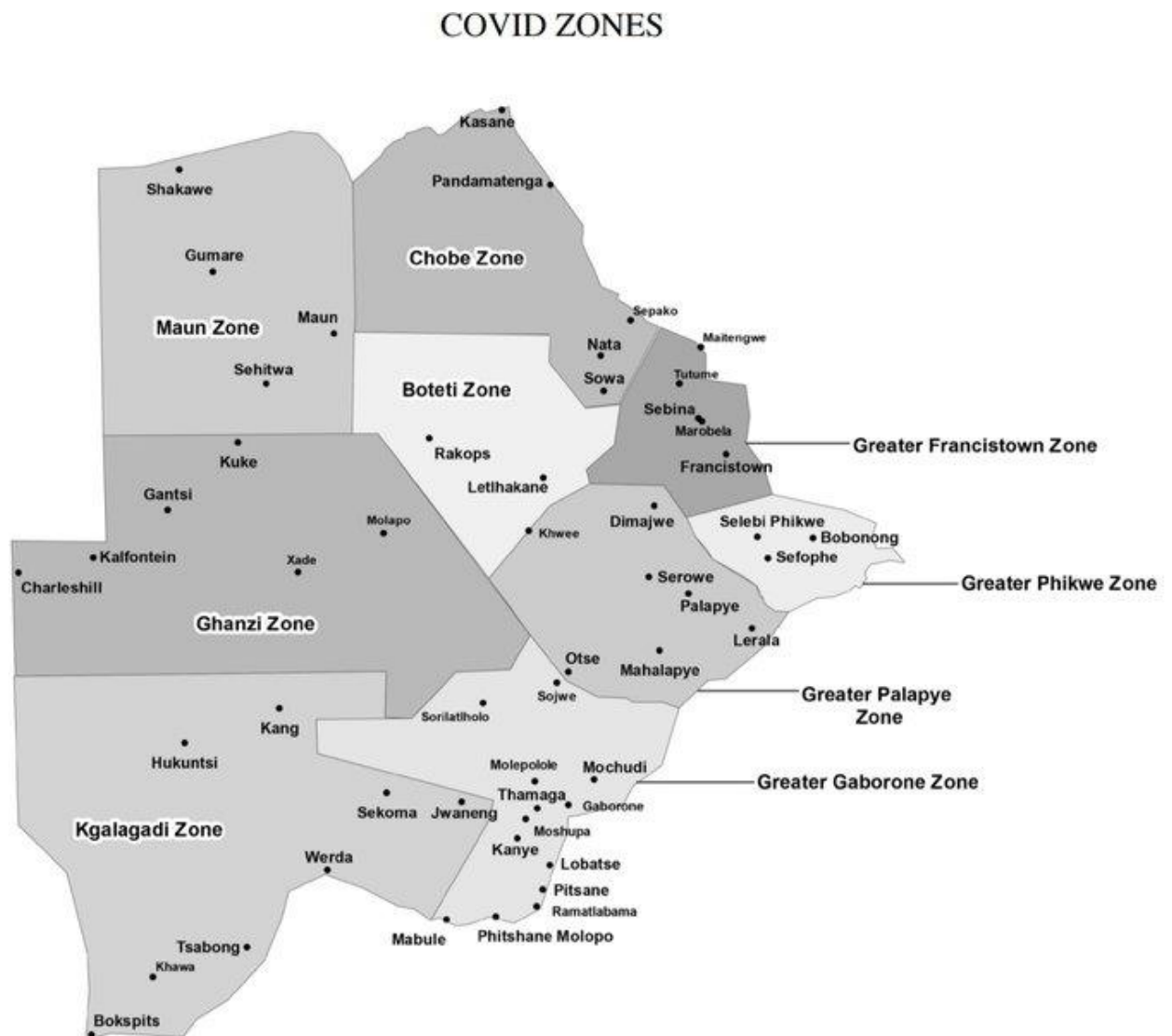


Figure 9: Sampling Frame Greater Gaborone Covid Zone

Source: *Gazettes Africa (2020)*

4.8.5 SAMPLING METHOD

Two types of sampling methods exist, namely probability and non-probability sampling (Creswell, 2017; De Vaus, 2012; Denscombe, 2010). Because this study was quantitative, it used the probability sampling technique to allow each element of the sampling frame to have a known, positive, and unbiased chance of being selected to be representative of the population (Kothari, 2004). Probability sampling leads to research findings being derived from a true population representation; thus, it can be generalized (Kothari, 2004). Locke and Latham (2006) identified several types of probability sampling: stratified random, simple random, cluster and systematic sampling.

To ensure the representativeness of the youth entrepreneurs' sample and validity for statistical inferences, a careful evaluation of the sampling procedure was done to meet the specific requirements of the study. The probability sampling method was used with the Stratified Random Sampling Technique (StrRST) to allow each element a known, positive and unbiased chance of being selected in the sample population. Rao-soft sample size calculator was used to generate the 417 sample size of youth entrepreneurship businesses in Botswana. Errors identified in the pilot study were corrected before fieldwork began. Four hundred and seventeen (417) structured questionnaires were distributed in the various MYSC districts in and around the Greater Gaborone Covid Zone, shown in Table 10.

Amongst the scrutiny was identifying potential respondents through lists of youth entrepreneurs that the district offices of the Ministry of Youth Gender, Sport, and Recreation supplied.

Two research assistants helped the researcher to personally conduct the fieldwork during the period of March-June 2023 covering such areas as Gaborone Central, Mogoditshane, Nkoyaphiri, Ledumadumane, Tlokweng, Gabane, Metsimotlhabe, Mmankodi, Mmokolodi, Mmopane, Thamaga, Kumakwane, Dikhutsaneng, Molepolole, Lobatse, Ramotswa, Mochudi, Morwa, and others.

4.8.6 SAMPLE SIZE

Sample size is the number of individuals or subjects included in a study. In research, determining an appropriate sample size is crucial to balance the statistical considerations, such as validity and generalizability of the research findings, with practical constraints, such as time and cost considerations. Unlike qualitative research that focuses on data saturation to determine sample sizes, this study considered a predetermined large enough sample size. According to Rezvani and Fathollahzadeh (2020), an appropriate sample size ought to be large enough to provide sufficient statistical power, which is the ability of a study to detect an effect or relationship if it truly exists. A small sample size may not have enough statistical power to detect meaningful effects, leading to inconclusive or unreliable results.

On the other hand, an excessively large sample size can be impractical, time-consuming, and costly (Bolarinwa, 2020; Pesämaa et al., 2021). This study used the Rao-Soft sample size calculator to determine a sample size of 417 respondents from the target population of youth entrepreneurs in Botswana. The Rao-Soft method was meant to minimize frustrations usually encountered during research since that method is considered suitable for scholars, specialists, and researchers with minimal statistical knowledge.

In determining this sample size, the study considered, amongst others, the research objectives, the quantitative study design, the planned descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, variability within the sample and the desired level of confidence. Using Rao-Soft sample size calculator software offered a reliable sample size estimation and guaranteed confidence since the method incorporates the study's margin of error, confidence level, and response distribution. Since the research wanted a lower margin of error of 5%, a larger sample size was preferred to represent the target population under study closely (Adam, 2020; Lakens, 2022; Mahendran et al., 2022). Rao-Soft utilizes confidence levels required in study designs like T-test, regression, design and analysis of the experiment, analysis of variance, and correlation. The study set the under-listed requirements for the participant entrepreneurial businesses:

1. The company had to be established and managed by youth aged 18-35.
2. During the time of the study, only businesses active in the market were considered.

4.9 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Research instruments are data collection tools such as questionnaires, observations and interviews to gather information from research respondents (Habib et al., 2014; Altinay et al., 2016). The selection of appropriate research instruments depends upon the research objectives and research questions to be answered (Barasa et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2015; Wang, 2018). The main data collection instrument selected for this quantitative study was a five-point Likert scale rating questionnaire with structured questionnaire items for EMO dimensions and YEP scales adopted from previous research by Becherer et al. (2012) that ranged from 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree (see Appendix A).

Thus, the instrument was considered valid when the questionnaire constructs were tried and tested before by previous researchers. The only new constructs introduced by this study

were the industry or sector of study, which was the youth entrepreneurial business sector and the geographical area, Botswana. Reliability was considered crucial to the measurement of quantitative scales in order to maintain consistency over time. This study preferred structured Likert Scale rating questions because they are easier to answer, quicker to gather data, more accurate, and readily amenable to coding in quantitative analysis than open-ended questions. A Likert scale-type research instrument was considered since it provided typical answers computed on a score for respondents to choose the level of agreement or disagreement with a proposition (De Vaus, 2002; Krosnik & Presser, 2010). Likert scale-type questions are easy to complete; thus, they were preferred in this study to reduce missing value errors, which may result when respondents skip difficult questions. The EMO dimensions and YEP scales are measured using the dimensions identified in the conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5). Likert scales were preferred due to the research instruments' ease of answer, preciseness, and cost-effectiveness. Structured data collection instruments were timesaving and more readily amenable to coding in quantitative analysis than open-ended questions, fulfilling methodological literature (Bhaskar & Manjuladevi, 2016).

4.9.1 QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

The constructs of the questionnaire used in this study were developed from measurement scales adopted from prior studies. Guidance was sought from the research supervisor on the general structure of the survey instrument, wording, clarity and cleanliness of the questionnaire to minimise ambiguity. A statistician was consulted to advise on the sequential order of statements to avoid problems in data recording and interpretation. Expert advice from the statistician was the addition of attention-checking questions to measure participants' misconduct during the survey since, prior to this consultation, the questions required respondents to select answers from the prescribed responses by filling in the provided gaps. The questionnaire contained six sub-sections, as outlined below:

The first part of the questionnaire contained an introductory paragraph that explained who the researcher is, the programme of study and the institution where the studies were undertaken. The purpose of the study and a request to answer the questionnaire was extended. Lastly, confidentiality assurance of the information to be collected was guaranteed.

The second part of the questionnaire had five items that sought to unearth company data like the type of business sector offered, length of operation, number of employees in the company, the company's total asset value, and the annual percentage growth rate of the business. Those two variables sought to establish any relationship between the lengths of operation and the performance of the business from its inception.

The third part of the questionnaire had four items that gathered general demographic and preliminary company information about the respondents. The demographic information sought to understand the research respondents' gender, age, and qualification standard applied as knowledge relevant to the business and their role in the company.

The fourth part of the questionnaire comprised three EMO dimensions that were assessed using numerous factors that gauged the influence of their adoption on the relationship between EMO and YEP performance. Each factor had a minimum of three items rated on a five-point Likert scale. The multi-item scale questions were meant to capture sufficient data about each EMO dimension where only one question could not have provided sufficient information. The scale items were chosen from previous research and framed in a way that helped the researcher fully understand the whole set. The researcher carefully selected the scale items to gather a clearer sense of the response. Composite scores were used to derive meaning from such multi-item scale responses. The three EMO dimensions under consideration were MO, CO, and IO. Market Orientation was measured using five factors: MI, OD, RL, NR, and CBD. Customer orientation was measured using four factors, namely RTC, VC, CRM, and CC. Entrepreneurial orientation was measured using five factors, namely PR, IN, CA, CRT, and EA.

The fifth part of the questionnaire comprised internal EMO dimensions that included three mediator variables. This part of the questionnaire assessed the assumption that the mediator variables KoB, MS, or OS strengthen the relationship between EMO and YEP. Each mediator variable was measured using three-factor items.

The sixth and last part of the questionnaire assessed YEP adoption through seven scale items. The items examined the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, and OS) on the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP.

In this research, the questionnaire was constructed carefully to improve the response rate. According to Smith et al. (2019), response rate ensures the validity and reliability of the research findings, with any response rate between 50% and 92% being considered suitable for quantitative research studies. The response rate was improved by minimizing unusable questionnaires that could be flawed and ineffective in gathering reliable and valid data. The pilot testing stage exposed such unreliable questions that compromised data collection. The researcher took mitigation measures outlined in the subsequent sections to correct any uninterpretable questions to validate the collected data (as shown in Appendix J).

Questions were carefully structured to avoid ambiguity that could introduce systematic errors in the data. Long questionnaires were shortened to reduce fatigue among respondents, which could have resulted in incomplete or careless responses. Simple terminology or concepts were used in the questions to avoid excessive cognitive difficulties in understanding. Proper wording was used to cater to sensitive or offensive content that was deemed to cause discomfort or offend respondents. Such questionnaires may lead to social desirability bias, where respondents provide socially acceptable answers instead of their true opinions. A pilot test on the questionnaire was conducted with a representative sample to identify and rectify the actual fieldwork. Pilot testing helped ensure the questionnaire was clear, comprehensible, and functioning as intended. Finally, clear and adequate instructions on answering the questionnaire were given to reduce confusion. The collected data may have been compromised if participants were unsure how to interpret the questionnaire or the desired response format.

4.10 DATA VARIABLES AND THEIR MEASUREMENT

This section describes how the study data variables, constructs, measurement scales, measurement method, statistical analysis techniques and the respective data sources were identified against the theoretical orientation. This quantitative study used both data variables, categorical and numerical variables, to describe, understand, and analyze the phenomena under study. In statistics, data variables are characteristics that can change from one individual or object to another. Proper identification of data variables/ types and the corresponding measurement scales are essential for data analysis and inferences about populations or samples (Azen & Walker, 2021; Rahman et al., 2022). Subsequent sections of this study identify and discuss the data variables. Table 10 summarizes the common descriptive statistical measures and techniques used in this research to manipulate,

categorize, and analyze the data, such as measures of central tendency, dispersion, correlation, regression analysis, and hypothesis testing to draw inferences and conclusions.

Table 11: Common Descriptive Statistical Measures and Techniques

Descriptive Statistical Measures and Techniques	
1. Measures of Central Tendency	i. Mean: The arithmetic average of a set of values.
	ii. Median: The middle value in a sorted set of values.
	iii. Mode: The most frequently occurring value in a set of values
2. Measures of Dispersion or Variation:	i. Range: The difference between a data set's maximum and minimum values.
	ii. Variance: The average of the squared differences from the mean.
	iii. Standard Deviation: The square root of the variance indicates the data spread around the mean.
3. Measures of Shape and Distribution:	i. Skewness: Measures the asymmetry of a distribution.
	ii. Kurtosis: Measures the shape of a distribution's tails and peakedness (or flatness).
4. Percentiles:	i. Values that divide a dataset into hundred equal parts.
5. Graphical Representations	i. Histogram: A visual representation of the frequency distribution of numerical data.
	ii. Box Plot: Displays the minimum, first quartile, median, third quartile, and maximum values of a dataset.
	iii. Scatter Plot: Illustrates the relationship between two variables using points on a graph.

Source: Researcher's compilation

Generally, data variables or data types of this study fell into two main categories, namely, categorical or qualitative and numeric or quantitative, with each category being further split into two levels of (data) measurement or scales of measurement being nominal (categories with no inherent order) and ordinal (categories with a specific order or ranking); then discrete and ratio for numerical. The subsequent schematic figure presents the four levels of data measurement, also known as levels of measurement or scales of measurement. Figure 9 presents some operational definitions followed by a discussion of how these levels determine the statistical analysis techniques applied to the data.

According to Azen and Walker (2021), categorical variables represent qualitative or discrete characteristics that include:

- a. Nominal scales of measurement are data variables with no inherent order or numerical value associated with the categories, e.g., gender (male or female), marital status (single, married, divorced), and eye colour (blue, green, brown) (Azen & Walker, 2021). The nominal level of measurement used in this study includes the sector of youth entrepreneurship business offered, the gender of the youth entrepreneurs, and the employment grade. Nominal values describe the type of variable with no sense of order. When analysing each nominal data type in this study, such as gender, each gender type was given a simple numeric number which had no mathematical relevance apart from merely for coding purposes. In this study, summaries for such nominal data were done using nonparametric statistical analysis techniques such as frequencies or percentages to denote the number of occurrences such as the encountered observations. No mean or average values can be calculated from nominal data.

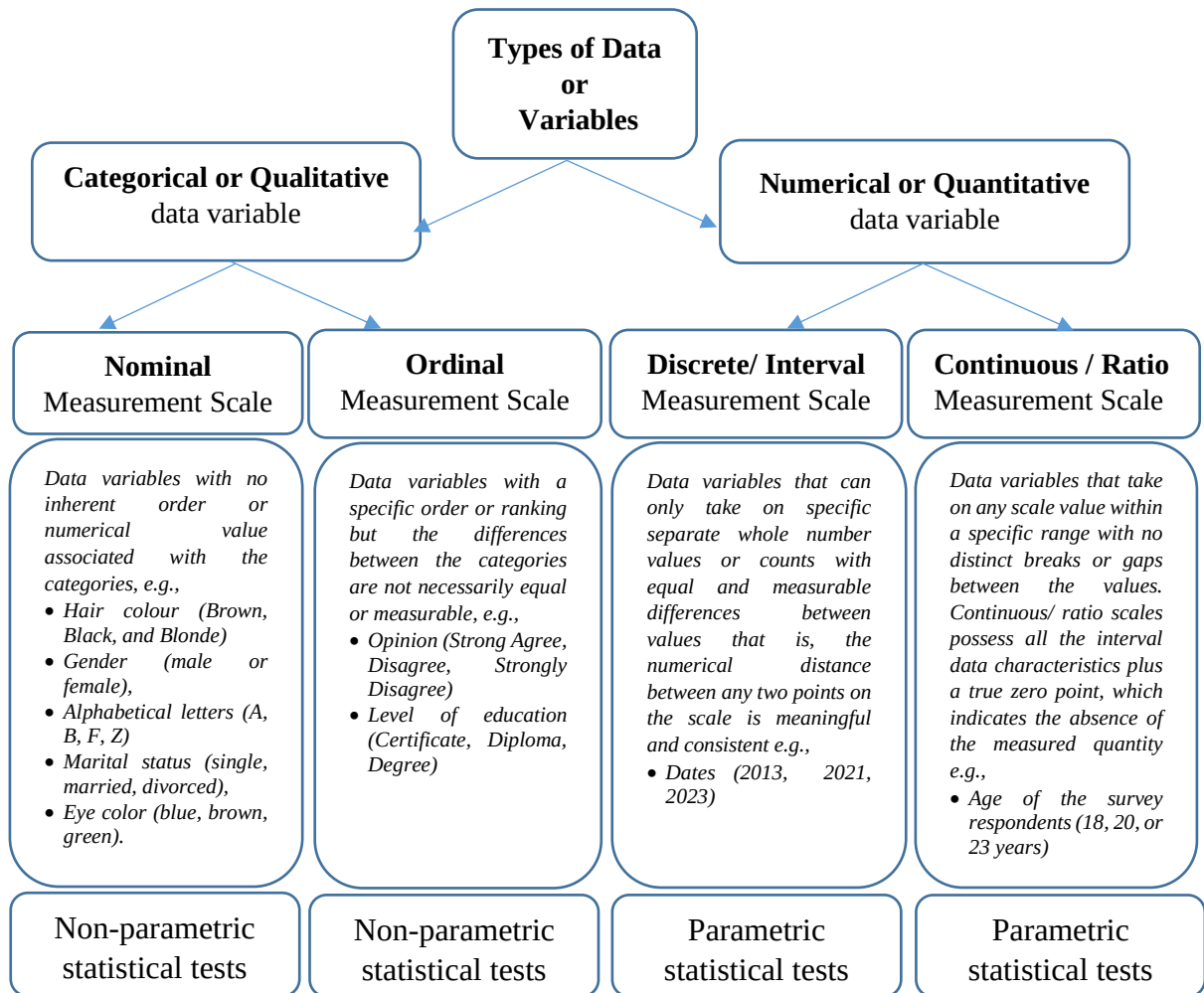


Figure 10: Types of Data Variables, Measurement Scales, and the Statistical Test

Source: Researcher's compilation

- b. Ordinal scales of measurement are data variables with a specific order or ranking, but the differences between the categories are not necessarily equal or measurable (Boulton et al., 2021). The study also recorded ordinal data, ranked based on certain criteria with no differences between each data group and values that were not necessarily equal or quantifiable. In other words, ordinal data represents rankings or order of categories or values, where the relative positions or order were meaningful, but the exact differences or intervals between the categories were not well-defined.

Some examples of ordinal data used included the business ratings against competitors, educational qualifications relevant to the business, and the majority of the questions used with Likert scale ratings. Likert scales are commonly used in surveys to measure the respondents' attitudes or opinions. In this study, respondents were presented with statements or questions that asked them to rate their level of agreement or disagreement on a scale such as "strongly disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree", and "strongly agree" (Krosnik & Presser, 2010). In this case, the order of the response options was meaningful, but the intervals between them were not necessarily equal.

Some of the ordinal questions asked survey respondents to rate their product or service uniqueness against competitors on a scale of one to five, with one being the lowest rating, denoting "strongly disagree", and five being the highest, denoting "strongly agree". Although the rating scales were ordered, the difference between each rating was not necessarily the same. Another ordinal data type was the educational qualifications relevant to the business. The educational levels were classified as "tertiary certificate", "tertiary diploma", "undergraduate degree", "master's degree", "self-taught & passion", and "industry experience". Even though there is an ordered progression from one educational level to another, the difference between each level was not standardized. The business ratings against competitors also categorise the businesses into competence groups. The order merely reflects a hierarchy, but the magnitude of the difference between the categories was not precisely defined. Thus, the resulting data was recorded as ordinal. This study analysed ordinal data using nonparametric statistical analysis techniques such as the Mann-Whitney U test or the Kruskal-Wallis test. These tests do not assume that the intervals between the categories are equal and can handle ranked or ordered data.

Numerical variables, or quantitative variables, represent measurable quantities or values. These numerical variables can be further divided into two subtypes:

- a. Discrete/ Interval scales of measurement are data variables that can only take on specific separate whole number values or counts (do not take decimal points) with equal and measurable differences between values, that is, the numerical distance between any two points on the scale is meaningful and consistent (Hair and Sarstedt, 2019). Nonetheless, the presence of a true zero point is not necessary. Examples of discrete or interval measurement scales included in this study are the number of full-time employees in each entrepreneurship business and the specific year of establishment of each youth business venture. In this study, discrete/ interval data was analysed using parametric statistical analysis techniques such as multiple regression to allow the model of the relationship between the dependent variable and the multiple predictors from the EMO dimensions.
- b. Continuous/ Ratio scales of measurement are data variables that take on any scale value within a specific range with no distinct breaks or gaps between the values (Boulton et al., 2021; Saunders et al., 2018). Continuous/ Ratio scales possess all the interval data characteristics plus a true zero point, indicating the measured quantity's absence. In this study, such continuous/ ratio data was analysed using parametric statistical analysis techniques such as ratios between values, and arithmetic operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division can be performed on such data. Examples of ratio data include height, weight, time, and income. In this study, continuous variables used included the age in years of the survey respondents, how long the business has been in operation, and the company's total current assets value in thousands of US dollars.

In this study, it was important to note the data type and determine the scales of measurement to determine the type of statistical analysis corresponding to each data set. Nominal and ordinal data were analyzed using non-parametric statistical analysis tests, while interval and ratio data were subjected to parametric statistical analysis tests assuming certain data distribution properties. In each case, the choice of the correct statistical test was dependent on such factors as:

- a. The research question that needed to be addressed,
- b. The type of data collected in the study,

- c. The assumptions associated with each different statistical test are considered for use.

Figure 10 outlines the steps taken to decide on the correct statistical tests for the study.

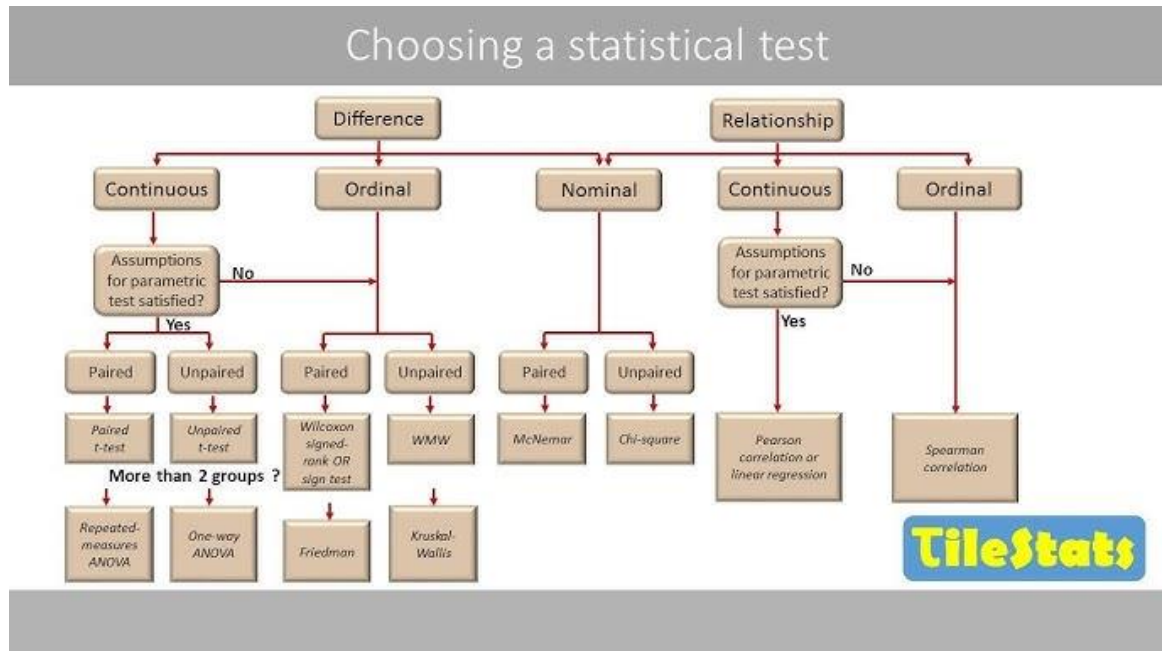


Figure 11: Flowchart for Selection of Statistical Analysis

Source: Hair and Sarstedt (2019)

As shown in Figure 10, the researcher sought expert advice from a consultant statistician to help select the most appropriate statistical analysis test for each case. From the three groups of respondents, descriptive statistics helped summarise basic patterns and characteristics of the demographics to show how the research variables are connected in the research sample (Babbie et al., 2014; Marczyk et al., 2005; Saunders et al., 2018). The study assumed a better understanding of data if mean responses and standard deviation averages were considered together. Independent T-tests were used to explore the differences in groups of respondents.

Figure 11 shows the preferred statistical analysis of this study. Inferential statistics was used on continuous data collected from sections B and C of the questionnaire. Multiple regression, correlation, and confirmatory factor analyses were performed to test the relationships between EMO and YEP.

Selecting the right statistical analysis - flowchart/decision tree

Start with the top line - you will have a choice. Make your choice and go to the next line down. As you move down the table you will make more choices until you have settled on the best statistical approach for your investigation/project.

Start here ==>		Is your analysis concerned with Differences or Similarities ?		<==== Start here			
Differences			Similarities				
Do you have two samples to compare or more than two?			Are your data categorical ? Are you looking for an association between categories or do you have two factors (can you draw a scatter graph)?				
More than two samples		Two samples only		Categorical - Association		Two variables to correlate	
Are your data normally distributed or non-parametric?				Do you have two sets of categories or only one?		Are both variables normally distributed or non-parametric?	
Normal	Non-parametric			Two	One	Non-parametric	Normal
You need ANOVA, analysis of variance	Use the Kruskal Wallis test			Use Chi Square analysis to look for association between the various categories	Use Goodness of fit test to look for a fit between the expected ratio between the categories and the observed ratio	Use Spearman Rank correlation to determine the strength of the relationship	Use regression analysis and Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the strength of the relationship and also to be able to use one variable to predict the other
Are your samples in matched pairs ?							
Matched pairs			Not in matched pairs				
Do you have >25 pairs of data?			Do you have >25 data items in each sample?				
>25 pairs		<25 pairs		>25 data per sample		<25 data items per sample	
Use the z test for matched samples		Are your data normally distributed or non-parametric?		You need the z test for unmatched samples		Are your data normally distributed or non-parametric?	
		Normal	Non-parametric			Normal	Non-parametric
		Use the t test for matched pairs	Use Wilcoxon matched pairs analysis			Use the t test for unmatched samples	Use the Mann Whitney U test

Figure 12: Flowchart for Selection of Statistical Analysis

Source: Boulton et al. (2021)

Standard multiple regression analysis was used to explain the contribution to the variance of an independent variable on the dependent variable. It also showed “a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables” (Altinay et al., 2011). A standard multiple regression analysis was done to test the model's Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) (as shown in Table 25). The study used standard multiple regression analysis to determine the extent to which the independent variables (the EMO dimensions, market orientation, customer orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation) positively affect YEP (dependent variable), especially in the presence of mediator variables (KoB, MS and OS).

4.11 RESPONSE RATE

In research, the response rate is a percentage ratio of the individuals who participated in a survey divided by the total number of eligible individuals (Smith et al., 2019). Response rate is commonly used to measure the engagement or effectiveness of communication contexts. In research, a high response rate indicates a higher level of engagement or interest from the respondents, a perceived interest in the research as important to both personal and

professional life. In contrast, a low response rate may suggest disinterest or other factors that hinder participation. A high response rate generally indicates a lower risk of non-response bias, where the characteristics of non-respondents differ significantly from those of respondents, potentially leading to skewed or unreliable results (Holtom et al., 2022). Conversely, a lower response rate may raise concerns about the representativeness and generalizability of the findings. The specific benchmarks for a good or bad response rate can vary depending on the context and industry. The ideal response rate varies depending on the nature of the research, the target population, and the methodology (De Vaus, 2002; Krosnik & Presser, 2010). In quantitative studies, the response rate affects the validity and generalizability of the research findings. According to De Vaus (2012), the response rate ensures the validity and reliability of the research findings, with any response rate between 50% and 92% considered suitable for quantitative research studies. In some cases, a response rate of 60% or higher may be considered acceptable, while in other situations, such as certain types of surveys or clinical trials, a response rate of 80% or more may be desired.

This study mitigated a low response rate by seeking guidance from the research supervisor on the general structure of the questionnaire to minimise ambiguity. The researcher invested time and effort in the questionnaire design and pilot testing to identify anomalies. Careful construction of the data collection instrument ensured that the questions were clear, comprehensible, and functioning as intended. The questions were well structured to avoid ambiguity that can introduce systematic errors in the data. Long questionnaires were avoided to reduce fatigue among respondents, which can result in incomplete or careless responses. Simple terminology or concepts were used in the questions to avoid excessive cognitive difficulties in understanding. Proper wording was used to cater to sensitive or offensive content that was deemed to cause discomfort or offend respondents. Such questionnaires may lead to social desirability bias, where respondents provide socially acceptable answers instead of their true opinions. Clear and adequate instructions on answering the questionnaire were given to reduce confusion. Appropriate response options and multiple reminders were provided. The researcher also ensured confidentiality and anonymity to the respondents.

4.12 CHALLENGES DURING DATA COLLECTION

Several challenges were encountered during the data collection stage. Altinay et al. (2011) propose the importance of alternative plans in research in case of challenges experienced with the original plan. In this study, data collection needed careful planning and attention to detail.

Initially, the planned fieldwork changed numerous times due to a lack of participant cooperation. Some of the youth entrepreneurs played truant during appointments. When initially contacted, the participants lacked trust and suspected that the researchers were decoys from the law enforcement units chasing after YDF loan defaulters. Then, once participants were met, it was not easy to spontaneously build rapport (Rahman et al., 2022). Amongst the adjustments to the original fieldwork plan was the inclusion of some participants who were either randomly met or referred to by visited participants. Therefore, some degree of purposive and snowball sampling emerged during field visits to include participants who met the stipulated survey criteria, even though they were not originally planned to be the sample units.

Following this, the population was widely dispersed, resulting in longer than anticipated distances that were covered to trace the scattered participants. The extra unbudgeted distances resulted in increased travel costs to do the study. At times, the appointed places to meet the respondents changed. Some participants relocated meeting times and places, resulting in more than planned time spent surveying one participant.

Lastly, another challenge emanated from ethnicity barriers. Language, culture and country of origin slightly hindered the smooth data collection. Most participants wanted to be conversed in their native language, yet the researcher spoke a foreign language. However, using an interpreter in some cases helped overcome this challenge. The subsequent section discusses in detail the analysis used in this study.

4.13 ANALYSIS OF DATA

This section discusses the quantitative data analysis methods and techniques of this study. Data analysis includes reducing the collected raw data into manageable sizes, developing summaries, establishing patterns, and applying statistical analysis to draw clear, concise

inferences and deductions from the information gathered during an investigation (Abu-Bader, 2021; Azen & Walker, 2021; Van der Walddt, 2020; Wagner III, 2019). Generally, quantitative data analysis is done in three phases: Firstly, it measures differences between groups; in this case, it measures the difference between the diverse youth entrepreneurial industry sectors. Secondly, to assess relationships between variables, in this case, how related is the IV to the DV through the MV. Finally, to test hypotheses in a scientifically rigorous way.

This quantitative social science study has multiple latent constructs and variables forming a complex conceptual framework (Figure 5). Thus, there was a preference to use Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in conjunction with Smart Partial Least Squares the Fourth Version (Smart PLS4) software. From the several SEM modelling programs available, the choice to do mediation analysis and hypotheses testing using Smart PLS4 together with IMB Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 28 software is summarised in the subsequent paragraphs.

- i. Firstly, Smart PLS4 was considered a modern SEM tool that allows a high degree of flexibility in modelling the correlation between the various error terms (Latif et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2022). Due to the nature of this study being from the social sciences, it was deemed prone to errors, and SEM caters to such by incorporating an error term in its equation. The latent constructs in this study include the YEP and EMO dimensions that require using two or more related questions (measurement scales). Therefore, assessing them through subjective Likert scale estimate responses would be prone to error. In this case, SEM became appropriate since it models measurement error for both the predictor and outcome variables for this study.
- ii. Secondly, Smart PLS4 was deemed a contemporary statistical modelling technique that is flexible and suitable for handling various data types, including continuous, categorical, and ordinal variables used to establish relationships between variables in this study (Hussain et al., 2023). To begin with, the nominal level of measurement used in this study includes the sector of youth entrepreneurship business offered, the gender of the youth entrepreneurs, and the employment grade. This was followed by ordinal data, including the business ratings against competitors, educational qualifications relevant to the business, and most of the questions used

with Likert scale ratings. Then, discrete or interval measurement scales in this study were used to measure the number of full-time employees in each entrepreneurship business and the specific year of establishment of each youth business venture. Lastly, continuous variables used include the age in years of the survey respondents, how long the business has been in operation, and the company's total current assets value in thousands of US dollars.

- iii. Additionally, SEM was considered because it is a set of modern diverse analysis programs that comprise both confirmatory factor analysis (measurement model) that measures the latent variables or composite variables and path analysis (structural model) that tests all the hypothetical dependencies based on path analysis (Cook & Forzani, 2020, 2023; Roux et al., 2019; Wooldredge, 2021) to overcome the limitations found in the first-generation multivariate analysis techniques like multiple regression, logistic regression, and analysis of variance (Fan et al., 2021).
- iv. Also, SEM was preferred because it could simultaneously model and solve complex relationships between multiple direct and indirect variables (as shown in the conceptual framework diagram of this study Figure 5), which would not be possible when only using multiple regression in SPSS. The path diagram produced by Smart PLS4 visually showed the influence of mediating variables (MS, KoB, and OS) on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Clarifying the potential interactions may allow future researchers to design more robust mediation effect studies.
- v. This social science study had latent (theoretical) or multi-faceted constructs (EMO, MO, EO, MS, KoB, and others) with observed variables that could not be directly measured compared to others from scientific fields. Structural equation modelling (SEM) conducted in Smart PLS4 proved a powerful technique for testing and evaluating multivariate correlations for this complex phenomenon (Fan et al., 2021; Tarka, 2018). The technique evaluated the fit of the data to the model and used the path diagram to identify areas to modify the conceptual model.
- vi. SEM in Smart PLS4 software was preferred due to its ability to generate simple, user-friendly path diagrams that concisely represent the hypothesized relationships amongst the variables in the conceptual model. The path diagram (shown in Figure

- 12) provides clear communication that allows both expert and non-expert researchers with limited statistical knowledge or experience to comfortably understand the hypothesized relationships and use the diagram to compare the observed data and tested predictions.
- vii. Unlike other statistical methods that can be challenging, Smart PLS4 was considered robust to provide reliable results when handling small sample sizes, missing data, and non-normal distributions (Adam, 2020; Lakens, 2022; Mahendran et al., 2022).
 - viii. The Smart PLS4 software was preferred to produce the path diagram of model results (such as the diagram shown in Figure 12) that even includes factor loadings. These visualizations enhanced the interpretation and communication of research findings from data modelling and analysis as they visually depict the correlations between variables in much clearer, simpler, and more appealing illustrations. Like most social scientists who consider path diagrams valuable tools to introduce complex statistical concepts, the path diagram better narrated this research's thinking than the use of complex mathematical formulae and equations.
 - ix. Smart PLS4 software was also preferred to employ bootstrap resampling techniques, as it enabled robust estimation of model parameters, standard errors, and significance levels (Gudergan et al., 2008; Latif et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2022). Bootstrap resampling was particularly useful when assumptions of traditional statistical methods were not met, like in this study, which had numerous latent variables.
 - x. Smart PLS4 focuses on predictive modelling, making it valuable for forecasting and prediction. The software's predictive power can be used to develop strong predictive models, especially when dealing with large and complex datasets.

4.13.1 PATH ANALYSIS PROCEDURE CONDUCTED IN SMART PLS4

Path analysis is a more sophisticated extension of multiple regression analysis used in research to examine relationships between variables and test hypotheses about causal relationships, even in complex relationships that involve multiple variables simultaneously (Cook & Forzani, 2020, 2023; Roux et al., 2019). Path analysis provides estimates of direct

effects (the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable) and indirect effects (the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable mediated by one or more intermediate variables) (Wooldredge, 2021). Structural equation modelling (SEM) in Smart PLS4 was used in this study to conduct path analysis and estimate the strength and significance of the paths as outlined in some of the general steps discussed in the subsequent section:

- Define the research question with a clear articulation of the variables to be examined and the hypotheses to test.
- Development of a conceptual framework (as shown in Figure 5) with path diagrams (as shown in Figure 12) that show the theoretical relationships between the variables.
- Primary data collection on the variables of interest.
- Selection of the Smart PLS4 statistical software program capable of conducting path analysis.
- Use Smart PLS4 to specify the model, define the relationships between variables, and indicate the proposed paths.
- Estimation of the parameters (coefficients) of the paths in the model. The software is capable of providing estimates of direct and indirect effects, as well as goodness-of-fit indices.
- Assess model fit: Evaluate the model's goodness of fit to the data using fit indices. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and NFI were preferred.
- Interpret the results by examining the path coefficients to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between variables. Assess the significance of the direct and indirect effects.
- Revision and refinement of the model to fit well, modification of the path diagram (as shown in Figure 12), or exploration of alternative models.

Although path analysis is a powerful statistical tool to analyze complex relationships and test hypotheses about causal pathways, careful assumptions need to be considered and evaluated because the path analysis techniques rely on specific assumptions, such as linearity, normality, and the absence of measurement error (Cook & Forzani, 2020, 2023; Roux et al., 2019; Wooldredge, 2021). Table 13 shows the steps used to analyse the data and generate the results of this study:

Table 12: Quantitative Data Analysis Steps

1. Data Screening, Cleaning and Replacement of Missing Values		
2. Measurement Model Assessment	a. Reliability	
	b. Validity	i. Convergent Validity
		ii. Discriminant Validity [Fornell & Larcker Criterion, HTMT (Preferred), or Cross Loading]
	c. Report Measurement Model	
3. Structural Model Assessment	a. Check for Collinearity	
	b. Assess and report the significance of relationships (through Bootstrapping)	i. Check for Bootstrapped Path Coefficients, T Statistics, P Values • A t-value over 1.96 (two-tailed) and <i>p</i>-value < .05 mean significant results, which were considered significant to substantiate the hypotheses of this study.
		ii. Assess the Explanatory (R-Square) and Predictive Power (PLS-Predict)

Source: Researcher's compilation

4.13.2 DATA SCREENING, CLEANING AND REPLACEMENT OF MISSING VALUES

The data entry was screened, cleaned, and treated for missing values before being analysed to measure the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP. Data screening in research refers to reviewing and cleaning collected data to ensure its quality and suitability for analysis. The process was done to eliminate errors, inconsistencies, and missing values, eliminate outliers, and eliminate any participants' misconduct that could have been experienced during questionnaire completion. Data screening, cleaning, and replacing missing values ensured the validity and reliability of the research findings. Some notable steps during data screening included data entry verification, missing data analysis, outlier detection, data distribution normality, variable consistency and coding, data cleaning and transformation, and general data quality assurance (Wagner III, 2019).

To begin with, data entry verification was done to check for accuracy by cross-checking against the source questionnaire documents. The original questionnaires were all numbered before coding to allow for double entry during verification. The data was screened for impermissible values that could have been keyed in during data coding. Any value from 1-

5 on the five-point Likert Scale responses could have been an error during coding. No issues of impermissible values were noticed.

Followed by checking coding errors for variance consistency and coding. Variable consistency and coding ensure the consistency and correctness of variable labels and their correct coding. No participants' misconduct was witnessed because no Likert Scale responses appeared to have the same rating. In cases where the same rating is selected throughout, the participant would not have read the questions but answered with a similar score like "strongly agree" throughout. Such participant misconduct on answers may be detected by testing for standard deviation. Only the Likert Scale items were tested for standard deviation. The data for this study was collected over a large sample size. Thus, the rule of thumb was applied to delete any standard deviation value less than 0.25 (Lakens, 2022). The acceptable level of agreement (or disagreement) within the question was that any rows with less than 0.25 could have been deleted because those answers showed little or no variance. In this study, all the responses had reasonable variations above 0.25.

Then, the appropriate identification and handling of missing data. Missing data can be categorized as missing completely at random (MCAR), missing at random (MAR), or missing not at random (MNAR). Various techniques like imputation or deletion can be used to address missing data. However, this study employed the Expectation Maximization approach to clean and replace missing data. Replacement of missing data was done to improve statistical power that otherwise threatens the validity of trials and may lead to invalid conclusions (Kang, 2013; Black et al., 2019).

Outlier detection was a step that checked for extreme values that deviated significantly from the rest of the data. Outliers can be detected using statistical techniques like z-scores and box plots or domain knowledge. Outliers can be retained, transformed, or removed depending on the nature of the data and research objectives. After this, a check for data distribution and normality was conducted. This normality assumption assessment was done to check if the data follows a normal distribution pattern, which is an important test in statistical analyses. This can be done through visual inspection (e.g., histograms) or statistical tests (e.g., Shapiro-Wilk test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test).

Thereafter, there was data cleaning and transformation. The data was cleaned by addressing any inconsistencies, errors, or illogical values that may have been done during the recording of the variables, combining categories, or transforming variables to meet assumptions of statistical analyses. Lastly, the data was generally checked for quality assurance to ensure its fit for analysis. This final step reviewed documentation, assessed the overall data quality and addressed any remaining issues in data cleaning to ensure that the data met the research objectives and was suitable to answer the research questions or test the hypothesized relationships. It is important to note that data screening was performed in this research to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings, minimize biases, and ensure the accuracy of the results. Data screening was an essential step in this research to ensure that the data used for analysis was high quality.

4.13.3 MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT

Reliability and validity are essential for Likert scale measurements to achieve internal consistency and accuracy of a measure (Gliem & Gliem, 2003; Heale & Twycross, 2015; Pasek & Krosnick, 2010). Reliability is the consistency or stability of research measurement variables or constructs. The study conducted reliability tests to minimize unreliable measurements that could introduce errors and reduce the validity of the findings (as shown in Table 13).

Table 13: Measurement Model Assessment through Reliability and Validity Tests

a. RELIABILITY TESTS	b. VALIDITY TESTS
• Test-Retest Reliability Consistency of measurement scales of the same group of participants on two separate occasions	• Face validity Subjective surface appearance judgment of the questionnaire or research design done by other researchers or experts to measure what it intends to measure
• Internal Consistency Reliability Items within a measurement scale are interrelated and measure the same underlying construct.	• Internal validity Evidence for causal relationships between variables
• Item Analysis Reliability The relationship between individual items and the total score	• External validity Generalizability of research findings to other populations
• Parallel Forms Reliability Create two equivalent forms of a measurement scale and administer them to the same group of participants.	• Construct validity Adequacy of the questionnaires to accurately capture the underlying constructs
• Convergence Reliability The extent to which the same construct's measurement scales are related is correlated or converged in their findings to produce similar results.	• Discriminant validity The empirical distinction of each construct from the others in the conceptual framework (Afthanorhan et al., 2021) is shown in Figure 5.

Source: Researcher's compilation

Firstly, a test-retest reliability analysis was conducted to determine the degree of consistency of measures to the same group of participants on two separate occasions. It was paramount for this study to have consistent measurement scales of EMO and YEP that are stable over time because numerous other studies might need to use the same constructs and correlate the results.

Secondly, an Internal Consistency Reliability was conducted to assess the extent to which items within each measurement scale were interrelated and measured the same underlying construct. Almost all the variables in the study had three measurement scales to assess each latent variable. Commonly used internal consistency reliability measures include Cronbach's alpha and split-half reliability. Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the average correlation between all possible combinations of items, indicating how well they collectively measure the construct. Internal consistency was a key issue in this quantitative research because the results from the estimated sample were to be generalized to the whole entrepreneurship population in Botswana. Internal measurement scale reliability is the

percentage of the variance between the exact scores of the underlying construct (Field et al., 2010). A greater than 0.70 Cronbach's Alpha (α) value was considered to validate internal consistency, as alluded that acceptable, reliable constructs fall between 0.70 - 0.95 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011; Tore et al., 2022).

Thirdly, Item Analysis Reliability was conducted to evaluate the reliability of individual items within each measurement scale. Each of the three EMO dimensions and the three mediator variables had three measurement scales. Thus, item analysis was crucial to identify problematic items that could have introduced errors or did not correlate well with the overall scales. Item-total correlations, which measure the relationship between each item and the total score, were used to assess item reliability.

Fourthly, the study conducted Parallel Forms Reliability, which created two equivalent forms of measurement scales that were administered to the same group of participants. The use of Smart PLS4 simplified this process of obtaining scores from both forms of measurement scales and then correlating the scores to determine the consistency between them. Parallel forms reliability was useful to minimize practice effects or order effects.

Lastly, Convergence reliability was checked to assess the level to which the expressions used to measure the observed and latent variables were expected to converge and relate to each other (Voorhees et al., 2016). In this study, convergent validity was considered to be the extent to which measurement scales of the same construct or variable that are expected to be related are correlated or converged in their findings to produce similar results. By demonstrating convergent reliability, this research supports the idea that even though the multiple measurement scales used in this research were obtained from different prior research, they all hone into the same underlying construct. This convergent reliability method determined the extent to which the instrument variables measured their intended concepts correctly.

Fornell and Larcker (1981), as supported by Cheung et al. (2023), proposed a generally accepted technique to measure both convergent and discriminant validity called the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Average Variance Extracted was obtained by dividing the sum of squares of the covariance loadings of the expressions related to the factor by the number of expressions. In order to provide convergent validity, AVE values must be less

than the Composite Reliability (CR), and each AVE value must be greater than 0.5. A strong and high positive correlation suggests that the measures converge, which indicates that they capture the same underlying construct (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Even though the study's questionnaire items were adopted from Becherer, Helms, and McDonald (2012), the research tool was further tested for convergence validity to establish the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire to capture the intended constructs or variables. Thus, the instrument was considered valid when the questionnaire constructs were tried and tested before by previous researchers.

In research, validity is the extent to which a study or research instrument accurately measures or assesses what it claims to measure or assess (Lakens, 2022). Validity is important to determine the trustworthiness of a study's findings. To ensure validity, the study went through a combination of multiple quantitative validity checks to prudently mitigate against all possible potential threats to validity, as discussed in the subsequent sections;

Firstly, the research design was carefully planned through a year-long proposal that went through a rigorous "viva voce" proposal defence panel. The proposal defence panel comprised academics from the WBS post-graduate school and a pair of external supervisors. The panel highlighted grey areas in the proposal that were corrected before approval was granted.

Secondly, an appropriate measurement tool in the form of a five-point Likert scale was thoroughly considered for reasons highlighted in the questionnaire design section of this study. It was crucial to ensure internal validity by minimizing confounding variables and sources of bias in the questionnaire. Avoidance of internal validity was done by carefully constructing the questions to provide accurate and reliable evidence for causal relationships between variables (Surucu & Maslakci, 2020). Internal validity was examined to see whether the observed effects were attributed to the independent variable(s) and not to other factors. The research also considered factors such as the sample representativeness and the similarity of conditions across different settings to ensure external validity. Sample representativeness was catered for by selecting a stratified random sampling technique that gave an equal chance to every sample unit to be used in the study. External validity was considered to ensure the generalizability of the research findings to other populations,

settings, or conditions and to ensure the obtained results could be applied to broader contexts. Again, measurement dimensions were adequately examined through statistical analyses and methods to establish construct validity. Construct validity assessed how well the EMO dimensions, the mediator variables, and the operationalized theoretical and conceptual framework accurately measure the constructs under study. It involved examining the adequacy of the measurement instruments, such as questionnaires or tests, in capturing the underlying constructs accurately. After this, a thorough review of the instrument's content, plus advice from expert judgment, was used to assess content validity. Content validity was done to ensure that the items or questions in the questionnaire represented the full scope of the concept under investigation. Great leverage on using questions from extant research helped mitigate against content validity.

Thirdly, the research proposal defence panel members conducted the initial face validity of the questionnaire and data collection procedure. Face validity is the extent to which a measurement instrument design appears, on the surface, to measure what it intends to measure. Rigorously enquiry of the data collection and analysis methods were refined with the thesis supervisor in collaboration with the WBS research ethics board.

Discriminant validity assesses the extent to which each construct in the study was empirically distinct from the others in the conceptual framework. Rather than using the suggested AVE traditional measurement metric of Fornell and Larcker, the study adopts the heterotraitmonotrait (HTMT) of corrections to assess discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in Smart PLS4 was used to validate data before conducting regression analysis.

4.13.4 REPORT MEASUREMENT MODEL

Descriptive statistics was used to present demographic information summaries or descriptions of company background, while inferential statistics was used to draw suggestions or generalizations from the EMO dimensions to YEP.

Descriptive statistics are statistical analysis methods that summarize and describe data sets using various numerical measures and graphical representations (Diraditsile, 2020). Descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to explain otherwise latent variables numerically and describe how the research's numerous variables were connected (Babbie

et al., 2014; Saunders et al., 2018). In this study, descriptive statistics provided easy ways to observe, analyse, and describe the profile, identify particular population characteristics and understand characteristics such as the youth entrepreneurs' company backgrounds and the respondents' demographic aspects. The choice for descriptive statistics was to provide a clear understanding of categorical, nominal and ordinal data and generally summarise basic patterns and characteristics of the demographics in the research sample (Marczyk et al., 2005).

The first set of descriptive statistics sought to measure business performance through analysis of such factors as efficiency, return on investment, growth, profitability, and accumulation of company assets. The gathered company data included measurement constructs such as the sector in which the youth entrepreneurs offer their products or services, the number of years in operation from the inception of the company, the number of employees, total company assets and the percentage of annual sales growth rate that the businesses experienced within the previous two financial periods.

The other set of descriptive statistics gathered respondents' background data such as the gender, the age of the youth entrepreneurs, the standard of qualification relevant to the business and the employee grade within the company structures. The study had three groups of respondents: youth entrepreneurs, business owners, managers and employees.

Both data sets applied corresponding descriptive statistics measures and techniques to gain a preliminary understanding of the data before conducting more advanced statistical analyses, as discussed in the previous section of this study.

4.14 STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT

This step assesses whether or not the relationship between the different constructs in the study is significant. This research sought to test for the mediating effect of KoB, MS, and OS on the strength of the relationship between EMO and YEP. Multiple regression analysis requires that there should be no multicollinearity violation among the independent variables (Kyriazos & Poga, 2023; Shrestha, 2020). The subsequent section discusses multicollinearity assumption checks done in this study.

4.14.1 MULTICOLLINEARITY ASSUMPTION CHECK

The structural model assessment process started with checking for collinearity. Both the variance inflation factor (VIF) and the collinearity tolerance method were used in this study (as shown in Tables 5.6, 5.7, and 25, amongst others). Pallant (2020) states that multicollinearity is a situation in a statistical model where two or more independent variables are highly correlated with each other. There will be challenges in analysing and interpreting the results, and it becomes difficult to determine the unique contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. Generally, when using the collinearity tolerance statistics, the values must be less than one (<1). In this study, all the collinearity tolerances of the integrated variables shown in Table 24 had collinearity tolerance figures of less than one where MO X EO has 0.165; MO X CO has 0.113; and CO X EO has 0.164.

Likewise, Table 24 shows VIF collinearity values for the inner-model list ($1 \leq r \leq 10$), with MO X EO $r = 8.88$; MO X CO $r = 6.049$; and CO X EO $r = 6.094$. Kyriazos and Poga (2023) suggest that the multicollinearity variable must be “less than $r = 9$ ”. If $r \geq 9$, there is a multicollinearity violation, and regression will not be efficient. Therefore, using the figures shown in both Tables 20 and 24, the constructs of this study have not violated multicollinearity; thus, they were considered accurate and reliable for statistical analysis, and the results were considered valid to enhance the understanding of relationships between variables of this research.

If collinearity existed in this study, this researcher would have focused on the overall model's performance rather than relying solely on individual variable coefficients. However, this researcher was pro-active to avoid multicollinearity violation. The fourth entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension of innovation orientation (IO) that other authors (Kiss et al., 2022; Schulze et al., 2022) include in conceptual models was removed from the draft conceptual framework of this study. Preference was taken to remain with only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO). This research considered IO to have scale items that are highly correlated with those of EO because innovativeness can be taken as one of the sub-constructs of EO.

4.14.2 CHECKING FOR THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

The next step in the structural model assessment process was reporting the significance of the relationship using SEM software in Smart PLS 4, primarily done through bootstrapping.

After the bootstrapping procedure, the researcher checked for Path Coefficients, T Statistics, and P Values to determine whether the hypotheses were significant. P-values are crucial in regression analysis to make a statistically significant unique contribution. Shrestha (2020) asserts that the significant value ($p < .05$) would tell the researcher that the relationship between variables is significant. In the case of two-tailed statistics, a t-value greater than 1.96 means that the hypothesis is significant and substantiated.

The last step was to assess the Explanatory (R-squared), as shown in Table 14, and Predictor Power (PLS-Predict). Smart PLS4 was used in both cases.

Table 14: R-square Overview

<u>R-square Overview</u>		
	R-square	R-square adjusted
Knowledge of Business KoB	0.332	0.326
Organizational Structure OS	0.522	0.518
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP	0.655	0.651

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

Predictive power regression

Predictive power regression is a statistical technique used to assess the predictive ability of latent variables in forecasting future values of observed variables (Osborne & Waters, 2019). The basic idea behind predictive power regression is to estimate a regression model where the dependent variable is the variable to be forecasted, and the independent variables are the predictors or forecasters. The study analyzed the accuracy of forecast or prediction of the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between EMO and the integrated EMO dimensions on YEP. The predictive power of regression is assessed by examining the model's goodness of fit and its ability to replicate the observed data. Various statistical measures, tests and fit indices that are commonly used include:

- R-squared, which indicates the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that the predictors can explain,
- The chi-square test examines the difference between the observed and expected covariance matrices. A nonsignificant chi-square value suggests a good fit.

- **Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI):** These indices compare the fit of the hypothesised model to a null model. Values close to or above 0.95 indicate a good fit.
- **Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA):** This index measures the discrepancy between the model and the population covariance matrix. A value below 0.06 indicates a good fit.
- **Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR):** This index assesses the average difference between the observed and predicted correlations. Values below 0.08 were generally considered acceptable.

However, in this study, SEM was performed with a mixture of the below five analytical stages (Azen & Walker, 2021; Byrne, 2013; Fan et al., 2021), namely:

1. **Model specification:** Defines the hypothesized relationships among the variables in an SEM based on one's knowledge.
2. **Model Identification:** This checks if the model is over-identified, just identified, or under-identified.
3. **Parameter estimation:** Model coefficients can be only estimated in the just-identified or over-identified model.
4. **Model evaluation:** Assesses model performance or fit, with quantitative indices calculated for the overall goodness of fit.
5. **Model modification:** Adjusts the model to improve model fit, that is, the post hoc model modification.

4.15 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

The research hypotheses were tested using Smart Partial Least Squares version four (Smart-PLS4). As highlighted in Section 4.13 of this study, the Smart-PLS4 software was considered because it offers a flexible, robust, and user-friendly approach that is capable of handling complex models, small sample sizes, non-normal data, and formative constructs, making it a valuable tool for researchers aiming to explore and validate theoretical models to structural equation modelling.

Field (2009) proposes that β values (standardised coefficients) are important in regression analysis to show the significance of each independent variable in the model. β values show

the extent or the degree to which each predictor variable affects the outcome provided all the other predictors remain constant” (Pallant, 2020). Positive β coefficients, that is, $\beta > 0$, mean that the independent variable positively affects the dependent variable. The β values are much more relevant when comparing independent variables as they are all measured in standard deviation units. This study focuses on testing the impact of all the dimensions of EMO on company performance.

4.16 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Diraditsile (2020), social research presents intrusion into respondents’ lives, where people often reveal personal information, such as their ages, educational levels, and personal opinions. As such, data collection needs to follow approved ethical considerations. Ethics are the rules of conduct in research, norms or standards of behaviour that guide moral choices about human behaviour and the relationships that protect the respondents from harm to assure prudence in the process (Bless et al., 2006; Johns, 2009; Walliman, 2015). Amongst other ethical principles discussed below, the research ensured that all respondents met the sampling procedure criteria outlined in the methodology. The researcher avoided plagiarism by rigorously citing all sources and properly attributing ideas and information to their authors.

As a requirement from the GovBots, a research permit had to be issued from relevant authorities before undertaking the research. Permits were sought and obtained from both MYSC and the Ministry of Entrepreneurship. Apart from an introductory letter that clarified the purpose and nature of the study, at the beginning of each questionnaire was a paragraph that provided relevant information about the researcher and the aim of the study.

The researcher explained the right to informed consent to the respondents (youth entrepreneur owners, management, and employees). Relevant information was shared on the possible minimal risks and benefits of participating in this survey. Respondents were informed that minimal risk may come from questions that disclose everyday work activities and opinions rather than detailed biographical information. Otherwise, no sensitive questions that may cause distress or traceable personal information were required. The questions were envisaged not to cause any research-induced trauma that may require professional counselling, alternate treatment and or need for a distress protocol. The research guarded against this minimal risk by requesting participants to maintain strict

confidentiality on their answers and non-disclosure of participant's personal information on the questionnaires. Respondents were guaranteed that their responses would not be shared with their employer and may not be traced back to individuals.

There were no direct and immediate benefits to the respondents who participated in this study. Only the study's findings and recommendations may be shared upon request since these may positively benefit both the respondents' work welfare and the organization's performance.

In order to improve the response rate, the questionnaires were only distributed to willing respondents. Informed consent and willingness to participate in this study were sought before the survey began by completing and signing a respondent's consent form (see Appendix F). There were no penalties or loss of benefits for refusal to participate. Respondents were assured of no form of victimization for survey participation. No cohesion was required from either the employer or the respondents' supervisors.

The research sought fair and just treatment of respondents through voluntarism. The independence of the respondents in this study was meant to come up with results and conclusions that produce pure and unbiased facts (Wilson, 2010). According to Bless et al. (2006), voluntarism gives respondents the freedom to decide whether or not to participate in the research without being forced, overtly or covertly. Respondents were at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason, and any data collected on such a withdrawn participant will, in default, be destroyed unless the person specifically consents to its retention.

Other ethical considerations observed in this study included eliminating bias using Likert-scaled responses with little or no chance of wrong interpretations. Other methods to mitigate researcher bias include cautiously designing the research instrument in consultation with previous research and diligence during data collection, where verbatim data can be manually or electronically recorded with the respondents' permission. This research encouraged respondents to freely and willingly volunteer their information without bias. Furthermore, bias was mitigated by being prudent during data analysis and avoiding misrepresenting reported findings (Azen & Walker, 2021; Rahman et al., 2022).

To guarantee anonymity in this research and prevent victimization or cause harm in any way, research respondents were encouraged to avoid the disclosure of the contributor's identities on the questionnaires. Usually, only the researcher and the research supervisor are privy to personal information, but in this case, both are mandated to act ethically and professionally and protect participants' identities. The only exceptions in which all of these are rare would normally be when personal information may be disclosed if required by law, or the Human Research Ethics Committees of the University may exceptionally require personal data to respond to formal respondents' complaints or for a compliance audit.

The researcher did not interfere with respondents when collecting completed questionnaires to guarantee confidentiality and promote privacy. According to Ogden (2008), confidentiality means not to disclose in any way information obtained from respondents or to identify the source publicly. Respondents were assured that the collected data would not be used for other commitments apart from for academic purposes of meeting the requirements of this course. Conclusions were honestly derived, and truthful recommendations were tabled to benefit all interested stakeholders. Also, the findings and recommendations from this study were securely guarded and only shared with participating organisations upon request.

Participant identities were encrypted during the research to convert the data into secret codes that conceal the true meanings. Also, as the survey proceeded, data was cybersecurity protected through regular computer anti-virus software updates. Data protection from unauthorized users was through user-restricted permissions, password security computers, and backup storage drives. After the study, the data was secured and guarded in encrypted digital form in external storage drives with drive-locks. The data was stored with all participant-identifying features removed for a maximum of five years, after which the data would be deleted to prevent misuse.

4.17 DATA PRESENTATION PROCEDURES

Data presentation shows conclusions that cover all the research objectives (Rahman et al., 2022). The responses were classified and presented in pictographs or data visualization techniques for easy understanding. Bar charts were used to show comparisons or trends on discrete categories or groups of data. Pie charts were used to show the distribution of parts within a whole, especially to emphasize the proportion of each component. Tables

enhanced the research by presenting data in both informative and easy-to-understand ways. The majority of information in this thesis is presented in tabular formats due to their accuracy in reporting data in decimals, percentages, and other precise mathematical details. Tables were also preferred for their structural visualization of data, which allows for easy comparisons in rows and columns. SEM from Smart PLS4 produced appealing representations of diagrammatic equations in path diagrams (as shown in Figure 12). Thus, SEM visualisations become more attractive to social scientists who prefer mathematically simple ways of narrating their thinking. The diagrammatic presentations from SEM visually show the relationships between variables much clearer than using complex mathematical formulae and equations.

4.18 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the methodology used in conducting this study. Firstly, the methodology chapter pronounced the research design, purpose, philosophy, approach, methodological choices, strategy time horizons, data collection processes and analysis as presented in the “research onion process approach diagram” (as shown in Figure 6). The preference to use path diagrams was justified as crucial to visually represent the theoretical model to aid in model specification and evaluation, facilitate comparing visual relationships to the data from the hypothesis tests, and enhance communication of the research findings. Then, the chapter justified the choice of the target population, sample size, the development and administration of the research instrument, data presentation methods, anticipated reliability, and validity, and concludes by discussing the ethical considerations that guided the development of this study. In order to address the objectives of this study fully, this methodology chapter depicts the steps that the study followed.

Furthermore, the chapter described the measures to guard against ethical research standards that governed this study. Lastly, the elaborated procedures were taken to code, analyse, and present the collected data. A summary outline of variables, constructs, scales, method of measurement, and data sources used in the methodology chapter of this study is shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Summary Outline of Variables, Constructs, Scales, Method of Measurement, & Data Sources

Summary Outline of Study Variables, Study Constructs, Measurement Scales, Method of Measurement & Data Sources							
Variables	Dimension/ Construct	Determinant Factor/ Measure	Description	Measurement		Method of Measure	Scales Source
				Scales	Items		
EMO adoption (Independent Variable)	1. Market Orientation (MO)	i. Market intelligence generation (MIG)	Practice getting and analysing market environmental awareness data to drive future decisions (Udriyah et al., 2019).	5	15 items	Ordinal	Bamfo and Kraa, (2019); Dabrowski et al. (2019)
		ii. Opportunity detection (OD)	Constantly identifying unnoticed external market forces helps the firm's source of sustainable profit potential.			Ordinal	
		iii. Resource leveraging (RL)	Ability to use fewer inputs in order to produce more.			Ordinal	
		iv. Networks and relationships (NR)	Share ideas in multidisciplinary teams or business linkages			Ordinal	
		v. Coordination between departments (CBD)	Function units harmoniously work with others to contribute to greater customer value.			Ordinal	
	2. Customer Orientation/ Customer Intensity (CO/ CI)	i. Responsiveness towards customers (RTC)	Adaptable to accommodate changes in dynamic customer preferences	4	12 items	Ordinal	Sadiku-Dushi et al., (2019)
		ii. Value creation/ Creativeness (VC)	Willingness to innovate processes and NPD and combine resources to meet unmet customer needs			Ordinal	
		iii. Customer Relationship Management (CRM)	Combination of practices, strategies, and technologies to manage customer interactions and improve lifetime value.			Ordinal	
		iv. Communication with Customers	Deliver and exchange information with customers.			Ordinal	
	3. Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)	i. Pro-activeness (PR)	Foresight to seize opportunity, hoping for future demand	5	15 items	Ordinal	Arabeche et al., (2022); Herlinawati et al. (2019); Ince, et al. (2023); Mathafena and Msimango-Galawe (2023)
		ii. Innovativeness (IN)	The practical implementation of new ideas into new products, services, technologies, or markets.			Ordinal	
		iii. Competitive Aggressiveness (CA)	An intense effort to outperform industry rivals.			Ordinal	

		iv. Calculated Risk-taking (CRT)	Nosedive in action and decision-making rather than being too cautious			Ordinal	
		v. Entrepreneurial Autonomy (EA)	Independence on business concept/ vision to completion			Ordinal	
Mediator Variables (Internal EMO dimensions)	1. Knowledge of Business (KoB)	i. Employee Technical Skills	The sum of skills/experiences relied upon in managing a business.	1	3 items	Ordinal	Torri and Martinez (2014)
	2. Managerial Skills (MS)	ii. Management's Competent Strategies	Learnt/experienced attributes to effectively perform specific organizational tasks, e.g., leadership style.	1	3 items	Ordinal	Popescu et al., (2020)
	3. Organizational Structure (OS)	iii. Formal Systems of Communication	OS are the rules and grouping of resources that outline how activities in a firm are directed to meet the set goals	1	3 items		Foss et al. (2019); Rabhi et al. (2023); Tipu (2022).
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (Dependent Variable)	1. Customer Visits	i. Number of customer visits and their purchase size	Increase in customer visits and orders made per customer	4	4 items		
	2. Efficiency	ii. Customer Retention and Referrals	A customer's long-term relationship with the business and their influence on others to buy from the firm				Bharadwaj (2000)
	3. Growth	iii. Change in Sales	The difference between the ending and starting values for the period				Richard et al. (2009)
Control Variables	4. Firm Size	iv. Total Assets	Measures business in terms of the total assets, total sales, market value of equity and number of employees	1	1item		St-Pierre and Audet (2011)
	5. Firm Age (FA)	v. Years of Operation	FA is the years a company experiences, from incorporation to the point of investigation.	1	1item		Delen et al. (2013)
	6. Assets Growth Rate	vi. Return on Assets (ROA)	A firm's percentage change in the growth of its assets over a given period	1	1item		Wu et al. (2012)

Source: Adapted from Lumpkin and Dess (2015)

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS, DATA ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described the study methodology guided by the “research onion”. This chapter presents the results, analyses and interprets the data, and then discusses the study findings. The study sought to mitigate the problem of the high youth entrepreneurship failure rate in Botswana. Studies show worrisome declining rates of established youth business ownership in Botswana, with statistics of low-performance rates of only 1 or 2% of SMMEs that manage to grow or make the transition to larger enterprises (Diraditsile & Maphula, 2018; Muchuchuti & Mahambo, 2020; Gaetsewe, 2018). The main objective of this study is to examine the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). This chapter presents the findings of the quantitative data acquired from fieldwork conducted in March-June 2023. The data analysis results, hypotheses testing and discussion of findings presented in this chapter include descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and hypotheses testing that were derived being guided by the under-listed objectives:

1. To establish the relationship that exists between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
2. To establish the relationships that exist between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
3. To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
4. To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)
5. To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

6. To examine the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Table 16 shows the steps used to analyse the data and generate the results of this study.

Table 16: Quantitative Data Analysis Steps

i. Data Screening, Cleaning and Replacement of Missing Values		
ii. Measurement Model Assessment	a. Reliability	
	b. Validity	i. Convergent Validity
		ii. Discriminant Validity [Fornell & Larcker Criterion, HTMT (Preferred), or Cross Loading]
	c. Report Measurement Model	
iii. Structural Model Assessment	a. Check for Collinearity	
	b. Assess and report the significance of relationships (through Bootstrapping)	i. Check for Bootstrapped Path Coefficients, T Statistics, P Values • A T value over 1.96 (two-tailed) and P value < .05 mean significant results, and your (alternate) hypothesis is substantiated.
		ii. Assess the Explanatory (R-Square) and Predictive Power (PLS-Predict)

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.2 DATA SCREENING, CLEANING AND REPLACEMENT OF MISSING VALUES

The data entry was screened, cleaned and missing values replaced to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings as outlined in the construct reliability and validity sections discussed later in this chapter. Data screening, cleaning and replacement of missing values were employed through the Expectation Maximization approach as an essential step to ensure high data quality and improve statistical power that otherwise threatens the validity of trials and may lead to invalid conclusions (Kang, 2013; Black et al., 2019). Some notable steps during data screening include data entry verification, missing data analysis, outlier detection, data distribution normality, variable consistency and coding, data cleaning and transformation, and general data quality assurance.

Firstly, data entry verification was done to check for accuracy by cross-checking against the source questionnaire documents. The original questionnaires were all numbered before coding to allow for double entry during verification. The data was screened for impermissible values that could have been keyed in during data coding (Smith et al., 2019). Standard deviation was used to test for only the Likert Scale items and detect participant answer misconduct. No participants' misconduct was witnessed because no Likert Scale responses appeared to have the same rating. The rule of thumb was applied to delete standard deviation values less than 0.25. The acceptable level of agreement (or disagreement) within the question was that any rows with less than 0.25 were deleted because those answers showed little or no variance. In this study, all the responses had reasonable variations above 0.25. This final step reviewed documentation, assessed the overall data quality and addressed any remaining issues in data cleaning to ensure that the data met the research objectives and was suitable to answer the research questions or test the hypothesized relationships.

5.2.1 DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS PRESENTATION, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section presents summaries of the survey findings in simple pictographs for ease of data analysis and interpretation of the results. The study used various quantitative facets, approaches and software like Smart PLS4 and IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 28 to analyse the data. Specifically, objectives i, ii, and vi of this study were run in Smart PLS4 and objectives iii, iv, and v were conducted in IBM SPSS that allowed transformation of the combination of scale EMO dimensions which the researcher failed to run in Smart PLS4. Interpretation and discussion of the findings are done simultaneously as the results are presented in each respective segment, as shown in the subsequent sections.

In this study, descriptive statistics was used to present summaries of demographic descriptions of the dataset, while inferential statistics deduce suggestions or generalizations from the EMO dimensions to YEP. The descriptive statistics covered data on the business and respondents' profiles, particularly identifying the population characteristics and the company's performance, measured through efficiency, growth, and profitability (Diraditsile, 2020). The choice for descriptive statistics was to provide a clear understanding of categorical, nominal and ordinal data through summarised patterns and characteristics that show how the research variables are connected in the research sample (Babbie et al., 2014; Marczyk et al., 2005; Saunders et al., 2018).

Using descriptive statistics allowed the research variables to be explained in a numeric form that better elaborates the data through mean responses and standard deviation averages. Independent T-tests were used to explore the differences in groups of respondents.

5.3 QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION AND COLLECTION

Table 17 summarises the questionnaire distribution and collection statistics. Data collection started soon after receipt of the research ethical clearance from the three respective stakeholders, namely the Wits Research and Ethics Committee; Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development (MYSC); and the Department of Science, Research and Technology (DSRT). This study's primary data collection tool was a self-administered five-point Likert scale rating questionnaire (Appendix F). Preference for a questionnaire was due to its versatile use in descriptive and exploratory studies (Saunders et al., 2018). Previously established EMO scales and variables were adopted and refined to increase the reliability and validity of the model measurement scales. Convenience sampling was used to run a pilot test study with fifteen youth entrepreneurs within the Gaborone District. The pilot study exposed some measurement items under EA, KoB, MS, and OS that were biased toward businesses with more than one employee or those that were not departmentalised. Furthermore, the pilot test clarified the questionnaire instructions and rephrased some questions to reduce bias that could have violated the validation of the questionnaire before use.

Table 17: Questionnaire Distribution and Collection Metrics

Questionnaire Distribution and Collection	Number	Percentage (%)
Total Questionnaires Distributed	417	100%
Questionnaires Collected	376	89%
Unusable Questionnaires	42	11%
Usable Questionnaires	334	79%
Response Rate	376	89%

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.3.1 RESPONSE RATE METRICS ANALYSIS

The data for this study was collected over a large sample size, as shown in Table 17 and Figure 12, which shows the demographic metric frequency analysis of the 376 (89%) questionnaires collected. The bar graph Figure 12 presents statistics that show that from the collected questionnaires, n=42

(11%) were unusable, and n=334 (79%) were usable questionnaires that were finally analysed and interpreted to derive the findings of this study.

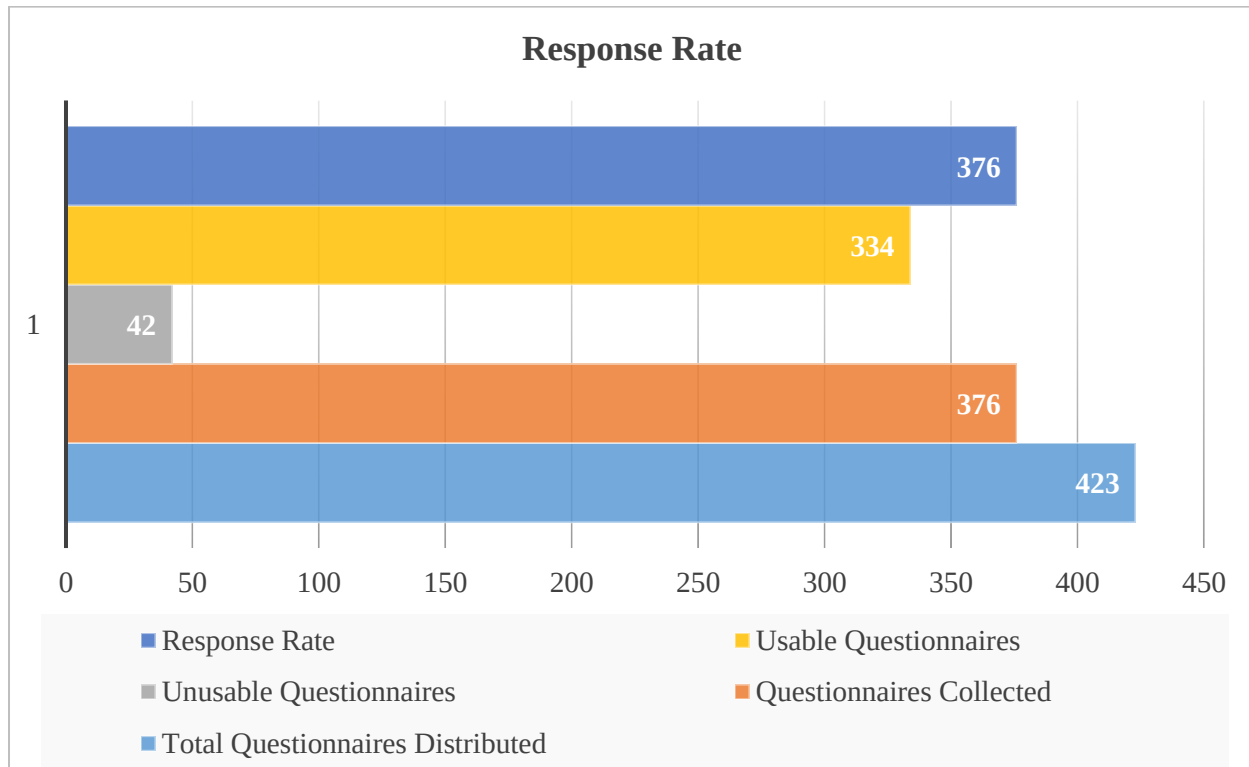


Figure 13: Response Rate Metrics

Source: Researcher's compilation

The study considered unusable questionnaires as instrument instruments that were flawed and deemed ineffective in gathering reliable and valid data. The response rate was the percentage of answers received in relation to the total number of questionnaires sent out. The questionnaire distribution and collection process produced a response rate of n=376 (89%), considered adequate for this quantitative study (Smith et al., 2019). Any response rate between (50 – 92)% is considered suitable for quantitative research studies (Cohen et al., 2017; De Vaus, 2012). A high response rate was considered to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. In some cases, a response rate of 60% or higher may be considered acceptable, while in other situations, such as certain types of surveys or clinical trials, a response rate of 80% or more may be desired (Story & Tait, 2019). The subsequent section discusses the demographic metrics of the respondents, including the youth entrepreneurship business sector, years of operating the business, no of full-

time employees, company's total asset value, annual growth rate, entrepreneur's gender, age range; qualification most relevant to the business; and lastly employment status of the respondent shown in Table 17.

5.3.2 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC METRICS: FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

This section of socio-demographics presents the actual numeric count and percentage figures of both the respondents' and their company profiles that include the youth entrepreneurship industry sector, years of operating the business, no of full-time employees, company's total asset value, annual growth rate; entrepreneur's gender; age range; qualification most relevant to the business; and lastly employment status of the respondent. The research studied the socio-demographic metrics to understand their patterns and how demographic factors may influence the propensity to manage good-performing entrepreneurial ventures. Although the socio-demographic metrics provided valuable insights into youth entrepreneurial ventures in Botswana, the data was cautiously interpreted as just a few aspects of a person or company's profile that should not overshadow other characteristics required for youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Thus, the socio-demographic metrics were considered only a fraction of the basis for making generalizations or assumptions about YEP.

Table 18: Socio-Demographic Metrics: Frequency Analysis

Socio-demographic Variable Description	Category	Frequency (N=334)	Percent (%) of the sample
Youth Entrepreneurship Industry Sector	Manufacturing	12	3.6
	Service Provision	272	81.4
	Agriculture	33	9.9
	Retailing	17	5.1
	Other (Specify)	0	0
Years of operating the business	0-2 years	187	56.0
	3-5 years	107	32.0
	6 years and above	40	12.0
No of full-time employees	1-10	318	95.2
	11-20	8	2.4
	21-30	5	1.5
	Above 31	3	0.9
Company's Total Asset value	P0-100 000	176	54.0
	P101 000-P200 000	88	27.0
	P201 000-P300 000	48	14.7
	P301 000 and above	14	4.3
Entrepreneur's Gender	Male	166	49.7
	Female	160	47.9
	Unspecified	8	2.4
Age Range	18-25	40	12.0
	26-30	102	30.6
	31-35	135	40.2
	36-40	50	15.0
	41-45	7	2.1
Qualification most relevant to the business	Tertiary Certificate	56	19.4
	Tertiary Diploma	46	15.9
	Tertiary Undergraduate	126	43.6
	Master's Degree	7	26.7
	Self-Taught & Passion	38	33.2
	Industry Experience	61	21.1
Employment Status of the respondent	Employee	3	0.9
	Management	29	8.7
	Owner	289	86.8
	Other	13	3.6

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

5.3.3 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP INDUSTRY SECTOR METRICS

The study established the industry sector where youth entrepreneurs conduct their business. As shown in Table 18 and depicted by the pie-chart diagram Figure 14, the sampled industry sector

metrics recorded the highest frequency, n=272 (81.4%), on service provision. Followed by the agriculture industry sector with a frequency of n=33 (9.9%). Then, the retailing sector, n=17 (5.1%). After this was the manufacturing industry sector with n=12 (3.6), and lastly, the other-specified industry sector, which had a frequency of n=0 (0%).

The study realised that most youth entrepreneurs prefer businesses within the service provision sector and shun the manufacturing sector despite Botswana being a net importer of products mainly from South Africa. Interactions with the youth entrepreneurs indicate a low preference to venture into the manufacturing sector due to the lack of infrastructural start-up capital required in the manufacturing sector. The low numbers in the agricultural sector were attributed to a lack of farming land, high rental costs to lease the farms, and the high intensive equipment required to start farming businesses.

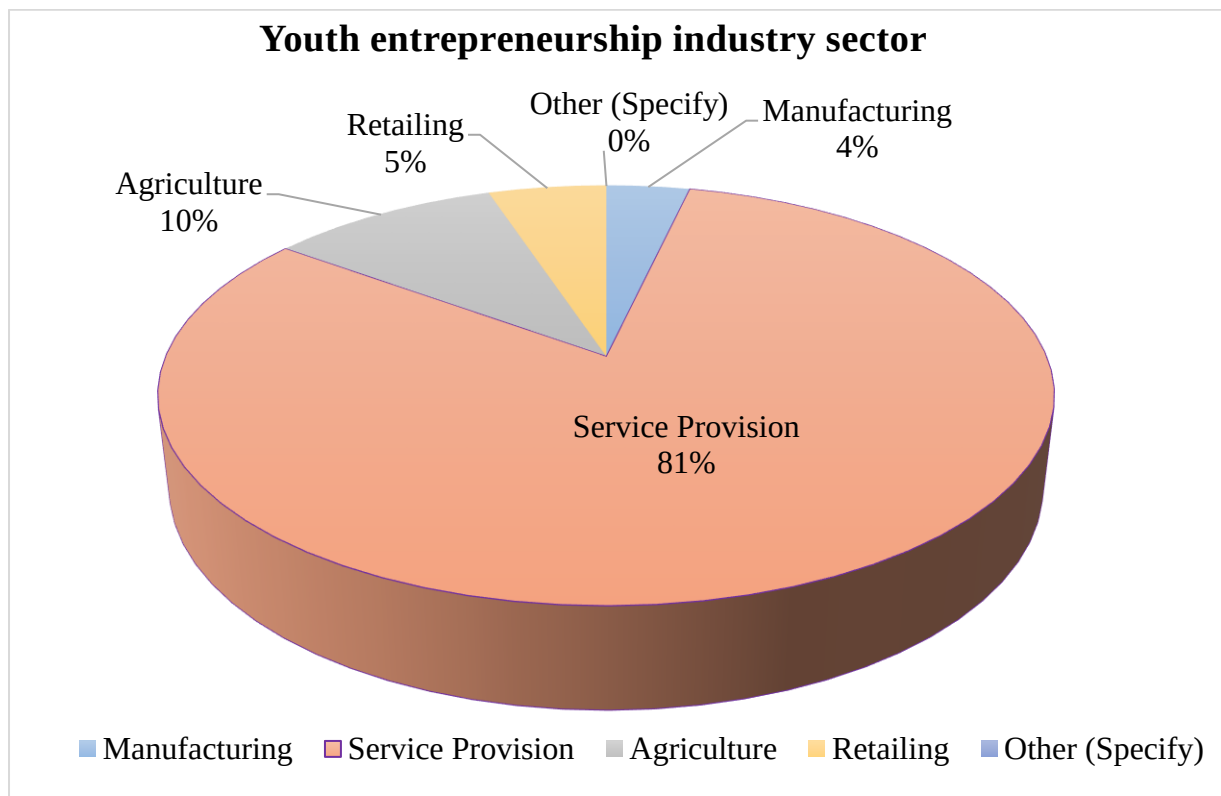


Figure 14: Youth Entrepreneurship Business Sector

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.3.4 YEARS OF OPERATING THE BUSINESS METRICS

The study determined the years of business operation to establish the survival rate of youth entrepreneurial ventures from their inception. As shown in Table 17 and represented by the pie-chart diagram Figure 15, the sampled business operating years metrics recorded the highest frequency, n=187 (56%), of youth entrepreneurs operating their business for less than two years from inception (0-2 years). The high frequency of more than half the youth entrepreneurs having been in operation for less than two years shows the youth's zeal to run their own enterprises. However, the number of businesses reduced to n=107 (32%) as the years of operation increased (3-5 years) with a sharp decline n=40 (12%) that is witnessed at (6 years and above) of operation.

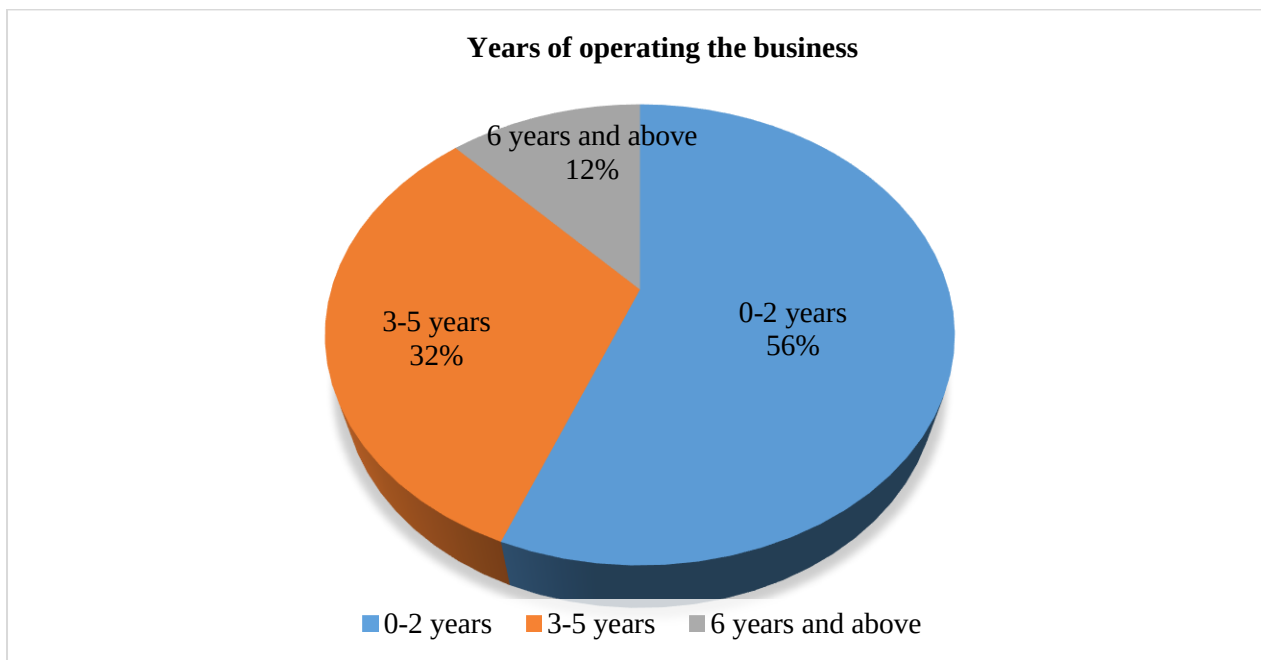


Figure 15: Years of Operation the Business

Source: Researcher's compilation

This decline in the number of businesses with time may be due to failure to adapt to the dynamic environments. The youth entrepreneurs may set up after identifying an ideal market need but fail to be more creative and innovative to stay relevant in the marketplace. The significance of years of operation to business performance is multifaceted. It is worthwhile to note that ultimately, regardless of an enterprise's age, its success depends upon the ability to be more creative, adapt to the changing socio-economic needs, innovate its products or processes and satisfactorily meet the needs of its target market,

5.3.5 NO OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE METRICS

The study found the number of full-time employees in each youth entrepreneurial venture. Table 17 and the bar-chart diagram Figure 16 represent the sampled results that recorded the highest frequency of n=318 (95.2%) of the youth entrepreneurs that employ ten or fewer full-time employees. The findings corroborate other small business entrepreneurship studies conducted in Botswana (Olumide; Diraditsile). The statistics show that most of the youth entrepreneurs in Botswana are mainly business or manager-owner-run types of businesses, which insignificantly contribute to employment and economic creation.

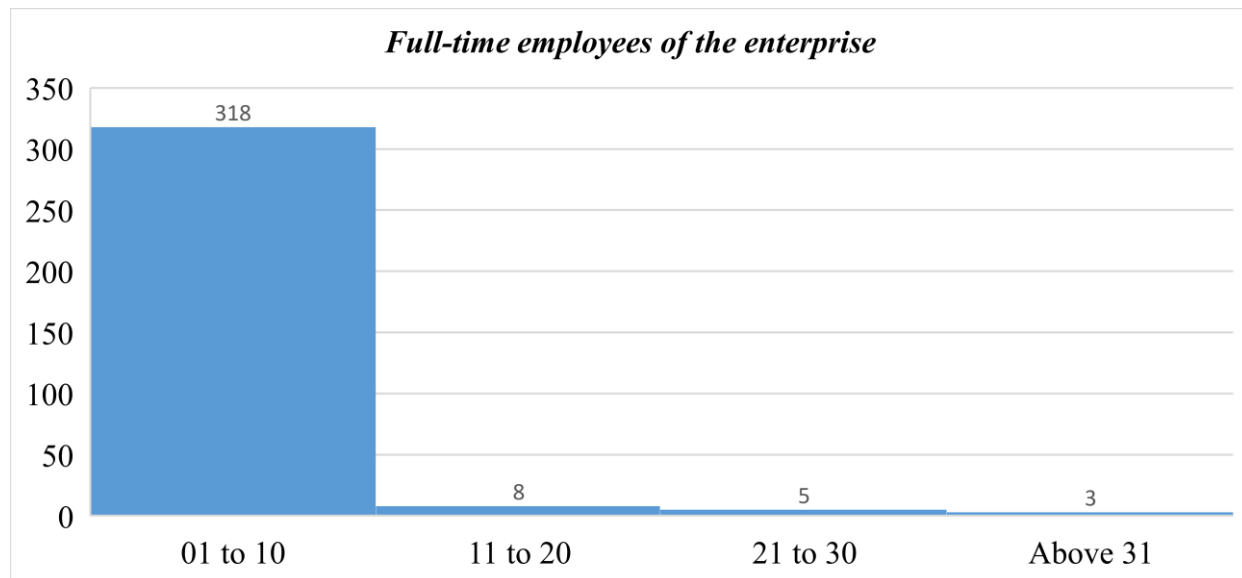


Figure 16: Full-time employees of the enterprise

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.3.6 COMPANY'S TOTAL ASSET VALUE METRICS

The study also established each youth entrepreneurial total company asset value. The statistics in Table 17 and the bar-graph Figure 17 show that the majority, n=176 (54%), of the sampled youth entrepreneurs have business assets below P100,000 (Botswana Pula), with more than 50% of the sampled youth entrepreneurs failing to amass company assets over and above the initial P100 000 value that they would have received as a government grant. This may be another area for the government to look into capital injection to support the youth by equipping them with agricultural business assets. The youth constitute more than 60% of Botswana's 2.4 million population. Therefore, supporting the youth businesses by equipping their business ventures with

manufacturing and farming infrastructure may be another avenue of meaningful employment creation.

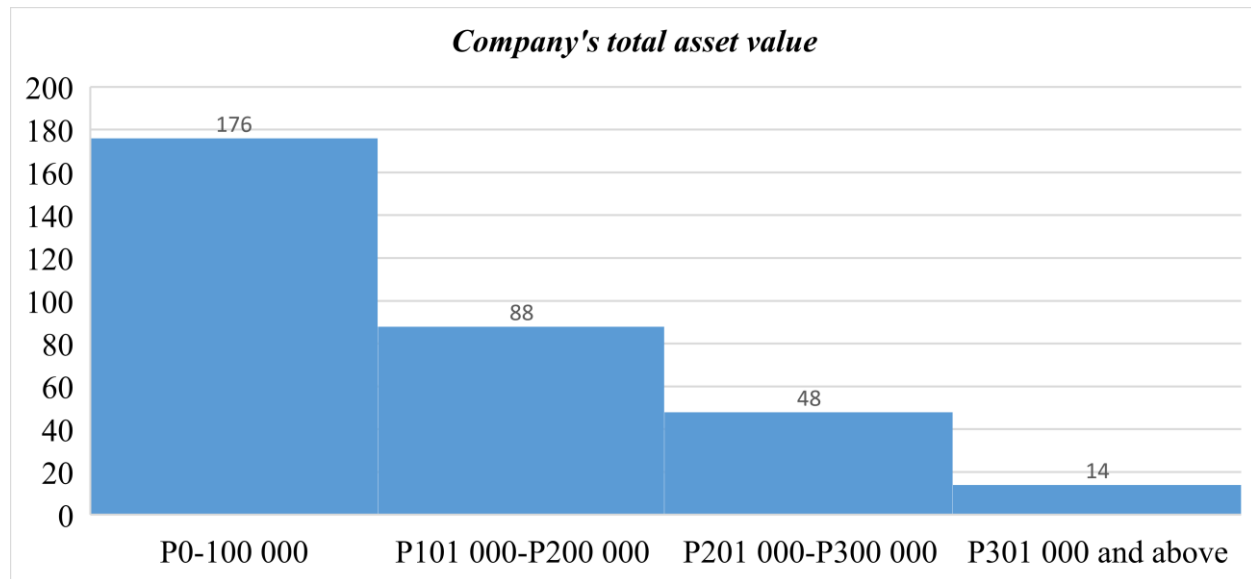


Figure 17: Company's total asset value

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.4 ENTREPRENEUR'S GENDER METRICS

The research data in Table 17 and depicted in the pie-chart Figure 18 shows the different entrepreneur's gender metrics that helped to understand the disparities between identifying individuals as male, female, or unspecified and the preferences to industry sector and the ability to manage youth entrepreneurial businesses. Even though the population of Botswana has more females than males, statistics of the sampled respondents show that n=166 (49.7%) of the youth entrepreneurs are males. The female sector is represented by n=160 (47.9%), whilst the unspecified gender sector had n=8 (2.4%).

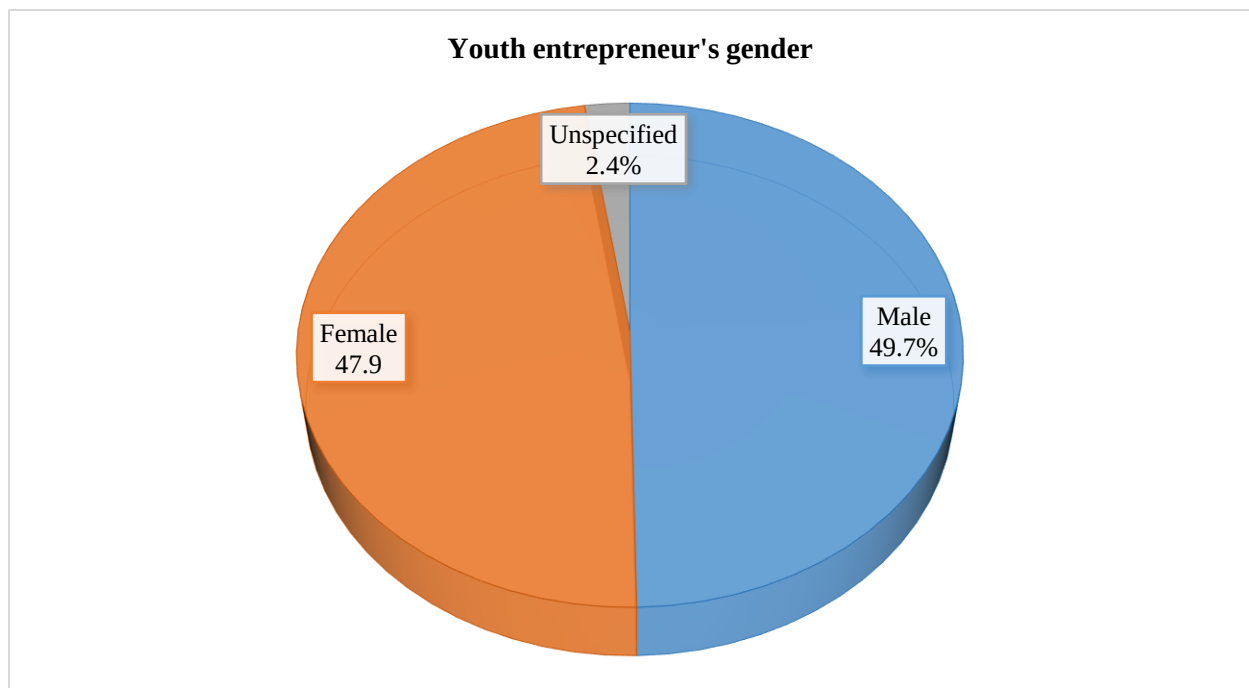


Figure 18: Youth Entrepreneur's Gender

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.4.1 AGE RANGE METRICS

The study identified the age range composition of the youth entrepreneurs who participated in the survey. The different age range metrics helped to understand the patterns between maturity and the ability to manage youth entrepreneurial businesses. Statistics in Table 17 and also depicted by the bar-graph Figure 19 show the majority of the youth entrepreneurs (26-30=102 + 31-35=135), n=237 (70.8%), that were sampled are between the age bracket of 26 to 35 years.

This majority cohort is Generation Y millennials who grew up during the rapid change of societal to technological eras. This age group cohort experienced rapid development and widespread access to computers, adoption of the internet, and use of mobile phones, which has influenced their attitudes, behaviours, and ways of communication.

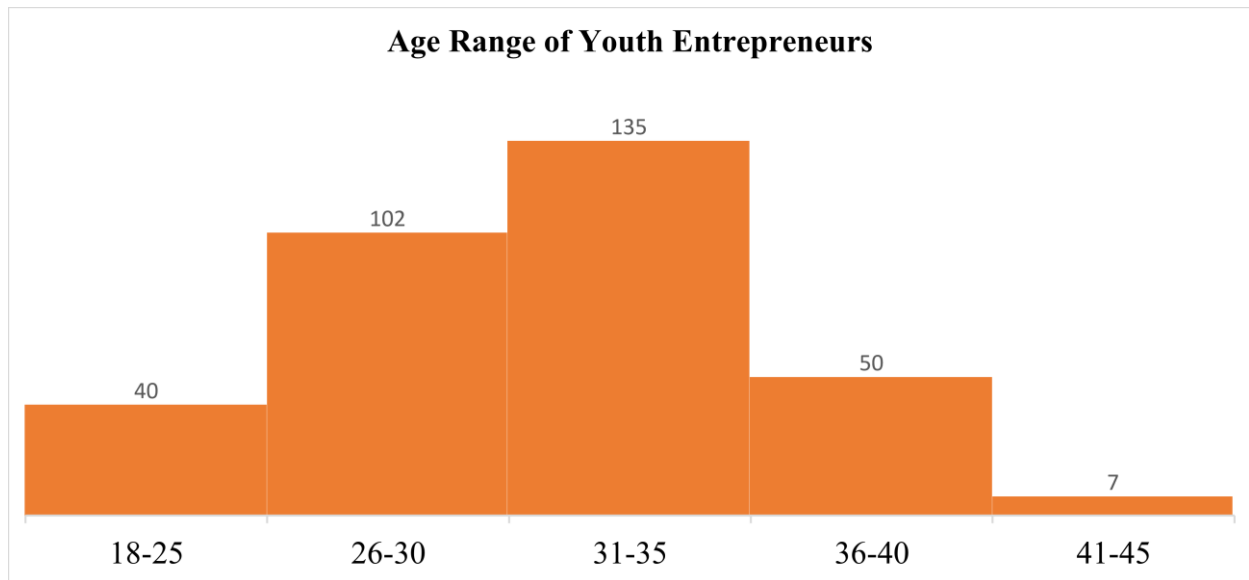


Figure 19: Youth Entrepreneur's Age Range

Source: Researcher's compilation

Their quest for technological advancement probably explains their motivation to move into more service industries, such as manufacturing and farming, which have a slower uptake of technological innovation shifts than service provision, where software creativity is easily adopted.

5.4.2 QUALIFICATION MOST RELEVANT TO THE BUSINESS METRICS

The study also sought to determine the metrics on the qualification most relevant to business management. This question sought to validate if knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Statistics shown in Table 17 and the pie chart Figure 20 show the highest frequency, $n=126$ (43,6%), of youth entrepreneurs with tertiary undergraduate qualifications. Followed by $n=61$ (21.1%) being those who rely on industry experience to run their businesses. After this, $n=56$ (19.4%) were tertiary certificate holders, and the least frequent were youth entrepreneurs who ran their businesses using their master's degree educational knowledge. This question was imperative to assess the background knowledge used to enhance business performance. Certain educational backgrounds are considered vital for an enterprise's sustainability.

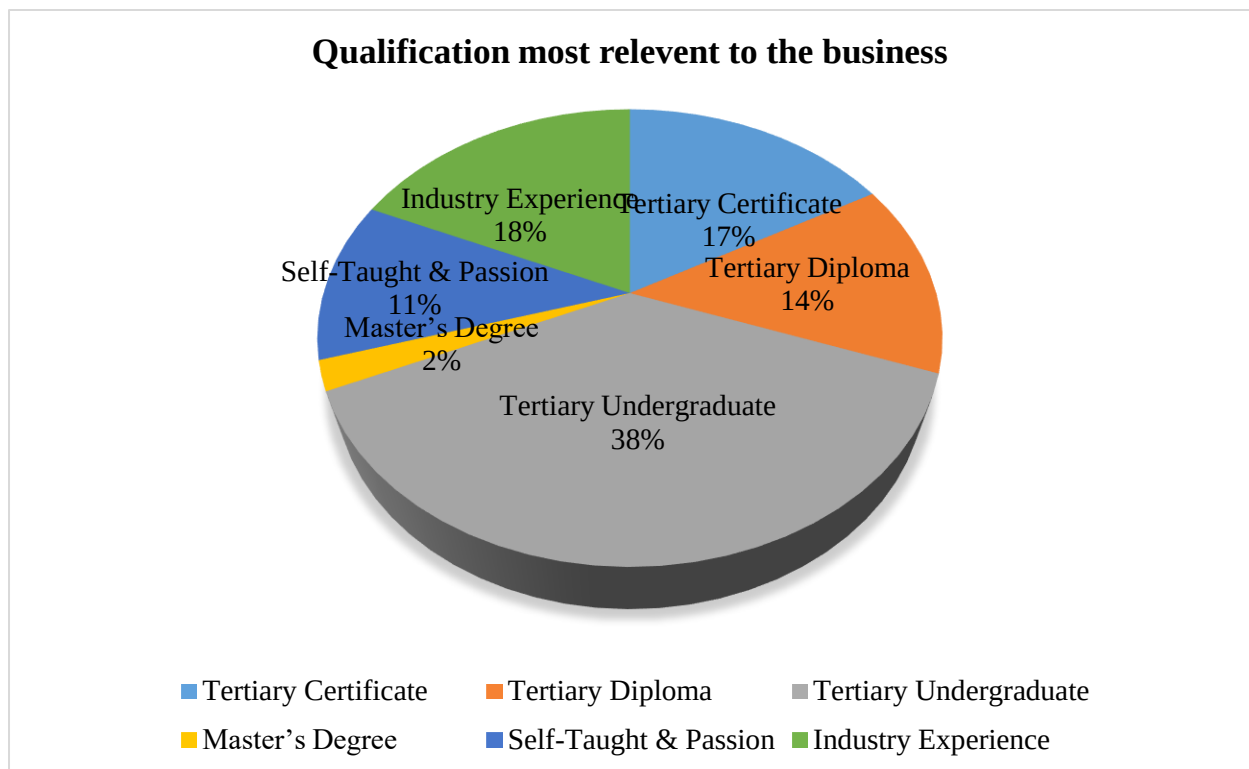


Figure 20: Youth entrepreneur's most relevant qualification to the business

Source: Researcher's compilation

The formal qualifications the youth attained helped them understand the relationship between the highest level of formal education and their appreciation of general business principles needed to manage their entrepreneurial ventures.

5.4.3 EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENT METRICS

The survey also asked whether the respondents that filled out the questionnaire were the respective business owners themselves, the enterprise's managers, or employees, and to state otherwise. Statistics in Table 17, represented by the pie-chart Figure 21, show that the majority of the youth entrepreneur respondents, n=289 (86.8%), were the owners of the enterprises. Followed by n=29 (8.7%) who were in management, then 13 (3.6%) who filled otherwise, and lastly, 3 (0.9%) who were employees within the enterprise ventures. This paltry 0.9% number of employees met in the youth establishments indicated the very low rate of employment creation that the facilities are bringing into the economy. On the other hand, getting the responses from the business owners

themselves validates to some extent that the provided information was first-hand, true and an unfiltered reflection of how the businesses are conducted.

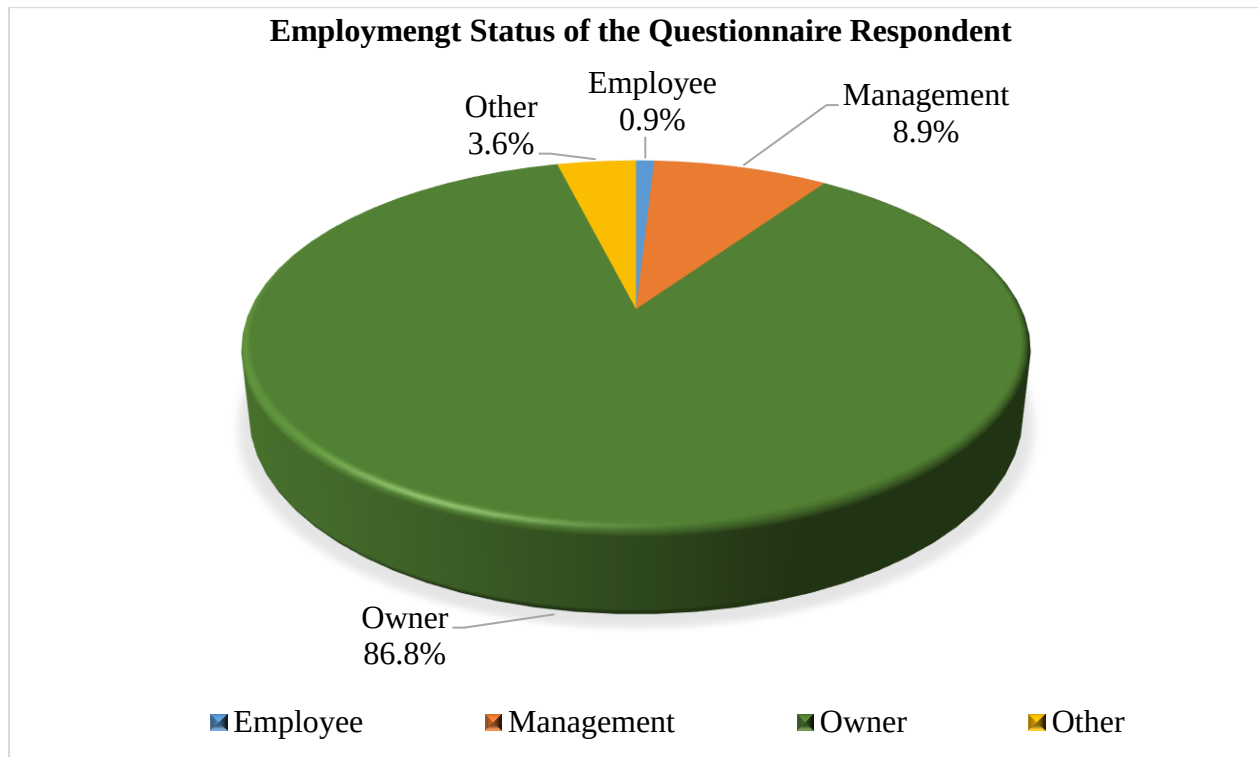


Figure 21: Employment status of questionnaire respondent

5.4.4 PSYCHOMETRIC NOMENCLATURE OF THE SCALE ITEMS OF THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLE (IV), THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE (DV), AND THE MEDIATOR VARIABLES (MV)

Tables 19a, 19b and 20 depict the psychometric nomenclature of the scale items of the independent variable (IV), the dependent variable (DV), and the mediator variables (MV).

5.4.5 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS- KAISER-MEYER-OLKIN (KMO) AND BARTLETT'S TEST OF SPHERICITY

The study conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to uncover the underlying dimensions within the latent observed variables. Exploratory Factor Analysis is a statistical technique commonly used in social sciences like this study to understand the relationships among the variables and identify latent factors that explain the patterns observed in the dataset (Hadi et al., 2016).

Table 19a: Psychometric nomenclature of the scale items of IV, DV& MV

Variables	Factors	Reliability Test	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy & Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		Factor Matrix; Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis	Descriptive Statistics	
		Cronbach's Alpha (α)	R-squared (R^2) %	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	Communality Extraction	Mean	Standard Deviation σ (sigma)
Market Intelligence	MI1	0.820	73.721	0.677	384.716	0.691	3.674	1.081
	MI2					0.822	3.935	1.063
	MI3					0.698	3.748	1.089
Opportunity Detection	OD1	0.663	59.944	0.645	149.764	0.770	3.861	0.909
	OD2					0.817	3.353	1.074
	OD3					0.734	3.777	1.051
Resource Leveraging	RL1	0.666	58.654	0.476	289.456	0.440	4.122	0.786
	RL2					0.930	3.021	1.226
	RL3					0.871	3.157	1.400
Networks and Relationships	NR1	0.865	78.868	0.689	524.170	0.857	3.819	1.291
	NR2					0.801	3.831	1.225
	NR3					0.707	3.593	1.246
Coordination Between Departments	CBD1	0.937	89.231	0.735	955.661	0.847	3.620	1.418
	CBD2					0.932	3.045	1.245
	CBD3					0.898	3.024	1.352
Responsiveness Towards Customers	RTC1	0.681	62.973	0.672	182.113	0.802	4.436	0.859
	RTC2					0.809	3.973	0.979
	RTC3					0.770	3.418	1.341
Value Creation	VC1	0.606	59.098	0.584	164.893	0.797	4.469	0.676
	VC2					0.857	4.199	0.952
	VC3					0.635	3.872	1.193
Customer Relationship Management	CRM1	0.783	70.036	0.663	310.056	0.799	4.074	0.952
	CRM2					0.818	3.896	0.923
	CRM3					0.890	3.840	1.190
Communication with Customers	CC1	0.766	70.558	0.689	309.651	0.865	4.009	1.094
	CC2					0.861	4.335	0.976
	CC3					0.791	3.377	1.471
Pro-activeness	PR1	0.742	66.566	0.595	279.394	0.739	4.030	0.843
	PR2					0.900	3.777	1.117
	PR3					0.800	3.329	1.214
Innovativeness	IN1	0.780	69.560	0.640	325.753	0.857	3.849	1.066

	IN2					0.897	4.217	1.091
	IN3					0.740	4.164	0.993
Competitive Aggressiveness	CA1	0.629	60.012	0.544	233.937	0.467	3.187	1.167
	CA2					0.889	3.359	1.004
	CA3					0.890	3.632	1.335
Calculated Risk Taking	CRT1	0.779	69.841	0.664	307.440	0.783	3.602	1.046
	CRT2					0.834	3.196	0.903
	CRT3					0.887	3.668	0.979
Entrepreneurial Autonomy	EA1	0.771	69.062	0.599	373.204		3.380	1.162
	EA2						2.976	1.406
	EA3						3.546	1.142
Knowledge of Business	KoB1	0.716	64.486	0.385	468.330	0.542	4.439	0.712
	KoB2					0.963	3.834	1.088
	KoB3					0.845	3.967	1.207
Managerial Skills	MS1	0.589	55.544	0.545	137.827	0.513	3.819	0.739
	MS2					0.816	3.769	0.759
	MS3					0.858	4.256	0.902
Organizational Structure	OS1	0.763	67.936	0.687	238.081	0.835	3.976	1.019
	OS2					0.847	3.487	1.068
	OS3					0.789	4.141	0.833
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	YEP1	0.827	68.587	0.838	1100.958	0.475	4.021	0.982
	YEP2					0.615	3.976	1.176
	YEP3					0.639	3.243	0.895
	YEP4					0.856	3.534	0.998
	YEP5					0.690	3.570	1.248
	YEP6					0.767	3.027	1.370
	YEP7					0.759	3.181	1.249

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

Table 19b: Psychometric nomenclature of the scale items of IV, DV& MV

KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		MI	OD	RL	NR	CBD	RTC	VC	CRM	CC
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.677	0.645	0.476	0.698	0.735	0.672	0.584	0.663	0.689
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	384.716	149.764	289.456	524.170	955.661	182.113	164.893	310.056	309.651
	df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Sig.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

Table 20: Psychometric nomenclature of the scale items of IV, DV& MV

KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		PR	IN	CA	CRT	EA	KoB	MS	OS	YEP
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.595	0.640	0.544	0.664	0.599	0.385	0.545	0.687	0.838
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	279.394	325.753	233.937	307.440	373.204	468.330	137.827	238.081	1100.958
	df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21
	Sig.	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

The study preferred using EFA to reduce a large number of the observed variables into a smaller set that captures the most significant information in the data (as shown in Table 19a for the breakdown of the sub-constructs). As such, factor analysis was conducted using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test to assess the sphericity of a correlation matrix. Whilst the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was used in this statistical analysis research to assess the suitability of the sampling adequacy for data factor analysis, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used in multivariate analysis to show the robustness of the sub-constructs by assessing the suitability of the dataset for factor analysis (Hoque & Awang, 2016). As such, factor analysis was performed using Varimax Rotation to simplify and interpret the factor structure obtained from the analysis.

Firstly, the dataset produced KMO test values in Tables 19a, 19b, and 20. The KMO statistic ranges between zero and one ($0 < x < 1$). The KMO tests determine whether the data is suitable for factor analysis by examining the inter-correlations among variables. A high KMO value close to 1 (one) indicates a high degree of sampling adequacy, suggesting that firstly, the sample size (417) used in this study was adequate, and secondly, the relationships between variables are relatively strong and likely to yield distinct and reliable factors (Adam, 2020; Mahendran et al., 2022). On the other hand, a low value closer to zero indicates that the variables are not highly correlated and may not be appropriate for factor analysis. Generally, the study produced KMO values > 0.5 (PR=0.595; IN=0.640; CA=0.544; CRT=0.664; EA=0.599; MS=0.545; OS=0.687 YEP=0.838) that suggest that the variables were strongly related and were suitable for factor analysis. KMO values > 0.5 indicate good sampling adequacy and suggest that the dataset has sufficient inter-correlation among variables. The KMO values of all the eighteen scale items ranged between 0.385-0.838, with only 2/18 (11%) values below 0.5 being Knowledge of Business with the least value (KMO=0.385, Approx. Chi-Square=468.330, Degrees of freedom-df=3, Sig- $p < 0.001$). The KMO value of KoB recorded below 0.5 may be because some of the sub-constructs were not properly explaining the construct; thus, it has negatively affected this value. However, the component factor matrices of KoB were all greater than 0.5 (KoB1=0.542, KoB2=0.963, KoB3=0.845).

Secondly, the test statistic in Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used to determine both sampling adequacy and whether the underlying latent variables of the dataset were suitable for factor analysis (Shrestha, 2021). A Bartlett's Test of Sphericity below 0.05 suggests a substantial correlation in the dataset. The dataset's results in Tables 18b and 19 show

Bartlett's Test of sphericity values (i.e., $p\text{-value} < 0.05$), which assumes the variables are normally distributed and that the correlation matrix is based on independent observations. Thus, there were no violations of these assumptions that could affect the validity of the test results.

In the research context, "mean" values indicate a statistical measure of central tendency calculated as the average values in a descriptive dataset. The study used a Five-Point Likert scale rating to gauge the latent scale responses from the sampled population. All the mean responses from the scale items indicate mean values of three and above. Tables 19a, 19b and 20 depict the rest of the sub-constructs having three (3) as the degree of freedom except YEP, which had twenty-one (21). The study's mean values, above three out of five, indicate that the study used sub-construct items from extant literature to explicate the hypothetical relationships between the independent, mediating, and dependent variables.

In general, the psychometric nomenclature values of the scale items shown in Table 19 include commonalities, standard deviation, mean, KMO, TVE, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity prove that the sub-constructs of the independent, mediating, and dependent variables used in this study are reliable and valid. The sub-construct items explicate robustness in terms of psychometric nomenclature because they are greater than 0.5. The values also show that the sample size was adequate. The scale items were proved to have been picked from extant literature. The majority of the respondents share almost similar views on the scale items asked by the questionnaire. This showed a lack of no great anomalies within the dataset.

The factor matrix extraction method was used to test for Goodness of Fit Index (GFI). Reliability was considered with communality values that were greater than 0.5. As a general rule of thumb, commonalities should range from 0 to 1, with higher values depicted in Table 19 indicating that a larger proportion of the variance in the variables is explained by the common factors (Tore et al., 2022). In this study, all the variables except YEP1 have values above 0.5, ranging from 0.7 upwards. The dependent variable YEP1 is the only scale item with a communality value of 0.475, which is less than 0.5 but, when approximated, can be 0.5. The high communality values of the study indicate that the variables are more reliable and were considered a true representation of the underlying factors. The high communalities values above 0.7 witnessed from this research suggest that the common

factors explain a substantial portion of the observed variables' variance, thus indicating a good fit between the data and the proposed factor structure. These high communality values confirm that no variables sparingly represented the underlying factors that could have been excluded from further analysis.

5.5 SEM MODELLING IN SMART PLS4

IMB Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 28 software was used to validate data before regression analysis. From the several Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) programs, mediating analysis and hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS4 (Smart Partial Least Squares).

5.5.1 MEASUREMENT MODEL ASSESSMENT RESULTS: CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY:

This section shows Cronbach's Alpha (α), which indicates the reliability and validity of each research variable (Tore et al., 2022). Before regression analysis, IBM SPSS Version 28 was used to validate the dataset's internal consistency through reliability analysis. Reliability is the alternative name for consistency. Reliability and validity were performed to test the internal consistency and accuracy of the Likert scale variables or constructs (Gliem & Gliem, 2003; Heale & Twycross, 2015; Pasek & Krosnick, 2010).

The WBS research proposal defence panelists conducted the initial face validity of the questionnaire and data collection procedure. The panellists ensured the researcher rigorously elaborated the data collection and analysis methods before granting permission to proceed with the thesis. Finer adjustments and refinements were made to the proposal in conjunction with the thesis supervisor before submission to the WBS research ethics board.

The research ethics committee scrutinised the proposal, methodology, data collection instrument and measurement criteria to uphold the integrity of the research process. Firstly, the ethics clearance conditions ensured alignment with WBS's ethical principles, codes of conduct, and academic legal requirements applicable to studying social sciences. Part of the WBS ethics compliance standards includes obtaining ethics training with a reputable institution (Appendix J). This is followed by promoting responsible and ethical advancement of academic knowledge within the field of study. Then, the research design and procedures were vetted to adequately safeguard the human research participants' rights,

well-being, and dignity. The committee acted to oversee the potential risks and benefits of the overall research approach and granted permission for the study to proceed only after meeting the ethical standards as evidenced by the research ethics clearance permits with references below:

1. Wits Human Resources Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) Clearance Certificate with Protocol Number: H23/01/07 dated 05 April 2023,
2. Ministry of Entrepreneurship being represented by the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology via The Department of Research Science and Technology: Ref MCKT 1/11/1 I (39) dated 28 March 2023.
3. Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development: Ref: MYSC 9/1/1 dated 07 March 2023.

Table 21 narrates the reliability and validity tests conducted by this study to minimize unreliable measurements that could introduce errors and reduce the validity of the findings.

Table 21: Measurement Model Assessment through Reliability and Validity Tests

a. RELIABILITY TESTS	b. VALIDITY TESTS
• Internal Consistency Reliability (Items within a measurement scale are interrelated and measure the same underlying construct)	• Internal validity (Evidence for causal relationships between variables)
• Convergence Reliability (The extent of the same construct's measurement scales to be related to each other are indeed correlated or converge in their findings to produce similar results)	• Construct validity (Adequacy of the questionnaires to accurately capture the underlying constructs)
	• Discriminant validity (The empirical distinction of each construct from the others in the conceptual framework)

Source: Researcher's compilation

The test for internal consistency ascertained the correlation and coherence of a set of survey instrument questions in measuring each corresponding latent variable. Testing internal consistency ensured reliability and validity, providing insights into the extent to which items within each measurement scale were interrelated and believed to measure the same underlying construct (Field et al., 2010). From the commonly used internal consistency or reliability measures that include Cronbach's alpha (α) and Split-half reliability tests, the study preferred the former because Cronbach's alpha is more robust. In comparison,

Cronbach's alpha (α) considers all possible item combinations; that is, it provides a single reliability coefficient for the entire scale, whereas split-half reliability splits the items into two halves and estimates the reliability separately. Thus, this study made the Split-half test less appropriate than Cronbach's Alpha (α), which assumes uni-dimensionality and parallelism among the items. Table 22 shows the Cronbach's Alpha (α) results of the internal consistency of the constructs in this study.

Table 22: Reliability Statistics: Internal Consistency of the Constructs

Variables	Factors	Factor Loadings	Reliability Test Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Market Intelligence	MI1	0.595	0.820
	MI2	0.679	
	MI3	0.740	
Opportunity Detection	OD1	0.631	0.663
	OD2	0.759	
	OD3	0.547	
Resource Leveraging	RL1	0.374	0.666
	RL2	0.366	
	RL3	0.373	
Networks and Relationships	NR1	0.757	0.865
	NR2	0.678	
	NR3	0.601	
Coordination Between Departments	CBD1	0.562	0.937
	CBD2	0.553	
	CBD3	0.621	
Responsiveness Towards Customers	RTC1	0.464	0.681
	RTC2	0.597	
	RTC3	0.649	
Value Creation	VC1	0.235	0.606
	VC2	0.310	
	VC3	0.562	
Customer Relationship Management	CRM1	0.621	0.783
	CRM2	0.189	
	CRM3	0.542	
Communication with Customers	CC1	0.667	0.766
	CC2	0.586	
	CC3	0.722	
Pro-activeness	PR1	0.584	0.742
	PR2	0.631	
	PR3	0.699	
Innovativeness	IN1	0.026	0.780
	IN2	0.176	
	IN3	0.149	
Competitive Aggressiveness	CA1	0.460	0.629
	CA2	0.747	
	CA3	0.809	
Calculated Risk Taking	CRT1	0.414	0.779
	CRT2	0.534	
	CRT3	0.513	
Entrepreneurial Autonomy	EA1	-0.092	0.771
	EA2	-0.227	

	EA3	-0.592	
Knowledge of Business	KoB1	0.439	0.716
	KoB2	0.962	
	KoB3	0.895	
Managerial Skills	MS1	0.085	0.589
	MS2	0.872	
	MS3	0.865	
Organizational Structure	OS1	0.840	0.763
	OS2	0.846	
	OS3	0.779	
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	YEP1	0.689	0.827
	YEP2	0.743	
	YEP3	0.612	
	YEP4	0.921	
	YEP5	0.819	
	YEP6	0.476	
	YEP7	0.781	

Source: Researcher's compilation IBM SPSS Version 28 output of fieldwork metrics March-June 2023

Table 22 presents factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha values, which are both important concepts used in psychometric assessment to evaluate the reliability and validity of each questionnaire scale item from the measurement instrument used in this study.

Factor loadings represent the correlation between observed variables and their underlying latent factors in factor analysis. High factor loadings indicate that an observed variable is strongly associated with a particular factor, suggesting that the variable is a good indicator of the underlying construct.

The reliability of the variables was tested using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency reliability, which assesses how well a set of items measures a single unidimensional latent construct. It is calculated based on the average inter-item correlation among the items on a scale. The following conditions were observed in the relationship between Factor Loadings and Cronbach's Alpha and the resultant interpretation of the results.

The relationship between high factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha; when factor loadings are high, that means the scale items are strongly related to the underlying factor. High factor loadings generally lead to higher average inter-item correlations, which in turn increase Cronbach's alpha. Scale items with high factor loadings contribute more to the common variance explained by the factor, leading to greater internal consistency. The relationship between low factor loadings and Cronbach's Alpha; low factor loadings indicate that the

scale items are weakly related to the underlying factor, which results in lower average inter-item correlations, thus decreasing Cronbach's alpha. Scale items with low factor loadings contribute less to the common variance and may introduce more measurement errors, reducing internal consistency. The study revealed three scale items (resource leveraging, innovativeness, and entrepreneurial autonomy) with such low factor loadings. Apart from those three scale items, the rest collectively indicated a good measure of reliability.

The measurement of internal consistency or reliability was deemed an important issue in this quantitative research because the results from the estimated sample dataset were to be generalized to the entire entrepreneurship population of Botswana. Apart from YEP, which had seven scale items measuring company performance, the remaining latent variables had three measurement scale items to assess each variable. The results from Table 21 are interpreted below. Table 23 shows the results and interpretation of the internal consistency of the measurement dimensions to establish construct reliability.

Firstly, to ensure external validity, the study used a stratified random sampling technique to guarantee sample representativeness. Sample representativeness gave every sampling unit an equal chance to be selected in the study. The similarity of conditions across different settings was considered to ensure results applicable to broader contexts and the generalizability of the research findings to other populations, settings, or conditions.

Secondly, item analysis reliability was conducted to evaluate the reliability of individual items within each measurement scale. Since three scale items (resource leveraging, innovativeness, and entrepreneurial autonomy) showed low factor loadings that could have introduced measurement error and reduced internal consistency, the instrument was refined by re-phrasing the questions to improve the overall internal consistency and validity of the instrument scale items. The three EMO dimensions and the three mediator variables had three measurement scales on each to assess each latent variable.

Factor loadings affect Cronbach's alpha because they reflect the extent to which items correlate with the underlying construct being measured. High factor loadings usually lead to higher inter-item correlations, which increase Cronbach's alpha, indicating better internal consistency. Conversely, low factor loadings can decrease Cronbach's alpha by lowering the average inter-item correlation, suggesting poorer internal consistency. Thus, ensuring

that items have high factor loadings on the intended factor is crucial for developing reliable and valid measurement instruments.

Table 23: Interpretation of Internal Consistency of the Constructs

Reliability Test		
Variables	Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha (α) Value	
Coordination Between Departments	0.937	0.9 and Above: Only CBD had an excellent internal consistency of CBD=0.937, indicating the measurement constructs' high reliability. The CBD measurement scales were highly correlated and consistently measured the underlying latent construct.
Networks and Relationships	0.865	0.8 to 0.9: NR=0.865, YEP=0.827, and MI=0.820 depicted good internal consistency that suggests strong reliability of the measurement scale items. The high Cronbach's Alpha value range indicates fairly consistent and correlated scale items to the measured latent variable.
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	0.827	
Market Intelligence	0.820	
Customer Relationship Management	0.783	0.7 to 0.8: CRM=0.783, IN=0.780, CRM=.779, EA=0.771, CC=0.766, OS=.763, PR=0.742, and KoB=0.716, depicted a generally acceptable internal consistency range of Cronbach's Alpha (α) value. The author considered the measurement scales satisfactory for social science research to produce the desired results. A greater than 0.70 Cronbach's Alpha (α) value was considered to validate internal consistency, as alluded that acceptable, reliable constructs fall between 0.70 - 0.95 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011; Tore et al., 2022).
Innovativeness	0.780	
Calculated Risk Taking	0.779	
Entrepreneurial Autonomy	0.771	
Communication with Customers	0.766	
Organizational Structure	0.763	
Pro-activeness	0.742	
Knowledge of Business	0.716	
Responsiveness Towards Customers	0.681	0.6 to 0.7: RTC=0.681, RL=0.666, OD=0.663, CA=0.629, and VC=0.606, though the measurement scales depict some low internal consistency. The researcher proceeded with this low Cronbach's Alpha (α) value range. The low range could have been due to the complexity of the conceptual model constructs and the multi-faceted nature of the integrated EMO dimensions that potentially brought redundancy in the research instrument questions that do not add significant information.
Resource Leveraging	0.666	
Opportunity Detection	0.663	
Competitive Aggressiveness	0.629	
Value Creation	0.606	
Managerial Skills	0.589	Below 0.6: MS=0.589 depicts poor internal consistency. This low Cronbach's Alpha (α) value suggests the measurement scale items were not consistently measuring that latent variable MS. The questions were considered not to be reliable or valid, and the researcher revised particularly question MS1=0.085, which had the lowest Cronbach's Alpha (α) value, thought not to contribute to the questionnaire effectively. The question was rephrased to avoid "reverse-wording" that potentially confused participants. After revising the scale item, a pilot test was done to test improvement in internal consistency.

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.5.2 CONVERGENT VALIDITY (MEASUREMENT MODEL)

Convergent validity is a method to determine construct validity, which is the extent to which the instrument variables measure their intended concept correctly (Cheung et al., 2023). Convergent validity requires that the expressions used to measure a latent variable be related to each other (Cheung and Wang, 2017; Hair et al., 1998). Fornell and Larcker (1981) proposed a generally accepted technique to measure convergent and discriminant validity called the average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE is the proportion of variability in a dependent variable that can be attributed to the independent variables. The average variance extracted is obtained by dividing the sum of squares of the covariance loadings of the expressions related to the factor by the number of expressions. To provide convergent validity, AVE values must be less than the Composite Reliability (CR), and each AVE value must be greater than 0.5. Table 24 shows the convergent validity results.

Table 24: Convergent Validity

<u>Construct Reliability and Validity: Measurement Model</u>			
<u>Overview: Convergent Validity.</u>			
	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	R-squared (R²) Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Customer Orientation CO	0.789	0.848	0.552
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO	0.920	0.951	0.505
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO	0.702	0.858	0.512
Knowledge of Business KoB	0.699	0.864	0.641
Market Orientation MO	0.903	0.927	0.531
Managerial Skills MS	0.580	0.576	0.508
Organizational Structure OS	0.759	0.772	0.676
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP	0.846	0.873	0.535

Source: Output from IBM SPSS Version 28

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) were both higher or close to 0.500 and 0.700, respectively, which corroborates convergent validity (as shown in Table 22). The factor loadings also helped to evaluate convergent validity by indicating the extent to which the EMO items and their measurement items were related (as shown in Table 18). High factor loadings (such as OD2 = 0.759; NR = 0.757; CA3 = 0.809; KoB2 = 0.962; KoB3 = 0.895; MS2 = 0.872; MS3 = 0.865; YEP4 = 0.921) indicated that they are good measures of the construct thus, supported convergent validity of the measurement model.

Even though the study's questionnaire items were adopted from Becherer, Helms, and McDonald (2012), the research tool was further tested for convergence validity to establish the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire to capture the intended constructs or variables. The AVE measure uses a statistic called the coefficient of determination, denoted as R-squared (R^2), which ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates that the independent variables explain none of the variances in the dependent variable, and 1 indicates that all of the variance is explained. Strong and high positive correlations (CO = 0.552; EMO = 0.505; EO = 0.512; KoB = 0.641; MO = 0.531; MS = 0.508; OS = 0.676; YEP = 0.535) suggested that the measurement items converge and indicated that they captured the same underlying construct. Thus, the instrument was considered valid when the questionnaire constructs were tried and tested before by previous researchers. In this research, an AVE value (OS = 67.6%) represents how the independent variable MI explains the observed variation in the dependent variable YEP. All of the AVE values in this research study report R-squared values above 0.51, implying that the independent variables included in the analysis explain more than 51% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable. In comparison, the remaining 49% is attributed to other factors not included in the study.

5.5.3 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

Construct validity assessed how well the questionnaire measurement scales accurately measured the abstract constructs they intended to evaluate (Cheung et al., 2023). This study's measured abstract or theoretical constructs include EMO dimensions, the mediator variables (KoB, MS and OS), and the operationalized theoretical and conceptual framework. A thorough review of the instrument's content and advice from expert judgment were used to assess content validity. The high factor loading figures in Table 20 and great leverage on using questions from extant research helped mitigate against content validity violation.

5.5.4 CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY

Construct reliability (CR) measures the level of reliability of the relationship between observed variables and latent variables of a measurement instrument (Cheung et al., 2023; Rosli et al., 2021). Reliability and validity are essential for Likert scale measurements to achieve internal consistency and accuracy of a measure (Gliem & Gliem, 2003; Heale & Twycross, 2015; Pasek & Krosnick, 2010). The study's questionnaire items were adopted from Becherer, Helms, and McDonald (2012) to measure the variables. Thus, the instrument was considered valid when the questionnaire constructs were tried and tested

before by previous researchers. Firstly, the research design was carefully planned through a year-long proposal through rigorous “viva voce” proposal defence panels. The proposal defence panels comprised academics from the WBS post-graduate school and external supervisors who highlighted grey areas in the proposal that the researcher corrected before proceeding with the thesis writing. Validity was considered important in this study to determine the trustworthiness of a study’s findings. By demonstrating convergent reliability, this research supports the idea that even though the multiple measurement scales used in this research were obtained from different prior research, they all honed into the same underlying construct. To ensure validity, the study went through a combination of multiple quantitative validity checks to prudently mitigate against all possible potential threats to validity, as discussed in the subsequent sections;

5.5.5 DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY ASSESSMENT (MEASUREMENT MODEL)

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion are outputs commonly associated with structural equation modelling (SEM) and were specifically used to assess the discriminant validity of constructs in this study’s measurement model. These outputs were generated using the partial least squares structural equation modelling software (Smart-PLS4-SEM). Discriminant validity assessed the extent to which each construct in the study was empirically distinct from the others in the conceptual framework (Cheung et al., 2023; Rosli et al., 2021). The study used both the AVE traditional measurement metric of Fornell and Larcker and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) method of corrections to assess discriminant validity (Afthanorhan et al., 2021; Henseler et al., 2015). Discriminant validity was assessed through cross-loadings, and the results of both tests are reported in Tables 25 and 26.

The results in Table 25 show the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) measure of discriminant validity of this structural equation modelling (SEM) study. The HTMT ratios were used to determine whether constructs in the model were sufficiently distinct to indicate the amount of variation (-1 to +1) in EMO of each measurement item to YEP.

Table 25: Discriminant Validity- Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) - Matrix

Discriminant Validity: Measurement Model Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) - Matrix					
	CO	EMO	EO	KoB	MO
Customer Orientation (CO)					
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation (EMO)	0.966				
Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)	0.776	1.000			
Knowledge of Business (KoB)	0.563	0.651	0.655		
Market Orientation (MO)	0.837	1.009	0.855	0.588	
Managerial Skills (MS)	0.795	0.889	0.832	0.694	0.866
Organizational Structure (OS)	0.560	0.760	0.770	0.485	0.751
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (YEP)	0.774	0.796	0.820	0.651	0.678

Source: Output from Smart-PLS4

Typically, $HTMT < 1$ value establishes discriminant validity. However, except for $MO = 1.009$, all the other EMO measurement items showed discriminant validity equal to or less than 1 ($EO = 1$; $KoB = 0.651$; $MS = 0.889$; $OS = 0.760$). The MO, HTMT ratio > 1 suggested potential issues that compromised discriminant validity in the model where the constructs may not have been distinct enough. The MO measurement scales were examined to determine the questions potentially loaded onto others. The affected questions were addressed before the fieldwork was conducted. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion discriminant validity results in Table 25 later confirmed compliance with acceptable ratios. $MO = 0.916$ was later obtained.

Table 26: Discriminant Validity- Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Fornell-Larcker Criterion					
	CO	EMO	EO	KoB	MO
Customer Orientation (CO)	0.593				
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation (EMO)	0.883	0.552			
Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)	0.627	0.831	0.558		
Knowledge of Business (KoB)	0.438	0.532	0.559	0.800	
Market Orientation (MO)	0.783	0.916	0.740	0.501	0.656
Managerial Skills (MS)	0.608	0.676	0.551	0.524	0.672
Organizational Structure (OS)	0.493	0.605	0.667	0.336	0.672
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (YEP)	0.679	0.784	0.591	0.515	0.602

Source: Output from Smart-PLS4

The factor loading results in both tables are greater than their cross-loadings, which is a sign of discriminant validity. The study used IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences

Version 28 software to analyse factors, apply “Varimax Rotation”, and calculate communalities based on the obtained factor loadings. The study used “Varimax Rotation” to generate the communalities for the factor matrix. The Varimax Rotation method was preferred because it is a commonly used factor analysis technique that simplifies and interprets factor loadings (Loewen & Gonulal, 2015). To generate communalities, the researcher extracted the factors and estimated the factor loadings for each variable in the dataset to obtain the initial factor loadings shown in Table 22.

Factor loadings were used to represent the strength and direction of the relationship between specific observed variables (EMO dimensions and their measurement item) and a latent construct (YEP). The factor loading amount of variation (-1 to +1) in EMO or each measurement item indicated its reliability and validity to YEP. High positive values (such as OD2 = 0.759; NR = 0.757; CA3 = 0.809; KoB2 = 0.962; KoB3 = 0.895; MS2 = 0.872; MS3 = 0.865; YEP4 = 0.921), indicated stronger associations or greater internal consistency. On the other hand, low and negative values (IN1 = 0.026; IN2 = 0.176; EA1 = -0.092; EA2 = -0.227; EA3 = -0.592; MS1 = 0.085) indicated a negative relationship.

After the initial factor loadings were obtained, the researcher applied the Varimax Rotation method to maximize the variance of squared loadings within each factor, making the factor structure more interpretable. Once the Varimax Rotation was applied, the researcher estimated communalities by summing the squared factor loadings for each variable. This was done by taking the square of each factor loading, summing across the factors, and assigning the result as the communalities for each variable. The quest for communalities statistical techniques in this research was used to measure the proportion of variance in a factor analysis data set to uncover the correlation between the variable and the common factors (Watson, 2017).

5.6 REPORT MEASUREMENT MODEL- GOODNESS OF FIT INDICES OF THE MODEL

As part of the structural equation model (SEM) evaluation process, both the Standardised Root Mean Squared (SRMR) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) statistical measurement techniques that were used in this study confirmed the goodness of fit of the theoretical model constructs as shown by the values in Table 27.

Table 27: Model Evaluation: Goodness of Fit Indices of the Model.

Model Evaluation: Goodness of Fit Indices of the Model.

Fit Summary

	Saturated model	Estimated model
Standardised Root Mean Squared (SRMR)	0.104	0.104
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.90	0.89

Source: Researcher's compilation

In SEM, the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) measures the degree of similarity between the observed and theoretical or expected datasets. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) tests are generally used in SEM to assess the validity of statistical models or hypotheses to help make informed decisions to accept or reject propositions based on statistical significance.

This study applied the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) technique to determine the extent to which the independent variables (market orientation, customer orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation) positively affect YEP (dependent variable), especially in the presence of mediator variables (KoB, MS and OS). The study results produced the estimated model values of SRMS 0.1 and NFI 0.89, which were derived (as shown in Table 27). Lower SRMS values indicate a better fit or higher accuracy of the model (Rosli et al., 2021). On the other hand, the NFI values of one indicate a perfect fit. The study produced *p*-values closer to one, which suggests that the observed data is consistent with the expected data, indicating a good fit for the model. Therefore, the SRMS and the NFI values indicate that the study model fits the researcher's data (Kyriazos & Poga, 2023). The results of this study also proved the statistical validity of the theoretical model and its hypothesis. Thus, the observed data set was considered consistent with the assumptions and hypotheses in this research. Thus, an informed decision was made to accept the proposed theoretical framework.

NFI is the most popular Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) technique used in structural equation models (SEM). The NFI range ($0 \leq p \leq 1$), with *p*-values closer to 1, indicates a better fit and a higher probability of obtaining the observed data. A *p*-value of 0 indicates a complete lack of fit, and a small *p*-value indicates that the observed data is significantly different from the expected data, suggesting a poor fit of the model to the data ((Rosli et al., 2021)).

On the other hand, a large p -value suggests that the observed data is consistent with the expected data, indicating a good fit for the model, while a value of 1 indicates a perfect fit.

However, due to the complexity of the structural model of this study, the NFI technique fell short of thoroughly evaluating the model on its own; thus, preference was made to use the NFI in conjunction with other fit indices, such as the SRM. However, the model was good, as evidenced by the results in Table 27. The model also meets the rule of thumb that standard multiple regression requires 15 or more subjects per predictor for reliability purposes (Kyriazos & Poga, 2023; Stevens, 1996). This study has over 15 scale items (as shown in Table 4).

5.7 STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

This step assessed whether the relationship between the study's different constructs was significant. This research sought to test for the mediating effect of KoB, MS, and OS on the strength of the relationship between EMO and YEP. The structural model assessment process started with checking for collinearity. Both the variance inflation factor (VIF) and the collinearity tolerance method were used in this study (as shown in Table 24).

5.7.1 COLLINEARITY DIAGNOSIS RESULTS- STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT

Multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the collinearity tolerance method (Table 24, amongst others). Multiple regression analysis requires no multicollinearity violation among the research-independent variables (Thompson et al., 2017). In research, collinearity, also known as multicollinearity, is the situation in a statistical model where two or more independent variables are highly correlated with each other such that there will be challenges to analyse and interpret the results, and it becomes difficult to determine the unique contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. Problems of multicollinearity occur when there is a linear relationship between independent variables in a regression or multivariate analysis such that one independent variable can be predicted from other independent variables with a high degree of accuracy (Chan, 2022; Kyriazos & Poga, 2023; Shrestha, 2020).

There are various causes of multicollinearity, amongst them being the use of highly correlated independent variables, measurement errors, data transformations, or including

derived variables that are linear combinations of other variables. As proposed by Rezvani and Fathollahzadeh (2020), multicollinearity creates problems that include unstable parameter estimates, large standard errors, difficulties in interpreting the individual effects of variables, affect the model's predictive power resulting in misleading or unreliable results, amongst others (Chan, 2022; Kyriazos & Poga, 2023; Shrestha, 2020).

Various techniques are used to diagnose the extent and nature of multicollinearity in datasets. Amongst the multicollinearity diagnostics that include correlation matrices, variance inflation factor (VIF), collinearity tolerance, condition indices, and eigenvalues, this study used both the VIF and collinearity tolerances (as shown in Table 28). Generally, when using the collinearity tolerance statistics, the values must be less than one (<1) (Chan, 2022; Kyriazos & Poga, 2023). In this study, all the collinearity tolerances of the integrated variables shown in Table 14 had collinearity tolerance figures of less than one where MO X EO has 0.165; MO X CO has 0.113; and CO X EO has 0.164.

Table 28: Variance Inflation Factor: Inner Model-List: Multicollinearity Assumptions and Diagnostics

	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Customer Orientation CO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	2.620
Customer Orientation CO -> OS Organizational Structure	2.620
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	2.410
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	2.237
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO -> OS Organizational Structure	2.237
Knowledge of Business KoB-> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	1.498
Market Orientation MO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	3.510
Market Orientation MO -> OS	3.510
Managerial Skills MS -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	2.026
Organizational Structure OS -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	1.614

Source: Researcher's compilation

However, the study also used the “variance inflation factor” (VIF) collinearity technique to transform variables and reduce the issue of multicollinearity (transformation technique). When using the VIF technique, the VIF values must be equal to or greater than one (≥ 1) in order not to violate the assumption of multi-collinearity (Oke et al., 2019). Table 28 shows VIF collinearity values for the inner-model list that are all greater than one where MO X EO has 8.881, MO X CO has 6.049, and CO X EO has 6.094. Both Pallant (2020) and Tay

(2017) suggest that the multicollinearity variable must be “less than $r=9$ ”. If $r \geq 9$, there is a multicollinearity violation, and regression will not be efficient (Gomez, 2016). Therefore, using the figures shown in both Tables 14 and 24, the constructs of this study have not violated multicollinearity; thus, they were considered accurate and reliable for statistical analysis, and the results were considered valid to enhance the understanding of relationships between variables of this research.

Although other authors (Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020; Vij & Bedi, 2012) include innovation orientation (IO) as the fourth entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension, this study ignored IO as having highly correlated scale items with those of EO. Thus, the study preferred only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO).

5.8 INFERENCE STATISTICS- ASSESS AND REPORT BOOTSTRAPPING RESULTS

This section discusses inferential statistics that were used to assess and report the statistical significance of the construct's hypothesized relationships through bootstrapping. The inferential statistics were conducted on continuous data collected from sections B and C of the questionnaire. Multiple regression, correlation, and confirmatory factor analyses were performed to test the relationships between EMO, the integrated EMO dimensions, and YEP. The study conducted two-tailed tests guided by the research questions and hypotheses tests that did not specify a direction of effect on the relationship between EMO, the integrated EMO dimensions, and YEP. The study's major contribution is the mediating effect of KoB, MS, and OS regardless of the direction of effect on EMO and its integrated dimensions on YEP. The results of the tested direct relationships are presented in Table 29.

The structural model assessment process was done using SEM software in Smart PLS 4 through bootstrapping to report the significance of the relationships. After the bootstrapping procedure, beta path coefficients, t-statistics, and *p*-values were checked to determine whether the hypotheses were statistically significant. All three values were simultaneously used to substantiate the hypothesized decision. The beta path coefficient measured the percentage change in the outcome variable for every 1 unit of change in the predictor variable. A beta coefficient sign could be negative (-) or positive (+).

Table 29: Direct Effect Bootstrapping Results

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p-values	Comment
EMO -> YEP	0.604	0.596	0.068	8.898	0	H_1 Significant
MO -> YEP	-0.041	-0.043	0.033	1.251	0.105	H_{1a} Rejected
CO -> YEP	0.038	0.037	0.016	2.427	0.008	H_{1b} Significant
EO -> YEP	0.014	0.016	0.026	0.543	0.293	H_{1c} Rejected
EO -> KoB	0.334	0.341	0.063	5.317	0	Significant
EO -> OS	0.364	0.364	0.053	6.846	0	Significant
CO -> KoB	0.115	0.115	0.067	1.724	0.042	Significant
KoB -> YEP	0.207	0.206	0.028	7.327	0	Significant
MO -> KoB	0.12	0.115	0.093	1.298	0.097	Rejected
MO -> OS	0.435	0.435	0.063	6.851	0	Significant
CO -> OS	-0.092	-0.093	0.068	1.358	0.087	Rejected
MS -> YEP	0.058	0.067	0.048	1.214	0.112	Rejected
OS -> YEP	-0.152	-0.152	0.052	2.896	0.002	Significant

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

The interpretation of a (+) beta means an increase in the predictor variable would also increase the outcome variable, whereas a (-) beta means an increase in the predictor variable would decrease the outcome variable. *P*-values were considered important in this regression analysis study with a probability threshold set at $p < .05$ (assuming a 5% significance level), interpreted as statistical significance results that told the researcher that the relationship between the EMO and YEP variables was substantiated.

On the other hand, where the *p*-value was greater than 0.05, the results were interpreted as insufficient evidence to substantiate the hypothesis, thus not statistically significant, hence rejecting the hypothesis. A significance value ($p < .05$) makes a statistically significant unique contribution (Pallant, 2020; Shrestha, 2021). The *t*-tests assessed whether the beta coefficients differed significantly from zero.

In the case of two-tailed statistics, a *t*-value greater than 1.96 means that the hypothesis is significant and substantiated. The *t*-value and significance *p*-values were associated with each other. If the beta coefficient is not statistically significant (i.e., the *t*-value is insignificant), the variable was considered insignificant to predict the outcome.

Mediation was tested using the Smart-PLS4 bootstrapping method, which followed a series of steps to determine whether the effect of an independent variable (EMO) on a dependent variable (YEP) is mediated by a third variable (KoB, MS, or OS) with the indirect effect bootstrapping results shown in Table 30. The bootstrapping steps included, amongst others, calculating the indirect effect for each sample, followed by calculating the confidence intervals (typically 95%) for the indirect effect from the bootstrap distribution, then finally determining if the confidence interval does not include zero, then the mediation effect was considered significant.

Table 30: Indirect Effect Bootstrapping Results

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p-values	Deposition
MO -> KoB -> YEP	0.025	0.024	0.019	1.277	0.101	H _{5da} Rejected
CO -> KoB -> YEP	0.024	0.024	0.014	1.68	0.004	H _{5db} Significant
EO -> KoB -> YEP	0.069	0.07	0.016	4.193	0.001	H _{5dc} Significant
MO -> OS -> YEP	-0.066	-0.067	0.027	2.402	0.006	H _{5fa} Significant
CO -> OS -> YEP	0.014	0.013	0.011	1.281	0.1	H _{5fb} Rejected
EO -> OS -> YEP	-0.055	-0.054	0.018	3.033	0.001	H _{5fc} Significant

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.9 THE PATH DIAGRAM

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) from Smart PLS4 produced an appealing representation of diagrammatic equations in path diagrams (Figure 12). The visualization enhanced the interpretation and communication of the research findings from data modelling and analysis as it graphically presents the correlations between variables in a much clearer, simple, and appealing path diagram preferred by most social scientists to narrate their thinking than to use complex mathematical formulae and equations (Abu-Bader; 2021). The diagram concisely presented the theoretical relationships between variables by nodes or circles, with arrows between nodes that indicate the direction of the relationships. The justification to use the path diagram is presented under the “analysis of data” section of this study.

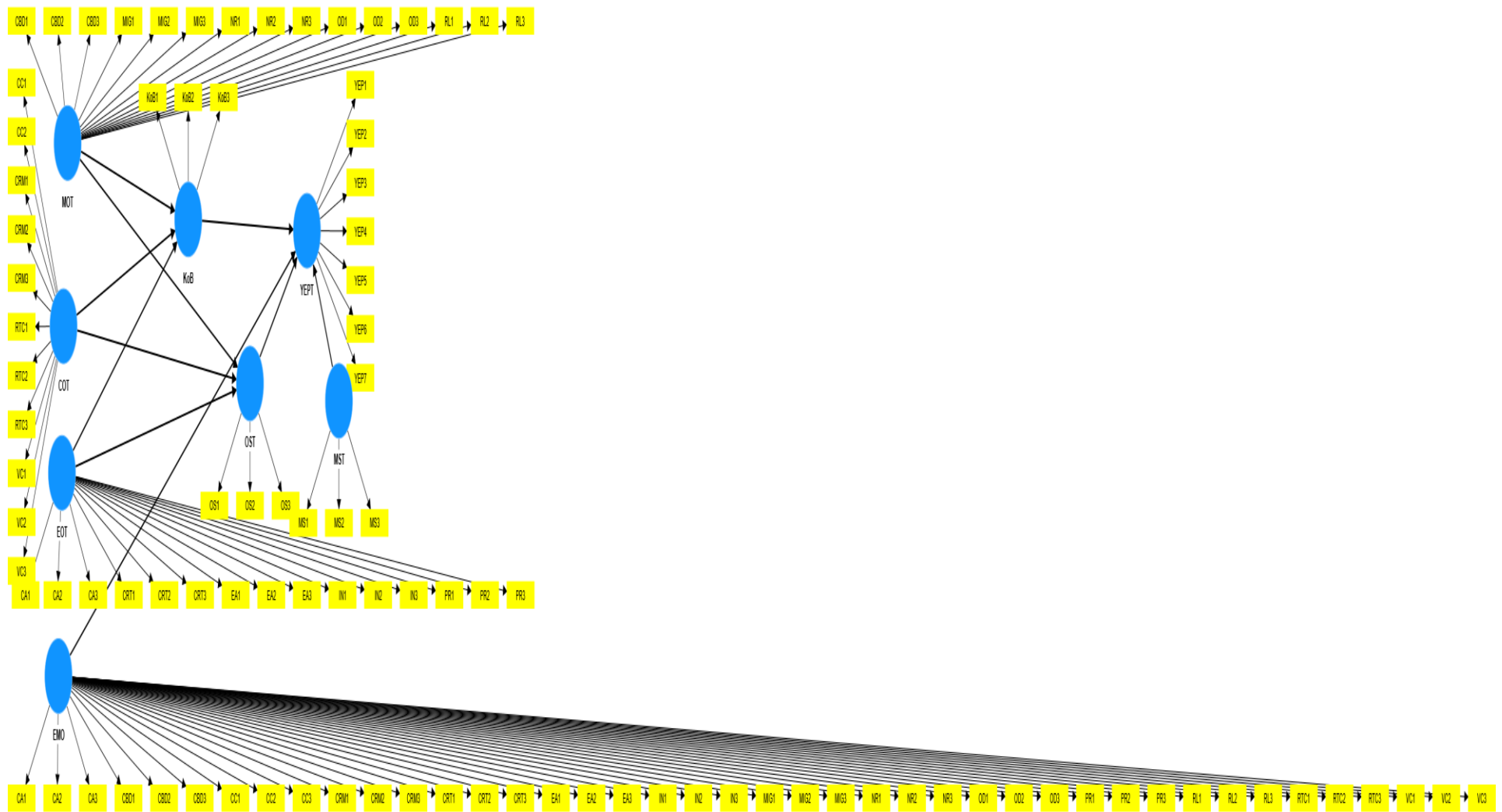


Figure 22: Path-Diagram

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.9.1 PATH ANALYSIS: HYPOTHESES RESULTS

The path analysis hypotheses results shown in Table 31 were derived from the sampled population of this study. Field (2009) proposes that β values (standardised coefficients) are important in regression analysis to show the significance of each independent variable in the model. β values show the extent or the degree to which each predictor variable affects the outcome provided all the other predictors remain constant” (Abu-Bader, 2021; Azen & Walker, 2021; Pallant, 2020). Positive β coefficients, that is, $\beta > 0$, mean that the independent variable positively affects the dependent variable. The β values are relevant when comparing independent variables as they are all measured in standard deviation units. In this study, the focus was to test the impact of all the dimensions of EMO on YEP. The findings presented in Table 29 show that except for MO $\leftrightarrow$ KoB ($\beta=0.58$), OS $\leftrightarrow$ CO ($\beta=0.560$), and OS $\leftrightarrow$ KoB (0.485), all other hypotheses were positive and significant. Therefore, hypotheses H1, H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H3b, H3c, H5, H6 and H7 are accepted, while hypotheses H3a and H3d are H1; H1a; H1b and H1c were all supported.

Table 31: Path Analysis: Hypotheses Results

Path Analysis: Hypotheses Results		
	Deposition	
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	(H1 Supported)	0.796
Market Orientation MO $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	(H1a Supported)	0.678
Customer Orientation CO $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	(H1b Supported)	0.774
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	(H1c Supported)	0.820
Knowledge of Business KoB $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	H4d Supported	0.651
Managerial Skills MS $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	H4e Supported	0.812
Organizational Structure OS $\leftrightarrow$ YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	H4f Not Supported	0.522
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO $\leftrightarrow$ KoB Knowledge of Business	Supported	0.651
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO $\leftrightarrow$ MS Managerial Skills	Supported	0.889
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO $\leftrightarrow$ OS Organizational Structure	Supported	0.760
Market Orientation MO $\leftrightarrow$ KoB Knowledge of Business	Not Supported	0.588
Customer Orientation CO $\leftrightarrow$ KoB Knowledge of Business	Not Supported	0.563
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO $\leftrightarrow$ KoB Knowledge of Business	Supported	0.655
Market Orientation MO $\leftrightarrow$ MS Managerial Skills		0.866
Customer Orientation CO $\leftrightarrow$ MS Managerial Skills	Supported	0.795
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO $\leftrightarrow$ MS Managerial Skills	Supported	0.832
Market Orientation MO $\leftrightarrow$ OS Organizational Structure	Supported	0.751
Customer Orientation CO $\leftrightarrow$ OS Organizational Structure	Not Supported	0.560
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO $\leftrightarrow$ OS Organizational Structure	Supported	0.770

Source: Researcher's compilation

Smart PLS4 was used to integrate the relationships of the under-listed hypotheses and produced the path coefficient values shown in Table 29 to achieve Objective 1 and the hypothesised proposition of this study listed below.

5.9.2 STANDARD MULTIPLE REGRESSION

Standard multiple regression analysis was used to explain the contribution to the variance of EMO and its dimensions on YEP, as well as show a causal relationship between the independent variable (EMO) and the dependent variable (YEP) (Altinay et al., 2011). A standard multiple regression analysis was done to test the model's goodness-of-fit index (GFI), Table 23. The study used standard multiple regression analysis to determine the extent to which the independent variables (market orientation, customer orientation, innovation orientation and entrepreneurial orientation) positively affect YEP (dependent variable), especially in the presence of mediator variables (KoB, MS and OS). Standard Multiple Regression, therefore, investigates “the prediction of a particular outcome by a set of variables” and also makes judgements about the factor that could be the “best predictor of an outcome” (Pallant, 2020). As such, multiple regression analysis requires no multicollinearity among the independent variables. Pallant et al. (2007) suggest that the multicollinearity variable must be “less than $r = 9$ ”. If r is equal to or greater than 9, multicollinearity and regression will not be efficient. Shrestha (2021) asserts that p - values are very important in regression analysis because the sig value ($p < .05$) indicates a statistically significant unique contribution.

5.9.3 THE TOTAL EFFECTS PATH

In this mediating effect analysis study, the total effects path coefficient results (as shown in Table 30) show the impact of IV (EMO or its dimensions) on DV (youth entrepreneurial performance) without the involvement of the mediator variables KoB, MS, and OS (knowledge of business, managerial skills, and organizational structure). Thus, the total effect represents the direct effect of EMO or its dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) before consideration of the influence of mediator variables KoB, MS, and OS.

Table 32: Total Effects (Path List) Results of EMO, KoB, MS and OS on YEP

Path Analysis/Hypotheses Results.	
	Total Effects
	(Path coefficients) β
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	0.708
Market Orientation MO -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	-0.068
Customer Orientation CO -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	0.035
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	-0.016
Knowledge of Business KoB -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	0.108
Managerial Skills MS -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	0.165
Organizational Structure OS -> YEP Youth Entrepreneurial Performance	-0.159
Market Orientation MO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	0.134
Customer Orientation CO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	0.081
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO -> KoB Knowledge of Business	0.410
Market Orientation MO -> OS Organizational Structure	0.519
Customer Orientation CO -> OS Organizational Structure	-0.168
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO -> OS Organizational Structure	0.381

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

The total effect coefficient results in the regression model (as shown in Table 32) were generated through regression analysis where EMO or its dimensions (MO, CO, and EO) were regressed on YEP as the independent variable. The results from the sampled respondents show inverse relations on YEP and (MO -> YEP $\beta = -0.068$; OS -> YEP $\beta = -0.159$; EO -> YEP $\beta = -0.016$). These results contradict extant literature suggesting positive relationships on all these EMO dimensions. This shows that the youth in Botswana need mentoring and coaching on MO, OS, and EO. On the other hand, (EMO -> YEP $\beta = 0.708$; CO -> YEP $\beta = 0.035$; KoB -> YEP $\beta = 0.108$, and MS -> YEP $\beta = 0.165$), show positive associations with YEP. It is important to note that the total effect path coefficients (Table 27) differ from the indirect effect path coefficient results (Table 28), representing the effect of EMO on YEP when operated through the mediators' KoB, MS, and OS. To fully understand the mediating effect process, the study decomposed the total effect into indirect and direct effects, as shown in the analysis of objectives 4, 5 and 6 in the subsequent sections. Table 33 shows the summary tests of the 28 hypotheses analysed in this study.

Table 33: Summary of Hypotheses Tests

Summary of Hypotheses,					
Count	Model a. Dependent Variable:	Standardized Coefficients			Deposition
		Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. p-value	
1	YEP: EMO/YEP H_{1i} :	0.796	12.927	<.001	Supported
2	YEP: MO/YEP H_{1a} :	-0.205	-2.927	.004	Supported
3	YEP: CO/YEP H_{1b} :	0.414	7.057	<.001	Supported
4	YEP: EO/YEP H_{1c} :	0.461	10.256	<.001	Supported
5	YEP: MOEO/YEP H_{2a} :	-0.386	-0.369	.713	Not Supported
6	YEP: MOCO/YEP H_{2b} :	-0.143	-1.660	.098	Not Supported
7	YEP: COEO/YEP H_{2c} :	0.924	10.678	<.001	Supported
8	YEP: MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} :	0.271	6.413	<.001	Supported
9	YEP: MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} :	0.276	5.995	<.001	Supported
10	YEP: COEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3c} :	0.210	5.576	<.001	Supported
11	YEP: MOEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3a} :	0.066	1.341	.181	Not Supported
12	YEP: MOCO/MS/YEP H_{4e3b} :	0.040	0.718	.474	Not Supported
13	YEP: COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c} :	0.043	1.046	.296	Not Supported
14	YEP: MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} :	0.079	1.482	.139	Not Supported
15	YEP: MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} :	0.085	1.484	.139	Not Supported
16	YEP: COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} :	0.069	1.566	.118	Not Supported
17	YEP: EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} :	0.233	5.525	<.001	Supported
18	YEP: EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} :	0.002	0.042	.967	Not Supported
19	YEP: EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} :	0.033	0.630	.529	Not Supported
20	YEP: MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} :	0.134	1.582	<.001	Supported
21	YEP: CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} :	0.085	1.684	.004	Supported
22	YEP: EO/KoB/YEP H_{5dc} :	0.041	1.568	0.001	Supported
23	YEP: MO/MS/YEP H_{5ea} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
24	YEP: CO/MS/YEP H_{5eb} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
25	YEP: EO/MS/YEP H_{5ec} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
26	YEP: MO/OS/YEP H_{5fa} :	0.079	1.482	.006	Supported
27	YEP: CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} :	-0.085	1.484	.739	Not Supported
28	YEP: EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} :	0.069	3.033	.001	Supported

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

5.9.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP)

Objective 1: To establish the relationships that exist between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{1a-c})

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H₁: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

Table 34: The relationship between EMO <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable:	Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	AVE
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)			R ²
YEP: EMO/YEP H ₁ : It is supported.	0.579	0.236	0.796	12.927	<.001	.535
EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP						

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_1 sought to investigate the direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable EMO and produced the results in Table 34 showing EMO/YEP H_1 : (H_1 ; $\beta = 0.796$, $t = 12.927$, $p < .001$). Both the H_1 test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 12.927$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$ which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_1 is supported and significant in this study. The H_1 p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The positive signs of the H_1 test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between EMO and YEP. A remarkable finding from this study is that EMO strongly supports YEP; with every one-unit increase in EMO, YEP is expected to increase by 79.6%. The AVE coefficient of determination (EMO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.535$) implies

that the independent variable EMO explains 53.5% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. Thus, this study has enough evidence to conclude the meaningful impact on the direct relationship between EMO and YEP. This study corroborates with previous research (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) that the H_1 hypothesis is supported and significant.

In other words, as the value of EMO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. This implies that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of EMO, which other studies attest to improve company performance. Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt EMO to improve their business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of EMO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

5.9.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP)

Objective 2: To establish the relationships that exist between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{1a-c})

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H_{1a}, H_{1b}, H_{1c} : There is a direct relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{1a} : There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1b} : There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1c} : There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

Table 35: The relationship between EMO dimensions <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable:	Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	AVE
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)			R ²
YEP: MO/YEP H_{1a} : It is supported.	0.099	0.036	-0.205	-2.927	.004	.531
YEP: CO/YEP H_{1b} : It is supported	0.306	0.043	0.414	7.057	<.001	.552
YEP: EO/YEP H_{1c} : It is supported	0.419	0.039	0.461	10.678	<.001	.512
Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP						

At Significant level $p < .05$; t -value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

H_{1a} : There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1a} sought to investigate the direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable MO and produced the results in Table 35 showing MO/YEP H_{1a} : (H_{1a} ; $\beta = -0.205$, $t = -2.927$, $p < .004$). The H_{1a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = -2.927$, greater than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .004$, less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{1a} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{1a} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (MO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.531$) implies that the independent variable MO explains 53.1% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. The negative signs of the H_{1a} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MO and YEP. This means that YEP is expected to decrease by 20.5% for every one-unit increase in MO. In other words, as the value of MO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MO, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MO to enhance business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of MO dimensions and their relationship with YEP. Thus, the H_{1a} hypothesis is significant and supported in this study. That is, this study has

enough evidence to conclude the meaningful impact on the direct relationship between MO and YEP.

H_{1b}: There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1b} sought to investigate the direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable CO and produced the results in Table 35 showing CO/YEP H_{1b}: (H_{1b}; $\beta = 0.414$, $t = 7.057$, $p < .001$). The H_{1b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = 7.057$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{1b} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{1b} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.553$) implies that the independent variable CO explains 55.3% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between CO and YEP. The results from the sampled respondents show that YEP is expected to increase by 41.4% for every one-unit increase in CO. In other words, as the value of CO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of CO, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt CO to enhance business performance. The study suggests a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of CO dimensions and their relationship with YEP. Thus, the H_{1b} hypothesis is supported and significant in this study. That is, this study has enough evidence to conclude the meaningful impact on the direct relationship between CO and YEP.

H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1c} sought to investigate the direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed

on predicting variable EO and produced the results in Table 35 EO/YEP H_{1c} : (H_{1c} ; $\beta = 0.461$, $t = 10.678$, $p < .001$). Both the H_{1c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 10.678$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{1c} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{1c} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.512$) implies that the independent variable EO explains 51.2% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the H_{1c} test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between EO and YEP. This means that YEP is expected to increase by 46.1% for every one-unit increase in EO. In other words, as the value of EO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lack implementation of EO strategies which other studies attest to improving company performance (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023; Meekaewkunchorn et al. 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt EO to improve business performance. The study highlights a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of EO dimensions and their relationship with YEP. Thus, the H_{1c} hypothesis is supported and significant in this study. That is, this study has enough evidence to conclude the meaningful impact on the direct relationship between EO and YEP.

A remarkable finding from this study is that all the EMO dimensions (MO, CO, and EO) have an AVE coefficient of determination relationship with YEP, which is greater than 51% being:

The AVE coefficient of determination (MO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.531$) implies that the independent variable MO explains 53.1% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP.

The AVE coefficient of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.553$) implies that the independent variable CO explains 55.3% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP.

The AVE coefficient of determination (EO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.512$) implies that the independent variable EO explains 51.2% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP.

5.9.6 THE NEXUS OF INTEGRATING MARKET ORIENTATION, CUSTOMER ORIENTATION, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION ON YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE (YEP)

To achieve Objective 3 and the respective hypotheses, Smart PLS4 could not integrate the relationships of the combined EMO dimensions. Thus, using the transformation method, IBM SPSS Version 22 was used to integrate two by two of the combined dimensions. Reference is made to the below-listed objective and its related hypotheses that produced the listed path coefficient (beta) values at $p < .05$ (as shown in Table 36).

Objective 3: To determine the influence of integrating entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{2a-c})

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H_{2a}: H_{2b}: H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

Table 36 shows the results of the transformation method used in SPSS IBM Version 28 to integrate combined variables.

Table 36: The relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable:	Coefficients ^a					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	AVE
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)			R ²
YEP: MOEO/YEP H _{2a} : It is not supported.	0.013	0.036	-0.386	-0.369	0.713	.592
YEP: MOCO/YEP H _{2b} : It is not supported	-0.045	0.027	-0.143	-1.660	0.098	.592
YEP: COEO/YEP H _{2c} : It is supported	0.419	0.039	0.924	10.678	<.001	.592

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{2a}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2a} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable MOEO and produced the results in Table 36 showing MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : (H_{2a} ; $\beta = -0.386$, $t = -0.369$, $p < .713$). The H_{2a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = -0.369$, less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2a} is not supported or significant in this study. The H_{2a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (MOEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) implies that the independent variable MOEO explains 59.2% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent YEP variable. The negative signs of the H_{2a} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MOEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO, YEP is expected to decrease by 38.6%. In other words, as the value of MOEO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The study's results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MOEO strategies, which is one of the unique contributions to the BoK from this study. Previous research separately attested that MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) individually improves company performance. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MOEO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of MOEO dimensions and their relationship with YEP. Thus, the H_{2a} hypothesis is insignificant, not substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that there is meaningful impact on the direct relationship between integrating MOEO and YEP in this study.

H_{2b} : There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2b} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable MOCO and produced the results in Table 36 showing MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : (H_{2b} ; $\beta = -0.143$, $t = -1.660$, p

< .098). Both H_{2b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = -1.660$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .098$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2b} is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{2b} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (MOCO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) implies that the independent variable MOCO explains 59.2% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent YEP variable. The negative signs of the H_{2b} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MOCO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO, YEP is expected to decrease by 14.3%. In other words, as the value of MOCO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The study's results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MOCO strategies. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the integration of MOCO becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt integrated MOCO strategies to improve business performance. The study suggests a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of integrated MOCO dimensions and their relationship with YEP. Thus, this study's H_{2b} hypothesis is not supported or significant. In this study, there is no evidence to conclude a meaningful impact on the direct integrating MOCO relationship to YEP.

H_{2c} : There is a direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{2c} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variable COEO and produced the results in Table 36 COEO/YEP H_{2c} : (H_{2c} ; $\beta = 0.924$, $t = 10.678$, $p < .001$). Both H_{2c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 10.678$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2c} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{2c} p -value is below the predetermined

threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficient of determination (COEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) implies that the independent variable COEO explains 59.2% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent YEP variable. The positive signs of the H_{2c} test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between COEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO, YEP is expected to increase by 92.4%. In other words, as the value of COEO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci, & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between COEO to YEP becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK.

Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt COEO to improve business performance. The study suggests a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of the integrated COEO relationship with YEP. Thus, the H_{2c} hypothesis is supported and significant in this study. That is, there is enough evidence to conclude that there is meaningful impact on the direct relationship between integrating COEO and YEP in this study.

5.9.7 THE NEXUS OF THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS, OR OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTEGRATED ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSIONS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

In order to report the mediating effect analysis, three results were needed: the total effect, the direct effect, and the indirect effect. This study analyzed the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results are in Table 37.

Increase in beta value: *Introducing a mediator can increase the beta value if the mediator acts as an additional pathway through which the independent variable affects the dependent variable. In this case, the mediator variable partially or fully*

explains the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, resulting in an increased beta value for the mediator.

No significant effect: *In some cases, the introduction of a mediator may not significantly impact the beta value. This occurs when the mediator does not substantially influence the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The beta values for the independent variable may remain relatively stable, indicating that the mediator has a minimal effect on the overall relationship.*

Objective 4: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) 4d-f (3a-c)

Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H_{4d-f (3a-c)}: Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

H_{4d3a}, H_{4d3b} and H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

Table 37: The mediating effect of integrated EMO dimensions <-> KoB <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect				a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect			
Coefficients ^a				Coefficients ^a			
Standardize Coefficients				Standardized Coefficients			
Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
YEP: MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : It is not supported.	-.386	-0.369	0.713	YEP: MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} : It is Supported	0.271	6.413	<.001
YEP: MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : It is not supported	-.431	-1.660	0.098	YEP: MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} : It is supported	0.276	5.995	<.001
YEP: COEO/YEP H_{2c} : It is supported	0.924	10.678	<.001	YEP: COEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3c} : It is supported	0.210	5.576	<.001
Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				The mediating effect of Knowledge of business (KoB) <-> Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP			

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{4d3a} : Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3a} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variables (mediating effect of KoB on MOEO) MOEO/KoB and produced the results in Table 37, which show MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} : That is: (H_{4d3a} ; $\beta = 0.271$, $t = 6.413$, $p < .001$). Both H_{4d3a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 6.413$, which is greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4d3a} : is supported and significant in this study. The H_{4d3a} p -value is below the predetermined threshold, with a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (MOEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable MOEO and mediator variable KoB explain 59.2% and

64.1% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4d3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} ; $\beta = 0.271$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} ; $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOEO and YEP. The inverse relationship implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between MOEO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 27.1% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 27.1%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, which becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between MOEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB in the combined MO X EO to YEP relationship. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .001$ value, H_{4d3a} is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable KoB has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP in this study.

H_{4d3b}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3b}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variables (mediating effect of KoB on MOCO)

MOCO/KoB and produced the results in Table 37, which show MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} : That is: (H_{4d3b} ; $\beta = 0.276$, $t = 5.995$, $p < .001$). Both H_{4d3b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.995$, which are greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$ which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4d3b} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{4d3b} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (MOCO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable MOCO and mediator variable KoB explain 59.2% and 64.1% of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4d3b} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} ; $\beta = 0.276$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : $\beta = -0.431$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 27.6% inverse indirect beta value from -43.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between MOCO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 27.6% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 27.6%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated MO X CO to YEP relationship. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .001$ value, H_{4d3b} is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to

conclude that the mediator variable KoB has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP in this study.

H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4d3c}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variables (mediating effect of KoB on COEO) COEO/KoB and produced the results in Table 37, which show COEO/KoB/YEP *H_{4d3c}*: That is: (*H_{4d3c}*; $\beta = 0.210$, $t = 5.576$, $p < .001$). Both *H_{4d3c}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.576$, which is greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$), which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{4d3c}*: is supported and significant in this study. The *H_{4d3c}* p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (COEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable COEO and mediator variable KoB explain 59.2% and 64.1% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant *H_{4d3c}* imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/KoB/YEP *H_{4d3c}*, $\beta = 0.210$, has both reduced from the direct COEO/YEP *H_{2c}*: $\beta = 0.924$, and the $t = 10.678$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge decrease in the absolute 21% indirect effect beta value from the 92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between COEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 21%. In other words, as the value of COEO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023) to company performance, the integration of these

dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between COEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study encourages youth entrepreneurs to understand KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .001$ value, H_{4d3c} is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable KoB has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP in this study.

A remarkable discovery from the results of this study is the need to inculcate entrepreneurship education and develop entrepreneurial skills among young entrepreneurs. Extant literature supports that KoB is an essential component in colleges and university curricula where the new breed of young entrepreneurs emanates from (Subrahmanian et al., 2017). Education policies in Botswana may also include education and training programs that promote a culture of entrepreneurship from the grassroots levels; support programs funded by the government and private sector; the country's many incubators and mentorship programs; and the physical infrastructure that provides support (Bosma et al., 2020).

H_{4e3a}, H_{4e3d} and H_{4e3c}: Managerial Skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

Table 38: The mediating effect of integrated EMO dimensions <-> MS <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect	Coefficients^a			a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect	Coefficients^a		
Model	Standardize Coefficients			Model	Standardized Coefficients		
	Beta (β)	t	Sig.		Beta (β)	t	Sig.
YEP: MOEO/YEP <i>H_{2a}</i> : It is not supported.	-.386	-0.369	0.713	YEP: MOEO/MS/YEP <i>H_{4e3a}</i> : It is not supported.	MS .066	1.341	0.181
YEP: MOCO/YEP <i>H_{2b}</i> : It is not supported	-.143	-1.660	0.098	YEP: MOCO/MS/YEP <i>H_{4e3b}</i> : It is not supported	MS .040	.718	0.474
YEP: COEO/YEP <i>H_{2c}</i> : It is supported	.924	10.678	<.001	YEP: COEO/MS/YEP <i>H_{4e3c}</i> : It is not supported	MS .043	1.046	0.296
Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				The mediating effect of Managerial Skills (MS) <-> Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP			

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{4e3a}: Managerial Skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3a}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variables (mediating effect of MS on MOEO) MOEO/MS and produced the results in Table 38, which show MOEO/MS/YEP *H_{4e3a}*: That is, (*H_{4e3a}*; $\beta = 0.066$, $t = 1.341$, $p < .181$). Both *H_{4e3a}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.341$, which is less than t-value > 1.96 and $p < .181$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{4e3a}*: is not supported and not significant

in this study. The H_{4e3a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold, with a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (MOEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (MS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.508$) imply that both the independent variable MOEO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 50.8% of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4e3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3a} ; $\beta = 0.066$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MO X EO and YEP. This indicates that the MS mediating effect process partially explains the influence of the MO X EO on the YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/MS, YEP is expected to decrease by 6.6%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease.

The results contradict extant literature suggesting that under normal circumstances, when either MO or EO is practised and mediation is introduced, YEP tends to increase, and vice versa when all other variables in the model are held constant. This huge decrease in the absolute 6.6% indirect effect beta value from -38.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population suggests a huge MS mediating effect. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated MO X EO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .181$ value, H_{4e3a} is insignificant and not substantiated or not supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable MS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP in this study.

H_{4e3b}: Managerial Skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of Market Orientation (MO) with Customer Orientation (CO) MO x CO and Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (YEP)

H_{4e3b}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Managerial Skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The dependent variable YEP was regressed on predicting variables (mediating effect of MS on MOCO) MOCO/MS and produced the results in Table 38, which show MOCO/MS/YEP *H_{4e3b}*: *H_{4e3b}*; $\beta = 0.040$, $t = 0.718$, $p < .181$). Both *H_{4e3b}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 0.718$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .181$), which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{4e3b}*: is not supported and not significant. The *H_{4e3b}* p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (MOCO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (MS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.508$) imply that both the independent variable MOCO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 50.8% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant *H_{4e3b}* imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/MS/YEP *H_{4e3b}*; $\beta = 0.040$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP *H_{2b}*: $\beta = -0.143$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects on the relationship between MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 4% inverse indirect beta value from -14.3% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies MS's negative mediating effect on the relationship between MOCO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 4% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 4%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease. This is contrary to the extant literature, which suggests that under normal circumstances, when either MO or CO is practised, the value of YEP tends to increase and vice versa when all other variables in the model are held constant. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and CO

(Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci, & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance. The MS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the combined MO X CO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .181$ value, H_{4e3b} is not significant, substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable MS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP in this study.

H_{4e3c} : Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4e3c} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediating effect analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between the predicting variable COEO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 36 show COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c} : (H_{4e3c} ; $\beta = 0.043$, $t = 1.046$, $p < .296$). Both H_{4e3c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.046$, which is less than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .296$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4e3c} : is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{4e3c} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (COEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (MS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.508$) imply that both the independent variable MOCO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 50.8% of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant H_{4e3c} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c} ; $\beta = 0.043$ has reduced from the direct COEO/YEP H_{2c} : $\beta = 0.924$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS

mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge 4.3% decrease in indirect beta value from the 92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies MS's positive mediating effect on the relationship between COEO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 4.3% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 4.3%. In other words, as the value of COEO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the MS mediating effect and the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between COEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .296$ value, H_{4e3c} is not significant, substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable MS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP in this study.

H_{4f3a} , H_{4f3b} and H_{4f3c} : Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integrated EMO dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is:

Table 39: The mediating effect of integrated EMO dimensions <-> OS <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect				a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect			
Coefficients ^a				Coefficients ^a			
Standardize Coefficients				Standardized Coefficients			
Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
YEP: MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : It is not supported.	-.386	-0.369	0.713	YEP: MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} : It is not supported	OS .079	1.482	.139
YEP: MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : It is not supported	-.431	-1.660	0.098	YEP: MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} : It is not supported	OS .085	1.484	0.139
YEP: COEO/YEP H_{2c} : It is supported	0.924	10.678	<.001	YEP: COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} : It is not supported	OS 0.069	1.566	0.118
Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				The mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) <-> Integrated EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP			

At Significant level $p < .05$; t -value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{4f3a} : Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3a} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediating effect analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable MOEO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 39 show MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} : (H_{4f3a} : $\beta = 0.079$, $t = 1.482$, $p < .139$). Both H_{4f3a} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.482$, which is less than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .139$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4f3a} : is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{4f3a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (MOEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the

independent variable MOEO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 67.6% of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant level of H_{4f3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} : $\beta = 0.079$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOEO and YEP. The relatively huge 7.9% decrease indirect beta value from -38.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the inverse partial mediating effect that OS has on the relationship between MOEO and YEP.

These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 7.9%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance. The OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X EO relation to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .139$ value, H_{4f3a} : is not significant, substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP in this study.

H_{4f3b}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3b} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (EO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable MOCO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 39 show MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} : (H_{4f3b} : $\beta = 0.085$, $t = 1.484$, $p < .139$). Both H_{4f3b} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.484$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .139$ which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4f3b} : is not supported and not significant. The H_{4f3b} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated.

The AVE coefficients of determination (MOCO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the independent variable MOCO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 67.6% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of both the test statistic and the significant H_{4f3b} level imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} : $\beta = 0.085$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : $\beta = -0.143$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 8.5% decrease indirect beta value from -14.3% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the inverse partial mediating effect that OS has on the relationship between MOCO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 8.5%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance. The OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X CO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .139$ value, H_{4f3b} is not significant, substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP in this study.

H_{4f3c} : Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{4f3c} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable COEO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 39 show COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} : That is, (H_{4f3c} : $\beta = 0.069$, $t = 1.566$, $p < .118$). Both H_{4f3c} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.566$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .118$) which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4f3c} is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{4f3c} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The AVE coefficients of determination (COEO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.592$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the independent variable COEO and mediator variable MS explain 59.2% and 67.6% of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant H_{4f3c} level imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} : $\beta = 0.069$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct COEO/YEP H_{2c} : $\beta = -0.924$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge 6.9% decrease indirect beta value from -92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies OS's inverse partial mediating effect on the relationship between COEO and YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 6.9%. In other words, as the value of COEO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) and EO (Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023; Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021) to company performance, the OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between COEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined CO X EO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .118$ value, H_{4f3c} is not significant, substantiated, or supported in this study. That is, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP in this study.

5.9.8 THE NEXUS OF THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS, OR OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Objective 5: To examine the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) (H_{5d-f})

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{5d} : H_{5e} : H_{5f} : Knowledge of business (KoB), Managerial skills (MS), or Organizational Structure (OS) KoB, MS, or OS mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

That is,

Table 40: The mediating effect EMO <-> KoB, MS, OS <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect					a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect				
Coefficients ^a					Coefficients ^a				
Standardize Coefficients					Standardized Coefficients				
AVE					AVE				
Model					Model				
Beta (β)					Beta (β)				
t					t				
Sig.					Sig.				
R ²					R ²				
YEP: EMO/YEP H_{1i} : It is supported.	.796	12.927	<.001	.535	YEP: EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} : It is supported	KoB .233	5.525	<.001	.641
YEP: EMO/YEP H_{1i} : It is supported.	.796	12.927	<.001	.535	YEP: EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} : It is not supported	MS .002	.042	.967	.508
YEP: EMO/YEP H_{1i} : It is supported.	.796	12.927	<.001	.535	YEP: EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} : It is not supported	OS .033	.630	.529	.676
Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP					The mediating effect of <i>Knowledge of business (KoB)</i> , <i>Managerial skills (MS)</i> , or <i>Organizational Structure (OS)</i> <-> EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimensions <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{5d} : Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{5d} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between the predicting variable EMO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 40 show EMO/KoB/YEP with (H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$, $t = 5.525$, $p < .001$). Both the H_{5d} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.525$, which is greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$, and $p < .001$ which less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{5d} : is supported and significant in this study. The H_{5d} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered significant. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable KoB has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP in this study. The AVE coefficients of

determination (EMO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.535$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable EMO and mediator variable KoB explain 53.5% and 64.1% of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$ result imply an indirect positive KoB mediating effect of 23.3% on the EMO relationship to YEP. The indirect EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5d} , 23.3% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect on the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 23.3% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 23.3%. In other words, as the value of EMO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the KoB mediating effect of producing a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as an intermediary when implementing EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EMO relationship with YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .05$ value, H_{5d} is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable KoB has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP in this study.

H_{5e}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{5e} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between the predicting variable EMO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 38 show EMO/MS/YEP with (H_{5e} ; $\beta = 0.002$, $t = 0.042$, $p < .967$). The H_{5e} test statistic and significant level have absolute values: $t =$

0.042, less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .967$, greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5e} is not supported and is not significant. The H_{5e} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered insignificant.

The AVE coefficients of determination (EMO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.535$) and (MS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.508$) imply that both the independent variable EMO and mediator variable MS explain 53.5% and 50.8%, respectively, of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} ; $\beta = 0.002$ result imply an indirect positive MS mediating effect of 0.2% on the relationship between EMO and YEP. The indirect EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} ; $\beta = 0.002$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the MS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5e} , 0.2% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge MS mediating effect of the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the youth entrepreneurs suggest a 0.2% MS mediating effect on transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 0.2%. In other words, as the value of EMO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the MS mediating effect of producing a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more MS as a mediating factor when adopting EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EMO relationship to YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .967$ value, H_{5e} is unsupported and insignificant in this study. In this study, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable MS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

H_{5f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H_{5f} : This study sought to investigate the mediating effect of organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable EMO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 38 show EMO/OS/YEP with (H_{5f} ; $\beta = 0.033$, $t = 0.630$, $p < .529$). Both the H_{5f} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 0.630$, $p < .529$), which are less than the t -value > 1.96 and greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5f} is not supported and not significant. The H_{5f} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered insignificant. The AVE coefficients of determination (EMO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.535$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the independent variable EMO and mediator variable OS explain 53.5% and 67.6%, respectively, of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} , $\beta = 0.033$ result imply an indirect positive OS mediating effect of 3.3% on the EMO relationship to YEP. The indirect EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} , $\beta = 0.033$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the OS mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5f} , 3.3% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect on the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 3.3% OS mediating effect on transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 3.3%. In other words, as the value of EMO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when adopting EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the EMO relationship with YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .529$ value, H_{5f} is unsupported and insignificant in this study. In this study, there is not

enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

5.9.9 THE NEXUS OF THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF KoB, MS, OR OS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EACH ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION (EMO) DIMENSION AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE

Objective 6: To examine the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP) [H_{5d-f} (a-c)]

Therefore, this study proposed the following hypotheses:

H_{5da}, H_{5db} and H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

The direct mediating effect analysis results of the relationship between each EMO dimension and YEP were needed in comparison to the indirect effect results of each EMO dimension, as shown in the subsequent tables, in order to report the nexus of the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

Table 41: The mediating effect of each EMO dimension <-> KoB <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect					a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect				
Coefficients^a					Coefficients^a				
Standardize Coefficients					Standardized Coefficients				
Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²	Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²
YEP: MO/YEP <i>H_{1a}</i> : It is supported.	-.205	-2.927	.004	.531	YEP: MO/KoB/YEP <i>H_{5da}</i> : It is supported	0.134	1.582	<.001	.641
YEP: CO/YEP <i>H_{1b}</i> : It is supported	0.414	7.057	<.001	.552	YEP: CO/KoB/YEP <i>H_{5db}</i> : It is not supported	0.085	1.684	0.04	.641
YEP: EO/YEP <i>H_{1c}</i> : It is supported	0.461	10.256	<.001	.512	YEP: EO/KoB/YEP <i>H_{5dc}</i> : It is supported	0.041	1.568	<.001	.641
Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP					The mediating effect of Knowledge of Business(KoB) <-> Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{5da}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5da}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Knowledge of business (KoB)* on the relationship between marketing orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between the predicting variable MO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 41 show MO/KoB/YEP with (*H_{5da}*; $\beta = 0.134$, $t = 1.582$, $p < .001$). Both the *H_{5da}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are = 1.582), which is less than the $t\text{-value} > 1.96$, and $p < .001$, which is less than the $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{5da}*: is supported and significant in this study which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). The AVE coefficients of determination (MO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.531$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply

that both the independent variable MO and mediator variable KoB explain 53.1% and 64.1%, respectively of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} ; $\beta = 0.134$ result implies an indirect 13.4% positive mediating effect of KoB on the MO relationship to YEP. The indirect MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} ; $\beta = 0.134$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MO/YEP H_{1a} ; $\beta = -0.205$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the MO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5da} , 13.4% from the H_{1a} : -20.5% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect of the MO relationship to YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 13.4% mediating effect of KoB on transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 13.4%. In other words, as the value of MO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting MO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between MO and YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .001$ value, H_{5da} is supported and significant in this study. That is, KoB mediates the MO relationship to YEP in this study. Hence, there is a need for more coaching and mentoring for youth entrepreneurs to understand better the KoB mediating effect on adopting the MO strategies to improve YEP.

H_{5db} : Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5db} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect

of KoB on the relationship between the predicting variable CO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 41 show CO/KoB/YEP with (H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$, $t = 1.684$, $p < .004$). Both the H_{5db} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 1.684$, $p < .004$), which are both less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5db} : is supported and significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). The AVE coefficients of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.552$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable CO and mediator variable KoB explain 55.2% and 64.1%, respectively, of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ result imply an 8.5% indirect positive KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP.

The indirect CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ has reduced from the direct CO/YEP H_{1b} : $\beta = 0.414$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the CO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5db} , 8.5% from the H_{1b} : 41.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 8.5% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 8.5%. In other words, as the value of CO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance. The KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between CO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting CO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the CO relationship with YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .004$ value, H_{5db} is supported and significant in this study.

H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5dc}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Knowledge of business (KoB)* on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between the predicting variable EO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 39 show EO/KoB/YEP with (*H_{5dc}*; $\beta = 0.041$, $t = 1.568$, $p < .001$). Both the *H_{5dc}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 1.568$, $p < .001$), which are closer to t -value > 1.96 and equal to $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{5dc}*: is supported and significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). The AVE coefficients of determination (EO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.512$) and (KoB/YEP: $R^2 = 0.641$) imply that both the independent variable EO and mediator variable KoB explain 51.2% and 64.1%, respectively, of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The EO/KoB/YEP *H_{5dc}*; $\beta = 0.041$ result imply an indirect positive 4.1% KoB mediating effect on the EO relationship to YEP.

The indirect EO/KoB/YEP *H_{5dc}*; $\beta = 0.041$ has reduced from the direct EO/YEP *H_{1c}*: $\beta = 0.461$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explained the EO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of *H_{5dc}*, 4.1% from the *H_{1c}*: 46.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect of the EO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 4.1% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 4.1%. In other words, as the value of EO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) to company performance. The KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as an intermediary when implementing EO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EO relationship with YEP. Thus, the hypothesis with a $p < .001$ value, H_{5dc} , is supported and significant in this study. That is, there is enough evidence to conclude that the mediating effect of KoB is meaningful in the MO relationship to YEP in this study.

H_{5ea} , H_{5eb} and H_{5ec} : Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

Table 42: The mediating effect of each EMO Dimension <-> MS <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect	Coefficients^a				a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect	Coefficients^a			
	Standardize Coefficients			AVE		Standardized Coefficients			AVE
Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²	Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²
YEP: MO/YEP H_{1a} : It is supported.	-.205	-2.927	.004	.531	YEP: MO/MS/YEP H_{5ea} : Rejected				.508
YEP: CO/YEP H_{1b} : It is supported	0.414	7.057	<.001	.552	YEP: CO/MS/YEP H_{5eb} : Rejected				.508
YEP: EO/YEP H_{1c} : It is supported	0.461	10.256	<.001	.512	YEP: EO/MS/YEP H_{5ec} : Rejected				.508
Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP					The mediating effect of Managerial Skills (MS) <-> Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				

At Significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{5ea} : Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5eb}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ec}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ea}: H_{5eb}: H_{5ec}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Managerial skills (MS)* on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [market orientation (MO) *H_{5ea}*: customer orientation (CO) *H_{5eb}*: entrepreneurial orientation (EO) *H_{5ec}*:] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between the predicting variables MO, CO, or EO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 42 show MO/MS/YEP with (*H_{5da}*; β = blank, t = blank, p < blank); CO/MS/YEP with (*H_{5db}*; β = blank, t = blank, p < blank); and EO/MS/YEP with (*H_{5dc}*; β = blank, t = blank, p < blank); All the *H_{5ea}: H_{5eb}: H_{5ec}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are (t = blank, p < blank), which are supposed to be less than t -value > 1.96 and greater than p < .05 respectively. These two blank figures imply that *H_{5ea}: H_{5eb}: H_{5ec}* are rejected. The *H_{5ea}: H_{5eb}: H_{5ec}* p -values should have been above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered not significant.

The AVE coefficients of determination (MO/YEP: R^2 = 0.531; CO/YEP: R^2 = 0.551; EO/YEP: R^2 = 0.512) and (MS/YEP: R^2 = 0.508) imply that both the independent variables MO; CO; or EO and mediator variable MS explain 53.1%; 55.1%; or 51.2% and 50.8% respectively of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The MO/MS/YEP *H_{5da}*; CO/MS/YEP *H_{5db}*; and EO/MS/YEP *H_{5dc}*) β = blanks result imply a rejected indirect mediating effect of MS on the relationship between MO; CO; or EO to YEP. The blank column results indicate a rejection in the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) in the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [market orientation (MO) *H_{5ea}*, customer orientation (CO) *H_{5eb}*, entrepreneurial orientation (EO) *H_{5ec}*,] to youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The sampled population results are contrary to extant literature. The EMO dimensions/MS/YEP should show a reduced coefficient value from the direct EMO dimensions/YEP values. The supposed decrease in the beta values after introducing the mediator variable means the MS mediation absorbs some of the direct effects between the EMO dimensions' relationship to

YEP. This supposed decrease in the beta value between the direct effect (EMO dimensions/YEP) and the indirect effect (EO/MS/YEP) indicates that the intermediate MS mediation process somewhat explains the influence of EMO dimensions on YEP. This means that MS should have some intermediary influence in transmitting the effect of the relationship of the EMO dimensions to YEP. However, the blank results in the absolute indirect effect beta value from the direct effect witnessed within the sampled population suggest that the MS mediating effect is rejected, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) to company performance. The MS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EMO dimensions relationship to YEP. With such blank column values, all H_{5ea} : H_{5eb} : H_{5ec} : are rejected in this study. In this study, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable MS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

H_{5fa} , H_{5fb} and H_{5fc} : Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

That is:

Table 43: The mediating effect of each EMO dimension <-> OS <-> YEP

a. Dependent Variable: Direct effect					a. Dependent Variable: Indirect Effect				
Coefficients ^a					Coefficients ^a				
Standardize Coefficients					Standardized Coefficients				
AVE					AVE				
Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²	Model	Beta (β)	t	Sig.	R ²
YEP: MO/YEP <i>H_{1a}</i> : It is supported.	-.205	-2.927	.004	.531	YEP: MO/OS/YEP <i>H_{5fa}</i> : It is supported	OS 0.079	1.482	0.006	.676
YEP: CO/YEP <i>H_{1b}</i> : It is supported	0.414	7.057	<.001	.552	YEP: CO/OS/YEP <i>H_{5fb}</i> : It is not Supported	OS -.085	1.484	0.739	.676
YEP: EO/YEP <i>H_{1c}</i> : It is supported	0.461	10.256	<.001	.512	YEP: EO/OS/YEP <i>H_{5fc}</i> : It is supported	OS 0.069	3.033	0.001	.676
Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP					The mediating effect of Organizational Structure(OS) <-> Each EMO Entrepreneurial Market Orientation dimension <-> Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP				

At Significant level $p < .05$; t -value > 1.96 ; Two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

H_{5fa}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fa}: Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) on the marketing orientation (MO) relationship to youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of the OS relationship to the predicting variable MO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 43 show MO/OS/YEP with (*H_{5fa}*; $\beta = 0.079$, $t = 1.482$, $p < .006$). The *H_{5fa}*: test statistic ($t = 1.482$) is closer to the t -value > 1.96 , and the significant level value ($p < .006$) is also close to the $p < .05$ predetermined threshold of this study which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). These two figures imply that *H_{5fa}* is supported and significant. The AVE coefficients of determination (MO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.531$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the independent variable MO and mediator variable OS explain 53.1% and 67.6%, respectively, of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The MO/OS/YEP *H_{5fa}*; $\beta = 0.079$ result imply an indirect partial 7.9% OS mediating effect on the MO relationship to YEP. The indirect MO/OS/YEP *H_{5fa}*; $\beta = 0.079$

has reduced and changed direction from the direct MO/YEP H_{1a} : $\beta = -0.205$ after the OS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explained the MO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fa} , 7.9% from the H_{1a} : -20.5% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect of the MO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 7.9%. In other words, as the value of MO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when implementing MO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the MO relationship with YEP. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .006$ value, H_{5fa} is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the MO relationship to YEP in this study.

H_{5fb} : Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fb} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) on the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable CO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 43 show CO/OS/YEP with (H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$, $t = 1.484$, $p < .739$). Both the H_{5fb} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 1.484$, $p < .739$), which are less than the t-value > 1.96 and greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5fb} : is not supported and not significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). The AVE coefficients of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.552$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that

both the independent variable CO and mediator variable OS explain 55.2% and 67.7%, respectively, of how well the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$ result imply an indirect inverse -8.5% OS mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. The indirect CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$ has reduced from the direct CO/YEP H_{1b} ; $\beta = 0.414$ after the OS mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the inverse CO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fb} , -8.5% from the H_{1b} : 41.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS inverse mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP.

These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS reverse mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/OS, YEP is unexpectedly attenuating by -8.5%, which is opposite the initially expected direction. In other words, as the value of CO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) on company performance, the OS mediating effect produces a meaningful impact on the relationship between CO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The implication is that youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to implement OS when practising CO to improve company performance cautiously. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the reverse mediating effect of OS on the CO relationship to YEP, which is more complex than initially assumed and strengthens the CO/OS relationship to YEP in a counterproductive manner. Thus, with the hypothesis having a $p < .739$ value, H_{5fb} is not supported and is not significant in this study. In this study, there is not enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between MO and YEP.

H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fc} : Sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Mediation analysis was performed through regression to assess the

mediating effect of OS on the relationship between the predicting variable EO and the dependent variable YEP. The results in Table 43 show EO/OS/YEP with (H_{5fc} ; $\beta = 0.069$, $t = 3.033$, $p < .001$). Both the H_{5fc} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 3.033$, $p < .001$), which are greater than the t-value > 1.96 and less than $p < .05$, respectively. In this study, with a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05), these two figures imply that H_{5fc} : is supported and significant. The AVE coefficients of determination (EO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.512$) and (OS/YEP: $R^2 = 0.676$) imply that both the independent variable EO and mediator variable OS explain 51.2% and 67.6%, respectively, of how good the regression equation fits the dependent variable YEP. The EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} ; $\beta = 0.069$ result imply an indirect positive 6.9% OS mediating effect on the EO relationship to YEP. The indirect EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} ; $\beta = 0.069$ has reduced from the direct EO/YEP H_{1c} : $\beta = 0.461$ after the OS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explained the EO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fc} , 6.9% from the H_{1c} : 46.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect of the EO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 6.9%. In other words, as the value of EO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when implementing EO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the EO relationship with YEP. Thus, the hypothesis with a $p < .001$ value, H_{5fc} , is supported and significant in this study. There is enough evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the MO relationship to YEP.

Smart PLS4 combined the three mediation variables KoB, MS and OS to generate a total effects mediation matrix with the results shown in Table 44.

5.10 ASSESS THE EXPLANATORY (R-SQUARED) AND PREDICTIVE POWER (PLS-PREDICT)

The last step was to assess the Explanatory (R-squared) and Predictive Power (PLS-Predict). Smart PLS4 was used in both cases.

5.10.1 PREDICTIVE POWER REGRESSION

This section discusses the predictive power regression (PPR) statistical technique used in this study to assess the predictive ability of latent variables in forecasting future values of observed variables. PPR was used to estimate a regression model where the dependent variable (YEP) was forecasted from the independent variables (EMO, MO, CO, and EO) as the forecasters. Furthermore, the study analyzed the accuracy of forecast or prediction of the mediating effect of KoB, MS or OS on the relationship between EMO and the integrated EMO dimensions on YEP. The PPR was assessed by examining the model's goodness-of-fit and ability to replicate the observed data. Various statistical measures, tests and fit indices that were used include:

- R-squared, which indicates the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that the predictors can explain,
- Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is used to compare the fit of the hypothesized model to a null model. Values close to or above 0.95 indicated a good fit.
- Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) measured the discrepancy between the model and the population covariance matrix. A value below 0.06 indicates a good fit.
- Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) assessed the average difference between the observed and predicted correlations. Values below 0.08 were generally considered acceptable.

Table 44: The R-Square (Coefficient of Determination for the Integrated Variables)

Model Summary										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	0.770 ^a	0.592	0.589	3.65685	0.592	160.703	3	332	<.001	1.484
a. Predictors: (Constant), COEO, MOCO, MOEO										
b. Dependent Variable: YEP										

Source: Researcher's compilation

The R-square (coefficient of determination) indicates how “good” the model of the study fits the researcher’s data or how good the regression equation fits the researcher’s data. Generally, numbers closer to 1 indicate a better fit. Standard multiple regression requires 15 or more subjects per predictor for reliability purposes (Brooks & Barcikowski, 2012; Lavery et al., 2019; Stevens, 1996).

Table 45: The R-Square (Coefficient of Determination for EMO and Mediator variables)

Model Summary										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.790 ^a	.624	.617	3.57649	.624	84.254	6	304	<.001	1.406
a. Predictors: (Constant), OS, KoB, EO, CO, MS, MO										
b. Dependent Variable: YEPT										

Source: Researcher’s compilation

The independent variables explain “the number of unique variances found in each dependent variable” (Pallant, 2020). Therefore, standard multiple regression investigates “the prediction of a particular outcome by a set of variables” and also makes judgements about the factor that could be the “best predictor of an outcome” (Pallant, 2020).

Table 46: Correlation Analysis

Correlations								
	Customer Orientation CO	Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO	Entrepreneurial Orientation EO	Knowledge of Business KoB	Market Orientation MO	Managerial Skills MS	Organizational Structure OS	Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP
Customer Orientation CO	1.000	0.883	0.627	0.438	0.783	0.608	0.493	0.679
Entrepreneurial Market Orientation EMO	0.883	1.000	0.831	0.532	0.916	0.676	0.605	0.784
Entrepreneurial Orientation EO	0.627	0.831	1.000	0.559	0.740	0.551	0.667	0.591
Knowledge of Business KoB	0.438	0.532	0.559	1.000	0.501	0.524	0.336	0.515
Market Orientation MO	0.783	0.916	0.740	0.501	1.000	0.672	0.672	0.602
Managerial Skills MS	0.608	0.676	0.551	0.524	0.672	1.000	0.497	0.622
Organizational Structure OS	0.493	0.605	0.667	0.336	0.672	0.497	1.000	0.385
Youth Entrepreneurial Performance YEP	0.679	0.784	0.591	0.515	0.602	0.622	0.385	1.000

Source: *Researcher's compilation*

5.11 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In light of conflicting prior research, this research clarified the relationships between EMO dimensions and YEP, determined the influence of integrating the EMO dimensions on YEP, and examined the mediating effect of KoB, MS and OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

In addressing the first research objective, which sought the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP), the study establishes success in YEP when businesses adopt an EMO. The positive signs of the H_1 test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between EMO and YEP. A remarkable finding from this study is that the adoption of EMO strongly

supports YEP, whereby with every one-unit increase in EMO, YEP is expected to increase by 79.6%. This study deduced enough evidence and corroborated with previous research (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) that conclude the meaningful impact on the direct relationship between EMO and YEP. The findings offer excellent opportunities to refocus EMO literature on integrating its dimensions and introduce mediation factors. Also, the study addresses a pressing concern, the underperformance of youth entrepreneurs, and sets forth a comprehensive, unique framework (Figure 23) to enhance the success of businesses. Like other emerging countries in the Sub-Saharan region, Botswana can diversify its economy by strengthening its entrepreneurial sector. However, this study discovered that entrepreneurship in Botswana is still in the developing stages and is strongly supported by Botsgov (through institutions such as LEA, CEDA, YDF, NDB, Kickstart, and many others). Therefore, this study compliments the government's efforts through EMO education to Botswana to become self-empowered (Eniola & Entebang, 2015; Richie, 2018).

The second research objective examined the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimension MO, CO, and EO and youth entrepreneurial performance. The negative signs of the H_{1a} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MO and YEP. This means that YEP is expected to decrease by 20.5% for every one-unit increase in MO. In other words, as the value of MO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MO, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MO to enhance business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of MO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

Again, the positive signs of the H_{1b} test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between CO and YEP. The results from the sampled respondents show that YEP is expected to increase by 41.4% for every one-unit increase in CO. In other words, as the value of CO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of CO, which other studies attest to improving

company performance (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt CO to enhance business performance. The study suggests a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of CO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

Lastly, the positive signs of the H_{1c} test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between EO and YEP. This means that YEP is expected to increase by 46.1% for every one-unit increase in EO. In other words, as the value of EO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lack implementation of EO strategies which other studies attest to improving company performance (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023; Meekaewkunchorn et al. 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020).

The third research objective examined the influence of integrating the entrepreneurial marketing orientation dimensions on youth entrepreneurial performance. Unlike previous studies that glorify the effect of the EMO dimensions individually on firm performance, MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019), EO (Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020), and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci, & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020), this study integrated the EMO dimensions into different permutations to establish a combination that best contributes to the relationship between EMO adoption and YEP, apart from the mere EMO constructs alone. Whereas the study produced inverse direct relationships between MOEO/YEP and MOCO/YEP, the COEO/YEP shows a direct positive relationship. Integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO, MOEO, and COEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK.

The negative signs of the H_{2a} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MOEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO, YEP is expected to decrease by 38.6%. In other words, as the value of MOEO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The study's results imply that the sampled youth

entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MOEO strategies, which is one of the unique contributions to the BoK from this study. Previous research separately attested that MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) individually improves company performance. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MOEO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of MOEO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

The negative signs of the H_{2b} test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MOCO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO, YEP is expected to decrease by 14.3%. In other words, as the value of MOCO increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. The study's results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MOCO strategies. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the integration of MOCO becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt integrated MOCO strategies to improve business performance. The study suggests a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of integrated MOCO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

The positive signs of the H_{2c} test statistic and significant level imply a positive direct relationship between COEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO, YEP is expected to increase by 92.4%. In other words, as the value of COEO increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci, & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between COEO to YEP becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt COEO to improve business performance. The study suggests a

need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of the integrated COEO relationship with YEP.

The fourth research objective examined the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between the integrated entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results from this objective were the principal contribution of the study to the BoK. The study is amongst the few to consider the mediating effect, and it may be the only one with the MVs KoB, MS, or OS used simultaneously to create an essential causal pathway of the relationship and explain how or why the independent variable (IV) EMO affects the dependent variable (DV) YEP. The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4d3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} ; $\beta = 0.271$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOEO and YEP. The inverse relationship implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between MOEO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 27.1% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 27.1%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, which becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between MOEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB in the combined MO X EO to YEP relationship.

The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4d3b} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} ; $\beta = 0.276$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : $\beta = -0.431$.

The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 27.6% inverse indirect beta value from -43.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between MOCO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 27.6% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 27.6%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated MO X CO to YEP relationship.

The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant H_{4d3c} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3c} ; $\beta = 0.210$, has both reduced from the direct COEO/YEP H_{2c} : $\beta = 0.924$, and the $t = 10.678$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the KoB mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge decrease in the absolute 21% indirect effect beta value from the 92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the positive mediating effect that KoB has on the relationship between COEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 21%. In other words, as the value of COEO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, and vice versa, when all other variables in the model are held constant. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the direct relationship between COEO to

YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study encourages youth entrepreneurs to understand KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. A remarkable discovery from the results of this study is the need to inculcate entrepreneurship education and develop entrepreneurial skills among young entrepreneurs. Extant literature supports that KoB is an essential component in colleges and university curricula where the new breed of young entrepreneurs emanates from (Subrahmanian et al., 2017). Education policies in Botswana may also include education and training programs that promote a culture of entrepreneurship from the grassroots levels; support programs funded by the government and private sector; the country's many incubators and mentorship programs; and the physical infrastructure that provides support (Bosma et al., 2020).

The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4e3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3a} ; $\beta = 0.066$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MO X EO and YEP. This indicates that the MS mediating effect process partially explains the influence of the MO X EO on the YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/MS, YEP is expected to decrease by 6.6%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease. The results contradict extant literature suggesting that under normal circumstances, when either MO or EO is practised and mediation is introduced, YEP tends to increase, and vice versa when all other variables in the model are held constant. This huge decrease in the absolute 6.6% indirect effect beta value from -38.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population suggests a huge MS mediating effect. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023) to company performance, the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOEO to YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company

performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated MO X EO relationship to YEP.

The positive signs of the test statistic and significant H_{4e3b} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/MS/YEP H_{4e3b} ; $\beta = 0.040$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : $\beta = -0.143$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects on the relationship between MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 4% inverse indirect beta value from -14.3% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies MS's negative mediating effect on the relationship between MOCO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 4% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 4%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease. This is contrary to the extant literature, which suggests that under normal circumstances, when either MO or CO is practised, the value of YEP tends to increase and vice versa when all other variables in the model are held constant. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci, & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance. The MS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the combined MO X CO relationship to YEP.

The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant H_{4e3c} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c} ; $\beta = 0.043$ has reduced from the direct COEO/YEP H_{2c} : $\beta = 0.924$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the MS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge 4.3% decrease in indirect beta value from the 92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies

MS's positive mediating effect on the relationship between COEO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 4.3% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 4.3%. In other words, as the value of COEO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance, the MS mediating effect and the integration of these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between COEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP.

The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant level of H_{4f3a} imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOEO and YEP. The indirect MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} : $\beta = 0.079$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOEO/YEP H_{2a} : $\beta = -0.386$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOEO and YEP. The relatively huge 7.9% decrease indirect beta value from -38.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the inverse partial mediating effect that OS has on the relationship between MOEO and YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 7.9%. In other words, as the value of MOEO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of EO (Ince et al., 2023; Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance. The OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company

performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X EO relation to YEP.

The positive signs of both the test statistic and the significant H_{4f3b} level imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated MOCO and YEP. The indirect MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} : $\beta = 0.085$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MOCO/YEP H_{2b} : $\beta = -0.143$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the MOCO and YEP. The relatively huge 8.5% decrease indirect beta value from -14.3% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies the inverse partial mediating effect that OS has on the relationship between MOCO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOCO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 8.5%. In other words, as the value of MOCO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. This becomes one of the unique contributions this study makes to the BoK, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) and MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) to company performance. The OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MOCO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X CO relationship to YEP.

The positive signs of the test statistic and the significant H_{4f3c} level imply a positive indirect relationship between the integrated COEO and YEP. The indirect COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} : $\beta = 0.069$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct COEO/YEP H_{2c} : $\beta = -0.924$. The decrease in the beta value after introducing the OS mediator means the mediator variable absorbs some of the direct effects between the COEO and YEP. The relatively huge 6.9% decrease indirect beta value from -92.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population implies OS's inverse partial mediating effect on the relationship between COEO and YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP.

This means that for every one-unit increase in COEO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 6.9%. In other words, as the value of COEO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the individual effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) and EO (Mathafena & Msimango-Galawe, 2023; Meekaewkunchorn et al. 2021) to company performance, the OS mediating effect and integrating these dimensions to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between COEO and YEP becomes another unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined CO X EO relationship to YEP.

The fifth research objective examined the mediating effect of knowledge of business, managerial skills, or organizational structure on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance. The EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$ result imply an indirect positive KoB mediating effect of 23.3% on the EMO relationship to YEP. The indirect EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5d} , 23.3% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect on the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 23.3% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 23.3%. In other words, as the value of EMO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as an intermediary when implementing EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EMO relationship with YEP.

The EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} ; $\beta = 0.002$ result imply an indirect positive MS mediating effect of 0.2% on the relationship between EMO and YEP. The indirect EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} ; $\beta = 0.002$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the MS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5e} , 0.2% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge MS mediating effect of the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the youth entrepreneurs suggest a 0.2% MS mediating effect on transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/MS, YEP is expected to increase by 0.2%. In other words, as the value of EMO/MS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the MS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more MS as a mediating factor when adopting EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EMO relationship to YEP.

The EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} ; $\beta = 0.033$ result imply an indirect positive OS mediating effect of 3.3% on the EMO relationship to YEP. The indirect EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} ; $\beta = 0.033$ has reduced from the direct EMO/YEP H_1 : $\beta = 0.796$ after the OS mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the relationship between the EMO and YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5f} , 3.3% from the H_1 : 79.6% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect on the EMO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 3.3% OS mediating effect on transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 3.3%. In other words, as the value of EMO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EMO (Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an

intermediary when adopting EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the EMO relationship with YEP.

The last research objective examined the mediating effect of (KoB, MS, or OS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} ; $\beta = 0.134$ result implies an indirect 13.4% positive mediating effect of KoB on the MO relationship to YEP. The indirect MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} ; $\beta = 0.134$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MO/YEP H_{1a} : $\beta = -0.205$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the MO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5da} , 13.4% from the H_{1a} : -20.5% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect of the MO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 13.4% mediating effect of KoB on transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 13.4%. In other words, as the value of MO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting MO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between MO and YEP.

The CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ result imply an 8.5% indirect positive KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. The indirect CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ has reduced from the direct CO/YEP H_{1b} : $\beta = 0.414$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the CO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5db} , 8.5% from the H_{1b} : 41.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial

8.5% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 8.5%. In other words, as the value of CO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance. The KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between CO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting CO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the CO relationship with YEP.

The CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ result imply an 8.5% indirect positive KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. The indirect CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} ; $\beta = 0.085$ has reduced from the direct CO/YEP H_{1b} : $\beta = 0.414$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the CO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5db} , 8.5% from the H_{1b} : 41.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 8.5% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 8.5%. In other words, as the value of CO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) to company performance. The KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between CO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting CO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the CO relationship with YEP.

The EO/KoB/YEP H_{5dc} ; $\beta = 0.041$ result imply an indirect positive 4.1% KoB mediating effect on the EO relationship to YEP. The indirect EO/KoB/YEP H_{5dc} ; $\beta = 0.041$ has reduced from the direct EO/YEP H_{1c} : $\beta = 0.461$ after the KoB mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable KoB absorbed some of the direct effects and partially

explained the EO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5dc} , 4.1% from the H_{1c} : 46.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge KoB mediating effect of the EO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 4.1% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EO/KoB, YEP is expected to increase by 4.1%. In other words, as the value of EO/KoB increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) to company performance. The KoB mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as an intermediary when implementing EO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EO relationship with YEP.

The MO/MS/YEP H_{5ea} ; CO/MS/YEP H_{5eb} ; and EO/MS/YEP H_{5ec}) $\beta =$ blanks result imply a rejected indirect mediating effect of MS on the relationship between MO; CO; or EO to YEP. The blank column results indicate a rejection in the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) in the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [market orientation (MO) H_{5ea} , customer orientation (CO) H_{5eb} , entrepreneurial orientation (EO) H_{5ec} ,] to youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The sampled population results are contrary to extant literature. The EMO dimensions/MS/YEP should show a reduced coefficient value from the direct EMO dimensions/YEP values. The supposed decrease in the beta values after introducing the mediator variable means the MS mediation absorbs some of the direct effects between the EMO dimensions' relationship to YEP. This supposed decrease in the beta value between the direct effect (EMO dimensions/YEP) and the indirect effect (EO/MS/YEP) indicates that the intermediate MS mediation process somewhat explains the influence of EMO dimensions on YEP. This means that MS should have some intermediary influence in transmitting the effect of the relationship of the EMO dimensions to YEP. However, the blank results in the absolute indirect effect beta value from the direct effect witnessed within the sampled population suggest that the MS mediating effect is rejected, unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Arabeche et al., 2022; Herlinawati et al., 2019; Ince et al., 2023; Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) to company performance. The MS mediating effect to produce a

meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EMO dimensions relationship to YEP.

The MO/OS/YEP H_{5fa} ; $\beta = 0.079$ result imply an indirect partial 7.9% OS mediating effect on the MO relationship to YEP. The indirect MO/OS/YEP H_{5fa} ; $\beta = 0.079$ has reduced and changed direction from the direct MO/YEP H_{1a} : $\beta = -0.205$ after the OS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explained the MO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fa} , 7.9% from the H_{1a} : -20.5% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect of the MO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 7.9%. In other words, as the value of MO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of MO (Bamfo & Kraa, 2019; Dabrowski et al., 2019) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between MO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when implementing MO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the MO relationship with YEP.

The CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$ result imply an indirect inverse -8.5% OS mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. The indirect CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$ has reduced from the direct CO/YEP H_{1b} : $\beta = 0.414$ after the OS mediating effect process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explains the inverse CO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fb} , -8.5% from the H_{1b} : 41.4% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS inverse mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS reverse mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/OS, YEP is unexpectedly attenuating by -8.5%, which is opposite the initially expected

direction. In other words, as the value of CO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to decrease. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of CO (Domi et al., 2020; Feng et al., 2019; Kelleci & Taşkın, 2020; Sa et al., 2020) on company performance, the OS mediating effect produces a meaningful impact on the relationship between CO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. The implication is that youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to implement OS when practising CO to improve company performance cautiously. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the reverse mediating effect of OS on the CO relationship to YEP, which is more complex than initially assumed and strengthens the CO/OS relationship to YEP in a counterproductive manner.

The EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} ; $\beta = 0.069$ result imply an indirect positive 6.9% OS mediating effect on the EO relationship to YEP. The indirect EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} ; $\beta = 0.069$ has reduced from the direct EO/YEP H_{1c} ; $\beta = 0.461$ after the OS mediation process, meaning that the mediator variable OS absorbed some of the direct effects and partially explained the EO relationship to YEP. This relatively huge decrease in the absolute indirect effect of H_{5fc} , 6.9% from the H_{1c} : 46.1% direct effect witnessed within the sampled population, suggests a huge OS mediating effect of the EO relationship to YEP. These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in EO/OS, YEP is expected to increase by 6.9%. In other words, as the value of EO/OS increases, the value of the YEP tends to increase. Unlike previous studies that solely attest to the effect of EO (Wahyuni & Sara, 2020) on company performance, the OS mediating effect to produce a meaningful impact on the relationship between EO and YEP becomes a unique contribution this study makes to the BoK. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when implementing EO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the EO relationship with YEP.

Moreover, the study formulated a new integrated EMO conceptual framework (Figure 1) and a path diagram (shown in Figure 12) that provide clear communication to allow both expect and non-expect researchers with limited statistical experience to comfortably understand the hypothesised relationships and use the diagram to compare the observed data and tested predictions.

The study exposed a lack of entrepreneurial knowledge and management skills vital for YEP. The study recommends collaborative approaches between the government and private sector to foster practical entrepreneurial activities that impart the relevant skills. Recommendations are for mutually beneficial strategic partnerships between the industry and start-up firms. This research equips policy makers, educators, and practitioners with actionable insights to foster thriving youth entrepreneurship by identifying critical mediating factors and introducing novel perspectives on EMO integration.

Again, findings from this study corroborate previous studies to prove that a stable entrepreneurial ecosystem in Botswana is possible through frequent notification and training on how to make use of existing entrepreneurial opportunities (Eddin & Thomas, 2018; Alqassabi, 2020; Omoruyi et al., 2017). Even though Botsgov supports entrepreneurship education by sponsoring entrepreneurship courses in tertiary institutions through the Department of Tertiary Education Financing (DTEF), the study suggests the creation of strong collaborative partnerships between institutions of learning and industries to mutually benefit both sectors and provide support to new start-ups in the country.

Additionally, the study recognised and appreciated the various innovation incubation centres nationwide, including the LEA facilities. However, the study suggests the removal of competitive barriers that hinder youth entrepreneurs from growing and increase concessions that prioritise awarding tender bids to youth entrepreneurs as a way to nurture them. However, for youth entrepreneurs to run successful businesses, this thesis suggests that Botsgov needs to go beyond simply supporting the willpower and idea to create an environmentally friendly ecosystem to grow entrepreneurial dreams (Richie, 2018).

Again, the strategic significance of entrepreneurship in national economic development is widely recognized (Hussain et al., 2023). Considering the significant role played by the Batswana entrepreneurs for economic development (Diraditsile, 2021) and the result of our research, the study proposes eliminating the obstacles that Batswana entrepreneurs face and encouraging initiatives that foster the country's economic development.

Finally, the study's findings imply a mindset change towards a generation of creative tech-literate entrepreneurs that consider selling or exporting value-added goods, unlike the sales

of raw materials (Omoruyi et al., 2017). Furthermore, the study encourages entrepreneurs to adapt to technological changes that embrace modern machinery and equipment use (Dong, 2019; Neumeyer, 2020). The youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to be abreast with technological advancements to enhance their entrepreneurial performance through efficient production, reduced operating costs, and identification of new opportunities.

5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the study results and discussed the findings guided by the research objectives and questions. Generally, the study unveiled that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of EMO, EMO dimensions, integration of EMO dimensions, and the mediating effect of KoB, OS, and MS on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt EMO, EMO dimensions, the integration of the EMO dimensions, and the mediating effect of KoB, OS, and MS to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the impact of these variables, the dimensions, and their relationship with YEP. The preceding chapter recaps the discoveries, concludes the study and deduces suggestions established with the results. Implications on theory, practice and the economy are shared. Limitations and areas for future research wind off the thesis.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 RESEARCH SUMMARY

Guided by the research objectives and questions, this chapter summarizes the findings, outlines the conclusions, and deduces the study's implications. The research purpose emanated from the poor YEP problem outlined in this study's first chapter. Chapter one generally introduces and outlines the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, contribution of the study, definition of key terms, assumptions of the study, and the general outline of how the research is organized. The study's first objective was to establish the relationships between EMO dimensions and YEP. Followed by determining the influence of integrating the EMO dimensions on YEP and then examining the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between EMO and YEP. After that, it examines the mediating effect of MS on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Then, finally, it examines the mediating effect of OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

In chapter two, the literature review, the thesis examined relevant write-ups from previous studies in entrepreneurial marketing adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance. Due to contradictory a-priori findings, this research establishes the strengths of the relationships between EMO dimensions and YEP, determines the influence of integrating the EMO dimensions on YEP, and examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS and OS on the relationship between EMO and YEP. Guided by objectivism and the correspondence theory of truth, the research employs the Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship (PET) and the Contingency Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE) to unravel the complex interplay between EMO and YEP. Key themes and concepts were critically deliberated to bring out the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on YEP. Therefore, the research sought to craft winning entrepreneurial strategies to overcome challenges causing poor YEP, hindering employment creation and economic development. The study's findings address a pressing concern, the underperformance of youth entrepreneurs, and set forth a comprehensive framework to enhance their success.

The third chapter crafted the conceptual framework diagram (as shown in Figure 23) that shows this study’s originality of being amongst the first few that delve into the mediating effects of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organisational structure (OS), to unveil critical pathways through which EMO and its integrated dimensions influence youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Although other authors (Rezvani & Fathollahzadeh, 2020: Vij & Bedi, 2012) include innovation orientation (IO) as the fourth entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension, this study ignored IO as having highly correlated scale items with those of EO. Thus, the study preferred only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), as shown in Figure 23.

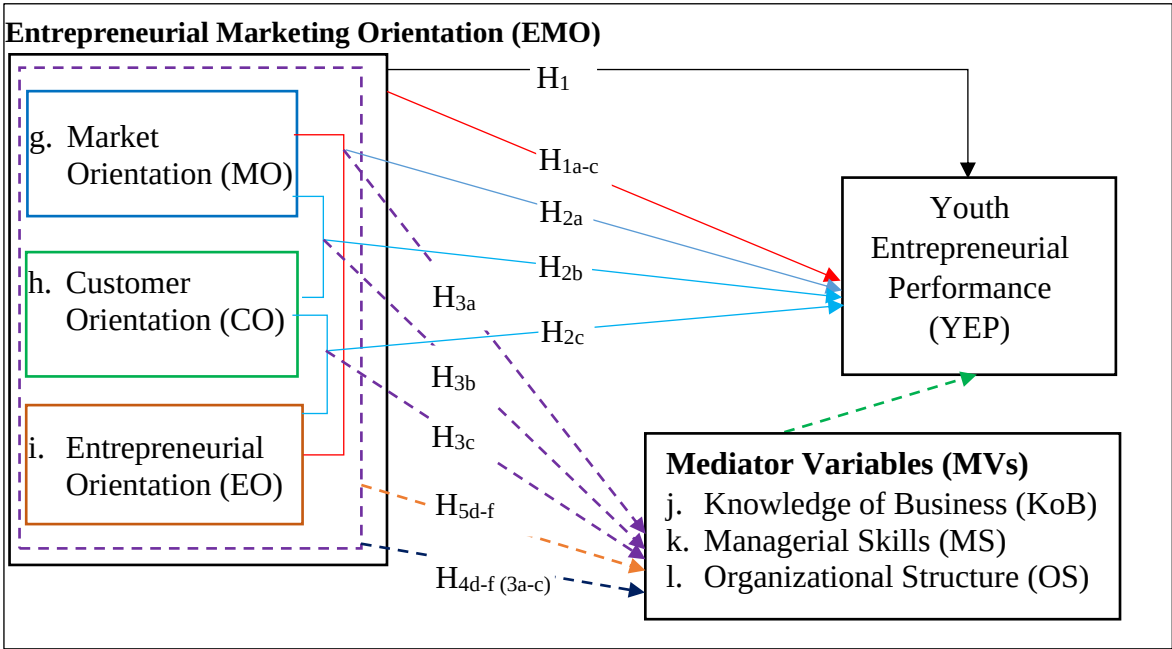


Figure 23: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher’s compilation

The fourth chapter was the research methodology. The section adopted the research onions process diagram (Figure 6) to discuss the study procedure, including the research strategy, population, sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis, reliability, validity, and ethical considerations. The chapter clarified and justified the selection of each method, technique or strategy used. The study adopted the objectivism (realism) ontological assumption and the correspondence approach to truth epistemological theory to show that something is true when a claim resembles real-world scenarios. The theoretical lenses in this study were the Psychological Theory of Entrepreneurship (PET) and the Contingency

Theory of Entrepreneurship (CTE). The positivism philosophy was chosen to interpret, understand, and develop new knowledge through an improved conceptual framework (Figure 23) with mediating variables and integrated relationships between EMO adoption and YEP. The research adopted a cross-sectional timeframe to conform to the PhD study period and minimize participant attrition rate, biases, and inconsistencies. Rao-soft sample size calculator was used to generate the 417-sample size of youth entrepreneurial businesses.

The primary data collection tool was a self-administered five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire research instrument was distributed in the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development (MYSC) districts in and around the Greater Gaborone Covid Zone of Botswana, namely Gaborone Central, Mogoditshane, Nkoyaphiri, Ledumadumane, Tlokweng, Gabane, Metsimotlhabe, Mmankodi, Mmokolodi, Mmopane, Thamaga, Kumakwane, Dikhutsaneng, Molepolole, Lobatse, Ramotswa, Mochudi, Morwa, and others. Two research assistants helped the researcher personally conduct the fieldwork from March to June 2023. A quantitative methodology survey research strategy applied statistical data collection and analysis procedures. The probability sampling technique was used with the stratified random sampling method to allow each element a known, positive, and unbiased chance of being selected in the sample population. Before the respondents answered the questionnaire, the researcher perused the questionnaire with the respondents to clarify any issues that needed transparency to reduce missing values from unanswered questions. During data collection, respondents were separated to reduce participant error from individuals influencing each other (Wagner III, 2019).

The Expectation Maximization algorithm approach was used to clean missing data. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and Mediation Analysis were used to analyse data and draw conclusions through hypotheses testing using standard multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis. Anti-plagiarism software was used to minimise intellectual piracy. The University's ethical clearance and the respective research permits from government ministries were sought. Consent, voluntarism, anonymity, and willingness to freely participate were encouraged. Confidentiality to protect the respondents was assured. Previous measurement scales were adopted to guarantee validity and reliability. The measurement scale items proved to have been picked from extant literature. Honest, truthful conclusions and recommendations were presented through

pictographs and explanations of discussions were presented for ease of understanding. The research used a deductive approach to formulate and test the hypotheses built from known EMO literature. A descriptive research design explored the lack of consensus on the EMO dimensions and YEP. The research used the three assessment standards, beta path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to substantiate the hypothesized relationships. A remarkable finding from this study is that all the EMO dimensions (market orientation, customer orientation, and entrepreneurial orientation) have an AVE coefficient of determination relationship with YEP, which is greater than 51%.

The fifth chapter presented the collected data in easier-to-interpret formats, analysed the results, and discussed the study's major findings. The research objectives, hypotheses, and questions guided discussions in this section. Smart Partial Least Squares the Fourth Version (Smart PLS4) structural equation modelling technique and IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 28) software were used to analyze the data. The factor analysis of the fourteen EMO variables used in this study confirmed consistency with earlier studies. Both the descriptive and inferential analyses of the EMO dimensions generally had high levels that are apparent with YEP. The major findings were that, while the mediating effect of MS was found wanting, OS exhibited multifaceted mediating effects like departmentalization, centralization of decision-making authority, and coordination of work process procedures that are vital ingredients for firm performance. It emerged that learning the business principles positively impacts superior business returns, a clear indication that KoB mediates the relationship between EMO and YEP. The findings offer excellent opportunities to refocus EMO literature on integrating its dimensions and introducing mediating factors.

The sixth chapter summarised the study, outlined the major conclusions, and deduced the implications on theory, practice, the economy, and others. The study wound off with limitations and areas for future research. Generally, the mediating effect of KoB was unearthed to be statistically significant to influence either the relationship of the EMO dimensions or the integrated EMO dimensions with YEP. On the contrary, the MS mediating effect was rejected, whilst OS had varying mediating effects on the EMO relationship to YEP. In summary (as shown in Table 47), at significant level $p < .05$; t-value > 1.96 ; two-tailed test, the supported and significant hypotheses showed meaningful impact on the EMO or the integrated EMO dimensions relationship to YEP were H_1 ; H_{1a} ; H_{1b} ; H_{1c} :

H_{2c} : H_{4d3a} : H_{4d3b} : H_{4d3c} : H_{5d} : H_{5da} : H_{5db} : H_{5dc} : and H_{5fc} . On the contrary, H_{5fa} : showed partial significance, whilst the not supported and not significant hypotheses were H_{2a} : H_{2b} : H_{4e3a} : H_{4e3b} : H_{4e3c} : H_{4f3a} : H_{4f3b} : H_{4f3c} : H_{5e} : H_{5f} : H_{5ea} : H_{5eb} : H_{5ec} : and H_{5fb} .

6.2 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE STUDY

This section summarizes the study's key findings and restates the main points that prompted this research. Conclusions provide a concise overview of how this research contributed to the field of EMO. At significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; two-tailed test, the supported and significant hypotheses showed a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and its integrated dimensions and YEP as summarised in Table 47:

Table 47: Deposition of Hypotheses Tests

Summary of Hypotheses,					
Count	Model a. Dependent Variable:	Standardized Coefficients			Deposition
		Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. p-value	
1	YEP: EMO/YEP H_1 :	0.796	12.927	<.001	Supported
2	YEP: MO/YEP H_{1a} :	-0.205	-2.927	.004	Supported
3	YEP: CO/YEP H_{1b} :	0.414	7.057	<.001	Supported
4	YEP: EO/YEP H_{1c} :	0.461	10.256	<.001	Supported
5	YEP: MOEO/YEP H_{2a} :	-0.386	-0.369	.713	Not Supported
6	YEP: MOCO/YEP H_{2b} :	-0.143	-1.660	.098	Not Supported
7	YEP: COEO/YEP H_{2c} :	0.924	10.678	<.001	Supported
8	YEP: MOEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3a} :	0.271	6.413	<.001	Supported
9	YEP: MOCO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3b} :	0.276	5.995	<.001	Supported
10	YEP: COEO/KoB/YEP H_{4d3c} :	0.210	5.576	<.001	Supported
11	YEP: MOEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3a} :	0.066	1.341	.181	Not Supported
12	YEP: MOCO/MS/YEP H_{4e3b} :	0.040	0.718	.474	Not Supported
13	YEP: COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c} :	0.043	1.046	.296	Not Supported
14	YEP: MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a} :	0.079	1.482	.139	Not Supported
15	YEP: MOCO/OS/YEP H_{4f3b} :	0.085	1.484	.139	Not Supported
16	YEP: COEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3c} :	0.069	1.566	.118	Not Supported
17	YEP: EMO/KoB/YEP H_{5d} :	0.233	5.525	<.001	Supported
18	YEP: EMO/MS/YEP H_{5e} :	0.002	0.042	.967	Not Supported
19	YEP: EMO/OS/YEP H_{5f} :	0.033	0.630	.529	Not Supported
20	YEP: MO/KoB/YEP H_{5da} :	0.134	1.582	<.001	Supported
21	YEP: CO/KoB/YEP H_{5db} :	0.085	1.684	.004	Supported
22	YEP: EO/KoB/YEP H_{5dc} :	0.041	1.568	<.001	Supported
23	YEP: MO/MS/YEP H_{5ea} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
24	YEP: CO/MS/YEP H_{5eb} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
25	YEP: EO/MS/YEP H_{5ec} :	-	-	-	Not Supported
26	YEP: MO/OS/YEP H_{5fa} :	0.079	1.482	.006	Supported
27	YEP: CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} :	-0.085	1.484	.739	Not Supported
28	YEP: EO/OS/YEP H_{5fc} :	0.069	3.033	.001	Supported

At Significant level $p < .05$; $t\text{-value} > 1.96$; two-tailed test_ refers to the hypothesis is significant and substantiated

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.2.1 CONCLUSIONS OF THE ACCEPTED HYPOTHESES OF THIS STUDY

H₁: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP)

H₁ sought to investigate the direct relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both the *H₁* test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 12.927$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$ which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H₁* is supported and significant in this study. The *H₁* p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. This means that for every one-unit increase in EMO, YEP is expected to increase by 79.6%. A remarkable finding from this study is that EMO strongly supports YEP. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of EMO, which is attested to improve company performance by other studies. Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt EMO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of EMO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

H_{1a}: There is a direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1a} sought to investigate the direct relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The *H_{1a}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = -2.927$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .004$, less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{1a}* is supported and significant in this study. The *H_{1a}* p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MO, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Wakjira & Kant, 2023). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MO to enhance business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of MO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

H_{1b}: There is a direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1b} sought to investigate the direct relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The *H_{1b}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = 7.057$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{1b}* is supported and significant in this study. The *H_{1b}* p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of CO, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Domi et al., 2020; Ismail, 2023). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt CO to enhance business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the value and impact of CO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

H_{1c}: There is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{1c} sought to investigate the direct relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The *H_{1c}* test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 10.678$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{1c}* is supported and significant in this study. The *H_{1c}* p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lack implementation of EO strategies, which other studies attest to improving company performance (Meekaewkunchorn et al., 2021; Wahyuni, 2020). Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt EO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of EO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

H_{2c}: There is a direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{2c} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance

(YEP). Both H_{2c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 10.678$, greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2c} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{2c} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 10.6% significant direct effect in transmitting the CO and EO relationship integration to YEP. Therefore, the study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt COEO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of the integrated COEO relationship with YEP.

H_{4d3a}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4d3a}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{4d3a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 6.413$, which is greater than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .001$, which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4d3a} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{4d3a} p -value is below the predetermined threshold, with a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 27.1% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB in the combined MO X EO to YEP relationship.

H_{4d3b}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4d3b}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{4d3b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.995$, which are greater than $t\text{-value} >$

1.96 and $p < .001$ which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4d3b} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{4d3b} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The findings imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 27.6% KoB significant mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated MO X CO to YEP relationship.

H_{4d3c}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4d3c} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{4d3c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.576$, which is greater than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .001$, which is less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4d3c} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{4d3c} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is substantiated. The study encourages youth entrepreneurs to understand KoB as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP.

H_{5d}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5d} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 38 show EMO/KoB/YEP with (H_{5d} ; $\beta = 0.233$, $t = 5.525$, $p < .001$). Both the H_{5d} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 5.525$, which is greater than t -value > 1.96 , and $p < .001$ which

less than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{5d} is supported and significant in this study. The H_{5d} p -value is below the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered significant. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 23.3% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as an intermediary when implementing EMO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EMO relationship with YEP.

H_{5da}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5da} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Knowledge of business (KoB)* on the relationship between marketing orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both the H_{5da} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are = 1.582), which is less than the t -value > 1.96 and $p < .001$), which is less than the $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{5da} is supported and significant in this study which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 13.4% mediating effect of KoB on transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. This implies that the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more KoB as a mediating factor when adopting MO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the relationship between MO and YEP.

H_{5dc}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5dc} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Knowledge of business (KoB)* on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 39 show EO/KoB/YEP with (H_{5dc} ; $\beta = 0.041$, $t = 1.568$, $p < .001$). Both the H_{5dc} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 1.568$, $p < .001$), which are less than t -value > 1.96 and less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5dc} is supported and significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 4.1% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and

mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the EO relationship with YEP.

H_{5fa}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fa}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) on the marketing orientation (MO) relationship to youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 41 show MO/OS/YEP with (*H_{5fa}*; $\beta = 0.079$, $t = 1.482$, $p < .006$). The *H_{5fa}*: test statistic ($t = 1.482$) is less than the t -value > 1.96 , and the significant level value ($p < .006$) is less than the $p < .05$ predetermined threshold of this study which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). These two figures imply that *H_{5fa}* is supported and significant. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO relationship to YEP. The youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more OS as an intermediary when implementing MO strategies to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the MO relationship with YEP.

H_{5fc}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fc}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organizational Structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 41 show EO/OS/YEP with (*H_{5fc}*; $\beta = 0.069$, $t = 3.033$, $p < .001$). Both the *H_{5fc}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 3.033$, $p < .001$), which are greater than the t -value > 1.96 and less than $p < .05$, respectively. In this study, with a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05), these two figures imply that *H_{5fc}*: is supported and significant. These results imply that the sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the EO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the OS mediating effect on the EO relationship with YEP.

6.2.2 CONCLUSIONS OF THE REJECTED HYPOTHESES OF THIS STUDY

On the contrary, the subsequent section highlights the hypotheses that were not supported and not significant in this study:

H_{2a}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{2a} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The H_{2a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values of $t = -0.369$, less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2a} is not supported or significant in this study. The H_{2a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The negative signs of the test statistic and significant level imply an inverse direct relationship between MOEO and YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in MOEO, YEP is expected to decrease by 38.6%. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lacked implementation of MOEO strategies, which other studies attest to improve company performance. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MOEO to improve business performance. There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to understand better the value and impact of MOEO dimensions and their relationship with YEP.

H_{2b}: There is a direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{2b} sought to investigate the direct relationship between integrating market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO on youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{2b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = -1.660$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .098$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{2b} is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{2b} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The implication is that the sampled youth entrepreneurs lack implementation of the integrated MOCO strategies, which other studies attest to improving company performance. Therefore, this study recommends that youth entrepreneurs adopt MOCO to improve business performance.

There is a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the impact of the integrated MOCO dimensions and their relationship to YEP.

H_{4e3a}: Managerial Skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4e3a}: We sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{4e3a} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.341$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .181$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4e3a} is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{4e3a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold, with a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated MO X EO relationship to YEP.

H_{4e3b}: Managerial Skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of Market Orientation (MO) with Customer Orientation (CO) MO x CO and Youth Entrepreneurial Performance (YEP).

H_{4e3b}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Managerial Skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both H_{4e3b} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 0.718$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .181$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4e3b} is not supported and not significant. The H_{4e3b} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a moderate 4% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated MO x CO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated MO x CO to improve company

performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the combined MO x CO relationship to YEP.

H_{4e3c}: Managerial skills (MS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4e3c}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 36 show COEO/MS/YEP H_{4e3c}:(H_{4e3c}; $\beta = 0.043$, $t = 1.046$, $p < .296$). Both H_{4e3c} test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.046$, which is less than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .296$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4e3c}: is not supported and not significant in this study. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 4.3% MS mediating effect in transmitting the effect of the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more MS as mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP.

H_{4f3a}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4f3a}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) MO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 37 show MOEO/OS/YEP H_{4f3a}:(H_{4f3a}; $\beta = 0.079$, $t = 1.482$, $p < .139$). Both H_{4f3a}: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.482$, which is less than t -value > 1.96 and $p < .139$), which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that H_{4f3a}: is not supported and not significant in this study. The H_{4f3a} p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. These results imply that this study's sampled

respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 7.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the MO X EO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated MO X EO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X EO relation to YEP.

H_{4f3b}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (CO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4f3b}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of market orientation (MO) with customer orientation (EO) MO x CO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 37 show MOCO/OS/YEP *H_{4f3b}*: (*H_{4f3b}*: $\beta = 0.085$, $t = 1.484$, $p < .139$). Both *H_{4f3b}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.484$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .139$, which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{4f3b}*: is not supported and not significant. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated MO X CO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediating factor when implementing the integrated MO X CO to improve company performance. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of OS on the combined MO X CO relationship to YEP.

H_{4f3c}: Organization Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (CO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{4f3c}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Organization Structure (OS) on the relationship between the integration of customer orientation (MO) with entrepreneurial orientation (EO) CO x EO and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 37 show COEO/OS/YEP *H_{4f3c}*: That is, (*H_{4f3c}*: $\beta = 0.069$, $t = 1.566$, $p < .118$). Both *H_{4f3c}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are $t = 1.566$, which is less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .118$) which is greater than $p < .05$. These two figures imply that *H_{4f3c}*: is not supported and not significant in this study. The *H_{4f3c}* p -value is above the

predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is not substantiated. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest a 6.9% OS mediating effect in transmitting the integrated CO X EO relationship to YEP. The study proposes encouraging youth entrepreneurs to gain more OS as a mediator when implementing the integrated CO X EO to improve company performance.

H_{5db}: Knowledge of business (KoB) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5db}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Knowledge of Business (KoB) on the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 39 show CO/KoB/YEP with (*H_{5db}*; $\beta = 0.085$, $t = 1.684$, $p < .004$). Both the *H_{5db}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 1.684$, $p < .004$), which are both less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and less than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{5db}*: is supported and significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). These results imply that this study's sampled respondents of youth entrepreneurs suggest a partial 8.5% KoB mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of KoB on the CO relationship with YEP.

H_{5e}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5e}: I sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The results in Table 38 show EMO/MS/YEP with (*H_{5e}*; $\beta = 0.002$, $t = 0.042$, $p < .967$). The *H_{5e}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values: $t = 0.042$, less than $t\text{-value} > 1.96$ and $p < .967$, greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{5e}* is not supported and is not significant. These results imply that the youth entrepreneurs suggest a 0.2% MS mediating effect on transmitting the EMO relationship to YEP. Hence, the youth entrepreneurs are encouraged to gain more MS as a mediating factor when adopting EMO strategies to improve company performance. There

might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EMO relationship to YEP.

H_{5f}: Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

Both the *H_{5f}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = 0.630$, $p < .529$), which are less than the t -value > 1.96 and greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two figures imply that *H_{5f}*: is not supported and not significant. The *H_{5f}* p -value is above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, the coefficient is considered not significant. In this study, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the mediator variable OS has a meaningful impact on the relationship between EMO and YEP.

H_{5ea}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between market orientation (MO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ea}: We sought to investigate the mediating effect of managerial skills (MS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [market orientation (MO) *H_{5ea}*] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Table 40 shows blank results of MO/MS/YEP with (*H_{5ea}*; $\beta = \text{blank}$, $t = \text{blank}$, $p < \text{blank}$). The *H_{5ea}*: test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are ($t = \text{blank}$, $p < \text{blank}$), which are supposed to be less than t -value > 1.96 and greater than $p < .05$, respectively. These two blank figures imply that *H_{5ea}* is rejected. The *H_{5ea}*: p -values should have been above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, blank results imply a rejected indirect mediating effect of MS on the MO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the MO relationship with YEP.

H_{5eb}: Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5eb}: sought to investigate the mediating effect of Managerial Skills (MS) on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [

customer orientation (CO) H_{5eb}] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Table 40 shows blank results of CO/MS/YEP with (H_{5db} ; β = blank, t = blank, p < blank). The H_{5eb} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are (t = blank, p < blank), which are supposed to be less than the t -value > 1.96 and greater than p < .05, respectively. These two blank figures imply that H_{5eb} : is rejected. The H_{5eb} : p -values should have been above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, blank results imply a rejected indirect mediating effect of MS on the CO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the CO relationship with YEP.

H_{5ec} : Managerial skills (MS) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5ec} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Managerial Skills (MS)* on the relationship between each entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) dimension [entrepreneurial orientation (EO) H_{5ec}] and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Table 40 shows blank results of EO/MS/YEP with (H_{5ec} ; β = blank, t = blank, p < blank); The H_{5ec} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are (t = blank, p < blank), which are supposed to be less than t -value > 1.96 and greater than p < .05 respectively. These two blank figures imply that H_{5ec} is rejected. The H_{5ec} p -values should have been above the predetermined threshold of this study, which had a 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05); thus, a blank result implies a rejected indirect mediating effect of MS on the between EO relationship to YEP. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth to appreciate the mediating effect of MS on the EO relationship with YEP.

H_{5fb} : Organizational Structure (OS) mediates the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP).

H_{5fb} : sought to investigate the mediating effect of *Organizational Structure (OS)* on the relationship between customer orientation (CO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Both the H_{5fb} : test statistic and significant level have absolute values that are (t = 1.484, p < .739), which are less than the t -value > 1.96 and greater than p < .05, respectively. These two figures imply that H_{5fb} : is not supported and not significant in this study, which had a predetermined threshold of 95% confidence interval (commonly 0.05). The

CO/OS/YEP H_{5fb} ; $\beta = -0.085$ result imply an indirect inverse -8.5% OS mediating effect on the CO relationship to YEP. These results imply that the sampled youth entrepreneurs suggest an 8.5% OS reverse mediating effect in transmitting the CO relationship to YEP. This means that for every one-unit increase in CO/OS, YEP is unexpectedly attenuating by -8.5%, which is opposite the initially expected direction. There might be a need for more coaching and mentoring for the youth entrepreneurs to appreciate the reverse mediating effect of OS on the CO relationship to YEP, which is more complex than initially assumed and strengthens the CO/OS relationship to YEP in a counterproductive manner.

6.3 RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

This implications section explains the broader insinuations of the research findings on real-world applications to theory, practice, policy, or suggestions for future research.

6.4 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This thesis may contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of EMO by expanding upon existing theories as outlined below:

6.4.1 ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

- a. This study's first implication is to advance EMO literature and knowledge. The study's originality lies in being amongst the first few that delve into the mediating effects of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS), and organisational structure (OS) on the EMO relationship to YEP. While the mediating effect of MS was found wanting, OS exhibited multifaceted mediating effects like departmentalization, centralization of decision-making authority, and coordination of work process procedures, which are vital ingredients for firm performance. It emerged that learning the business principles positively impacts superior business returns, indicating that KoB mediates the EMO relationship with YEP. The findings offer excellent opportunities to refocus EMO literature, consider integrating the EMO dimensions, and introduce mediating factors.
- b. Furthermore, the study unveils critical pathways through which EMO and its integrated dimensions influence youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). Unlike previous research that only analysed the individual effects of each EMO dimension on company performance, this study suggests a stronger impact if the EMO dimensions are integrated into several permutations. The integrated EMO dimensions, that is, blending

the EMO constructs and their measurement scales to form unique combinations, are thought to significantly impact the relations affected by the mere EMO constructs alone. The conceptual framework suggests several integrated relationships between EMO dimensions and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP), which previous studies (Al-Lawati, 2017; Gyanwali & Bunchapattanasakda, 2019; Sadiku-Dushi et al., 2019) failed to unearth. Thus, the study formulated a unique conceptual framework with integrated EMO dimensions. This study's findings may lead to the development of a new and complex theoretical framework that can be used to explain the relationship between EMO and its integrated dimensions on YEP, with phenomena shown in Figure 23.

6.4.2 REMARKABLE FINDING OF THE STUDY

A remarkable finding from this study is that all the EMO dimensions (MO, CO, and EO) have an AVE coefficient of determination relationship with YEP, which is greater than 51%. Firstly, the AVE coefficient of determination (MO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.531$) implies that the independent variable MO explains 53.1% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. Followed by the AVE coefficient of determination (CO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.553$) implies that the independent variable CO explains 55.3% of the total variance observed in the dependent variable YEP. Lastly, the AVE coefficient of determination (EO/YEP: $R^2 = 0.512$) implies that the independent variable EO explains 51.2% of the total variance observed in the dependent YEP.

6.4.3 CONTRIBUTION TO NEW EXPLANATIONS OF THE EXISTING EMO THEORIES

- a. The findings enrich extant EMO theories and contribute to entrepreneurial marketing practices in developed and emerging economies. Moreover, the study contributed new explanations to the existing theories that address a pressing concern of the underperformance of youth entrepreneurs and set forth a comprehensive framework to enhance their success. Due to contradictory a-priori findings, this research established the strengths of the relationships between EMO dimensions and YEP.
- b. The study further determines the influence of integrating the EMO dimensions and examines their relationship with YEP. Both the descriptive and inferential analysis findings generally had high levels that indicate that all the EMO dimensions are apparent within YEP. The results may lead to the development of a new and complex

theoretical framework that can be used to explain the phenomena (as shown in Figure 6).

6.4.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Development of practical skills: Entrepreneurship is a skill-based subject. Although the results of this study concurred with Al-Lawati (2017) that knowledge of the business (KoB) is influential in entrepreneurial success, this study proves that KoB alone is not enough for sustainable entrepreneurial performance. Therefore, to run successful businesses, youth entrepreneurs should have other notable skills like managerial competencies (Popescu, 2020) and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurial efficacy (Phetha, 2022). To a greater extent, Botswana's youth entrepreneurs were found lacking in some of these skills. Thus, the study recommends grassroots entrepreneurial education to develop and improve these practical skills with time. The study exposes a lack of entrepreneurial knowledge and management skills vital for YEP.

6.4.5 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Employment creation through integrating the EMO dimensions improves entrepreneurial performance: The study acknowledges a plethora of challenges experienced by youth entrepreneurs, such as unfavourable government policies and low technology uptake. This research suggests that most youth entrepreneurial ventures are owner-run businesses with only ten or fewer employees. This implies an insignificant contribution to the economy's employment creation problem. The study recommends adopting and integrating EMO dimensions to improve entrepreneurial performance. Ultimately, more entrepreneurial activity may improve industry and market activities, creating jobs to progress economic stability, growth, innovation, and overall prosperity (Christopher et al., 2021). So far, this study corroborates other scholars' belief (Banha, 2022; Boldureanu, 2020; de O Silva et al., 2024; Thomas, 2023; Quatraro & Vivarelli, 2015) that entrepreneurship studies are one of the major drivers of job creation where micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) increase employment opportunities. The study further supports that entrepreneurial activities often bring innovative products, services, or technologies that stimulate economic growth by increasing the overall productivity of an economy. The nation's overall prosperity is brought by successful entrepreneurs who either accumulate wealth through their ventures, reinvest in new

entrepreneurial endeavours or use their resources to support other businesses and industries. All these activities may lead to increased investments and improve the economy.

6.4.6 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Reduce the knowledge-to-action gap: Findings from this study show that even though the majority of young entrepreneurs are tertiary graduates, there is a wide knowledge-to-action gap in the resultant entrepreneurial performance. Implications from this study are to ensure that valuable knowledge and research findings have a meaningful impact on real-world practices and outcomes. This research recommends proactive collaborations between youth entrepreneurs and institutions of education to apply the knowledge and improve entrepreneurial skills needed for tangible firm performance. The thesis puts forward that teaching applied entrepreneurship knowledge improves entrepreneurial performance and addresses societal issues like community development, poverty alleviation, income inequalities, and other social justice issues that may be directly affecting local communities.

The study recommends collaborative approaches between the government and private sector to foster practical entrepreneurial activities that impart the relevant skills. Recommendations are for mutually beneficial strategic partnerships between the industry and start-up firms. The study's invaluable contributions extend beyond statistical significance, revealing a blueprint for enhancing youth entrepreneurial success. This research equips policymakers, educators, and practitioners with actionable insights to foster thriving youth entrepreneurship by identifying critical mediating factors and introducing novel perspectives on EMO integration.

6.4.7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Findings from this research can influence the development, implementation, and evaluation of entrepreneurship policies. Although Botswana has several policies that support entrepreneurship development, an entrepreneurship policy approach that coordinates several private and public sector bodies is needed (Eddin & Thomas, 2018). This research provides the necessary youth entrepreneurship information and evidence for policymakers to effectively address societal issues and make informed decisions that benefit the public and society.

6.5 LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This section discusses the limitations of this study and suggests areas for future research. The limitations of this study highlight the constraints within which this research was conducted. These constraints are necessary to reduce erroneous results as they provide a scope and framework to understand the potential improvements in the field of EMO and YEP. These considerations may help future EMO researchers identify gaps in existing knowledge and suggest directions for further investigation.

Due to limited resources, such as budgetary constraints of being a student study, this research was geographically limited to the Greater Gaborone COVID Zone. To reduce compromises brought by resource constraints, further studies are encouraged to collaborate with others and complement research capabilities to cover broader geographic areas.

The limited period to complete this thesis in three years (2022-2024) restricted the depth and breadth of this research. Future studies may consider longitudinal research to fully understand YEP over longer periods.

Sample size limitations confined the research to only 417 youth entrepreneurs in Botswana between 18 and 35. This limited sample size could have compromised external validity and the generalizability of the results to the entire entrepreneurship population (Adam, 2020; Lakens, 2022; Mahendran et al., 2022). To reduce this sample size bias and produce more accurate results, further studies with larger sampling units are encouraged. The limitation to only youth entrepreneurs might have affected external validity, where the results would be less applicable to other populations. To avoid this limited applicability of the research findings, future studies may be conducted on all age categories of entrepreneurs.

Data collection limitations delayed the fieldwork process when the researcher encountered difficulties tracing and accessing the YDF beneficiaries. The defaulting YDF beneficiaries played truant when called for survey appointments. The revolving fund defaulters suspected that the researcher was a sheriff decoying as an academic. Ethical concerns might have been compromised when the researcher devised tactics to pretend to be a customer when setting appointments. Then, only personally announce the purpose of conducting an academic survey at the meeting place with the youth entrepreneurs before they commence

the survey. Such deceptive practices could be avoided in future studies. Future researchers may explore and develop improved data collection techniques or measurement tools.

Measurement instrument limitations constrained participants to select only one choice from the provided five-point Likert scale answers. Future studies are encouraged to use flexible measurement instruments that gather detailed answers.

The study narrows its theoretical scope to only three EMO dimensions, namely, market orientation (MO), customer orientation (CO) and entrepreneurial orientation (EO), yet many other dimensions can be considered (Tendai et al., 2019). Future studies may use more dimensions.

Conclusions were only drawn to explore the consensus on the EMO dimensions and their relationship with YEP, using only the three mediating variables (KoB, MS, and OS); however, other mediator variables can be considered. More confounding variables may be considered in future studies to improve the accuracy of the conclusions.

There were limitations in the theoretical demarcation that only focused the research on the identified research objectives and purpose of the study. Future studies may devise more research objectives to cover a wide theoretical scope.

Lastly, the study was limited to using a quantitative methodology that uses statistical data collection, emphasizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This compromised reliability or validity. To mitigate the compromise, a mixed methodology may be considered to understand the youth entrepreneurs' perceptions better.

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APPENDICES



Appendix A

PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER TO THE YOUTH COMPANIES

.....

Date;

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request to conduct research and collect data from your organization

My name is Paul T. Guruwo, a PhD (Management) research candidate at the Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management in South Africa (Student Number 1439073). I kindly seek your permission to conduct research on your company management and employees as part of the requirements of my studies. This research used adult respondents of 18 years and above to guard against the use of vulnerable groups like children.

The researcher administered questionnaires that sought to examine the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The purpose of the study emanates from the problem of the high youth entrepreneurship failure rate in Botswana and poor YEP, which hampers employment creation and contribution to economic development. Recommendations from the study are anticipated to be vital to crafting winning entrepreneurial strategies that overcome performance challenges.

Assurance is that information gathered will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. No specific company information or participant's identities will be reported but generalized themes will be used to establish a framework of entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance.

Yours Sincerely

Paul T. Guruwo

PhD Candidate (Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management)

1439073@students.wits.ac.za; +267 76 568 468



Appendix B

PERMISSION REQUEST TO THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, GENDER, SPORT, AND CULTURE

The Permanent Secretary (Policy and Development Research Division)

Ministry of Youth, Gender, Sport, and Culture

Plot 54372, Central Business District

GABORONE, Botswana

01 March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request to conduct research and collect data from youth entrepreneurs

My name is Paul T. Guruwo, a PhD (Management) research candidate of the Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management in South Africa (Student Number 1439073). I kindly seek your permission to conduct research and collect data through questionnaire surveys from youth entrepreneurs, their management, and employees as part of the requirements of my studies. All respondents of this research will be adults of 18 years and above to guard against the use of vulnerable groups like children.

The study seeks to examine the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The purpose of the study emanates from the problem of the scourge of high youth entrepreneurship failure rate in Botswana and poor YEP which hampers employment creation and contribution to economic development. Recommendations from the study are thought to be vital to craft winning entrepreneurial strategies that overcome performance challenges.

Assurance is that information gathered will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. No specific company information or participant's identities will be reported but generalized themes will be used to establish a framework of entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this regard.

Yours Sincerely

Paul T. Guruwo

PhD Candidate (Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management)

1439073@students.wits.ac.za; guruwopt@gmail.com +267 76 568 468/ +267 75 904 060

PERMISSION REQUEST TO THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE, AND TECHNOLOGY

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Communications, Knowledge, and Technology
The Department of Research Science and Technology (DRST)
Private Bag BR 279
GABORONE, Botswana
01 March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request to conduct research and collect data from youth entrepreneurs

My name is Paul T. Guruwo, a PhD (Management) research candidate of the Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management in South Africa (Student Number 1439073). I kindly seek your permission to conduct research and collect data through questionnaire surveys from youth entrepreneurs, their management, and employees as part of the requirements of my studies. All respondents of this research will be adults of 18 years and above to guard against the use of vulnerable groups like children.

I am conducting a study which seeks to examine the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The purpose of the study emanates from the problem of the scourge of high youth entrepreneurship failure rate in Botswana and poor YEP which hampers employment creation and contribution to economic development. Recommendations from the study are thought to be vital to craft winning entrepreneurial strategies.

Assurance is that information gathered will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. No specific company information or participant's identities will be reported but generalized themes will be used to establish a framework of entrepreneurial marketing orientation and youth entrepreneurial performance.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this regard.

Yours Sincerely

Paul T. Guruwo

PhD Candidate (Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management)

1439073@students.wits.ac.za; guruwopt@gmail.com +267 76 568 468/ +267 75 904 060

Appendix D

DISTRICT COORDINATORS REQUESTS-YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND BENEFICIARY LIST

Plot 37830 Odi Crescent, Block 6
Gaborone
Botswana,

The Principal Programme Officer 1
Tlokweng Sub-District Council
Ministry of Youth, Gender, Sport, and Culture
Private Bag TO5, Tlokweng,
GABORONE, Botswana.

12 April 2023,

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request for list of districts Youth Development Funded (YDF) beneficiaries:

Your assistance is being sought to provide a list of YDF beneficiaries within your district. The beneficiaries are to be used as research respondents for a PhD study being undertaken by Paul T. Guruwo who works as a Senior Lecturer in the Entrepreneurship Department at BA ISAGO University (BIU) and is also a PhD (Management) student at Wits Business School (WBS) with a thesis titled: **Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation Adoption and Youth Entrepreneurial Performance: Examining the Mediation Factors**.

The above-mentioned student has research ethics clearance permits with references below:

4. Wits Human Resources Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) Clearance Certificate with Protocol Number: H23/01/07 dated 05 April 2023,
5. Ministry of Entrepreneurship being represented by the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology via The Department of Research Science and Technology: Ref MCKT 1/11/1 I (39) dated 28 March 2023.
6. Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Gender, Sport, and Culture Development: Ref: MYSC 9/1/1 dated 07 March 2023.

Your cooperation in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely



Paul T. Guruwo

PhD Candidate (Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management)
1439073@students.wits.ac.za; guruwopt@gmail.com +267 76 568 468/ +267 75 904 060

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (PIS)

Dear Sir / Madam,

My name is Paul Tarisayi Guruwo. I am a PhD (Management) student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My supervisor is Professor Fanny Saruchera. I am conducting a research study about the mediating effect of knowledge of business (KoB), managerial skills (MS) and organizational structure (OS) on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The study title is: Entrepreneurial marketing orientation adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance: Examining the mediating factors.

I invite you and request your commitment to take part in this research by completing the Likert scale questionnaire provided. In each case, select the choice that best meets your opinion. If you decide to take part, your participation in this research study, it should be because you want to volunteer and will last about half an hour. The research seeks fair and just treatment of respondents through voluntarism. You do not necessarily have to take part if you feel like not participating. You may stop being in the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. Respondents are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and any data collected on such a withdrawn participant will in default be destroyed, unless the person specifically consents to its retention. The questionnaire survey will take place at your work premises from March 2023-June 2023 at a time agreed upon by your human resource management.

During the research activity, I will need to ask for some of your personal information that includes your age, gender, and standard of qualification relevant to the business. Data from the survey will be treated with high confidentiality and anonymity. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you. Respondents' identities will be encrypted to conceal the true meanings and victimization. Assurance is that no individual is identified by name in any report or publication arising out of the study. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this research study, but your name and any personal information will not be used or passed on. The data will be generalised and used for teaching purposes with identities of respondents and organizations concealed.

Data protection from unauthorized users is through user restricted permissions with password security on both the computers and backup storage drives. After the study, data with any participant identifying features will be coded and kept for two years then deleted after five years to prevent misuse. Only Paul Tarisayi Guruwo will have access to the research data.

You will not get any direct or immediate benefit if you choose to join the research study. You will not lose any services, benefits, or rights you would normally have if you decided not to join. Taking part in the research study will not cost you anything in terms of data purchase costs or travel costs. You will not be paid for being in this research study.

The risks for this research study are no more than what happens in everyday life. The research guards against this minimal risk through requesting respondents to maintain strict confidentiality on their answers. Respondents are guaranteed that their responses will not be shared with their employer and may not be traced back to individuals. Only the findings and recommendations of the study may be shared upon request since these may positively benefit both the respondents and the organization's performance.

This research study will be written up as a research report. The report will be available on the university library website. If you would like to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you upon request.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research study, feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Tarisayi Guruwo

Researcher : Paul Tarisayi Guruwo, 1439073@wits.students.ac.za

Cell phone number : +267 76 568 468 /+267 75 904 060

Research Supervisor : Professor Fanny Saruchera, fanny.saruchera@wits.ac.za

Wits phone number : +27 11 717 3787

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of project: Entrepreneurial marketing orientation adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance: Examining the mediating factors.

Name of researcher: Paul Tarisayi Guruwo, WBS Candidate number: 1439073

I, ..., of company agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below)

The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.	YES	NO

I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the study	YES	NO

I agree that direct quotations from my completed questionnaire may be used by the Paul T. Guruwo in their research report	YES	NO

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name or other identifying data will not be used by Paul T. Guruwo in their research report	YES	NO

I agree that other researchers apart from Paul T. Guruwo may use the information I provide in my completed questionnaire (depending on their own ethics clearance being obtained) but my name and any personal information will not be used or passed on	YES	NO

Signature of the participant :

Name of participant :

Date :

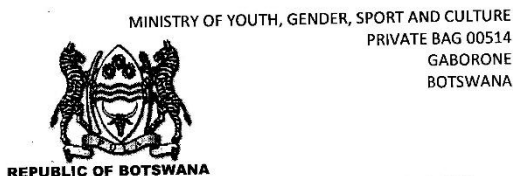
Signature of the researcher :

Name of researcher/person seeking consent : Paul Tarisayi Guruwo

Date : 01 March 2023

PERMIT FROM THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH, GENDER, SPORT, AND CULTURE

TEL: (+267) 3901186
FAX: (+267) 3913473



REF: MYSC 9/1/1

07 March 2023

Mr. Paul Guruwo
Plot 37830, Block 6
Gaborone, Botswana

RESEARCH PERMIT- PAUL GURUWO

This serves to acknowledge your application to do research titled **"Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation Adoption & Youth Entrepreneurship Performance: Examining the Mediating Factors"** The Permit is granted for a period of Twelve (12) Months, commencing 07 March 2023 to the 31 March 2024 and is granted under the following conditions:

1. Copies of the final product of the study are to be directly deposited with the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sport and Culture Development, National Library Services, National Archives and Records Services and Office of Research and Development Unit in the University of Botswana.
2. The Permit does not give you authority to enter premises, private establishment or protected areas. Permission for such areas should be negotiated with those concerned.
3. Failure to comply with any of the above conditions will result in the immediate cancellation of the Permit.
4. The permit holder is required to adhere to the Covid-19 health protocols at all the time.

Thank you

Yours Faithfully

Tsaone K. Ramatlhare

For/Permanent Secretary



Cc: Director, National Archives and Records Services
National Librarian, National Library Services
Director, Office of Research and Development, University of Botswana



**PERMIT FROM THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**

Telephone: +267 3612000

Fax: +267 3914261

Toll free line: 17779



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

Ministry of Communications,
Knowledge and Technology
Private Bag 00414
Gaborone
Botswana

REF: MCKT 1/11/11 (39)

28 March 2023

Mr Paul Tarisayi Guruwo
Plot 37830, Block 6
Odi Crescent
Gaborone

Dear Sir,

**Application For Research Permit - Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation
Adoption and Youth Entrepreneurship Performance: Examining the Mediating
Factors**

Your application for Research Permit for the proposed research titled: **'Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation Adoption and youth entrepreneurship performance: Examining the mediating factors'** has been granted. The permit is valid for one (1) year. You are kindly advised to peruse section 4.4 to 5.0 of the 'Guidelines for Application for Research Permit' in Botswana.

Any changes in the proposed research should be communicated, without fail, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology citing above reference. You are further advised to deposit the final report with the Department of Research Science and Technology or Department of National Archives and Records Services.

By copy of this letter, the Director of Research Science and Technology is advised to take note of this development and ensure that deliverables to government are timely met.

Yours faithfully

Lesego M. Thamae

For/Acting Permanent Secretary

CC: Director of Research Science and Technology





Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

R14/49 Guruwo

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE PROTOCOL NUMBER: H23/01/7

PROJECT TITLE

Entrepreneurial marketing orientation
adoption and youth entrepreneurship
performance: Examining the mediating
factors

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Mr. P Guruwo

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

Wits Business School/

DATE CONSIDERED

27 January 2023

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved
Risk Level: Minimal

EXPIRY DATE

06 March 2026

DATE 05 April 2023

CHAIRPERSON

(Professor J Watermeyer)

cc: Supervisor: Dr F Saruchera

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and A SIGNED COPY returned to the Secretary electronically. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee. I/we agree to the completion of a regular progress report. For Minimal and Low Risk studies, this is due annually on 31 December. For Medium and High-Risk studies, this is due twice annually on 30 June and 31 December.

Signature

07/ 04/ 2023
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

I am Paul T. Guruwo a PhD research candidate of the Wits Business School, Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management (Student Number 1439073). I seek your assistance to complete this questionnaire which; Examines the mediating effect of KoB, MS, or OS on the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) adoption and youth entrepreneurial performance (YEP). The study is aims to improve YEP, and support employment creation needed worldwide. Assurance is that information gathered is treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. By continuing, you consent to participate in this survey. Therefore, please provide honest and unbiased responses. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Section A

Fill in the below blank spaces and /or indicate your option in the boxes provided.

Company's Background

1. Sector of youth entrepreneurship business offered by your company;

Manufacturing	☐	(Specify)
Service Provision	☐	(Specify)
Agriculture	☐	(Specify)
Retailing	☐	(Specify)
Other	☐	(Specify)
2. How long has the business been operating (in years)?

0-2	☐	3-5	☐	6 and above	☐	(Specify year of establishment).....
3. Number of full-time employees; 1-10 ☐ 11-20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ Above 31 ☐
4. Company's total current asset value in thousands of US dollars (Rate \$1; P13.5);

0-10k	☐	11-20k	☐	21-30k	☐	31 and above	☐	(Specify).....
5. Indicate the annual growth rate of the business in sales/assets (%);

0-10%	☐	11-20%	☐	21-30%	☐	31% and above	☐	(Specify).....

Respondent's Background

6. Gender; Male ☐ Female ☐ Unspecified ☐
7. Age in years; 18-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46 and above ☐
8. Standard of qualification most relevant to the business:

Tertiary Certificate	☐	Tertiary Diploma	☐	Undergraduate Degree	☐
Master's Degree	☐	Self-taught & Passion	☐	Industry Experience	☐
9. Employment grade; Employee ☐ Management ☐ Owner ☐

☐ Other (Specify).....

Section B

Entrepreneurial Marketing Orientation (EMO) dimensions measurement

Tick the preferred response box against each question.										
EMO#1	MARKET ORIENTATION									
Factor 1.1	Market Intelligence	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
MI1	We monitor changing consumer behaviour, technological advancements to stay current on market demand.									
MI2	We conduct market research, surveys, social media analytics, and industry news to make informed business decisions.									
MI3	We monitor competitor's actions to keep abreast with rivalry pressures.									
Factor 1.2	Opportunity Detection	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
OD1	We are good at identifying new trends and opportunities in the market.									
OD2	We are known for our agility (i.e., flexibility) in adjusting our market offerings to exploit emerging opportunities									
OD3	The company looks beyond current customers and markets for more prospects.									
Factor 1.3	Resource Leveraging	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
RL1	We use creative approaches to make things happen and try to do more with less.									
RL2	We collaborate with our partners to maximize the productivity of our collective resources.									
RL3	The company leverage resources by bartering or sharing.									
Factor 1.4	Networks and Relationships	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
NR1	We use networking and/or regularly visit other firms in the industry to exchange favours and acquire new knowledge.									
NR2	Our marketing decisions are based on information exchanged with those in our personal and professional networks.									
NR3	The company uses advice from key industry friends and partners to develop and market our products/ service.									
Factor 1.5	Coordination between Departments	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
CBD1	I pass on informal information from other organizations that might be important to my workmates and my company.									
CBD2	Job tasks, roles, procedures and responsibilities are explicitly defined and formalised in each workstation.									
CBD3	The company consistently shares customer information across all business functions.									
EMO#2	CUSTOMER ORIENTATION DIMENSION MEASUREMENT									
Factor 2.1	Responsiveness towards Customers	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
RTC1	The company acts very quickly on customer comments and complaints.									
RTC2	The company continuously discovers additional customer needs which they are not aware of yet.									
RTC3	Customers are involved in setting service standards.									
Factor 2.2	Value Creation	1-Strongly disagree	2-Disagree	3-Neutral	4-Agree	5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4
VC1	The company does excellent jobs and customer service to create great consumer value									
VC2	The company considers it very important to providing great customer value.									

VC3	We analyse customer satisfaction levels to align with customer needs and preferences.					
Factor 2.3	Customer Relationship Management 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
CRM1	There is an increase in visits and orders made per customer.					
CRM2	The company is experiencing repeat business and showing customer retention.					
CRM3	The company is experiencing increases in customer referrals.					
Factor 2.4	Communication with the Customers 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
CC1	The company actively solicits customer comments through feedback forms and reviews.					
CC2	There are multiple channels to reach customers and vice versa.					
CC3	We track progress and provide feedback on customer orders.					
EMO#3	ENTREPRENEURIAL ORIENTATION DIMENSION MEASUREMENT					
Factor 3.1	Pro-activeness 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
PR1	We constantly lookout for new ways to improve the ways things are done in my company.					
PR2	The company anticipates latent customer needs and suggests new products/ services to satisfy those needs.					
PR3	We are early adapters who accept new ideas and act ahead of competitors.					
Factor 3.2	Innovativeness 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
IN1	I always look for alternative ways to improve products and services in the company.					
IN2	My company's work atmosphere encourages creative and innovative ideas and solutions.					
IN3	My company tries to use inventive approaches if it helps get the job done more efficiently.					
Factor 3.3	Competitive Aggressiveness 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
CA1	The company often seek a market share position at the expense of cash flow and profitability.					
CA2	Our products/ services are unique and offer greater customer value and benefits than those of competitors.					
CA3	We maintain close lead customer contacts and try to recognize customer's benefits and their needs before competitors.					
Factor 3.4	Calculated risk-taking 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
CRT1	Our business would rather accept the risk to pursue an opportunity than miss it altogether.					
CRT2	The business is more flexible than competitors in dealing with market uncertainty.					
CRT3	Management take risks on decision they think will benefit the company.					
Factor 3.5	Entrepreneurial Autonomy 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
EA1	I can make decisions for the business without consulting anyone else.					
EA2	I can make business decisions without fear of negative consequences from others.					
EA3	We are self-motivated to remain engaged in our work without being micromanaged.					
	MEDIATOR VARIABLES (INTERNAL EMO DIMENSION MEASUREMENT)					
Factor 4.1	Knowledge of business 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
KoB1	The company maintains books of records about the business operations					

KoB2	We match technical skills of staff from other companies.					
KoB3	I have vast technical expertise about this business sector.					
Factor 4.2	Managerial Skills 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
MS1	I can prioritize tasks and manage time effectively.					
MS2	I am able to recognize and utilize individual team members' strengths to create customer value					
MS3	Managers have high level of entrepreneurship knowledge					
Factor 4.3	Organisational Structure 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
OS1	The company has clear coordination of tasks and processes to effectively serve customers' needs.					
OS2	Company duties are standardized and documented in each workstation.					
OS3	There are clear and formalized communication channels within the firm.					
YEP	YOUTH ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE					
Factor 6.1	Growth of the Company 1-Strongly disagree 2-Disagree 3-Neutral 4-Agree 5-Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5
YEP1	Sales revenue improved noticeably from the previous financial periods.					
YEP2	Total company assets have greatly improved over the past two years.					
YEP3	Our company developed new products/ services over the past three years.					
YEP4	Our company has better company assets than those of competitors.					
YEP5	The overall performance of our company is higher than that of competitors.					
YEP6	Performance results are widely shared, posted prominently, and updated.					
YEP7	Management are usually satisfied with the company's return on investment (ROI).					

Thank you for your participation

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH ETHICS CERTIFICATE



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Certificat de formation - Training Certificate

Ce document atteste que - this document certifies that



Paul T Guruwo

a complété avec succès - has successfully completed

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du programme de formation TRREE en évaluation éthique de la recherche
of the TRREE training programme in research ethics evaluation

Release Date: 2022/11/10
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EDITING CONFIRMATION

To whom it may concern:

This memo serves to confirm that the manuscript/research project detailed below has been language-edited and/or proof-read.

Regards,

-SM001-

SM (Cert. Lang. Ed.)
Language Editor

Manuscript Title:

ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION ADOPTION AND YOUTH
ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING FACTORS

Author:

PAUL T. GURUWO

Issued on:

25/02/2024

Disclaimer:

The editors/proofreaders make(s) no claim as to the accuracy of the manuscript contents nor the objectives of the author. While all possible efforts have been made to ensure the text as edited is readable and grammatically correct, the author(s) have the option to accept or reject suggestions and trackable changes made to the document before submission.

sarchcot@gmail.com

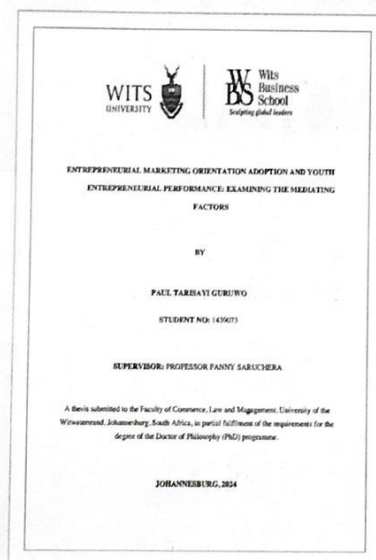


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**ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING ORIENTATION ADOPTION AND YOUTH
ENTREPRENEURIAL PERFORMANCE: EXAMINING THE MEDIATING
FACTORS**

BY

PAUL TARISAYI GURUWO

STUDENT NO: 1439073

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR FANNY SARUCHERA

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme.

JOHANNESBURG, 2024

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