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The effect of Entrepreneurial Orientation and Business Performance of Youth Entrepreneurs within the Tshwane Municipality in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The youth unemployment rate has increased at the fastest pace globally in recent times. It is estimated that there are about 88 million unemployed youth existing in the world. In the first quarter of 2023, 60.7 % of South African youth were unemployed. The youth unemployment rate in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (TMM) is 32.6 %. To reduce this trend, most young people look for alternative means of starting their businesses. Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is viewed as one of such tools for the youth to start their businesses. EO can also be seen as an effective strategy to improve the business performance of the youth. The purpose of the study is to assess the role of entrepreneurial orientation as a tool to improve the business performance of the youth in TMM. The study analysed data using a quantitative research methodology. Both close-ended and Likert-scale questions were used in developing the questionnaire. An online survey was used to collect the data. A total of 160 youth entrepreneurs on the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) database who were residing in the TMM constitute the sample population. A total of 160 questionnaires were therefore sent out to the youth entrepreneurs in TMM. Out of the total, 153 responses were obtained. Out of these responses, 96 questionnaires were completed in full, while 57 questionnaires were partially completed and 7 questionnaires were uncompleted. This gave the completed questionnaire's response rate of 60 %. The data was collected and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study showed that there was a weak correlation between EO and business performance with a correlation coefficient of 0.047. The results indicate a generally positive association of EO with business performance, which was measured in terms of innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness, competitive and aggressiveness. The participants were of the view that the youth businesses in TMM are very innovative, take risks, are proactive, and are competitively aggressive. The study has unearthed the connection between entrepreneurial orientation and business performance. The study recommends that entrepreneurial orientation must be encouraged among youth entrepreneurs in TMM which may aid their pro-activeness and improve business performances. The improve business performances of the youth entrepreneurs of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality would lead to their increase business success.

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1. Introduction

Globally, it has been estimated that there are about 88 million unemployed youth existing in the world [1]. Youth unemployment is three times higher than adults' employment worldwide [2]. In the first quarter of 2023, 60.7 % of the unemployed people were youth in South Africa [3]. In the past five years, unemployment in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (TMM) according to the 2011 census increased from 24.2 % to 26 % [4]. The youth unemployment rate in the TMM according to the 2023 demographics was 32.6 % [5]. This calls for an urgent provision of employment creation efforts focusing on youth [4,6]. Governments across the world including South Africa are increasingly recognising the positive impact that the creation of new businesses can have on the employment levels of the youth [7]. Research has identified that there is a growing enthusiasm for youth engagement in entrepreneurial activities in South Africa [8,9].

The youth's ability to venture into businesses at an early age focuses on new ideas that build new business formations leading to various entrepreneurial developments. Furthermore, such Small Businesses initiated by the youths can bring new job opportunities as well as competitive advantages to the marketplace [10]. This can end up generating employment opportunities for other youth and boost the economic growth of the nation.

The processes practices and decision-making strategies of an organisation that acts entrepreneurially constitute entrepreneurial orientation (EO) [13]. EO has five main components including innovativeness, pro-activeness, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy. According to Yaser and Mohammed [14], while there is a strong relationship between entrepreneurial intention and greater autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, are weakly related to entrepreneurial intention.

The orientation of youth entrepreneurs has effects on their business performances [4,15]. This implies that the way entrepreneurs operate their businesses would have a significant impact on their business performances [16,17]. Additionally, young entrepreneurs require entrepreneurial orientation leadership, which involve the capacity to recognise and seize business potential, foster innovation thinking, energise and inspire other youth businesses and take measured risks in order to accomplish their business objectives [18]. Because of the special opportunities and problems that young entrepreneurs may encounter, entrepreneurial orientation leadership is especially important for their business environment [18].

Adeyanju *et al.,* [4] and Kumadeka [19] opined that numerous young people are pulled or pushed to become entrepreneurs by necessity, rather than by choice. Being pulled and/or pushed into entrepreneurship is alluded to as entrepreneurial orientation (EO) [20]. According to Halabisky [21], promoting youth entrepreneurship does not only help reduce unemployment, but more importantly, provides young people with the alternative of shaping their destiny by starting their businesses, instead of waiting for jobs to be provided for them [21].

Business performance is always the main priority of every business manager. Therefore, an effective business management of by youth entrepreneurs will determine the overall performance of their businesses [22]. Business performance is a complex concept, which depends on the indicators used to assess it. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are measurable values that determine how effectively an individual, team or organization is achieving a business objective [23]. Business performance is very important to the economy for various reasons, including job creation, economic development and poverty alleviation. The way entrepreneurs operate their businesses has a significant impact on their business performance. With references to the new age technologies, most youth entrepreneurs are turning to digital marketing channels including website

marketing, pay-per-click advertising, social media marketing, email marketing, and content marketing to improve their business performances [11,12].

The lack of sustainable jobs is one of the causes of the high unemployment rate in South Africa. While the government and other established businesses tried to create more jobs, it remains insufficient for the majority of the youth in the country. The rich entrepreneurial skills embedded in the youth have been left untapped. However, most young people go about seeking non-existing jobs. In view of this, the study seeks to assess the role of entrepreneurial orientation as a tool to improve the business performances of the youth entrepreneurs within the Tshwane metropolitan municipality in South Africa.

2. Methodology

A systematic process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information (data) to increase the understanding of the phenomenon of interest as described by Goldsmith [24], was used. For this study, a quantitative research design was used because questionnaires and corresponding quantitative analytical procedures were used to collect the data based on the methodology used [25,26].

The sample population of the study was obtained (grant and voucher beneficiaries) from the National Youth Development Agency's (NYDA) database. The database contained the contact details of 200 youth participants. The participants were divided into grant and voucher beneficiaries. From the grant beneficiaries' a total of 80 youth were residing in TMM. Likewise, from the voucher beneficiaries' a total of 120 youth were residing in the TMM. All youth entrepreneurs on the list were in the age group between 18 and 35 years. The census sampling method was selected for the population study. The population consists of 160 youth entrepreneurs residing in TMM A total of 160 questionnaires were sent to the youth entrepreneurs. Out of the 200 questionnaires, a total of 153 responses were obtained and out of these responses, 96 questionnaires were completed in full, while 57 questionnaires were partially completed and 7 questionnaires were uncompleted. This gave the completed questionnaire's response rate of 60 %.

A structured questionnaire was used in this study. Closed-ended questions were employed in this study because they are easier and quicker for people to answer. The participants' demographics and information that was used included age, gender, ethnic group, highest academic qualifications as well as a part-time and full-time business, Industry, type of ownership, number of years in business and location.

Likert-scale questions were assigned according to their numerical rankings. The study used 4 sections of questionnaires consisting of a total of 11 closed-ended questions and 4 as well as 5-point Likert-scale questions. The 5-point Likert-scale questions ranged from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree (neutral), 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. The 4-point Likert-scale ranged from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree. Sections, 1, 2, 4.3, and 4.4 of the questionnaires were the close-ended questions. Section 3.1 of the questionnaire used a 5-point Likert-scale. Sections 3.2 and 4.1 of the questionnaires used a 4-point Likert-scale. The questionnaires were uploaded online and the link was provided to the participants. The participants were able to access the questionnaire once they had clicked on the shared web link. Twenty minutes were allocated for the completion of the questionnaire, which was then returned to the researcher. Validity and reliability tests were done using Cronbach's alpha method to calculate the internal consistencies of the data. Data was collected and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The main purpose of the study is to determine whether EO predicts business performance and analyse the relationship between EO and business performance.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Information and Nature of Business

Participants were requested to provide information on their demographics, the information included were, age, gender, ethnic group, and highest academic qualifications as well as a part-time and full-time business, industry, type of ownership, number of years in business and location.

3.1.1 Demographic information

The statistics obtained were as follows: According to the age of the 96 entrepreneurs that participated in this study, the majority (82%) were in the age group between 25 and 35 years, while 18% were between the age group 18 and 24 years. Findings of gender revealed that 67.7% of the entrepreneurs who participated in this study were females. Male entrepreneurs who participated in this study constituted 32.3% of the total number of participants. Entrepreneurs of African origin were the majority, constituting 99% of the total number of entrepreneurs who took part in the study. There was only one white entrepreneur who participated.

The results of the qualifications show that 33.3% of the participants were holders of a post-graduate degree, 27.1% have a post-matric certificate post, 18.8% have a diploma, 15.6% hold an undergraduate university degree, and 5.2% are holders of matric/grade 12 certificates. There were no participants with a lower than matric level of education.

3.2 Nature of Business Demographics

Distribution of all employees, both full-time and part-time in the businesses was assessed 95.8% of the respondents employed between 11 and 20 employees in their operations, while 3.2% employed between 21 and 50 employees, both full-time and part-time in the business. Only 1% had 51 and above employees. None of the participants employed less than 11 employees in their business. This confirms that youth entrepreneurs contribute to job creation in the TMM.

The distribution of participants according to the industry shows that 57.3% of the participants were in the retail distribution industry, while 11.5% were in the finance and business services. Some 9.4% were operating in the electricity, gas and water industries, while 8.3% were operating in the manufacturing and transport communication industries respectively. Real estate, renting and business activities presented 4.2%, catering and accommodation as well as other trades were represented albeit with as low as 1%. There were no participants operating in the agriculture, construction and wholesale trade industries.

Distribution of participants according to the type of ownership revealed that the majority (50%) of the businesses were close corporations, while 24% were in partnerships. Private Company (Pty) Ltd accounted for 11.5%, co-operatives accounted for 9.4%, and business trusts were 5.1%. No participants were sole proprietors. The distribution of participants according to number of years in business was analysed and out of 96 participants, 89.6% confirmed that they were in business between 6 and 10 years, and 10.4% stated that they have been operating for more than 10 years. There were no participants operating in business for less than 5 years. This experience is of great value in this study in that, it provides informed inputs on the total years in which participants are operating their businesses.

The distribution of participants according to location shows that a total of 40.6% of the businesses were located in the Tshwane Central Business District (CBD), 3.1% were located in Tshwane industrial areas and 1% was located in a Tshwane township. No participants were located

in Tshwane informal settlements. The highest (55.3%) of the participants selected the option "Other", which means they were located in other parts of Tshwane, namely Akasia, Atteridgeville, Bronberg, Bronkhorstspruit, Centurion, Crocodile River, Cullinan/Rayton/Refilwe, Eersterust, Ekangala, Elands River, Ga-Rankuwa, Hammanskraal, Laudium, Mabopane, Mamelodi, Pienaarsriver, Pretoria, Soshanguve, Rethabiseng, Roodeplaat, Temba and Winterveld. This indicates that the number of participants operating in other parts of TMM was higher than those that operated in the TMM.

3.3 Descriptive Statistics of Entrepreneurial Orientation

The questionnaires aimed to capture the participant's perspective on the overall EO and the four characteristics of EO, namely: innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness and competitive aggressiveness. They were described using basic statistics that included the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. The business performances were also described using the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis.

The reliability of the above elements was described using Cronbach's alpha. The Likert scale was used in the questionnaire, and this scale required participants to indicate their level of agreement regarding the different characteristics of EO. The 5-point Likert-scale ranged from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree (neutral), 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. The 4-point Likert-scale ranged from 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	Stand. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
Overall EO	4.82	0.89	-0.89	0.19	0.92
Innovativeness	4.92	1.04	-1.07	0.20	0.87
Risk-taking	4.85	1.09	-1.03	0.76	0.83
Pro-activeness	4.76	0.89	-0.62	0.28	0.69
Competitive aggressiveness	4.62	1.14	0.56	-0.58	0.62
Business performance	4.21	0.48	-0.21	-0.05	0.88

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics relating to the variables being investigated, namely EO, and business performance (mean, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis to indicate the internal consistency of the Cronbach's alpha). In terms of the EO variables, innovativeness recorded the highest mean score (M = 4.9; SD = 1.04), followed by Overall EO (M = 4.82; SD = 0.89) and Risk-taking (M = 4.85; SD = 1.09) respectively. Pro-activeness also recorded a high mean score (M = 4.76; SD = 0.89), as well as competitive aggressiveness (M = 4.62; SD =1.14), pull factors (M = 4.21; SD = 0.44) and business performance (M = 4.21; SD=0.48).

Skewness values for the EO variables and business performance variables were low and ranged between -0.21 and 0.56. The positive and negative signs were indicative of skewness to the left and right [27]. The kurtosis values ranged between -0.05 and 0.76 and fell within the -1 and above the +1-normality range recommended coefficients [27]. Except for the pro-activeness and competitive aggressiveness variables, all the other variables recorded Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.75 to 0.92, which were above the 0.70 threshold for reliability.

3.3.1 Frequency

The perceptions of participants on EO (innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness, competitive aggressiveness), as well as the business performance of youth entrepreneurs were analysed using frequencies and percentages.

3.3.2 Entrepreneurial orientation

This section covers section 3 of the questionnaire, namely EO, which included innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness and competitive aggressiveness. Responses were assessed on a 5-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree (neutral), 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

3.3.3 Innovativeness

This subsection presents the analysis of the innovativeness of youth entrepreneurs in TMM using frequencies and percentages. For the item 'Business regularly introduces new products/services', a total of 51 (53.1%) participants agreed that youth entrepreneurs in the TMM regularly introduced new products/services, while 22 (22.9%) strongly agreed. On the contrary, 16.7% of the participants expressed neutral views on this matter (neither agreed nor disagreed); 4 (4.2%) disagreed that youth entrepreneurs in the TMM regularly introduced new products/services, while 3 (3.1%) strongly disagreed.

The results also show participants' behaviour on whether they place a strong emphasis on innovative products/services. Out of the 96 participants, 54 (56.3%) agreed that youth entrepreneurs in TMM place a strong emphasis on innovative products/services, while 24 (25.0%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, 15 (15.6%) of the participants expressed neutral opinions on this matter. In addition, 2 (2.1%) disagreed, while 1 (1.0%) strongly disagreed.

The results show that 45 participants, (46.9%) were those whose businesses were continuously pursuing new opportunities. Forty-three of them (44.8%) strongly agreed, 6 (6.3%) expressed neutral opinions, while 2 (2.1%) strongly disagreed. However, some of the participant's product lines also change dramatically. Out of those participants, product lines that changed dramatically, a total of 30 (31.3%) were in disagreement, 26 (27.1%) were neutral, and 25 (26.0%) agreed. Of the lower percentages, 10 (10.4%) strongly agreed, and 5 (5.2%) strongly disagreed.

Responses on the test item 'Changes in my product lines have been quite dramatic' show that the businesses of some of the participants have a strong relationship between the number of new ideas generated and the number of innovative ideas successfully implemented. A total of 43 (44.8%) were in agreement that there is a strong relationship between the number of new ideas generated and the number of new ideas successfully implemented, while 27 (28.1%) strongly agreed. However, 19 (19.8%) had neutral opinions, 6 (6.3%) disagreed, and 1 (1.0%) strongly disagreed.

3.3.4 Business places a strong emphasis on continuous improvement in product/service delivery

Some of the participants admit that their business places a strong emphasis on continuous improvement in product/service delivery. A total of 45 (46.9%) of the participants strongly agreed, and 44 (45.8%) were in agreement. On the other hand, 5 (5.2%) were neutral, and 2 (2.1%) were in strong disagreement. Participants also responded on whether they believe that innovation is an

absolute necessity for the future of the business. The results show that 52 (54.2%) of the participants strongly agreed that innovation is an absolute necessity for the future of the business, 42 (43.8%) agreed, and 2 (2.1%) were neutral in opinion. None of the participants gave a negative response to the necessity of innovation for the future of the business.

3.3.5 Risk-taking

This subsection presents the analysis of the risk-taking of youth entrepreneurs in TMM using frequencies and percentages. When confronted with uncertain decisions, some participants acknowledged that their businesses typically adopt a bold posture to maximise the probability of exploiting opportunities. Participants' responses to the above statement show that 58 (60.4%) disagreed with the statement, 18.8 (18.8%) had a neutral viewpoint, and 16 (16.7%) agreed. Very low percentages, that is, 3 (3.1%) strongly agreed, and 1 (1%) strongly disagreed.

In general, 27 (28.1%) of the participants were in agreement with business to have a strong inclination towards high-risk projects. However, some of the participants' reactions were negative as a total of 28 (29.2%) of the participants disagreed, whereas 21 (21.9%) were neutral in opinion, 20 (20.8%) strongly agreed, and 1% of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement.

On the item 'Employees are often encouraged to take calculated risks concerning new ideas' the response shows that some participants are often encouraged to take calculated risks concerning new ideas. A total of 40 (41.7%) were in disagreement, 34 (35.4%) participants were neutral, 13 (13.5%) agreed, and 9 (9.4%) strongly agreed. No participants strongly disagreed with the statement. The term "risk-taker" is considered a positive attribute for employees in most participants' businesses. Participants' responses, on the term "risk-taker" are considered a positive attribute for employees in their business. The results show that 35 (36.5%) of participants were neutral on this statement, 30 (31.3%) disagreed, 19 (19.8%) agreed, 11 (11.5%) strongly agreed, and 1 (1.0%) strongly disagreed.

3.3.6 Pro-activeness

This subsection presents the analysis of the pro-activeness of youth entrepreneurs in TMM using frequencies and percentages. The response on the item 'My business is very often the first to introduce new products/services indicates that a total of 34 (35.4%) of participants agreed, while 26 (27.1%) disagreed. Comparatively, 20 (20.8%) were neutral in opinion, 13 (13.5%) strongly agreed, and 3 (3.1%) strongly disagreed with the statement.

The responses of the participants on whether their businesses typically initiate actions that competitors respond to revealed that 39 (40.6%) disagreed with this statement, while 21 (21.9%) were neutral in opinion. On the other hand, 17 (17.7%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively, and 2 (2.1%) strongly disagreed. The responses from the participants, on if their businesses continue to seek out new products/services show that 44 (45.8%) strongly disagreed with this statement, 43 (44.8%) disagreed, 7 (7.3%) were neutral, 2 (2.1%) agreed, while none of the participants strongly agreed with this statement.

Some of the participants admitted that their businesses continuously monitor market trends and identify the future needs of customers. The results from the participants show that their business continuously monitors market trends and identifies the future needs of customers. A total of 46 (47.9%) agreed with this statement, and 42 (43.8%) strongly agreed. Notably, 8 (8.3%) were neutral, while none of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement.

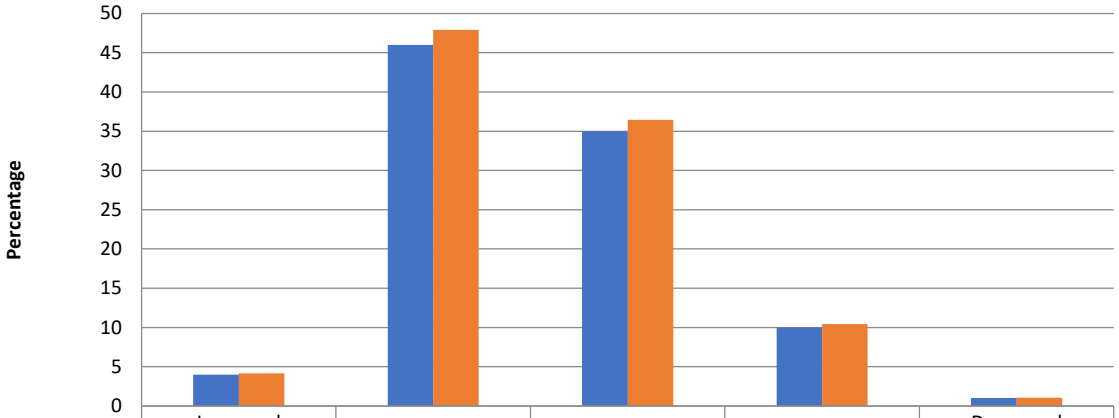
3.3.7 Competitive aggressiveness

This subsection presents the analysis of the competitive aggressiveness of youth entrepreneurs in TMM using frequencies and percentages. From the participants' responses on whether their businesses are competitive to overcome threats posed by competitors, out of 96 participants, a total of 49 (51.0%) of them disagreed, while 29 (30.2%) had a neutral opinion. However, some 10 (10.4%) of the participants agreed, 8 (8.3%) strongly agreed, while none of the participants strongly disagreed with this statement.

The responses to the item 'My business participates in marketing through aggressive advertising' indicate that 24 (25.0%) of the participants disagreed, and 23 (24.0%) agreed and strongly agreed respectively. On the contrary, 15 (15.6%) of the participants were neutral, and 11 (11.5%) strongly disagreed with this statement. Participants responded on whether their businesses implemented strategies that promote competitive aggressiveness to gain an increased market share. The results reveal that 36 (37.5%) of the participants disagreed, while 27 (28.1%) agreed, 16 (16.7%) were neutral in opinion, 12 (12.5%) strongly agreed, and 5 (5.2%) strongly disagreed.

3.4 Business Performance of Youth Entrepreneurs

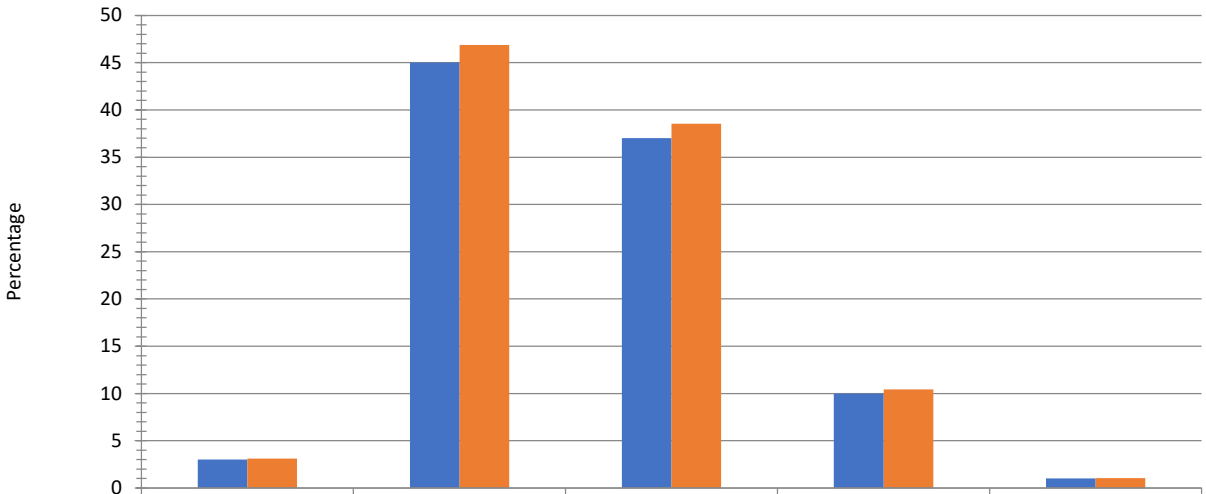
The questionnaire covered the performance of the business for the past 3 years (2015-2017), and it was evaluated on a 5-point Likert-scale which ranged from 1=decreased significantly, 2=decreased, 3=remains the same, 4=increased and 5=increased significantly. This subsection presents the analysis of the business performance of youth entrepreneurs in TMM using frequencies and percentages. Figure 1 shows participants' responses on 'The overall level of financial performance, including company profit and net financial results.



	Increased significantly	Increased	Remains the same	Decreased	Decreased significantly
Frequency	4	46	35	10	1
Percentage	4.2	47.9	36.5	10.4	1.0

Fig. 1. The overall level of financial performances e.g. company profit, net financial results

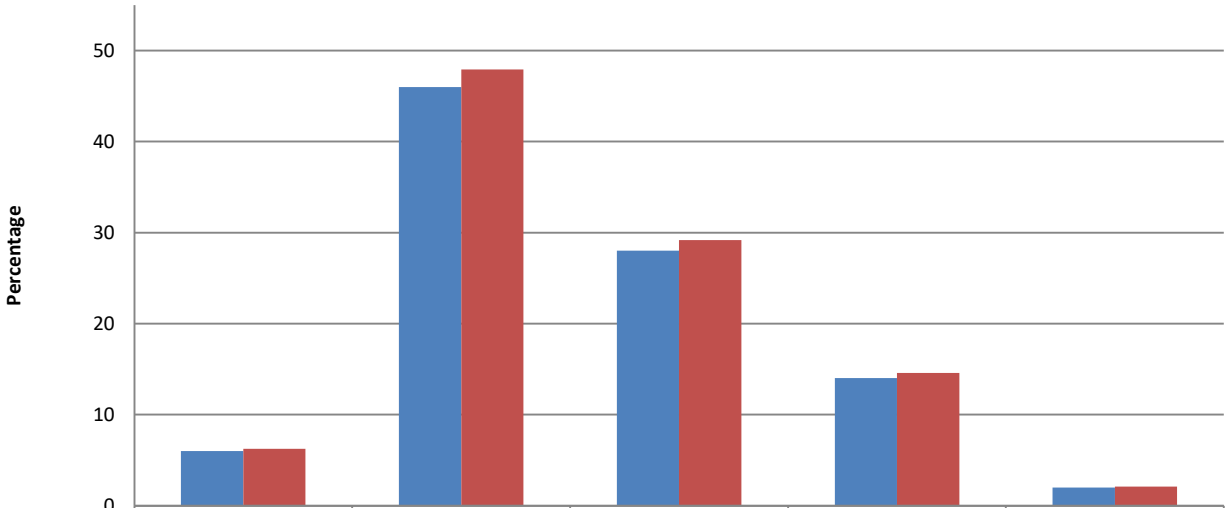
The results shown that, overall level of financial performances range between, 46 (47.9%) and 1 (1.0%). Figure 2 is a summary of participants' responses on 'The profitability of the business in comparison with other businesses in the same industry.



	Increased significantly	Increased	Remains the same	Decreased	Decreased significantly
Frequency	3	45	37	10	1
Percentage	3.1	46.9	38.5	10.4	1.0

Fig. 2. The profitability of the business in comparison with other businesses in the same industry

The results showed business profitability increases ranging between 45 (46.9 %) and 3 (3.1 %). The remaining 1(1.0 %) had a significant decrease in profitability. Figure 3 is the summary of participants' responses on 'The competitiveness of the business in comparison with other businesses in the same sector'.



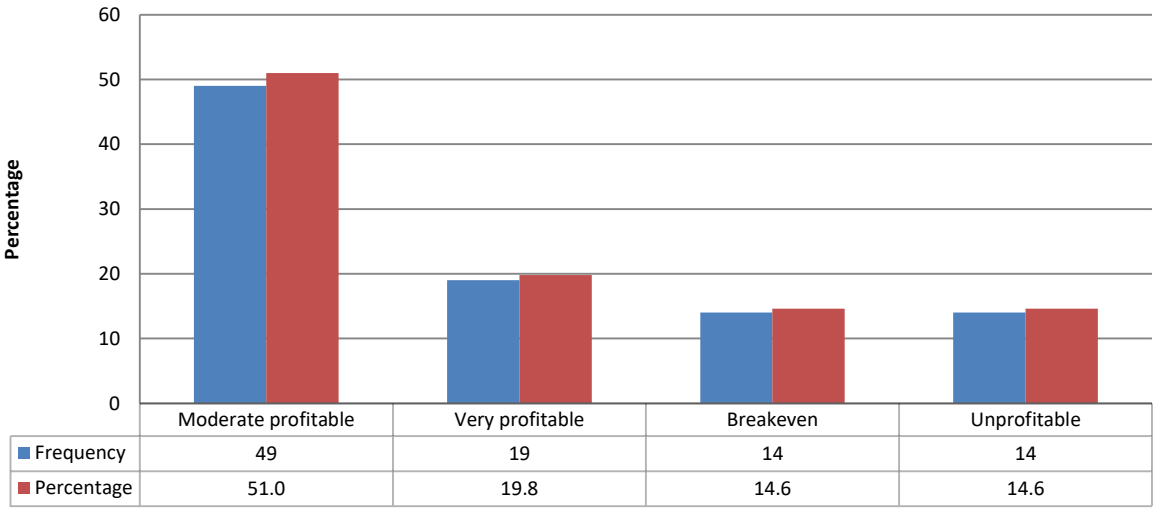
	Increased significantly	Increased	Remain the same	Decreased	Decrease significantly
Frequency	6	46	28	14	2
Percent	6.3	47.9	29.2	14.6	2.1

Fig. 3. The competitiveness of the business in comparison with other businesses in the same sector

The competitiveness of the business increase ranges from, 46 (47.9 %) indicated and 28 (29.2 %) indicated that it remained the same, 14 (14.6%) indicated that business competitiveness decreased, 6 (6.3%) indicated that it increased significantly, and 2 (2.1%) indicated that business competitiveness decreased significantly.

3.4.1 Assessment of the profitability of participants' businesses

Figure 4 is the rundown of the participant's responses on the assessment of the profitability of the business.



	Moderate profitable	Very profitable	Breakeven	Unprofitable
Frequency	49	19	14	14
Percentage	51.0	19.8	14.6	14.6

Fig. 4. An assessment of the profitability of your business

Most participants, that is, 49 (51 %) indicated that their businesses were making moderate profit, while 19 (19.8 %) indicated that their businesses were very profitable. Further, a total of 14 (14.6 %) participants indicated that their businesses were unprofitable, and the same percentage indicated that their businesses were break-even. Assessments of the turnover of participants' businesses over the past 2 years are using the questionnaire. The participants could select between eight options, as summed up in Figure 5.

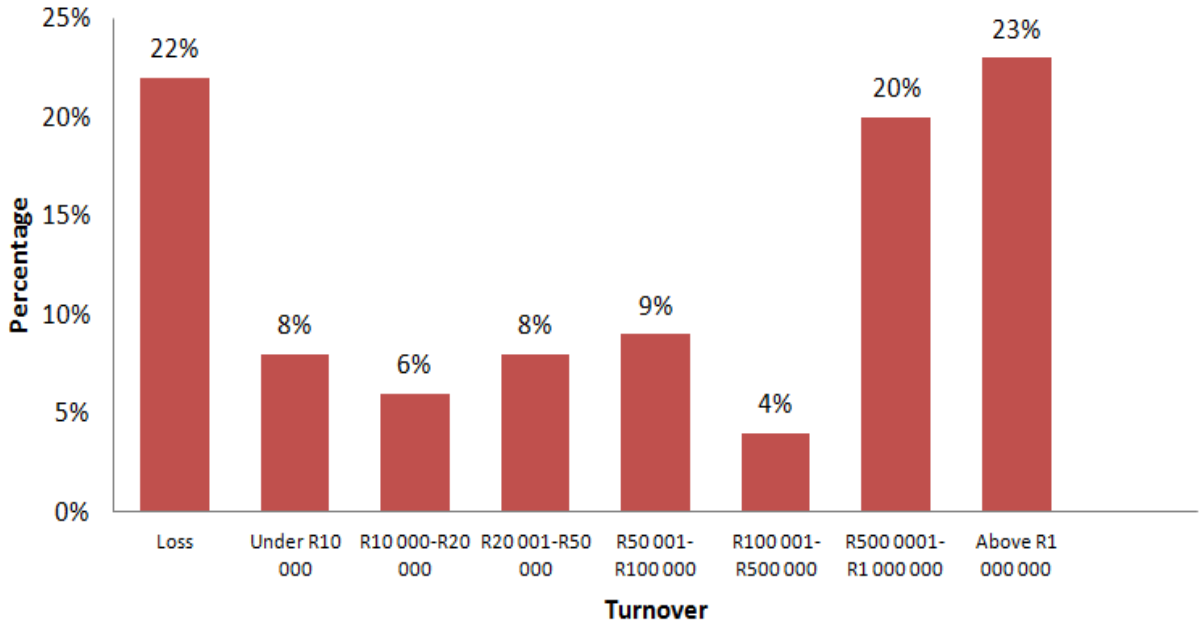


Fig. 5. Turnover of the businesses over the past 2 years

The results are as follows: 22 (23 %) indicated a turnover above R1 000 000; 19 (20 %) were between R500 0001-R1 000 000; 4 (4 %) of the participants were between R100 001-R500 000, and 9 (9 %) were between R500 001 and R100 000. Further, the results show that 8 (8 %) indicated that they are making a turnover between R20 001 and R50 000; 6 (6 %) indicated that they are making a turnover between R10 000 and R20 000; 8 (8 %) were only making a turnover under R10 000; and lastly, 22 (22 %) indicated that they make a loss.

3.4 Discussion

The outcomes of the study demonstrate that EO is a major factor in determining a business's success or failure. Additionally, EO can help companies find possibilities to start new projects. EO can also be look at as a way to create strategies that work for corporate success by using efficient decision-making procedures which can be supported by special elements such as personal orientation, work experience, education, family, role models and culture.

The study also indicated that EO does not predict the business performance of youth entrepreneurs in TMM, most likely because of weak EO, which puts appropriate structures in place that can expose these businesses to new technologies, methods, and marketplace trends, as well as help them to evaluate new possibilities.

The results indicate generally positive sentiments on the EO on businesses, which was measured in terms of innovativeness, risk-taking, pro-activeness and competitive aggressiveness. The participants were of the view that the youth businesses in TMM are very innovative, take risks, are proactive, and competitively aggressive. Further, the results have shown that participants were largely of the view that youth entrepreneurial businesses' performance in terms of profitability, competitiveness and overall level of financial performance has increased in comparison with other businesses in the same industry.

EO has a positive impact on the overall results of business performance of the youth entrepreneurs of TMM such as their company's profit. The net financial results of the youth were reviewed and most participants (47.9%) indicated that, their financial performances increased significantly as (36.5%) of the youth indicates that their business profitability remains and 10.4% of the youth indicate that, their financial performance decreased. Only (4.2%) of the youth indicated that their financial performance increased significantly and 1% indicated that their business decreased significantly. The increase in the business performance of the youth entrepreneurs of TMM lead to the success of their businesses as (61.5%) of the youth participants indicated that, their turnover had increases significantly and 62,5% indicated that their profit had increased. However, (52.1%) of the participants in total agreed that their sales had increased. Additionally, (55.2%) of participants concurred that their company's competitive positions have improved and (55.2%) of the participants concurred that their firms had seen an increase in effectiveness when asked if youth enterprise were becoming more effective. Of those surveyed, 58.3% felt that their company's efficiency had also increased.

A relationship between EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs was analysed using correlation analysis. It was established that the association between EO and business performance of youth entrepreneurs was positive but weak with a correlation coefficient of 0.047. Innovativeness and business performance of youth entrepreneurs demonstrated a weak association with a correlation coefficient of 0.041, which was not significant ($p > 0.05$). Competitive aggressiveness and business performance of youth entrepreneurs demonstrated positive but with a very weak association, with a correlation coefficient of 0.002 which was not significant ($p > 0.05$). Innovativeness and business performance of youth entrepreneurs demonstrated a weak

association with a correlation coefficient of 0.041, which was not significant ($p > 0.05$). Competitive aggressiveness and business performance of youth entrepreneurs demonstrated a positive but with a very weak association, with a correlation coefficient of 0.002 which was not significant ($p > 0.05$).

Through the use of multiple linear regressions, it was found that the performance of young entrepreneurs' businesses was significantly influence by EO ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, factors of EO such as innovativeness, risk-taking, proactivity and competitive aggression did not appear to have any statistically significant impact on business performance of youth entrepreneurs in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

In the TMM, young entrepreneurs had little knowledge about the opportunities, training and skills that were available to them. This study will raise their awareness of these opportunities. The study's findings thus demonstrated that EO has an impact on the business performance of the youth entrepreneurs of TMM. The study's findings offer a fresh perspective on the relationship between EO and business performance on the youth entrepreneurs of TMM. It can therefore be concluded that EO and business performance have significant influence on the youth within the TMM. Therefore, most Tshwane youth are oriented entrepreneurially to improve their business performances.

4. Conclusions

The results of the study therefore illustrated that EO influences the business performance of youth entrepreneurs. The results of the study provide new insights into EO and business performance and how they correlate with each other.

According to the findings presented in Table 1, the findings indicated that the p-value for the association between EO and business performance was greater than the 0.05 threshold. This meant the research findings suggested that there was no statistical evidence to suggest a relationship between EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs. Furthermore, a correlation analysis indicated that the association between EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs was positive but weak, with a correlation coefficient of 0.047.

In the same vein, the findings indicated that there was no statistical evidence to suggest that a relationship exists between EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs. Furthermore, a correlation analysis indicated that there was an association between EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs. However, unlike the positive and strong relationship between overall EO and the business performance of youth entrepreneurs revealed by the theory findings, the study's findings were positive but weak, with a correlation coefficient of 0.047. The study further highlighted that the implementation of entrepreneurially focused strategies would lead to improved business performance. This further supported the fact that EO and business performance have a strong relationship. An increase in EO would have a positive and a strong impart on the business performances of the Youth Entrepreneurs of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

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