EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IN FOSTERING INNOVATION IN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Wimbayi Chasaya[1], Ayansola Ayandibu

Department of Business Management, Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law, University of Zululand
Main Road Vulindela, KwaDlangezwa, Empangeni, South Africa

Article history:

Received
7 June 2025

Revised
16 July 2025

Accepted
20 August 2025

Available online
30 September 2025

ABSTRACT

Background: Heightened by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), innovation was increasingly becoming significant in entrepreneurship. Moreover, according to Schumpeterian entrepreneurship, innovation was equivalent to a profit. Thus, it was imperative to investigate the extent to which entrepreneurial ecosystems promoted innovation in youth entrepreneurship.
Purpose: This study investigates the role of entrepreneurial ecosystems in promoting innovation in youth entrepreneurship in South Africa.
Design/methodology/approach: A literature review study based on a collection of relevant literature from online databases was conducted. Literature from 2015 to 2025 was considered to analyze and synthesize the literature on youth entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
Findings/Result: Findings from the review of literature indicate that inadequate infrastructure development and funding, gaps in policy implementation and entrepreneurship education hinder innovation in youth entrepreneurship.
Conclusion: This study recommends creative entrepreneurship education, a National Youth Innovation Fund, local innovation hubs, and local government intervention to enhance innovation in youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. Drawing from the Triple Helix model, the government, industry, and universities should collaborate to fund innovative business ventures, mentor creative youth entrepreneurs, and offer innovative entrepreneurship education. This study recommends empirical research on the South African entrepreneurial ecosystem, focusing on rural and township areas.
Originality/value (State of the art): This article synthesizes the literature on youth entrepreneurship and innovation to inform diverse stakeholders of the current state of knowledge, key trends, research gaps, and directions for future research.

Keywords: youth entrepreneurship, innovation, entrepreneurial ecosystem, innovative entrepreneurship, youth empowerment

How to Cite:
Chasaya, W., & Ayandibu, A. (2025). Exploring the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in fostering innovation in youth entrepreneurship in South Africa: A literature review. Indonesian Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship, 11(3), 676. https://doi.org/10.17358/ijbe.11.3.676

[1] Corresponding author:
Email: wchasaya@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Youth entrepreneurial development necessitated by unemployment had seen youths starting and running Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (Ogamba, 2019). Youth entrepreneurship had been identified as a practical solution to unemployment (Braithwaite, 2024). Additionally, youth entrepreneurship enhanced economic participation, empowerment, and emancipation among young people. In support, Sumaworo (2023) posited that self-employment, promoting skills, and unveiling potentials were key outputs of youth entrepreneurship. In other words, youth entrepreneurship played a critical role in socio-economic development and the development of young people. In contrast, Van der Westhuizen (2024) argued that youth entrepreneur development was not a holistic solution to the global socio-economic crisis. This was supported by Alam (2019), who contended that youth entrepreneurship was one of the answers to the challenges of youth unemployment, rather than the only answer. While Kew (2015) agreed with this assertion, the author argued that it cultivated an entrepreneurial culture that promoted entrepreneurial activity in South Africa. Therefore, youth entrepreneurship could be viewed as a multidimensional approach to economic development.

According to Zhartay et al. (2020), "youth entrepreneurship (due to the socio-psychological characteristics of young people as the most active, creative, reflective part of society) was more flexible and susceptible to changes in the external environment, which contributed to the implementation of the innovative potential of the economy, commercialization of innovations and the introduction of innovative technologies.' This indicated that youth entrepreneurs played a critical role in driving innovation and creative entrepreneurship. Moreover, through innovative technologies, youth entrepreneurship could transform business environments and economies. Similarly, Alzate et al. (2024) purported that the development of new economies demanded market expansion and targeting new customers, creating an opportunity for young entrepreneurs to be creative. Similar to Alzate et al. (2024), Singh and Dv (2025) argued that innovative and creative young entrepreneurs could adapt to changing market conditions, identified new opportunities, and developed a unique brand identity. Hence, learning and innovation were important in youth-owned businesses (Adeosun & Shittu, 2021). Like Singh and Dv (2025), Mahadewi and Septyanto (2021) argued that innovation and creativity could create a competitive advantage for youth entrepreneurs. However, an important area of concern was whether youth entrepreneurs had the capability, resources, and support to seize these opportunities to be creative or innovative. Parker (2020) argued that technology significantly contributed to the success of small businesses; however, it was less utilized in informal businesses, especially in townships. Considering that most informal businesses were run by young people, it could be argued that their adoption of technology, which was central to innovation, was limited. This raises concerned about the involvement of youth entrepreneurs in innovative or creative entrepreneurship. While internal factors such as motivation and self-efficacy could play a critical role in enhancing innovation among youth entrepreneurs, the need for a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem could not be ignored.

Kariv et al. (2022) study underscores the significance of both internal factors and external support in fostering innovation among young entrepreneurs in Canada. Fubah et al. (2025) recommended that similar studies to evaluate entrepreneurial ecosystems' support for innovation among youth entrepreneurs should be conducted in developing continents such as Africa, where the risk of limited external support is high. Watermeyer and Bimha (2023: para1) stated that "yet we are consistently seeing that while many of these entrepreneurship programs are perhaps successful at the individual entrepreneur-level, the ecosystem has not been able to shift the needle at the scale required". This suggests that there has not been significant improvement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, which may not adequately foster innovation in youth entrepreneurship. According to Madzikanda et al. (2024), Southern Africa has the least innovative entrepreneurs per capita, and the highest SMEs failure rate among African regions. Yet, according to Keke et al. (2024), in developing countries, the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in reducing poverty and improving empowerment is widely recognized by policymakers. This calls for research into the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in promoting youth entrepreneurship innovation in South Africa. As such, this literature review study synthesizes literature to analyze the entrepreneurial ecosystems' support for innovation among South African youth entrepreneurs. The study attempts to fill the gap identified by Wald and Kansheba (2020) who argue that despite the growth of studies on

entrepreneurial ecosystems, their contributions remain fragmented, and the concept undertheorized. Thus, this study investigates the concept of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in youth entrepreneurship innovation from a South African perspective.

Therefore, the study intends to answer the following objective: What is the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in supporting youth entrepreneurship innovation in South Africa.

METHODS

A literature review study was conducted to evaluate the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in promoting innovation in youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. Thus, secondary data was used for the purpose of this research. According to Pare et al. (2015), a review article was a journal length article purposed to synthesize in a field of study without collecting primary data. In a similar notion, Van der Waldt (2021) stated that literature reviews enabled scholars to understand a field of study through analyzing individual information sources.

Secondary information was gathered from online databases. Search words such as "South African entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation, youth entrepreneurship, innovation in youth entrepreneurship, South African entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovation-led youth entrepreneurship in South Africa" were used to search for relevant literature published between 2015 and 2025. Literature search was conducted in databases such as Google Scholar, Sabinet, Science Direct and SAGE.

Youth entrepreneurship

"Youth entrepreneurship refers to the entrepreneurial activities undertaken by individuals aged between 15 and 35" (Chovatia, 2024:1906). van der Westhuizen (2023) provided a more comprehensive definition of youth entrepreneurship and stated that "entrepreneurial activities being undertaken by youths between the ages of 15 and 35 who are in the process of applying entrepreneurial qualities, including the individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO), factors of taking a risk and being innovative and proactive". van der Westhuizen (2023) highlighted innovativeness as an important quality for youth entrepreneurship. Without innovation, youth entrepreneurs can engage in entrepreneurship, but the outcome may differ from when innovation is central to youth entrepreneurship.

Innovation in youth entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial success among youths is largely dependent on innovation and creativity (Singh & Dv, 2025). Hence van der Westhuizen (2023) identified innovation as one of the important entrepreneurial qualities for youth entrepreneurship. Young entrepreneurs often capitalize on technology to disrupt traditional markets, and often introduce novel ideas and approaches (Chovatia, 2024). For instance, in agriculture, innovative young people leverage emerging technologies such as precision farming tools, data analytics and ecommerce platforms to improve operational efficiency and profitability. Thus, according to Dickinson et al. (2023), youths are critical drivers of innovation and possess the creativity necessary for transformative solutions.

Entrepreneurial ecosystem

According to Stam and van de Ven (2021:809), the entrepreneurial ecosystem "consists of all the interdependent actors and factors that enable and constrain entrepreneurship within a particular territory". This means that entrepreneurial activities are performed in a community of interdependent actors (Stam, 2015), not in isolation. Entrepreneurial success is because of a collective effort of a supportive ecosystem, not an individual dimension (Sagar, 2024). Sagar (2024) assertion implies that an entrepreneurial ecosystem can drive entrepreneurial success or failure. Regarding innovation in youth entrepreneurship, it can also be argued that entrepreneurial ecosystems drive youth entrepreneurship innovation success or failure. For this reason, a well-integrative and supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem can support youth entrepreneurship innovation while the same cannot be said of a disintegrated ecosystem. Table 1 shows the key components of an entrepreneurial ecosystem according to Stam (2015).

Table 1. Elements of the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Stam, 2015)

Pillar	Components
Accessible markets	Domestic market: large/medium/small companies as customers and governments as customer; Foreign market: large/medium/small companies as customers and governments as customer
Human capital/workforce	Management talent, technical talent, entrepreneurial company experience, outsourcing availability and access to immigrant workforce
Funding & finance	Friends and family, angel investors, private equity, venture capital and access to debt
Support systems/mentors	Mentors/advisors, professional services, incubators/accelerators and networks of entrepreneurial peers
Government & regulatory framework	Ease of starting a business, tax incentives, business-friendly legislation/policies, access to basic infrastructure, access to telecommunications/broadband and access to transport
Education & training	Available workforce with pre-university education, available workforce with university education and those with entrepreneurship-specific training
Major universities as catalysts	Promoting a culture of respect for entrepreneurship, playing a key role in idea-formation for new companies and playing a key role in providing graduates to new companies
Cultural support	Tolerance for risk and failure, preference for self-employment, success stories/ role models, research culture, positive image of entrepreneurship and celebration of innovation

Like Stam (2015), Isenberg (2015) identified six key dimensions of an ecosystem as "policy, finance, culture, support, human capital and markets". Antonelli et al. (2020:101) defined innovation ecosystem as "a large number and diverse nature of participants and resources that are necessary for innovation". Although similar to an entrepreneurial ecosystem, the main objective of an innovation ecosystem is fostering innovation in entrepreneurship.

Triple Helix Model

Developed by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff in 1995, "the Triple Helix model describes different types and degrees of collaboration between the three main actors involved in innovation: governments, universities and industry" (Razak & White, 2015). This means that to foster innovation in South African youth entrepreneurship, there is need for strong collaboration between the government, universities and industry. The participation of one actor alone may not facilitate youth entrepreneurship innovation. Carayannis and Campbell (2010) stated that the Triple Helix model is focused on the association between the universities, industry and governments. Universities are sources of knowledge production, industry, business and markets form the economic system whilst the government and the public sector are responsible for developing innovation systems to support universities and industry (König et al. 2020). This means that the government plays a significant role in supporting industry and universities towards innovation in entrepreneurship. In support, Nel-Sanders and Thomas (2022) stated that "the triple helix model emphasizes collaboration and partnerships to stimulate opportunities for improved research and innovation".

RESULTS

Components of the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Policy and Government Support

Research conducted by Anwana and Anwana (2020) revealed that unfocused national entrepreneurship strategy and inadequate regulatory environment to facilitate innovation are significant barriers of technology or digital entrepreneurship in South Africa. The findings suggest that entrepreneurship agencies and programs adopt a generalized and broad strategy for entrepreneurship development with no specific focus on innovation. Focus may be on other areas such as skills development, resource distribution, entrepreneurship education and business funding whilst little attention is given to innovation. Furthermore, government frameworks may not be doing enough to create a conducive environment for innovation in

youth entrepreneurship, including affordable access to technology and internet connectivity, affordable access to technology infrastructure and innovation hubs. Thus, not only should the government develop strategies and regulatory frameworks to promote innovation in youth entrepreneurship, but it should also put in place measures to ensure their implementation and establish an innovative environment for youth entrepreneurs. Anwana and Anwana (2020) findings are consistent with Nel-Sanders and Thomas (2022) who found that policy implementation is a critical challenge in governments' promotion of innovation-led entrepreneurial ecosystems. Resource constraints, lack of coordination and bureaucratic requirements can hinder policy implementation to promote innovation in entrepreneurship. As such, the government should design innovation-oriented entrepreneurial policies and mobilize and coordinate resources for their effective implementation. This calls for robust measures to ensure the effective implementation of policies and programs for youth entrepreneurship innovation.

In their research aimed at investigating the barriers to the development of innovative entrepreneurship, Madzikanda et al. (2024) established that in Southern Africa, government policies and socio-cultural factors promote entrepreneurship, with however inadequate support to positively influence economic growth. While governments for Southern African countries may develop policies to facilitate creative or innovative entrepreneurship, putting the policies into action and mobilizing adequate support may be challenging. For example, a review of eighteen pilot grants in Peru and South Africa conducted by the Anglo-American Foundation found that funding for youth entrepreneurship targets short-term entrepreneurship programs with little focus on long-term investments (Watermeyer & Bimha, 2023). Furthermore, the findings show that youth entrepreneurship programs are either late or inconsistent, resulting in few youth entrepreneurs receiving support from such programs. Thus, the existence of systemic and bureaucratic challenges hinders the effectiveness of government policies and programs for youth entrepreneurs.

Education and training

Research conducted by Mtshali et al. (2024) found a need to expand entrepreneurship education to instill innovation skills in students. Through the qualitative component of the study, a participant reported a lack of integration of innovation, technology and entrepreneurship education (Mtshali et al.2024). These findings imply that a significant gap exists in the entrepreneurship education currently taught in South African universities. Entrepreneurship education may be focused on courses such as marketing, business management, finance and operations management with little attention given to design thinking, creative entrepreneurship, innovation management, venture creation and strategic management. Yet, according to a study conducted by Kimanzi (2020), creativity is a key characteristic for sustainable entrepreneurs. Thus, entrepreneurship students may have business know-how but may not be able to leverage technology and innovation to create novel products or launch novel businesses. A most recent study by Madondo (2025) recommended that entrepreneurship education curricula should be infused with practical skills and entrepreneurial mindset development to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem for youths in South Africa. Additionally, Kruger and Steyn (2024) research emphasized the role of universities not only as key sources of knowledge, but of innovation and practical activities designed to positively impact societies.

Contrary to Mtshali et al. (2024), research conducted by Kimanzi (2020) established that entrepreneurship education at a South African university offered students opportunities for innovation through innovation centers and laboratories. These findings indicate that the entrepreneurship education offered by the university goes beyond traditional classroom learning and incorporates experiential and creative learning through innovation incubators. However, Kimanzi (2020) quantitative study collected data from student teachers in one South African institution. Thus, the findings of this study can not be generalized to the wider population of youth entrepreneurs in South Africa. A critical area of concern is whether Kimanzi (2020) findings are applicable to students and young entrepreneurs in different institutions and backgrounds, including those in rural and township universities. For instance, Parker (2020) argue that despite the existence of entrepreneurship ecosystems in South Africa, only a few are designed for township entrepreneurs. Additionally, research conducted by Kele and Dzansi (2024) established that policy-makers should extend focused support to youths in rural South Africa to improve their success and enable them to open new markets. Thus, it is not certain whether Kimanzi (2020) findings are applicable to youth entrepreneurs in rural South Africa.

Support Infrastructure

According to Eshun (2023), Africa's unemployment can be reduced by the opportunities in digital innovation, however, the continent faces critical insufficient access to finance and infrastructure. With limited access to digital infrastructure such as innovation incubators, technology hubs, internet connectivity and digital devices, innovation in youth entrepreneurship will be limited. Hence, Ajide (2020) argues that investment in infrastructure creates a good entrepreneurial environment, and their study found that ICT and broadband infrastructures, among other factors positively impact on entrepreneurial startups in Africa. In South Africa, Ssekitoleko and Dhliwayo (2023) study found that stringent data costs and poor digital technological preparedness hinder the implementation of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) technologies to enhance entrepreneurial activity in South Africa. These infrastructural challenges limit the innovation capacity of youth entrepreneurs in South Africa. Ssekitoleko and Dhliwayo (2023) findings have negative implications especially for rural youth entrepreneurs and startups who often operate in underdeveloped locations. Hence, Madzivhandila and Musara (2020) emphasized the significance of infrastructure development for entrepreneurial development. Research conducted by Hunter et al. (2020) on innovation ecosystems in Cape Town, Nairobi and Lagos underscore the significance of sufficient digital infrastructure and digital readiness as key elements of innovation in an ecosystem. According to the authors, "there is no doubt that more reliable electricity, greater internet coverage, access and usage of digital devices and sufficient digital rails in an economy (payment infrastructures, digital ID systems, etc.) make digital innovation easier" (Hunter et al.2020: 18).

Entrepreneurial Finance

Inadequate funding was found to be a key barrier to technology or digital entrepreneurship in South Africa (Anwana & Anwana, 2020). Consistent with Anwana and Anwana (2020), research conducted by Hunter et al. (2020) found that insufficient seed-and early-stage funding hindered innovation in the African continent. A more recent study conducted by Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies (2024) underscored a lack of financial resources to promote innovation entrepreneurship at South African Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. The report indicates that approximately half of the TVETs surveyed receive less than R10 000 annually towards innovation (Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies, 2024). This lack of funding means lack of innovation incubators and technology infrastructure, hesitation to fund high-risk innovative ideas and lack of capital to develop novel ideas and prototypes into real products. Inadequate funding can also constrain educational institutions from developing innovation incubators, thus it's a structural barrier that hinders creative or innovative entrepreneurship. Francke and Alexander (2019) study found that access to finance hinders innovation in some South African SMEs. Kruger and Steyn (2024) study suggests that both strategic resource allocation and technological integration can facilitate innovation and improve university ecosystems. The same may apply to youth entrepreneurship, strategic resource allocation including funding for innovation hubs, digital infrastructure and technical skills development can catalyze innovation and creative entrepreneurship for youth entrepreneurs.

Managerial Implications

Despite significant government efforts to promote youth entrepreneurship, more resources should be channeled towards creating an innovative entrepreneurial environment. A National Youth Innovation Fund (NYIF) can be established to regulate the funding of innovative youth-led business ventures in South Africa. While Anwana and Anwana (2020) identified inadequate regulatory environment and Sander and Thomas (2022) identified challenges with policy implementation, a National Youth Innovation fund can closely monitor the development and implementation of policies and interventions targeted at promoting innovation in youth entrepreneurship. For instance, it can spearhead and control the allocation of resources towards infrastructure development, innovation incubations, digital equipment and funding for youth innovative ventures. The National Youth Innovation Fund can be decentralized to provincial and municipal levels to improve the distribution of resources to local youth entrepreneurs. For example, offices can be set up in the ten districts in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province to improve coordination.

Access to innovation labs should be extended to all youth entrepreneurs regardless of their local, urban, township and rural entrepreneurs. Ssekitoleko and Dhliwayo (2023) identified high data costs and poor digital technological preparedness as the major hindrances to

the implementation of the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) technologies to enhance entrepreneurial activity in South Africa, which can include innovative or creative entrepreneurship. As such, the government can coordinate with the private sector, service providers, schools and tertiary institutions to facilitate the development of innovation labs and training and mentorship in creative entrepreneurship.

Educational institutions including primary and high schools, TVETs, universities and training centers should be innovation-driven. School curriculum should integrate problem-solving, design thinking and creative thinking, digital marketing and creative entrepreneurship in their courses. Aspiring student entrepreneurs should be linked with and mentored by local businesspeople and taught by experienced industry experts to allow for skills impartation. Kruger and Steyn (2024: 11) stated that "the deliberate deployment and development of these innovation-centric environments can substantially boost a university's innovative potential, strengthening its broader ecosystem". Thus, institutions of higher education should develop innovative curricula and create innovative environments for entrepreneurship students and student-preneurs. This will aid in not only cultivating innovative entrepreneurial mindsets of youth entrepreneurs, but also produce creative and innovative youth entrepreneurs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study investigates the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in supporting innovation in youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. The findings reveal significant gaps in entrepreneurship education, infrastructure development, government support, and funding. This study recommends strengthening government policies and interventions and implementing robust measures to ensure their effective implementation. To this end, more attention should be paid to the implementation rather than the development of innovation policies for youth entrepreneurship. Furthermore, higher education institutions should aim to transform entrepreneurship education by integrating technical education and innovation-driven courses to improve innovation in youth entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial ecosystem in South Africa should draw from Schumpeterian entrepreneurship, which entails that innovation lies at the heart of entrepreneurship. As such, youth entrepreneurship education, training, and mentorship should be innovation-driven. In addition, drawing from the Triple Helix model, the government, universities, and industry should collaborate to facilitate innovation-led youth business ventures.

Recommendations

The role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in promoting youth entrepreneurship innovation is underexplored in South Africa. Few empirical studies evaluate the contribution of the key entrepreneurial ecosystem elements on youth entrepreneurship innovation in South Africa, especially in rural areas. This aligns with Kele and Dzansi (2024) research which highlights insufficient research conducted in small town and village entrepreneurship ecosystems in South Africa. On the other hand, research conducted by Mamabolo and Koape (2024) highlights that entrepreneurs in township areas have inadequate access to the urban entrepreneurial ecosystem. Thus, the role of the rural entrepreneurial ecosystem in youth entrepreneurship innovation should be explored further.

There is a need for empirical research to evaluate the role of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in promoting innovation in youth entrepreneurship. In addition, there is limited research exploring the geographical disparities in ecosystem support for innovation in youth entrepreneurship. For example, whether the ecosystem support for youth entrepreneurship in urban areas is similar to township or rural areas, the same applies to female and male youth entrepreneurs. Furthermore, there is a gap in longitudinal studies exploring the role of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Future research should be skewed towards longitudinal studies to explore the transformation in entrepreneurship ecosystem in support for innovation in youth entrepreneurship. Limited research has adopted mixed-methods research design. Future research should consider mixed-methods research to leverage on the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

FUNDING STATEMENT: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not - for - profit sectors.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The author declares no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

Adeosun, O.T. and Shittu, A.I. (2021). Learning and innovation in youth-owned small businesses. Rajagiri Management Journal, 15(1), 69-87. https://doi.org/10.1108/RAMJ-09-2020-0051

Alam, A. (2019). Youth entrepreneurship: concepts and evidence. UNICEF: Office of Global Insight and Policy.

Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropies (2024). Ecosystem Mapping of Innovation Entrepreneurship at South African TVETS.

Alzate, P., Mejía-Giraldo, J.F., Jurado, I., Hernandez, S. and Novozhenina, A. (2024). Research perspectives on youth social entrepreneurship: strategies, economy, and innovation. Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship 13, 49.. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-024-00410-7

Ajide, F.M. (2020). Infrastructure And Entrepreneurship: Evidence From Africa. Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, 25(3). https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946720500156

Antonelli, A., Brunori, G., Jawhar, J., Petruzzella, D., Roma, R. (2020). Innovation ecosystems for youth agrifood entrepreneurship in the Mediterranean region. New Medit, 19(4), 99-115.

Anwana, E. and Anwana, T. (2020). Enhancing The Entrepreneurship Framework In South Africa. International Journal of Entrepreneurship, 24(3), 1-13.

Braithwaite, S. (2024). Strengthening Youth Entrepreneurship in South African Townships. Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs.

Francke, E. and Alexander, B. (2019). Entrepreneurial development in South Africa through innovation: A model for poverty alleviation. Acta Commercii 19(1), a631. https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v19i1.631

Fubah, C.N., Kansheba, J.M., Marobhe, M.I. and Mohammadparast Tabas, A. (2025). Youth entrepreneurship: a systematic literature review of the domain and future research agenda. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 32(2), 496-516. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-07-2024-0346

Hunter, R., Abrahams, M., Carboni, I. and du Preez. (2020). Innovation ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa: How to enable flourishing innovation? Cenfri.

Ianioglo, A. (2022). Innovation and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems. In book: Research and Development Enterprise [Working Title]. DOI:10.5772/intechopen.102344.

Kariv, D., Cisneros, L., Kashy-Rosenbaum, G. and Krueger, N. (2022). Does generation matter to innovation development? A new look at entrepreneurial businesses from the perspective of resource-based view (RBV). European Journal of Innovation Management, 27(2), 424-446, doi: 10.1108/ejim-05-2022-0226.

Kele, T. P. and Dzansi, D. Y. (2024). Exploring the Entrepreneurial Micro-Ecosystem: Agribusiness Among Youth in Rural South Africa. International Journal of Applied Research in Business and Management, 5(1), 243-256.

Kew, J. (2016). Obstacles and Opportunities for Youth Entrepreneurship: A Co-ordinated Approach Critical to Promote Youth Entrepreneurship.

Kimanzi, M. K. (2020). The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Fostering Innovation and Sustainable Entrepreneurship: A Case of a University In South Africa. International Journal of Business and Management Studies, 12(2), 470-485.

Kruger, S. and Steyn, A. A. (2024). Developing breakthrough innovation capabilities in university ecosystems: A case study from South Africa. Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 198, 1-12.

Madondo, E. (2025). Exploring youth entrepreneurial cognition: opportunities and challenges in the South African context. International Journal of Business Ecosystem & Strategy, 7(3), 195-203.

Madzikanda, B., Li, C. and Dabuo, F. T. (2024). Barriers to development of entrepreneurial ecosystems and economic performance in Southern Africa. Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development, 14(4), 936–946. https://doi.org/10.1080/20421338.2021.1918316

Madzivhandila, T. S. and Musara, M. (2020). Taking responsibility for entrepreneurship development in South Africa: The role of local municipalities. Local Economy, 35(3) 257–268.

Mahadewi, E. P. and Septyanto, D. (2021). Learning to be new youth generation in innovation and creativity with entrepreneurship. International Journal of Educational Research and Social Sciences.

Mamabolo, A. and Koape, M. (2024). Township Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: The Entrepreneurs'

Lived Experiences. Gordon Institute of Business Science, Entrepreneurship Development Academy.

Mtshali, T. W., Pfano, M. and Gamede, V. W. (2024). Exploring the Role of Entrepreneurship Education in Boosting Innovation among Students - A Case Study of Two KwaZulu-Natal Universities. Journal of Education and Learning Technology (JELT), 5(10), 542-556.

Nel-Sanders, D. and Thomas P. (2022). The role of government in promoting innovation-led entrepreneurial ecosystems. Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review, 10(1), a640. https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v10i1.640

Ogamba, I. K. (2019). Millennials empowerment: youth entrepreneurship for sustainable development. World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development, 15(3), 267-278. https://doi.org/10.1108/WJEMSD-05-2018-0048

Paré, G., Trudel, M.-C., Jaana, M., & Kitsiou, S. (2015). Synthesizing information systems knowledge: A typology of literature reviews. Information & Management, 52(2), 183–199.

Parker, M. (2020). Entrepreneurial ecosystems and challenges of small business development in a South African Township. WORLD BANK GROUP.

Singh, C. J. and Visal, D. V. (2025). Youth Entrepreneurship: Encouraging Innovation And Leadership Among Young People.

Ssekitoleko, P. and Dhliwayo, S. (2023). Elevating South Africa's Entrepreneurial Activity in the Fourth Industrial Revolution Era. Administrative Sciences, 13(9), Article 195. https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci13090195

Stam, E. (2015). Entrepreneurial ecosystems and regional policy: a sympathetic critique. European Planning Studies, 23(9), 1759–1769.

Stam, E. and van de Ven, A. (2021). Entrepreneurial ecosystem elements. Small Business Economics, 56, 809–832.

Sumaworo, M. (2023). Youth Entrepreneurship in Africa and Development Growth: Options and Challenges. International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, 3(6), 991-998. https://doi.org/10.55677/ijssers/V03I6Y2023-05

Van der Waldt, G. 2021. Elucidating the application of literature reviews and literature surveys in social science research. Administratio Publica, 29(1), 1-20.

van der Westhuizen, T. (2023). Youth Entrepreneur Ecosystems: Barriers and Enablers Relating to Personal Systems, Educational Institutes and Communities. In: Youth Entrepreneurship. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44339-8_9

van der Westhuizen, T. (2023). Youth Entrepreneur Ecosystems: Barriers and Enablers Relating to Personal Systems, Educational Institutes and Communities. In: Youth Entrepreneurship. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44339-8_9

van der Westhuizen, T. (2024). Practical Tools for Youth Entrepreneurs: An Applied Approach for South Africa and Beyond. Palgrave Macmillan: Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-44362-6

Wald, A. and Kansheba, J. M. (2020). Entrepreneurial ecosystems: a systematic literature review and research agenda. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 27(6). DOI:10.1108/JSBED-11-2019-0364

Watermeyer, B. and Bimha, S. (2023). The Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Requires Shifting the Needle at Scale. Independent Philanthropy Association South Africa (IPASA).

Zhartay, Zh., Khussainova, Zh., Yessengeldin, B. (2020). Development of the youth entrepreneurship: example of Kazakhstan. Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues, 8(1), 1190-1208. http://doi.org/10.9770/jesi.2020.8.1(80)