



THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TRAINING ON YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUCCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF THE GAUTENG PROVINCE

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Abstract:

The development of youth-owned businesses is one of the key drivers of economic growth, innovation and job creation in developing countries. Business Development Support (BDS) is one vehicle that has been used in South Africa to achieve this by capacitating entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge for venture creation. This study investigates the impact of BDS training on the success of youth entrepreneurship success and the level of adequacy of the training youth receives from BDS providers. The quantitative cross-sectional design study used a survey to collect data from 494 young entrepreneurs enrolled on the BDS programme in the Gauteng province, South Africa. The study's findings showed that BDS training positively impacts entrepreneurship success through financial and non-financial training programmes such as marketing, innovation, risk-taking and management skills. However, it was interesting to note that non-financial training had a more significant impact than a financial training programme on the entrepreneurship success for youth entrepreneurs. Moreover, entrepreneurs viewed the adequacy of training received from BDS differently when analysed across demographics. The study concludes that BDS providers should focus more on providing the youth with non-financial training, which seems to have a bigger impact. It is evident that non-financial training will enhance their innovation, marketing, risk-taking and management skills seeing that this is how non-financial training was operationalised. This study recommends that when designing programs for the youth consideration should be taken on the level of education, management and owner experience, and the age of the business, as the needs seem to be according to these demographics.

Keywords: *Human Capital; Youth Entrepreneurship; Business Development Support; Entrepreneurship success; Entrepreneurship; BDS Training; Financial training; Non-financial training*

1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa faces high levels of youth unemployment, which is a key demographic group that is critical for the future development of any economy (Oseifuah & Rugimbana, 2010). Youth entrepreneurship has the potential to integrate the youth into the job market and drive innovation within the space of entrepreneurship and is one of

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the ways for addressing youth unemployment (Adams & Quagranie, 2018). Unger, Rauch, Frese and Rosenbusch (2011:343) define human capital as skills and knowledge that individuals acquire through investments in schooling, on-the-job training and other types of experience. They further indicate that human capital covers a broad spectrum that includes formal education, employment, training, start-up and owner experience, parents' background, skills, and knowledge. Unger et al. (2011:341) further stated that:

“human capital increases owners' capabilities of discovering and exploiting business opportunities. In addition, human capital helps owners acquire other utilitarian resources such as financial and physical capital, and it assists in accumulating new knowledge and skills”.

Marvel, Davis and Sproul (2016) state that the term human capital embraces educational investment and prior knowledge which enhance the ability to exploit new ideas and ventures, making decisions about existing ventures, and accumulating relevant knowledge. In addition, Venter and Urban (2017) describe human capital as knowledge and skills acquired, inclusive of experience, that increases cognitive ability which in turn enables the ability to exploit an opportunity. Unger et al. (2011) highlight the need for further research on human capital to include greater understanding on how new owners come up with ideas to explore and exploit business opportunities. However, the drive for youth employment through new venture creation is limited by the lack of human capital, among most of the youth (Khumalo & Mutobola, 2014).

The primary goal of the Integrated Small Business strategy adopted by the South African government in 2005 was to promote and encourage the growth of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), entrepreneurship, creation of an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, and enhancement of competitiveness and capabilities of existing enterprises. Furthermore, the policy had multi-pronged objectives which included the expansion of education and training for small businesses (Mathibe & Zyl, 2011). Despite these interventions, the SMME sector continues to experience high mortality rates as they fail to grow and create the necessary employment previously envisaged by the government (Masutha & Rogerson, 2014a). Subsequent multiple private and public interventions that include Businesses Development Support (BDS) programmes and support mechanisms have been implemented to mitigate the challenges faced by SMMEs (Mathibe & Zyl, 2011). In addition, BDS organisations focusing on supporting and providing business training services to newly formed and established small businesses at strategic and operational levels were created (Khoase, Mutinta & MacArthur, 2018).

This study evaluates the adequacy of training provided by BDS providers and the impact this training has on youth entrepreneurship success among youth entrepreneurs who completed BDS training in the Gauteng province, South Africa. It is critical to understand whether BDS providers are succeeding in developing the youth and preparing them to run successful enterprises. This study focuses on human capital development and its impact on youth entrepreneurship success.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Youth Entrepreneurship

The United Nations (UN) defines youth as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 years, while the Commonwealth considers ages 15 to 29 years as youth (Adams & Quagranie, 2018). In South Africa, the categorisation of the youth is between 15 and 35 years of age, and those aged 15 years and above are permitted to enter the labour force (Oseifuah & Rugimbana, 2010). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor defined youth entrepreneurs as those in any population aged 18 to 34 years (Schøtt, Kew, & Cheraghi, 2015). For purposes of this study, youth entrepreneurs are defined as those young men and women between the ages of 18 and 35 years, who resided in rural or urban areas, and run their own enterprises (DTI, 2013).

The highest prevalence of entrepreneurship activity in South Africa is among the youth, with over 20% of SMMEs owned by individuals who are below 35 years of age (SEDA, 2018). Rajasekaran, Chinnathai, & Ramadevi (2015) reported that the focus on youth entrepreneurship is a deliberate mechanism for alleviating youth unemployment to ensure that young people participate in creating new businesses as a means of creating self-employment. Furthermore, the initiative builds capacity for youths to create jobs that align with innovative and dynamic business environments (Holiienka, Pilková, & Jančovičová, 2016). A survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (2018), showed that youth unemployment in South Africa was at 38.2%. The government has tried multiple interventions to promote and ensure youth employment through entrepreneurship interventions such as incubation facilities, youth entrepreneurship education, and tax relief for small businesses (Mohutsiwa, 2012). Ceptureanu and Ceptureanu

(2015) report that in Europe, youth unemployment is estimated at 21%, and governments are in a panic because of the risk of youth disengagement from the mainstream economy and are crafting new policies and funding initiatives aimed at youth entrepreneurship. Rajasekaran et al. (2015) indicated that in India of the 300 million youth in need of employment, the government could only secure 100 million jobs leaving the system with a 200-million job deficit. This creates a crisis that cannot be easily resolved, and the Indian government is continuously creating opportunities for youth entrepreneurship. This shows that youth unemployment is not only a South African challenge but rather a global one. However, South Africa has one of the highest and growing youth unemployment levels in the developing world.

Success in youth entrepreneurship requires the necessary skills, ideas, and personality traits which most young people lack (Ceptureanu & Ceptureanu, 2015). This places greater significance on entrepreneurial education which focuses on skills and knowledge development among the youth to shift their mind-sets towards thinking entrepreneurially (Rajasekaran et al., 2015).

2.2 Human Capital

Human capital refers to a set of skills and knowledge that an individual would utilise in performing a set task, and based on those skills, an expectation of success is attached (Dimov, 2017). Human capital can be categorised in general and specific terms, where the former refers to education and overall practical experience and the latter to education and experience concerning a particular activity or context (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). However, Zainol, Al Mamun, Ahmad and Simpong (2018) noted that the true definition of human capital varies. For example, some researchers concentrate on the conceptualisation of areas of interest, such as the long-term survival and sustainability of businesses. According to Cooper et al. (1994) and Unger et al. (2011), human capital incorporates economic activities that are dependent on individual characteristics such as age, gender, education, technical 'know-how' and management that broadens networking and critical problem-solving skill of the entrepreneur. Thus, this study's interest in understanding the role BDS plays towards developing the critical individual characteristics in fostering sustainable youth entrepreneurship success in South Africa.

In contrast, Ucbasaran, Westhead, Wright, and Flores (2010) consider the interplay between characteristics such as parental background, attitudes and entrepreneurial capabilities. While Unger et al. (2011) argue that human capital should be viewed in terms of multiple factors such as formal education, training, employment experience, start-up experience, owner, parent's background, skills, and knowledge, that a person possesses and how these contribute towards decision-making regarding discovery, exploration, and exploitation of an opportunity.

While noting the importance of human capital, Mamabolo, Kerrin and Kele (2017a) argued that the divergent and often contradictory views on the concept impede its development with respect to the specific skills needed by entrepreneurs, thereby restricting the empirical study of entrepreneurship. Dimov (2017) pointed out that although the area of human capital is wide enough, the biggest challenge is to convert the theoretical conceptualisation into specific fields of study that can assist future entrepreneurs. The debate focuses on the actual impact of human capital with some scholars arguing that the presumed impact depends on the human capital dimension under scrutiny rather than the general human capital propositions. In contrast, some empirical studies have found weak to non-existent correlations between human capital and entrepreneurship and where some relationship has been proposed, the extent of the relationship is debatable (Schwab, 2018). Thus, the need for further empirical studies on the phenomena.

SEDA (2018) indicated that 70% of South African entrepreneurs have matric or lower qualification and also stated that the country is ranked as one of the poorest countries in terms of human capital development. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Report (2009) indicates that in the context of South Africa, entrepreneurs lack management skills which is a consequence of a shortage of business-related training and education. Therefore, human capital is viewed as important in entrepreneurship and SMME growth.

2.3 Entrepreneurship Success

There is no consistent and accepted definition of entrepreneurship success in literature. The entrepreneurial success phenomenon is informed by the implied meaning or context and more times than not, it is understood as a grammatical construct in reference to entrepreneurship (Fisher et al., 2014). Thus, entrepreneurship is understood and defined through the context within which it is found (Fisher et al., 2014).

Entrepreneurship success can be viewed from the individual and organisational levels. Overall and Wise, (2017) state that characteristics of entrepreneurial success at the individual level include aspects such as independence,

persistence, achievement, locus of control, hard work, self-efficacy, and willingness to take risks. While entrepreneurship success at the organisational level is measured through performance indicators such as profit, business growth, owner hours, the number of people employed, return on investment, business goal achievements, and economic success (Fisher, Maritz, & Lobo, 2014). Further entrepreneurship success can be understood in terms of return on investment from activities related to idea generation, venture creation, and continued growth rate in business or the stock market (Limsong, Sambath, Seang & Hong, 2016). Furthermore, successful entrepreneurial businesses are associated with the ability to identify new opportunities embracing activities such as mobilising resources and utilising human capital abilities to create value (Sar, 2017). Thus, entrepreneurship success can be defined as the ability to generate financial returns in the form of profit or generating an actual first sale from a new enterprise (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). For this research, entrepreneurship success is viewed in terms of organisational performance measures, revenue (sales), growth in the number of employees and profit generated by youth entrepreneurs.

2.4 Business Development Support (BDS)

Developing nations have identified BDS as central to developing the entrepreneurial base and reducing small business failure rates (Masutha & Rogerson, 2014a). Thus, BDS has been developed to attend to different challenges such as technology acceleration, business growth, revitalisation of economic sectors and reducing the failure rate of small businesses (Masutha & Rogerson, 2014a). According to Hackett and Dilts (2004), the continued growth and never-ending failure of multiple new ventures in North America since the 1980s spurred an increase in the number of incubators. The justification for incubators was the belief that with increased competition among firms, it was important to incubate small firms to avoid failure until they were self-sustaining and had sustainable business structures (Hackett & Dilts, 2004). According to Msimango-Galawe and Hlatshwayo (2021) there is no convincing evidence that BDS is yielding the desirable outcomes especially reducing the failure rate of SMEs in South Africa. The BDS concept is still in its infancy in South Africa and requires much development and investment from the different stakeholders such as government and big business (Khoase et al., 2018). In 2004, four incubators were launched in South Africa which increased to fifty-one (51) by 2013, with 42 of these having been established through public sector participation and nine (9) through private sector participation (Masutha & Rogerson, 2014a). Of those recorded, thirteen (13) specialised in the manufacturing sector, eight (8) were in the mixed-use industry, seven (7) were in agriculture, five (5) in construction, five (5) in ICT, four (4) in chemicals, four (4) in jewellery, two (2) in small scale mining, and one (1) in bio and life sciences (Masutha & Rogerson, 2014a). In their 2018 report, Catalyst for Growth (C4G) indicated that the number of BDS providers grew from 314 to 442 in Africa, and 59 of these centres were in South Africa (C4G, 2019). It then becomes vital to assess and quantify the impact of the incubators in the SMME space in South Africa.

While new businesses may have valuable and tangible ideas, most lack the resources, skills, and knowledge to ensure that ideas materialise (Khoase & Ndayizigamiye, 2018). New businesses need assistance in terms of business registration, sourcing funding, business training, as well as continuous support from idea inception to completion given that many entrepreneurs rely solely on their own capital and have little business knowledge leading to higher chances of failure (Khoase & Ndayizigamiye, 2018). While several countries have embraced BDS programs to encourage and cultivate entrepreneurship, research on BDS remains limited and fragmented primarily due to the difficulty in collecting longitudinal data to assess SMMEs that are part of BDS programs and compare with those that are not (C4G, 2019).

In South Africa, one of the key foci of BDS is enterprise development, driven primarily by the need for broad-based black economic empowerment (Ntlamelle, 2015). The thrust remains a central tool of government to achieve equality and employment creation through small business development and giving smaller businesses a larger piece of the pie when trading with the State (Ntlamelle, 2015). This policy has forced many corporates to get involved in the development of SMMEs, but this has come with unintended consequences as some do it for only compliance, thus affecting the quality of support given to their beneficiaries. This study looks at the adequacy of support or training and impact thereof.

2.5 BDS training

An organised and coordinated approach is needed to allow small businesses to play a significant role in the economy (Egelsner & Rena, 2013). BDS training influences entrepreneurship by ensuring that new business owners have the necessary skills and knowledge to start new ventures, instil and stimulate entrepreneurship values such as creativity, risk-taking, and independence (Egelsner & Rena, 2013). Furthermore, the ever-changing environment requires small business owners to equip themselves with the necessary skills and knowledge that ensure sustained competitive advantage (Khoase et al., 2018).

Research evidence on entrepreneurial training have found that training programmes, whether customised or generic, are necessary for new venture growth and improving SMME's chances of success (Khoase et al., 2018). Therefore, there is a need for diverse training programs, which focus on different industries (Khoase et al., 2018); especially on key areas of running a business, such as basic accounting, economics, marketing, and cash flow management (Egelsner & Rena, 2013). The role of SMMEs as change agents and contributors to economies is well documented. However, the true value of a small business is far from being realised, primarily because most entrepreneurs are not educated or skilled to run businesses (Egelsner & Rena, 2013; Msimango-Galawe & Hlatshwayo, 2021).

The small business and entrepreneurship training environment in South Africa is highly fragmented, comprising multiple role players, including government agencies such as Youth Development Agency, SEDA, NGOs, community-based organisations, and educational institutions at all levels (Nieman, 2013). The National Small Business Act 1996 paved the way for the White Paper on National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Business by the Department of Trade and Industry in South Africa (Nieman, 2013) that outlined three primary pillars for training. The pillars include modular training relevant to sectors and certain groups, training of trainers, training services and methods, and the role of local business centres as training agencies for small business owners (Nieman, 2013).

Khoase et al. (2018) point out the different schools of thought regarding the impact of training on business performance. They highlight scholarly debates around the impact of the role of government involvement towards creating an environment conducive for business formalisation, growth and survival. However, some scholars argue that entrepreneurship education should focus on entrepreneurs who will act as change agents for the next generation (Nieman, 2013). Further arguing that focusing on existing entrepreneurs is short-sighted, considering that they have benefited from different programmes without any evident impact (Nieman, 2013). This study seeks to understand this more by looking through a BDS lens. This study also argues that BDS plays a significant role towards reducing unemployment levels through developing and empowering youth entrepreneurs, thereby minimising SME failure rate and thus ensuring that the youth remain economically active.

The study is informed by the following hypotheses that investigate two types of BDS training:

- *H1*: There is a positive impact of BDS non-financial training on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.
- *H2*: There is a positive impact of BDS financial training on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.

Financial training is assumed to include performing financial analysis, developing financial systems, controlling costs, organising and maintaining the financial records, managing the financial records, and reading and interpreting financial records. While financial training and or skills include innovation, marketing, management and risk-taking.

3. METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study adopted a cross-sectional design approach to investigate the impact of BDS financial and non-financial training on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng. Cross-sectional designs allow the researcher to collect data at one point in time using self-administered questionnaires for collecting numerical data to measure and quantify the extent of the impact under investigation in a cost-effective manner that allow respondents to complete at their convenience (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

There are 2.3 million entrepreneurs in South Africa, with 34% in the Gauteng province and over 25% of the total are categorised as youth entrepreneurs (SEDA, 2021). The targeted population comprised three thousand (N =3000) youth entrepreneurs registered as BDS beneficiaries on the Catalyst for Growth (C4G) platform in the Gauteng province. The sampling frame included all young entrepreneurs on the Catalyst for Growth (C4G) database as the organisation stores information for BDS service providers and their beneficiaries. Random sampling was used to draw a sample from the sampling frame that gave each young entrepreneur who completed BDS programmes from BDS service providers, registered under the Catalyst for Growth, an opportunity to respond to the questionnaire. The study sample is representative, and the findings are generalisable to the entire population (Cooper & Schindler, 2019). However, 494 responded and completed the survey in full constituting a 16.5% response rate. The general rule of thumb suggests that any sample size greater than 300 is suitable for regression analysis. Alternatively, the study could adopt the ratio approach of 10:1 indicating that 25 items x 10, which is 250, which is an acceptable sample size (Pallant, 2010). Therefore 494 was an adequate sample size for this study.

To ensure that the study complies with ethical requirements, the respondents were informed that the survey was voluntary and that they had the right to terminate at any point during the process. Additionally, they were assured that personal information and contact details were not shared with the researcher as the questionnaire

was distributed by one of the C4G staff members and data shared was anonymised. This was in addition to ethics clearance from the institution's ethics committee that ensured that all ethical processes were adhered to.

3.1 Sample characteristics

The study focused on youth entrepreneurs who were BDS beneficiaries and had their businesses in Gauteng. The South African National Youth Policy 2020 defined youth as those within the South African population ages 15 to 35 years, which is consistent with the African Youth Charter (RSA, 2015).

Table 2 below shows that there were 494 respondents in this study; all had businesses in Gauteng and were below the age of 35 years. The data collected indicated that more respondents (48%) were male than female (42%), while 10% of the respondents were indicated as other. Of the 48 countries measured by the GEM report 2018, 42 countries show a similar representation of male and female entrepreneurs. This is no different in South Africa, where male entrepreneurs are dominant (Singer et al., 2018). Two intervals were used to categorise age: 18 to 25 years and 26 to 35 years. The age group 18 to 25 years constituted 65% of respondents, as expected. Over two-thirds of the respondents possessed a degree of higher qualifications. 75% of respondents were African. Coloured respondents constituted 8%, with White and Indian respondents constituting 6.7% and 6.5%, respectively.

Table 2: Sample Characteristics

DEMOGRAPHICS (N=494)	SUB ELEMENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Gender	Male	237	48.0
	Female	209	42.3
	Other	48	9.7
Age	18-25	170	34.4
	26-35	324	65.6
Education	Did not matriculate	19	3.8
	Matric certificate	36	7.3
	Post-matric certificate	42	8.5
	Diploma	63	12.8
	Degree	142	28.7
	Honours or equivalent	132	26.7
	Masters or equivalent	50	10.1
Race	PhD or equivalent	10	2.0
	White	33	6.7
	African	371	75.1
	Coloured	39	7.9
	Indian	32	6.5
	Asian	15	3.0
	Other	4	0.8

Business experience: Most (92%) of the respondents have been in business for a period of between 1 – 3 and 4 – 6 years, each category just over 40%. Only 1% have been in business for 10 years and more, or for less than 1 year.

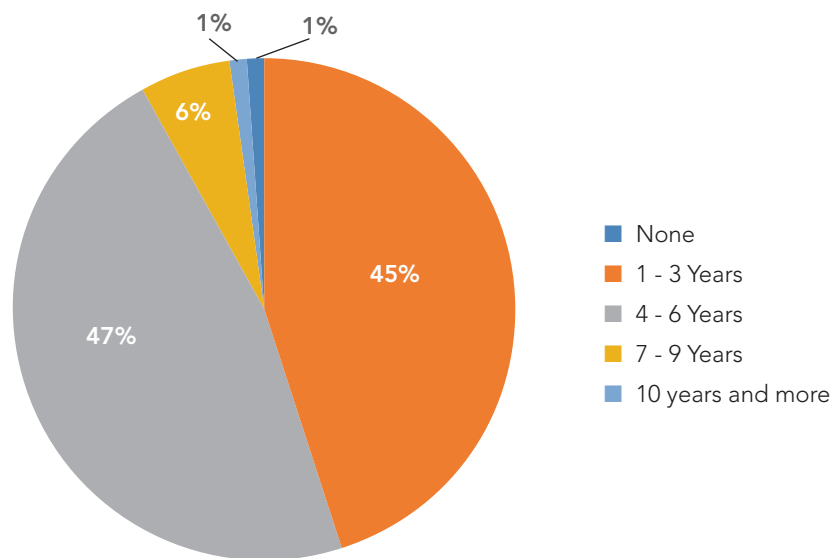


Figure 1: Business Experience

4. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

The objective of the study was to investigate various training programmes provided by BDS to young entrepreneurs in Gauteng and how this training impacts the success (performance) of their enterprises. Further to assessing the training programmes the entrepreneurs deemed their training programmes more adequate for their business growth. BDS training was categorised into financial training (performing financial analysis, developing financial systems, controlling costs, organising and maintaining the financial records, managing the financial records, and reading and interpreting financial records) and non-financial training operationalised as innovation, marketing, management and risk-taking training.

The non-financial training construct had multiple dimensions as suggested by literature, but the factor analysis showed that they are best analysed as one factor or dimension instead of individually. This is because they all loaded onto the non-financial training factor when exploratory factor analysis was conducted to test construct validity. In turn, the financial training component included training in relation to performing financial analysis, developing financial systems, controlling costs, organising and maintaining the financial records, managing the financial records, and reading and interpreting financial records. The third variable in the study was the entrepreneurship success as the dependent variable which included annual revenue, jobs created, annual profits and profit margins.

The results of the multiple linear regression that was conducted showed that BDS training explained 15% of the variation in entrepreneurship success model with R-square = 0.150. Furthermore, the regression model of BDS training as the independent variable was significant in predicting entrepreneurship success since the p-values for F (2, 491) was less than 0.05. Though the variance explained is low, BDS training was significant in explaining the variations in entrepreneurship success. It was then critical to go further and understand in detail how each of these variables impacted entrepreneurship success.

Table 3 below shows the results for financial and non-financial training by BDS on entrepreneurship success. This gives us more understanding on which type of training impacted youth entrepreneurship success the most, and it was the non-financial training (24%) rather than financial training (17%) as expected.

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	UNSTANDARDISED COEFFICIENTS	STANDARDISED COEFFICIENTS	PERCENT	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1. (Constant)	1.090	0.467		2.335	0.020	0.173	2.007
BDS Training - Non Financial	0.411	0.118	0.239	3.479	0.001	0.179	0.644
BDS Training – Financial	0.290	0.118	0.169	2.469	0.014	0.059	0.521

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurship Success

H1: There is a positive impact of BDS non-financial training on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.

The results in Table 3 indicated that BDS non-financial training ($M = 0.239$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) had a significant and positive impact on entrepreneurship success. Therefore, it was concluded that BDS non-financial training positively impacted youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.

H2: There is a positive impact of BDS financial training on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.

The results in Table 3 further indicated that BDS financial training ($M = 0.169$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) had a significant and positive impact on entrepreneurship success. Therefore, it was concluded that BDS financial training had a positive and significant impact on youth entrepreneurship success in Gauteng.

In conclusion, both financial and non-financial BDS training had a positive impact on entrepreneurship success of Gauteng BDS beneficiaries. However, it is interesting to note that BDS training that focused on non-financial aspects of the business, such as innovation, marketing, risk-taking, and management, had more impact than the training that focused on financial aspects of the business. The study then went further to look across demographics to see how the entrepreneurs reported on the adequacy of the training received.

Summary of key findings and insights contributing to knowledge on BDS Training

Further tests that included ANOVA, Welch F-Test and Brown Forsythe were conducted to get a deeper understanding on whether the responses from the respondents were homogenous across demographics.

The respondents reported financial training ($M=6.19$) as more adequate for their businesses success when compared to non-financial training ($M=6.12$), although the results show evidence of a stronger positive impact of BDS non-financial training compared to financial training on youth entrepreneurship success of Gauteng BDS beneficiaries. The BDS financial training is reported as the most adequate though it has lower impact on entrepreneurship success. The two training variables were measured using a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is extremely inadequate and 7 extremely adequate. In this study most respondents indicated the range between adequate to extremely adequate scale. Entrepreneurship success ($M = 5.41$) indicated that on average businesses grew moderately at less than 10% of which the financial training had a significant impact compared with financial training.

Furthermore, analysis on how some of these individual variables behaved when analysed in respect to various demographics (gender, age, level of education, race, management and owner business experience, and the age of the business) indicated the following: that all the demographics have a significant mean difference when it comes to adequacy of BDS training except for gender, for both financial and non-financial training, and age for only non-financial training.

Gender demographic: Male entrepreneurs reported both types of BDS training as less adequate compared to female entrepreneurs. But this difference was not statistically significant when analysed with unequal variance assumption taken into consideration. However, male entrepreneurs' businesses performed better than female entrepreneurs even though they did not deem the BDS training as adequate as they would have preferred. Future research should investigate the reasons for the differences between male and female entrepreneurs in terms of adequacy of BDS training on these constructs and business performance.

Age Demographic: The mean difference was not significant for the non-financial training of the two age groups (18 – 25 and 26 – 35 years old) but was significant on financial training which means when it comes to the adequacy of financial training offered by BDS providers age influenced how each group received the training.

Level of education, race, management and owner experience, and business age all had a significant mean difference in the adequacy of BDS non-financial and financial training: The findings indicated significant differences between those who had diplomas and lower qualifications, who showed that training was less adequate compared to degreed entrepreneurs and post graduates who reported that the same was extremely adequate. This is the same for both financial and non-financial training which suggest a need for deeper understanding on how and why the demographics have a bearing on the adequacy of BDS training for these groupings.

5. DISCUSSION

The study findings support similar research findings on BDS, which indicate that training programmes, whether generic or customised are necessary for new venture growth and success as they greatly improve SMMEs' chances of survival (Khoase et al., 2018; C4G, 2019). Studies have shown that small business owners have low levels of education, skills and knowledge of key business areas, such as basic accounting, economics, marketing and cash flow management (Egelsner & Rena, 2013; Unger et al., 2011). However, the results supported the notion that SMMEs that have gone through BDS training have a much higher chance of survival and a greater chance of revenue generation than those who have not received such training (C4G, 2018; Msimango-Galawe & Hlatshwayo, 2021). The success of BDS does not hinge on government support alone, as some BDS service providers are private, and there is a requirement that more support is provided by other institutions that play a key role in the economy and market dynamics (Mazanai & Fatoki, 2011; Hewitt & van Rensburg, 2020).

BDS training and education influence new venture creation by ensuring entrepreneurs have the requisite skills and knowledge to start new ventures, instil and stimulate entrepreneurship values such as creativity, risk-taking, and independence (Egelsner & Rena, 2013), and this was evident in this study's findings. Post testing both hypotheses, the results indicated that there is a positive and significant impact of BDS training on youth entrepreneurship success, which meant that both hypotheses were supported. Furthermore, it was evident that some demographics have a bearing on whether entrepreneurs find the training received adequate or inadequate in growing their enterprises.

There have been many challenges concerning the development of BDS providers, and the government has played a pivotal role in their success, such as the DTI identifying the importance of BDS services as a strategic tool in growing small businesses (TIPS, 2019). However, some researchers have indicated that governments' involvement in creating a conducive environment for businesses to thrive might in effect be a hindrance, mainly because some ventures are highly informal and, in an attempt to formalise them, government policies might induce the complete collapse of the venture (Khoase et al., 2018; Mazanai & Fatoki, 2011; Hewitt & van Rensburg, 2020).

The research findings were consistent with previous literature specifically on the importance of BDS training on the success of youth-driven businesses. For example, Egelsner and Rena (2013) indicated that BDS training influences entrepreneurship activity by ensuring that entrepreneurs have the necessary skills and knowledge to start new ventures, and instil and stimulate entrepreneurship values such as creativity, risk-taking and independence. BDS training is particularly important, especially in the South African context, as the government believes that small business plays a pivotal role in the economy and are key drivers of economic growth, job creation, and inclusive growth. Furthermore, the NDP proposes that SMMEs are used for job creation and has set a target of 90% of jobs that should be created by small businesses by 2030 (NPC, 2011). BDS training, therefore, plays a vital role because it ensures that new business owners have the necessary skills and knowledge to start and manage their new ventures. If South Africa is to reduce the failure rate of SMMEs there is a need to accelerate the role of BDS providers to address specific training needs, in order to enhance the success of young entrepreneurs in developing their enterprises. Further BDS training may need to consider the different needs on the basis of demographics profile such as level of education, owner experience, management experience, the age of the business and even race to enhance youth entrepreneurship success. Additionally, the business needs should be assessed before enrolling beneficiaries, in order to match the training needs with the respective beneficiaries' training and support needs offering general training.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is evident that BDS training has a significant contribution towards the youths' entrepreneurial journey, with respect to non-financial and financial training, which in turn has some positive impact on youth entrepreneurship success. Notwithstanding the significance of types of financial training, non-financial training showed a stronger impact which suggest the need for more emphasis on such training programmes. The study recommendations include the need for BDS providers to monitor and offer post-training support. Additional resources should be made available for non-financial training in the areas that include innovation, risk-taking, marketing and management. Gender was not an issue for this sample so the training provided can be the same across gender. Training programs should be taking into consideration the levels of education, race, owner and management experience and age of the business as it is evident that the needs differ according to these demographics.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The main limitations for the study include time and resources. Future studies should conduct longitudinal studies to confirm, or otherwise, the longer-term determinants of youth entrepreneurship success. In addition, future

research should interrogate the effect of demographic characteristics on the training needs of youth entrepreneurs in addition to examining the phenomena in the different South African provinces.

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