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Perceived Access to Finance, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Attitude Toward Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Ability, and Entrepreneurial Intentions: A Botswana Youth Perspective

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Abstract

Governments in emerging markets in Africa need to focus more on the factors that drive the entrepreneurial ability of the youth on the continent. This approach is required to lower unemployment levels through self-employment and stimulating entrepreneurial intentions among graduates. Considering this, the research aimed to determine the factors influencing youth entrepreneurial ability and their effect on entrepreneurial intentions. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey from 347 youths enrolled at five universities in Botswana and analyzed through structural equation modeling to test the formulated hypotheses. The results established that perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship positively influence entrepreneurial ability. In addition, entrepreneurial ability was found to positively affect entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, it is important for universities in developing markets like Botswana to stimulate entrepreneurial thinking through curriculum development and establishing a positive mindset that will stimulate the development of goals and the understanding that failure is not always a negative outcome or characteristic.

Keywords

attitude toward entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial ability, entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived access to finance

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has been identified as a prime area for solving some of the social challenges that economies face, such as reducing unemployment (Ambad & Damit, 2016; Ndofirepi, 2020; Neneh, 2014; Nieuwenhuizen & Swanepoel, 2015). Botswana has been experiencing high levels of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, which currently stands at 17.7%, while youth unemployment is worrisome at 35.67% (The World Bank, 2018). As reported by the *Daily News* ("Mixed reaction in parliament to Masisi Maiden SONA," 2018, p. 3), Botswana President Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi reiterated that the government is addressing national challenges, including "the twin problems of poverty and unemployment particularly among our young people who constitute 60 percent of this country's population." The government's educational investment constitutes one of the highest in the world—about 9% of the gross domestic product—but has not created requisite credence attributes (The World Bank, 2018). In this context, tertiary institutions in Botswana have been involved heavily in inculcating an entrepreneurial spirit in students by offering entrepreneurship courses (Mafela, 2009) to address the challenges alluded to by the president of Botswana. In the context of this study, a youth is defined by the African Union (2006, p. 3) as "every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years."

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According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2017), youth unemployment remains extremely high, with a sharp decline in the youth labor force in the past 20 years. Exacerbating the situation is the fact that there has been a marked increase in the number of youths operating in the informal sector (76.7%), with 70.9 million unemployed youths globally by 2017. Research confirms that youths are three times as likely as adults to be unemployed, which is concerning. The ILO (2017) projects that by 2030, 77% of the youth labor force (individuals between the ages of 15 and 24) will be in developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. The foregoing statistics are evidence of the current and anticipated future youth challenges. Governments across the globe are now focusing on youth entrepreneurship as a key component in addressing youth unemployment by including youths into the labor force (Holt, 2020). Holt (2020) further argued that youth entrepreneurship should focus on three specific areas: "(i) supporting the development of youth-led new enterprises; (ii) supporting new enterprises and enterprise growth to create new jobs that may employ young people; and (iii) enhancing youth employment prospects by developing underpinning skills and experience" (p. 6). Most governments are now supporting youth entrepreneurial initiatives through youth-led enterprises by advancing finance to the new start-ups, for instance, in Botswana, the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA) and the Youth Development Fund, which is administered through the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sport and Culture Development.

One of the key components of youth entrepreneurship is entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurial intentions refer to the inner personal conviction individuals have regarding their being prepared/propelled to initiate a new business venture and continuously plan to accomplish this in future (Farrukh et al., 2018; Fayolle & Liñán, 2014; Ridha et al., 2017). Extant literature confirms that intention is a predictor of actual behavior, which normally results in an individual undertaking a planned entrepreneurial activity (Fatoki, 2010; Neneh, 2014). Entrepreneurial intention has been confirmed as the first step toward the initiation of a new business enterprise in the near or distant future, hence it is an important construct in the field of entrepreneurship that should be considered. Entrepreneurial intention has been a subject of immense research over the last three to four decades (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014; Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Ndofirepi, 2020). The popularity of entrepreneurial intentions was based on prominent intention theories, such as the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), the theory of implementing entrepreneurial ideas (Bird, 1988), and the theory of entrepreneurial event (Shapero & Sokol, 1982).

Many research studies across the globe have focused on youth entrepreneurship by investigating the intentions of youths at tertiary institutions embarking on the establishment of entrepreneurial enterprises (Agbim et al., 2013; Ambad & Damit, 2016; Ekpe & Mat, 2012; Fayolle & Liñán, 2014; Khuong & An, 2016; Liñán & Fayolle, 2015; Marire & Dhurup, 2018; Ndofirepi, 2020; Neneh, 2014; Pfeifer et al., 2016). A great deal of these studies focused on entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial ability, self-efficacy, personality characteristics, and attitudes mainly using Ajzen's (1991) TPB. The TPB has three basic components: attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991; Segal et al., 2005). The TPB posits that the behavior of an individual is a culmination of multiple factors, which include the consideration of the resources available, the individual's attitude, and the opinion of others. Ajzen (1985) postulated that the performance of an action by an individual is determined by the individual's intention to attain the behavior, whilst the intention is based on the individual's attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude refers to the positive or negative connotation or feeling an individual possesses in performing a behavior. Cheung and To (2017) averred that a subjective norm is the perceived social pressure that emanates from associates, friends, and family members to perform or not perform a certain behavior (in this instance, starting a new entrepreneurial venture). Personal attitudes and perceived behavior have been confirmed to be working indirectly with social norms in propelling the individual's intention toward entrepreneurship (Maes et al., 2014). Therefore, this research is underpinned by the TPB, since there is consensus in most literature that entrepreneurial intentions can be determined by using the TPB (Ambad & Damit, 2016; García-Rodríguez et al., 2015; Jarvis, 2016; Ramadani et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2014).

Research on entrepreneurship within the broader context of the African continent is predominantly Malawian, Nigerian, and South African (Fatoki, 2010; Marire & Dhurup, 2018; Mwatsika, 2015; Shamsudeen et al., 2017). Most of these studies, coupled with those conducted outside Africa, have explored various factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions, such as entrepreneurial education, access to resources, social environment, entrepreneurial orientation, innovativeness, and risk-taking (Ekpe & Mat, 2012; Fayolle & Liñán, 2014; Khuong & An, 2016; Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). In addition, Liñán and Fayolle (2015) posited that there is acute paucity of empirical literature on the relationship between entrepreneurial ability, entrepreneurial intentions, and action, especially among the youth. This assertion is supported by Ambad and Damit (2016), who argued that there is limited research focusing on the factors that influence students' intentions to launch new start-ups or entrepreneurship effort. Therefore, this study fills the knowledge gap on entrepreneurship, since extant literature shows a severe lack of studies focusing on the combination of perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship as determinants to entrepreneurial ability, which is the focus of this study. Consequently, this study intends to broaden the scope of entrepreneurship discourse in developing country contexts, such as Botswana. In closing the literature gap espoused above, this study hypothesizes four

relationships—there is a positive relationship between perceived access to finance and entrepreneurial ability; there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial ability; there is a positive relationship between attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ability; and there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions—using a sample of 347 youths at five selected universities in Botswana.

Furthermore, an examination of the literature showed that despite the importance of entrepreneurship in economic development, most of the past research focused on western countries, with little empirical research on entrepreneurial motivation, attitude and intentions, and entrepreneurial ability of students in developing countries (Farrukh et al., 2018), such as Botswana. Botswana provides a fertile ground to conduct this study as it faces high levels of youth unemployment, yet youths constitute 60% of the population.

Based on the foregoing and in addressing the research gap identified above, the main objective of this empirical study was to determine the factors that influence youth entrepreneurial ability and its effect on the entrepreneurial intentions of Botswana's youths. In support of the stated objective, the study sought to provide answers to the following questions:

(a) Do perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship influence the entrepreneurial ability of Botswana's youths?
(b) Does entrepreneurial ability influence the entrepreneurial intentions of Botswana's youths?

In addition, the study theoretically contributes to an enhanced understanding and appreciation of the role of entrepreneurial ability in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among the youth. Results from this research support and expand knowledge on the intervening role of entrepreneurial ability in its relationship with entrepreneurial intentions, which has been confirmed in previous studies (Do & Dadvari, 2017; Koe, 2016). Moreover, the study provides practical guidelines, mainly to governments, which support and fund entrepreneurial activities among the youth. Consequently, results from this study may assist policymakers in crafting youth-friendly policies that capacitate youths in securing self-employment, especially in accessing much-needed financing for starting new ventures. Government agencies in the context of Botswana, such as the CEDA that extends finance to youths, are encouraged to continuously educate the youth group on the funding opportunities available. Such educational youth programs can be replicated in other African countries and beyond.

The review of literature on perceived access to finance, attitude toward entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial ability, and entrepreneurial intentions, coupled with the development of hypotheses related to the constructs of the study are provided in the next section. Thereafter, the methodological approach of the study is presented. The discussion of results follows, with the theoretical and practical contributions of the study then proffered. Finally, concluding remarks as well as the limitations and areas for further research are articulated clearly in the last section of the paper.

Literature

Explaining which entrepreneurial initiatives lend credence to opportunities in an era of environmental munificence, several scholars based on the premise of the TPB (Ajzen, 1987, 1988, 1991) have signified a nomological web between entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions. Based on the above-mentioned, this study seeks to provide telescopic insight into the explication and indication of benign opportunities in today's dynamic environment. Furthermore, it raises a vital reflection as to the extent to which perceived access to finance, attitude toward entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy predict entrepreneurial ability, and how entrepreneurial ability influences entrepreneurial intentions among Botswana's youths.

Development of Young Entrepreneurs

Young entrepreneurs require development and training in line with the aspiration for entrepreneurial ecosystems and education (O'Brien et al., 2019). Themba and Josiah (2015) indicated that while there is a strong focus on the development of entrepreneurs in Botswana, the extent to which entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial education, and entrepreneurial ecosystems set the tone for employment creation is unknown. Based on the aforementioned, young individuals' attitude and self-efficacy need to be influenced positively through education, and the importance of entrepreneurship and its relevance needs to be instilled so that these individuals become more conscious and interested in becoming entrepreneurs (O'Brien et al., 2019; Do Paço et al., 2011; Themba & Josiah, 2015). Furthermore, young adults should be informed of how they can access finance through educational programs as entrenched in the aspirations for a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem (Lin et al., 2013).

As noted by O'Brien et al. (2019), entrepreneurial education has moved from a perspective that purely focused on start-ups toward a broader enterprising behavior approach. This assertion sets the precedence for not only how young adults can obtain access, but also how and where they should apply, and what is required, all of which should be part of formal training coupled with the right attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Do Paço et al., 2011; Turker & Selcuk, 2009).

According to De Carolis and Litzky (2019), entrepreneurial education at universities should remain a priority, as innovative ideas often spring from individuals working in start-ups, which sets the tone for job creation fostered

through new business ventures. These researchers further argued that through university education, entrepreneurs can be fostered, capacitated, nurtured, and developed through a well-crafted curriculum that results in the creation of an entrepreneurial mindset in students. It has been acknowledged widely that with the possession of relevant and adequate knowledge, education, and the motivation for entrepreneurship, there is a high possibility that young people may opt for an entrepreneurial career (Turker & Selcuk, 2009). The assertion posited above is also supported by Gerba (2012), Mapfaira and Setibi (2014), and Pulka et al. (2015), who averred that entrepreneurship education enables the acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors promoting entrepreneurial awareness that result in students starting their own enterprises.

Yamakawa et al. (2016) argued that a university's curriculum should have a practical element, such as an internship/attachment where students can develop self-efficacy by responding to uncertainty and the evaluation of risks, which is critical in the development of an entrepreneurial mindset. Therefore, entrepreneurial education plays an important role in the astute proficiency of entrepreneurial ability to embolden an entrepreneurial ecosystem and secure employment creation among young adults in a country. Thus, Liñán and Fayolle (2015) argued that what promotes or inhibits the creation of a new organization or entrepreneurial action requires a comprehension of how entrepreneurial individuals apprehend and perceive the opportunity based on entrepreneurial characteristics and intentions. Oliveira and Rua (2018) concluded that entrepreneurial characteristics is nurtured via a myriad of relationships between entrepreneurial intentions and action.

Theory of Planned Behavior

According to Pedrini et al. (2017), the antecedents of the intention to become an entrepreneur include attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls. García-Rodríguez et al. (2015) noted that the extent to which the TPB influences entrepreneurial intentions has been argued by a myriad of studies on entrepreneurship (Jarvis, 2016; Ramadani et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2014). Therefore, the authors seek to apply the tenets of the TPB to explicate the nexus between the constructs of this study with respect to start-up intentions of Botswana's youths. Furthermore, Paul and Shrivatava (2016) asserted that the TPB is a valid theoretical model for understanding the effects of several variables, including personality traits, risk-taking propensity, and locus of control on entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, Boonroungrut and Huang (2021) concluded that the TPB is a well-known behavioral change theory extending from pure psychological consideration to a more socio-psychological realm. The assertion espoused a priori thus set the telescopic insight into this empirical study. Academic discussion on entrepreneurship over the years has focused on entrepreneurial behavior and personal traits (McClelland, 1961). Kao (1991) stated that the direction of entrepreneurship scholarship moved toward activity-based research. Therefore, entrepreneurial orientation places attention on opportunity and acquisition of resources. This is especially important considering that behavioral and cognitive issues, rather than personality characteristics, lend credence to entrepreneurial orientation, and is thus the motivation for this empirical study in Botswana (Kruger, 2004). As contended by Boonroungrut and Huang (2021), the TPB implicates intention as the proximal determinant of behavior. Hence, they asserted that cognitive engaged behavior is evaluated positively and mainly determined by attitudes, positive or negative behavior evaluation, subjective norms, acceptable social perception, and perceived behavioral control.

Perceived Access to Finance

The need for a culture of entrepreneurial orientation has set the premise for an ongoing debate on the effectiveness of entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions, especially among the youth in today's emerging markets. Zhang et al. (2014) lend credence to the assertions espoused above by stating that entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions are significantly and positively associated with perceived attractiveness and feasibility of a new venture. Furthermore, Sánchez (2013) stated that entrepreneurial ability is significantly and positively associated with tenets of self-efficacy, proactiveness, and proclivity toward risk in an era of environmental munificence. Adu et al. (2020) asserted that perceived access to finance is nurtured by the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intentions. Hattab (2014) and Lortie and Castogiovanni (2015) added that a meta-analytical review of extant literature has explicated telescopic insight into the recognition and exploitation of opportunities. However, the extent to which the nomological web exists between perceived access to finance and entrepreneurial ability is unknown, which sets the premise for this empirical study. Moreover, De Carolis and Litzky (2019) indicated that the challenge with entrepreneurial education lies in getting it right, as there is scant evidence that the way entrepreneurship education is taught will result in the proliferation of new and successful business.

Attitude Toward Entrepreneurship

The nomological web of intention behavior and attitude has been stated empirically in the meta-analytical review of extant literature (Kautonen et al., 2015). Moreover, Hattab (2014) noted that behavioral controls on entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions have been conceptualized as contributing to the body of knowledge in entrepreneurism with implications on attitude toward entrepreneurship. According to Alvesson (2010), psychologists have argued that individuals with an inherent need for social desires will

seek to receive affirmation from esteemed social relations. Uy et al. (2015) concurred that entrepreneurial education influences young entrepreneurs' personalities, while environmental support influences their entrepreneurial attitudes. Furthermore, Alves et al. (2019) indicated that over the past decades, universities have had an increasing demand to transcend the role of producing science and technology to explore its knowledge potential to produce novel commercial applications. Thus, they posited that the entrepreneurial ecosystem is associated inextricably with entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial education.

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Ramadani et al. (2015) postulated that various studies have established the positive impact of creativity, entrepreneurial knowledge, flexibility, personal networks, and analytical abilities on entrepreneurial intentions. Jarvis (2016) contended that attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial self-efficacy are susceptible to cognitive bias in a normative environment premised on entrepreneurial orientation. This contribution is vital with regard to entrepreneurial self-efficacy, as researchers seek to clarify the cognitive processes that explicate the platform for intentions to act entrepreneurially (Jarvis, 2016). Hence, Gibcus et al. (2012) posited that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a set of skills or technical know-how needed to initiate a business venture, and the TPB sets the platform for analyzing educational programs' proficiency for advancing entrepreneurial actions. Thus, Adu et al. (2020) concluded that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is associated inextricably with entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intentions, which set the tone for shaping students' personalities.

Entrepreneurial Ability

Pedrini et al. (2017) argued that the extension of the TPB should include locus of control, entrepreneurial ability, risk propensity, self-efficacy, need for achievement, tolerance for ambiguity, and novel ideals. Abebe (2012) concluded that because of the extent to which attitudes predict behaviors and cultural values lend credence to postulations, there is a relationship between individual cognitive orientations and cultural values that provides parallel support for entrepreneurial behaviors. Jarvis (2016) lends credence to the assertion espoused here by stating that although progress has been made in explicating the entrepreneurial behavior and cultural web, there is still a need for more research on cognitive and entrepreneurial orientations, especially in emerging economies like Botswana. Therefore, De Carolis and Litzky (2019) contended that characterization of entrepreneurs not only indicates that a higher education-based entrepreneurship curriculum must revolve around the process of starting business or new venture, but that an entrepreneurial plan of study should mirror a business school curriculum.

Entrepreneurial Intentions

Baron (2008) and Fayolle and Liñán (2014) emphasized the need to start incorporating more psychological perspectives into entrepreneurial research, where personality characteristics are a consistent predictor of entrepreneurial behavior. They further noted that the nomological web between intent and theories as well as models that lend credence to decision-making in an atmosphere of risk and uncertainty need to be encouraged and explored. Pedrini et al. (2017) concluded that entrepreneurial self-efficacy and risk propensity positively affect entrepreneurial intentions. Moreover, they noted that on the managerial side, the link between entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions must be understood, as this will help reinforce tertiary and vocational institutions to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurial orientation in the younger generation of today.

Hypotheses and Research Model Development

The Relationship Between Perceived Access to Finance and Entrepreneurial Ability

Elfving et al. (2009) and Liñán and Fayolle (2015) contended that all theoretical models posit that entrepreneurial intentions are associated directly or indirectly with entrepreneurial action. However, Wilson and Martin (2015) suggested that the absence of action indicates that a valid intention is not attained. Liñán and Fayolle (2015) claimed that there is acute paucity of empirical literature on the relationship between entrepreneurial ability, entrepreneurial intentions, and action, especially among the youth. Perceived access to finance is fundamental to entrepreneurship as it affects entrepreneurial cognitions, such as willingness, confidence, and visions (Lim et al., 2010; Yousafzai et al., 2015). The above is affirmed by Muñoz and Kibler (2016), who indicated that from an institutional perspective, benefits like financial grants and subsidies, as well as technical and legal metrics are well noted in extant literature as the antecedents of youth entrepreneurial effort. Based on the aforementioned, it is hypothesized that:

> *H_1: Perceived access to finance is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability among Botswana's youths.*

The Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Ability

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is one way to understand the new venture creation process to assist instructors in the implementation of new entrepreneurship curricula and courses (Kickul & D'Intino, 2005). Despite the emphasis on entrepreneurship education, it is challenging to evaluate actual behavior, thus intentions are utilized often as a proxy (Heuer & Kolvereid, 2014). Bae et al. (2014) defined self-efficacy as the belief in the ability to perform certain tasks and competencies. Chen

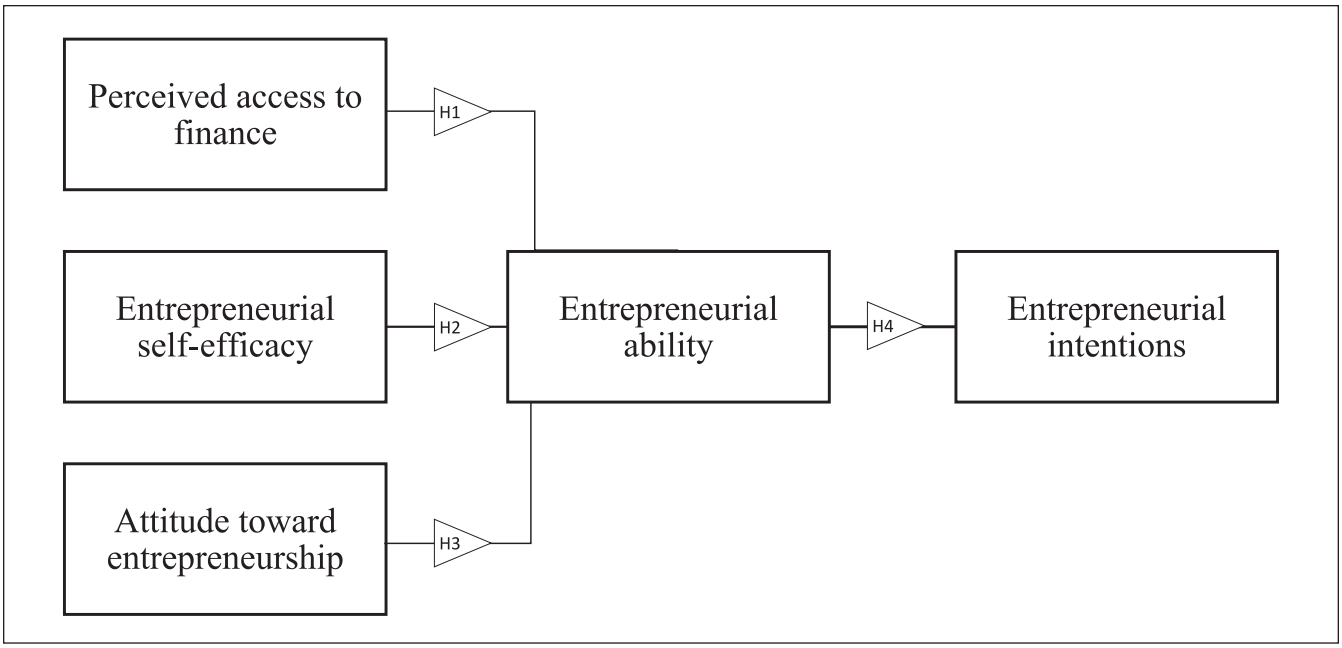

Figure 1. Research model.

and Hsu (2013) concluded that entrepreneurial self-efficacy provides the platform that enhances entrepreneurial cognitions. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability among Botswana's youths.

The Relationship Between Attitude Toward Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Ability

Based on the TPB (Ajzen, 1991), the antecedents of the intention to become an entrepreneur include attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls. Many researchers (e.g., Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Kirkley, 2017) noted that entrepreneurial education could help institutionalize entrepreneurial orientation to develop entrepreneurial culture among learners. Thus, education shapes learners' attitude toward entrepreneurship. Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

H3: Attitude toward entrepreneurship is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability among Botswana's youths.

The Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Ability and Entrepreneurial Intentions

A myriad of authors has postulated that the extension of the TPB could include antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions and psychological characteristics, such as locus of control, risk propensity, self-efficacy, need for achievement, and tolerance for ambiguity (Liñán et al., 2011). Xiao and North (2017) concluded that informal entrepreneurial learning forums—for instance, role modeling, experience from entrepreneurial parents and friends, and interactive learning settings—are not only important for enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy, but also provide a platform for explicating entrepreneurial ability. From the above, the following relationship was hypothesized:

H4: Entrepreneurial ability is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial intentions of Botswana's youths.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the research model is proposed as shown in Figure 1.

Research Methodology

This study was descriptive in nature and an explanatory research design was applied (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The ethical clearance number for the study is MOTE 1/18/6 V. In addition, the study was cross-sectional since the data on the constructs of interest were only collected at a single point in time (Zikmund et al., 2017). A descripto-explanatory research design was followed and data were collected from students at five tertiary institutions in Botswana, which represented the sampling units and study elements.

Questionnaire Design and Measures

The questionnaire was divided into six major sections, namely the demographic profile of the respondents, perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy,

Table 1. Constructs, Items, and Item Codes.

Perceived access to finance (PAF)
PAF1 If I were to start my own business, I know how to prepare a business plan.
PAF2 If I were to start my own business, I know how to use financial information to make business decisions.
PAF3 If I were to start my own business, I know a lot about the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency and the sources of funding in Botswana.
PAF4 If I were to start my own business, I know a lot about the Youth Development Fund Facility and the sources of funding in Botswana.
PAF5 If I were to start my own business, I know a lot about other sources of funding in Botswana.
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE)
ESE1 I can come up with new ideas and products.
ESE2 I can identify creative ways to get things done with limited resources.
ESE3 I can take calculated risks.
ESE4 I have the ability to succeed with all the endeavors I set my mind to.
ESE5 I can formulate a set of actions in pursuit of opportunities.
Attitude toward entrepreneurship (ATT)
ATT1 If I had the opportunity and resources, I would like to start a firm.
ATT2 A career as an entrepreneur is attractive for me.
ATT3 I would rather be my own boss than have a secure job.
ATT4 Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfaction for me.
ATT5 Entrepreneurship is a good way to make lots of money.
Entrepreneurial ability (EA)
EA1 I am open to new ideas.
EA2 I am not discouraged by challenges and negative feedback.
EA3 My success is influenced by my abilities and efforts.
EA4 I believe that higher risks are worth taking because they give higher returns.
EA5 I am not afraid of investing my money in a business whose risk I have challenged.
Entrepreneurial intentions (EI)
EI1 I am prepared to do anything to be an entrepreneur.
EI2 I have strong intentions to start my own business in the future.
EI3 I will make every effort to start and manage my own business.
EI4 I am determined to start my own business in the future.
EI5 My long-term goal is to become an entrepreneur.

Source. Adapted from Gundry and Welsch (2001), Kolvereid (1996), Kolvereid and Isaksen (2006), Mitchell and Mickel (1999), and Tang and Chiu (2003).

attitude toward entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial ability, and entrepreneurial intentions. Demographic characteristics include gender, age, and level of study. Items used to measure the study constructs were adapted from literature and modified to suit the context of this study. Items included to gauge the study's construct were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. A pilot test was conducted prior to the administration of the questionnaires for this empirical study. The pilot test did not require any changes to be made to the questionnaire before final fielding. Table 1 presents the items used to measure the five constructs in the study.

Sampling and Data Collection

The population of the study were students in their second and third years of study at five universities in Botswana and data were collected using a cross-sectional survey design. These universities were selected since they represent the combination of private and public universities in Botswana. Moreover, the universities are located in the cities of Gaborone and Francistown, the two commercial centers in Botswana. Screening questions were used to ensure that the sample met the set requirements of the study. The importance of using undergraduate students as the subject of study was validated in other studies, such as Ismail et al. (2009), Koe et al. (2012), Lin et al. (2013), Shook and Bratianu (2010), and Van Gelderen et al. (2008). The respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling method. This sampling technique was used in this study since the sampling frame was known (Keller, 2012; Zikmund et al., 2013). The five universities represented the different strata and the motivation for using the stratified sampling method was to get a fair representation of students across the five universities, which has been confirmed by other researchers (e.g., Koe et al., 2012). Of the 550 self-administered questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 347 were returned and usable.

Table 2. Measurement Model Fit Indices.

χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.889	0.938	0.967	0.974	0.047

Data Analysis

Validation of Data

Data normality, non-response bias, common method bias (CMB), convergent validity, and discriminant validity analyses were executed to validate data before performing structural equation modeling to test research hypotheses. These methods are discussed in the sections that follow.

Normality test. In studies that have both independent and dependent factors, it is important to ensure that data are normally distributed before testing relationships among such factors. *Z*-values were computed in SPSS version 22. The values for all items/variables fell within the range −2.58 and +2.58, significant at $p < .01$ (Field et al., 2012). This suggests that data were approximately normally distributed.

Non-response bias. Non-response bias presents a serious validity threat to data, especially when data are collected through surveys, as is the case in this study. To counter this threat, a non-response bias test was conducted using Armstrong and Overton's (1977) approach. Likewise, means of each of the first 50 entries of the responses were compared against those of the last 50. Results show that there were no significant differences in the means, which suggests that non-response bias did not threaten the validity of this study.

Common method bias. When data are collected through a survey, CMB may threaten the validity of data. Employing Harman's single-factor approach, exploratory factor analysis was conducted in SPSS version 22, fixing the number of factors at 1. The solution gave a single factor with the average variance explained of 34.3%. As such, no single factor explained more than 50%. Therefore, it was concluded that CMB was not a threat to the validity of data in this study (Kim et al., 2013; Wu, 2013).

Convergent validity. The measurement model was executed in AMOS version 26. Results show that convergent validity was satisfied, as shown in Table 2. Measurement model fit indices were within acceptable ranges: CMIN/Degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) = 1.889, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.938, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.967, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.974, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.047 (Hair et al., 2014; Hooper et al., 2008).

Table 3 shows that standardized factor loadings, critical ratios, and Cronbach's α and composite reliabilities were acceptable. Similarly, Table 4 shows acceptable average variance extracted (AVE). All standardized factor loadings were larger than 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Critical ratios were sufficiently large (i.e., greater than 2) and significant (Segars, 1997). All Cronbach's α and composite reliability coefficients were greater than .7 (Nunnally, 1978; Segars, 1997) and AVEs were greater than .5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Discriminant validity. Results in Table 4 show that conditions for discriminant validity were fulfilled. All AVEs were larger than their corresponding inter-construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2014).

Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling in AMOS version 26 was performed to test the research hypotheses. As shown in Table 5, the model fit indices were adequate: $\chi^2/df = 1.817$, GFI = 0.942, TLI = 0.969, CFI = 0.981, and RMSEA = 0.046 (Hair et al., 2014; Hooper et al., 2008).

Research Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 6 outlines the respondents' demographic profile.

With respect to gender, 25.4% of the respondents were male, while 74.6% were female. In terms of age, all respondents were aged 18 to 35 years—20.7% of the respondents fell within the 18 to 20 age bracket, 53.9% of respondents were within the 21 to 25 age group, and 25.4% were in the 26 to 30 age bracket. Furthermore, 36.3% of the respondents were in their second year at the sampled tertiary institutions and 63.7% were in their third year at the tertiary institutions sampled.

The Relationships Between the Proposed Constructs

The results of the hypotheses testing are presented in Table 7 and Figure 2.

All research hypotheses were supported. This suggests that perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship positively influence entrepreneurial ability, whereas entrepreneurial ability positively influences entrepreneurial intentions. Results in Figure 2 show that perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship explain 76% of the variance in entrepreneurial ability ($R^2 = .76$), while entrepreneurial ability explains 71% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions ($R^2 = .71$).

The study established that perceived access to finance is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability. Thus, when youths perceive that they have access to finance that enables them to start a business, they tend to develop an entrepreneurial personality. On the contrary, a perceived lack of access to finance to start new enterprises is likely to

Table 3. Standardized Factor Loadings, Critical Ratios, Cronbach's α, and Composite Reliability.

Constructs and items	Standardized factor loadings	Critical ratios (CR)	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability
Perceived access to finance (PAF)				
PAF1	0.800	—	.885	.885
PAF2	0.774	16.317***		
PAF3	0.853	15.097***		
PAF4	0.833	14.756***		
PAF5	0.691	11.956***		
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE)				
ESE1	0.917	—	.938	.942
ESE2	0.916	22.275***		
ESE3	0.881	23.152***		
ESE4	0.826	17.983***		
ESE5	0.832	20.117***		
Attitude toward entrepreneurship (ATT)				
ATT1	0.784	—	.952	.956
ATT2	0.858	21.695***		
ATT3	0.869	20.232***		
ATT4	0.925	16.235***		
ATT5	0.919	15.687***		
Entrepreneurial ability (EA)				
EC1	0.843	—	.972	.977
EC2	0.874	18.221***		
EC3	0.917	18.461***		
EC4	0.907	17.636***		
EC5	0.923	19.413***		
Entrepreneurial intentions (EI)				
EI1	0.863	—	.956	.959
EI2	0.914	26.867***		
EI3	0.905	25.586***		
EI4	0.878	17.921***		
EI5	0.924	23.763***		

Note. CR is fixed.
***Significant at $p < .001$.

Table 4. Inter-Construct Correlations and AVEs.

Construct	PAF	ATT	EC	ESE	EI
PAF	**.634**				
ATT	.517	**.750**			
EC	.247	.329	**.801**		
ESE	.345	.422	.294	**.757**	
EI	.428	.506	.425	.349	**.827**

Note. Diagonal elements represent AVE. PAF = perceived access to finance; ESE = entrepreneurial self-efficacy; ATT = attitude toward entrepreneurship; EA = entrepreneurial ability; EI = entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 5. Structural Model Fit Indices.

χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.817	0.942	0.969	0.981	0.046

Table 6. Demographic Profile of Respondents.

Item	Description	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	88	25.4
	Female	259	74.6
Age	16–20	72	20.7
	21–25	187	53.9
	26–30	88	25.4
Education	Second year	126	36.3
	Third year	221	63.7

negatively impact the youths' spirit of entrepreneurship. This finding supports the view that perceived access to finance is fundamental to entrepreneurship, as it affects entrepreneurial cognitions, such as willingness, confidence, and visions (Lim et al., 2010; Yousafzai et al., 2015). Similarly, Muñoz and Kibler (2016) attested that benefits, such as financial

Table 7. Outcome of Hypotheses Testing.

Hypothesis	Hypothesized relationship	SRW	CR	Outcome
H1	PAF → EA	0.212	6.474***	Supported
H2	ESE → EA	0.476	17.938***	Supported
H3	ATT → EA	0.722	21.302***	Supported
H4	EA → EI	0.741	24.904***	Supported

Note. SRW = standardized regression weight; CR = critical ratio; PAF = perceived access to finance; ESE = entrepreneurial self-efficacy; ATT = attitude toward entrepreneurship; EA = entrepreneurial ability; EI = entrepreneurial intentions.
***Significant at $p < .001$.

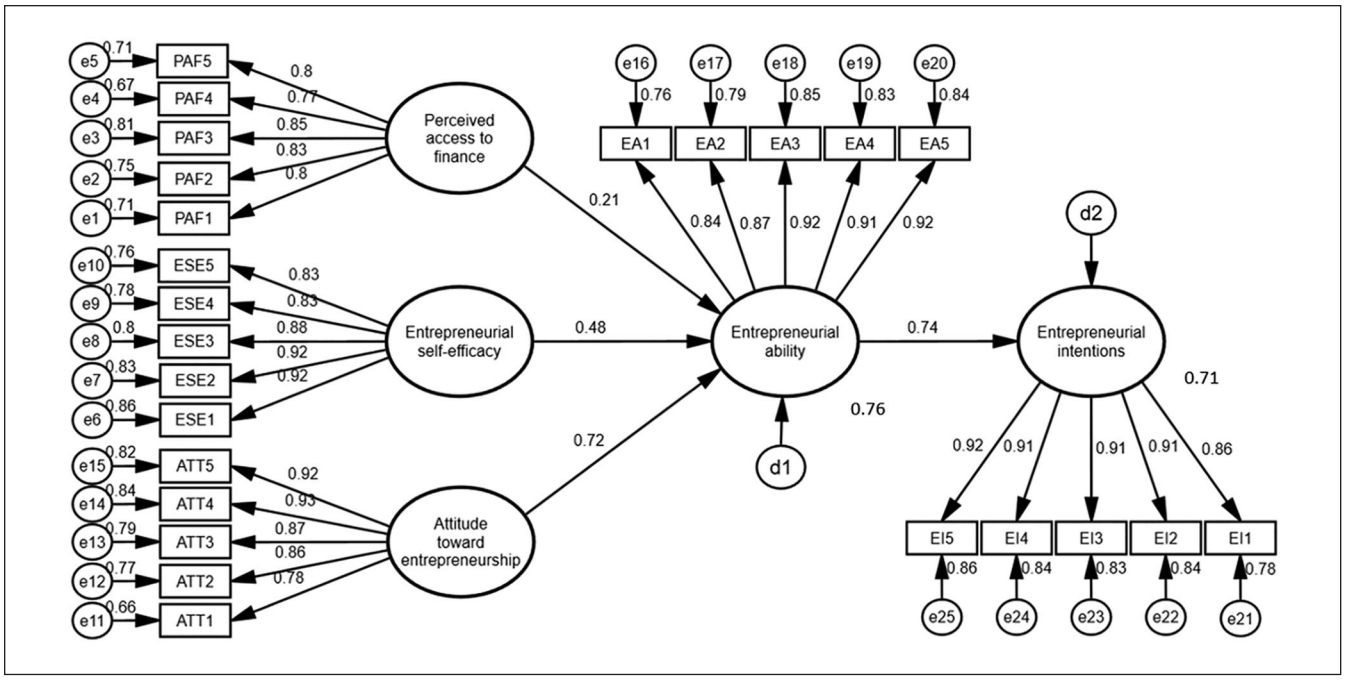

Figure 2. Structural model: AMOS output.

grants and subsidies, are factors that determine youth entrepreneurial effort.

It was also found that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability. The implication of this is that when youths believe that they are capable of running successful new ventures, they are likely to develop an entrepreneurial spirit. On the other hand, when youths lack self-belief in starting successful business ventures, they are unlikely to develop the spirit of entrepreneurship. Despite the limited empirical evidence to support this finding, Chen and Hsu (2013) concluded that entrepreneurial self-efficacy enriches entrepreneurial cognitions.

The study found that attitude toward entrepreneurship is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial ability. This suggests that a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship is likely to inculcate the entrepreneurial culture among youths. In contrast, a negative attitude toward entrepreneurship is likely to dampen the entrepreneurial ethos among youths. Although there is limited empirical evidence in Botswana to augment this finding, it is believed that entrepreneurial education could help institutionalize entrepreneurial orientation to develop entrepreneurial culture among learners (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Kirkley, 2017).

Entrepreneurial ability is significantly and positively related to entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, when the culture of entrepreneurship predominates among youths, they are likely to be willing to start new ventures. Conversely, youths without an entrepreneurial spirit are expected to be unwilling to start their own businesses. There is a paucity of studies attesting to this finding. However, Xiao and North (2017) agreed that entrepreneurial culture-acquired through informal entrepreneurial learning forums, such as role modeling, experience from entrepreneurial parents and friends, and interactive learning settings—can enhance the practice of entrepreneurship.

Discussion

Although studies on entrepreneurial ability driving entrepreneurial intentions have been explored extensively in management literature (Teixeira et al., 2018; Vuorio et al., 2018), this study explores the role of selected precursors to entrepreneurial ability in an emerging African market. The selected antecedents have not been explored in Botswana before, nor have their combination and proposed relationships in an emerging African market. The context of this study was youth perception of entrepreneurial intention in Botswana, where a greater understanding of youth access to funding, entrepreneurial self-efficacy as well as their attitude toward entrepreneurial ability can lead to more favorable entrepreneurial intentions.

In terms of the selected antecedents to entrepreneurial ability, it was established that perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and young individuals' attitude toward their ability to become entrepreneurs have a positive and significant influence on their future entrepreneurial intentions. The findings support studies by other scholars in the entrepreneurship domain, who also established that access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship significantly and positively influence the entrepreneurial ability of young individuals, and therefore their future entrepreneur intentions in established and emerging markets (Jena, 2020; Luc, 2018; Nowiński et al., 2019; Rosique-Blasco et al., 2018). However, it is interesting to note that the majority of studies explored the antecedents of entrepreneurial orientation, rather than the precursors of entrepreneurial ability and its linkage to entrepreneurial intentions from an emerging African market perspective (Belas et al., 2017; Fietze & Boyd, 2017; Koe, 2016).

Youths in emerging African markets want to have access to funding, be empowered to think creatively, and work for themselves to enable the creation and future development of their own businesses. Such empowerment will stimulate their entrepreneurial ability and drive their future behavioral intentions. In addition, it is notable that Botswana's youths feel strongly that being entrepreneurs would entail great satisfaction for them. They want to become independent thinkers and creative business developers, thereby strengthening their desire to become financially self-sufficient to secure their future survival (see Table 4). Scholars argue that when the youth is empowered through business education and business skills development, their interest in entrepreneurial thinking is stimulated, driving future entrepreneurial intentions (Jena, (2020). Singla et al. (2018) and Weerakoon (2020) concurred, stating that knowledge creation and financial support are key drivers of entrepreneurial orientation that enhance future entrepreneurial intentions.

Regarding the role of entrepreneurial ability as an intervening variable, this study established that entrepreneurial ability is a strong driver of entrepreneurial intentions, as validated by numerous scholars researching entrepreneurial intentions (Koe, 2016; Neneh, 2020; Saraf, 2015). These scholars purported that youths' ability to think in an entrepreneurial manner is guided by their ability to be open to new business ideas, thinking positively and creatively, and where they are conscious of the entrepreneurial risk but willing to invest money and time in a business venture they believe in. Therefore, youths' constant assessment of the benefit-risk ratio of a new or existing business venture drives their entrepreneurial hunger for success (Khuong & An, 2016; Yurtkoru et al., 2014).

Considering the argument above, it becomes important for educational institutions in Botswana, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the Botswana government to develop educational programs that educate young individuals on how to prepare a business plan and use financial information to make business decisions. In addition, marketing campaigns by the Botswana government should be targeted at Botswana's youths through platforms like YouTube, Instagram, billboards at university campuses, radio station marketing media, and public relations programs. These marketing programs can inform Botswana's youths about the CEDA, the Youth Development Fund Facility, and the different sources of funding available in Botswana for youth entrepreneurs. Furthermore, NGOs and the Botswana government can initiate roadshows or competitions to stimulate entrepreneurial thinking, developing a national interest in entrepreneurship as a creative endeavor for self-employment and work creation. These roadshows or competitions could also encourage idea development as well as innovative and creative thinking among youths and develop a passion for self-employment. The latter should focus especially on motivating Botswana's youths to become independent business thinkers, securing satisfaction through entrepreneurial success. This strongly drives entrepreneurial ability, as individuals are guided to understand that their success is influenced by individual ability and efforts.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The results of the study indicate that perceived access to findings, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship have a significant and positive influence on entrepreneurial ability. Furthermore, it was established that entrepreneurial ability significantly and positively influences entrepreneurial intentions. Earlier research (Awang, 2016; Donbesuur et al., 2020) confirms that the stronger the entrepreneurial ability of individuals, the greater their entrepreneurial intentions. Scholars (e.g., Jena, 2020; Luc, 2018; Nowiński et al., 2019; Rosique-Blasco et al., 2018) validated that the ability of the youth to become entrepreneurs is influenced by multiple factors that are perceived as antecedents to entrepreneurial ability, such as funding opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures, self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship.

Theoretical Implications

Greater understanding of the antecedents of entrepreneurial ability strengthening future entrepreneurial intentions. The findings of the study have validated the interrelationships between perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, attitude toward entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial ability, and entrepreneurial intentions. Understanding these direct relationships is critical, considering that it has inferences for entrepreneurial theory. It would seem that the entrepreneurial intentions of young Botswanans are not only built on an all-inclusive rational assessment of these individuals' entrepreneurial ability. Therefore, it is plausible to note that if young individuals' entrepreneurial ability reflects an open-mindedness toward new ideas, is not discouraged by challenges and negative feedback, and is willing to take higher risks, these individuals will be more inclined to have positive entrepreneurial intentions (Marques et al., 2018). When young individuals feel comfortable designing a business plan, are able to understand financial information to make business decisions, are able to take calculated risks, and want to manage their own business ventures, their entrepreneurial ability is strengthened (Nguyen, 2021; Pett et al., 2019). The extensive entrepreneurial literature has explored studies that confirm the importance of access to finance, self-efficacy, and attitude as antecedents to entrepreneurial orientation (Law & Breznik, 2017; Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019; Urban & Ratsimanetrimanana, 2019). However, the findings expand on the entrepreneurial ability-entrepreneurial intentions link by emphasizing the combined role of perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship on entrepreneurial ability and the influence of the latter on entrepreneurial intentions.

Enhanced understanding of the role of entrepreneurial ability in fostering entrepreneurial intentions. The research results support the intervening role of entrepreneurial ability in its relationship with entrepreneurial intentions. Similar to the work of Do and Dadvari (2017), Koe (2016), and Suartha and Suprapti (2016), entrepreneurial ability is perceived as an important factor to strengthen the future entrepreneurial intentions of young individuals in various settings across established and emerging markets. Therefore, it appears that it becomes increasingly important for role players, such as governments, NGOs, and the private sector, to educate young individuals on how to secure access to funding, write a business plan, manage finances in a manner that can secure future success, understand how to take risks, and develop a strong belief in the benefits of becoming an entrepreneur. Such an educational approach will enhance individual entrepreneurial ability and strengthen future entrepreneurial intent. Future studies could widen the findings of this study to expand on the intervening role of entrepreneurial ability in its relationship with entrepreneurial intentions.

A perspective on the importance of understanding the selected factors driving entrepreneurial ability and entrepreneurial intentions in an emerging African market like Botswana. Academic studies on entrepreneurial orientation in Africa have focused predominantly on countries like South Africa, Nigeria, and Malawi (Fatoki, 2010; Mwatsika, 2015; Shamsudeen et al., 2017). Most of these studies have explored various factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions (e.g., culture, entrepreneurial education, access to resources, social environment, entrepreneurial orientation, innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking) (Ekpe & Mat, 2012; Neneh & Van Zyl, 2017). However, in entrepreneurial literature, limited research has focused on the combination of perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship as selected antecedents to entrepreneurial ability in a Botswana context. In addition, the study makes a further theoretical contribution by exploring entrepreneurial ability as an intervening variable, driving future entrepreneurial intentions. This relationship is positioned from the perspective of entrepreneurial ability being contextualized in terms of innovative thinking, risk awareness, ability development, and a developmental approach toward the management of negative feedback. Such an approach secures an interesting link with entrepreneurial intentions, especially within an African context, such as Botswana.

Managerial Implications

Practical implications are based on the findings that perceived access to finance, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and attitude toward entrepreneurship positively influence entrepreneurial ability, while entrepreneurial ability positively influences entrepreneurial intentions. From a practical standpoint, access to finance, self-efficacy, positive attitudes, entrepreneurial traits, and intentions play a critical role in entrepreneurship.

To boost the culture of entrepreneurship among youths, it is advised that policymakers create a climate where access to finance is easy. This can be achieved through availability of government credit lines, where prospective business youths can borrow money to start new businesses at concessionary rates. Banks can also offer loans dedicated to youths with bankable business proposals. Moreover, government seed funding can be used to boost access to finance to enable new business start-ups among youths. In addition, the entrepreneurial spirit can be promoted through enhanced entrepreneurial self-efficacy and a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship. Similarly, the willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities can be boosted by enhanced entrepreneurial culture. In this regard, education and training play a major role in achieving entrepreneurial self-efficacy, a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship, and a desirable entrepreneurial ability. Therefore, the following recommendations are proposed.

Firstly, the development of youth entrepreneurs should be grounded on continuous educational programs. These programs should increase youth entrepreneur awareness around the preparation and implementation of a business plan, and the development and interpretation of financial statements. Government-funded agencies, such as the CEDA or government-approved NGOs, should create continuous engagement opportunities with youth entrepreneurs to guide them around potential risks and how to address these; to provide opportunities for these entrepreneurs to showcase their products and/or services through supportive marketing endeavors; and, where youth entrepreneurs can access funding or bridging funding, to stimulate their business growth (e.g., the Youth Development Fund facility in Botswana).

Secondly, government programs in developing economies should drive educational programs that can stimulate a positive mindset toward entrepreneurship among the youth. Learners at school and students at college or university should be educated on the importance of entrepreneurship, the benefits of independent business ownership that develop innovative thinking, and why an understanding of risks is critical to ensure the future success of the business as an entrepreneur.

Consequently, the encouragement of entrepreneurial thinking should become a governmental priority in developing economies. Governments should create platforms that provide youths with opportunities to illustrate their ideas (e.g., conferences, seminars, and creative platforms), where young entrepreneurs can get together and creatively demonstrate their ideas. These platforms can further stimulate collaboration with critical role players, such as the government, private sector, and NGOs, on viable ideas to address socioeconomic issues or where funding can be provided to stimulate new business ventures. Through the stimulation of youth entrepreneurial intentions, the government will empower small and medium enterprises to contribute to the economy through product and service creation and employment generation. It remains imperative that government programs through NGOs and educational institutions at primary, secondary, and tertiary educational levels develop a positive mindset around entrepreneurship by empowering educational programs to stimulate youths to work for themselves, to strengthen an awareness around the benefits of entrepreneurship, and to market entrepreneurship among young people as a lucrative career choice that is supported by government schemes. These schemes include access to funding, continuous business engagement to secure youth entrepreneurial success, the provision of continuous educational programs that stimulate creative thinking and empower young individuals around business success and business challenges, as well as the provision of accessible venues youth entrepreneurs can access to obtain support or where they can start their businesses.

Thirdly, universities should be assisted by government in developing markets to stimulate entrepreneurial thinking through curriculum development, a focus on innovative idea development, the development of a positive mindset that will stimulate the strive for excellence, the development of goals, and the understanding that failure is not always a negative outcome or characteristic. Educators should be trained in entrepreneurial intentions and be empowered to guide young scholars on how to work productively under continuous stress, pressure, and conflict; and develop skills on how to network with others, work in a team and manage employees, as well as ideas on how to persist in the face of adversity. Therefore, through education, youth entrepreneurs should be guided to believe in themselves as entrepreneurs. The development of self-belief becomes pertinent in the future success of youth entrepreneurs, thus they should be empowered with knowledge to open their minds to new ideas and how to learn from failures and persevere, to achieve set goals, to develop confidence through a self-analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and to avoid risk, among others.

Finally, the development of small business incubators (within an academic department or faculty at a school or university) under the mentorship of a business entrepreneur can contribute to the development of positive entrepreneurial intentions among youths. The outcome of such incubator training could be to guide students and university academics on how the outcome of individuals' actions depends on their performance, how business success is influenced by individual abilities and efforts, how self-confidence can drive business success, and that the investment of money into a business should be risk calculated. Hence, by understanding the entrepreneurial ability that influences entrepreneurial intentions, youth entrepreneurs, educational institutions, government departments, and NGOs can be equipped with the knowledge to develop an entrepreneurial youth of the future.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors influencing youth entrepreneurial ability and their effect on entrepreneurial intentions. The study established that the entrepreneurial ability of Botswana's youths was influenced by their access to funding, their entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and their attitude toward their ability to be entrepreneurs. In addition, entrepreneurial ability was established as a strong precursor to entrepreneurial intentions. From an emerging economy perspective, it is recommended that the youth in Botswana be educated on how to develop a business plan and be better equipped to use financial information to make business decisions. Moreover, young individuals should be educated to think creatively and be empowered to manage risks successfully. Through such an approach, the entrepreneurial ability of the youth of Botswana will be strengthened and their entrepreneurial intentions stimulated.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The study revealed factors that are important in enhancing entrepreneurship among Botswana's youths. It may be useful for future researchers to extend this study by investigating more factors that can influence entrepreneurship. Factors that could be considered are personality (referring to achievement motivation, internal locus of control, and innovative orientation), start-up inclination (the estimate of later start-up probability), the environment (encompassing entrepreneurs in the surroundings of the youths, use of technology, and supportive upbringing), process (entrepreneurship orientation of the school, independence/criticism as values in instruction, entrepreneurship-oriented instruction methods, and team-oriented methods), and risk-taking ability (willingness to take risks through entrepreneurial endeavors). More so, it is recommended that future studies also consider samples across all economically active age groups. The economically active age group can be defined as all individuals between the ages of 15 and 64 who has "worked in gainful employment for at least one hour per week or who had a formal job attachment" (OECD, 2021). In addition, a study by Hatak et al. (2015) has confirmed that measuring entrepreneurial intention across different age groups can strengthen the understanding of factors that influence entrepreneurial expectations and fears toward entrepreneurial intention and also develop an enhanced understanding of their respective needs as a youth cohort. This is pertinent because, after the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment is expected to rise among all age groups. One way to alleviate the detrimental effects of unemployment is through entrepreneurship. Hence, an understanding of the factors that influence entrepreneurship will be inevitable among all age groups.

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