Understanding Performance of Micro and Small Enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya: The Application of Strategic Interventions

[1]Julius Kipino Nkoiboni & [2]Janet Muthimi, PhD
[1,2]Department of Business Administration, Kenyatta University
Corresponding Email: nkoiboni.julius@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In the contemporary global business environment, achieving performance has been the primary objective in both organizational and individual contexts, whether small, medium, or large, in both profit and people. Besides, for businesses to gain prominence, they need a strong strategy. Micro and Small enterprises are a significant source of growth, innovation, and jobs, and their potential impact on achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals is far greater than their size would suggest. Besides, still, Micro and Small enterprises have not achieved their goals and objectives, leading to underperformance or failure in most countries. In this regard, when firms do not perform as expected, concern arises about their use of improvement strategies. Fortunately, strategic interventions have been widely cited as a key construct that firms can adopt to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and performance. Timely and appropriate interventions can bring a significant change in fortune. The study aimed to determine whether adopting strategic interventions would influence the performance of selected Micro and Small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. Precisely, the study aimed to examine whether affordable credit, Information and Communication Technology, strategic marketing, and entrepreneurship training affect the performance of selected Micro and Small-sized Enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study was anchored in three theories: the Balanced Scorecard Model, Dynamic Capability Theory, and Schumpeter's Theory of Economic Development. A descriptive research design was used, targeting a population of 670 medium and small enterprises registered and fully operational for 5 years or more. Proportionate stratified and random sampling was employed to select a random sample of 202 business owners and directors as the unit of observation. The data collection instrument was a pilot-tested questionnaire for accurate measurement examination. Descriptive and inferential (multiple regression) statistics were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that strategic interventions measured by affordable credit, Information Communication Technology, strategic marketing, and entrepreneurship training had a significant impact on micro and small enterprises' sales growth and stability, customer stability, product repurchase, and earning stability and increase (Adjusted R-Squared = 0.671, F-statistic 39.850, P-value < .001). The study findings imply that strategic interventions constitute a comprehensive measurement system that addresses critical aspects of business functioning in Medium and Small enterprises in Kajiado County and influences sales growth rate and stability, customer loyalty, product repurchase, earnings stability, and rate of increase. The study recommends that the management of Medium and Small enterprises should include strategic interventions in their strategic plans and business structures to ensure high performance continues. Other businesses and companies should adopt strategic interventions to improve their performance.

Keywords: Strategic Interventions, Affordable Credit, Information Communication Technology, Strategic Marketing, Entrepreneurship Training, Firm Performance, Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs).

1.0 Introduction

In today's interconnected and globalized world, the ability of businesses to continuously use existing resources efficiently and effectively in fulfilling their goals and objectives pervades firms that aspire to success, regardless of the activity or area they pursue (Barney & Hesterly, 2019). In this regard, optimizing performance is a central goal for managers and decision-makers to achieve competitive advantage and ensure success. Islam and Wahab (2021) argue that improving business performance leads to increased profitability, higher productivity, and greater customer satisfaction. Besides, globalization in the 21st century has created new business opportunities, leading many short-sighted companies to go out of business (Grant, 2021).

According to Hunger (2020), firms that continually review and measure the results of their strategic approach against their corporate blueprint are better able to respond to fast-changing market forces and are more likely to achieve success and improved performance. Nainggolan *et al.* (2022), along with Grant (2021), agree with Johnson et al. (2020) and elaborate that the key to thriving through these turmoil and turbulences lies in the formulation and execution of business intervention strategies that are effective in guiding businesses towards growth and stability in the face of adversity.

In businesses, strategic interventions enable greater efficiency across different teams towards a common goal. Groups and intergroup interventions are incorporated to improve businesses' overall performance (Akeke, 2019) and can be applied to human resource management, human processes, and strategic change interventions (Krüger & Meyer, 2021). Business strategic interventions formulate a change-implementation framework to achieve desired outcomes and positive results.
Akeke (2019) affirms that the formulation of strategic interventions in businesses includes identifying critical business drivers, determining which are critical for teams to work collectively, and analysing, assigning, and deciding how often to monitor results. For instance, Micro and small enterprises are the backbone of any healthy economy; they supply and anchor big retail businesses with markets, products, and services. There is no globally accepted definition of micro and small enterprises. Besides, according to Bański et al. (2018), the critical attributes considered in their definition include capital, turnover, and, primarily, the number of employees.

Kenya Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) are formal or informal non-primary enterprises that employ 1 to 50 workers. The range is vast, from transportation to Juakali, and the capital varies depending on the type of business. They are also categorized into four forms: trade, manufacturing, service, and farm. The sector is estimated to account for about 85% of all businesses, contributing between 18% and 25% of the country's GDP (KIPPRA, 2019). Today, emerging as an employment avenue that improves the social and economic status of citizens, especially the marginalized and poor, they are considered the main drivers of transforming and advancing economies worldwide (Muathe, 2021).

However, as noted by Aladejebi (2020), even when the economy is doing well, the continuity rate for MSE remains a concern. Due to its small size, a simple management mistake may lead to poor performance or collapse. Besides, since the development and success of MSEs are conditioned by changes in the modern economy and society, these microenterprises are declining in profits, and they are the least prepared among all organizations (Daniel, 2018). The catalytic role and the challenges hindering the development of MSEs have been presented from global, regional, and local

perspectives. Therefore, for MSE to achieve performance in income, profits, and sales, intervention strategies that focus on improving the long-term vitality of the firms are paramount.

The stream of research presented a convincing and solid case for their choice of strategic interventions to identify and shift away from elements that do not work, aiming to become more competitive in the industry.

Munguti and Wamugo's (2020) proximity of intervention includes financial inclusion, which is the effective access to and use of convenient, affordable, available, and sustainable financial services. As Muturi and Njeru (2019) elaborate, the deterioration of economic conditions and the rise in financial hardship during recessions create an increased need for responsible, affordable credit. Mutuku *et al.* (2022) propose that upgrading employees' skills through training improves product quality. It includes activities designed to help the employer acquire high competence, experience, and knowledge. This proactive approach outlines intervention plans for product development, operational strategies, and skill development to lay the groundwork for sustained business growth and innovation (Dimitriadis & Koning, 2022).

The existing body of management literature, for instance, Kyengo *et al*. (2019), indicates that a well-executed marketing strategy boosts brand awareness and visibility with new audiences and is a nuanced approach to business survival and growth. The strategic intervention highlights leveraging to connect with the target audience and establish a resonant identity brand. Srinivasan (2018) argues that, for instance, market-specific promotions enhance the brand's acceptance and visibility in the local market, thereby fostering stronger customer relations.

Mohammad *et al.* (2023) conceptualized the constructs regarding information communication technology and suggested that ICT plays a pivotal role in collaboration, bringing creativity and innovation to business. For instance, tech firms are well-positioned to help SMEs improve social support, social networks, and connectedness. Adapting to new business models, easy access to funding through mobile banking, and securely returning to work, as singled out by Hidayat et al. (2020), enable firms to enter new opportunities and participate in diversified digital supply chains.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Improving the performance of small businesses has been identified as a key success factor for the growth, development, and sustainability of nations. In contemplation of such an outcome, Micro and Small Enterprises, besides their key role in job creation and economic growth, have not been the case for many small enterprises due to volatile environments or the appropriateness of sustainable interventions to adapt (Cueto *et al.,* 2022). In Kenya, the performance of MSEs is challenging despite various assistance from non-financial incentives and facilities, NGOs, the government, and the MSE 2012 Act. MSE Tracker Survey (2023) informs that 21 percent of MSEs reported a drop in sales. Further, the survey found that only 6.7% of business owners have income to run another business, and businesses with 1-9 employees' expectations of profit performance declined from 62.4% in October 2022 to 49.8% in June 2023 (MSE Tracker Survey, 2023).

In Kajiado County, Kenya, a report from the CDF strategic plan 2018/2022 found that MSMEs' failure was rooted in management, products and services, and access to finance. The KIPPRA report on MSEs (2022) attests that these businesses endure tumultuous times due to the lack of strategic interventions that deliberately guide a business towards a different and more effective state.

Therefore, for MSE to achieve performance in income, profits, and sales, intervention strategies that focus on improving the long-term vitality of the firms are paramount.

Several studies have examined the effects of strategic interventions on the performance of micro and small enterprises. For instance, in Brazil, Fonseca Braga and Zurlo (2018) examined the resilience of the MSE sector and found that training and skill development interventions are pivotal for improving businesses. Onyeiwu *et al.* (2020) in Nigeria, the KIPPRA report on MSEs in Kenya (2022), and the Kirikiru (2021) report all state that it is critical to raise sufficient funds quickly. If not addressed, it leads to business failure. The gap identified in the Onyeiwu *et al.* (2020) study is that it is a systematic review and relies on a combination of evaluation methods. In contrast, Kirikiru's (2021) study is limited in scope.

Al Asheq and Hossain (2019) in Bangladesh and Kyengo *et al.* (2019) in Kenya found that marketing strategy, as a component of a business plan, helps establish and sustain business demand, price differentiation, and relevance. However, besides contextual bias in Al Asheq and Hossain's (2019) study, the conceptual gap is hinged on the fact that this study did not address all strategic marketing characteristics and performance of MSE, while Kyengo *et al.* (2019) in Kenya used a positivist study philosophy and the techniques of multistage probability sampling, a methodological gap.

Against this background, SME performance hangs on strategic interventions, a reality that has not been understood and embraced by many SME, including Kenya, and has yet to mention or attempt to evaluate the effect of affordable credit, ICT intervention, marketing, and training interventions on the performance of micro and small enterprises in Kenya, specifically in Kajiado County. Therefore, this study sought to determine key strategic interventions that capture the dynamics of the informal sector in Kenya to enhance the performance of these enterprises.

1.2 Research Objectives

The study's general objective was to establish the effect of strategic interventions and performance of selected micro and small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. The specific objectives included:

   i.   To determine the effect of access to affordable credit interventions on the performance of MSEs in Kajiado County, Kenya
  ii.   To establish the effect of information communication technology interventions on the performance of MSEs in Kajiado County, Kenya
 iii.   To establish the effects of marketing interventions on the performance of MSEs in Kajiado County, Kenya
  iv.   To determine the effect of entrepreneurship training interventions on the performance of MSEs in Kajiado County, Kenya

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

Various research studies advance distinct propositions of firm performance, and the study employed The Balanced Scorecard Model to underpin the dependent variable.

2.1.2 Balance Scorecard Model

The Balanced Scorecard Model, developed by Kaplan and Norton (1996), is a performance metric in strategic management that identifies, controls, and improves business functions to enhance performance. In the balanced scorecard model, four aspects of a business are used to collect information: internal processes, learning and innovation, customers, and finances (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Business internal processes are evaluated by investigating how better products are manufactured; learning and innovation through training and knowledge resources; customer perspectives through gauging customer satisfaction with the availability of products or services; and financial perspectives are evaluated by investigating income, sales, and expenditures to understand financial performance (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

The balanced scorecard model was applicable to the study because it connects MSE's vision, mission, strategies, and operational activities, and maps goals and objectives to business performance. The BSC model was relevant to the proposed study, as MSEs are expected to enhance performance and align their business activities with their methodology and vision. It was used to assess MSE's performance through sales, profit, and income. Hence, the firms' performance-dependent variable was grounded using the model to anchor the study.

2.1.2 Dynamic Capability Theory

The study also adopted the dynamic capability theory proposed by Teece et al. (1997), which states that a firm reconfigures its competencies to address turbulent prevailing situations. The model concerns a firm's capacity to develop, combine, and configure internal and external expertise to respond to a rapidly changing environment (Laaksonen & Peltoniemi, 2018). The theory assumes that ventures with smaller dynamic capabilities always outshine their counterparts with superior dynamics, as noted by Teece *et al.* (1997).

The dynamic capabilities construct is a pivotal tool that enables managers and directors to think strategically about a firm's future. In MSEs' sustenance during decline, such capabilities allow firms to respond quickly to changes by identifying, strengthening, and incorporating them into their business models to prolong their competitive advantage. The theory was used to provide valuable insights into how education and training enable agility to quickly adapt, reflect, and transform, as well as to understand consumer behaviour and consumption habits. Thus, the theory underpinned entrepreneurship training and marketing variables.

2.1.3 Schumpeter's Theory of Economic Development

Moreover, the study adopted Schumpeter's Theory of Economic Development by Schumpeter (1934), who guided the role of innovations in business. Schumpeter sought to explain economic fluctuations by examining how cycle dynamics and growth communicate through fundamental elements. According to Schumpeter's theory of development, the production process is indicated by the combination of material and immaterial productive forces (Schumpeter, 2021).

The rate of technological growth in contemporary society shapes the immaterial set of productive forces in Schumpeter's theory. The Schumpeterian theory of creative destruction, as noted by Bazhal (2016), argues that technological innovation facilitates the growth of new firms and provides a competitive edge for old, analogue-based businesses. On the other hand, the material production forces constructed by the theory arise from original factors of production. Tkachuk (2023) notes that the evolution of the theory is related to the specific institutional structure of finance, since the behaviours of rent-seeking institutions (bank credit) and financing conditions for entrepreneurial innovation are key determinants of economic development.

Schumpeter's Theory of Economic Development is applied to the study as it focuses on how the expansion of output depends on financial intermediaries and the history of technological development. The theory was used to provide anchorage for the access to credit, information, and communication technology variables.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Several researchers have empirically demonstrated the effects of affordable credit, Information and Communication Technology, strategic marketing, and entrepreneurship training interventions on organizational performance. Msomi and Maharaj (2022) analyzed the relationship between access to credit and SME viability in South Africa. The study targeted 105 SMEs and employed a quantitative research approach. The study concluded that cheap credit enabled the weaker sections to access formal-sector lending and freed them from exploitation by informal-sector lenders, thereby improving the economic conditions of small businesses. The study was conducted outside Kenya's geographical limits.

In the same vein, Daniel's (2018) study on the availability of business credit and SME performance concluded that cheap credit enabled weaker sections to access formal-sector lending and freed them from exploitation by informal-sector lenders, thereby improving the economic conditions of small businesses. The gap is that it was a systematic review that relied on combinations of methods for evaluation, and the review benefits from recurrence. Munguti and Wamugo (2020) findings indicated that the loan-to-income ratio, branch penetration, and collateral security positively and significantly affected SME financial performance. Despite its exciting results, this study makes no mention of the loan payback period as a significant variable determining affordability.

Numerous researchers have also documented the benefits of ICT interventions to business performance. Rusliati (2020) explored the role of technological innovation in MSME performance in Majalengka Regency, Indonesia. Using 111 MSMEs in the Indonesian regency as the target population, a quantitative descriptive method and continuum analysis were employed. The findings showed that technological innovation enabled the firms to improve product design using simple machines. Findings also indicated that ICT helped reduce costs by enhancing internal processes. The study was carried out on MSMEs in Majalengka regency, Indonesia, to gather data; however, due to geographical conditions and workplace differences, the responses may have been biased.

A broader perspective has been analysed by Ab-Wahab et al. (2020), who assessed the relationship between the ICT adoption and SMEs' business performance in Malaysia. Findings indicated a positive, significant relationship between IT and strategic alignment in firms. It was also revealed that ICT provides valuable insights into business operations, which improves internal processes. Besides the geographical bias, the study mainly examined how ICT innovation influences a firm's

performance in general, and it is based on specific practices and recovery interventions for MSE performance.

Moreover, studies by Chang *et al.* (2019) in China and Al Asheq and Hossain (2019) in Bangladesh have documented that marketing interventions influence firm performance. For instance, it was also found that marketing and branding empowered marketing teams and outlined how to present SME core offerings to customers in Bangladesh, and that market capability significantly influenced brand innovation and the performance of Chinese industrial firms. This study, however, despite its interesting results, concentrates on distinct nations, industry contexts, and data analysis methods.

Moreover, studies by Okumu *et al.* (2018), Efobi and Orkoh (2018), and Dimitriadis and Koning (2022) have documented that entrepreneurship training Interventions positively and significantly influence firm performance. In this regard, as the business landscape has gradually shifted toward technology, organizations should revitalize their firms by developing digital training programs to identify skill shortages, gauge demand, and calculate supply. Besides, these studies focused on the formal sector, whose performance measures are conceptually different from those of the informal sector. These firms operate in different sectors, hence the need for another study in Kenya, which the current study seeks to bridge.

2.3 Conceptual Framework
Figure 1 shows the study's conceptual framework which shows the interrelation between the independent variable and the dependent variable.
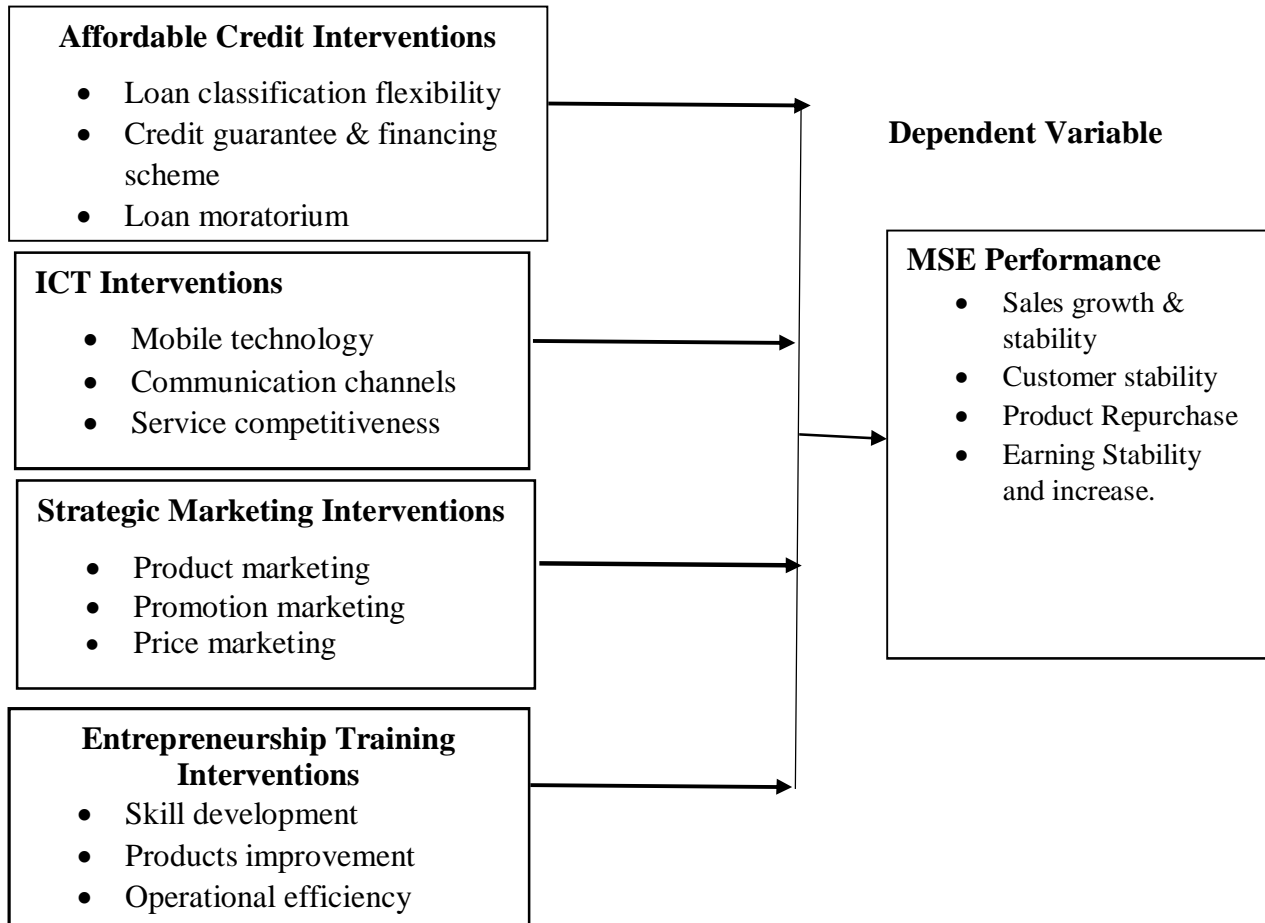
Independent Variables

Affordable Credit Interventions
• Loan classification flexibility
• Credit guarantee & financing scheme
• Loan moratorium

ICT Interventions
• Mobile technology
• Communication channels
• Service competitiveness

Strategic Marketing Interventions
• Product marketing
• Promotion marketing
• Price marketing

Entrepreneurship Training Interventions
• Skill development
• Products improvement
• Operational efficiency

Dependent Variable

MSE Performance
• Sales growth & stability
• Customer stability
• Product Repurchase
• Earning Stability and increase.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive study design was used to analyze the data. Kothari (2004) notes that a descriptive study design provides an accurate picture and detailed characteristics and behaviors of a given phenomenon, situation, subject, or population. The choice of descriptive research design provided valuable insights into the study topics, which can pivotally inform future research and policy decisions. Further, since it is often less expensive and time-consuming than other methods (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), it is a cost-effective way to gather information on the population and phenomenon under study.

MSEs in Kajiado County, Kenya, served as the study unit of observation. The study target population comprised 670 micro and small enterprises, with a focus on trade businesses in Kajiado North Sub-County, Kenya, across trading, services, and manufacturing. The selected target population consisted of MSEs that have operated a business for at least five years. The data will be collected from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), managing directors, or owners of the businesses. The choice of the respondents group is that they are key informants and are in charge of strategic implementations.

The study used a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Stratified random sampling is a research technique that divides the elements of a population into exclusive, non-overlapping groups, and random samples are selected from each stratum for comparison and the drawing of conclusions in the final results (Kothari, 2004). In this regard, the population will be stratified by random sampling into three categories: agribusiness, boutiques, and hardware. This study's sample size was determined by following the recommendations of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Saunders et al. (2009) to select 30% of the target population across the three sub-groups, resulting in a sample of 202 respondents as the study unit of observation.

Primary data was collected using appropriately developed questionnaires to aid the process. In designing the questionnaire, the researcher drew on published literature from prior studies on the study constructs and identified the salient strategic intervention practices for each study variable. Guided by the ascertained literature, the researcher developed five questions for each variable using personal knowledge. To elicit controlled, well-structured opinions from respondents, the study tool was divided into distinct closed-ended and open–ended categories.

In designing the questionnaire, closed-ended questions used a Likert scale with five response options, ranging from disagree totally (scored 1) to agree totally (scored 5), to facilitate straightforward analysis and provide standardized responses. Besides, each variable's closed-ended question was replaced with a single open-ended question to provide more thorough, deeper, and more subjective information about participants' thoughts and opinions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The collected qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involved analyzing patterns and themes in the open-ended questions in the dataset. As suggested by Johnson and Christensen (2024), along with Leavy (2022), the researcher first read through the transcripts and responses to familiarize with the data, highlighted text sections such as phrases and sentences, and came up with labels or codes for the content description, examined and categorized them under suitable themes. Further, the searcher refined the themes by combining and splitting for insights, ascertained that the themes accurately represent the data, and finally came up with an easily understandable name for each theme. The thematic or conceptual analysis was measured non-numerically: through natural-language description.

Before the actual field data collection, validity and reliability tests were conducted. Leedy and Ormrod (2015) note that validity and reliability represent a study's measurement of variables and constructs and are indicators of the quality and accuracy of the study instrument. The study verified the instrument's validity through construct and content validity testing before the actual data collection. Content validity was established by the researcher and supervisor reviewing a set of questions to determine whether all aspects of the study variables are covered, as suggested by Sekaran and Bougie (2016). On the other hand, the construct validity of the instrument was established by reviewing the questionnaire items against the indicators presented in the conceptual framework to determine whether they are aligned with each other, as recommended by Sekaran and Bougie (2016).

The research assessed instrument reliability by pilot-testing 10% of the study population, as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), with respondents selected randomly. The study followed the threshold direction, and Cronbach's Alpha values for all study variables were greater than 0.7, which were considered definitive (Kothari, 2004; Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The collected information was effectively organized and standardized prior to SPSS coding, facilitating entry. Descriptive statistics also involved comparing groups within the collected data, presenting results as response percentages, graphs, and bar charts to visualize the respondents, as recommended by Kothari (2004).

Inferential statistics was also used to draw inferences through parameter estimation and make predictions based on the data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Inferential assessment was conducted using multiple regression and correlation analyses. Multiple regression was employed to examine how independent variables (strategic intervention constructs) affect the dependent variable (firm performance) and how changes in the dependent variable trigger changes in the independent variables, (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The following shows how strategic interventions were linked to firm performance using a multiple linear regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby;

Y= Firm Performance; β_0 = Constant β_1, β_2….. And β_4 = Variable Coefficients; X_1 = access to affordable credit; X_2= ICT adoption; X_3= Marketing Interventions; X_4 Entrepreneurship training interventions, and ε = the Error Term

4.0 Results and Discussion

The researcher administered 202 questionnaires to business owners and directors of Micro and Small Enterprises that concentrate on trade businesses in trading, services, and manufacturing in Kajiado North Sub-County. Figure 2 provides details on the response rate.
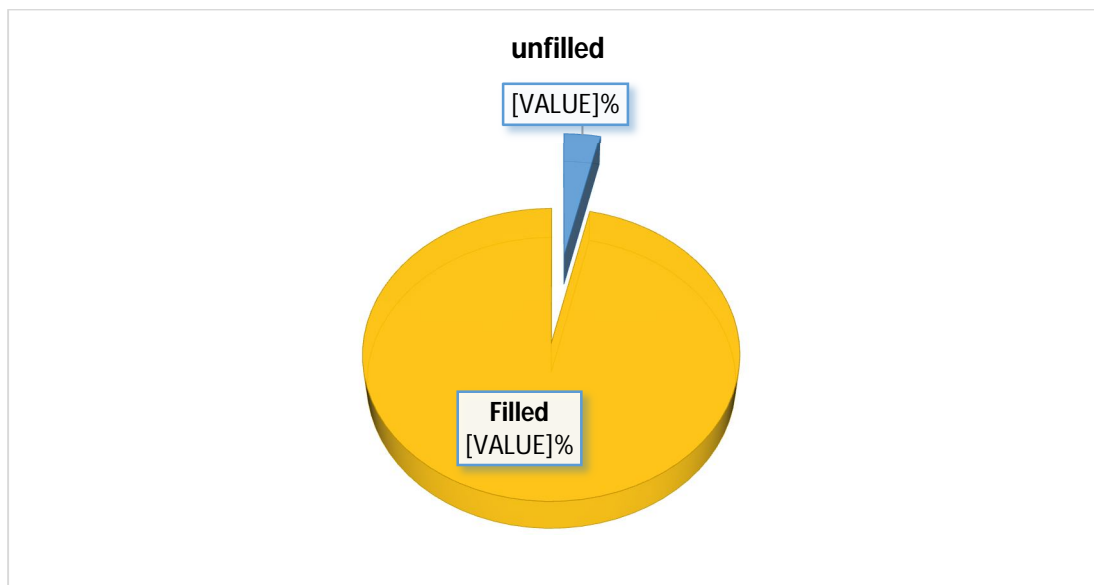

Figure 2: Response Rate

Figure 2 indicates that of the 202 questionnaires administered to owners of MSEs in Kajiado North Sub-County, 195 respondents duly filled and returned the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 96.5%, deemed acceptable for statistical analysis. On the other hand, seven questionnaires that were incomplete or unanswered were rejected. The respondents' busy schedules may have accounted for the unreturned or incomplete questionnaires. Kothari (2004) states that a response rate of 70% or more is ideal for analysing data. This implies that a 96.5% response rate is adequate for analysis, allowing inferences about the study objectives for conclusions and recommendations.

The study conducted a correlation analysis to establish statistical significance and trends between the independent and dependent variables. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

		Affordable Credit	ICT	Marketing	Entrp' Training	Firm Performance
Affordable	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Pearson Correlation	.518**	1			
Marketing	Pearson Correlation	.648**	.520**	1		
Entrep'	Pearson Correlation	.621**	.831**	.605**	1	
Firm Performance	Pearson Correlation	.716**	.702**	.681**	.706**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	195	195	195	195	195

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings from Table 1 show that the link between access to affordable credit and MSE performance was positive and significant, indicated by $r = 0.716$ and p-value <.001; ICT and firm performance were strongly positive ($r = 0.702$ and p-value <.001); marketing and performance were strongly correlated ($r = 0.681$ and p-value <.001). The correlation coefficient of 0.706 indicates a moderately strong positive linear relationship between entrepreneurship training and firm performance. The p-value of $p < 0.01$ suggests that the observed correlation is unlikely to be due to chance, further supporting the reliability of the relationship.

Concurrently, Huber (2004) describes two variables' linear associations' explication by categorizing correlation from ± 0.10 to ± 0.9, where false or weak associations range between ± 0.10 to ± 0.29, moderately correlated range from 0.30 to ± 0.49 moderately correlates, and the substantial correlation range is from 0.5 up to ± 0.9. Therefore, the research study strongly and significantly correlated with the suggestions. This implies that an increase in independent variables will improve performance, since all results were above ±0.5. These findings were consistent with a research study by Islam and Wahab (2021) on strategic intervention and performance of MSEs and reveal that a set of sequenced planned actions and methods intended to change the firms' aspects to increase their

effectiveness are an essential component in determining the business's key characteristics that contribute to success.

Regression analysis was further conducted to test the study's objectives, quantify the impact of core strategic interventions (affordable credit, Information and Communication Technology, strategic marketing, and entrepreneurship training) on MSE performance, and provide statistical evidence to support the theoretical and empirical review. The results of the regression analysis, the ANOVA, and the regression confidence results are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4, respectively.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.878[a]	.685	.671	.3750

    a. Predictors: (Constant), affordable credit, ICT, marketing, entrepreneurship training.

Findings from the model on the explanation of how much variance in MSEs performance can be attributed to four determining factors: access to affordable credit, digital or ICT adoption, marketing, and entrepreneurship training investment interventions indicate that these four factors account for 0.671 of the adjusted R-squared value, which suggests that 67.1 % of MSEs performance can be explained by variation of these factors. The regression model indicates that the four strategic intervention factors included have a significant positive effect on firm performance.

Table 3: **Two-way ANOVA Results**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	16.993	4	4.233	39.850	<.001[b]
Residue	20.184	190	106		
Total	**37.117**	**194**			

The results above revealed a p-value of .001(b), which is lower than 5%, indicating that the regression model is significant in predicting the relationship between strategic intervention constructs and MSE performance in Kajiado County, Kenya. Results presented in Table 3 also reveal that a considerable effect (F = 39.850) was observed, indicating a positive and significant result (P-value < .001). This implied the model was statistically fit and positively applicable in appraising the reciprocity between strategic interventions and MSEs' performance. Table 4 gives the coefficients.

Table 4: Coefficients and Significance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	2.239	1.736		1.342	.000
Affordable C.	.212	.072	.294	2.929	.004
ICT	.156	.059	.278	2.665	.009
Marketing	.140	.035	.408	3.966	.000
Entrp' TR.	.145	.040	.160	3.628	.006

    a.   Dependent Variable: Firm Performance

Using SPSS, the researcher generated results that provided detailed insights into the relationship between strategic interventions and firm performance. The table examines four considerations for strategic interventions: affordable credit, ICT, marketing, and entrepreneurship training. From Table 4, the following multiple regression equation is fitted to the relationship between strategic interventions and firm performance, with access to affordable credit having the largest impact.

$$Y = 2.239 + 0.212 X_1 + 0.156 X_2 + 0.140 X_3 + 0.145 X_4$$

Where Y is the dependent variable and X is = Independent variable

X_1 = access to affordable credit; X_2= ICT adoption; X_3= Marketing Interventions; X_4= Entrepreneurship training interventions.

As indicated in Table 4, the unstandardized coefficient for access to affordable credit is 0.212, which suggests that a one unit increase in access to cheap credit is associated with a 0.212 unit increase in the dependent variable. The standard error of this coefficient is 0.072, which represents the degree of uncertainty associated with the estimate. The result also provides information on the significance level of the coefficient estimate for the access to affordable credit variable, which is 0.004 and $P < 0.05$. This indicates that the observed relationship between the construct and the dependent variable is unlikely to have occurred by chance, assuming no ties.

As such, access to affordable credit is the most significant aspect in explaining the performance of MSEs in Kajiado County. The relationship was powerful, and the findings mirror those of Karanja and Muathe (2025), who found that access to finance enables traders to respond quickly to customers' needs. This in turn has a significant relationship between access to affordable credit and the performance of MSEs. This finding is supported by Lagat and Njaramba (2024) and Muturi and Njeru (2019), who argued for sufficient financing for businesses, which ultimately affects their performance.

Further, the regression model shows that ICT interventions are positively associated with MSE performance. The regression coefficient was 0.156, with a p-value of 0.006 (< 0.05), indicating a significant effect of ICT adoption on performance. Consequently, a unit increase in ICT interventions will result in a 0.156 improvement in MSE performance. The results are consistent with prior scholarly works. For instance, the extant study aligns with Chandavarkar and

Nethravathi's (2023) findings that technology adoption is well-positioned to help medium and small enterprises recover from market failures and imperfections. The findings are supported by Hidayat *et al.* (2022), who state that ICT interventions help businesses adapt to new business models, which play a pivotal role in collaboration, bringing creativity and innovation to business.

The regression model further found that the performance of MSE is significantly related to marketing interventions. This is indicated by a regression coefficient of 0.140 and a p-value of 0.000, less than 0.05. Accordingly, a unit increase in place marketing will result in a 0.140 improvement in MSE performance. The result aligns with the study of Natoil et al. (2023), which found that marketing capability significantly influenced brand innovation and performance. These results align with Niyonsaba et al.'s (2022) findings that marketing and branding convey a sense of credibility and professionalism and help build awareness and recognition among the target audience.

Also, the regression model for entrepreneurship training indicated that the coefficient (0.145) is statistically significant and different from zero. The reason is that its p-value is 0.006, which is below the .05 level of significance. Consequently, a unit increase in the strategic intervention for entrepreneurship training will result in a 0.145 improvement in MSE performance. The outcomes are in line with earlier literature, such as Menya (2020) in Kenya, who noted that the use of knowledge in entrepreneurship could improve business management skills and, in turn, enhance management in terms of profit generation and satisfaction levels. Likewise, the extant study aligns with Gyasi et al.'s (2020) study in Ghana, which found that entrepreneurial training fosters creativity in entrepreneurs' skills and knowledge and provides insights into building opportunities that translate into business growth.

Open-ended questions were provided to collect qualitative data on each independent variable, allowing respondents to express ideas and offer opinions, and to capture constructs that closed-ended questions still need to cover. Thematic analysis involved analyzing patterns and themes in the open-ended questions in the dataset. As suggested by Johnson and Christensen (2024), along with Leavy (2022), the researcher first read through the transcripts and responses to familiarize with the data, highlighted text sections such as phrases and sentences, and came up with labels or codes for the content description, examined and categorized them under suitable themes.

Further, the searcher refined the themes by combining and splitting for insights, ascertained that the themes accurately represent the data, and finally came up with an easily understandable name for each theme. The thematic or conceptual analysis was measured non-numerically: through natural-language description. After respondents' views were combined thematically to identify other ways in which affordable credit access had impacted the enterprise's performance, some of the most cited impacts included helping finance working capital and helping reconstruct businesses. Other perspectives emerged from the thematic analysis, including increased market awareness and capacity.

After participants' views were combined thematically to explain other ways in which the ICT intervention had impacted the enterprise's performance, some of the cited perspectives included that ICT has allowed the enterprise to overcome traditional trade barriers and made it easier to differentiate products and services. Other themes cited in ICT included the facilitation of financial transactions and greater visibility for businesses. The findings were consistent with expectations and with the view held by Soman et al. (2024) in India that ICT adoption has a positive effect on

productivity, both directly and indirectly, depending on the sector, and has great potential to support sustainable development.

Participants combined to explain other ways in which strategic marketing had impacted the enterprise's performance. Some of the cited perspectives in the themes noted that greater insight into consumer monitoring has been achieved through digital marketing tools. Other themes in strategic marketing open-ended questions included helping marketers define the current marketing situation and envision the most appropriate course of action to achieve the desired performance. The outcomes align with earlier literature, such as Dambo and Igoni (2023) in Nigeria and Githinji and Nyaga (2022) in Kenya, which established that marketing interventions in small businesses enable a more robust, in-depth analysis of CRM. A two-way connection is established between customers and companies to drive sales growth.

The last open-ended question addressed other perspectives on how entrepreneurship training interventions have influenced the performance of MSEs. Key themes noted included equipping them with the requisite emotional and specialized capacity to be innovative and drive productivity and other positive organizational outcomes. This finding aligns with several initial studies that found that knowledge acquisition, knowledge assimilation, and knowledge application mediate the direct relationship between entrepreneurial training interventions and SMEs' performance (Nuel & Chika, 2022; Menya, 2020).

5.0 Conclusion
Based on the study's findings, firms seeking to improve performance through sales growth, customer stability, and product repurchase, and earnings stability must adopt strategic interventions within their organizations. To improve performance, medium and small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya, have adopted key strategic interventions, including access to affordable credit, information and communication technology (ICT), marketing, and entrepreneurship training. These strategies have led to improved performance through research and the development of effective ways to increase both financial and non-financial performance metrics.

Regarding affordable credit, the study concludes that focusing on loan guarantees shapes the efficiency with which credit and resources are allocated across firms of different productivity levels in the medium term. Also, the study concluded that loan terms and conditions, as well as credit standards, lower overall rejection rates. The softer eligibility scenario implies that they contribute decisively to bring the share of illiquid firms back to the normal time of the production distribution.

Given the results obtained on the effect of information and communication technology interventions on the performance of MSEs, the study infers that MSEs in Kajiado county have heavily relied on systems to support their operations and drive success, from managing daily tasks to enabling communication with customers and partners. The investigation, therefore, concluded that information and communications technology (ICT) support is a key driver of business success. The study also concluded that investing in a robust ICT strategic intervention infrastructure is key to achieving long-term growth and sustainability.

Further on, in strategic marketing interventions and the performance of MSEs, the intervention was pivotal to success, indicated by the effective use of resources, the building of a consistent brand image, and the prioritization of needs and how the product or service can meet set goals. The investigation, therefore, concluded that strategic marketing is a cardinal determinant of SME performance. Marketing involves strategic interventions to improve the performance of MSEs, with central objectives of customer satisfaction, market dominance, and becoming an industry player.

The research also examined the effect of entrepreneurship training Interventions on the performance of MSEs. It was established that entrepreneurship training and performance were positively related and that they affect skill development, product improvement, and operational efficiency, all of which are key drivers of business success. The study thus concluded that fostering a sense of knowledge, competencies, and skills enables navigation of competitive business landscapes. Accordingly, the employee will place greater emphasis on their professional development and take the initiative to pursue training opportunities that can improve their current competencies.

Consequently, it can be concluded that a set of sequenced planned actions or events intended to help an organization increase its effectiveness in the form of access to affordable credit, information, and communications technology (ICT), marketing, and entrepreneurship training influences the performance of selected micro and small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya.

5.1 Policy Recommendations

The researcher gives recommendations seeking to assist all managers and directors of MSEs, among others, in Kenya with the mandate to draft strategic plans, policies, or regulations. These recommendations would significantly enhance current knowledge of these bodies. Based on the findings, the study implies that access to affordable credit, information, and communication technology (ICT), marketing, and entrepreneurship training influences the performance of selected micro and small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. Therefore, the recommendations are that MSEs' management should include strategic interventions in their strategic plans and business structures to ensure high performance continues. Other businesses and companies should adopt strategic interventions to improve their performance.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

The findings and inferences made from this study were delimited to the constructs of strategic interventions and performance in the context of medium and small enterprises in Kajiado County, Kenya. It is therefore necessary for future researchers to undertake similar or replicative empirical studies in medium and small enterprises in other Counties in Kenya, as well as extend the investigation to organizations in different industries and sectors to validate the findings and conclusions of this study.

Similarly, other factors that may not have been accounted for in the estimated model may also warrant the attention of future researchers. Future studies should examine additional performance indicators, including employee numbers, sustainability, expansion, and employee satisfaction.

REFERENCES

Ab Wahab, N. Y., Mohamad, M., Yusuff, Y. Z., & Musa, R. (2020). The Importance of ICT Adoption in Manufacturing Sector: An Empirical Evidence on SME Business Performance. *Int. J Sup. Chain. Mgt Vol*, *9*(2), 268.

Akeke, N. I. (2019). Strategic interventions and performance of small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. *International Journal of Community Development and Management Studies*, *3*, 017-029.

Al Asheq, A., & Hossain, M. U. (2019). SME performance: Impact of market, customer and brand orientation. *Academy of marketing studies journal*, *23*(1), 1-9.

Aladejebi, O. (2020). Managing small businesses in Nigeria during covid-19 crisis: impact and survival strategies. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, *22*(8), 24-34.

Bański, J., Degórski, M., Komornicki, T., & Śleszyński, P. (2018). The delimitation of areas of strategic intervention in Poland: A methodological trial and its results. *Moravian Geographical Reports*, *26*(2), 84-94.

Ab Wahab, N. Y., Mohamad, M., Yusuff, Y. Z., & Musa, R. (2020). The Importance of ICT Adoption in Manufacturing Sector: An Empirical Evidence on SME Business Performance. *Int. J Sup. Chain. Mgt Vol*, *9*(2), 268.

Bin-Obaidellah, S. S. A., Mokhtar, N. F., Awi, N. A., & Mokhlis, S. (2023). The effect of ICT infrastructure on business performance of micro and small enterprises in Yemen: the moderating effect of social media marketing. *International Journal of Procurement Management*, *18*(1), 44-67.

Chandavarkar, N. D., & Nethravathi, P. S. (2023). Analysis of Challenges faced during Adoption of ICT by Small and Medium Enterprises in India. *International Journal of Management, Technology, and Social Sciences*, *8*(2), 1-21.

Chang, K. C., Hsu, C. L., Hsu, Y. T., & Chen, M. C. (2019). How green marketing, perceived motives and incentives influence behavioral intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *49*, 336-345.

Cueto, L. J., Frisnedi, A. F. D., Collera, R. B., Batac, K. I. T., & Agaton, C. B. (2022). Digital innovations in MSMEs during economic disruptions: experiences and challenges of young entrepreneurs. *Administrative Sciences*, *12*(1), 8.

Dambo, B. I., & Igoni, I. M. (2023). Marketing strategies and performance of small and medium scale enterprises in Port Harcourt. *International Journal of Business & Law Research*, *11*(4), 9-15.

Daniel, C. O. (2018). Business credit availability and its impact on small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research Science and Management*, *5*(9), 21-30.

Dimitriadis, S., & Koning, R. (2022). Social skills improve business performance: Evidence from a randomized control trial with entrepreneurs in Togo. *Management science*, *68*(12), 8635-8657.

Efobi, U., & Orkoh, E. (2018). Analysis of the impacts of entrepreneurship training on growth performance of firms: Quasi-experimental evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, *10*(3), 524-542.

Fonseca Braga, M., & Zurlo, F. (2018). Introducing design-driven innovation into Brazilian MSMEs: Barriers and next challenges of design support. *PROCEEDINGS OF DRS*, 2987-3006.

Grant, R. M. (2021). *Contemporary strategy analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.

Githinji, S., & Nyaga, G. N. (2022). Marketing strategies: do they influence the growth of small and medium enterprises in Kenya. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Information Technology*, *8*(6), 76-84.

Gyasi, R. S., Li, C., Akolgo, I. G., & Owusu-Ampomah, Y. (2020). The impact of entrepreneurial training and performance of SMEs in Ghana. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Science and Technology*, *7*(2), 126-134.

Hunger, J. D. (2020). *Essentials of strategic management*. Pearson Education Limited.

Islam, A., & Wahab, S. A. (2021). The intervention of strategic innovation practices in between regulations and sustainable business growth: a holistic perspective for Malaysian SMEs. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development*, *17*(3), 396-421.

Hidayat, S., Setiawan, M., Rohman, F., & Hussein, A. S. (2022). Development of quality digital innovation by optimally utilizing company resources to increase competitive advantage and business performance. *Administrative Sciences*, *12*(4), 157.

Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2024). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. Sage publications.

Johnson, J., Whittington, R., Regnér, P., Angwin, D., Johnson, G., & Scholes, K. (2020). *Exploring strategy*. Pearson UK.

Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1996). Linking the balanced scorecard to strategy. *California management review*, *39*(1), 53-79.

Karanja, J. M., & Muathe, S. M. A. (2025). Access to Credit and Firm Performance: Evidence from Micro and Small Enterprises in Murang'a County, Kenya. *Journal of Business*, *13*(3), 70-80.

Kirikiru, J. M. (2021). *Selected Financial Factors Influencing Financial Performance Of Small And Medium Enterprises In Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, Egerton University).

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.

Krüger, N. A., & Meyer, N. (2021). The development of a small and medium-sized business risk management intervention tool. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, *14*(7), 310.

Kyengo, J. M., Muathe, S. M. A., & Kinyua, G. M. (2019). Marketing capability and firm performance: An empirical analysis of food processing firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, *6*(1), 544-555.

Laaksonen, O., & Peltoniemi, M. (2018). The essence of dynamic capabilities and their measurement. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *20*(2), 184-205.

Lagat, D. J., & Njaramba, J. (2024). Accessibility of Credit and Performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Nandi County, Kenya. *African Tax and Customs Review*, *8*(1), p12-p12.

Leavy, P. (2022). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guilford publications.

Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2015). *Practical research*. Pearson.

Menya, P. O. (2020). *Entrepreneurial Training and Performance of Micro and Small Enterprises Under Youth Employment Opportunities Project in Kisumu County, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Mohammad, A. S., Haji, M. M., & Suleiman, K. S. (2023). ICT's Impact on SMEs in Zanzibar: A 360-Degree Appraisal. *International Journal for Global Academic & Scientific Research*, *2*(3), 32-44.

Muathe, J. M. (2021). *Influence Of Mobile Banking Services On Growth Of Micro And Small Enterprises In Makueni Sub-county In Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, Kca University).

Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative & qualitative apporaches* (Vol. 2, No. 2). Nairobi: Acts press.

Munguti, M. J., & Wamugo, L. (2020). Microfinance credit accessibility and financial performance of small and medium enterprises in Machakos County, Kenya. *Integrated Journal of Business and Economics*, *4*(1), 71-79.

MSE Tracker Survey (2023) Kenya. Available at https://www.fsdkenya.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FinAccess-MSE-Tracker-Survey-March-2023.pdf

Muturi, W., & Njeru, A. (2019). Effect of equity finance on financial performance of small and medium enterprises in Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, *10*(5), 60-75.

Mutuku, A. K., Kiilu, B. N., Mathuku, P., & Auka, D. O. (2022). Effect of Entrepreneurial Skills on Organizational Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nakuru City-Kenya. *International Journal of Economics & Business Administration (IJEBA)*, *10*(3), 156-173.

Msomi, T. S., & Maharaj, A. (2022). Credit accessibility and viability of Small and Medium Enterprises in South Africa. *The Journal of Accounting and Management*, *12*(1).

Nainggolan, E., Gultom, P., & Manik, D. E. M. (2022, December). Implementation of Digital Marketing as a Business Recovery Strategy for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Medan Area. In *Proceeding International Business And Economics Conference (IBEC)* (Vol. 1, pp. 325-334).

Natoil, N., Sopi, S., & Hartarini, Y. M. (2023). Enhancing marketing performance in MSMEs: empirical research from Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. *Management Analysis Journal*, *12*(3), 385-394.

Nuel, O. I. E., & Chika, A. C. (2022). Uncovering the relationship between entrepreneurship training on business growth among SMEs in Southeast Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, *7*(1), 224-228.

Okumu, E. L., Kiflemariam, A., & Mang'unyi, E. (2018). Effects of Employee Training on Employee Performance: A Case of the Judiciary of Kenya. *International Journal of Research in Management, Economics and Commerce*, *8*(9), 39-47.

Onyeiwu, C., Muoneke, O. B., & Nkoyo, U. (2020). Financing of small and medium scale enterprises and its growth impact in Nigeria. *The Journal of Entrepreneurial Finance (JEF)*, *22*(2), 1-19.

Rusliati, E. (2020, December). An Innovation for the Resilience and Development of MSMEs in Majalengka Regency, Indonesia. In *6th International Conference on Social and Political Sciences (ICOSAPS 2020)* (pp. 632-643). Atlantis Press.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.

Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. john wiley & sons.

Schumpeter, J. A., & Swedberg, R. (2021). *The theory of economic development*. Routledge.

Soman, S. P., Paul, B., & Patnaik, U. (2024). ICT Uptake, Performance and Trade Relations: A Case of Village Micro and Small Enterprises. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, *15*(4), 18003-18018.

Srinivasan, R. (2018). The impact of strategic marketing on the performance of micro small & medium enterprises-An Indian scenario. *The Business & Management Review*, *9*(4), 404-410.

Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. *Strategic management journal*, *18*(7), 509-533.

Tkachuk, I. (2023). Schumpeter's theory of economic development and modern civil society: points of interaction. *Access Journal*, *4*(2), 182-193.