

https://dspace.org/

A case study on the critical success factors in implementing the Lean Start-up Methodology in developing digital innovation start-ups

Mukwawaya, George Fungai

2020
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/31234

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/



A case study on the critical success factors in implementing the Lean Start-up Methodology in developing digital innovation start-ups.

George Fungai Mukwawaya

Student number: 582314

School of Mechanical, Industrial and Aeronautical Engineering

University of the Witwatersrand

Johannesburg, South Africa

Supervisor:

Dr. Bruno Emwanu

A research dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Engineering.

11 October 2020

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the critical success factors of the Lean Startup Methodology (LSM) in digital innovation space as the research question on which the study is hinged. The applicability of LSM to different business ideas in the same space is also investigated. As the methodology is relatively new to the local market, there is interest also to investigate how well understood and appreciated the methodology is in South Africa.

To address the aforementioned question the research was conducted in a local digital innovation centre, an incubation facility. The entrepreneurial development initiative brought entrepreneurs onboard for a yearlong LSM mentorship from idea to minimum viable product. The qualitative research methodology entailed observing the LSM classroom sessions at the incubation centre which was the primary delivery model of the methodology to the entrepreneurs. At the end of the classroom engagements, 5 startups and 5 LSM facilitators were interviewed after obtaining formal consent. Startup team interviews were conducted as focus groups. The facilitators participated in one-on-one interviews. A total of 16 participants from the incubation program consented to taking part in the study. The resulting qualitative data were analysed using thematic content analysis to extract valuable insights and derive a model of critical success factors for LSM in digital innovation space.

The study concludes that the critical success factors for LSM in the digital innovation space lie in the following themes: Validated Learning, Entrepreneur Traits, Quality of Business Idea, Build-Measure-Learn loop, and Management. Results show that LSM is equally applicable to all of the studied digital innovation business ideas and no limitations were found. The appreciation and understanding of the methodology in South Africa remain limited. Building on the findings, the study comes up with recommendations on how an incubator can maximise the quality of the overall LSM program for digital entrepreneurs.

For entrepreneurs to fully capitalise LSM in validating business models, an awareness of the critical success factors is important. Deep knowledge of the methodology is recommended to fully utilise the tools at the disposal of the LSM practitioner.