

Challenges and Prospects of Youth Entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone

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Abstract: The world's population continues to grow, while job creation opportunities shrink, particularly among young people. Youth unemployment is among key global challenges that may continue to persist for many years. The objectives of this study were to find out specific factors that discourage the youth from pursuing entrepreneurship careers; challenges inhibit expansion of their entrepreneurial ventures, and the prospects of youth entrepreneurship development in Sierra Leone. The current study adopted a descriptive research design. A quantitative and qualitative research approach was employed with the help of self-administered questionnaires and interview. A sample of 50 subjects were randomly drawn from a population of 80 youth entrepreneurs who operate and are formally registered as SMMEs within various industries that are registered in Bombali District Council or Makeni City council. It was found that it was not the case that young people in Sierra Leone do not want to pursue careers in entrepreneurship, but rather it was that youth entrepreneurship development lacking in the community. The current study also revealed that a major factor that inhibits youth entrepreneurship development was the lack of awareness and inaccessibility of entrepreneurship support structures and initiatives in the community. The findings and recommendations therefore bear far-reaching ramifications for all stakeholders who are concerned to develop youth entrepreneurship in the country.

Key words: Challenges, Prospects and youth entrepreneurship

1. INTRODUCTION

The world's population continues to grow, while job creation opportunities shrink, particularly among young people (Youth Business International, 2013). The unemployment of young people is amongst key global challenges that will continue to persist for many years (Schoof, 2006). According to Youth Business International (2009), the World Bank predicts that by 2030 young people under the age of 25 will amount to three billion worldwide. Disappointingly, in spite of this generation being estimated to be the most educated ever, the International Labour Organisation's (ILO's) statistics foresee a massive decline in job opportunities (Youth Business International, 2009). Furthermore, these statistics indicate that 40 percent of young people globally are currently unemployed, and have little chance of being employed when they are adults.

In Sierra Leone a youth is described as any young person between the ages of 15-35. Thus, in the context of this study, youth are regarded as young people. Young people in Sierra Leone constitute the mainstream of the population in percentages. Nevertheless, approximately 70 percent of

them are unemployed. The unemployment of young people does not only result in widespread depression, but also contributes to economic and social costs (Schoof, 2006:1). Perhaps this could also pave a way for poverty conditions, in which these young people will be obliged to live in, for a very long time if there are no turnaround strategic approaches established.

The first entrepreneurs can be traced back to nearly 20,000 years ago. The first known trading between humans took place in New Guinea around 17,000 BCE, where locals would exchange obsidian (a volcanic glass prized for its use in hunting tools) for other needed goods – like tools, skins, and food. The first big shift in entrepreneurship took place during the Agricultural Revolution, which occurred about 12,000 years ago in which humans started to domesticate plants and animals. Instead of having to roam, forage, and hunt for their food in different regions throughout the year, human populations could remain stationary in one location and farm the land.

This was a fundamental shift in human history. Villages and towns started developing close to fertile lands. There was no longer a need for everyone in the community to be directly involved with food production. People didn't need to spend all day hunting and gathering for their own sustenance – it was more efficient to let a smaller number of farmers handle food production while the rest of the population focused on other tasks. Some of the earliest entrepreneurs were; Hunting and gathering, Fishing, Cooking, Tool-making, Shelter-building and Clothes-making.

As cities sprang up around the world, entrepreneurship took an important turn. Entrepreneurs were still specializing in all of the areas like (pottery, carpentry, tool-making, etc.). But they began to realize that profits could be made by trading between cities and cultures. The right international trade route could make an entrepreneur very wealthy. Some of the popular trade routes at the time included:

- Trading salt from Africa across the Roman Empire
- Trading technologies like Chinese paper-making around the world
- Trading rice from China across Asia
- Trading coffee, lemons, and oranges from Arabia into Europe
- Trading complex ideas like the Arabic number system into Europe (this occurred in the year 1200 thanks to an Italian trader named Leonardo Fibonacci).

- Trading gunpowder (a combination of carbon, sulphur, and potassium nitrate) from China to other parts of the world

Weapons trading were particularly important in these early times. Iron was discovered around 2000 BCE, and the civilizations that controlled iron were able to dominate other civilizations. This would lead to the world's first empires, including Alexander the Great's Empire, the Han Chinese Empire, the Roman Empire, and the Persian Empire.

One of the key developments in the history of entrepreneurship (and in human history) was the invention of money. Prior to the invention of money, all entrepreneurship and trade took place through the barter system. During this period, entrepreneurs were known more as merchants and explorers than as entrepreneurs. These individuals would raise capital, take risks, and stimulate economic growth (much like the entrepreneurs of today). Many see this period as the beginnings of capitalism.

Sierra Leone's business community has been largely dominated by rent-seekers, commonly known as "businessman." characterized by much older individuals, usually above average income, travel overseas frequently to buy general merchandise and resell at wholesale or retail prices. Rent-seeking entrepreneurship is generally very profitable. However, the capability to generate jobs, create and deliver value, be sustainable and foster economic development becomes very questionable. Notwithstanding, Sierra Leone is experiencing an entrepreneurial awakening. An evolution from rent-seeking to value-creation is at hand. This is a crucial and an exciting period for entrepreneurial enthusiasts and Sierra Leoneans at large. It is logical to postulate that the unremitting frustrations caused by a worsening economy, lack of jobs for an increasing number of graduates, very low wages for those lucky enough to secure jobs, and lost hope for a political saviour laid the foundation for the emergence of a value-creating, high-potential, high growth, high impact entrepreneurs, ignited by the global entrepreneurial trend. This is all the more spectacular as this emergence is dominated by young people.

Statement Of The Research Problem

In this competitive modern society, relevant skills and experience that the industry demands remain a challenge for the youth, and these issues need thorough scrutiny, particularly in job scarce environments, such as Sierra Leone. Worryingly, youth unemployment in Sierra Leone has recently climbed to its highest peak ever (estimated at 75 percent). Entrepreneurship is acknowledged as one of the best strategic approaches to alleviate unemployment, which may result in poverty, criminal activities, dependence on government grants, and so on. Hence, Sierra Leone's government has established a number of business development interventions aimed at to flourish the business environment, in particular among the youth, since the early 2000s.

Thus far, young people in Sierra Leone more especially Makeni where the study was conducted do not appear to be

interested in entrepreneurship. As a result, they could be losing out on the many business opportunities that exist in the country, as well as the benefits of entrepreneurship, such as income generation, improvement of standards of living, and so on. If this is the case and it continues to persist, youth unemployment will keep increasing. In addition, this could also be a recipe for poverty legacy, which could be carried on to the next generation. Furthermore, this situation could encumber efforts, which are aimed at closing or considerably minimising existing levels of income in terms of inequality amongst them and young people from other well developed regions or groups in Sierra Leone. Moreover, crime might escalate, as these young people may seek alternative means of survival, such engaging in criminal activities e.g. theft, break-ins, robberies, misused of drugs, and so on. Also, their social wellbeing may become increasingly dependent on government grants.

Research Objectives

The research aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- To find out specific factors that discourages youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone.
- To investigate particular challenges that inhibits expansion in youth entrepreneurial ventures in Sierra Leone.
- To describe the prospects of youth entrepreneurship development in Sierra Leone.

Research Questions

The study aimed to address the following research questions:

- What are the specific factors that discourage youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone?
- What particular challenges inhibit expansion in youth entrepreneurial ventures in Sierra Leone?
- Are there prospects for youth entrepreneurship development in Sierra Leone?

Significance Of The Study

Entrepreneurship aids economic growth, economic competitiveness, job creation, as well as improvement of social welfare in any country (Linan et al., 2005:1; Dempsey, 2009; Ndedi, 2009; Fatoki & Chindoga, 2011). Therefore, the importance of youth entrepreneurship development cannot be underestimated in the country, particularly given its poor background. The findings of the study will shed light on the challenges and prospects of youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone for the following stakeholders: policy makers; researchers; private institutions; donors; entrepreneurship educators; and youth development practitioners who are enthusiastic about developing youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone. In

addition, entrepreneurship does not only benefit entrepreneurs, but also their families, society at large, as well as the government (Fatoki&Chindoga, 2011). For instance, entrepreneurship results in the following: economic growth; income generation; improvement of standards of living; creation of investment opportunities; large tax base owing to a large number of new established firms; technological developments; creation of job opportunities; reducing criminal activities that occur owing to unemployment, as well as dependency on government incentives for social well-being (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). Furthermore, a study of this nature has not been conducted in the country before, and this underlines the need for the study.

2 THEORETICAL AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The Neo-Classic Theory of Entrepreneurship: This is one of the famous theories of entrepreneurship advanced by Marshal in 1948; the theory stipulates that there is no exploitation on the business platform. The theory is of the view that the effort an entrepreneur put in a particular business will determine the profit margin that will be returned on the business. On the other hand the theory also views the level of knowledge as well as the business information acquired by an entrepreneur as an important factor that will determine the level of profit and success accrue to an entrepreneur, in the course of carrying out business activities.

Resource Based Theory of Entrepreneurship: According to Alvarez and Busenitz (2001), the resource-based theory of entrepreneurship argues that access to resources by a would-be entrepreneur is an important factor that influence new venture development. The theory highlights the significance of financial, social and human resources towards enhancing the entrepreneurial ability to detect and act upon discovered opportunities. Financial, social and human capital represents three classes of theories under the resource-based entrepreneurship theories (Davidson and Honing, 2003)

Conceptual framework: Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework of the challenges and prospects of youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone.

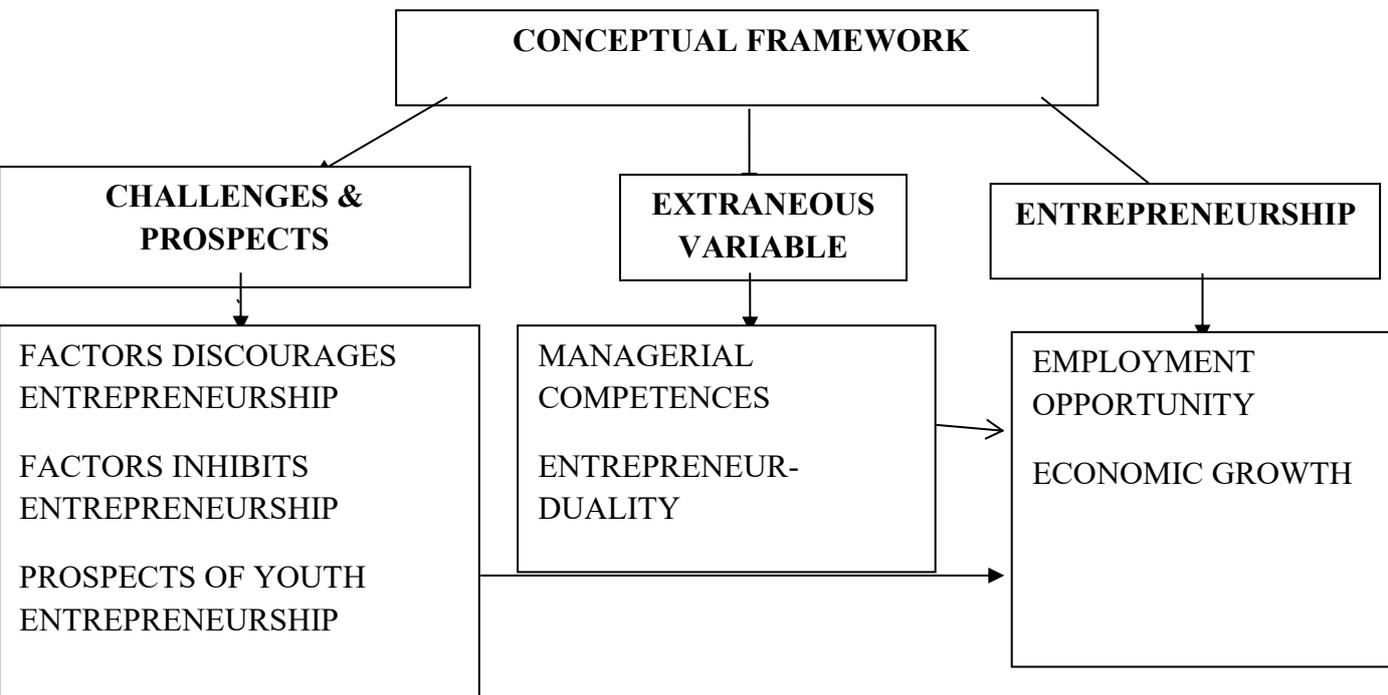


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of youth entrepreneurship

Source: Drawn by the researcher – 2023

EXPLANATION

The diagram above depicts clearly the various constructs of the variables used in the study. The left-hand side of the diagram contains construct of the independent variables, the right hand side contains construct of the dependent variables, and the construct at the centre of the diagram represents that of the extraneous variable.

The extraneous variables consist of construct of the independent variable. This is because the researcher used five constructs of the independent variables but is limited to only three, therefore, the remaining two were placed in the extraneous column.

They were placed in that column to show that they are important but it is as a result of the researcher being limited to only three that is why they are not included in the independent variable column.

Factors responsible for the emergence of entrepreneurship

The research shows that there is a variety of factors that can motivate an individual to pursue a career in entrepreneurship, and these are outlined below.

Background factors like entrepreneurship education, training and experience that a person receives from his environment can play a big role in influencing his attitude to set up an entrepreneurial venture (Lall&Sahai, 2008).

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Similarly, Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen (2009) also suggest that there is a connection between higher levels of education and training, and the emergence of entrepreneurship. Family, role models and association with similar types of individuals influences the emergence of entrepreneurship. Where an environment is entrepreneurially orientated, supportive and beneficiary to the individuals that reside within, those people are likely to follow the same foot-steps (Lall&Sahai, 2008). The financial conditions of a person, whether favourable or adverse, can pull or push him/her to start-up a new entrepreneurial venture for a variety of reasons (Lall&Sahai, 2008). Wickham (1998), in Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen (2009) asserts that the emergence of entrepreneurship will depend on the strengths of both necessity and opportunity factors.

Motivational factors: The best-known researchers in the field of entrepreneurship such as McClelland (1961), Hornaday, Bunker and Aboundis (1970) agree that a high need for achievement is one of the main motivating factors, which can drive an entrepreneur to succeed in his entrepreneurial venture (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008). Locus of control motive is also regarded as a crucial factor that can encourage the emergence of entrepreneurship. Individuals that have this characteristic usually believe in taking charge of their own lives (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). The need for independence though is a characteristic relates to a locus of control, an individual with this need usually has or had it while working for someone else. This type of a person enjoys doing things his or her own way, and does not fit in a working environment where he or she is tied down and obligated to follow someone else's rules (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

Economic factors: Supportive government policies are important for the development of entrepreneurship in any country is undeniable. Hence, many governments in the world, including Sierra Leone's government, are formulating policies and programmes that promote entrepreneurship within its different sectors (Lall&Sahai, 2008). A supportive business environment where legal business regulations are relaxed, infrastructure is good, business advice, counselling, mentoring, finance, training, and incubators are abundantly available for entrepreneurs, the emergence of entrepreneurship is likely to occur (Lall&Sahai, 2008; Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). Nevertheless, the country's government may assist in this situation by allocating enough funds to its business structures that support SMMEs so that deserving entrepreneurs may be able to access funding for their business venture (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). Where there is good infrastructure, enough suppliers and distribution channels in a business environment, potential entrepreneurs may take advantage of such opportunities and establish their own business ventures (Lall&Sahai, 2008).

Rewards: Recognition is one of the factors that may encourage an individual to set-up and successfully manage his or her business venture as a result of the desire to attain a social standing in society (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009), which could help stimulate to his/her self-esteem (Lall&Sahai, 2008). When an entrepreneurial venture is successful, the owner reaps large profit margins, which an ordinary individual who works for a paid job cannot imagine laying his/her hands on. Therefore, with a business that is successful and lucrative, an entrepreneur's social status and lifestyle changes (Lall&Sahai, 2008), and some of those who live with him in the community begin to see him as a role model.

Challenges of youth entrepreneurship

Musengi-Ajulu (2010) state that even though these initiatives have resulted in the creation of more economic opportunities for young people, it appears that they have no significant impact in reducing the high unemployment rate (70 percent) among young people in the country.

Start-up and expansion capital: Access to start-up capital is a major stumbling block when trying to start-up a business. This can force aspirant entrepreneurs to use their own money or to borrow from their family to start a business (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). This might be even worse for young people from disadvantaged environments, where they have no collateral to secure the business funding and if ultimately they do not obtain the start-up capital, their creative ideas may go to waste (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

Regulatory red tape: The regulations and bureaucracy attached to starting-up a business are among factors that may discourage prospective entrepreneurs as they can take some time to complete, and cost money (Nieman&Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). Hence, Herrington et al. (2010) mention that the unproductive government bureaucracy and redtape related to setting-up and managing a business, as well as the restrictive labour regulations, require urgent attention.

Lack of interest in entrepreneurship as an option: In Kroon, de Klerk and Dippenaar (2003), Kao (1992) argues that the main aim of entrepreneurial learning should revolve around developing a generation of more creative, innovative, and calculated risk-taking individuals. He adds that even those who would opt for a wage job with entrepreneurial learning can easily cope with the dynamic work context attributed to shorter, multiple careers and contracts, as well as flexible job responsibilities.

Awareness of entrepreneurial support initiatives: Quite a large number of the target market is not knowledgeable of the entrepreneurial support that is available and accessible

for the development of their businesses (Fatoki&Chidoga, 2011)

Inadequate entrepreneurial skills: These entrepreneurial skills include opportunity recognition, creativity and innovation, calculated risk-taking, determination, and so on, (Van Rensburg, 2011). Herrington et al. (2009) argue that a lack of education and training is also amongst major barriers to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, they state that the quality of basic education has declined in South Africa and that student drop-outs before matriculation aid to a lack of entrepreneurial and business skills.

Access to markets: The lack of sustainable markets for entrepreneurs' products and services are among factors that could lead to business failure (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). Entrepreneurs are responsible for delivering products and services to the marketplace and to sell them at a profit (Burke, 2006).

Access to human resources: Attracting and retaining appropriate talent is seen as a major obstacle for a number of organisations' success (Ohlhoff, 2008). Without the appropriate human resources a company would not have products or services to deliver to the marketplace (Van Dijk, 2008).

Access to appropriate technology: Presently, advanced technologies play a tremendous role in the success and competitive edge of any business or entrepreneurial venture (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). At the same time Internet connection has drastically changed archaic ways of conducting business in a number of ways, as digitalisation and connectivity have become the order-of-the-day (Succeed, 2011).

Crime: Feelings of frustration and desperation of amongst the unemployed may motivate young people to engage themselves in criminal activities (Mahadea et al., 2011). Therefore, this could imply that the fear factor on crime may negatively impact entrepreneurial ventures, as well as the entrepreneurial intentions of young people in the country.

Social-cultural constraints: Nieuwenhuizen (2009) assert that apart from general constraints, which affect other entrepreneurs in the country, women face the following: balancing business and family responsibilities; negative prevailing socio-cultural attitudes; gender discrimination and bias; and personal difficulties.

Prospects of youth entrepreneurship
 Mpafa (2008) argues that there is a growing number of youth entrepreneurs setting-up their own businesses in response to abandoned opportunities in the market, rather than setting-up a business out of necessity circumstances.

As a custodian of youth development, the NYDA has a responsibility to facilitate youth entrepreneurship, among other things in Africa (Chabane, 2011). He further argues that this structure has stepped on a number of areas such as strategies to fight poverty through broadening young people's economic participation, and youth skills development programmes in all the country's provinces since its establishment in 2009. To advance economic participation among young people, this integrated plan proposes some of the strategic interventions that are outlined below (South Africa. NYDA, 2011).

- **The individual:** Ease access to information, job preparedness skills and training to foster entrepreneurial mindsets through non-financial and financial support for young people;
 - **The organisation:** By advancing and incubating profitable business and organisations that support young people;
 - **Markets:** By creating value-chains and easy access to new markets and to stimulate such markets continually;
 - **To create an enabling environment for young people to benefit from Local Economic Development (LED), Provincial Growth and Development (PGDs) and New Growth Path (NGP) business opportunities that are created through aggressive preparation, training and mentorship, as well as policy reform, which will actively direct opportunities created for young people;**
 - **To support and enforce a practice that requires 50 percent of all jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities that are created by the NGP's 2010, Jobs Fund and other related initiatives at all spheres of government to directly benefit young people;**
 - **To implement a long term curriculum programme in all schools, which will equip learners with entrepreneurial knowledge and skills from an early age, to increase employability chances before leaving the school environment; and**
 - **To develop business linkages and participation between youth-owned businesses and the public sector procurement chain through youth based preferential procurement practice, and to keep 30 percent of government investment to provide 35 year contracts for youth entrepreneurial ventures.**
- Conversely, South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through its endeavours to facilitate the country's economic growth, wealth and job creation, has made various strides such as the establishment of an institutional framework to support SMEs (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study made use of a descriptive research design. A research design is a blueprint, which details the manner in which the data of the study should be collected and analysed in an effort to find relevant answers for questions that are posed by the investigator (Flick, 2011). In the context of this research, a quantitative and qualitative descriptive research approach was employed, making use of self-administered questionnaires. Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), state that a quantitative research approach is “applied to describe conditions, investigate relationships, and study cause-effect phenomena”. In addition, this approach can be carried out through personal interviews, administering of questionnaires, and personal surveys (Babbie & Mouton, 2001 in Naris, 2009), and is more concerned with analysis of the numerical data (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006; Fox & Bayat, 2007).

Study area and targeted population

Makeni is the capital and administrative centre of Bombali District. The city lies approximately 137 kilometers (85 miles) east of Freetown. The city of Makeni has a total population of 126,059 people (2015 population census). It is a major commercial, educational, transportation and economic centre. It is a religious tolerance environment through accommodating the practices of both the Islamic and Christianity faith. Through having other ethnicities, it is a Theme dominated environment and the major occupation of the people is trade.

The research population for this study was limited to Makeni youth entrepreneurs who had formally registered enterprises that operate within various industries of the SME sector during the course of the investigation. Therefore, the population for this study comprised 80 participants, and all of them are likely to share a common set of characteristic, as a result of their background. Selection of the population for the study was driven by the researcher's belief that these subjects would bring about worthwhile information to the subject matter for the following reasons: they come from a variety of sections that make up Makeni; and are registered with either Bombali District council or Makeni City council, an organisation with a reputation of youth entrepreneurs in the area of Makeni, which also promotes and develops entrepreneurship among young people in this area. Due to aspects such as costs of collecting the data and limited time to complete the study, the entire population of the study could not be studied, therefore, a sample was drawn.

Sample size and unit of analysis

Sample size refers to the number of individuals chosen randomly from the entire population to create the necessary sample Rahman M. S (2017). Due to the research community's size, the researcher chose a sample to reflect the entire study population because it would be difficult to collect data from every responder in the population. This study sampled a number of 50 respondents from the 80 targeted participants. This sample was selected because the

researcher was unable to collect data from all the targeted population in the study as a result of the aforementioned limitations.

Unit of analysis is the major entity, which the researcher analyzes in the study, from which different summary descriptions and explanations can be created (William, 2006). In the current study unit of analysis comprise a group of individuals. These individuals included youth entrepreneurs from Makeni township in the Northern Province, who were formally registered during the course of the investigation. Individual characteristics such as gender, age, attitudes, etc, in the study help to provide a composite picture of the group of individuals being studied. Therefore, conclusions drawn in the study are based on the analysis of a group of Makeni youth entrepreneurs.

Sampling technique

The study used a non-probability sampling technique. Specifically, it used a snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling is a research technique used to gather data from a specific population by using referrals from initial participants. This method of sampling is particularly useful when studying rare or hard-to-reach populations, for instance, drug addicts or individuals with certain diseases. In snowball sampling, the researcher begins by identifying one or more individuals who fit the criteria for the study and who are willing to participate. After collecting data from these initial participants, they are asked to refer other people they know who also fit the criteria and may be interested in participating in the study. The process continues until enough data has been collected. One of the advantages of snowball sampling is that it allows researchers to reach populations that may be difficult to access through traditional methods of sampling. Additionally, because participants are referred by others they trust, there may be a higher level of cooperation and willingness to participate in the study. Using this method, the researcher selected initial respondents at random and subsequent respondents were then selected by the initial respondents from among their acquaintances until the desired sample size was reached. This sampling method was used because it was difficult for the researcher to come up with an exhaustive list of youth entrepreneurs who currently engage in entrepreneurial activities within the district of Bombali. In addition, Housden (2010), highlighted the advantages of using non-probability sampling technique which include lower cost, faster and smaller sample size, all of which were important elements for consideration in this research study.

Research instrument

A questionnaire was the main instrument used for collecting primary data from the target population. It was developed by drafting questions covering the central topics of the study and it mostly included closed-ended questions with a few open-ended questions in order to give respondents some flexibility. The questionnaire was a web-based questionnaire and it was self-administered by the respondents. An invitation to complete the questionnaire was sent to the respondents via email or through social media networks. The questionnaire was pilot tested on a sample fitting the

characteristics of the study population with the aim of identifying questions which respondents did not understand or were subject to multiple interpretations. The results of the pilot test were used to refine the questionnaire.

Research procedures

A research procedure is a fixed, step-by-step sequence of activities or course of action (with definite start and end points) that must be followed in the same order to correctly perform a task (Business Dictionary 2019). This part clearly shows how the researcher used the said tools in getting and collecting data for the study. The researcher collected qualitative data and quantitative data. The qualitative data was conducted through the questionnaire instrument and the quantitative was conducted through the interview instrument.

Quality control

Quality control is a way or set of procedures projected to ensure that the researcher is done to meet the obligation of its aim (Atlantic International University 2016). The researcher of this study uses the eliminating extraneous variables technique to control the extraneous variables. This technique was used to eliminate the extraneous variables completely from the study so that they will not affect the dependent variable.

Data analysis procedure

This study used a statistical program, SPSS—short for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences—to analyze the data. Data analysis included tallying the frequencies and percentages of each responder to establish consistency and logical completeness. Before entering the data into SPSS, the researcher performed a data cleaning exercise in which some data was altered, and others were eliminated. This was done to verify that the data collected was valuable, valid, and reliable. Once a clean set of reliable data had been established, it was coded onto SPSS to begin analysis. Analysis was then carried out both qualitatively and statistically. Additionally, the gathered data were displayed using word reporting systems, tables, and charts.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Demographic profile of the respondents

The study targeted a total number of 80 respondents. Unfortunately, 43 respondents completed and turned in their questionnaires. Only 3 questionnaires were not responded appropriately and thus were declared invalid for the study. Therefore, the analysis was made based on 40 responded questionnaires. In order to provide a general sense of which the respondents were,

Table 5.1 below presents a detailed demographic profile of the respondent.

| DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES | | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 25 | 62.5% |
| | Female | 15 | 37.5% |
| Educational qualification | Primary | 2 | 5% |
| | Secondary | 8 | 20% |
| | Tertiary | 25 | 62.5% |
| | Vocational | 5 | 12.5% |
| Age | 16-20 | 0 | 0% |
| | 21-25 | 5 | 12.5% |
| | 26-30 | 18 | 45% |
| | 31-35 | 17 | 42.5% |

Source: Field data 2023

From the table 4.1 above, it can be clearly seen that 62.5% (25) respondents are male while 37.5% (15) are female. These results could be related to Fatoki and Chindoga’s (2011) views that social-cultural constraints are likely to negatively affect the engagement of young women in entrepreneurship. Apart from entrepreneurship constraints mentioned in the study, these could be related to Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen’s (2009:31) identified women entrepreneurship obstacles, namely personal difficulties; gender discrimination and bias; negative prevailing socio-cultural attitudes; and balancing business and family responsibilities. In addition, the fact that a lot of young women nowadays become mothers early in life before completing their studies, might also be the case in Makeni area, which deteriorates their chances of being entrepreneurs, as their personal responsibilities increase. The skewed gender-representation calls for measures that could aid to reduce such gaps between male and female youth entrepreneurs.

However, the table further indicate that, 5% (2) of the respondents claimed to be in the primary level, 20% (8) of the respondents claimed to be in the secondary sector, 62.5% (25) of the respondents claimed to be in the tertiary level, while the remaining 12.5% (5) of the respondents are non-Educated. Results from this study indicated that a majority of respondents studied up to tertiary school level even though some of them did not do entrepreneurship or

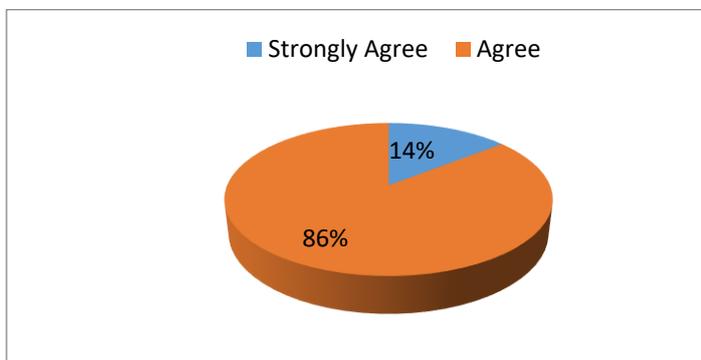
business related-courses. Perhaps this highlights the need for entrepreneurial and management skills, as they missed out on them at a school level. Ndedi (2009) suggested that at a tertiary level, entrepreneurship should be introduced in all fields of the study, as all students may require such entrepreneurial competencies (Lowergren, 2006, in Ndedi, 2009).

The results for respondents’ age groups indicate that majority of the respondents comprised 18 (45%) who were between the ages of 26 and 30 years, followed by 17 (42.5%) who were between the ages of 31 and 35. Only 5 (12.5%) of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 25 years and non for those between the age bracket 16 and 20 years. Even though in the context of this study the targeted subjects were between the ages of 16 and 35, based on the results of the current study, the age group of 16-20 was not represented. In most cases young people in this age group are still studying at secondary schools. However, their young age should not hold them back from starting their own businesses, as some world-known successful entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates of Micro Soft (Inventors, 2013), Richard Branson of the Virgin Group (Branson, 2006) started their small businesses at early ages in their life. This underlines the need for aggressive measures in promoting entrepreneurship as early as in secondary schools. The aim will be to showcase and motivate learners to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

**Entrepreneurship / Business related information
 Respondents' Attitudes towards what encourages and discourages youth entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone**

Attitudes of respondents towards what encourage and discourages youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The responses were evaluated by assigning scores to each response. Strongly agree 1, agree 2, Neutral 3, Disagree 4 and Strongly Disagree 5. Mean scores were calculated and are presented in Table 4.6 below.

Figure 4.1 Involvement in a family business early in life provides a good entrepreneurial foundation



Source: Field data 2023

Figure 4.1: majority of the respondents in this research 34 (85.7 percent) indicated that they agree that involvement in a family business, early in life, would provide a good entrepreneurial foundation for those who want to set up a business, while the remainder 6 (14.3 percent) strongly agreed with the statement.

The results of this study indicate that there is overwhelming agreement that involvement in a family business early in life would provide a good entrepreneurial foundation for those who want to set up a business. These results could be related to previous suggestions made in the literature that the foot-steps of family members and role models that are entrepreneurially orientated and supportive, are likely to be followed by individuals who reside within the same environment (Lall & Sahai, 2008:24). Therefore, the important role, which these individuals can play in instilling and influencing an entrepreneurial spirit among those who are within their environment (especially parents to their children), should not be underestimated.

Table 4.2 Entrepreneurship education and training enabled the setting up of their businesses.

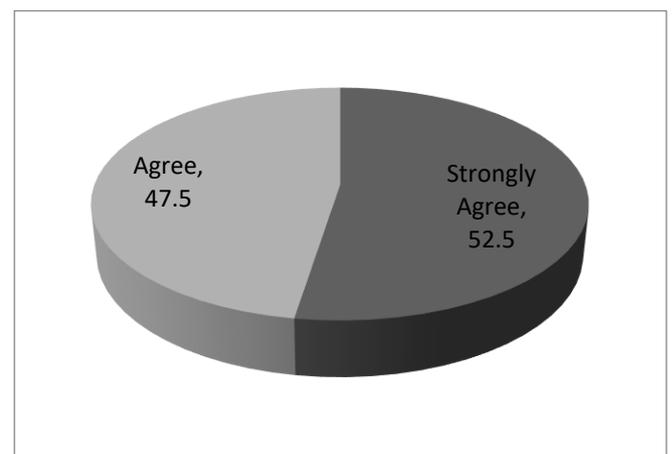
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Agree | 4 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| | Agree | 17 | 42.5 | 42.5 | 52.5 |
| | Disagree | 18 | 45.0 | 45.0 | 97.5 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 40 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field data 2023

Most respondents for this study (45 percent) disagreed that entrepreneurship education and training enabled the setting up of their businesses, followed by 42.5 percent who agreed. Conversely, 10 percent strongly agreed, while only 2.5 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement.

The results illustrated that for some participants, entrepreneurship education and training did not enable the setting up of their businesses, while others felt that it did. This happened because not all of these youth entrepreneurs were exposed to an entrepreneurship/business management course in a schooling environment while still studying. Therefore, the results of this study corroborate Ndedi's (2009:467) position that entrepreneurship must be introduced in all fields at the university level and be implemented at all levels. While for those young people that are school leavers, Mahadea et al. (2011: 67-68) believe that a culture of entrepreneurship among them should be explored, so as to play an extensive role in their well-being as well.

Figure 4.2 Funding for youth-owned business during the start-up phase

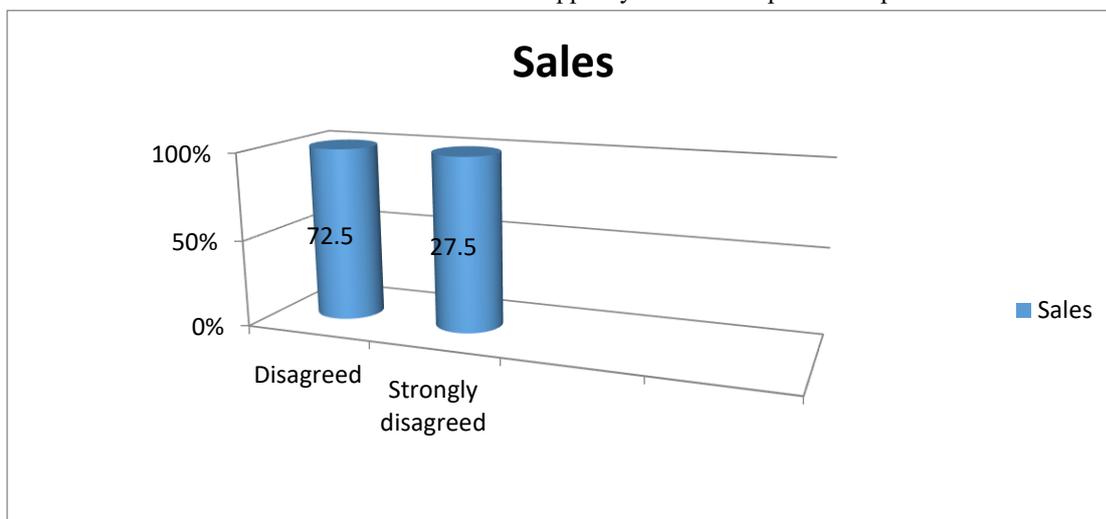


Source: Field data 2023

Figure 4.2: Majority of the respondents 21 (52.5 percent) who participated in the survey agreed that businesses like theirs usually start up with funds that are largely provided by owners, while 19 (47.5 percent) strongly agreed.

The results of this study showed that all the participants felt that businesses like theirs usually start up with funds that are largely provided by business owners. Such aspects as the need to start-up after schooling, lack of financial support from their families and friends, lack of savings and collateral, and difficulties in finding start-up capital, were common obstacles that could be identified as reasons why business ventures like theirs started with funds that are largely provided by owners. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that there was a need for easy access to business funding.

Figure 4.3: Easy access to funding from financial institutions that support youth entrepreneurship



Source: Field data 2023

A majority (72.5 percent) of the respondents for this study disagreed that it is easy for businesses like theirs, to obtain funding from financial institutions that support youth entrepreneurship, while a small percentage (27.5 percent) strongly disagreed.

The results show that all the participants felt that it is was not easy for businesses like theirs, to obtain funding from

financial institutions that support youth entrepreneurship. Aspects such as a lack of savings and collateral, lack of access to business funding information, and lack of access to business mentorships to help them draw up good business plans, were among the identified common obstacles that result in their inability to obtain business funding.

Table 4.3 Speed of process to register a business in Sierra Leone

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly Agree | 2 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| | Agree | 13 | 32.5 | 32.5 | 37.5 |
| | Disagree | 19 | 47.5 | 47.5 | 85.0 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 6 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 40 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field data 2023

Table 4.3 indicate that a large proportion of respondents (47.5 percent) disagreed that the process to register a business in Sierra Leone is quick, followed by 32.5 percent that agreed with the statement. Merely 15 percent strongly disagreed with the statement, while 5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed.

The results show that more participants felt that the process to register a business in Sierra Leone was not quick, whilst some were against this position. Some of them made use of agents who claimed that they would speed up the registration process of their businesses. Consequently, for some, the registration time was long and for some it did not take long.

Table 4.4 Cost of business registration

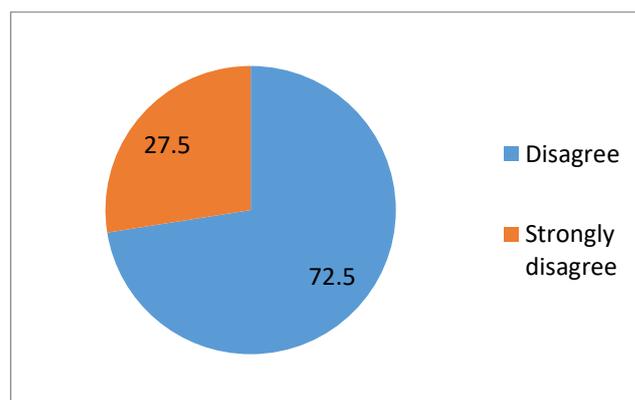
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Agree | 8 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Disagree | 26 | 65.0 | 65.0 | 85.0 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 6 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 40 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field data 2023

The results show that majority (65 percent) of the respondents disagreed that the process to register a business like theirs is not expensive. Some respondents (15 percent) strongly disagreed, while some (10 percent) agreed with this statement.

The study illustrates that a majority of the participants felt that the process to register a business like theirs was expensive. Factors such as lack of start-up capital, as well as possible additional costs charged by agents assisting with business registration of aspirant entrepreneurs, might have influenced the views for some of these youth entrepreneurs in this regard.

Figure 4.4: Continued demand for products and services of small businesses

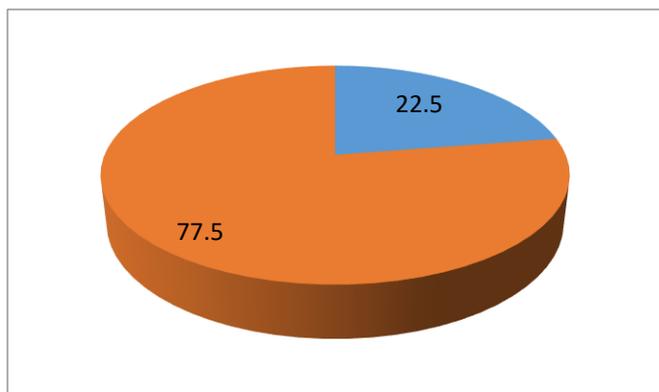


Source: Field data 2023

As far as the results are concerned, most of the respondents (72.5 percent) indicated that they agreed that the demand for their products and services in the market is likely to continue in future, while it was only 27.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed with the position.

Interestingly, a large number of the participants were positive that demand for their products and services in the market were likely to continue in future. Perhaps this is an indication of the level of optimism, which is a defining feature of entrepreneurs. This could also mean that their products and services are in demand in the market, in the sense that they meet the daily needs of end-users/customers.

Figure 4.5: Use of modern technologies in the daily operations of small businesses

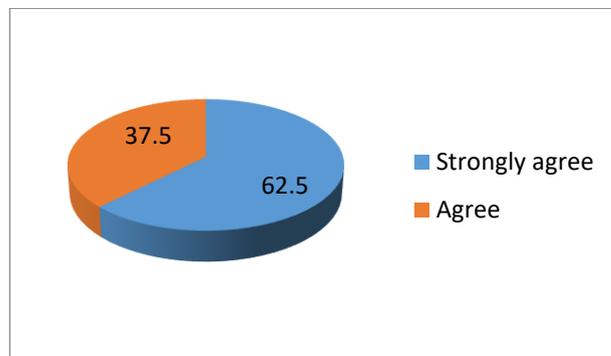


Source: Field data 2023

The above results indicate that most of the respondents 31 (77.5 percent) for this research agreed that businesses like theirs make use of modern technology in their daily operations, while 9 (22.5 percent) however, strongly agreed with this position.

The results showed that all the participants felt that businesses like theirs make use of modern technology in their daily operations. Perhaps this is because these youth entrepreneurs know and understand the importance of using superior business resources and capabilities such as modern technologies in order to gain and sustain a competitive advantage in the market. These modern technologies referred to in this study include, computers, printers, fax machines, telephone; building equipment; electric lawn mowers; electric stoves and microwaves; sewing machines, and so on, depending on the type of industry in which the business operates.

Figure 4.6: The entrepreneurship option for economic participation



Source: Field data 2023

A large percentage (62.5 percent) of the respondents indicated that they strongly agreed that entrepreneurship is the best option for economic participation rather than seek paid employment, while 37.5 percent agreed.

Based on the results of the study, all the participants felt that entrepreneurship is the best option for economic participation rather than seek paid employment. These results are important for this study, since they could be relating to Sandrock's (2011) ideal that a generation of employers would be much more advantageous than that of employees. To this end, she suggests that graduates from universities, as well as matriculants, should be equipped with entrepreneurial skills in order to create more jobs rather than to seek a paid job.

Table 4.5 Government programmes and support for youth entrepreneurship

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Agree | 1 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| | Disagree | 15 | 37.5 | 37.5 | 40.0 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 24 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 40 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Field data 2023

Most respondents (60 percent) that participated in this study strongly disagreed that the programmes of the Sierra Leone government are supportive of youth entrepreneurship, while 37.5 percent disagreed with this statement, and only 2.5 percent agreed. The results showed that there was overwhelming disagreement that programmes of the government were supportive of youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone.

4.6 Level of importance on factors discourages youth entrepreneurship

| | N Statistic | Minimum Statistic | Maximum Statistic | Mean | | Std. Deviation Statistic |
|---|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | Statistic | Std. Error | |
| Government programmes and support for youth entrepreneurship | 40 | 2 | 5 | 4.55 | .101 | .639 |
| Continued demand for products and services | 40 | 4 | 5 | 4.27 | .071 | .452 |
| Easy access to funding from financial institutions | 40 | 4 | 5 | 4.27 | .071 | .452 |
| Cost of business registration | 40 | 2 | 5 | 3.75 | .151 | .954 |
| Speed of process to register a business | 40 | 1 | 5 | 3.35 | .195 | 1.231 |
| Entrepreneurship education and training enabled the setting up of businesses. | 40 | 1 | 5 | 2.88 | .187 | 1.181 |
| Involvement in a family business early in life provides a good entrepreneurial foundation | 40 | 1 | 2 | 1.85 | .057 | .362 |
| Use of modern technologies in the daily operations of small businesses | 40 | 1 | 2 | 1.78 | .067 | .423 |
| Funding for youth-owned business during the start-up phase | 40 | 1 | 2 | 1.48 | .080 | .506 |
| The entrepreneurship option for economic participation | 40 | 1 | 2 | 1.37 | .078 | .490 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 40 | | | | | |

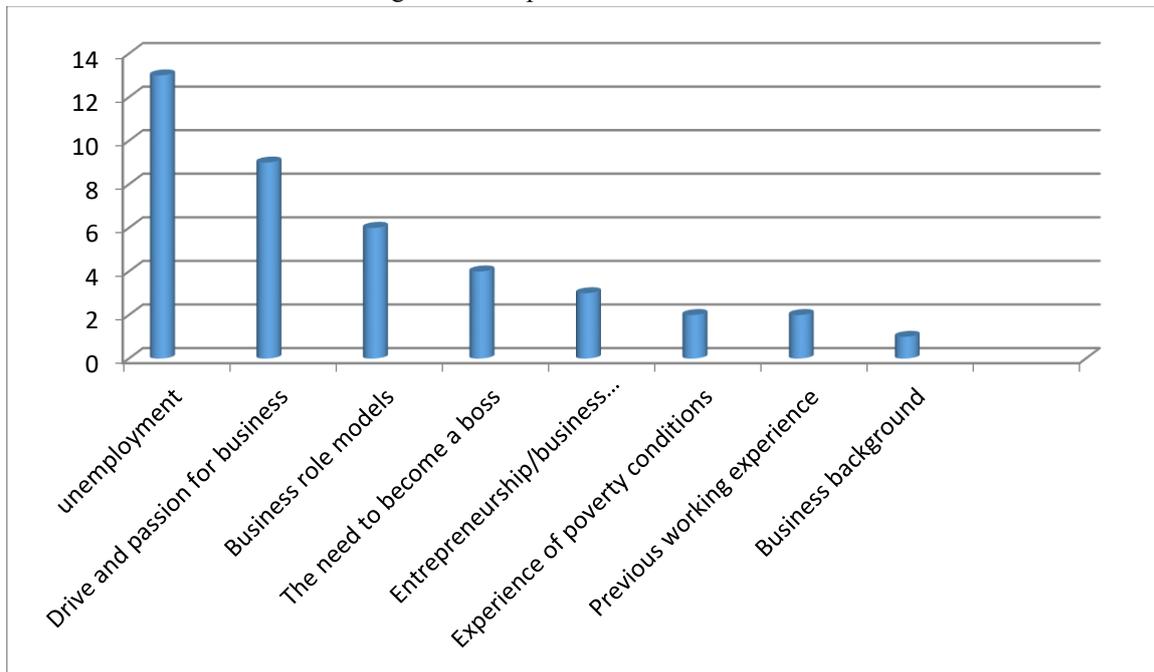
According to table 4.6 presented, the highest factors discouraging youth entrepreneurship in Sierra Leone are no government programmes and support for youth entrepreneurship in, low demand for products and services of small businesses, difficulties in access to funding from

financial institutions that support youth entrepreneurship, expensive cost of business registration, delay in the process to register a business and lack of entrepreneurship education and training discourages the setting up of their businesses.

Factors inspired participants to start-up a business

Factors that inspired participants of the study to start their own businesses are highlighted in a chronological order, starting from the factor with highest to lowest score achieved.

Figure: 4.7 Inspiration to start a business



Source: Field data 2020

Unemployment: Results of the current study show that 13 of the 40 (32.5 percent) participants indicated that unemployment was the main motivating factor for their business start-up. There are a variety of factors behind unemployment that pushed them to set-up their own businesses. Even though some of these youth entrepreneurs had completed their studies and some had dropped-out of school before starting their businesses, the main influences behind this factor included the following: the responsibility to financially take care of themselves and their families; use skills that they gained from their previous employment before their retrenchment; and setting-up a business as a trial for self-employment; and so on.

Drive and passion for business: A total of 9 of the 40 (22.5 percent) participants started their businesses as a result of a drive and passion for business. Some of these youth entrepreneurs were attracted by the fact that they had entrepreneurship exposure early in life from a family business. Some did it to effect a positive change in their communities at a profit. Others saw lucrative business opportunities and elected to explore them, while some were motivated by education and training, as well as technical that were gained from a schooling environment.

Business role models: A total of 6 of the 40 (15 percent) participants expressed that successful entrepreneurs, both globally and locally, inspired them in the setting-up of their

own businesses. Most of these participants cited Prof. Rev. Joseph Turay for the establishment of UniMak. Some mentioned their own parents, Bill Gates and so on as individuals who inspired the setting-up of their business ventures. Based on the results of the current study, it would seem that these business role models have played an influential role for some youth entrepreneurs to set up their businesses.

The need to become a boss: Four of the 40 participants (10 percent) indicated that the need to become an own boss encouraged them to set up their new businesses. Some of the participants were tired of taking orders from their previous bosses. Some were influenced by fear of unemployment, as youth unemployment is high in the country, and hence decided to take the initiative of becoming an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship/business education and training: Three of the 40 (7.5 percent) participants indicated that entrepreneurship/business education and training inspired them to start-up their own business, as they wanted to use the knowledge and skills of what they had learnt at school and put it into practice. Perhaps the view that entrepreneurship education and training plays a positive role in the success of a business venture (Sandrock, 2011) has played an influential role among these youth entrepreneurs in the setting-up of their own business ventures.

Experience of poverty conditions: Two of the 40 (5 percent) participants indicated that living under poverty conditions and the need to change those conditions for the better influenced them to start businesses of their own. Among these young people, some of them grew up living under poverty conditions, and did not wish for the legacy of poverty to carry on in their families. Hence engagement in entrepreneurship was seen as the first step to bringing them closer to realising this goal. Bolton and Thompson (2003:41) argue that entrepreneurs do not only come from rich contexts, but also emerge from poor backgrounds, and entrepreneurs who emerged from a poor background are likely to be hungrier for success and willing to do almost anything to see to it that their businesses succeed.

Previous work experience: Two of the 40 (5 percent) participants indicated that experience, knowledge and skills gained from previous employment encouraged them to start their own business. Knowledge and experience received from previous employment, as well as unsatisfactory working conditions had influenced a few of these youth entrepreneurs to set-up their businesses. Through their work experience they should have knowledge and access to invaluable business networks such as good suppliers and customers.

Business background: One of the 40 (2.5 percent) participants cited his upbringing under a family business environment as an influence, which resulted in the setting-up of his own business. These results suggest that most of these youth entrepreneurs do not come from families of entrepreneurs. Bolton and Thompson (2003:40) find another source argue that in a family business, a baton is always passed on to the children of the founder to carry on the legacy at some point in life.

Obstacles at business start-up

The results from this study indicate that almost all the participants admitted to having encountered some obstacles when setting up of their businesses. Some of the obstacles they made mention of are as discuss below:

Lack of start-up capital: The respondents of this study expressed that a lack of start-up capital was a key obstacle when setting up their business ventures. This corresponds with the findings of the research which suggest that access to business funding for these young people was a major stumbling block.

Lack of savings and collateral: Majority of the respondents cited that they were not in possession of any form of savings or collateral to secure business funding when they started their businesses. Aspects such as a lack of savings and a

lack of collateral to secure business funding, as well as inability to compile a proper business plan, also limited their chances of obtaining business funding from financial institutions, which offer financial products to small business owners in the country.

Cost of business resources: The participants also expressed their concerned about the high cost of business resources such as technological machinery, equipment, raw materials, and human resources. A few participants perceived factors such as the global recession, which has a likelihood of negatively affecting inflation, might have been influential on such high costs.

Lack of business management experience: Lack of business management experience by youth entrepreneurs during their first few months of operation can have dire consequences. Van Rensburg (2010) exemplifies entrepreneurship with golf.

Lack of business management skills: The respondents indicated that they lacked business management skills. These included administration, financial management, and marketing, human resource management and leadership skills. The literature of this study highlighted that entrepreneurs do come from all walks of life, and there are a variety of influences, which has impacted their emergence. This result seems to suggest that only few of these entrepreneurs did not acquire business education at school, but nevertheless decided to start-up their own businesses.

Lack of government support services: The participants expressed their concern over the lack of youth entrepreneurship development initiatives provided by the government of Sierra Leone. This is problematic, as government support programmes that should assist youth entrepreneurs to grow their businesses are inaccessible to most youth entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone.

Lack of networks: Six of the 77 (7.8 percent) stated that a lack of good business networks for business advice purposes for these youth entrepreneurs was one of the obstacles when setting up their businesses. This may not auger well for these youth entrepreneurs, because in the modern days they know-who seems to work better than the know-how. Therefore, if these youth entrepreneurs do not have the right business contacts who can add value to the existence and development of their businesses, then their chances of success for their businesses may be limited (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:192).

Lack of information: The participants expressed their concern over the lack of information about available business support structures, and the services and initiatives

that they offer youth entrepreneurs. These results suggest that youth entrepreneurs were not quite sure about such structures that the Sierra Leone government has created to assist with start-up and nurturing of their businesses.

The results illustrate that all the respondents who participated in this research replied positively to the question regarding current obstacles in the operation of their businesses. Some of the problems that these youth entrepreneurs have were inherited since the setting up of their business. Some of the problems stated by the youth's entrepreneurs were lack of expansion capital, lack of business resources, business management skills, lack of access to sourcing the right employees and lack of access to business information.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This research found that indeed, youth entrepreneurship development services were lacking in Sierra Leone. Therefore, youth entrepreneurs in this country are likely to miss out on a range of business development services, such as business advice, counselling, mentoring, finance, training and incubators, as a result of the absence of youth support structures. Therefore, it is safe to say that the inadequate youth entrepreneurship development in Sierra Leone is attributable to the lack of awareness and inaccessibility of entrepreneurship support structures and initiatives.

The absence of youth entrepreneurship support structures in Sierra Leone plays a negative role on the development of youth entrepreneurship in this country. This in fact may limit chances of expansion in an entrepreneurial venture. The research also discovers that there are numerous challenges faced by youth's entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone. Among them are, lack of start-up capital which is a primary obstacle to set up of a new business venture, lack of expansion capital was seen as one of the primary obstacles which hinders the exploration of growth opportunities amongst Sierra Leonean youth entrepreneurs. The process for registration of a business was also perceived as expensive by many respondents. This result suggests that measures to reduce the costs of the business registration for young people should be established.

Interestingly, in spite of the youth entrepreneurship challenges found by this study, some good prospects emerged. A continued growth in the population of youth entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone was established.

The degree of understanding business regulations that govern small businesses was quite substantial for youth entrepreneurs. It is interesting to note that these business regulations are understandable to these youth entrepreneurs, particularly since they form part of the regulatory red-tape. Awareness of the benefits of entrepreneurship could be associated with this position. Conversely, it is a well-established fact that both push and pull factors may enhance

an individual's attitude towards becoming entrepreneurs. Also, it was found that entrepreneurial skills could boost their business's chances of success. Similarly, managerial skills aid chances of success in the business. Hughes et al. (2005:1) further add that emotional intelligence may also play a positive role in the personal capacity of an entrepreneur, as well as the success of a small business venture. Therefore, it can be concluded that these skills would play a positive role in the success of any business venture. In addition, Van Rensburg (2010) argues that in order to achieve entrepreneurial performance, entrepreneurs should focus on developing themselves with these skills. Previous involvement in a family business provides a good entrepreneurial foundation for youth entrepreneurs. This position indicates the important role, which parents and other family members who run their businesses can play in educating and influencing entrepreneurial attitudes amongst young people in their families.

In summary, the current objectives of this study were met, as the research questions were answered. The current study discovered that it was not that young people in Sierra Leone did not want to pursue careers in entrepreneurship, but rather it was that youth entrepreneurship development was lacking in this community. Evident to this, is the fact that there are no government support structures available to assist youth entrepreneurs with the hindering factors that they encounter while setting up and managing their businesses. Despite this though, youth entrepreneurs show enthusiasm and determination in the operation of their business ventures. A growing interest amongst youth in entrepreneurship was also found. Perhaps the rest lies with other stakeholders. Therefore, Sierra Leone's government should pay more attention to the establishment of youth support structures in the country, as this would help to squeeze and ultimately seal the existing gaps in youth entrepreneurship development. The visibility of such youth entrepreneurship structures would help to sustain the interest of

entrepreneurship among youth, and also assist to establish and develop their entrepreneurial ventures. Overall, the importance of youth entrepreneurship development into

positively shaping the socio-economic landscape in the modern society should be taken seriously, by all the stakeholders in Sierra Leone, and the whole of Africa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Sierra Leone government should prioritise investment in youth entrepreneurship development initiatives, particularly in less advantaged communities. Such development initiatives should offer business development services that are tailored to nurture the business venture. These may include business advice, counselling, mentoring, finance, training and incubators. Nonetheless, extra attention should be paid to creating easy access to business funding for youth entrepreneurs, especially for those who have good business ideas, but lack start-up capital to execute their business ventures. Also, lack of start-up capital was among major obstacles into the development of youth entrepreneurial ventures. This could easily be possible if government support structures can be more visible in the less advantaged communities where they are also needed the most. In addition, such support structures should be located at the heart of Sierra Leone where there is access to public transportation.
- The country's government should provide continued support for youth entrepreneurship development at all stages of the business, including helping with expansion capital. This form of business funding may assist in acquiring more resources to help to expand their businesses and eventually create more job opportunities.
- Sierra Leones's government should take action to reduce costs that are associated with business registration for young people, as most of them lack requisite finances, particularly those who are fresh from a schooling environment and those from less advantaged backgrounds. This could encourage more and young aspiring entrepreneurs to come on board and execute their entrepreneurial ventures and hence contribute meaningfully to the economy of this country. Regarding business regulations, which govern youth business ventures, those that are less than one year old should receive tax amnesty, and only start paying tax after one year. Those funds could play a big role in the nurturing of the business venture.
- To maintain enthusiasm amongst youth entrepreneurship, strategies to encourage youth in engaging themselves in entrepreneurial activities should emerge and be correctly implemented. This could also be achieved through the creation of favourable business environment, where the business's support services are accessible to young people. This would also strengthen young aspiring and other youth entrepreneurs' self-esteem over their business, knowing that the business support that they need is merely a few miles away from their residential areas, or where they operate their business ventures.
- Conversely, private institutions such as banks and other microfinance institutions should introduce youth entrepreneurship funding as part of their services, and not take advantage of the vulnerability of the youth entrepreneurs when seeking for business funding by imposing high costs of capital in their offerings.
- Parents/grandparents who have operating businesses should expose their children to their businesses. This will ensure that business legacies will have the potential to carry on to the next generation. Nevertheless, education should be a priority for young people, as it develops intelligence that is useful in life and indeed for the business.
- Although these youth entrepreneurs felt that a continued demand for their products and services in the market is likely to continue in future, changes in the business environment are somewhat inevitable. Therefore, they need to use entrepreneurship skills such as innovation and creativity, as well as networking to remain competitive in the market. This can be achieved by accessing new markets or by creating new products and services.
- Interacting with more experienced entrepreneurs within the same industry and other youth entrepreneurship support structures for business know-how is advisable. Again, making use of secondary sources such as books and the Internet should be helpful to those youth entrepreneurs who lack business management experience.

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