

Original Article

Evaluating the Existence of Entrepreneurship Prerequisite Skills Sets in the Small-Scale Horticulture Farming Sector in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Mutoko Rural District, Mashomaland East Province in Zimbabwe

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Abstract: *The research sought to evaluate the existence of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko District in Mashonaland East province in Zimbabwe. Thus, this was achieved through phenomenological philosophy, and the sample was made of 50 persons comprising 30 women, 5 bank officials, 5 Agritex, 5 Village heads and 5 spouses. Consequently, the findings from the study show that entrepreneurship prerequisite skills are significant to the growth of the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko District in Mashonaland East province. Furthermore, the findings show that entrepreneurship prerequisite skills exist in the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko District. Equally, entrepreneurship prerequisite skills are significant to the growth of the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko District in particular and Zimbabwe at large. However, there is also a need for the government to equip small-scale horticulture farmers with more sophisticated entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets through incessant pieces of training.*

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Prerequisite Skill Sets, Small-Scale Horticulture Farmers.*

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Munyoro et al. (2017), the liberalization of Zimbabwe's economy and society in general (Makoni, 2006) was done with the intention of distributing Zimbabwe's riches equitably. Therefore, the liberalization of the economy was accompanied by an explosion of indigenous entrepreneurs whose intent was to open up all industrial sectors which were formerly henpecked by foreign-owned institutions (Odhiambo, 2011; Sulaiman et al., 2012). According to Romer (1994) and Parker (2012), this economic strategy was intended to promote the required economic development in Zimbabwe by using domestic resources before turning to external ones, and this is known as endogenous growth theory. In this instance, economic theory suggests that the effective utilization of resources, the building of both physical and human capital, and the advancement of technology all lead to economic progress in a robust financial system, something that Zimbabwe desperately required given that the economic situation then needed to be reorganized in order to allow others to have a piece of the cake which was not the case before independence (Ajayi, 1995; Munyoro et al., 2018). In fact, before independence, it was difficult for rural entrepreneurs to benefit from any sector in the country except the retailing and transport sectors because these colonial governments and their institutions were not supportive (Munyoro et al., 2017; Chigunhah et al, 2020) and consequently, the solution to this issue was therefore seen as offering possibilities for indigenous entrepreneurs to realize the dream of the liberation war by assisting them following independence from colonial powers and this led to the removal of strict regulations in all industrial sectors by the Government of Zimbabwe (Chamlee, 1993; Sibindi and Bimha, 2014; Munyoro et al, 2017). Accordingly, several indigenous entrepreneurs entered the once foreign-dominated industrial sectors such as the agricultural sector, particularly the small-scale horticulture farming sector (Berger et al., 2000; Chigumira and Makocheanwa, 2014; Mumvuma et al., 2003; Munyoro et al., 2017; Chigunhah et al., 2020). Thus, this resulted in more competition and, subsequently, the introduction of technology, which ultimately improved the quality of goods and services in the domestic economy and, in the process, promoted economic development in Zimbabwe (Levine, 1996; Sibindi and Bimha, 2014). Fascinatingly, studies on rural entrepreneurship also show that the returns on investment from small-scale farmers are much higher than for urban small-scale farmers (Fatoki, 2014; Munyoro et al., 2016) and that small-scale farming is a crucial industrial sector to both developed and developing economies. Thus, it is not surprising to see the Government of Zimbabwe focusing on the promotion of the small-scale farming sector in Zimbabwe over commercial farming (World Bank, 2014; Chigunha et al., 2020). Hence, the move by the African continent to improve the efficiency of its agribusiness industry as well



as employing a variety of different strategies in order to improve efficiency and productiveness in the small-scale farming sector, including horticulture farming (Chigusiwa et al., 2013; World Bank, 2014; Chigunha et al., 2020).

It is worth noting that this is done through the upgrading of small-scale farming, particularly horticulture farming, as it provides a means of subsistence for the majority of rural communities in Zimbabwe and around Africa. In short, it has been noted that for small-scale horticulture farming to be successful, this then requires high-yield seeds, an increase in the use of organic fertilizers and compost, improved infrastructure, and most importantly, capital as well as entrepreneurial skill sets (Chigusiwa et al., 2013; Munyoro et al., 2017). In view of this reason, small-scale horticultural agriculture in Zimbabwe is one of the nation's most important endeavors in the fight against hunger and the extremely high rates of joblessness that the nation currently faces, both in rural regions and overall (World Bank, 2014; Munyoro et al., 2017; Chigunha et al., 2020). In fact, the lack of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the small-scale farming sector in rural areas in Zimbabwe has been a cause of concern for a long time (Bachelier, 2007; Hanson, 2008 and Morvant Roux, 2008; Mutambanadzo et al., 2013; Munyoro et al., 2016; Chigunhah et al., 2020). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the existence of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Zimbabwe, as well as establish the contribution of the small-scale horticulture farming sector to the economic growth of Zimbabwe.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A) *Analysis of Theories of Entrepreneurship*

It is worth noting that probing and reviewing the profundity of the entire study's results of this study was influenced by theories of entrepreneurial (Munyoro et al. (2016), and thus, developing nations, including Zimbabwe are these days, more people are focused on ways to maximize entrepreneurship especially rural entrepreneurship among its citizenries than anything else. Therefore, the conclusion drawn from the aforementioned argument demonstrates that the field of business ownership is more important to economic progress than anything else. Due to this, it is necessary to examine a variety of relevant theories that Zimbabwean entrepreneurs adhere to, including the economic, psychological, sociological, anthropological, opportunity-based, biological, and resource-based theories that have been supported by an array of scientific testimony by Smith and Chimucheka (2014) and Munyoro et al. (2016). The unfortunate thing to note is that, more often than not, entrepreneurial innovation in the nation falls short of what Hak Choi (2008) suggests: imitation and adaptation are common methods of innovation in less developed countries (LDCs), as opposed to the more conventional idea of new product or process development.

That said, Cantillon is credited with developing the first theories of entrepreneurship in 1725, according to Smith and Chimucheka (2014). This indicates that the history of entrepreneurship is extensive, dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries, as evidenced by the writings of Cantillon and Adam Smith, as well as the 1930s Great Depression that contributed to the collapse of global economies as noted by Romer (2003) and Munyoro et al. (2016). As Acs and Audretsch (2008) and Munyoro et al. (2016) assert that the majority of modern conceptions of entrepreneurship center on possibilities and the choice to seize them. It is imperative to emphasize that this study will not center on theories but will primarily focus on the history of entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe rather than a worldwide perspective, given that this field has not received as much academic attention as the literature suggests. Thus, with regard to Zimbabwe, the conversation includes the eras that correspond to the times when black Zimbabweans began to engage in the nation's economic development (Wild, 1997; Munyoro et al., 2016).

a. **The Pre-Independence Entrepreneurship Era of the 1950s-1980s**

Thus, this was the first era of entrepreneurship (Wild, 1997; Munyoro et al., 2016) and therefore, this period, generally known as colonial Rhodesia, was marked by a number of socio-economic and political problems that resulted in the extreme marginalization of Black people (Wild, 1997; Munyoro et al., 2016). As Sanders et al. (2005) suggest, this accurately presented the idea that overriding people who view entrepreneurship as a business chance or who see it as their last resort and are motivated to establish businesses since other work options are either absent or inadequate are the main drivers of entrepreneurial activity. Hence, Ndiweni and Verhoeven (2013) agree with this contention and point out that people are using entrepreneurship as a form of protest against the government in other underprivileged areas of the nation (the Smith Regime in this instance) whose role has little relevance to their lives. Consequently, Ndoro (1996) noted that the majority of the informal sector's operations were considered to be unlawful as a remnant of colonial control. As stated by Hagen (1957) and Shapero and Sokol (1982), communities aim to address social complaints through economic inventiveness.

b. **First Decade after independence entrepreneurship (1980- 1990)**

Maphosa (1998) highlighted the idea of enhancing cultural values of pride, independence, and self-reliance as some communities choose to endure in defiance of the government. Given the past of colonial control, this has been perceived as a major driver of entrepreneurship in this area. Blacks and Whites continued to experience stark disparities in economic performance even after the country gained independence in 1980. As a result, the legacy of minority-focused policies and

regulations had a significant impact on the economy, leading Blacks to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors as a means of addressing these issues. Accordingly, Mazingi and Kamidza (2011) and Munyoro et al. (2017) claimed that because of racial considerations, black people, who made up 96% of the population, only owned 10% of the country's means of production, while white people, who made up 4% of the population, controlled over 90% of the economy. The Zimbabwean government planned to address 10% of the economy by enabling black citizens to take part in the nation's economic growth.

Consequently, the Riddel Commission of 1981 examined around 28 Acts that forbade black Zimbabweans from engaging in economic activity and recommended that they be abolished, as stated by Ndiweni and Verhoeven (2013). This development created chances for entrepreneurs. Thus, it is possible to conclude that, in this particular case, small enterprises and entrepreneurial endeavors played a crucial role in eradicating the remnants of the colonial past.

c. Second Decade entrepreneurship (1990-2000)

As previously mentioned, many people were forced to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors due to a lack of viable alternatives, despite the sector's many obstacles, which include a lack of security, organization, recognition, social protection and legal representation, a lack of institutional and governmental support; and inaccessible resources, as stated by Ngundu (2010). Therefore, the Economic Structural Adjustment Program's adoption had a significant negative impact on the nation's economic performance. As a result, the primary option was still to develop entrepreneurial abilities. Kamidza et al. (1999) concur that ESAP's shortcomings included a lack of stakeholder consultations during the program's design (Munyoro et al., 2016), lack of national ownership, a combination of frictional and structural vulnerability, uneven access to resources, and a failure to account for the expected impact of external events, notably drought. Hence, Saunders (1996) stated that the working class bore the brunt of ESAP, as public expenditure on healthcare declined by 39% in 1994-95, inflation averaged over 20%, and over 55,000 Zimbabweans lost their jobs.

d. Third Decade entrepreneurship (2000-2010)

Large companies in this century have been able to outcompete small companies due to their ability to purchase state-of-the-art technological equipment, which is essential in the constantly shifting economic landscape (Munyoro et al., 2016). Alongside numerous economic reforms, the fast-track land reform also began to take momentum in 2000 (Munyoro et al., 2016). Additionally, Fundira (2007) pointed out that certain enterprises in Zimbabwe profited from the circumstances by using lax enforcement of financial regulations to take advantage of common Zimbabweans through illegal means, including money laundering, as exemplified by ENG Capital. (Munyoro and Dube, 2017). Small business ownership and entrepreneurship persisted in spite of these reservations.

e. Zimbabwean entrepreneurship from 2010 to date

Zimbabwe's economic policy was outlined in the 2013 introduction of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socioeconomic Transformation (ZimAsset). Zimbabwe's economic and social climate deteriorated, according to the ZimAsset whitepaper, for a variety of reasons, including heavy debt, hyperinflation, land reform, slowing economic development, and poor performance from income inflows (Munyoro and Dube, 2018). Because there are still no other possibilities for employment, the ongoing collapse of Zimbabwe's official economy over the past ten years has also aided in the development of entrepreneurial skills and the proliferation of small companies. Adding to this thesis, Matsvai et al. (2014) claimed that the economic collapse caused a sharp drop in the use of industrial capacity, the closure of businesses, and the emergence of a booming informal sector. Matsvai et al. (2014) also linked Zimbabwe's economic underperformance to political developments and government policies, which were crucial in the unfavorable movements of economic variables since the year 2000. However, no one has thoroughly discussed the necessary skill sets for entrepreneurship to comprehend the phenomenon and its significance for rural entrepreneurs, including small-scale farmers in rural areas.

B) What is Entrepreneurship Prerequisite Skills Sets?

As a way to add value to a good or service, persons who take on the highest risks in terms of money, time, and/or career commitment become entrepreneurs who engage in a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth (Ronstadt, 1984; Kuratko, 2015). Thus, the item or service itself may or may not be novel or distinctive, but the entrepreneur must nevertheless provide value by acquiring and deploying the required abilities and resources (Ronstadt, 1984). In fact, Kuratko (2015) described entrepreneurship as an ever-changing process of vision, change, and creation that calls for an investment of enthusiasm and drive toward the development and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions. Other necessary components of being an entrepreneur include the ability to form a company team that is effective, the willingness to take calculated hazards in regards to time, equity, or career, the crucial skill of creating a strong business plan, and the vision of recognizing chances in which others see chaos, contradiction, and confusion. In addition, Munyoro et al. (2017) defined entrepreneurship as taking advantage of market possibilities that arise from ongoing assessments of business models with the goal of making a profit in order to achieve an enterprise's goals. Because of this, the core of entrepreneurship is the "willingness" to assume some "risk,"

which leads to the development, conceptualization, and application of novel ideas. Hence, the need for entrepreneurs to have entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set because the act of entrepreneurship necessitates being prepared to take calculated risks in terms of time, having the capacity to put together a successful venture team, having the inventiveness to gather the necessary resources, and being able to spot opportunity in the midst of chaos (Kuritiko and Hodgetts, 2004; Kuratko, 2015; Munyoro et al., 2017).

Thus, to achieve this, one has to have a skill also and this skill, in general, is the capacity to exhibit a system and a series of actions that are functionally connected to achieving a performance objective and it is therefore worth noting that Using a skill involves a relationship between several distinct activities rather than just one activity and is such that every individual directly enhances people's capacity to perform well in a certain circumstance (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). As a result, a skill must produce something observable, something that someone in the person's environment can "see." For instance, planning ability in entrepreneurship is a skill because individuals with this kind of ability can identify the sequence of action to be taken to achieve a specific objective (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). As a result, they are able to spot possible roadblocks to those actions. As a result, those who possess this skill can spot resources that can assist them in avoiding or getting past roadblocks when they get in the way of an action. As a result, knowledge can be learned through a variety of methods, including reading, listening, and seeing (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

On the other hand, skill is something that can only be learned with practice; it allows a person to show the pattern and series of actions that are functionally associated with carrying out a task. To put it another way, both knowledge and skills are needed to complete a task successfully; therefore, a wide range of hard and soft talents can be included in the category of entrepreneurial abilities (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2021; Herrity, 2022). In order to support the expansion of their businesses and brands, entrepreneurs may take on a wide range of diverse business jobs. As a result, building the following skill sets will also help one improve one's entrepreneurial abilities and raise one's success as an entrepreneur (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2021; Herrity, 2022). Thus, entrepreneurial talents are applicable to a wide number of employment roles and industries, and they comprise a large range of different skill sets, including technical skills, leadership and business management skills, and creative thinking (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022). Consequently, acquiring a variety of skill sets can be necessary for developing entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, it's crucial to remember that entrepreneurial skills encompass both soft and hard skills, which facilitate the growth of entrepreneurial projects (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Accordingly, examples of entrepreneurial skills are discussed in detail below.

a. Business Management Skills

It is crucial to remember that successful business owners frequently rely on their managerial abilities to oversee and operate a company or brand. As a result, honing one's multitasking skills, delegating tasks to staff members, and making judgment calls about the viability and health of one's enterprise can all be considered aspects of developing business management skills. (Nieuwenhuizen et al, 2008; Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al, 2016; Herrity, 2022).

b. Organizational Skills

It is also important to keep in mind that before embarking on your entrepreneurial adventure, you must establish a business structure and the competencies you will need for an effective operational structure, such as organizational abilities (Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022). As a result, the abilities are crucial because you must develop a comprehensive business plan. Additionally, it is crucial because when your company expands, your team will be responsible for handling a variety of responsibilities and reporting to you (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016). As a result, you must possess strong organizational abilities to maintain business operations in order to assign jobs appropriately (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022).

c. Risk-taking Skills

Risk-taking is a characteristic that many successful business owners possess because launching a firm entails several risks. In actuality, taking calculated chances is necessary for your organization to expand as rapidly as you would like, and it takes a great risk-taker to handle these risks to produce positive results (Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

d. Resourcefulness

In entrepreneurship, resourcefulness is a skill you need to have in order to succeed as an entrepreneur; you must be able to respond swiftly to obstacles and come up with solutions in unexpected circumstances (Munyoro et al., 2016). For example, the recent pandemic is testimony to the need to have resourcefulness skills in order to adapt to a new environment and develop resourceful solutions (Munyoro et al., 2022; Herrity, 2022).

e. Time Management Skills

In entrepreneurship, When starting a new business, there are many dates that must be met. To guarantee that you can meet these deadlines and produce results, you must have strong time management abilities, and it is, therefore, important to note that this skill is important because it teaches one to multitask effectively and gets tasks done efficiently and effectively (Munyoro et al., 2022; Herrity, 2022).

f. Teamwork and Leadership Skills

It is worth noting that Being a successful entrepreneur can also entail assuming leadership roles and contributing to a team. As a result, being a business owner or entrepreneur increases the likelihood of acting as a team member and supervisor, necessitating the use of effective leadership techniques to motivate the team (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022). In fact, if one looks at every successful entrepreneur, one will see that they all possess strong leadership skills, and it is not a surprise that this tops the list of entrepreneurial skills one needs to excel (Munyoro et al., 2021; Herrity, 2022). In short, entrepreneurs usually have a clear vision and an ambitious goal, and hence, one needs excellent leadership skills to persuade people to share their vision, support it, and feel inspired to work towards the goal (Munyoro et al., 2021; Herrity, 2022).

g. Communication and Listening

Working with people to expand a business requires having strong communication skills, which may be developed through active listening in meetings and speaking at meetings. Thus, entrepreneurs (business owners) can develop these required skill sets (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Additionally, clear and effective messages sent via social media, email marketing, content marketing, and other advertising techniques can effectively impact how one contacts their target market, which is why it is important for this skill to be included in the prerequisite skill sets for entrepreneurship (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

h. Customer Service Skills

It is worth noting that there are some believers of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets, such as Herrity (2022), who think that they are needed in whatever sector of the economy an entrepreneur chooses to work in. Because of this, it's necessary to develop efficient client service abilities, and this starts from talking with potential clients to discussing opening partnerships (Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Therefore, effective customer service skills can help one to connect with their customer base and ensure that the brand is providing the product or services that the market needs (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

i. Financial Skills

As noted above, owning a business can also mean taking care of the financial aspects of your organization. You can develop financial skills by learning from a financial planner, reading financial guidebooks and using financial software to help you organize and keep track of the financial processes in your business (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

j. Analytical and Problem-Solving Skills

It is important to note that there are some believers of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets, such as Herrity (2022), who think that successful entrepreneurs possess outstanding analytical and problem-solving abilities because developing a brand or business can involve a number of decisions that need to be made, obstacles to be overcome, and creative thinking to create plans and strategies that will help one to reach their goals (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

k. Critical Thinking Skills

It is also well noted that analytical and critical thinking abilities may be essential for enhancing your general business abilities, enabling an entrepreneur to consider issues, circumstances, initiatives, and operations from several angles; this can aid an entrepreneur in making decisions and resolving issues (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022). Critical thinking abilities may also be required for strategic planning and assessing the methods you may be employing as an entrepreneur in order to adjust or enhance your business strategy as necessary (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

l. Strategic Thinking and Planning Skills

Those who believe in entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets think since strategic planning abilities may be transferred from critical thinking to strategic thinking, entrepreneurs who have established brands and enterprises are likely to have used these abilities to create plans for expanding and improving their companies. (Nieuwenhuizen et al, 2008; Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Therefore, preparation and the ability to think strategically are necessary for success as an

entrepreneur. These skills can help you uncover ways to outperform your rivals, expand your market reach, or put effective strategies into action to achieve your objectives (Cooney, 2012; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

m. Technical Skills

Looking at the discussions above, it is imperative that despite the availability of software for marketing, planning, financial analysis, and other business operations, it can also be quite advantageous to advance one's technological abilities as an entrepreneur (Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Because of this, business owners who are proficient with technology can oversee projects using software and other digital methods, monitoring sales and profits and evaluating the effectiveness of company expansion (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

n. The Management and Organizational Skills

Advocates of entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set believe that organization and time management are two more crucial abilities for business owners to possess. (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022). Therefore, techniques that might aid an entrepreneur in acquiring these skill sets are essential for any firm. Among these strategies are organizing tasks into doable lists and establishing deadlines and reasonable objectives for the business owner and their group (Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022). Additionally, one might employ an office assistant to help with paperwork organization or employ technology to help with company file organization financial data and client files (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Munyoro et al., 2016; Herrity, 2022).

o. Branding Marketing Networking Skills

Advocates of entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set also believe that while most entrepreneurs dedicate their time to marketing and collaborating with other experts to advance and expand their businesses, mastering effective branding and marketing techniques can be a crucial component of becoming an entrepreneur (Nieuwenhuizen et al., 2008; Herrity, 2022). In this case, One can connect with other entrepreneurs to expand their network, or they can enrol in a free online course to learn the fundamentals of branding and marketing (Cooney, 2012; Herrity, 2022).

It is clear from the discussion above that entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set are important to entrepreneurs and important role when one is planning to start a new business venture (Reynolds et al., 1994; Linan and Chen, 2009; Munyoro et al., 2016) and that it has a positive impact on entrepreneurial performance (Omid et al., 2015). Moreover, a further review of the literature shows that no studies have been conducted to ascertain the link between entrepreneurship performance and entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets, yet this is significant in the promotion of entrepreneurship development (Ekpo and Edet, 2013; Omid et al., 2015). Additionally, research demonstrates that entrepreneurial talents are merely business skills that a person develops to enable them to perform well, particularly in a challenging business climate (Folahan and Omoriyi, 2006; Munyoro et al., 2022). At the same time, Lyons (2002) defined entrepreneurial talents as merely the abilities required to create novel goods and services and to come up with answers to market demands. Since the world is so uncertain and unpredictable nowadays, the ability to constantly learn, acquire knowledge, and build abilities is crucial for businesses (Smilor, 1997; Minniti and Bygrave, 2001; Tether et al., 2005; OECD, 2010).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Because of its adaptability to many contexts, phenomenological philosophy served as the foundation for this investigation (Oppenheim, 1992; Kraemer et al., 2000; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). Thus, the research strategy was also employed in an effort to meet the study goals and provide answers to the research issues that had been raised (Kraemer et al., 2000; Munyoro, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). Furthermore, the adoption of research phenomenological philosophy was also done because it deals with the source, nature and development of knowledge (Vasilachis de Giaidino, 2009; Creswell et al., 2017). Additionally, the in-depth interpretive strategy's qualitative findings' situational aspect was also employed to enhance one another (Goodyear, 2005; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). Furthermore, this study used a research approach referred to as qualitative (subjective) method (Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017) due to the fact that it allowed the researcher to look at the role of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the development of rural entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe especially in the growth of small-scale horticulture farming in Mutoko district in particular and Zimbabwe at large (Dawson, 2002; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). Besides, this also allowed the researcher to investigate the conceptualization and significance of those involved with these facts in this case, mainly the rural entrepreneurs and the existence of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the small-scale horticulture farming in Mutoko district in Mashonaland East province (Dawson, 2002; Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017). In fact, this is indispensable for the reason that it allows the researcher to have admission to the best information from the qualitative research realm (Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). In the same way, it is worth noting that the use of this method reduced the shortfalls of using qualitative strategies in isolation (Dawson, 2002; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019)

It is well known in research that qualitative research is problematic in deciding the total population with which the researcher can work since it is hard to pick respondents with the required characteristics, and as such, the population is unknown most of the time, as is the case with this study (Burns and Grove, 1993; Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the target population was made up of approximately 30000 rural entrepreneurs that are from the Mutoko district because all elements (people, things, and events) that satisfy the sample requirements for research inclusion are referred to as population (Burns and Grove, 1993; Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017). It is also significant to note that the research uses a lot of resources. As such, there is a need to reduce the population into a sample when carrying out a study, but of course, the sample size is dependent on your research questions and objectives (Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). Accordingly, a sample of this study was made up of 50 rural entrepreneurs, that is, small-scale horticulture farmers. In view of that, in all qualitative research and non-probability sampling techniques, the issue of sample size is ambiguous, and unlike probability sampling, there are no rules (Munyoro, 2014; Creswell et al., 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). For that reason, the use of 50 respondents was justified to some extent.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data in this study was presented using a table in order to convince the readers to understand the findings and their implications on policy formulation (Kennedy, 2007). For that reason, these techniques were selected because they made it simple to compare and comprehend the information being provided (Few, 2004). In addition, the data was analyzed using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA), in which the data collected using interview guides and group interviews was transformed into some form of explanation of the respondent's views on the impact of entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in promoting rural entrepreneurship in Zimbabwe (Seidel, 1998; Davidson et al., 2011; Munyoro, 2014). As a consequence, in order to investigate into themes, the researchers, in this instance, identified text passages and labeled them with some thematic notions. The QDA procedure comprised both coding and writing (Seidel and Kelle, 1995. Munyoro, 2014). The researcher was, therefore, able to swiftly locate, review, and compare all the texts that were going to be connected to a specific thematic notion, thanks to the labeling or coding of these topics (Plachkova and Boychev, 2012; Munyoro, 2014). As a result, the researchers separated the model into three sections: Observing, Gathering, and Contemplating about Interesting Things. These sections were connected and repeated (Plachkova and Boychev, 2012; Munyoro, 2014). As a result, the researcher identified intriguing elements in the data and gave them "codes" according to the subject or theme; these codes were then utilized to segment the data (Plachkova and Boychev, 2012; Munyoro, 2014). Consequently, the codes served as instruments for sorting and collecting (Seidel and Kelle, 1995; Plachkova and Boychev, 2012; Munyoro, 2014). The researcher next began to write about the findings. This involved compiling a data summary, which required basic analytical concepts. Additionally, SPSS was utilized to display tables, diagrams, and other information (Gibbs, 2002; Munyoro, 2014).

V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

A) Response Rate

As stated elsewhere in the study, a total of 50 interview guides were given out to different study participants within the parameters of the investigation, and intriguingly, all the interview guides were returned. Consequently, as seen in the chart and table below, the response rate was set to 100%. As a result, the 100 % response rate obtained in the study was excellent. As noted by Wixom and Watson (2001), a response rate of above 75% is good, and yet this study surpassed that expectation. The findings also indicate that 70% of the interview guide respondents were male, while 30% were female. Thus, this shows that many of the respondents were male. Whilst the table also reveals that 8% of the respondents were aged 20 years and below, 16% were aged 20-30 years, 24% were aged 30-40 years, 16% were aged 40-50 years, and 20% were aged above 50 years. Consequently, most of the respondents were therefore aged 20-30 years, followed by those aged 30-40 years. Therefore, this result was motivated by the fact that these age groups are the common ages found in rural areas of Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the youths had a fair representation, showing that they are also representing local governance structures in Zimbabwe. In addition, most of the respondents in this study were educated, indicating that they could easily understand the concept of entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set and other related concepts that were part of this study.

B) Analysis of Variance

In this study, the author used an interview guide that solicited respondents' opinions on the existence of entrepreneurship prerequisite skills set in women entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe. To achieve this, the researcher resorted to a Likert scale, which was structured as follows: 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree and 5= strongly disagree. Therefore, any mean below 3 indicated agreements, while a mean above 3 meant disagreements. Thus, Using the Kaiser stopping method, the study revealed that education level was the main determinant of the way respondents answered questions. This study was then utilized to perform the ANOVA test, and the results are displayed in the table below.

a. Entrepreneurship Prerequisite Skill Sets are Significant to the Development of Sugarcane Entrepreneurship.

This study revealed Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are significant to the development of rural entrepreneurship, especially in the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko Rural District in Zimbabwe. A mean score of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 1.01 bolster this assertion. Additionally, an ANOVA p-value of 0.29 indicated how significant this idea was to the investigation.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance

	Mean	Std Dev	Anova p.value
Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are significant to the development of sugarcane entrepreneurship in Mutoko Rural District in Mashonaland East province.	2.3	1.01	0.29
Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are available to rural entrepreneurs in the Mutoko Rural District, especially small-scale horticulture farmers.	3.7	1.03	0.46
Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions offer training services to develop entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in Mutoko Rural District.	2.1	1.03	0.41
Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions are adequately staffed for inculcating entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District.	2.9	0.96	0.1
Entrepreneurship training for rural entrepreneurs is significant, especially for small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District.	2.3	0.94	0.06
Rural entrepreneurs, especially small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District, meet the requirements for entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets training.	2.5	0.81	0.22
Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions should work with village heads and Agritex officials to develop entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in rural farmers, especially small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District, Mashonaland East.	1.8	0.99	0.29
Rural entrepreneurs, especially small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District, are organized into representative groups.	1.6	1.01	0.07
Government support programmes to complement entrepreneurship prerequisite skills sets training in rural entrepreneurs, especially small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District,	1.9	0.95	0.22

b. Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are available in agricultural entrepreneurs (small-scale horticulture farmers).

Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are available to rural entrepreneurs, particularly small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District in Mashonaland East Province. This is supported by a mean score of 3.7 and a standard deviation of 1.03.

c. Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions offer training services to develop entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in rural entrepreneurs, especially small-scale horticulture farmers.

In this study, Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions were seen to be offering training services to support their clients, that is, small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District in Mashonaland East province in Zimbabwe. This claim is supported by a mean score of 2.1 and an ANOVA p-value of 0.41. Also, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions were said to be adequately staffed to inculcate entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in the rural entrepreneurs, especially small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District in Zimbabwe. This is supported by a mean score of 2.9, and an ANOVA p-value of 0.1 highlighted the importance of this notion.

d. Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions work with village heads and Agritex officials in developing entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in small-scale horticulture farmers in Zimbabwe.

In this study, Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises institutions should work with village heads and Agritex officials in developing entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets in small-scale horticulture farmers as a mean score of 1.8 was observed.

e. Rural entrepreneurs are organized into representative groups.

This study highlighted that rural entrepreneurs such as small-scale horticulture farmers are organized into representative groups, and a mean score of 1.6 was recorded.

f. Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are significant to the development of rural agricultural entrepreneurship (small-scale horticulture farming).

This study revealed Entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are significant to the development of rural agricultural entrepreneurship. This claim is supported by a mean score of 2.3 and a standard deviation of 1.01. Furthermore, an ANOVA p-value of 0.29 signified the importance of this notion to the study.

VI. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A) Findings

The study established that the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises is significant in promoting rural agricultural entrepreneurship (small-scale horticulture farming) in Zimbabwe, and the benefits of rural agricultural entrepreneurship possess strong persuasive qualities and the ability to influence economic growth. In fact, The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises are helping small-scale horticulture farmers in Mutoko Rural District with the much-needed training and funds for their day-to-day operations. In addition, the research unearthed the great role being played by small-scale horticulture farmers in the economic development of the district in particular and the country at large. Thus, data gathered in this research showed that small-scale horticulture farmers who are involved in agricultural entrepreneurship use their own resources in the form of working capital and skills in starting and running their horticulture businesses. However, these savings and skills are inadequate, and hence, most small-scale farmers are resorting to the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises for upgrading skills and financing. Nonetheless, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises could certainly do more by reducing loan tenure and interest rates. In short, the study established that entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets exist in the small-scale horticulture farming sector in Mutoko Rural District in Mashonaland East province in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the study shows that entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets are significant to small-scale horticulture farmers; hence, their success as Mutoko Rural District small-scale horticulture farmers are known for producing tomatoes of excellence in Zimbabwe because they are endowed with entrepreneurship prerequisite skill sets of superiority, although there is need for continuous training in order to advance their entrepreneurship prerequisite skills sets which are in line with modern-day challenges.

B) Recommendations

a. Training of Agricultural Entrepreneurs

Training is an important component of business success since rural agricultural entrepreneurs (small-scale horticulture farmers) need to be professionally trained and, hence, should attain basic business management skills in order to be efficacious entrepreneurs. Therefore, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises should establish more training centers across the country focusing on fundamental business practices like bookkeeping and market research, communication, organizational, leadership, customer service, financial skills, and marketing skills.

b. Capital Injection

The small-scale horticultural sector is in dire need of financial infusion as this will help rural agricultural entrepreneurs with the much-needed working capital, and this will enable them to shift away from relying on their own savings to finance business operations as they may not be enough as it takes a long time to raise.

c. Capacity Building

Capacity building is a critical area that requires urgent attention from the government, and this could involve developing new products, improving regulations and procedures, and educating employees. As a result, all obstacles that prevent agricultural entrepreneurs from obtaining funding and training will be removed, allowing small-scale horticultural producers to be more accommodating. Furthermore, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises should be able to attract development funds from non-profit making institutions so as to be able to offer more training programmes for small-scale horticulture farmers, especially in Mutoko Rural District and beyond.

d. Creation of an Enabling Environment

The character and kind of policies chosen within any economic sector have a substantial impact on how that sector will evolve in the future. Consequently, examining the situation in Zimbabwe, it can be seen that efforts have been made to promote small-scale horticulture farmers through legislation, but regrettably, the development of rural entrepreneurship is hampered by the fact that these regulations are frequently not effectively articulated through stakeholder participation. Accordingly, the government should therefore consult and include the proper groups before enacting these policies.

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